

Kinsol Memories

In 1962, I was a student at Shawnigan Lake School. One of the treasured privileges older students had was leave on Sunday to escape the school and hike the environs.

We had heard about some abandoned silver mines in the area that were within reach, and so one Sunday my buddy and I set out from the school, determined to find them.

With the aid of a topographic map, we started on our trek by heading into the bush that started right at the back of the school. After about two hours of heavy slogging we hit the railway line. And there, much to our amazement was a massive wooden trestle whose existence we had not suspected.

Since it was the only way across the Koksilah River, we nervously picked our way across it, keeping an eye on the fire barrel bays as an escape route in case a train should decide to cross at the same time. It was a l-o-o-o-n-g way down to the river!

We never did find any silver mines. And we ended up getting sufficiently lost in the back roads that we had to stop at a farmhouse and call for a rescue.

Although most of the details of that trip are now a hazy memory, the image of stepping out of the woods and seeing the amazing Kinsol Trestle is still crystal clear in my mind. I'm glad that it's a sight that others will be able to see for years to come.

Glen Seeds
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If you have a story or some pictures that you'd like to share about the Kinsol Trestle, send them to kinsol@cfcowichan.ca. And if you have a Kinsol-related story, photo or artifact, contact the Cowichan Valley Museum (www.cowichanvalleymuseum.bc.ca) about including it in their upcoming virtual exhibit "The Kinsol Trestle: Abandoned, Then Embraced."