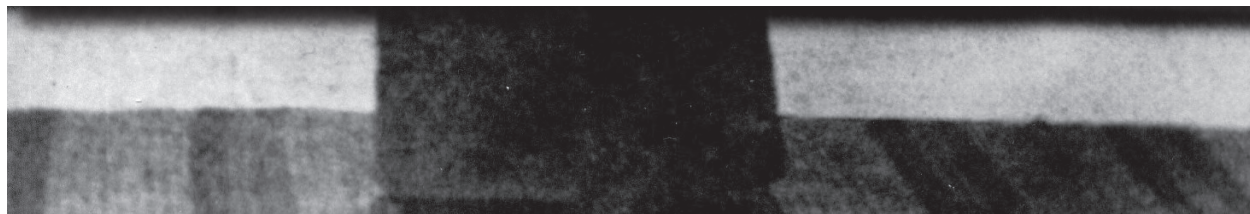


British Columbia **HISTORY**

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British Columbia History

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be interested in its past"
W. Kaye Lamb, 1937

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To apply for the scholarship all candidates must submit (1) a letter of application and (2) a letter of recommendation from the professor for whom the essay was written. First and second year course essays should be 1,500-3,000 words; third and fourth year, 1,500 to 5,000 words. All essays must be on a topic relating to the history of British Columbia. By entering the scholarship competition the student gives the editor of BC History the right to edit and publish the essay if it is deemed appropriate for the magazine.

Applications should be submitted to: Marie Elliott, Chair BC Historical Federation Scholarship Committee, PO Box 5254, Station B, Victoria, BC V8R 6N4

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Nominations for the BC History Web Site Prize must be made to the British Columbia Historical Federation, Web Site Prize Committee, prior to **31 December 2007**. Web site creators and authors may nominate their own sites. Prize rules and the on-line nomination form can be found on The British Columbia History Web site: <http://www.victoria.tc.ca/resources/bchistory/announcements.html>

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A Certificate of Merit and fifty dollars will be awarded annually to the author of the article, published in BC History, that best enhances knowledge of British Columbia's history and provides reading enjoyment. Judging will be based on subject development, writing skill, freshness of material, and appeal to a general readership interested in all aspects of BC history.

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The Vancouver Race Riot of 1907 and the Death of Ng Ah Sim

By Janet Mary Nicol

Janet Mary Nicol is a Vancouver based writer who wrote *A Working Man's Dream* for issue 36.2 of *BC Historical News*

Friday, September 13, 1907
The corpse of Ng Ah Sim was laid out on a cart and pulled by one of the six men. They passed through roped barricades patrolled by police and Chinatown residents and climbed Cambie Street, scattering tiny pieces of paper along the way. Evil spirits became trapped in the holes cut into the paper, they believed, leaving the dead man's soul unharmed. Each man wore a skull cap, a long braid falling down his back. The cautious among them hid a gun inside the wide sleeve of his dress-length tunic or suspended a knife from a cord tied around his waist. At 33rd Avenue, the procession turned toward the segregated section of Mountainview cemetery. Below and in the distance, low rise buildings of Vancouver fanned Burrard Inlet. On the opposite shoreline, a great wall of mountains appeared dark blue against a pale sky. At the burial site, the group banged drums, clapped cymbals and set off firecrackers as they placed the corpse in the moist earth and then covered it. Their duty complete, the men retreated home to the city's heart. So ended the bad luck journey of Ng Ah Sim.

Six Days Earlier

It was an intensely warm Saturday evening when Olaf Lauritzen arrived in downtown Vancouver after visiting his brother's farm in the nearby farming community of Cloverdale. He registered at the Glasgow Hotel at 505 Westminster Street and planned to have a leisurely beer with a friend when the commotion down the block caught his eye.

A streetcar was stopped at Westminster and Hastings Streets in front of a two-storey red-brick building with twin turrets and traffic was unable to move past the people crowding the road. Drawing nearer, Olaf saw smoke rising from an effigy made of straw and old clothes. It was in flames and a sign at its feet read: "Lieutenant Governor Dunsmuir—to be burned at City Hall." A Christian minister standing on the building steps shouted "The Asians are taking the bread from our table! he roared. It's time to do something!"

"You bet it is" came a reply from somewhere in the crowd. People cheered until they were hoarse as flames rose and fell. Many held a small white flag with the slogan "A White Canada For Us". Olaf edged closer. A man holding a drum told Olaf about a 'monster parade' held a few hours earlier. Thousands of spectators on Granville and Hastings Street joined the marchers along the route. "Half of Vancouver is here tonight," he said with pride. Olaf looked out at the sea of white faces and thought it could be true.

The late summer sun was nearly gone, casting a veil of darkness. The speaker went back inside the building where more shouting and cheers were heard. Another man in a dark suit holding a panama hat came out and stood before his excited audience. "Drive away the aliens," he advised. Americans up and down the coast have taken matters into their own hands, he told them, running foreigners out in places like the border town of Bellingham. "There are no



Sentaro Uchida, General Merchant, Powell Street, Vancouver, B.C

Library and Archives Canada
Photo C-023556



hindoos in Bellingham tonight!" he yelled. the crowd responded with wild applause, finally subsiding to quiet, only to be disrupted moments later by a distant sound of breaking glass.

Olaf held his breathe. Someone yelled, 'On to Chinatown'. The crowd was unchained. They streamed down Dupont Street only half a block away. A man holding a liquor flask led the charge of men and boys. He snatched a long cloth banner out of the hands of a stranger, the slogan "Stop the Yellow Peril!" as he dragged it along for two blocks. Stopping suddenly, he threw his flask at a store window, shattering the glass. Olaf ran behind him and with the crowd, cheered encouragement, as he stuffed the banner inside the gaping hole. Another man took his boot to a window and kicked it. Then he took a rock from his pocket and sent it hurling at the jagged edges of glass. When a terrified Chinese shopkeeper peered from the balcony above, the rock thrower shouted abuses and threats. Others in the crowd began taking aim at the windows too, using bricks and chunks of wood. They continued to whoop and holler as they moved down the street.

Not a sound came from inside the shops and apartments above. Fewer than a dozen police, their clubs drawn, moved among the people attempting to bring order. One police officer grabbed a boy but another man shoved the officer, causing him to lose his grasp. The boy disappeared into the crowd.

Olaf joined a group turning into Shanghai Alley. Any other night the alley was brightly lit and full of people going to and from its gambling dens, restaurants and theatre. Prostitutes, evicted a year ago from waterfront brothels, also lived and worked in

the alley's tenements. On this night, they also hid indoors.

Behind one locked door lived 12 year old Lillian Ho Wong. When she heard the loud voices she ran to her mother. Her father commanded them to stay in the centre of the room, ready to run out the front or back door. He told them to turn out all the lights. "And don't sit near the windows." As the mob ran through the lane, she could hear swearing and yelling. Across the alley, someone had left their store

lights on and all the glass there was shattered. Finally, Lillian heard the footsteps fade away.

Olaf saw a gang turning into Canton Alley and joined them. It was a short lane ending in a courtyard. Tenement buildings lined both sides, one as high as seven stories. As residents hid within, the destruction continued. Back on Dupont Street Olaf gazed at the heaps of window glass on the ground. Some of the rioters reached their arms into the store windows and grabbed merchandise. Gunshots rang out. People moved helter skelter up and down the street gathering stones and seeking unbroken glass to smash.

One man spotted an unbroken window and kicked it out. An officer who had been watching chased him. The man sped off across the railway tracks and into the arms of another officer. Someone chanted, 'rescue, rescue' as the rioter was led away in handcuffs to the police's motorized van. Officers barked at the crowd to move along. Another rioter began throwing stones at the police, and shouted, "Don't listen to him. We don't have to move for them." He was grabbed and handcuffed. By now, all the city's available police were at the scene, including Chief Constable Chamberlin.

The sound of gongs rang out as fire trucks came. Men with cans of coal oil had been spotted moving around the backs of the buildings. Fire chief Carlisle positioned himself and other firemen at Pender and Carrall by a hose wagon. Carlisle considered turning the water hose on the crowd but Chamberlin advised him not to, believing it would incite more violence. So far, no one had been seriously hurt. Strangely, a few Sikhs, Chinese and Japanese men moved unharmed among the spectators.

Olaf joined the mass movement toward the

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Reg. #1907-09124780, Microfilm # B13095, GSU M#1927123 BCA

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Original burial site: Range 4, Block 4, Plot 11, Lot 14

Chinatown Heritage
Alley website - <http://www.chinatownvancouver.ca/>

Henderson's Directory, 1907 VCA

Vancouver Court Records, 1907 VCA

On Powell Street at Gore in Vancouver this mosaic recalls the ugly events of 1907.

Damage done by the rioters to the store of V. Kawasaki Bros., 202 Westminster Avenue, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, 8 - 9 Sept 1907.

*Library and Archives Canada
Photo C-023556*



Westminster (Main St.). By now it was completely dark, with only street lights casting a dim uneven light. The rioters had grown to more than a thousand people, most of them curious onlookers. A man shimmied up a pole and cried out, "On to Japtown." All were unified as they cheered their agreement.

Olaf was part of the mass of marching men who went swinging around Westminster to Powell Street. Before them, the rows of wooden tenements and shops were barely visible in the darkness. No lights shone on either side of the street. Oblivious to the ominous appearance of the Japanese quarters, the intruders picked up crushed rocks from the semi-paved street. Suddenly, a child's shrill cry from inside a second-storey tenement split the eerie silence. It was followed by another and another. A bedlam of wailing broke loose as the rioters began smashing storefront windows.

The Japanese residents had been alerted to the rioting and positioned themselves on rooftops, armed and ready to fight. Some were veteran soldiers of their home country's war against the Russians two years earlier. As the mob approached, they took aim and pelted rocks down onto the unsuspecting mob. Others came shrieking out of their front door, crying 'Banzai' and tearing into the startled crowd with sticks, clubs,

iron bars, knives and bottles.

Olaf turned into a lane and watched as a Japanese man climbed a stepladder alongside the building. Another man in the swarming mass climbed up behind him. The Japanese man pulled out a knife, swooped down and cut him on the arm. The injured man fell and rolled onto the ground, showing his face in a dim light. He was a fellow Japanese. Before Olaf could take a swing at him, the attacker scrambled down the ladder and pulled his unintended victim through a side door.

The fighting did not prevent the mob from smashing windows of shops and small homes along both sides of the street. A police sergeant charged the crowd with a drawn revolver and people scattered but continued to break windows along side streets and to steal merchandise. Two Japanese men pulled a rioter into a lane and cut his head with a sharp rock while he fought back with a bottle. The gongs of the ambulance wagon rang out. Eventually the rioters wavered, broke and then retreated, some cut and bleeding.

Olaf followed the crowd re-gathering on Westminster Street. Officers had begun cordoning off Powell and Dupont, placing barricades of rope from one side of the street to the other. A boy emerged

from the crowd holding a knife. He stepped up to the barricade and sliced the rope, followed by a roar of approval from the crowd. He looked defiantly into the face of an officer. "What can you do to me for cutting the rope?" As the officer moved to grab him, the boy threw his knife into the crowd. He was handcuffed and pulled to a van.

Just then, two officers seized and handcuffed Olaf. "Mob the police!" Olaf shouted as the police pulled him to the van. The crowd chanted 'rescue, rescue'. Five officers hastily assembled and standing shoulder to shoulder dragged Olaf along. Their formation forced the mob to back against the curb but didn't stop them from cursing and shouting. People surged back and forth under the glare of the street lights and threw bricks and stones over the heads of police as Olaf, still calling out, was thrown in the van, joining more than a dozen others. The police driver sped to the jail house as some of the crowd followed on foot while others stayed behind to see what would happen next.

By midnight the police had gained control of the streets though outsiders continued prowling the roped-off areas all night and throughout Sunday and Monday in the relentless heat wave. As another cloudless dawn broke Tuesday, it was to be a 50 year old gardener's last. Ng Ah Sim worked and lived on a South Vancouver farm and studied English from a neighbor in the evenings. That morning he was found hanging from a tree branch, his corpse still warm. A rope had been taken from a nearby well. The razor used to cut it was in Ah Sim's pocket. The Vancouver coroner ruled his death a suicide but many in the Asian community believed otherwise.

Later that same day, the rain finally arrived, washing the streets and cooling some of the tensions of a city caught up in a fever of hatred.

Afterword

The events of the riot have been recounted through the eyes of Olaf but based on a composite of eyewitness accounts. Olaf Lauritzen was one of only five rioters convicted. He served a three month sentence and likely left town as his name does not appear in the city directory of 1907 or thereafter.

The eyewitness account of Lillian Ho Wong of Shanghai Alley was originally told in Paul Yee's *Saltwater City*. Lillian was among the 150 Chinese and Japanese children attending Vancouver public schools.

There were no fatalities from the riot but in its aftermath, martial law was declared for 10 days. The city was compelled to shut down gun shops after Asians purchased hundreds of dollars worth of weapons. Residents of Chinatown and Japantown set up their own security patrols and Chinese workers went on a three day city-wide strike, demanding full police protection.

The Asiatic Exclusion League, established earlier that summer was modelled after other leagues in American cities. With an active membership of 2,000 people including Mayor Bethune, the league had sponsored the rally. When they applied to conduct yet another "monster parade" on October 8, 1907, the council surprisingly voted 8-3 against their request. The federal government paid the Chinese and Japanese community for property damages incurred by the riot but federal authorities continued to restrict Asian immigration for decades to come.

In 1919, Ng Ah Sim's body was disinterred from Mountainview cemetery, as was customary among expatriot Chinese and sent back to his home province in China for burial among his ancestors. •

A Celestial¹ Love Story, or was it?

by Ronald Greene

Ron Greene writes the Token History column which appears in BC History and he is the BC Historical Federation's 1st vice president.

Some time ago the following ad in the *Nelson Miner*² caught my eye:

**"To Wah Chung
Revelstoke, B.C.**

**Some one took my girl away, dress in
English clothes. Looks like a Jap girl.
Has three Chinamen with her.
\$200 reward for returning her to
Nelson.**

*Lun Foo
Kuskonook"*

One of the problems with researching Chinese items from the late 19th century is that the Chinese were viewed unfavourably by most British Columbians. White workmen viewed the Chinese as cheap labour who undercut their wages and the lack of communication between the Chinese and the whites led to a lack of understanding and hence a dislike of the Chinese by the whites. The province was entering a period of strong anti-Asian feeling. Many restaurants advertised "All white help" and some Kootenay communities declared themselves Chinese-free and "encouraged" the Chinese either not to come, or to leave if they had come. Giving a few typical comments, we note The *Slocan Drill*, of April 14, 1900 had a headline "Asiatics not wanted at Salmo. ..." and on June 8, 1900 said "The Chinese cook imported into the camp last week has been given his walking ticket." The *Moyie Leader* in 1900 noted, "Moyie Laundry Opened. Messrs Bremner & Hickey opened their new laundry this week and are now ready for their share of the public patronage. With two white laundries in town there is no further necessity of patronizing the Chinese. Give the white men a show to make a living." Again on Jan 12, 1901 the *Moyie Leader* roared "To fight the Chinese The citizens of Moyie have taken a firm stand to rid the town of the Chinese population...." The following advertisement in the *Kootenay Mail*, July 10, 1900 "Revelstoke Restaurant, First street near Molsons Bank. Board by the week, \$4.50, meals 25 cents,

Home made Bread, Cakes and Pies for sale. Open day and night. No Chinese employed. A. Cowey, proprietor."

In the social climate of the day, the following story was handled surprisingly sympathetically. It appears that Lun Foo's "girl" was brought to Kuskonook by Wah Chung, the Revelstoke merchant. If we believe the *Nelson Miner* then Wah Chung sold the girl, named Tai, to Lun Foo for \$400. However, this is just one of the alternative versions of the story that are available and lacking any means to determine which is accurate and which is journalistic licence or conjecture we will leave it up to the reader to decide. The *Miner* indicated that when Wah Chung brought the girl to Kuskonook he was accompanied by two other Chinese, young men, one of whom was called Loo, a fan-tan player, a professional gambler who wandered from camp to camp. Lun Foo established his girl nearby to his restaurant. Lun Foo was a happy man. The source is vague on how long Lun Foo was in such a state, we don't know whether it was a day, a week, or longer. The *Miner* claimed, "from inquiries made in Nelson,..." that Lun Foo's heart was not the first gladdened by the young lady, before going to Revelstoke she had been the object of the affections of a Nelson resident, Hip Chang. The cause of Lun Foo's advertisement was that two young Chinese men, Loo and Joe Wing, brought a boy's suit for Tai and the three of them slipped onto a lake steamer heading across the border to Bonner's Ferry.

With Tai gone, Lun Foo became unhappy, irritable and bedraggled. He was said to have taken a potato-masher to someone who had suggested that Tai was "no good." The question asked was whether Wah Chung had deliberately taken advantage of Lun Foo, intending all along to resell the girl elsewhere.

