

Heritage Sites and Points of Interest

1 The Prairie Inn 7806 East Saanich Road

From Kent, England, Henry Simpson was one of the first farmers and first businessman on the Cross Road.

In 1859, on the trail to and from Victoria, he built "The Tavern" and later in 1893 replaced it with the "Prairie Inn", a real hostel catering to travelers and wayfarers who wished for a drink and a good meal. Henry Simpson and his family ran a post office, a horse service and later, when roads appeared, a stage to Victoria. He was a great community worker, one of the founders of the Saanich Agricultural Fair and farmed 300 acres on either side of Mt. Newton Cross Road.

2 Nickels Farm House ca. 1900 1666 Mt. Newton Cross Road

A landmark structure at the base of the hill rising up to Saanichton Village. The original settlers of this property were the Buckmasters.

3 Rose Farm ca. 1890 and later 1450 Mt. Newton Cross Road (now Mt. Newton Seed Orchard)

Established by Xavier Marcott, a Quebec native and veteran of the gold fields, this large valley farm, 500 acres and more, spread from the hollow up hill into the timber on the south east slope of Mt. Newton. Nothing remains of the farm except a stone creamery and the barn built in 1907 of massive hand-hewn timbers.

4 Lidgate Homestead and Cairn 1459 Mt. Newton Cross Road

In 1853 Duncan Lidgate, a former employee of the Hudson Bay Co., cleared a site for his home and worked 60 acres as a mixed farm. Community minded, he helped form the North & South Saanich Agricultural Society and build St. Stephen's Church.

5 In 1866, on the northwest corner of Thomson Road and Mt. Newton Cross Road, a four-room log school house and teacher's residence was built for six

students on land donated by William Thomson. Nothing remains on the site today.

6 Walter Thomson Residence ca. 1901 1271 Mt. Newton Cross Road

A late Victorian residence built by Walter, one of William and Margaret Thomson's 15 children.

7 Bannockburn ca. 1857 1189 Mt. Newton Cross Road - a designated heritage site

Built by William Thomson, it is by far the oldest surviving house on the Cross Road. The house is set back below the road.

Leaving Scotland at an early age, and after many adventures, William Thomson was shipwrecked near Clo-oose on the Westcoast and taken prisoner by the Nuu-chah-nulth people. He was eventually freed when traded to Governor Douglas for 7 blankets. In 1855 he purchased land from the Hudson Bay Co. where he built his home and farmed. Supplies came out from Victoria by way of canoes and boats as only meandering trails and horse paths existed. In 1856 he married Margaret Dyer, daughter of the Lidgates. Besides farming 200 acres, he built many of the original roads in the area, was a diligent community worker, helped found the Saanich Agricultural Fair and build St. Stephen's Church.

The Barn - ca. 1887 - Built by William Thomson of hand-hewn timbers in a medieval-style of heavy timber joinery. The shed-roofed additions were built later.

8 Butterfield Park and Residence ca. 1913 1184 Mt. Newton Cross Road - a designated heritage site

The house, of Edwardian Builder-style, was built by Jack Butterfield, a master mariner and captain of the Brentwood Ferry until 1930.

Evelyn, his wife, and daughter Hilda, were ardent gardeners and carefully developed the site taking advantage of views over the valley and Saanich Inlet. They developed an orchard, planted flowering shrubs, a rose garden, and cutting garden, kitchen and herb gardens. Mrs. Butterfield had over 40 different species of iris. Purple wisteria covered an outdoor aviary. A tennis court at the back of the property made for many happy games. Restoration of the historic residential garden is currently underway.

9 Glencairn ca. 1938 1049 Mt. Newton Cross Road

This was once the rectory for the Parish of South Saanich.

10 St. Stephen's Anglican Church ca. 1862 7921 St. Stephen's Road - a designated heritage site

A must see, a short walk down the lane past the Parish Hall.

St. Stephen's is the oldest church in British Columbia, used continuously as a place of worship since its construction. Built on land deeded by William Thomson, it was constructed of California redwood brought in by sea as there was no local

saw mills at the time. In 1984 the Church was designated a heritage building by the District of Central Saanich. Here you may appreciate the heart of the Mt. Newton Valley pioneer community. Peace and tranquility, a perfect rest stop. Enjoy the surrounding valley and Saanich Inlet views and stroll through the mossy, flower-strewn cemetery where many of the original settlers of the area are buried.

