



FREEMAN OF THE CITY HONOURS

The honour of Freeman is the highest honour a city can bestow on an individual. The title of Freeman shows the City's recognition of selfless acts and deeds performed as well as our appreciation and thanks for the tireless commitment to the community by this honoured person.

The purpose of naming a person Freeman and bestowing the honour of Freedom of the City is to recognize an individual who has created tremendous pride, given exemplary service to, or made an outstanding contribution to the City of Campbell River. This honour is restricted to very exceptional cases, and requires Council to reserve the honour for only those particular cases of exceedingly high merit.

While Freeman's names are added to the top of the voters' list and included in city social events, the title carries no privilege; it is purely an honour, reflecting the eminence of the person on whom it is conferred or as recognition of significant and valuable services rendered to the City by that person. Freeman are also looked upon as "elders" of the community and called upon for advice by council.

Since Campbell River's incorporation in 1947, nine freemen have been named: Oscar Thulin (1965); Tom Barnett (1982); Robert Ostler (1991); Mary Ashley (1994); Dot Andrews (2005); Bill Harrison (2005); Jim Lornie (2005); Bill Matthews (2007); and Rod Brind'Amour (2007). Their biographies follow.

Criteria for selection includes:

- Selfless service to the community;
- Outstanding achievements in a number of areas within the arts, business, humanities, politics, community service, sports, environment or professional endeavours;
- Nomination requests are accepted but not solicited from the public;
- Nomination of an ex-Council member are not considered for a minimum of one year after that member's term has ended;
- The honour cannot be bestowed posthumously.



FREEMAN BIOGRAPHIES

Oscar Thulin (1965)

Campbell River Fire Chief and Village Councillor

Background

- Born: 1901, Lund, BC, son of Frederick and Vira Thulin
- Died: 1977
- Arrived in Campbell River as a young man and remained in the community until his retirement.

Community Service

In 1941, urged by the local Air Raid Patrol, three volunteers took on the task of establishing fire protection for the territory of Campbell River. Oscar Thulin was one of those founding volunteers who ensured gumboots, waterproof coats, hoses, nozzles and a portable pumper were available. He served as Fire Chief from 1942 to 1965.

From the start Oscar wholeheartedly embraced his role in the volunteer Fire Department and one of his first endeavors was to secure a pumper truck. Unwilling to wait for fundraising efforts to purchase a truck, he retrofitted a 1935 Maple Leaf two-ton truck to meet their needs. Hampered by war time shortages Oscar made do with available resources and the aid of mechanics in the Campbell River Garage and Marine Ways, a local business he operated with his brother Clarence and brother-in-law Einar Anderson. Two large oil drums were cut down and welded together to form an 850-gallon water tank, which was mounted on the truck along with a length of hose and a modified pump.

Oscar reportedly contributed 480 volunteer hours working on the construction of the first fire hall, which began in 1944 and was built on a piece of his land. Conveniently located directly across from the Thulin house at the corner of 10th and Island Hwy (now Bank of Montreal) Campbell River's first Fire Hall was opened in 1945.

Oscar's wife Agnes was on the original roster of volunteers and took on the role of communications officer. Nicknamed "Whistlepunk," Agnes sounded the alarm located at the top of the Fire Hall while Oscar opened the front door and readied the vehicles.

Oscar also served on the first village council and was a charter member of the C.R. Rotary Club.

At Oscar's retirement, he was named "Honourary Assistant Fire Marshal" and "Honourary Chief" with full rights and privileges and was presented with the cap he had worn as fire chief for 24 years. Agnes was named an honorary member for her many years of service to the fire department. Reeve Jack Lee presented Oscar with the key that opened Campbell River's John Hart system water works in 1949.

Oscar was also honoured as Freeman and described as "one of the first councillors, the first fire chief, one of the first members of the Rotary Club, one of the first men to do any real work in the church here" and the first fire chief to retire.