The *Anaconda Standard*, a Montana newspaper, reported³ that Koo Wong, the Tai of the *Nelson Miner*, was languishing in the Great Falls city jail, with her "lover," Wong Lee alias Wong Sing, the "Loo" of the *Nelson Miner* and a second Chinese male, Joe Wing. Wong Lee and his colleague, Joe Wing, were said to have left San Francisco in the spring looking for a suitable place to establish a laundry. The story describes Koo Wong [Tai] as a dainty maid of 17 years, whom Wong had spied when he came through Revelstoke, which they called Rose Lake. It was not known whether she was the wife of Wah Chung, his concubine, or a mere chattel, but after she was deposited with Lun Foo she was stolen away by Wong Lee and Joe Wing, dressed in boy's clothing.

The trio were apprehended in Great Falls, Montana, or maybe as stated, Bonner's Ferry, although those two communities are far enough apart that one wonders why if arrested in Bonner's Ferry the three companions ended up in a Great Falls jail. At first the authorities there thought they had a kidnapping case on hand, but later believed that Koo Wong was a willing companion to Wong Lee. When their case came up in court almost a week later it was decided that Koo Wong was to be returned to her lord and master, presumably Wah Chung. Wong Lee, the lover, gambler and prospective laundryman, had permission to be in the U.S., but not to leave it, which he had violated when he went to Revelstoke and his situation was to be determined. Joe Wing turned out not to have any status in the U.S. so he was to be deported to China.⁴ The final decision was that Wong Lee was also to be deported, so he and Joe Wing were taken to Tacoma for deportation. Koo Wong was given the choice of returning to British Columbia, or also being deported. She chose the former.⁵

A report in the *Nelson Miner*, following the arrest of the three offered several stories, one of which was that Koo Wong was born in San Francisco of rich parents who sailed for China about two years before, leaving her in the custody of Wah Chung, who claimed that she was his wife. She said that he proved to be a drunken brute who frequently beat her and that she wrote Wong Lee and Joe Wing to come up from San Francisco and take her back to San Francisco.⁶ However, the *Nelson Miner* states this story doesn't agree with what they discovered in Kuskonook, which was that the girl had been sold to Lun Foo for \$400, and was afterwards stolen from him. Wah Chung's story is different once again. He claimed that he brought the girl down to Nelson to visit a dressmaker and that after finishing that business he remembered that his cousin, Lun Foo, owed him \$400 and so sent the girl over to Kuskonook, in the company of Wong Lee, to collect the debt. This money was given to the girl, but she and Wong Lee slipped away over night.

The next week the *Nelson Miner* reported another story, this one given by Mr. C.P. Hill, the United States deputy collector of customs for Montana and Idaho. He stated that the girl's name was Oie Gam. That she was born in China, but emigrated to Victoria with her parents at the age of two years. Her parents decided to return to China and the girl married Wah Chung, a merchant of Revelstoke [at least this one point seems consistent through the

stories]. This version of the story was that Wong Lee was from a different tong than Wah Chung and that he could doubly benefit from an abduction by harming a member of an opposing tong, i.e. Wah Chung, and selling the girl in San Francisco where she would have had a value for immoral purposes of several thousand dollars.⁷

What happened to the girl after she was returned to Wah Chung? Wah Chung died July 2, 1932.⁸ Mrs. Wah Chung had predeceased her husband by almost three years, dying on August 17, 1929. However, Mrs. Wah Chung was shown as having been born in 1861, and only in Revelstoke for 16 years, so she is unlikely to have been the fair Oie Gam [or Tai, or Koo Wong].⁹ However, a Mrs. Wing Chung delivered a fine boy in early August 1908.¹⁰ It hasn't been shown that this woman was Wah Chung's wife. She died at sea on a trip to Hong Kong in 1921 and was buried in China, so any proof that she might have been Oie Gam will be hard to find.¹¹ When Wah Chung died his son, Eng Bing, was shown as the informant. •

Notes

1 A term used for Chinese, deriving from an old name for the Chinese Empire, i.e. the Celestial Empire

2 *Nelson Miner*, October 11, 1898, p. 3

3 *Anaconda Standard*, Oct. 9, 1898, p. 15

4 *Anaconda Standard*, Oct. 15, 1898, p. 15, and *Great Falls Tribune*, Oct. 15, 1898, p. 4

5 *Great Falls Tribune*, Oct. 20, 1898, p. 3

6 *Nelson Miner*, Oct. 17, 1898, p. 1

7 *Nelson Miner*, Oct. 25, 1898, p. 1

8 GR2951, Death Registrations, 1932-09-466084, microfilm B13144

9 GR2951, Death Registrations, 1929-09-429030, microfilm B13137, her own name was not given, just Mrs. Wah Chung

10 *Kootenay Mail*, August 8, 1908, "The first Chinese baby born in Revelstoke arrived on Wednesday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Wing Chung. The new comer is a fine boy." If traditional Chinese name patterns were followed by Wah Chung then his family name was Wah and not Chung, so that Wing Chung could be unrelated.

11 *Kootenay Mail*, July 20, 1921, p.

Kuskanook

Supposedly derived from a Ktunaxa word meaning edge or end of the lake. The town by this name, formerly known as Kalama, flourished briefly in 1898. It was originally spelled Kuskonook, but when the CPR built a steamship by the same name, they changed it to Kuskanook, which became widely accepted. There is also a Kuskanax Creek (spelled Koos-Ka-Nax on some maps) near Nakusp, although this was traditionally Sinixt territory.

Information from:

<http://kootenay-lake.ca/geography/toponymy/>

Sounds of Brass Ladner 1889-1902

Jim Love and Brant Mitchell

Jim Love and Brant Mitchell are members of the Delta Concert Band

They would like to thank the staff of the Delta Museum and Archives for their help, particularly Kathy Bossort and Kate McPherson. We would also like to thank Mr. Edgar Dunning, a founder and long time supporter of the Delta Concert Band for setting us on our historical quest. Our thanks are also due Gwen Szychter for her help with newspaper references.

In January 2007 we rediscovered a hard-covered ledger, "Treasurer's Book Ladner Cornet Band"² in the Delta Museum and Archives. It shed some light on Brass Bands in the Delta, particularly at Ladner's Landing. After considerable detective work, we were able to reconstitute some of the musical history of the area. Although the ledger only covers 1900-1902, the volume included a brief history of a predecessor, the Delta Brass Band that functioned between December 1889 and November 1891. Indeed, we deduced that the Brass Band started the book that was turned over along with its instruments and treasury when the Ladner Cornet Band was formed in December 1900.

F.W. Harris, an English-born cannery bookkeeper who arrived at Ladner's Landing in 1888³, probably led the formation of Delta's first brass band at Ladner's Landing in December 1888. He was supported by prominent local residents: a physician from Germany, a lumberman from Sweden, a clerk in the general store from Ontario, four cannery men and three farmers. All eleven band members signed the Constitution and By Laws. Among the interesting clauses in the Constitution were a capping of the membership at eleven, and a somewhat draconian schedule of fines for missing practices (50 cents) or being late (25 cents).

The band raised money through public subscriptions, membership fees, assessments on members, and concerts. It also received a grant from Delta municipality. In turn, the band did not own the instruments bought with its general fund; the municipality held them in trust and could give them to the leader of any regularly organized band. With the help of local amateur performers⁴, the band held a fund-raising concert in January 1890. Despite inclement weather, the attendance was large. Later that month, when the instruments arrived from Charles Stark of Toronto, Mr. Harris distributed them and arranged the first practice on the following Wednesday. Some members, in their eagerness, began to blow their instruments right away and sounds could be heard over a long distance.⁵

The weekly practices soon became twice weekly as the band members struggled to master their instruments in time for the Queen's Birthday celebrations at the end of May.⁶ Many members were quite young. While they may have been able to read music, almost certainly most had no previous experience with a brass instrument. Nevertheless, the band had a second fund-raising concert in December

with many of the same performers including the Minstrel Band that had been such a hit at the January concert.⁷ Practices continued and contemporary reports suggest rapid progress was being made. By 1891, the band gave several concerts, including an open air series, and was able to pay its way.

The band seems to have been most active in the winter. This may reflect the seasonal occupations of the majority of the players, namely in farming and salmon canning. From December 1889 to November 1891, some members left the band and the total Membership Roll reached fifteen. But late in 1891 or early 1892, the Delta Brass Band was dissolved. The reason is not clear since most of the band members, including Bandmaster Harris, still lived in or around Ladner's Landing. There was money in the treasury and the band had instruments, music and stands. Possibly, as in other small communities, the less skilled players may have lost interest and the number of experienced players may not have sufficed to carry on.⁸

Almost ten years later, in December 1900, Paul Ladner, a farmer and founder of the Delta Brass Band, John Watson, a cannery man and brother of a Delta Brass Band founding member, Ed Bown, a saddler from Nova Scotia and W.H. Smith, a baker from Ontario, organized the Ladner Cornet Band with an initial complement of sixteen players, including Leslie McNeely, a member of the old Brass Band. Of the initial sixteen players, ten came from Eastern Canada, particularly Ontario, where bands were plentiful, even in small communities. The players in the new band had more varied occupations than those in the Delta Brass Band and so the seasonal effect on activities was less evident.

The Ladner Cornet Band inherited the instruments – their number and variety unknown -- of the Delta Brass Band and its treasury. Under the leadership of Arthur Leslie, a professional musician, who traveled from New Westminster, weekly practices began. Since there is no mention of the purchase of instruments and there were more bandsmen than in the Brass Band some of the new players probably had their own instruments and were experienced. The account books reveal that between them, the two bands owned five cornets, two trombones, a baritone horn and a snare drum, a bass drum, and a B flat bass. Tom Foster, the butcher and cornet player in the Brass band bought himself a helicon (a tuba).

While the first year was primarily devoted to melding the band, it made a few public appearances, including open-air concerts. To raise money for



Notes

- 1 Delta Museum and Archives
Terry Brennan Fonds
- 2 *Vancouver Daily World*,
10 December 1889
- 3 *Vancouver Daily World*,
22 January 1890
- 4 *Vancouver Daily World*,
29 January 1890
- 5 *Vancouver Daily World*, 5 May
1890
- 6 *Vancouver Daily World*,
23 December 1890
- 7 Dale McIntosh, *History of Music
in British Columbia 1850-1950*
(Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1989),
8 *Vancouver Daily World*, 29
9 *Delta News*, 22 March 1902,
July 1901
- 10 *Delta News*, 31 May 1902
- 11 *Delta News*, 31 May 1902
- 12 *Delta News*, 23 August 1902
- 13 *Delta News*, 4 October 1902
- 14 *Delta News*, 27 December 1902
- 15 *Delta News*, 18 October 1902
- 16 *Delta Times*, 23 March 1909

uniforms, it organized a successful garden party for July 24, 1901 with assistance from the Westminster City Band. The Westminster Band chartered the *SS Ramona*, filled it with people from New Westminster for a moonlight cruise to Ladner's Landing where they partook of raspberries and cream, cooling drinks and ice cream. Then, by the light of Chinese lanterns strung throughout the grounds, the visiting band played for a dance on a specially laid wooden platform. An estimated one thousand people attended the party.⁹

By 1902, the band was a force in the community. On St. Patrick's Day, it was a major act in a concert in which local amateurs presented vocal solos and duets, and piano solos. Among the featured performers were Rev. I.W. Williamson, who played a solo on a recently arrived silver-plated Besson cornet valued at about \$80, and Arthur Leslie, the first band instructor, who played a piccolo solo.¹⁰ The band also co-operated with the Ladner Dramatic Society to present two plays, "The Rough Diamond" and "Ici on Parle Francais." For the 24 May celebrations, the Dramatic Society and the band crossed the river to Steveston, the "Sockeye Town," to repeat the performance at the Steveston Opera House. The two groups split the box office receipts that must have been considerable since the *Delta News* reported that on the occasion Ladner

was almost emptied of people.¹¹ The first boat, the *SS Transfer*, left Ladner's Landing at 7:00 a.m.; the excursionists returned on the *SS Ramona* after the last curtain fell.

In addition, the band played at community events. Some of its eleven public appearances in 1902 appear to have been spontaneous. For example, on a Wednesday evening, the night of its practices, the band serenaded Mr. and Mrs. Fawcett outside their house and the "boys were royally treated".¹² Mr. Fawcett was retiring and moving to Victoria after selling his drug store to F.J. MacKenzie. His son, Arthur, played in the Band. Other outings, not recorded in the ledger, were of a community nature. For example, the band led the children in a parade to the sports ground for the May Day celebrations in 1902. It also played at concerts in aid of churches or benevolent societies with its only charge being the conductor's fee.

The Band had fraternal feelings for other bandsmen. When the visiting Nanaimo lodge of Woodmen of the World unexpectedly brought the Ladysmith Band with them,¹³ the Ladner Band paid \$3.00 to W.H. Smith, the baker and restaurant owner, to serve lunch to the Ladysmith band.

Over the period covered by the Treasurer's Book, the Ladner Cornet Band had three instructors. Leslie was probably a military musician and his

*The Ladner Cornet Band
c. 1903¹
Delta Museum and Archives photo
1991-33-4*

military commitments probably took precedence over the Ladner Cornet Band in the summer. In July 1901, Frank Dorland, who had joined the band as a player in May 1901, took over the band. Little is known of his musical background but he improved the caliber of the band's playing over the next fifteen months. In October 1902, John Cronshaw, a military musician, a clarinetist in the Sixth Regiment Band (Duke of Connaught's Own Rifles), was appointed director of music.¹⁴

Newspaper reports of concerts often listed the music played. The bandmaster purchased blank music books and probably arranged piano music, religious and secular, for the band. Otherwise, the band bought music from Whaley Royce and Co., J.W. Pepper and A.A. Lombard. The programme for the St. Patrick's Day 1902 concert included:

Wien Bleibt Wien, *Schrammel*
 Sons of Erin, *Beyer*
 Danube Waves, *Ivanovici*
 Songs of the Sea, *Walston*
 Sounds from the Sunny South, *Isenman*
 Distant Greeting, *Doring*

Both the Delta Brass Band and the Ladner Cornet Band struggled with some of the same problems still encountered by community bands. There was a constant need for money to pay instructors and buy new music, instruments and uniforms. There was always a need for more players. The Delta Brass Band was capped at eleven players. Although a total of forty-two names appear in the Cornet Band's roster, it usually only had about twenty active members and a core of about twelve. Many players dropped out because they left the area. For example, Reverend Williamson, the Baptist minister and briefly the band master, left to accept a call to Kamloops early in 1903.¹⁵ Thus, the Cornet Band publicly appealed for new players.¹⁶

The Treasurer's Book ends with an indication that the accounts were being transferred to a new book. We know that the Ladner Cornet Band carried on for quite a few years and maintained its tradition of joint ventures with other groups such as a concert with the Delta Glee Club in 1909.¹⁷ Perhaps the later record will yet turn up. Nevertheless, the Treasurer's Book gives a glimpse at brass bands in Delta between 1889 and 1902 and some insight into the cultural life of the community. •

W. Kaye Lamb Scholarship Winners Announced

First or second year essay:

"Agricultural Societies
and Farmers' Institutes in
Nineteenth-Century British
Columbia"

*submitted by Shannon Lucy, Victoria. She
received a cheque for \$750.00.*

Third or fourth year essay:
two essays tied for this award.

"Representing Space as
Place: Property Dialogues in
the McKenna/McBride Royal
Commission, 1913-1915"

by Tessa Stiven, Victoria,

and

"Field Correspondence Sheds
Light: McIlwraith's Letters on
His Own Monograph",

by Susan Ritchie, Campbell River.

Each student received \$500.00.

Marie Elliott, Chair of W. Kaye
Lamb Scholarship Committee.

The Red Book Revealed:

British Columbia's Home Economics Secret 1930-1975

By Mary Leah de Zwart

On bookshelves of used bookstores and school storage rooms across British Columbia, you will find an unassuming recipe book that falls open naturally at food-spattered pages. It's the reference to which great-aunts and grandmothers turn when faced with a household problem. Between the covers of *Food, Nutrition and Home Management Manual*, an entire world of bygone British-Canadian household management is described. The mere mention of this school textbook, commonly known as the Red Book, is a guaranteed conversation starter among women (and a very few men) who used it in their home economics classes in B.C. between 1930 and 1975. People comment on the uniform on page 41; the orange tea biscuit recipe; the one-egg cake recipe versus the two-egg recipe.¹ What is it about this book that has enabled it to carve its little niche in history?

The Red Book appears to have been intended to remain in households long after school days were done. Sturdy and well bound, it emphasizes recipes for a family of six. The original version was green, then blue and finally in 1944, the first red cover appeared, remaining until the book was completely revised in 1975. In the foreword, Jessie McLenaghen, Provincial Director of Home Economics in B.C. from 1926 to 1946, stated her hopes for the book; first that it would eliminate the necessity of copying notes and recipes, and secondly that it would prove that home economics was not an "unprepared subject" by including questions that could be the basis of homework assignments. McLenaghen proclaimed her intention that the manual should be put in the hands of the student in order to promote home interest. "Power to do", she wrote, "is gained only by doing". Even after McLenaghen retired, her foreword continued unchanged until 1975.

