

## CHILLIWACK LAKE "SAPPER PARK" MONUMENT

### CFB Chilliwack Historical Society

Pictures are worth a thousand words and these pictures show a "Sapper" monument that needs our help. Located at the South end of Chilliwack Lake, it no longer favourably represents Sappers. We are confident that with the aid of the Sapper Family, we can turn this around and once again give it meaning and purpose.

In the 1960s and 70s, Royal Engineer Field Squadrons conducted Exercises all across Canada. The object was to develop field engineering and artificer skills by building roads and bridges, luckily the construction of community recreational facilities was also included.

In 1971, 50 Field Squadron, Royal Engineers selected Chilliwack area in which to exercise those skills. At the south end of Chilliwack Lake, the Squadron built two bridges, Victoria and Invicta and a wonderful beach and park for the City of Chilliwack residents.

In 1971 the monument seen here was erected and the area was officially named Sapper Park. With 500 spectators, the Lt Gov of BC and the Chief Engineer of the Royal Engineers in attendance, the Naden Band trumpeted the grand opening.

### AS IT WAS THEN - 1971



## AS IT IS NOW - 2015

Times changed. Since that auspicious opening, the area has been put out of bounds to camping, the road is no longer accessible, and as you can see, the monument is a mess, with bullet holes and overgrown moss, weeds and fallen trees. This monument wants to live. It has the Sapper will to survive – is strong, steadfast and has survived 45 years of severe rampaging floods. It is well grounded in firm footings and is not going anywhere.



Given the current state of the monument and the designation of the property restricting public access, the CFB Chilliwack Historical Society advised CME Branch of the situation. They immediately responded. 3rd Canadian Division Support Group Engineer Services (3 CDSG Eng Svcs) from Edmonton and 192 Construction Engineer Flight (Aldergrove) each conducted reces and a plan was conceived. Moving the monument was considered, however, after the two independent reces both reached the same conclusion it is resolved that, the monument should remain where it is and be made available to the public via a well-marked hiking trail. Additionally, a link will be afforded the public, by electronic methods and by inserting an etched plaque describing the monument and its whereabouts at the Sapper Park on Young Rd in Chilliwack. 192 Construction Engineer Flight generously offered to annually recce the monument site and provide labour and skills to maintain the trail and monument – Bravo Zulu and Thank-You everyone. Permissions will be sought from BC Parks, for a marked trail, enabling visitors, as well visual improvements to the monument will be sought and implemented in keeping with environmental guidelines.

**Result:** a forty-five year old treasured Sapper monument being saved for future generations.

This area is an ecologically protected site and proper care must be taken if we are to make this happen. We have every confidence in our Sapper Family that this piece of history will be saved, restored and visited by the public and future Sappers for many more years in its natural habitat - **TELL THEM - SAPPERS WERE HERE! - CHIMO! UBIQUE!**

CFB Chilliwack Historical Society will be actively involved in fundraising to make this happen.

Tax deductible receipts will be issued.

Please make cheques payable to "CFBCHS"

Mail to: CFBCHS, 6760 School Lane, Chilliwack, BC V2R 2C9