Oscar and Agnes moved to Victoria after his retirement in 1965. Oscar's uniform is preserved at the museum as part of his legacy of community involvement.

Source: Courier, November 3, 1965



FREEMAN BIOGRAPHIES

Tom Barnett (1982)

Background

- Born: September 3, 1909 in Red Deer, Alberta
- Died: June 5, 2003, Comox, B.C.
- Educated at Bridgeport High School (Richmond) and the University of British Columbia

Thomas Speakman Barnett spent his childhood in Rocky Mountain House and Genoa Bay near Duncan.

His varied work history included a short spell as a student missionary with the United Church, a placer miner, a newspaper editor, the first employee of the Alberni and District Credit Union, and sawmill worker and manager.

He married Ruth Pidcock in 1942. (Ruth Barnett was honoured posthumously as a Community Builder June 21, 2007. [link](#))

Community Service

Tom was a school trustee in Wells, BC in the 1930s, manager of the Alberni and District Co-op and long-serving executive member of the IWA, Local 1-85.

He was a Port Alberni Alderman from 1959-1962 and a CCF/NDP Member of Parliament for Comox-Alberni between 1953 and 1974. As a federal representative, his riding covered the northern two-thirds of Vancouver Island, stretching from Port Alberni across and to the north end of Vancouver Island, including the northern Gulf Islands and a large part of the Central Coast. Sitting on opposition benches through four prime ministers, Tom played a role in Canadian labour history as a social democrat who battled leaders of what he saw as a radical, Communist agenda. At age 64, after seven terms as an MP, Tom decided not to contest the federal campaign in 1974.

Tom Barnett was Mayor of Campbell River from 1976-1980, six years after he moved to the community. He prepared Campbell River for the future by establishing a planning department.

Tom Barnett was honoured as the last person to sign the BC 2000 Book for Campbell River. The book is a lasting legacy to the year 2000, on permanent display in the Royal British Columbia Museum in Victoria.

Causes

A proud and dedicated democratic socialist, who believed in the equality of all persons, no matter what their means and heritage, Tom Barnett left a legacy of decency, hard work and a commitment to working-class values. He was a strenuous advocate of a Canadian coast guard and an early proponent of environmental protection. His calls for national parkland on Vancouver Island preceded the creation of Pacific Rim National Park and preservation of the West Coast Trail. Through his commitment to addressing the concerns of all residents in his far-flung constituency, Tom was a tireless advocate for the First Nations people.

Sources: The Globe and Mail, Sept. 8, 2003, The Times Colonist – Tom Hawthorn; Obituary



FREEMAN BIOGRAPHIES

Robert V. Ostler (Dec. 2, 1991)

Background

- Born: September 12, 1920, Victoria
- Died: November 17, 2001

Bob took pilot training with Major Biggs Boys as an 18-year-old, serving for the six war years with the Royal Air Force. He spent the final years piloting a Lancaster on bombing sorties. He was shot down three times, and had to work his way through the underground back to base. Bob was a recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross.

After the war, Bob was employed digging telephone post holes. Thirty-four years later, he retired as general manager of computers and communications for B.C Tel.

Community Service

Bob served two terms as a councillor with the municipality of Saanich.

Bob Ostler was active with United Way, chairing campaigns in Victoria and Campbell River. When the United Way in Campbell River launched in 1970, Bob was its first president.

He ran, unsuccessfully, as a Social Credit candidate in 1986.

Bob served four terms as Mayor of the District of Campbell River from 1983 to 1990.

He was a major force in the growth of our community, both during his time as Mayor and as a local resident.

Under his leadership through the 1980s, Campbell River grew from a community with a population of 15,120 to 18,810. His tenure saw three phases of downtown revitalization completed; the construction of the Discovery Fishing Pier, the first public fishing pier constructed on the West Coast of Canada; a major addition to the airport terminal; funding for a new community centre; and the acquisition and reconstruction of the Tidemark Theatre and new library.