The book begins with a plea to spend one's self, strength, time, and money wisely. Housekeeping procedures are painstakingly elaborated, from efficient kitchen arrangement to reasons for not slamming the refrigerator door.² Care of the garbage can, gas, electric and coal stoves, the detection of draughts, and care

of milk bottles – no housekeeping detail is too minor to be omitted. Laundering is described as one of the oldest arts in existence. Speaking from personal experience, I would like to say that the stain removal method advocated for rust still works (salt, lemon juice and sunlight). With the overwhelming amount of detail, it appears that nothing was going to be left to chance, home teaching or trial-and-error.

"The good housekeeper does her marketing with intelligent care", declares the manual, and follows up the claim with sixteen rules for marketing. The

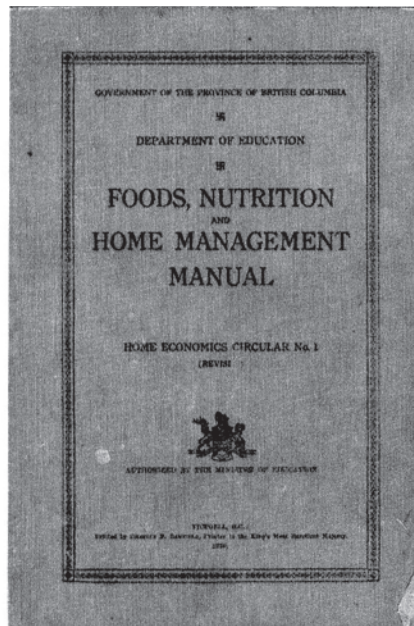
questions at the end of the unit include the following question: "If you were hungry and had only 10 cents, would you buy a loaf of bread or candy? Why?". This question is more complex than it appears. Teachers were obviously supposed to convince pupils to answer "bread", as if they were adult women who were responsible for family welfare, instead of being young students. On the other hand, the very asking of the question implies that some adults, those who were not intelligent or wise, would choose to buy candy instead of bread. Therefore children had to be warned about short-sighted, possibly delinquent

people who might be their own parents.

Once the kitchen is clean, the pupils can concentrate on twelve rules for healthy, happy B.C. schoolchildren. Children are admonished to eat very little candy (only after meals) and to exercise two hours each day. Ten hours of sleep each night is recommended for the 14 – 16 year old age group. The questions at the end of this unit include the following: "Explain why a very expensive meal may not contain the right food to meet the body needs" and "If dinner is served in the evening, should it be a light or substantial meal? Give reasons for having dinner at noon."

The section on Meal-planning and Table Service is filled with ways to improve living standards. Fifteen suggestions are given to aid in meal planning. Some of these recommendations would not be out of place today, such as including some of each food group in each meal and choosing whole grain over refined

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Notes

1 The Manual did change with the times. The 1951 edition did not include a picture of a maid but included "Rules for Serving without a Maid."

2 Even in the 1951 edition the care of the "refrigerator" referred to an icebox not to an electric refrigerator.

3 This photograph did not appear in the 1951 edition but like Mary Butler many former students remember making an apron to wear in class.

References:

Mary Butler, *Behind the Kitchen Door*, Victoria, British Columbia archives, 1983 (Cassette Recording No. 4088:21)

Bessie Dickinson, (1983). *Behind the Kitchen Door*, Victoria, British Columbia archives, 1983 (Cassette Recording No. 4162:23)

Foods, Nutrition and Home Management Manual. Home Economics Circular No. 1 (revised). (1931). Victoria, BC: British Columbia Department of Education. King's Printer

Centre photo: Jessie Mclenaghan set the tone of home economics for almost 50 years by putting together the first edition of Foods, Nutrition, and home Management.

cereals. Other suggestions are more prescriptive. Foods should be selected "because they contribute most to the health of the family," rather than because they are cheap, are liked by the family, or require the least amount of preparation." Food courses should be set up so that they contrast in flavour, "a mild course being followed by one more pronounced. Strong seasonings which destroy natural food flavours are harmful". This recommendation eliminates any number of foods such as goulash, borscht, or garlic, or anything that might be vaguely ethnic other than British. Two foods of pronounced flavour should never be served in the same meal. "The combination of salmon, onions and prunes is an unpardonable error."

The Red Book emphasizes practicality, simplicity, and if possible, elegance. "No amount of lavishness and perfection in the preparation of the food will compensate for poor arrangement and service in the dining-room.... *Paper flowers are not in good taste*". Two murky photographs of a dinner table setting are provided from the *Canadian Cook Book*, first published in 1923 and written by Nellie Lyle Pattinson, an early home economist. The white damask tablecloths, flower centerpieces, and elegant china suggest a sophisticated way of life beyond most people's means. Bessie Dickinson, a home economics teacher at Templeton Junior High School (Vancouver) in the 1920s remarked in an interview conducted in 1983 that the china in the home economics room, to her astonishment, was real Limoges.

Questions follow the information on table settings and service: "Which is preferable, coarse table-linen which is well laundered, or fine table-linen poorly laundered?" This question draws obvious class lines; is it intended to discriminate between the supposed pretentiousness of newcomers and the poor but honest Canadian? The etiquette section concludes with a picture of a dour young student trapped in her cookery uniform, consisting of an apron with French seams, pocket and buttonholes, buttoned-on towel and potholder, and a hair-band. The accompanying curriculum suggests that the uniform be compared to the professional appearance of a nurse.³



Food preparation takes up the bulk of the book, over one hundred pages. Recipes and preparation tips are included for beverages, fruits, cereals, soups, vegetables, salads, eggs, flour mixtures, stiff doughs, desserts, candy, meat, fish, poultry, canning, jelly-making, sandwiches, lunch-box requirements, invalid cookery and infant-feeding. The recipes are traditionally British: Matrimonial cake, bread and butter pudding, blanc mange, Welsh rarebit, shepherd's pie and kippered herring. No foods considered indigenous to British Columbia are included; no huckleberries, no salmonberries, no raspberries, no

Saskatoon berries, no deer, moose, clams, oysters, or small game such as rabbit or grouse. Salmon, a staple food to large numbers of British Columbians, is mentioned in passing as one of a number of available types of fish. The strongly urban tone ignores the food realities of rural and resource-based British Columbians who at that time were living on farms and in logging camps. The manual advises serving meat only once a day: "Too much meat is apt to cause digestive disturbances, causing a 'dark-brown taste' in the mouth". White sauce, a staple of the British diet, receives a fair amount of press

with three pages devoted to its variations as well as a whole series of procedural questions. Perhaps we should not be surprised at the inclusion of such typically British recipes. In 1931, people of British ethnic origin accounted for 71% of the B.C. population (490,000 out of a population of 694,000), and in 1971, those of British extraction accounted for 58% (1.26 million out of 2.18 million). The British majority had a clear cultural agenda invested in the many editions of the Red Book.

A young student named Irene Brown, whose name is written in the flyleaf of my 1931 copy, penciled in an evaluation of every recipe she tried in home economics class; the ratings ranged from "terrible" (cream of pea soup), "poor" (junket), "fair" (blanc mange), "not so hot" (brown betty), "quite rich" (carrot pudding), "O.K." (blushing apples, cream of tomato soup, muffins, fruit rolls, two-egg cake) to "good" (Welsh rarebit). In this way, the instructional rhetoric

was circumvented. The dry text of *Foods, Nutrition and Home Management* was transformed into an object of meaning for the owner. Rea Willoughby of 2580 Petalack Street, Regina, took more liberties with her 1941 copy. In addition to writing her name and the names of several friends in fat letters on the inside front cover, she wrote first names beside each letter of the recipe index: A was for Arliss, B for Bunny, C for Charmian, right up to Q for Queenie and Y for Yvonne.

A sample recipe from the Red Book exemplifies how Canada began to grapple with its increasingly multi-ethnic population. The Chinese Chews recipe is one of two recipes that concede the possibility of ethnicity other than white British in the entire manual, the other one being Swiss Steak. Nothing is Chinese about the recipe, but perhaps the complicated baking procedure makes it seem foreign and possibly exotic.

Chinese Chews

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup flour
1 tsp. baking powder
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt
2 eggs
1 c. white sugar
1 c. walnuts
1 c. dates

1. Sift flour and measure. Add baking powder and salt and sift again.
2. Beat eggs until light.
3. Add sugar and dry ingredients
4. Add walnuts and dates, chopped.
5. Press into a greased pan (8 by 8 inches)
6. Cook in a slow oven (300°F - 325°F.) for 20-25 min.
7. When a crust forms (after about 15 min.) it is advisable to mix the crust into the softer centre portion with a fork.
8. Replace in oven and cook 10-15 min. longer; then repeat No. 7
9. When cooked, lift out in spoonfuls and roll in the palm of the hand.
10. Roll in powdered sugar and store in a covered tin box.

Voices of the past regarding the effects of the Red Book can be heard in a series of interviews done in 1983 with B.C. women who took home economics from 1920 to 1960. Mary Butler, born in 1915, recalled with clarity the "hideous" uniform she and her fellow students had to construct and wear, and the thrill of

watching the effects of heat upon starch:



"In cooking the first thing we learned to make was white sauce. And it was astonishing for me to watch the teacher make white sauce because she dissolved the fat over heat at a low temperature, stirred the flour in, and then added the heated milk and the salt and pepper, and of course you stirred this slowly until the whole thing thickened."

The Red Book is still in use. Rene Schindel of Richmond says her mother, a Red Book veteran, still makes rarebit and it's "quite enjoyable". Nina Ho of Vancouver had only been in Canada a couple of years when she was introduced to the Red Book in the 1970s. She recalls finding it most confusing to discover that matrimonial cake was not intended for weddings. Sharon Marshall, a home economics teacher in Surrey, comments that the Red Book recipes did not seem foreign to her mother who was an immigrant from the former Yugoslavia in the 1950s. "My mom said in those days you were encouraged to forget your heritage and embrace everything Canadian, so she did." Lynne Wright of Quesnel recalls the teacher who thought the students were far too noisy in the Orange Tea Biscuit lab and "made us throw them out when they were done and sit with our hands behind our backs for the rest of the period. When we complained at home, we got no sympathy."

What to make of this influential recipe book? It recalls a time in British Columbia when life could be understood in precise measurements and step-by-step procedure, and expectations were clear (if not kind). It's tempting but trite to end by saying that times have changed, and the Red Book is a hopeless relic. The Red Book is important for what it leaves out as well as what it includes and in that

respect it's a valuable historical artifact. In addition to perpetuating colonialism it gave credibility to home economics as a legitimate subject area. Be sure you safeguard your mother or grandmother's copy well! You never know when you might need a recipe for hermits or marshmallows. •

The "hideous" uniform changed very slightly from 1911 (top) to 1942 (bottom) but the temperament of the model improved. While Miss 1911 seems dour, Miss 1942 is a cheerful embodiment of what every home economics girl should aspire to be, in her nurse like head scarf, full apron, button-on potholder, and towel draped over her arm. Both girls clutch their indispensable Foods, Nutrition and Home Management manuals.



The Leland Hotel, Nakusp

A Short History

Rosemarie Parent

Rosemarie Parent is a member of the Arrow Lakes Historical Society

The Leland Hotel was not the first hotel in Nakusp but in 2008, it will share with the town, a 116th birthday. It is possibly the oldest wooden hotel in the province. By 1892, mining and prospecting had been going on the area for several years and the Canadian Pacific Railway was planning to build a line from Nakusp to Three Forks. The Nakusp House (later the Madden House and then the Grand Hotel), built in 1892, was the first hotel in Nakusp but it burned to the ground in 1925. The Leland Hotel, opened later in 1892 as the Rathwell house, however, has survived though many changes of ownership. Mr. Rathwell who built leased it to Grant Thorburn and Harry Phair, who changed its name to the Leland Hotel. Rathwell, however, soon sold it for \$1,000 to D. Alan and Ellen McDougald, Californians who had been lured to British Columbia by the prospecting opportunities in the Kootenays. The McDougald's soon became involved in many of the town's activities but Alan died from tuberculosis in 1895, leaving Ellen with three children and the need to make a living. She did well. On July 24, 1897, the *Sandon Paystreak* reported, "The Leland Hotel will have 50 plastered rooms when the addition, now under construction, is thrown open. Mrs. [Ellen] McDougald, the proprietor of this well known hotel, is to be congratulated for the able and energetic manner in which she has built up one of the largest hotels in all the Kootenays." The addition was a three-storey structure on the west side of the building. The Leland was fortress-like in appearance

made up of three separate segments that were nevertheless quite attractive. The roofline displayed numerous inverted 'v's. Dormers were added to the original building while bay windows were built in the two newer sections. A balcony in front of the dormers allowed customers to view the spectacular scenery and busy harbour.

Mrs. McDougald had left the hotel by 1907 and a succession of proprietors took over. Rachel McKittrick and William Ogilvie who came about 1907 were succeeded by Jimmy Sneddon who had the hotel for two years. In 1912, Henry and Pearl Bohart looked after the hotel for the new owner, Henry's grandfather, but could not keep up the payments so Jimmy Sneddon took over the building again. He rented it to George Keys for a few months in 1918 until Keys took over the foreman's job at the shipyard. Jim Sneddon moved back with his sister Jennie and her husband Sam Jackson to help him reopen the hotel. They remained until 1921 when William (Bill) Pratt took it over on 1 May 1921. Pratt and his wife Agatha and their daughter, Edith, had visited Agatha's father every year at Demars and settled there in 1918 to get away from the unbearable summer heat of Detroit and in an attempt to improve Agatha's health. Unfortunately, she died in 1920. Bill was about to return to Detroit with Edith when he learned that Jim Sneddon wanted to sell the Leland.

Pratt's first project was to replace the small stoves spread throughout the building. This was not a very effective system since many rooms had

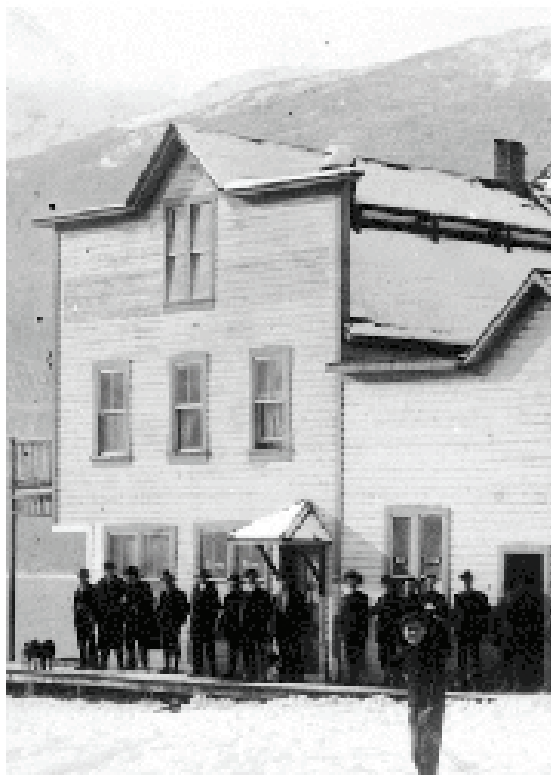


almost no heat on cold winter days. He installed a large furnace and boiler to produce low-pressure steam that was piped to registers along the halls. The system worked well but took huge amounts of fuel and burned a cord of four-foot-lengths of wood a day during the coldest spells! Over the years, Bill Pratt improved the hotel by replacing the veranda with a new enlarged one, by repainting the hotel, by laying a new floor in the sitting room, installing new tables in the dining room, replacing the "old drops" with new chandeliers, and planting flowers at the front of the hotel. To take advantage of the view of the dining room over six miles of lake, Pratt put in four large glass windows covering thirty-three feet of space along the entire frontage of the dining room.

Two canaries added their charm to the hotel but not all of Pratt's plans worked out as well. He attempted to have a little zoo for his patrons and the local children but a grizzly bear cub hung itself when its chain caught when it attempted to climb out of its cage; a fawn got out and died when it couldn't fend for itself, and an eagle escaped. Then, in 1931, an overheated furnace caused some fire damage but luckily, was easily brought under control.

After Pratt died in 1937 at age sixty-six, Edith and her husband Merrill Barrow took over the hotel. Because money was tight, Merrill kept his job driving a truck for the Department of Highways. In 1938, however, the crew brought in to overhaul the lakeboat, the *Minto*, stayed at the hotel. The Leland took in about \$10,000 that year and this allowed Edith and Merrill to improve it. In 1940, Merrill built a new and larger furnace room and installed a bigger and better boiler. He, like his late father-in-law, kept the hotel well maintained and made improvements every year. The men's side of the beer parlour was redecorated to represent an old-time log cabin with deer, bear and moose heads and old rifles used to recall pioneer days. The ladies' side of the beer parlor was repainted and fluorescent lighting and an electric fireplace were added. In 1945, as business expanded, the Barrows reopened the third floor that had been closed for several years after modernizing it and replacing the beds, carpeting and heating system. Improvements continued included installing a modern refrigeration, washing and sterilizing system in the bar. The ladies' beer parlour was again remodelled, the plaster in the kitchen was replaced with gyproc, furniture was repainted, extra shelving put in the pantry, the table tops were replaced with arborite and the building was rewired.

