



## Project Story: The Menorah Project of Shirat HaYam

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What the Bowen Island Community Foundation called the “Jewish Community Education and Equality Project” we fondly renamed “The Menorah Project”. Here is why.

Every December, we have a community event called “Light Up The Cove” where an assortment of six-foot Christmas trees occupy a prominent corner of our Cove, a fund- raiser for the local Children’s Centre. And each year, a group of us in our small Jewish Community of Shirat HaYam would say “where is the Menorah?”



This year, after a difficult encounter one of our members had with an antisemitic Holocaust denier, we decided it was time for an education campaign and to become more visible in the community. Worldwide, antisemitism has become a growing concern as well. A successful grant application led to the design and construction of our own six- foot Menorah made out of driftwood found on our beaches, three educational articles in our local paper, and the planning of a public event.

And so, on Saturday December 4, 2021, at the start of the “Light Up The Cove” event ,we had over two hundred people attend our first ever Hanukkah Menorah lighting and party.

They all joined in with singing the blessings and other songs as the seventh candle was lit, and then stayed to enjoy traditional donuts and even dance to Hava Nagila!



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The support for this whole project was heartwarming: the actual building of the Menorah by two members of our community with help from others, the support of the Bowen Children’s Centre, the sensitive reporting in the Undercurrent (Bowen’s local newspaper), and the enthusiasm of the “Light up The Cove” crew.

Thank you to the Bowen Island Community Foundation, the Vancouver Foundation, and Bowen Island Municipality for giving us this opportunity. The Menorah will now be used each year for an annual Hanukkah celebration on Bowen Island.

