

Chainsaws roar where protest failed

Trial days and camp life recalled in Clayoquot book

by Marni Norys

While the cries of outrage and dissent have begun to fade in the memories of many, chainsaws in Clayoquot Sound continue to ring out loud and clear.

And this fact, coupled with frustration with the Clayoquot trial process, inspired six people to co-author a new book.

'Clayoquot and Dissent', recently released by Ronsdale Press, features six essays, including one by part-time Comox resident Ronald Hatch.

Hatch was among the 900 people arrested for protesting MacMillan Bloedel logging in Clayoquot Sound nearly two years ago.

According to the UBC English professor, the book is largely a product of the frustration he and the others writers felt at the Clayoquot trials.

"We did a lot of preparation for the trial, but the judge wouldn't let us speak," recalls Hatch. "If you are arrested for civil disobedience, society owes you your day in court."

But the judge ruled against admitting the evidence assembled by Hatch and two of the other writers.

"We spent a lot of money on our defence, so we thought this would be the way we would (present) it," he says regarding the publication of the book.

Hatch, Loys Maingnon and Maurice Gibbons were arrested together at the Kennedy Bridge for disobeying a court injunction

against obstructing MacMillan Bloedel.

Also arrested was Marguerite Gibbons, who illustrated the book.

According to Hatch, Gordon Ingram came in from Victoria to testify on their behalf. Ingram has a PhD in Environmental studies, and has worked on rainforest conservation planning projects on islands in the Pacific Rim.

Since he wasn't able to testify, Ingram wrote a chapter for the book as well, in which he gives a detailed 10-year chronology of the conflict and an overview of the region's environment and ways to conserve the biodiversity of the area.

quot, Hatch says this one tries to take a comprehensive look at the events leading up to the arrests, the trial and the aftermath.

"It's the only book that really discusses the issues behind the destruction of the rainforest by multinational corporations, in cahoots with the government," Hatch explains.

"We were very fortunate to get Tzaporah Berman," says Hatch in speaking of a blockade coordinator who was frequently in the media during the protests.

Berman's essay serves somewhat as an introduction, while describing life in the peace camp and the political decisions which acted as a catalyst for the protests.

Gibbons, a Professor Emeritus in Education at Simon Fraser University, writes about his own transformation from a conservative university professor to a "radical"

According to Hatch, the essay is meant to banish the myth that all protesters were "welfare bums."

Maingon, a cultural ecologist, writes about the impact of environmental destruction on culture.

The last essay is by Hatch's son Christopher, who holds a degree in political science.

Hatch was a tree-planter who gave up his summer work season

to help in the peace camp.

Currently he works for Greenpeace in an attempt to stop clear-cutting, and he writes about what has come out of the protests.

The book is \$9.95. It is available at the Laughing Oyster Book Shop and Blue Heron Books.

All proceeds from sales will go to the Friends of Clayoquot and other environmental organizations.