Merril and Edith Barrow retired to Vancouver in 1957 and sold the hotel to Mr. and Mrs. Ernest E. Davidson of Vancouver who, in turn, sold it in 1960, to Roy Tricula and Nick Davis, who briefly operated the hotel with the help of Roy's older brother, Chris before selling it to Ralph and Peggy Tedesco. The hotel continued to change hands. Mr. and Mrs. Ed Milton and Mr. and Mrs. Mike Sommers purchased it in 1967 but two years later sold it to brothers Corrado and Bruno Cultura, who in turn sold it to Bob and Caroline White, Bob's parents, Eric and Helen White, and Bob's sister, Carol and brother-in-law, Emil LaFrance in 1973. Again the hotel sold in 1976, to Roy Shaw and Murray Ardies. About a year and a half later, Murray sold his interests to Clay Eng. In 1984, they sold to Lynn and Dennis Gautier who the following year sold it to Klaus Toering in 1985. Over the next few years, he upgraded the hotel, especially the bedrooms upstairs and constructed a deck off the dining room so that in summer all could enjoy eating outdoors. This is a tremendous asset to the only restaurant in town with a panoramic view of the lake. In 2005, Danny Watt and Sharon Metlewsy bought the hotel from Klaus and continue the work of upgrading the building. We wish them well in the years to come. •



*This page: Leland Hotel,
Nakusp c. 1910
BC Archives Photo D-08214*

*Opposite: Leland Hotel,
Nakusp c. 1930s
BC Archives Photo H-01734*

Kingsmill Bridge in Italy

A Tribute to a Vancouver Man

By Ken MacLeod

Ken MacLeod is a historian and retired teacher who now makes his home in Courtenay, BC

On May 12, 2007 on the Gari River near the town of Sant' Angelo, 5 kilometres southwest of Cassino, Italy, a commemorative plaque was unveiled which officially renamed a bridge vital to the breaking of the Gustav Line south of Rome after Captain (retired) Tony Kingsmill, MC, of Vancouver. The bridge, codenamed Plymouth Bridge, was officially renamed the Kingsmill Bridge in honor of Kingsmill for his actions during World War II during the Italian Campaign. Captain Kingsmill, who was serving with the 61st Light Aid Detachment, Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (RCME), attached to the 14th Canadian Armoured Regiment (Calgary Regiment), 1st Canadian Armoured Brigade, British 8th Army. Kingsmill devised a means of transporting an 80 foot Bailey bridge on the top of a turret-less Sherman tank and then moving the bridge into position across the Gari River. A second Sherman tank was used as a pusher tank to help support and steer the bridge into position. The bridge enabled tanks of the Calgary Regiment to make the initial crossing of the Gari River by armoured vehicles in order to support infantry of the 8th Indian Division whose ranks had been badly decimated and were attempting to hold the important bridgehead. The result was that the success of the operation undertaken by Kingsmill was vital to the breaking of the Gustav Line which enabled the Allies to push north through the Liri Valley towards Rome.

Tony Kingsmill, age 87, has been a Vancouver resident for the past several years. He and his wife Tee attended the ceremony on May 12 that was part of a veterans' tour by Special Travel International of Vancouver.

Kingsmill, whose responsibility was to oversee a unit of approximately 30 men to repair and maintain tanks of the Calgary Regiment of the 1st Canadian Armoured Brigade, an armoured unit that was regarded by General Sir Oliver Leese, Commanding Officer of the British Eighth Army, as "the finest Allied armoured brigade in Italy." The 1st Canadian Armoured Brigade had landed in Sicily in July, 1943 and had often supported the 1st Canadian Infantry Division until following the Battle of Ortona in December, 1943 when there was a falling out between Major-General Chris Vokes, the commanding officer of the 1st Canadian Division and Brigadier Bob Wyman who commanded the 1st Canadian Armoured Brigade. From that point on the 1st Armoured Brigade supported mainly British and other units in the 8th Army, mostly the 8th Indian Division which they had also supported since the

Sangro River in early December, 1943.

By early May, 1944, the Allied forces had been held up by a four month struggle at the Gustav Line that extended from Gaeta on the Tyrrhenian Sea to the Arieli River on the Adriatic Sea, just north of the port of Ortona. Monte Cassino was the anchor of the Gustav Line in the west. German paratroopers held Monte Cassino which overlooked and guarded the approaches to the Liri Valley.

A large Benedictine monastery atop Monte Cassino was thought to be used by the Germans. After the first attempt to take the monastery and the town of Cassino had failed, the Allied command made the decision to bomb the monastery in mid-February, 1944. Rather than dislodging the enemy from Monte Cassino, the bombing turned the ruins of the abbey into a German fortress, making it more difficult for the American, New Zealand, British, and Indian troops to take Monte Cassino.

By early May, 1944, General Harold Alexander, Commanding Officer of Allied Operations in Italy, and his staff decided that there would have to be an all-out attack on the Gustav Line between Monte Cassino and Gaeta involving both the US 5th Army and the British 8th Army, which now included the 2nd Polish Corps under the command of General Wladyslaw Anders.

American and British forces had also been pinned down by the Germans since January 22 at the seaside resort town of Anzio, south of Rome but north of the Gustav Line, where the Allies had hoped to establish a beachhead and outflank the Germans in order to relieve the pressure on Allied troops trying to take Monte Cassino and break into the Liri Valley. Although the beachhead was established, delays by the American commander allowed the Germans to move in reinforcements and prevent an inland advance by the Allied forces at Anzio.

The plan called for the Poles to take Monte Cassino, while the British 8th Army attacked the Gustav Line in the Liri Valley and the American 5th Army, commanded by General Mark Clark, and which included the Free French Expeditionary Force made up of French Moroccan and Algerian colonials, would attack the Germans in the Arunci Mountains and along the Tyrrhenian Sea. The Allied forces at Anzio would then attempt a breakout.

On May 11-12, the Poles failed in their first attempt to take the monastery on Monte Cassino, but in a fiercely-fought battle with German paratroopers on May 17 succeeded in taking the ruins of the Benedictine abbey and forcing a German withdrawal. The Free



Sherman tank and to assemble the span on top of four rollers mounted on a twelve foot wide "I" beam bolted to the turret ring of the tank. A second tank was used as a pusher tank to help support and steer the 80 foot span into position with a second carrier and reserve tanks in reserve in case the first tanks were knocked out.

Soon Captain Kingsmill and his "kids," as he still refers to his men, even though Kingsmill himself was only 24 at the time of the action, removed the turret from a tank and equipped it with rollers to enable the bridge to be pushed forward into position. The last five days prior to the attack were used to search for a suitable location on the river which could be bridged by the 80 foot section of Bailey bridge. The 1st Canadian Armoured Brigade were at this time in support of the 8th Indian Division.

Once a location for the bridge was found, the bridge was to be put into position following the heaviest Allied artillery barrage to date during the Italian Campaign which was to begin at 11 pm, May 11. Under the direction of Kingsmill

French colonial forces, known as the Goumiers or Gourms, under the command of General Alphonse Juin, drove the Germans back in the Aurunci Mountains to the west of the Liri Valley while American forces pushed north along the coast.

The major problem facing the British Eighth Army was to construct a crossing across the Gari River (also known as the Garigliano and the Rapido in other sectors). The plan called for the construction of at least ten bridges with the hope that at least one of these bridges would succeed despite heavy fire from the Germans.

A few weeks prior to the attack on the Gustav Line, an officer of the Royal Engineers approached Captain Kingsmill about the possibility of using tanks to transport a Bailey bridge into position across the river. At first Kingsmill doubted the idea, but eventually came up with a plan to remove the turret of a

the Bailey bridge was to be assembled on the carrier tank by an Indian Engineering Bridge-Building Platoon 300 yards south of the Gari River and then bolted to the pusher tank. Transporting the bridge was tricky. A pothole would be enough to cause the bridge to fall off the lead tank. Some time was lost when the tanks veered off course because of the early fog, complicated by the smoke from the German guns and the smoke laid down by the Germans to confuse the Allied advance. A further delay occurred when the tanks again became bogged down in mud 100 yards from the river.

With the advent of dawn the bridge had still not arrived. Finally about 7:45 am the carrier and pusher tanks arrived with the bridge. There was open daylight now. The original plan called for the operation to be carried out in the dark. Because of the heavy German fire, smoke canisters were utilized to hide the activity from the enemy. Kingsmill noticed that the Indian

References

In addition to interviews with Captain (retired) Tony Kingsmill and Al Judson, Historian, Calgary Regiment, the following sources were used:

The Calgary Regiment (An Informal History of the Calgary Regiment), originally printed in Hilversum, Holland in June, 1945, Second Printing, Vancouver, April, 1990.

The following interviews were used from the above publication:

A Bridge Too Soon - For the Germans, That Is by Trooper Ian Seymour, MID

Background to the Kingsmill Bridge by Lieutenant-Colonel Cyril H Neroutsos, DSO

The Gari River and Beyond by Lieutenant RA (Al) Cawsey

The Seldom Told Story of Canadians in the Gustave Line Battle in Italy by Ed Page, Calgary Regiment.

Right: Captain (retired) Tony Kingsmill, MC, in Italy May 2007

Canadian and Italian dignitaries at the unveiling of the plaque commemorating the naming of the Kingsmill Bridge.



engineers who were to assist him had stopped for tea and were sitting around a table. Kingsmill kicked over the table with the tea on it and told the Indian engineers to get back to work. "It was the only time in my life that I ever got mad," Kingsmill later admitted.

Kingsmill walked backward to guide the bridge into position, but soon the fire became too heavy, and he climbed into the carrier tank. The pusher tank pushed the bridge forward until it was 20 feet over the opposite bank of the river. The carrier tank was again in danger of becoming bogged down in the mud when Kingsmill told the driver to "step on it." The tank lunged forward into the river, and the bridge dropped into position.

Kingsmill and Trooper McLean, the driver, were just above waist deep in the water, but Trooper Ian Seymour, wireless operator, was still submerged. Eventually all three of the crew clambered out of the tank and onto the Bailey bridge. Kingsmill and his crew took refuge from the German mortars and machine-guns in the second carrier tank to further direct the operation until Kingsmill received several shell fragments in his back and had to be evacuated by jeep ambulance when he was satisfied that the operation was a success. The bridge, at the time codenamed "Plymouth Bridge," had to be disengaged from the pusher tank. According to Kingsmill, the bridge was

still resting on the carrier tank and was like a "teeter totter." Six Germans who had been hiding on the south side of the Gari River were the first to scramble across the bridge, before the first of the Calgary Tanks, each weighing 30 tons, managed the crossing.

After about an hour a Calgary tank under the command Corporal Bill Cawthey of C Squadron crossed the bridge, followed by Lt RA Cawsey's tank. Because of the "teeter totter" motion of the bridge, only one tank at a time could cross. Two other Calgary tanks managed to cross before the bridge was damaged by enemy fire. The arrival of the Calgary tanks saved the bridgehead established by a company of Indian footsoldiers, 3rd Brigade, 8th Indian Division, who had crossed during the night in rubber boats, but whose numbers had dwindled to only 10 men. Eventually a number of German gun positions and self-propelled armoured vehicles were knocked out by the first Calgary tanks. The machine guns on the tanks also were utilized to mow down the enemy soldiers.

A half hour earlier tanks of the Ontario Regiment began crossing the Oxford Bridge, but became bogged down in mud and 17 of these had to be towed out by RCEME, the repair unit. Eventually about half the squadron of Ontario tanks were able to continue the battle. C Squadron of the Calgary Tanks became

“mucked down” at the Oxford Bridge. By noon, Plymouth (Kingsmill Bridge) had been repaired and Major Fred Ritchie and B Squadron of Calgary tanks crossed the Gari River on the Kingsmill Bridge, followed by Headquarters and A Squadron.

To the people of Sant’ Angelo, the first tank to cross the Gari River was a tank of the Calgary Regiment, and the men of the Calgary Tanks are heroes to the people of Sant’ Angelo for the role they played in smashing through the Gustav. Tony Kingsmill who oversaw and directed the operation, was a key figure in this victory. Fourteen decorations for bravery were handed out to soldiers of the British Eighth Army for their actions in the crossing of the Gari-Rapido River. Captain Kingsmill and Major Fred Ritchie of the Calgary Regiment were awarded the Military Cross (MC). Trooper George MacLean received the Military Medal (MM), and Trooper Ian Seymour was mentioned in dispatches (MID).

Major (retired) Fred Ritchie of the Calgary Tanks, who also attended the ceremony on May 12, 2007 was also awarded the Military Cross for leading two squadrons of tanks across the Gari River on the Plymouth/ Kingsmill Bridge during the afternoon of May 12, 1944. Ritchie, age 88, is a retired orchardist who presently lives in Naramata, BC and is in good health. John Whitton, age 87, who in May, 1944, was a lieutenant in charge of the reconnaissance troop for the Calgary Tanks, also made the trip along with his wife Sheila.

Frederico Lamberti, a historian and world-known authority on the fighting in the Cassino area, was the instigator of the commemoration at Sant’ Angelo. In a 2006 telephone conversation with Ken MacLeod, historian and co-organizer of the trip, Lamberti told MacLeod, “There should be a plaque at Sant’ Angelo where the Calgary Tanks were the first to break the Gustav Line.” MacLeod had been informing Lamberti of another commemoration which took place in May, 2006, where a plaque was unveiled at the Melfa River north of Cassino to commemorate an important crossing by the Westminster and Lord Strathcona Horse Regiments on May 24, 1944. Major Jack Mahony of the Westminster Regiment was awarded the Victoria Cross for this action.

MacLeod discussed the idea of the Sant’ Angelo/ Gari River crossing with Karen Koonar of Calgary following the 2006 trip. Koonar, who was on the 2006 trip, was involved with the Museum of the Regiments (renamed the Military Museums), Calgary. MacLeod asked Koonar, a mother of three elementary school-

aged children, to discuss the matter with veterans of the Calgary Tank Regiment.

Koonar had just finished raising more than \$250,000 through a military art mosaic project for the Museum of the Regiments in Calgary. Koonar, a real go-getter and incredible organizer, took the idea from there. She contacted veterans of the Calgary Regiment Association through the museum, and received the okay and funding for the project. The commemoration was long overdue. According to veterans of the Calgary Tanks, reference to this important action was omitted by most major historical books on the Italian Campaign. Working with Al Judson, historian, 14th Armoured (Calgary) Regiment, Koonar lined up a company in Edmonton to design a bronze plaque and secured the services of the Canadian military to fly the plaque to Rome.

Roberto Molle, President, Battle of Cassino Historical Association, and Dr Alessandro Campagna, Vice-President of the Association, did a lot of the leg work in Italy to make the commemoration a reality. The Canadian Embassy in Rome and the mayor and council of Sant’ Angetlo were also involved.

At last the day arrived for the commemoration arrived. May 12, 2007 was a beautiful day, basking in the Italian sun. The 40 travellers from Canada witnessed the commemoration of an event that took place 63 years ago. Kingsmill, age 87, recalled the event almost as clearly as the day that it happened. Major (retired) Fred Ritchie, age 88, and Lt (retired), age 87, also addressed the crowd.

The ceremony was also attended by two representatives of the Royal Engineers’ Museum at Chelsea, England, as well as Tony Wojcik, the Canadian military attaché in Rome. Various Italian dignitaries, including the mayor and councilors from Sant’ Angelo also attended the event. That evening Al Judson presented a painting of the May, 1944 action at the Gari River to Roberto Molle for the Cassino Museum.

Kingsmill, a modest and unassuming hero with a kind smile and friendly disposition, had his day in the Italian sun. It was a proud moment for the Canadians who had done so much to liberate the people of the Liri Valley during the war.

The commemoration was only the start of a wonderful trip which took the Canadian contingent to Ortona, the Gothic Line battlefields near Rimini, and to a large reception by school children and the people of Villanova near Ravenna on the Adriatic Coast. In addition to reception and military tours, the Canadian contingent toured Rome, Pompeii, San Marino, and Venice. •

The Royal Navy and the Comox Settlement

By Allan Pritchard

Allan Pritchard is a Victoria-based writer who last wrote for the magazine in issue 37.4

The varied, sometimes unexpected and surprising roles the Victorian Royal Navy played in establishing and fostering European settlement on Vancouver Island are revealed nowhere more fully than in the history of Comox. The agricultural settlement at Comox, together with another at Cowichan, was founded in 1862 by the colonial government of Vancouver Island in order to expand European settlement of the island, which then extended little beyond the Victoria area and the small coal mining village of Nanaimo, and to provide livelihood for unemployed miners in the aftermath of the Cariboo gold rush. The extensive naval involvement at Comox arose from the facts that the tiny governmental establishment of Vancouver Island, which was still a separate colony from mainland British Columbia, had few resources of its own to draw upon, and that Comox, even more than Cowichan, was isolated, nearly 150 miles north of Victoria, separated even from Nanaimo by seventy-five miles of impenetrable forest. It is characteristic of the history of this settlement that the earliest record of its beginning is to be found in the logbook of a naval ship, and that the first accounts of its early development are provided by the letters of a naval officer.