Under his leadership, Campbell River acquired foreshore property, and a long-term vision of waterfront development began, including the seawalk. It was also during his time as Mayor that the development of the Discovery Marina and expansion and extensions of Alder and Dogwood streets began.

Campbell River's official coat of arms was presented to his council by B.C.'s Lieutenant Governor in 1987.

Mayor Ostler led the way in establishing a warm working relationship with the Campbell River Indian Band and was instrumental in creating the Sister City relationship with Ishikari, Japan, starting in 1983. In 1990 the City of Ishikari made him an Honourary Citizen. This was the first time a foreigner had been given the position of Honourary Citizen of any community in Japan.

Bob was chair of the Association of Vancouver Island Municipalities in 1986 and a life member. He was also an executive member of the Union of B.C Municipalities and an honorary fire chief.

After stepping down as Mayor in 1990, Bob served four years as vice-chair of the B.C. Assessment Authority.

He and his wife Morgan continued to be major boosters of the community, and Bob was named Campbell River's Citizen of the Year in 1993.

In April 2001, when the Mayor of Ishikari visited Campbell River, Freeman Ostler, in poor health, left his bed to attend the dinner honouring the Mayor of Ishikari's visit.

At his death, those who wished were encouraged to make a donation in Bob's memory to the Campbell River Museum Endowment Fund or the Campbell River Community Foundation.

Freeman Ostler's wife Morgan was elected as City Councillor in 2002 and 2005.

Causes

Bob Ostler believed the human family cannot live and thrive isolated from each other. We must reach out to interact with people – regionally, nationally and globally.

Cultural development and support for the arts and for education were also priorities.

He was an avid supporter of local film commission and a founding member of the Campbell River Community Foundation.

Freeman Ostler was praised by Mayor of the day, Jim Lornie, as a leader and visionary who helped Campbell River mature into a vibrant city.



FREEMAN BIOGRAPHIES

Mary Ashley (1994)

Background

- Born: March 24, 1938
- Educated at King George High School (Vancouver) and University of British Columbia, Adult Education Studies with post graduate training in career counselling, economic analysis and training for trainers
- Moved to Campbell River from Vancouver with husband Carl and two sons in April 1970
- Began her career in broadcasting with CBC Vancouver
- Labour Market Analyst and Career Counsellor, Human Resources Dev Canada
- Community Issues Consultant, MLA & Associates
- Former small business owner/operator (Dagmar's Gifts & Flowers Ltd.)

Community Service

Within months of arriving in Campbell River, Mary was volunteering with the Campbell River Salmon Festival Committee.

In 1972, she coordinated the construction of the Foreshore Park longhouse for the Salmon Festival Society and was given the First Nations name meaning Hostess of All People.

Mary became interested in municipal politics through volunteering with the district's Advisory Planning Commission.

She was alderman, then councillor from 1981 to 1990 and mayor from 1990 to 1993. She was re-elected councillor in 2002.

Shortly after taking office as mayor, her area of responsibility expanded with North Campbell River and Quinsam Heights joining Campbell River, and her council growing from six members to eight.

Sportsplex, the museum and the sewage treatment facility are the most visible reminders of the work done by Mary and her council. The development of the city's aid relationship with Kivi, Kenya also occurred under her direction.

Over the years, Mary has served on numerous committees, including Campbell River Salmon Festival, Chamber of Commerce, CRTV Association, Yucalta Senior Residence Society, Haig-Brown Kingfisher Creek Society and the Campbell River Museum Society.

She was a founding member of traffic safety committee CRASH (Campbell River Against Slaughter on the Highways) and a founding director of the National Foundations of Canada Board and the Campbell River Foundation.