11 Valhalla ca. 1928 936 Mt. Newton Cross Road - a designated Heritage site

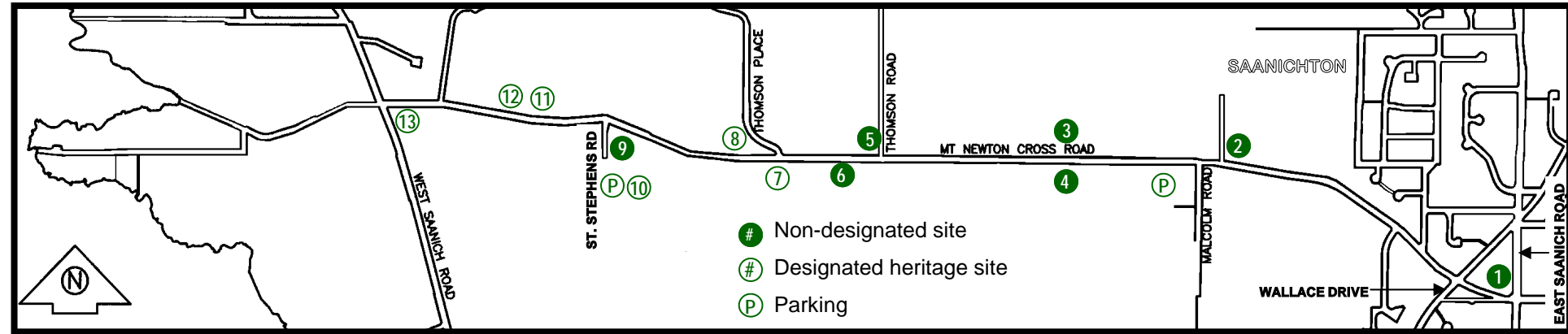
Constructed as a gymnasium for the Westinghouse children, it was originally part of the 912 Mt. Newton Cross Road property.

12 Paten Residence ca. 1913 912 Mt. Newton Cross Road - a designated Heritage site

This large frame house built by the Patens later became the home of the George Westinghouse family, who resided there until 1940.

13 Mount Newton Cottage ca. 1893 7969 West Saanich Road - a designated Heritage site

Built by Mrs. Betsy Henderson, a daughter of pioneers Abraham and Sarah Pope, this Victorian cottage stands on the family homestead. The house and life on the Cross Roads is well documented by author Betty Bell in her book "The Fair Land". Betsy and her husband Jack Henderson were owners of the Mt. Newton Hotel which previously stood directly across West Saanich Road.





Butterfield Residence



Bannockburn



St. Stephen's Church



District of Central Saanich
1903 Mt. Newton Cross Road,
Saanichton, BC V8M 2A9

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A Brief History . . .

Welcome to Central Saanich's scenic Mt. Newton Cross Road. This walk through the Valley, from the Prairie Inn to the west end of Mt. Newton Cross Road, is almost 4 km or 2.5 miles one way. All but 1 km is on a pedestrian path. Many of the houses seen along the way are of historic interest. *Please respect the privacy of these residents' homes.*

Before the settlers arrived, the Saanich First Nations' people inhabited the Peninsula. Mt. Newton, rising off the north side of the road, is considered to be a sacred mountain to the Saanich Peoples. In the SENCOTEN language, it is known as LAU,WELNEW.

Fields stretch on either side of the Valley and through the bottom winds Hagan Creek (named for an early pioneer family).



Photo: Deborah Kerr

The walk tells a story of men and women who came from many parts of the world - bakers, carpenters, gold miners, shipwrights, etc., who turned to farming and found in this valley an agricultural paradise. They cleared the land, planted hay crops, grains, fruit orchards, vineyards, berries and flowers, raised cattle

and sheep and practiced animal husbandry.

There are many names and stories missing from this short history. Among them the pioneer women who raised large families, cooked meals, tended gardens, milked cows, fed chickens and kept life going.

LAU,WELNEW and the Saanich People

The Saanich people inhabited the Peninsula many years prior to the arrival of the newcomers. In the beginning the creator taught the Saanich people how to care for the land. For many years they remembered these teachings and were happy and prosperous. As the years passed, some forgot the teachings. The creator became unhappy and sent a great flood. Those that were not prepared were washed away and those who were prepared gathered food and possessions in canoes and paddled to the highest mountain nearby. The creator took pity on the survivors and the flood receded. A mountain appeared in the distance, which became LAU,WELNEW (place of refuge, escape, healing). The good people who were saved are the ancestors of the Saanich tribes today. LAU,WELNEW, named Mount Newton by the newcomers is a sacred mountain and remains of great cultural significance to the Saanich people today.

Source: "LAU,WELNEW" by Earl Claxton and John Elliot, 1993



Mt. Newton Valley

MOUNT NEWTON
CROSS ROAD

HERITAGE WALK

CENTRAL SAANICH, BC



***Enjoy the Views and
Take Yourself Back in Time***