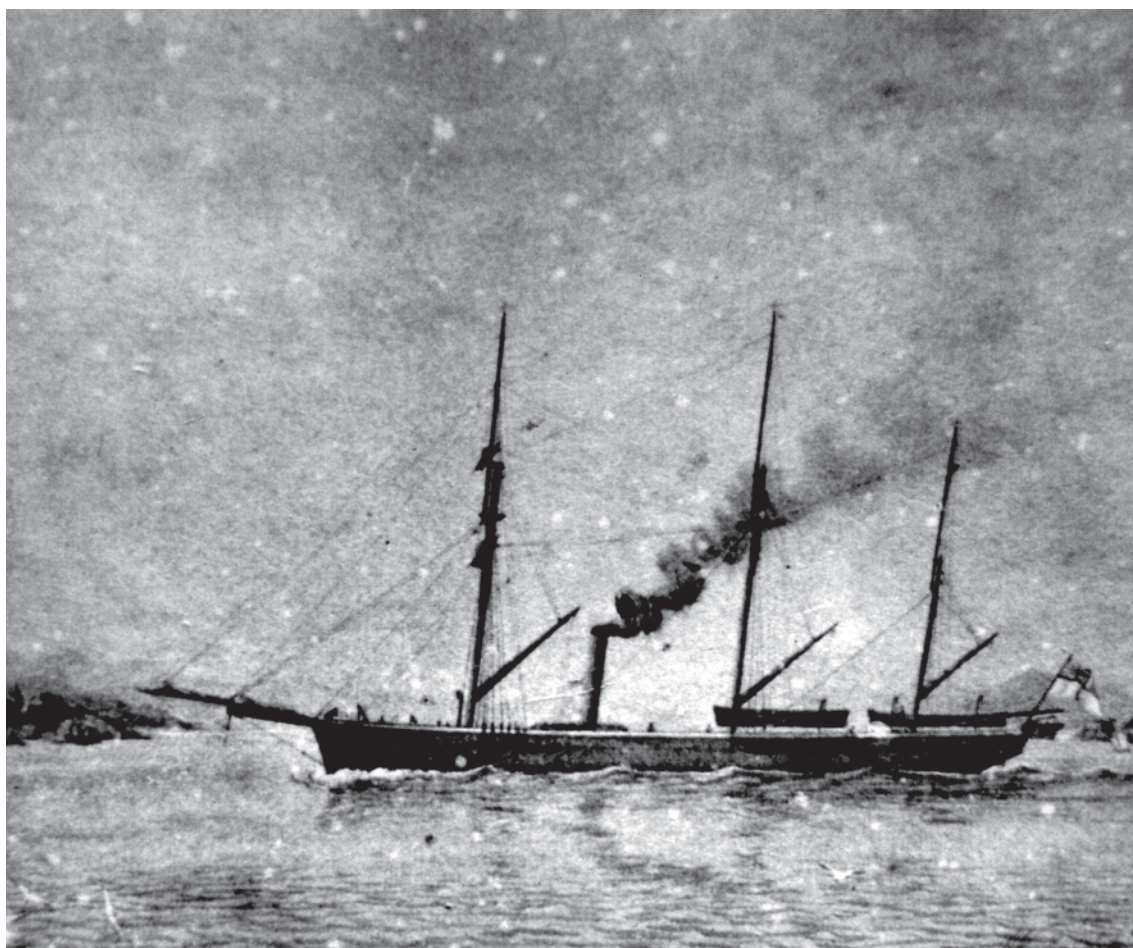
The navy initially prepared the way for the Comox settlement by coastal exploration three years before its foundation. The first very brief European inspections of the area had been made by J.W. McKay of the Hudson's Bay Company post at Nanaimo in October 1852 and James Douglas in August 1853, in order to investigate reports of a deposit of coal. They noted the agricultural potential of the area but no further exploration was made until the Comox district was included in the navy's coastal survey conducted by Captain George Richards in the autumn of 1859 and the spring of 1860. This not only provided for the first time an accurate chart of Comox Bay and the adjacent coastline but resulted in Lieutenant R.C. Mayne's report of his exploration of the Comox Valley in April 1860, when he went up the Courtenay River in a canoe with Natives. In this first at all detailed description of the area, Mayne drew special attention to the open "prairies" of rich soil, "perfectly clear land ready for the plough", and concluded that the district was "a most desirable place for a settlement".¹

Mayne reported that the Comox Natives recognized that white settlers would soon be arriving in their area, which because of its remoteness and lack of attraction for fur traders and gold diggers

had previously escaped European colonial intrusion. The scarcity of good agricultural land on Vancouver Island, especially of land clear of the heavy timber that covered most of the coastal area, ensured that settlement by Europeans would not be much longer delayed. Although Mayne learned that the Natives valued the land highly at Comox for the abundance of berries as well as game and other resources, in the eyes of Europeans it was open for settlement because it was not being cultivated in any way they could recognize. The first prospective settlers, a small group from the Nanaimo coal mines, pre-empted land at Comox in June 1862, but then withdrew, with one exception, George Mitchell, because of lack of access to markets. During this summer the colonial government, prompted by Attorney-General G.H. Cary, publicized plans for officially sponsored settlements at Comox and Cowichan in newspapers and meetings in Victoria. A series of new Comox pre-emptions were registered at the beginning of September, and at the beginning of the next month the navy transported the first group of permanent European settlers to Comox.

The direct naval involvement in the Comox settlement began with Governor Douglas' letter of July 31 to the navy's commander-in-chief for the Pacific Station, Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Maitland, requesting that a gunboat might accompany some settlers "about to form a settlement near the Courtenay River in the Comox Country". Maitland responded favourably, and the gunboat HMS *Grappler* under the command of Lieutenant Edmund Hope Verney carried the first group of some thirty-five settlers to Comox on October 1-2. The voyage, which brought such great and sudden change to the Comox district, is recorded in the ship's logbook preserved among the Admiralty records in the British National Archives. According to the log, the *Grappler* in Victoria harbour received the settlers for Comox with others for Cowichan early in the morning of October 1, and sailed at 9. After discharging settlers at Cowichan at 2:15 in the afternoon, it anchored for the night at 5:50 near Dodds Narrows south of Nanaimo. It sailed at 6 the next morning, passed Nanaimo at 7, and at 3:50: "Anchored at Mouth of Courtney [sic] River", and then "Disembarked Settlers".²

Both the seamen and the commander of the *Grappler* were well aware that in the foundation of the Comox settlement they were being called upon to undertake tasks outside normal naval duties. The *Victoria Colonist* reported that the seamen complained



that they had not been given extra pay for their labour in transporting and landing the settlers and their possessions. Lieutenant Verney undertook the work of establishing the settlement more enthusiastically, but in letters he termed the Vancouver Island colony “a very curious place” and described the peculiar mixture of responsibilities and tasks he had been given there in a way that made his politically experienced father, a long-serving British Member of Parliament, caution his relatively youthful son about the need for discretion: “because many of your duties appear to be more connected with the Colony than with the Navy”. On one occasion Lieutenant Verney appears to have been reproved by a superior officer for making an improper naval intervention in colonial affairs by criticizing the Vancouver Island government for failing to keep promises to pay Cowichan Natives for the land it took from them, but such cautions and reprimands did not discourage him from interesting and involving himself in the Comox settlement.³

As well as commanding the ship that brought the settlers, Verney performed the historically valuable service of providing the earliest reports of the first days of the Comox settlement, in letters to his father and stepmother in England, Sir Harry Verney and Parthenope, Lady Verney. On October 11 he wrote to his stepmother about the voyage that brought the settlers, and stated that when he returned a few days later he found them “in ecstasies with the country”. On November 1 he wrote his father a fuller report as a result of another trip to Comox on October 28-30. He described canoeing up the river and visiting about twenty settlers busy building their log houses. He predicted a fine future for the settlement, stating that although he had often heard of the fertility of the “Komux country” it exceeded his expectations, and writing enthusiastically about the beauty of the scenery, the large stretches of open land, the great trees of the forest, and the abundance of game.⁴

On this last visit Verney brought with him

NOTES

1. I have given a fuller account of early naval exploration of the Comox area in the article, “What is in a Name? Captain Courtenay and Vancouver Island Exploration”, *British Columbia Historical News*, vol. 37 (2004), no. 4, 3-7, continued in the renamed journal, *British Columbia History*, vol. 38 (2005), no. 1, 35. My transcript of much of R.C. Mayne’s report, 19 April, 1860, from the British Columbia Archives (hereafter BCA), F1217, is printed in D.E. Isenor, W.N. McInnis, E.G. Stephens and D.E. Watson, *Land of Plenty, A History of the Comox District* (Campbell River: Ptarmigan press, 1987), 57.

2. Correspondence between Douglas and Maitland, 31 July-4 Aug., 1862, Maitland’s Pacific Station Journal, Public Record Office (hereafter PRO), National Archives, Kew, England, ADM 50/311. Log of HMS *Grappler*, PRO, ADM 53/8158.

3. Complaint of *Grappler*’s seamen, *Colonist*, 25 Oct., 1862. Letters of Sir Harry Verney to Edmund, 13 Feb., 1863, and Edmund to Sir Harry, 22 Sept., 1862, *Vancouver Island Letters of Edmund Hope Verney, 1862-65*, ed. A. Pritchard (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1996) (cited below as Verney, *Letters*), 31, 91. See also the Introduction, 42.

4. Verney, *Letters*, 93-94, 99-100.

5. Hills, Diary, 29-30 Oct., 1862, Provincial Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, BCA, microfilm A796. Hills to Sir Harry Verney, 30 Oct., 1862, Claydon House Trust, Claydon House, Buckinghamshire, England.

HMS Grappler 1862. Photograph of an otherwise unknown painting in one of Lieut. E.H. Verney’s albums. Claydon House Trust.

6. Verney, *Letters*, 133-34, 137.

7. Verney, *Letters*, 56-57n., 154.

8. Spencer to Douglas, 13 April, 1863, BCA, Colonial Correspondence, F1226. Log of HMS *Forward*, PRO, ADM 53/8028. Produce at Comox at such an early date as April 1863 was probably provided by George Mitchell, the only one of the prospective settlers of June 1862 to remain at Comox.

9. In 1864 Robert Brown estimated that there were about 76 Natives at Comox, including 50 'Comoncs' and 10 'Puntledge', in his "Journal of the Vancouver Island Exploring Expedition", BCA, Add MS 794, vol. 4, 159 (omitted in John Hayman's 1989 edition of this journal). For complaints from settlers about the government's failure to pay Natives for land taken from them, and about the inactivity of the gunboats, see the letters signed C.R.B. and Beta in the *Colonist*, 18 Feb., 1864. Morton Jones to Governor Arthur Kennedy, 5 April, 1865, BCA, Colonial Correspondence, F1208.14, and Franklyn to Colonial Secretary, 1 May, 1865, F593.18.

10. For a contemporary estimate of the devastating impact of the 'whisky traders' on the Native population, see David Higgins, "The Passing of a Race", reprinted in *Tales of a Pioneer Journalist* (Surrey, B.C.: Heritage House, 1996), 124. Cf. Pidcock, "Adventures in Vancouver Island", BCA, Add MS 728, vol. 4a, 82.

11. Pike to J.W.S. Spencer, 4 April, 1863, enclosing F.O. Simpson to Pike, 3 April, BCA, Colonial Correspondence, F1210.5a.

Lieutenant Edmund Hope Verney, about 1860.
BC Archives photo 22-95061



to Comox on the *Grappler* George Hills, the Anglican Bishop of Columbia, and so while we owe directly to Verney the first account of the new settlement, we owe indirectly to him and the navy also the record of its beginning that appears in Hills' diary. Probably the fact that Hills was related to Verney, as the cousin of Verney's father, enabled him to reach the Comox settlement as quickly as he did, and thus provide descriptions of his visits to settlers working on their houses and Natives engaged in fishing, and to corroborate Verney's view of the excellence of the land and the promising future of the settlement. Before departing on October 30 Hills held divine service for the settlers, and in a letter to Sir Harry Verney written the same day at Deep Bay on the return voyage to Victoria he commended Lieutenant Verney for addressing the settlers at the end of his service to offer them all the assistance in his power.⁵

Verney's continued interest in the Comox settlement appears in letters to his father in the spring of 1863. He returned to Comox in late April and reported that during an afternoon spent visiting settlers he found the settlement much advanced: land was being ploughed, and gardens cultivated, "and I had a glass of rich and delicious new milk". He came back on May 15, bringing as his guests Mr. and Mrs. Nicol from the Nanaimo coal mines, and went up the river in a canoe and again visited settlers in their houses. He carried with him "juvenile works in verse and prose for distribution among the youthful population", and conducted divine service for the settlers.⁶

Other letters and a diary he kept in shorthand show that from time to time Verney gave passage on the *Grappler* both to the families of settlers and to clergy going to perform services at Comox. According to his diary on September 15, 1863 he brought to Comox two daughters of the Robb family, which had pre-empted land that is now the centre of the Comox townsite, and on October 2 he brought an Anglican clergyman from Victoria, Rev. R.J. Dundas, whom he joined with a congregation of ten at the Robbs' house. His helpfulness was not confined to the Anglican clergy, for he mentions in a letter on July 25, 1863 giving passage to Comox some time previously to Rev. Ebenezer Robson, the Methodist minister from Nanaimo.⁷

Other services performed by the navy for the Comox settlement in its first spring included bringing seed for the crops and providing a market for the produce. On April 13, 1863 the senior officer at

Esquimalt, Captain J.W.S. Spencer, wrote in response to a request from Governor Douglas that the navy would gladly accord any accommodation it could for carrying the settlers' seeds, "but it must always be borne in mind that Gun Boats are not the most convenient vessels for carrying either passengers, or articles liable to injury from wet or damp, having no further storage than their upper deck, exposed both to rain and sea" – reservations that may suggest some surprise at the peculiar demands being made upon the navy by the Comox settlement. In Victoria the *Colonist* on June 9 described the growth of the settlers' crops, but the log of the gunboat HMS *Forward*, sister ship of the *Grappler*, reveals that a sale of farm produce had already been made, probably the first record of any sale from the new agricultural settlement. An entry in the ship's log at Comox on April 29 reads: "Rec^d on board 84 lbs of Fresh Beef and 42 lbs of Vegetables purchased of one of the settlers". This initiates a pattern of sales important for the future of Comox, where the navy later became a valuable market for farmers, especially after the establishment of a naval rifle range on Comox Spit in the 1890s. Meanwhile during the earlier period before regular coastal shipping was established the navy sometimes helped Comox farmers convey their produce to the larger markets. The *Colonist* reported on February 22, 1867 that when the gunboat *Sparrowhawk* overtook a Comox farmer en route by canoe to Victoria with a half ton of ham and bacon it gave him passage as far as Nanaimo.⁸

While the navy was called upon to undertake various roles outside normal naval duties it seems never to have been seriously required to protect the settlers against the Natives of the Comox area, although settlers occasionally complained that the gunboats did not come as often as had initially been promised or do much to ensure their security. The settlers, arriving in the aftermath of the devastating smallpox epidemic, found only a small remnant of the original Natives of the area, the Pentlatch, whose numbers had earlier been much reduced by intertribal warfare, after which they were partly replaced by the tribe named Comox (K'omoks), who had been driven south during the 1840s by the more powerful Lekwiltok from their old territory around Campbell River and Cape Mudge. The settlers seem to have regarded both these groups at Comox as friendly rather than feeling threatened by them, even though Natives, left with small reserves, often complained they had not been paid for the land taken from them

12. Verney's two commissions as justice of the peace are preserved in his family's archive at Claydon House, Buckinghamshire. Extensive documents relating to the seizing of the *Shark* and Hart's conviction and temporary imprisonment are in BCA, Colonial Correspondence, F593.44, F594.10, and F597.3. See Hills, Diary, 21 Nov., 1865. Richard Mackie has shown that Hart's liquor trade became linked with violence and death among white settlers, in *The Wilderness Profound: Victorian Life on the Gulf of Georgia* (Victoria: Sono Nis, 1995), 78-79.

13. Mayne, *Four years in British Columbia and Vancouver Island* (London: John Murray, 1862), 246. Pidcock, "Adventures", 78-79.

14. Verney to Commander E. Hardinge, 28 Nov., 1863, BCA, Colonial Correspondence, F1208.5. Douglas to Hardinge, 22 Dec., 1863, BCA, D/A/10 G79, vol. 3. Lascelles to Hardinge and Morton Jones, 13 Jan., 28 Feb., and 26 March, 1864, F1208.6-7, F1208.10, F1208.13. Morton Jones to Kennedy, 5-10 April, 1865, F1208.14. Franklyn to Colonial Secretary, 1 May, 1865, F593.18.

15. Franklyn to Colonial Secretary, 18 Oct., 1865, with depositions by Cave and Native constable and Kennedy's response, BCA, Colonial Correspondence, F600.6.

