



Sunshine Coast Story-starters

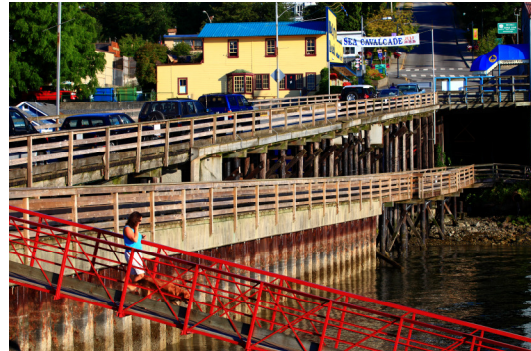
www.sunshinecoastcanada.com

www.discoverpowellriver.com

Sunshine Coast 2010 milestones: from 100 years to number one

Powell River writer Barbara Ann Lambert's new 360-page book, *Powell River 100*, chronicles the one-century mark of this Sunshine Coast city's historic Townsite. In 1910, the Powell River Paper Company created a desirable model community for its employees, from tree-lined streets of Craftsman style homes to a golf course, tennis courts, bowling greens and a movie theatre; (the Patricia Theatre, which first opened in 1913, remains Canada's oldest continuously operating movie theatre).

In 1995, the historic Townsite became one of the few designated National Historic Districts in Canada. Lambert's book can be purchased at the Powell River Historical Museum. Visitors can explore more of Powell River's colourful history at the Powell River Forestry Museum and on guided or self-guided tours of the nearly 400 heritage buildings near the mill.



On the Lower Sunshine Coast, Gibsons celebrates a first-year milestone. This quaint fishing village of 4,000 – with its panoramic ocean views, fresh air, working harbour, funky boutiques and fun festivals – was named Most Livable Community in the World (population under 20,000) at the 2009 LivCom Awards.

www.powellrivertownsite.com; www.powellrivermuseum.ca;
www.pforestrymuseum.org; www.discoverpowellriver.com; www.gibsons.ca

Sunshine Coast powderhounds head for the Knuckleheads and Dakota Ridge

With a pair of streamlined snowshoes, (available to rent or buy in Powell River), a set of ski poles and a well-packed backpack full of essentials, Nordic sports enthusiasts have all they



need to explore the uncrowded backwoods and deep powder of Powell River's Knuckleheads Mountain Range. Dedicated volunteers from the Knuckleheads Winter Recreation Association (KWRA) have winterized two warming huts – the E branch and A branch cabins – open for overnight stays for snowshoers, cross-country skiers and toboganners, free of charge. E branch

cabin is a former ski club shack, now equipped with a pellet stove for heat, a propane cook stove, gas lantern, bedding and an outhouse. On the Lower Sunshine Coast, Dakota Ridge Winter Recreation area is accessible on four-wheel drive forest service roads. Visitors can also arrange shuttle service through Alpha Adventures in Wilson Creek. The reward at the top: stunning views of the Coast Mountains and Vancouver Island, 12 km (7.5 mi) of groomed cross-country ski trails and 8 km (5 mi) of snowshoe trails winding through old-growth forests and wide-open subalpine vistas. www.discoverpowellriver.com; www.dakotaridge.ca; www.outdooradventurestore.ca

Luxury meets wilderness adventure at Sunshine Coast resorts

A five-minute boat ride from Lund Marina, Sevilla Island Resort sits atop a rocky outcrop offering gorgeous views of Finn Bay, Lund and Savary Island from the sky-high windows in its vaulted great room. Guests are treated to group dining on fresh local salmon, prawns, crabs and oysters whipped up by the resort's friendly, culinary-trained proprietors. Sevilla Island Resort's menu of customized eco-adventures ranges from scuba diving in the warm, waters of



Desolation Sound to cycling alongside the white sand beaches of Savary Island. The West Coast Wilderness Lodge in Egmont ferries guests by zodiac to the waterfalls of Princess Louisa Inlet by day, treating them to candlelit west coast fine dining by night. Painted Boat Resort & Marina is the Sunshine Coast's newest luxury destination, featuring two-bedroom waterfront suites, fine dining, on-site kayak rentals and the tranquil Spa at Painted Boat with eight treatment rooms. Rockwater Secret Cove Resort blends unique treetop tenthouses and oceanside cabins seamlessly into the surrounding bluffs and rainforest. Sailing, kayaking, adventure tours, golf and seasonal outdoor massages can all be packaged along with a stay at this award-winning destination resort. www.sevillaislandresort.ca; www.wcwl.com; www.paintedboat.com; www.rockwatersecretcoveresort.com