Mary Ashley was also:

Director, Mental Health Society of BC

Member, Campbell River Rotary

Director, Campbell River Hospital Foundation

President, Tourism Association of Vancouver Island

President, Campbell River Museum Society

President, Tyee Plaza Merchants Association
Labour Market Analyst for Employment and Immigration Canada
Director, Association of Vancouver Island Municipalities
Tourism Advisory Committee
Mid-Island Mayor's Transportation Task Force
Mayor's Institute
Federation of Canadian Municipalities Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Communities
Friends of the Tidemark
Development Team, 10th Anniversary Celebrations with Sister City Ishikari
Past President Association of Vancouver Island & Coastal Communities
Former Member Mid-Island Mayors Task Force on Transportation
Executive Member Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM)
Co-Chair with ADM David Young - Provincial Steering Committee on Governance
(Ministry of Children & Family Development)
Director Island Corridor Foundation (E & N Railway)
Secretary Campbell River Community Foundation
Member Daybreak Rotary Club
Honorary Chair (CR) Canadian Cancer Society's "Relay for Life"

Past Director:

B.C. Mental Health Society
Mayor's Institute of B.C.
Communities Institute of B.C.
Steering Committee – Local Governance Program (Royal Roads)
Community Foundations of Canada
Community Futures Corporation of Strathcona
Campbell River Television Association
CR Community Policing Committee
Campbell River Volunteer Society

Mary also chaired the City's port of call committee to coordinate cruise ship readiness and the committee preparing for the 25th anniversary of twinning with Ishikari.
She was named a Freeman of the District of Campbell River July 1, 1994.



FREEMAN BIOGRAPHIES

Dot Andrews (2005)

Background

- Born: January 1, 1932

As a young person, Dot's jobs included laundry at the hospital, legal typing and switchboard operation. Dot is a life-long resident of Campbell River except during her early adult years when her husband's work as a logger took them to nearby logging camps on surrounding islands and inlets.

Community Service

As a young woman, Dot was a coach for the Campbell River Killer Whales Swim Club. She then became very active in the Campbell River Trail Riders Organization (was president during mid 1960s) and was named an honorary member. In the 1970s through the 1990s, she was an active supporter of the Campbell River Shrine Club to assist BC Children's Hospital.

Dot's first involvement in local politics was as a School District No. 72 trustee from 1973 to 1984. She was elected chair in 1979, a position she held until she left the board in 1984.

Dot was an electoral area director of the Comox Strathcona Regional Board in 1988, and served in that position until 1991 when her area was amalgamated with the District of Campbell River. She was an active participant in the discussions that preceded her electoral area voting to become part of the municipality of Campbell River, and as is common practice was appointed to Council to represent her constituents in the transition. She was then elected as a councillor in 1993, 1996 and 1999, serving through 2002.

While serving as a councillor, Dot was appointed one of Campbell River's representatives on the regional board and was elected to the position of chair from 1992 through 2002. As chair of the regional board, she was known to be an effective, impartial leader through many very difficult and challenging years of regional governance. She served as district representative on the Campbell River General Hospital Board.

Dot's involvement as a school trustee, regional director and municipal councillor totals 26 years of making herself accessible to her constituents. She made significant contributions to the school district in the areas of finance, policy development and educational programs.

Dot was appointed as councillor responsible for public works, safety and traffic. She championed the referendum resulting in the completion of Campbell River's new police and safety building. Her responsibilities as councillor included serving on the Air & Water Quality Select Committee, the Emergency Planning Committee, and she was a member of the Local Improvement & Parcel Tax Court of Revision.

Her record of community service spans approximately 50 years and includes taking on cooking for the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen after retiring from political office.

In recognition of her community service, Dot received the 2004 British Columbia Community Achievement Award (established to celebrate British Columbia's spirit of excellence) and was named Freeman Andrews in 2005.



FREEMAN BIOGRAPHIES

Bill Harrison (2005)

Background

- Born: October 3, 1934
- Education: Graduated from Armstrong High School in the province's interior in 1952, post-secondary education at Wenatchee Valley College, University of the Americas (Mexico City), University of Victoria, Notre Dame (Nelson, BC), Eastern Oregon College and University of Idaho
- Reporter and editor for the Armstrong-Enderby Publishing Company 1953 to 1956
- Instructor in history, Spanish, foods for School District 72 from 1960 to 1994

Community Service

Bill Harrison was involved in the British Columbia Teachers' Federation and locally in the Campbell River & District Teachers' Association.