16. Franklyn to Colonial Secretary, 4 Nov., 1865, BCA, F600.6.

17. Denman, report to Kennedy, 14 Nov., 1865, BCA, F600.6, and Report of Proceedings to Secretary of Admiralty, 27 Nov., 1865, PRO, ADM 1/5924. Logs of *Sutlej*, *Sparrowhawk*, *Clio*, and *Forward*, PRO, ADM 53/8838, 9255, 9147, 9449.

18. Denman to Kennedy, 14 Nov., 1865, BCA, F600.6.

19. Ibid.

20. "Alleged Disturbances at Comox", *Colonist*, 18 Dec., 1865, p.3.

21. Porcher, *A Tour of Duty in the Pacific Northwest*. E.A. Porcher and H.M.S. Sparrowhawk, 1865-68, ed. Dwight L. Smith (Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2000), 40-41.

22. Kennedy's memo approving Denman's recommendation is dated 15 Nov., 1865, BCA, Colonial Correspondence, F867.13. In the aftermath, the missionary some settlers blamed for precipitating the crisis, Cave Brown Cave, soon went elsewhere when Bishop Hills accepted his decision that he was not the right man for Comox (Hills, Diary, 21 Nov., 1865).

– complaints that settlers (who viewed this as the responsibility of the colonial government) recognized to be entirely justified. In late April 1863 when alarm had been caused on the coast by murders in the Gulf Islands, at Governor Douglas' request the gunboats *Forward* and *Grappler* made a brief visit to Comox to reassure the settlers but there was no sign of any threat. In April 1865 when Commander Theodore Morton Jones visited Comox in HMS *Cameleon* he optimistically reported that the Natives welcomed the presence of the settlers. A month later the Nanaimo magistrate, W.H. Franklyn, reported after one of his periodic visits to the settlement that the Comox chief, Wacas, had "a very good character among the settlers". There were two causes, however, which involved the navy in policing duties from time to time at Comox: first, to protect the Natives from illegal 'whisky traders', and second to deal with problems arising from large-scale seasonal incursions of Lekwiltok from Cape Mudge.⁹

The navy's attempt to suppress the illegal liquor traffic at Comox as elsewhere on the coast proved frustrating because of the difficulty of obtaining evidence and convictions. The prohibition of the sale of liquor to Natives was both paternalistic and discriminatory but was intended to protect from unscrupulous traders a people in whose culture alcohol had been unknown. Some contemporary estimates suggest the liquor traffic was second only to the smallpox epidemic as cause of the decline of the Native population on the coast. At Comox in the 1860s there are reports of large amounts of liquor, which included deadly concoctions, being brought to the Native villages by schooner and canoe from Victoria and elsewhere, and early settlers like R.H. Pidcock described the harm to the Natives that resulted.¹⁰

The whisky sellers naturally took good care to conceal their illicit activities from the authorities, but in 1863 the accident of a shipwreck brought some of these activities to light. In late March the schooner *Explorer* ran aground on the north coast of Hornby Island. Commander John Pike of HMS *Devastation*, which happened then to be at Nanaimo, sent some of his men to investigate. They reported that the *Explorer* had carried a large cargo of liquor, for which it lacked the proper papers. The captain, Moses Phillips, stated he planned to establish a store at Comox with his partner, John Hart, before continuing further north. Witnesses testified that they heard Phillips and Hart discussing plans to trade liquor for furs with



"A chief of the Eucletaw Tribe. V.I." A photograph with this inscription in Lieut. E.H. Verney's hand enclosed by him in a letter of March 1865. Claydon House Trust

Natives.¹¹

Hart's store was subsequently established adjacent to the reserve at Comox, and became the source of many problems, sometimes prompting naval investigation and action. In connection with such activities Lieutenant Verney held commissions as justice of the peace, signed by James Douglas, for both colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia. In November 1863 Verney returning from a northern voyage in the *Grappler*, during which he

took action against liquor sellers at Metlakatla and Kitimat, seized the schooner *Shark*, which had recently landed liquor at Hart's. In December of the next year Hart was sentenced in a Nanaimo court to a year in prison, in lieu of a fine, for having liquor landed within a prohibited distance from a reserve. After he had been in prison a few weeks in Victoria, however, Arthur Kennedy, who had replaced Douglas as Governor of Vancouver island, ordered him released upon payment of costs, following the presentation of a petition, as advised by the attorney-general. Hart with a partner then resumed business for several years at Comox, where Bishop Hills in his diary in November 1865 described their establishment as "productive of vast evil" among settlers, but the agricultural settlers do not appear to have been implicated in the illicit traffic that was the concern of the navy.¹²

The illegal liquor trade at Comox received attention from authorities in high quarters, as is shown in various naval and colonial documents, the latter in some cases annotated in the handwriting of Governor Kennedy himself. The records leave a strong sense of the futility of attempts at suppression, in view of the facts that willing victims, justly resentful of a highly discriminatory law, usually refused to provide evidence, and that the traders in a lucrative occupation often could easily afford to pay fines and obtain the assistance of some of the colony's best lawyers.

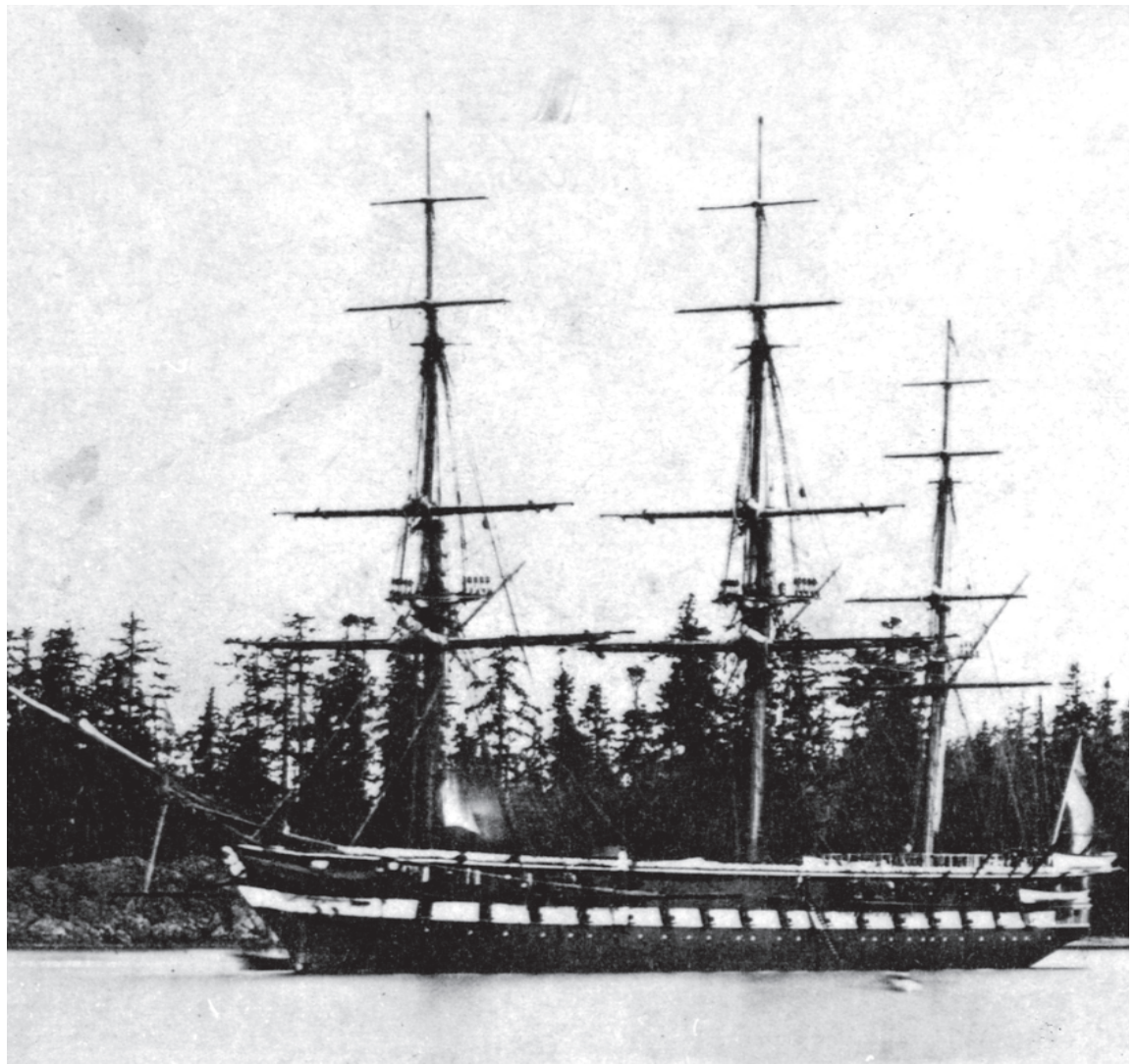
More frequently than the liquor traffic, however, it was the incursions of the Lekwiltok, Kwakwaka'wakw from Cape Mudge, generally known to the settlers and others at the time as 'Euclataws' or 'Yacultas' that brought the navy to Comox. This tribe was accustomed to make extended visits to Comox during certain fishing seasons on the rivers, coming down the coast in great numbers in a large armada of canoes, bringing the planks of their houses with them. They were a vigorous and bold tribe, who in the past had a reputation for aggressive and 'piratical' behaviour. Mayne in 1862 observed that they were the only tribe on the coast to resist the gunboats. At Comox, while some settlers admired them – Pidcock described them as "a fine lot of fellows", others alleged they came to steal the farmers' potatoes. The complaint about theft of potatoes was a serious matter since this was a specially important crop for many of the farmers. It resulted in a number of visits by gunboats to Comox in the years 1863-65, and at the end of the last year brought to Comox the

largest naval force that ever appeared there in the early years of the settlement.¹³

The problems began in the autumn of 1863 following the settlers' first potato harvest. On November 25 when Verney in the *Grappler* visited Comox en route back from Metlakatla, he reported that the farmers complained of Euclataws stealing potatoes, and that their presence was desired neither by the Comox Natives nor by the settlers. In late December and early January 1863-64 at Governor Douglas' request Lieutenant Horace Lascelles in HMS *Forward* spent two weeks at Comox. He reported that the settlers wanted the Euclataws ordered back to Cape Mudge, but that they had been better behaved since the recent visit of the *Grappler*, and he did not feel justified in doing this. In response to a petition of settlers to the colonial government, however, he made two further visits in February and March, and then ordered the Euclataws to return to their own country. He reported that they took down their houses without any trouble. The next year in early April 1865 the senior officer at Esquimalt, Commander Theodore Morton Jones, came to Comox in the larger, more heavily armed vessel, HMS *Cameleon*, and once more ordered the Euclataws back to Cape Mudge; he reported that they promised to obey. Later that month, Lascelles called at Comox in the *Forward*, with W.H. Franklyn, the magistrate from Nanaimo, to confirm that they had departed. In the autumn of that year, however, an apparent crisis developed, which proved to be exaggerated but sheds interesting light on the early history of the agricultural settlement, and the relations between Natives and settlers.¹⁴

The crisis of October-November 1865 began with the arrival in Nanaimo of the Anglican lay missionary catechist from Comox, Jordayne Cave Brown Cave, accompanied by one of the Native constables recently appointed at Comox by Franklyn. On October 18 they made depositions to Franklyn that about 150 Euclataws had recently arrived at Comox and camped two miles up the river, beyond reach of the gunboats. The constable deposed that they had come to steal the white men's potatoes, and to take revenge upon the Comox Natives for the deaths of five of their tribe from drinking whisky at Comox on a previous occasion. Cave stated that when he went to the Euclataws at their camp on the river the chief, Claylik, said that the *Forward* had already driven them away two or three times, and that they would kill any man who now tried to put them off the land. In a scene the missionary seems to have viewed with

HMS Sutlej.
BC Archives photo F-06988.



special indignation, "He then held open his blanket & danced on the beach in a defiant manner".¹⁵

Upon receiving these depositions from Franklyn, Governor Kennedy instructed him to proceed to Comox in the *Forward* and order the Euclataws to depart. When he arrived at Comox in the gunboat on October 31 Franklyn sent Police Sergeant Blake up the river to summon the Euclataws down to the ship. Claylik and others then came down in a large canoe; Franklyn addressed them through an interpreter, reproving them for repeatedly disobeying the governor's instruction, and ordering them away from Comox. They said they had come only to fish for salmon that did not come to their own area so soon, and that they needed more time to dry the fish they had caught. At first they promised to comply with

the order, but Franklyn learned they did not actually intend to leave, and that they said they despised the 'tennas' (little) gunboat. He reported on November 4 that he remained at Comox awaiting the arrival of a larger force.¹⁶

The navy responded with all available force. The commander-in-chief of the Pacific Station, Rear-Admiral Joseph Denman, decided, as he later stated, that he should visit in person "a place where so many ineffectual remonstrances had been made". He arrived in Comox Bay on November 7 in his flagship, HMS *Sutlej*, accompanied by the *Clio* and the *Sparrowhawk*. The *Sutlej* was a big ship with a crew of over five hundred and more than thirty heavy guns as well as much other armament, and the *Clio* and the *Sparrowhawk* were also much larger and more

heavily armed than the little *Forward*. According to their logbooks, the three ships immediately on the afternoon of November 7 put on a display of power, firing shells and rockets, and carrying out various exercises. Denman reported that in response the Euclataws hastily began to pull down their houses, and send them down the river in canoes with their women. Denman detained the canoes until the chiefs came to him. He put Claylik in irons for forty-eight hours as punishment for pointing a musket at Cave the previous summer. Then after Denman addressed them on November 13 the Euclataws left for Cape Mudge.¹⁷

Meanwhile Denman held a meeting with the settlers on November 10 at Cave's mission house, which he and the others reached with difficulty because of heavy rains and flooding. He found that two-thirds of the thirty settlers who attended favoured leaving the Euclataws undisturbed, as their labour was important to the farmers, and no danger was apprehended. He promised to tell the governor of the settlers' wish that the Euclataws should be allowed to continue coming for the fishing season in the autumn. Subsequently Denman, as he stated in his report to Governor Kennedy, visited several settlers. He found that a party led by James Robb was very critical of Cave for his activity in bringing in the navy to drive away the Euclataws, and that the settlers were afraid Denman might attack the Euclataws as he had the Natives at Clayoquot Sound, where in October 1864 in retaliation for the plundering of a trading schooner and killing of its crew he had carried out a punitive attack on the Ahousats, causing much death and destruction.¹⁸

As a result of what he learned in his meetings with the settlers, in his address to the Euclataws on November 13 Denman told Claylik and the other chiefs that they must not come again to Comox without the governor's permission but that he would attempt to obtain this. In the conclusion of his report he stated he thought it right to mention that the Euclataws had recently behaved well to the settlers, and that he believed they did not deserve such a bad reputation as previously. He found that the settlers, though scattered and without the ability to combine for defense, were "certainly without apprehension of violence".¹⁹

An interesting comment on these events appeared in the *Victoria Colonist* in a letter dated December 6 by a Comox settler who used the signature 'Beta'. Like some of the settlers interviewed by

Denman, he was very critical of Cave for attempting to have the Euclataws expelled from Comox. He declared that they had been accustomed to come there for salmon fishing "from time immemorial" and that Denman had no right to force them to leave:

We consider that the Euclataws have the privileges of British subjects, and as such have as good a right to visit Comox as any other men, so long as they behave themselves, and it is unfair to punish them thus before they have done wrong.

He alleged that in the past they had wrongly been blamed for the theft of potatoes actually taken by the Comox Natives. He emphasized the value of the Euclataws in providing both labour for digging potatoes and a market for their sale, as well as selling salmon and venison to the settlers.²⁰

When Admiral Denman returned to Esquimalt with the *Sutlej* and the *Clio*, he temporarily left behind HMS *Sparrowhawk* with Commander Edwin Porcher to monitor the situation at Comox and Cape Mudge. Porcher had just arrived from England with the *Sparrowhawk* to replace the two smaller old gunboats, and so he observed events at Comox with special interest as his first experience of the west coast colonies. In a journal he kept he seems to have viewed the bloodless Comox potato war as, like the bloodless San Juan 'pig war' a few years earlier, finally more comic than serious. He recorded that the events concluded with Denman presenting gifts and a certificate of good behaviour to Claylik, and undertaking to support the chief's request to be appointed a constable. Porcher reflected a little ironically on what he considered to be crisis that never was: "Thus ended our warlike expedition against the Euclataws who were supposed to be the most troublesome tribe in the whole island".²¹

Governor Kennedy immediately accepted Admiral Denman's recommendation that in the future the Euclataws should be allowed to come to Comox annually in the fishing season, as the majority of the settlers desired. The yearly arrival of the flotilla of Euclataw canoes from Cape Mudge at Comox Bay, described by Pidcock as a remarkable sight in the 1860s, continued to be a notable local event of the autumn until at least the 1880s. There were no further crises, real or apparent, that caused any large naval force to be sent to the Comox settlement.²² •

The Hotel Phair:

and the Extraordinary Family Who Created Her

By Patricia Rogers

Pat Rogers' last article for BC History was in issue 39.4. This is another story written and presented at the annual story telling festival in Proctor, BC on July 7 & 8, 2007

Susan leFebour was the storyteller.

In the audience were three generations of the Phair Family.