PRPAWS sparks interest in the Sunshine Coast Trail



PRPAWS, a group of enthusiastic volunteers, built the Sunshine Coast Trail (SCT) over the last 18 years. They are now in the process of adding eight shelters and two huts along the 180 km (112 mi) trail carved out of the wilderness from Desolation Sound Marine Park in the north to Saltery Bay ferry terminal in the south. The SCT leads to old-growth Yellow

Cedar forests, epic views on Tin Hat Mountain and the 13-km (8 mi) wheelchair accessible loop around Inland Lake. Hikers can jump on or off the trail at a variety of access points, breaking up the typical 8 to 10-day hike into shorter chunks. En route, there are two B&Bs, walk-in campsites and the Shinglemill Pub & Bistro on Powell Lake. The Duck Lake trail circuit built by the BOMB Squad, a group of retirees, has its own set of attractions for both hikers and mountain bikers – including well-marked bridges and boardwalks leading to Kelly Falls, David Lam Falls and 12 m (40 ft) cascading Eagle Falls.

www.sunshinecoast-trail.com;

www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/duck_lake.html;

www.bigpacific.com/whattodo/soameshill.html;

www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/mt_elphin.html;

www.bigpacific.com/whattodo/trianglelaketrail.html

The flying Purple Banner means artists at work on the Sunshine Coast

The Sunshine Coast is known for having one of the most densely populated communities of artists in Canada. To meet them in person, pick up a copy of the 2009/10 *Purple Banner Studio & Gallery Guide* from Visitor Information Centres and participating Sunshine Coast galleries. The flying purple banner marks a location where an artist is at work. The guide showcases more than 60 home studios and galleries of artists and artisans from Langdale in the south to Powell River, Lund and Savary Island in the north. In many cases, visitors are welcome to drop in, but the guide also includes a telephone icon indicating which artists prefer a call-ahead appointment. As well, the annual Powell River Studio Tour of Artists introduces visitors to two dozen artists from Saltery Bay to Lund. A map and brochure is available at local stores or can be downloaded online. The Gibsons Public Art Gallery features several annual juried exhibitions of local oil paintings, photography and pottery. In Sechelt, the Sunshine Coast Arts Centre features a public art gallery, literary readings, concerts and art courses.



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www.suncoastarts.com; www.powellriverartists.com; www.gibsonspublicartgallery.ca;
www.suncoastarts.com/profiles/scartscouncil/index.html

Mermaids and sunken ships: diving hot spots on the Sunshine Coast

Late oceanographer Jacques Cousteau is widely quoted as saying that the temperate diving waters of BC and Vancouver Island are third in the world only after Australia's Great Barrier Reef and the Red Sea. According to local scuba diver Ann Snow, owner of SunLund By-the-Sea campgrounds in Lund, Cousteau was actually diving in Desolation Sound when he made his famous remarks. With visibility in some areas up to 24 m (80 ft), the Sunshine Coast's

prime diving spots offer bonuses from shallow-water shipwrecks to underwater caves. The Emerald Princess, a 2.5 m (8 ft) bronze mermaid statue resides in 18 m (59 ft) of water in Saltery Bay Provincial Park. Diving author Betty Pratt-Johnson named the Skookumchuck (Sechelt) Rapids in Egmont the best dive in BC. Near Pender Harbour, an 85-m (280-ft) vertical drop wall at Fearney Bluffs is alive with giant cloud sponges, starfish, corals and octopi. In 1992, the Artificial Reef Society of BC sunk the HMCS Chaudiere, a 112 m (366 ft) destroyer escort ship, at Kunechin Point in the Sechelt Inlet. It's now the most popular dive on the Sunshine Coast.

www.bigpacific.com/whattodo/diving.html

Images courtesy of: Vancouver, Coast & Mountains – Graham Osborne, Bob Young
Tourism Powell River - Kelly Funk and Emma Levez Larocque.