A number of years serving on the board of the Campbell River Television Association saw the establishment and delivery of one of the very few local community-owned television stations in the country.

Bill has been active on the executive of the Campbell River & District Winter Club, assisting with many initiatives to make the community's Curling Club a healthy and viable organization.

Appointment to the Provincial Fisheries Advisory Committee provided Bill with another "service" experience and increased his value to the community. Bill also served on the Salmon Aquaculture Review Committee and the Cogeneration Project Review Committee for the Provincial Environmental Assessment Office. He served the community and the province on the Sports Fishery Strategy Steering Committee.

In addition, Bill spent several years as a charter member and as a seniors' stakeholder representing the District of Campbell River on the North Island Woodlands Advisory Group (formed in 1998 in response to the move to certify forest products from Weyerhaeuser's North Island Timberlands operations). In early 1999 the operations were the first in Canada to be certified to the Canadian Standards Association standards as sustainably managed forestlands.

Bill is a founding member of the Campbell River Art Gallery's Board of Directors, a member of both the Delta Sigma Pi Professional Business Administration Fraternity and the Phi Theta Kappa National Junior College Scholastic Fraternity.

Bill was elected councillor to the District of Campbell River in 1986. He was re-elected in 1987, 1990, 1993, 1996 and 1999. He was the councillor responsible for community economic development and air transportation. He was also Council's representative on the Campbell River Estuary Restoration Commission.

Bill worked tirelessly and was a critical player in the transition and development of the Campbell River Economic Development Corporation (Rivercorp), the District's arm's length economic development vehicle.

Bill volunteered to chair the organizing committee for the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the twinning of our community with our sister city Ishikari, Japan.

During his tenure as municipal councillor, Bill was one of Council's representatives on the Regional District of Comox-Strathcona, where he co-chaired the Greater Campbell River Committee and chaired the Regional Solid Waste Committee.

Bill was a member of the North Island College Board of Governors from 1989 to 1992 and served as vice-chair in 1991 and chair in 1992. He was also a member of the North Island College Foundation Board of Directors from 1995 to 2002. He played an instrumental role in the preliminary planning stages of North Island College's Campbell River Campus.

In recognition of his community service, Bill was named Freeman Harrison in 2005.

Freeman Harrison at a Glance

- Campbell River District Teachers Association
- B.C. Teachers' Federation
- Board of Campbell River Television Association
- Campbell River & District Winter Club
- Campbell River Community Fisheries Committee
- Founding Member, Board of Directors, Campbell River Art Gallery
- Weyerhaeuser Woodlands Certification Advisory Group
- Delta Sigma Pi Professional Business, Administration Fraternity
- * Phi Theta Kappa Fraternity (National Junior College Scholastic Society)
- Elected Councillor 1986
- Re-elected Councillor 1987, 1990, 1993, 1996, 1999
- Councillor Responsible for Community Economic Development and Air Transportation
- Council Representative on:
 - Estuary Management Commission
 - Economic Development Corporation
 - Working Group on Strategic Services
 - Chair – Sister City 20th Anniversary Celebration Select Committee
 - Regional District of Comox-Strathcona Director:
 - Co-Chair - Greater Campbell River Committee
 - Past-Chair – Regional Solid Waste Committee
- North Island College Member:
 - Vice-Chair (1991-92)
 - Chair (1992-93)
 - College Foundation Board (1995)
 - Chair – College Foundation Board (1998 to present)
- Provincial Government:
 - Provincial Environmental Assessment Office Salmon Aquaculture Review Committee
 - Provincial Government Environmental Office Co-Generation Project Review Committee
 - Provincial Sports Fishery Strategy Steering Committee



FREEMAN BIOGRAPHIES

Jim Lornie (2005)