The time is September 1928, a meeting of the Ladies Literary Society, hosted by Mrs. Alexander Carrie. The Guest of Honour is Gretchen Hatt Gibson, the daughter of Edwin Ernest Phair, the Proprietor of the luxurious Hotel Phair. Please welcome Mrs. Gibson.

"When my Father first set foot in this shantytown on the side of a mountain lake little did the residents know that he brought with him a family ancestry steeped in loyalist pursuits, intrigue and Witchcraft. Oh yes, you heard me right. Witchcraft. I see I have your attention now.

Let me see a show of hands-how many here have heard of Mary Estey? Rebecca Nurse? Benedict Arnold? Well, I am glad to see your education has not been a total romp!

Now, get comfortable, sit back and listen as I tell you the tale of the luxurious Hotel Phair and the extraordinary family who created her.

My Father entered the world in 1851 in Fredericton, New Brunswick, a child of privilege. His Father was a prosperous Barrister, his Mother from a family of means.

Little Eddie grew up as most boys did with one eye on the door and the other on the cookie jar. He was just a tad spoiled. When his parents separated briefly Eddie and his Mother moved to the home of her parents. Little Eddie was soon packed off to Boarding School. However, after many letters home to his Grandfather, he was soon home again. It was at that time that my Father knew he had the gift, the gift of the gab. At 11 years of age he had turned the whole school upside down in quite short order. He had the gift and if it worked as well as he thought it could, it could be the Midas Touch.

Now, I can see you are wondering how Fredericton and Benedict Arnold could ever possibly be linked. When we think of Benedict Arnold on this side of the 49th we think of a Hero. It is the Americans who have forever tarnished his name.

During the time of the American Revolution Benedict Arnold became disenchanted with Congress. He felt slighted and passed over for promotions. He had incurred so many debts that Congress wanted to court-martial him. Can you imagine that, Debtors Prison. It seems the high life and a young wife were his undoing. In 1780 he schemed to hand over the Fort at West Point, New York, to the British for 20,000 pounds. Well, the plan failed dismally so he abruptly changed sides, saving his own skin. He collected 6,000 pounds from the British and was promoted to Brigadier

General! He was on a roll. He created the American Legion, a group of soldiers fighting under the King's Colours and appointed Great Grandfather Andrew Phair as the Adjutant. Adjutant is a fancy name for secretary. Andrew Phair was responsible for all the General's paperwork. He was the first to know the General's thoughts - a position of some confidence.

As you will have guessed the family remained loyal to the Crown and fought with distinction helping to secure the North America we know today. A sense of civic responsibility was well ingrained in my family and has withstood the test of time.

Andrew, as a loyal defender, was granted land as a United Empire Loyalist in 1793. The designation of United Empire Loyalist brought with it a certain cachet that is evident to this day.

Can you imagine the bedtime stories passed from Father to son to son? The battles, the Indians, the victories. Enough to turn sleepy time eyes into saucers and eventually lull them into a dreamland filled with vast battlefields and glorious victories. The stuff little boys are made of.

In 1874 my Father cast his eyes upon the petite beauty known as Junietta Estey. Flashing dark eyes and the wit and intelligence to match his own. Oh talk about pitching woo, he was smitten. After a whirlwind courtship they were married that fall.

Mother's family had a bit of a dark past, although by no fault of her or her family, as history has shown. Oh, my, where to begin...

Mary Estey was my Great Grandmother and she and her sisters, Rebecca Nurse and Sarah Cloyce lived in Salem Village, Massachusetts, in 1692. The village name alone is enough to conjure up the ghosts of a time gone terribly wrong.

My Great Grandmother was 58 years old and the Mother of 7 when she was accused of being a Witch. In the winter of 1692 young Betty Parris became ill-she dashed about, dove under furniture, threw fits and contorted in pain. Soon others followed suit; the local doctor, one William Griggs, diagnosed Witchcraft and outright bedlam ensued. Soon the villagers were seeing Witches flying through the winter's mist off and on their broomsticks!

The girls said my Great Grandmother's spectral image was strangling them and causing them all sorts of afflictions. As soon as she was shackled the afflictions stopped. Her fate was sealed and on September 22, 1692 my Great Grandmother was hanged.

Rebecca suffered the same fate being hanged on July 19, 1692. She was 71 years old and had a reputation

of piety and simplicity of heart.

The only member of the trio to escape the gallows was Sarah. She, instead, was shackled and imprisoned.

If hanging was not enough a Witch was not allowed to be buried in consecrated ground. The families silently buried their own in unmarked graves and sadly, over the years, the locations have been lost to time.

In 1711 the families were compensated with 20 pounds for wrongful execution. Too little too late, I fear. The hysteria died as quickly as it started, yet the very hint of anything demonic will send shivers down the spine of my family. You can rest assured that these trumped up charges bear no familial links. Of that time we carry within our souls the knowledge that good champions evil, no matter the time elapsed.

Yes, long shadows weave through the very fabric of my family.

My parents welcomed their first child in 1876, but a long life was not meant to be. Infant death was not uncommon, however no matter how often it occurred it struck the heart with the force of ten blades.

Jasper arrived in 1879 and I was, well suffice it to say, I am the youngest - as old as my tongue and a bit older than my teeth.

Father was busy managing the Beaches Hotel and the Kent Northern Railway while Mother tended to us young ones. Their lives seemed full and comfortable.

One morning Mother caught a glimpse of a familiar spark in Father's eye and she knew exactly what he saw-opportunity. Railroads carry passengers and passengers need accommodation. The CPR was already beating this drum and Father wanted to join the parade.

It was not long before Father and a group of like-minded individuals heard opportunity knocking in the Interior of British Columbia. As Father packed his bag Mother gave him her blessing and a promise to follow.

Father arrived in what was to become Nelson in 1890 and with the investment money started the proceedings to erect a hotel the likes of which the Interior had never seen.

Mother tied up loose ends and with Jasper and I in tow closed up the house and boarded the train West in 1891. Little did she know that her love for her children and their Father would soon be tested.

Now we must remember Canada was only 24 years old and the most civilized part of the country



*Hotel Phair July 1898
Nelson and District Museum,
Archives and Art Gallery photo*

was the part we were leaving. There were towns with houses and white picket fences, cities with modern transportation, telegraph and telephone systems, libraries, churches, universities and direct lines to the markets of Europe. Canada East was booming.

Bearing that in mind can you imagine what went through my Mother's mind when she first set foot in Shantytown West?

I still have the picture etched into my memory of that wild and woolly town. There were wooden shanties and tents, and scruffy, unshaven men. The air was blue with smoke and the smell was overpowering. Mother told me to quit scrunching up my nose, as it just may stick. There were muddy ruts for streets and not one sidewalk. I didn't know where to step as I had the distinct impression my patent leather shoes would soon be swallowed up and me with them!

Jasper's eyes were like saucers and Mother was forever pulling him from one disreputable sight or another. He was intrigued by the painted ladies, the gunfire, the hullabaloo from the saloons and the horses forever racing about-it was magical for him.

All the colour drained from Mother's face. This was no place for a proper woman and a young lady.

After considerable discussions and many tears Mother and I waved goodbye to Father and Jasper. I heard Mother thank our Lord she had not sold the house!



*Edwin Ernest Phair
1851 - 1929
Courtesy of the Phair Family*

The Phair rose timber by timber at the unfathomable cost of \$12,000. Father had a gift for promotion and continually extolled her virtues in the local paper. If nothing else he had the whole town curious.

In October 1891 the Phair opened her doors and oh, she was grand. There were 35 rooms, steam heat, hot and cold water, electric bells, flush closets, baths, a bar, parlours, billiard tables and dining facilities. The Honeymoon Suite could not be rivaled anywhere in the Interior. Carriages met the trains and sternwheelers.

The dining facilities were the finest in the Kootenays with the most up to date cooking stoves and staff. Beautifully engraved menus graced each table and the servers clad in spotless uniforms were at your elbow at a moment's notice. The linens were crisp, the crystal fine and the sterling silverware heavy and polished.

The separate parlours offered exquisite furnishings, with fine Persian carpeting for the comfort of both male and female guests alike. No expense was spared and no amenity was missed.

Jasper eventually opened a Tobacconist Shop in the Hotel and imported the finest smoking tobaccos and Snuff. Beautifully engraved pipes, Snuff boxes and match holders filled his glass cabinetry.

The Phair knew pomp and grandeur. She was graced by two Governors-General, the Countess of Aberdeen, countless politicians, Supreme Court Jurists; and Provincial and Federal notables. Her clientele was first class.

Father loved a good story and he in turn was an excellent raconteur. He held court in the Phair and all were invited to attend. When he laced his fingers across his chest and tipped his chair back you could have heard a pin drop. Father and Mayor Houston were particularly close. Many a night they spent over libations discussing the progress of this shantytown. It was only fitting that Father was a Pall Bearer when his dear friend passed away.

When Mother died in 1894 I was shuffled between my Aunt and Father. I spent many days thanking Sir John A. for his railroad. Eventually Father relented and I was able to join him. It was a very exciting time for me.

I lived in the Hotel and was treated like royalty.

Of course I did not mind in the least. One Christmas was particularly memorable. I caught my first glimpse of Jock Gibson. Oh, what a handsome figure he cut in his kilt. Little did he know my sights were set. Did you know Jock was one of the signers of the Letters of Incorporation for the City of Nelson in 1897? - a man of some importance.

Now, let me tell you of that Christmas so many years ago. Oh, if the walls could talk. Close your eyes and let your mind cycle back in time.

It is the Christmas season and merriment is in the air.

The snow was falling in those big, fluffy flakes that add layer upon layer to the stoop. Two miners,



*The Hotel Phair's lobby
Courtesy of the Phair Family*

fresh from the camp, kick the snow from their boots as they enter the lobby. Over their arms are clothes from a different time. A time when hard work did not include a pickaxe and shovel; a time when linen tablecloths and sterling silverware were the norm. Tonight, for one night, they will forget the dust and grime of the mine and concentrate on finer things.

Envision, if you will, the lobby with a Christmas tree so tall you have to lean back to see the Angel. A tree adorned with holiday candles and ornaments so lovely that it takes your breath away. Garlands of evergreen are strung along the staircase and over the doors adding a fresh, crisp smell to the room. The sound of carolers drift in from the street and the smell of roasting chestnuts and the crackling fire add to the festive cheer. Yes, it is that favourite time of year.

Guests begin to enter the hotel shortly after 8:00 pm. The first to arrive is Alexander Carrie, the noted

architect, and his wife Lizzie. Alexander is resplendent in white shirt and tails. His quick smile evidences the magic of the night. Lizzie is elegantly attired in a dark green velvet evening dress, with Victorian collar and muff. A simple cameo adorns the bodice.

The Doctors Arthur are the next in the door, brushing light snow from their shoulders. Dr. Edward is wearing a dark suit specifically chosen for him by Dr. Isabella. As much as she tries her husband always looks like an unmade bed. Dr. Isabella is attired in a burgundy coloured satin evening dress with a high lace choker. The bodice is embroidered with a fine silver thread.

Our miners enter in white shirt and tails, freshly scrubbed and shaven. A gold fob leads to an elegant timepiece kept in the waistcoat pocket. They strike a handsome and comfortable pose that echoes of another time and place.

The guests continue to fill the ballroom. The Emorys, Bradshaws, Wards, Stewarts, Nelsons and the guest list goes on as they drift into the room adding an air of elegance to an already elegant evening.

Father and Jock Gibson, attired in their finest, keep a watchful eye as friends and neighbours mingle and break off into small groups. Tiny flickering candles, floating in glass snifters, adorn each table setting, along the perimeter of the dance floor.

Soon the guests find the crystal punch bowl and canapés. A few think the libations should be a bit more festive and if it were not for the practiced eye of the hotel staff, a flask or two would embolden the quaff. For those so inclined a shot or two of rum added to their glass makes a drink that would warm the heart of Jack Frost himself!

A band of local musicians play the night away. Impromptu sing alongs to all the Christmas favourites echo through the hotel. Many waltz to the strains of Greensleaves, a few to the sounds of a Viennese Waltz. A Ladies' choice finds Dr. Isabella waltzing with the Reverend Rogers and Alexander Carrie gracing the floor with Addie Nelson.

Over glasses of punch the women make plans for Christmas get togethers as the men quietly step outside to enjoy a fine cigar from Jasper's venue. Soon the couples drift back together for one final whirl about the dance floor. As the clock strikes midnight the outerwear is donned and soon the elegantly attired citizens of Nelson steal into the night. The softly falling snow appears as haloes in the lights of the city and leaves a fine blanket of white on the streets below.

Oh, those were memorable times. You may open

your eyes now.

Father had the Midas Touch and the Phair prospered under his management. In 1905 the Phair was sold for the tidy sum of \$40,000 and renamed the Strathcona. Father was back in Nelson in 1908 and once more back at the helm of his flagship Hotel. She was once more christened the Phair and remained so until 1912.

There were many managers after Father, but none had his touch. Although having numerous renovations the hotel could not keep pace with the others in the city. Father's clientele was loyal, but once he was gone, so were they.

The Strathcona today offers housekeeping rooms with an assortment of tenants—well heeled CPR employees, widows on limited incomes, migrants and of course, my Father.

Father has recently retired to the City and has taken a series of rooms at the Strathcona. The circle now seems complete.

However, you will not find Father holding court in the hotel, but on the verandah of 924 Vernon Street with my husband, Jock, yes I did catch him, and our two daughters, Jean and Agnes. Please stop by for some lemonade and stay for a tale or two of how Nelson and the Phair came to be. Father would love to see you." •



*Inferno May 28, 1958
Nelson and District Museum,
Archives and Art Gallery photo*

Archives and Archivists

Submitted by Sylvia Stopworth

Edited by Sylvia Stopworth,
Librarian and Archivist, Norma Marian Alloway Library,
Trinity Western University

The Simon Fraser letters at SFU Archives

*Based on a July 6, 2007, interview
with Frances Fournier, SFU
Archives*

In 1965, when Simon Fraser University officially opened at its mountain-top campus overlooking the Fraser River, there was no University Archives. So when Donald Fraser, descendant of famed explorer Simon Fraser, donated a collection of historic letters and other documents to the new University, they were locked away in a desk for safe-keeping.

When the drawer of the desk was unlocked just over two decades later, it was like stumbling upon a lost treasure.

Experts were consulted, and the authenticity of the documents, most dating back to 1846, was verified.

The "find" consisted of twenty-eight pages of fragile documents. Most were letters written by Fraser to family and friends around 1846, discussing his family's history. There were also a few pages from the account books of the first Fort Liard on the Peace River. These date back to 1803, when Fraser was serving as a clerk for the North West Company.

Simon Fraser is sometimes referred to as the founding father of British Columbia.¹ Between 1805 and 1807 he established the first four colonial trading posts west of the Rockies. A few years later, in 1808, he set off to explore the river that would later bear his name. In spite of his pivotal role in the history of our province, original documents pertaining to Fraser are rare.

When the Simon Fraser letters – as they came to be called – came to light again at SFU in the late 1980s, they were authenticated, enclosed in acid-free file folders, and placed in storage, this time in the University Archives. But these documents were not in pristine shape, and with the passing of time, their physical condition continued to deteriorate.

Enter professional Conservator, Rosaleen Hill.

Hill conducted a detailed assessment of these invaluable documents, identified the work that needed to be done, and – thanks to a generous grant from the National Archival Development Program (Library and Archives Canada), embarked on a project in January, 2007, to clean and repair the papers, ensuring their long-term preservation.

Looking back on the project a few months later, Archivist Frances Fournier says, "we all learned a lot." At one point,

having carefully tested the papers and inks, Hill washed the letters – first in pH neutral water, then in alkaline water. She invited archives staff to watch. No one doubted for an instant that Hill knew what she was doing, but there was still a moment of apprehension as the precious documents slipped beneath the water.

