

# SALT SPRING ISLAND LIBRARY

**LOCATION**

Ganges, British Columbia

**SIZE**

1,200 m<sup>2</sup>

**COMPLETION**

2013

**ARCHITECT**

Chang Holovsky Architects  
(now Iredale Architecture)

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER**

Herold Engineering Ltd.

**BUILDING ENVELOPE CONSULTANT**

Morrison Hershfield Ltd.

**GENERAL CONTRACTOR**

Knappett Projects Inc.

**PROJECT OWNER**

Capital Regional District

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

Located off the southeast coast of Vancouver Island, Salt Spring Island is the largest in British Columbia's Gulf Island chain. With a population of approximately 10,000, the island has a diverse and flourishing artistic community centred in the town of Ganges.

The new 1,200 square metre Salt Spring Island library, completed in 2013, is owned by the Capital Regional District and operated by the Salt Spring Island Public Library Association. Located in downtown Ganges, the building is designed to serve the changing needs of the community for decades to come.

Due to the constraints of a small site, the library has been designed to occupy the minimum possible footprint. The ground floor is home to the general collection, reading areas, multipurpose rooms and administrative areas, while the archives and associated workroom are located upstairs.

The design combines advanced technology, new low carbon energy management concepts, and an efficient and welcoming design that fits into its immediate physical and broader cultural context.

The key objectives for the project were to create the best possible environment by providing exceptional daylighting, views to the creek and the street, superior indoor air quality, and thermal comfort. The design also makes the sustainable strategies a visible part of the library, enabling it to become a teaching tool for sustainable design and environmental awareness as well.

The library is designed to the LEED Gold standard and so incorporates a number of green strategies. These include a large amount of glazing for daylighting the majority of spaces; operable windows and natural displacement ventilation, water conservation measures and geothermal heating.



Photo courtesy of John Cameron

*“The people of Salt Spring have a strong record of environmental awareness and design aesthetics, and they embraced the library design, construction, appearance and floor plan immediately after the building opened. The extensive use of wood is a major part of the building’s appeal.”*

**Duncan Hepburn, Building Manager,  
Salt Spring Island Public Library**

## WOOD USE

Architect Ladi Holovsky has been using engineered wood structures in his buildings for 35 years, and the Salt Spring Island Library is no exception.

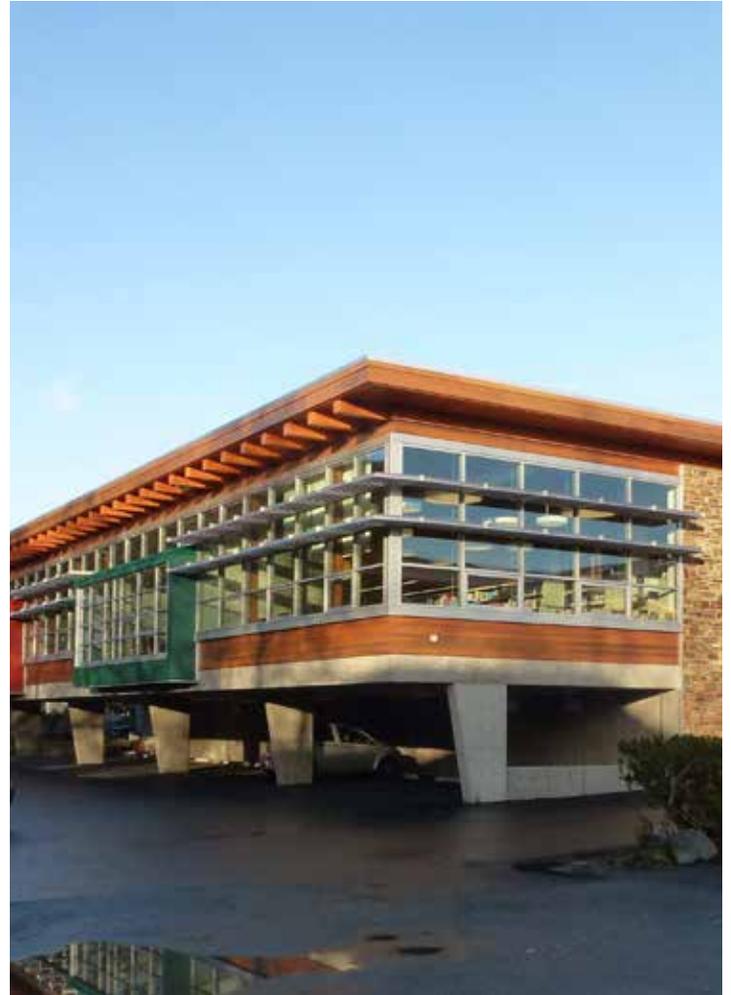
The library is constructed using a post and beam system with glulam joists and rafters, supporting the textured wood panels and tongue and groove wood roof on the second floor. The rafters project beyond the north and south walls, and their ends are visible beneath the cantilevered eaves.

On the northwest corner of the building, the library entrance is sheltered by a dramatic glulam-framed canopy whose exposed structure is supported on a single steel column.

In feature areas of the interior, the glulam post and beam connections are elegantly detailed with diagonal braces and neatly concealed steel plates. Linear wood ceilings perform an acoustic function as well as concealing services in key areas.

Exterior walls, interior partitions and shear walls are all constructed using light wood-frame construction, and the floors and roof include plywood diaphragms.

In addition to the linear ceilings, the interior features wood doors and trims, millwork and panelling. Complemented by light-coloured drywall surfaces and washed by abundant natural light, the wood creates a warm and welcoming atmosphere befitting a community library.



Photos courtesy of John Cameron

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

This profile is published by Forestry Innovation Investment, the Government of British Columbia’s market development agency for forest products.

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[naturallywood.com](http://naturallywood.com)

*The wood grain featured in this profile is western red cedar.*