Background

- Born: March 13, 1947
- Bachelor of Education (Secondary) Degree, University of British Columbia
- Former Managing Partner, Walcan Seafoods, Quadra Island, 18 years
- Became semi-retired hobby farmer after retiring from political office

Community Service

- Elected Mayor of District of Campbell River November 1993
- Re-elected November 1996, 1999
- Retired as Mayor November 2002

Former Member of:

- Board of Governors, Simon Fraser University
- B.C. Round Table on the Environment and the Economy
- Pacific Advisory Regional Council (P.A.R.C.) to the Federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans
- Sectoral Advisory Group for Fish and Fish Products (S.A.G.I.T.) to the Federal Minister of International Trade
- Community Economic Adjustment Initiative Project Steering Committee (Western Economic Diversification Canada)
- Forest Renewal B.C. (F.R.B.C.) Community Committee
- Past-President, Association of Vancouver Island Municipalities
- Process Chair, Central Coast Land and Resource Management Plan



FREEMAN BIOGRAPHIES

William A. (Bill) Matthews (2007)

Background

- Born: January 7, 1941
- Attended University of British Columbia for two years
- Insurance Council of B.C. – General Insurance Nominee License (Level 4)
- General Insurance Broker/Manager/Owner, Vancouver Island Insurancetres Inc.

Community Service

Bill was first elected in 1970 and sworn in by Judge Roderick Haig-Brown.

During his 23 years as councillor, Bill was:

- Councillor responsible for Finance and Personnel
- Chair, Finance, Personnel and Audit Committee
- Ex-Officio Member, Development Liaison Group
- Councillor Project Assignment: Deep Sea Ports
- Vice Chair, Comox-Strathcona Regional Board
- Chair, Strathcona Gardens Commission
- Board Member, Municipal Insurance Association
- President, North Island 911 Corporation
- Board Member, Municipal Finance Authority
- Council Liaison, North Island Woodlands Advisory Group (Weyerhaeuser)
- Council Alternate, Estuary Management Commission
- Council Alternate, Local Court of Revision
- Council Alternate, CR Economic Development (Rivercorp)
- Board Member, Campbell River Community Foundation
- Past Director, North Island College Foundation
- Past President, Campbell River Businessmen's Society
- Past President, Campbell River Lions Club
- Past President, Campbell River Public Art Gallery
- Past Founding President, Campbell River Tourism Promotion Society
- Past Chairperson, Campbell River United Way

Bill Matthews was named Citizen of the Year in 2007.



FREEMAN BIOGRAPHIES

Rod Brind'Amour (2007)

Perhaps best known for his extraordinary hockey abilities, in 2006, Rod brought the Stanley Cup home to Campbell River after winning it with the NHL's Carolina Hurricanes. Rod also won the Frank Selke award two years in a row: a world-class honour that goes to the best two-way hockey player.

As an athlete, Rod is an outstanding role model of dedication and commitment to excellence and is considered a future hall-of-famer.

Rod has made annual visits to his home town for more than 10 years. He shows compassion and leadership through his annual Cystic Fibrosis charity golf tournament, launched in 1996. He exercises his influence in support of Campbell River's Black family to raise funds for the national organization that focuses on this disease – a service for the benefit and betterment of the entire community.

Rod is the first non-politician to receive Freeman honours. He's a sports and a community champion, and this honour is our way to thank him for being ours.

Essential Rod Brind'Amour

Born August 9, 1970 in Ottawa, raised in Prince Rupert and Campbell River, Rod played at Michigan State University until he was drafted to the NHL in 1988 to the St. Louis Blues. He played for the Philadelphia Flyers from 1991-1999, when he was traded to the Carolina Hurricanes.

Rod was named captain of the Carolina Hurricanes before the 2005-06 season. He won his first Stanley Cup on June 19, 2006 with the Hurricanes, defeating the Edmonton Oilers in Game 7, 3-1.

In December 2006, he scored his 1000th career point and in February 2007, he recorded his 400th career goal.

(Source: Wikipedia)