

### BOOK EXPLORES STORIES OF CURSED GOLD MINE

A reportedly hidden gold mine on Pitt Lake has been cursed and whoever finds the mine will die, according to a story which has been told for more than a century.

The man who put the curse on the mine is a Salish man named Slumach, who was executed after he was tried for murder in 1891.

This story has fascinated one Mission man for half a century.

When they were just boys in 1957, Brian Antonson and his brother Rick heard from a fisherman's wife at Hatzic Lake that Slumach uttered the curse just before he had the noose put around his neck and just before his head was covered with a hood.

Intrigued by the story, the Antonson brothers and their friend, Mary Trainer, researched the legend and wrote a 56-page book about the mystery in 1972, and included newspaper clippings, stories, and other records.

Since then, the trio has not stopped receiving information. Now, on the 35th anniversary of the first book, the Antonsons and Trainer have written a second book, *Slumach's Gold: In Search of a Legend*, containing more stories and information.

One of the most interesting stories in the book is about a man named Stuart Brown, said Brian.

In 1974, Brown found a stream, and as he walked up the stream, he was up to his ankles in nuggets. He then went to the governor and suggested paying off the provincial debt. But the governor turned down the idea, said Brian, because the find was in a protected provincial park.

While Brian doubts a lot of the stories he's heard, he believes this one may be true.

"Of all the stories, his is the most compelling."

But as the legend says, anyone who finds the mine will die; Brown died of Parkinson's disease.

After decades of chasing the legend and trying to trace facts from as far back as possible, Brian said he doesn't believe Slumach had any gold, and he doesn't believe in Slumach's curse.

"There's nothing to indicate that he had any [gold], but there's lots of evidence that people found gold there," Brian said.

### Book explores stories of cursed gold mine

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He believes there's gold in the northeast corner of Pitt Lake, but he has never attempted to go after the treasure himself.

"The land is very dangerous – that's the reason people die up there," said Brian, who has seen many pictures of the terrain, which he describes as "wild country."

Brian is the associate dean of broadcast and communications at BCIT, and has lived in Mission for 33 years. Rick, who lives in Vancouver, is the president and CEO of Tourism Vancouver. Mary Trainer is a writer and communications consultant. She lives in Coquitlam.

The three will be at Coles Bookstore in Sevenoaks Shopping Centre to sign books this Saturday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Those interested in the legend or who have something to add to the story are also welcome to stop by for a visit.

The trio are getting set to work on another book on the same topic, scheduled to come out in 2012, the 40th anniversary of the first book.