Context:
Gabriola, geology, holes in sandstone, weathering

Citation:
Doe, Nick, Holes in sandstone at great heights, *SHALE* 22, pp.32–33, January 2010.
Doe, Nick, Windy New Mexico, *SHALE* 22, p.33, January 2010.

Errors and omissions:

Reference:

For honeycombing, carvernous weathering, tafoni in Nanaimo Group sandstone see:
http://www.nickdoe.ca/pdfs/Webp26c.pdf

Date posted:
February 6, 2010.

Author:
c/o Nick Doe, 1787 El Verano Drive, Gabriola, BC, Canada V0R 1X6
Phone: 250-247-7858, FAX: 250-247-7859
E-mail: nickdoe@island.net

This vessel is home made. Not one professional shipbuilder aided its construction. Joseph Silva, well known resident of Gabriola Island is the designer, and builder, and was assisted by his son Henry and by Joe Davis.

The craft is built of BC timber, with the exception of oak ribs. The planking, all fir and the decking, keel, and upperworks came from the Chemainus Mill on a special order. All planking for the hull goes from stem to stern without a splice.

At the official inspection in Vancouver Mr. Silva was highly commended on the construction of his vessel, both by marine officials and fishermen, all expressing the sturdiness of the craft, with its graceful lines.

Mr. Silva started the building on February 26 at his home port, Silva Bay on the south end of Gabriola Island. The vessel was launched in June, and after installation of a 10-year-old Vivian engine the ship passed all inspections in Vancouver by department of fisheries and marine officials. Nanaimo customs officials on Thursday conveyed the register of the troller to Joe Silva, who will be the skipper in charge to fish Millbank Sound and adjacent waters until next October. Tested speed of the troller registers between six and seven knots. For auxiliary power there is a mast carrying a sail.

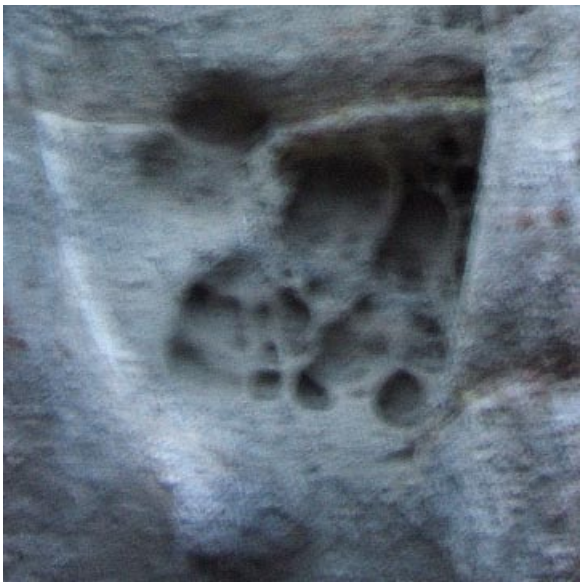
Comfortable bunks are arranged for the crew and a "captain's cabin," radio equipped, adds to the ship's comfort. But, after this, comes the part of the new fishing gear for the crew. "Gurdies," clutch-controlled lines on miniature winches, from the main drive shaft of the engine can haul at once and hoist the load on any of the six lines, leading out from stout masts holding at least three spoons for the lure.

Named after Silva Bay, the fisherman's ship deserves mention, in the recalling of old history of Nanaimo.

The Silva family came to this coast many years ago and first settled on Galiano Island. The present skipper of the ship was born there over 60 years past[1] and with his family came to South Gabriola lsland to make the home at Silva Bay, some 56 years ago. He has lived there since that time devoting his time to farming in the summer and fishing in the other seasons. Latterly he has devoted his time to fishing with considerable success.

The proud crew left today for the Millbank fishing grounds and will not return until November, confident that the craft they have built will be successful in all their ventures, to weather all storms and be lucky in the catch of the fish." ◊

Holes in sandstone at great heights—*by Nick Doe*



Honeycomb holes in sandstone, also known as *tafoni* or cavernous weathering, together with galleries, are often attributed to the work of the "wind and the waves", even though they are seldom found where the wind is strongest and the waves are highest. For years, I have been on the lookout for honeycomb holes that underline the fact that they are created by salt left behind by

[1] He was born in 1878, the son of John Silva (Portuguese Joe Silvey's brother) from Lisbon and Louisa Marelee from Sechelt or Valdes Island.

south of Nanaimo

evaporating water mostly drawn to the eroding surface from inside the rock by the heat of the sun. One of the problems of doing this however, is that on Gabriola, any holes found well away from the sea can always be "explained" by the assertion that in former times, sea levels were higher. And this is true. At the end of the last ice age, sea level here was at least 100 metres above its present level.

It was therefore with great delight that I recently came across some honeycomb holes in sandstone in the hills between Nanaimo and Extension that are more than 210 metres (690 feet) above sea level. That's way above any late-Pleistocene sea level.

The cliff faces southwest, as all good honeycomb sites do. The accompanying pictures are a bit blurry as they were high up on the cliff, and it was late in the afternoon on a gloomy day, and hence not much light. But they are unmistakable. Quite some wave, eh!

My thanks to Parker Williams for the hike. The cliff by the way has coal and a shaft, part of the Harewood Mine, at its base. ◊

Windy New Mexico—*by Nick Doe*

On a visit to Bandelier National Monument in New Mexico, we observed cavernous weathering, including galleries, similar to that seen in the Gulf Islands, yet the rock was far from the sea and was tuff (cemented volcanic ash), not sandstone.

The explanation for the weathering given by Park Guides was that it was "due to the wind"; the Pueblo Indians that lived in the caverns evidently didn't mind drafts.

The tuff had a pinkish rind, making chemical weathering a more intriguing explanation. Possibly *calcite* crystals are doing the job that salt crystals do here. More details would however require a substantial increase in our travel budget. ◊

New Mexico