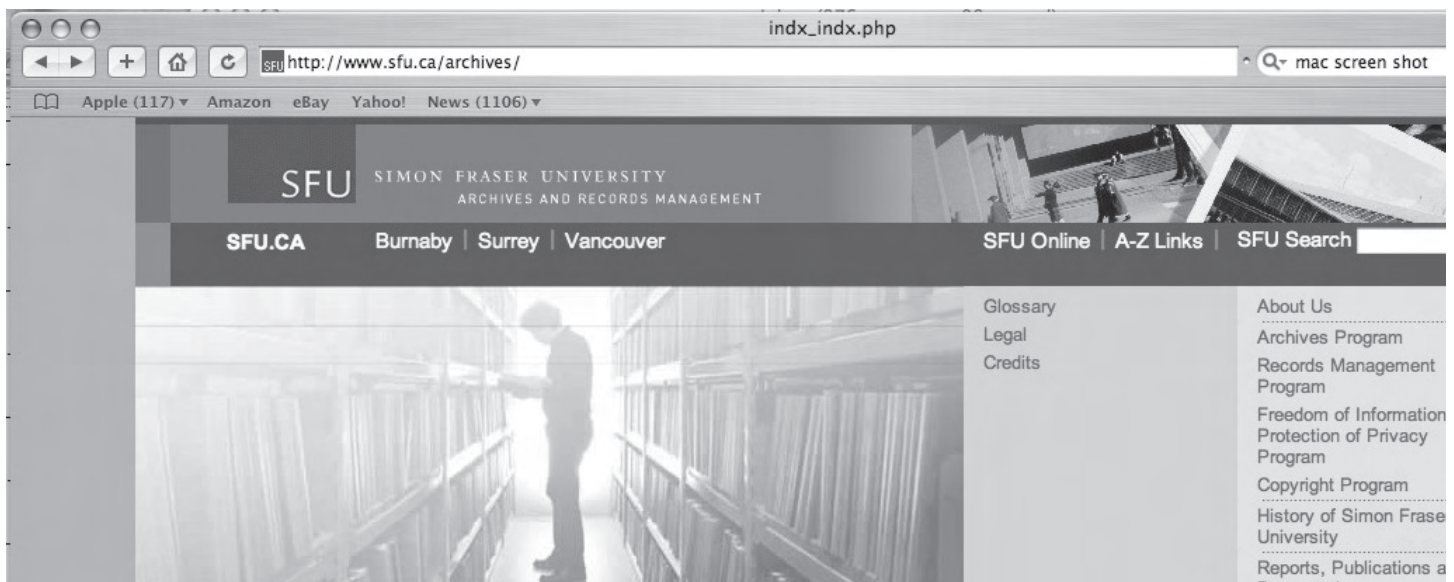
The accompanying images clearly demonstrate the fruits of Hill's labour.

Thanks to the far-sighted efforts of the SFU Archives, researchers will be able to access the information contained in these unique and significant documents for years to come.

For more information, visit the SFU Archives online at: <http://www.sfu.ca/archives/>

A few of the cleaned letters appear on the following pages

1 Barbara Rogers, "Simon Fraser - Explorer." *The Greater Vancouver Book*. Discover Vancouver. <<http://www.discovervancouver.com/gvb/simonsfr.asp>> Accessed July 10, 2007.



Memorandum

William Fraser alias William Mortay-churse was the first
Caret from the family of Lovat.

1st Hugh Fraser of Culbokie was married to Andrew Munro's
daughter laid off Bail in Culcom and by a
patronymic derived from his name his eldest heir
is since called MacMullethan or son of Hugh, he
got the lands of Gird - he had seven sons & three
daughters he purchased the lands of Culbokie.

2^d Hugh Fraser of Culbokie alias MacMullethan or was
married to Catherine MacKenzie alias Catherine Mac
vic vic is can daughter to the Laird of Furlach by
whom he had seven sons & one daughter his first
son & heir. Was -

3^d William Fraser of Culbokie alias William Nichol was
married to Mary Grant daughter to Mr. James Grant of
Munich he had seven sons & three daughters.

4th Hugh Fraser of Culbokie alias MacMullethan or was married
to Christine Christolam daughter to the Christolam of
Strathglass he had seven sons & three daughters.

5th William Fraser of Culbokie, was married to Margaret
Grant daughter to Patrick Grant Laird of Glenmoriston.

6th William Fraser of Culbokie was married to Margaret
McDonnell daughter of John McDonnell of Ardara.

7th William Fraser of Culbokie is married to Margaret
Thomson daughter to Alex Thomson of Appoillie.

8th William Fraser of Culbokie is married to a sister of the
present Ballachryne.

+ the celebrated Macdonald Fraser

Fragment - Sketch of the antiquities of the Frasers

The arms of the Frasers quartered with those of Clapp
and Fleming nor was Sir Simon himself an aptitude
he was descended by an old M.S. in the custody of my
Lord Statten from Pierre Fraser Chevalier de Foile
one of the petitioners of those Ambassadors Charlemagne
is said to have sent to Scotland about the year 800
and who having the good luck to marry Euphemia only
daughter to Roderick King Athine's favorite - he got by her
a plentiful estate in the south - Scotland he and his
son did believe this tradition. But he tells us that the first names of
Fraser is as ancient as the reign of Malcolm Canmore and
in that of Malcolm the maiden wife of a that one Simon Fraser
was a donor to the Abbey of Kelso from him Sir Simon
Dalrymple deduces the descension of the Frasers of the Dalrymple
whose progenitor he says was Oliver Cattle dealer
to the kings that married Mary of Scotland the first wife
of the present Marquis of Eglinton. He also tells us from
authentic records that in the reign of St. Robert there
were two eminent gentlemen designed Sir Alexander Fraser
the other Sir Helt Fraser of Cowie I can give no account of
the posterity of the first but I am sure the last is still
represented by the Lord Statten whose ancestor Sir Helt Fraser
the first Laird of Fife was to speak on the terms of law on

Simon Lord Lovat

His early attachments to the House of Stuart -
Assumes the title and claims the Estates of the deceased
Lord Lovat - His daughter institutes legal proceedings
against her relative - Lord Lovat's stratagem to keep
her in hope frustrated - His atrocious marriage with her
daughter - Attempts issued for his arrest - He the Queen
- stands at defiance - His flight to the Court of the
Pretender - Returns to Scotland as the accredited
agent of the House of Stuart - Arrested by the French King
for treachery - Enters into holy orders to his release -
Joins the Society of Jesuits - Returns to Scotland
and joins the adherents of the house of Stuart -
Obtains undisputed possession of his titles for his
person - Joins the insurgents after the Battle of
Ferguson - His arrest after the battle of Culloden -
His trial and execution -

This extraordinary man was the eldest
son of Thomas Gordon of Banchory by Sybilla MacLeod
daughter of the Chief of that powerful Clan - He was born
in 1688 - At the age of 24 he assumed the title and
claimed the estates of his kinsman Hugh Lord Lovat as
nearest male heir - This Hugh left an only daughter
Melina MacLeod who married Mackenzie of Rosehall
and who headed as Chief of his wife's Clan the Gordons in
favor of the Chevalier de St. George while Simon
enlisted himself under the standard of the House
of Stuart - Soon brought over the Gordons from the Camp
of the Duke of Cumberland - at the destruction took place on the
eve of the Battle of Sheriffmuir Lord Lovat was of service to
the House of Hanover, in preventing Argyll falling
into the hands of the Jacobites - He was rewarded with

Book Reviews



Books for review and book reviews should be sent to:
Frances Gundry, Book Review Editor,
BC Historical News,
P.O. Box 5254, Station B., Victoria, BC V8R 6N4

Clam Gardens; Aboriginal Mariculture on Canada's West Coast.

Judith Williams. Vancouver, New Star Books
(Transmontanus 15), 2006. 128 pp. Photos, notes, index.
\$19.00 paperback.

An artist who is also a determined and thorough researcher and an experienced beachcomber, Judith Williams pokes about British Columbia's shore and islands, digging clams, encountering and questioning coast-dwellers (Native and new-comers), and following her evidence to unsanctioned conclusions. As a consequence of her digging and questioning, she has come to challenge the received view of indigenous people as hunter-gatherers. In an earlier book in this same series, *Two Wolves at the Dawn of Time*, she questioned the notion that "inhabitants of the most complex Native culture in North America" wandered "aimlessly around in the rain hoping to trip over food." She looked then at cranberry orchards and clover gardens. The seed of the present book germinated in 1993 when Klahoose elder Elizabeth Harry (Keekus) directed her to the clam garden structures on Quadra Island.

From there her quest took her by boat to Cortes Island, around Desolation Sound, and north to the Broughton Archipelago. She borrowed her definition from Billy Proctor, upcoast personality and clam garden cultivator, who learned from Native people that a clam garden "was a clam beach that was tended with great care and a lot of work. Rocks were gathered up from the sandy beach area and piled in a ring along the low-tide perimeter. The removal of the rocks made more room for the clams, and the wall of stones prevented the sandy beach from eroding." Accessible only at extreme low tide, these elaborate structures were designed to foster butter clam production and became one of the foundation blocks of a coastal economy, likely preceding modern shellfish mariculture installations by hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years.

She meshed her exploration and documentation with those of marine geomorphologist John Harper, who spotted the human-made rock walls, while mapping

coastal areas from a helicopter. When presenting their findings to what should have been the appropriate provincial and academic agencies, both Williams and Harper had met with icy indifference and even resistance. Clam gardens were not mentioned in the "literature"; there was no place for them in the archaeological, historical or ethnological scheme of things. Editor and investigative historian Terry Glavin suggested what proved to be a fruitful sharing of resources and "discoveries." Williams points out that the clam gardens were not "discovered", because they were never lost.

This little book gathers several threads, the first the story of the clam gardens with the implications for understanding Native economy. But then there is the question of the suspected suppression, by the anthropology father figure, Franz Boas, and his successors to the present, of evidence which threatens preconceived hypotheses. Evolving from the first thread and alleviating the second is the ongoing story of people like Williams, Harper, Keekus, Proctor and Glavin, who care about the West Coast and its history and legacy, and who keep poking about the islands, meeting on beaches, and asking hard questions.

Phyllis Reeve is a resident of Gabriola Island

The Comox Valley

Paula Wild with Rick James, photography by Boomer Jerritt. Madeira Park, B.C., Harbour Publishing, 2006.
143 p. illus., bibliog..., \$34.95 hardcover.

The Comox Valley, by Paula Wild with Rick James and Boomer Jerritt (photographer) is a colourful introduction to one of BC's most popular regions, which extends along the east coast of central Vancouver Island from Oyster River south to Fanny Bay.

Wild explores the Valley's three centres of Courtenay, Comox and Cumberland, and the smaller communities of Merville and Black Creek to the north and Royston, Union Bay, Fanny Bay, Denman and Hornby Islands to the south. Mt Washington and Strathcona Park are also

included. A sampling of human history is given for each community, and aspects of natural history, geography, arts, culture, recreation and industry are interwoven into the text.

Boomer Jerritt's superb photographs capture the beauty and flavour of the area and its people. Printed on flattering glossy paper, there are several full-page photos, and a two-page spread heads each chapter. Other photographers include Rick James.

Wild successfully brings the history of the Valley to life by describing the characters that have shaped its communities. The history of the First Peoples of the Valley is illustrated by chief Nim-Nim, the last of the full-blooded Pentlatch who recalled many wars prior to the arrival of white settlers.

The life of a pioneer farmer is told through Eric Duncan, a tenacious and frugal man who moved to the valley in 1877 from the Shetland Islands. Farming played a critical role in the history of the Comox Valley, which Wild emphasizes.

Logging was another important industry. Comox lumber baron Robert Filberg encouraged the hiring of local employees, and let them use his cabins at William's beach. Filberg's 9-acre estate is now used for public functions.

Wild recounts the history of Courtenay and Comox, and includes a section on the past and present military presence at Goose Spit and CFB Comox. South of Courtenay, the seaside community of Royston was a former log dump and booming ground, and Union Bay was a busy shipping port for coal. Fanny Bay, at the southern boundary of the Comox Valley, has long been a major site for shellfish harvesting.

The Valley has produced many activists. One of the most notorious is Ginger Goodwin, who stood up for the rights of miners and workers through strike action, and was killed when his name became associated with the Cumberland miner's strike of 1912-1914. Environmental, as well as political activists continue to have a strong presence in the Valley. Best known are Melda Buchanan (1924-2004), who was

instrumental in protecting the 650-hectare Seal Bay Nature Park and Ruth Masters, who recently donated part of her property to become the Masters Greenway and Wildlife Corridor.

Wild highlights the unique natural history of the Comox Valley, noting that it is a significant area for birds, is home to rare species such as the Morrison Creek Lamprey, and encompasses a rare Garry Oak ecosystem. The natural beauty draws tourists to the mountains, beaches, and parks. Skiing, hiking, mountain biking, and golfing are popular recreational activities in the area.

The Comox Valley is a thriving place for the arts. Wild pays homage to artists Brian Scott and Jack Shadbolt, and writers Jack Hodgins and Des Kennedy. The Valley also has a strong tradition in theatre, which stems back to Sid Williams, a hiker, skier and boxer who served on Courtenay city council for 20 years, and was an avid actor in theatrical productions. Today, Courtenay's main theatre is named after him.

Part history, coffee table book and tourist guide, *The Comox Valley* is a joy to read and provides a good introduction to the area. Readers seeking a more comprehensive history may wish to check out the "Sources and Further Reading" section at the back of the book.

Though the book celebrates the area's indisputable beauty, it sometimes reads rather like a tourist promotion brochure. Wild does, however, hint that the Valley is changing, due to unprecedented growth in recent years. Many residents are concerned about large-scale developments. A burgeoning population may threaten the very "paradise" that drew them here.

Even long-term residents will pick up new information from this book. The photography of Boomer Jerritt is outstanding, and the layout is very attractive. It is a book worth having for anyone wishing to know more about this special part of B.C.

Jocie Ingram lives in the Comox Valley

Lantzville: the First Hundred Years.

Lynne Reeve. *Lantzville, B.C., Lantzville Historical Society, 2007. 96 p., illus. paperback.*

This letter sized book outlines in text and photographs the settlement, changing economics and growth of the small community of Lantzville, B.C. from its first settlement in 1868 to mid twentieth century. The village is situated between Nanaimo and Parksville on the east coast of Vancouver Island.

Author Lynne Reeve begins her history with Lantzville pioneer George Copley's heartfelt 1905 poem:

*Oh Nanoose Bay though beautiful spot
Where first I found my freedom.*

*T'was on thy shore I took up my lot
And thought I had found my freedom
But soon I found to my regret
That scenery is quite unsubstantial
For a mortgage on it I could not get
When I wanted something financial.*

And for many of Lantzville's settlers during the first hundred years, it was the financial swings of extraction economics that shaped their community's character. Lynne Reeve details in four chapters the changes from stump ranches and fishing that dominated up to the turn of the century to coal mining that eclipsed everything from 1905 until the Depression years. As the coal seams ran low, Lantzville entered another era whereby its life became one of a hard scrabble economy with a number of local residents involved in subsistence farming, logging and fishing. At the same time, the waterfront, unloved by the farmers, began to blossom as a summer cottage area for some Nanaimo and Victoria residents. Ms. Reeve's final chapter provides brief biographies of pioneer and leading families.

In 1947, the Island Highway was deliberately routed around the village to by-pass the unsightly abandoned colliery shacks and other "blighted areas". To many of the Lantzville merchants this seemed like disaster but as Lynne Reeve suggests, in the

long run, it preserved a village that might have become another northern suburb of Nanaimo. Since the span of the book ends in the 1960s, the author doesn't document the 2003 successful community initiative to incorporate as the District of Lantzville. Achieving municipal status after a century and half may indicate residents with a well-developed sense of themselves and, perhaps, a strong feeling for their history and future.

The book could have used more careful copy-editing and attention to the tweaking and reproduction of the many well-chosen photographs. *Lantzville: the First Hundred Years* is a classic local history. It has all the strengths that flow from the author's love of her community and its people and all the weaknesses that may emerge from the narrow focus of local narratives. The writing is lively and engaging but largely ignores the contexts in which Lantzville ebbed and waned. Nevertheless, it will give pleasure and serve as a useful compilation for future generations of mid-Island residents and history buffs.

Ross Carter is the editor of Historiana the newsletter of the Bowen Island Historians.

Leaving Paradise; Indigenous Hawaiians in the Pacific Northwest, 1787-1898.

Jean Barman and Bruce McIntyre Watson. Honolulu, University of Hawai'i Press, 2006. 512 p. illus. \$42.50 (U.S.) hard cover.

In June of 1787, Winee, the first Hawaiian known to visit the Northwest Coast of America, arrived at Nootka aboard Captain Charles Barkley's trading vessel, *Imperial Eagle*. Save for the matter of her gender, Winee was typical of the vast majority of indigenous Hawaiians to come to this coast. Her true name has either not been recorded – "Winee" may actually be Frances Barkley's corruption of the Hawaiian word *wahine*, meaning *woman* and her employment was that of a servant in the fur trade.

The first section of the book recounts the history of Hawaiian settlement in what would become the Columbia District of

Hudson's Bay Company, comprising the area which today is British Columbia, Oregon and Washington. Permanent Hawaiian settlement on this coast began in February of 1811 when John Jacob Astor's Pacific Fur Company hired 12 men at Oahu to work at Astoria. The practice of hiring Hawaiian contract labourers was continued by the North West Company and ultimately the Hudson's Bay Company. They were regarded by the fur traders as good and faithful workers, and it is quite likely that the Columbia Department could not have functioned without them. The vast majority were *maka'ainana*, the common people in a society which had been feudal but was rapidly changing to a cash economy, the *ali'i*, the nobility, no longer felt a traditional obligation for the lower orders – in the words of the mid-nineteenth century Hawaiian historian, S. M. Kamakau "The working man labours like a cart-hauling ox that gets a kick in the buttocks. He shivers in the cold and dew laden wind, or broils in the sun with no rest from his toil. Whether he lives or dies it is all alike." It is no wonder that many Hawaiian contract labourers, almost all of whom were men, entered in relationships with First Nations women, either in the custom of the country or sanctioned by law, and determined to remain here.

The period from the Gold Rush to the ending of the Hawaiian Islands independence in 1898 by their annexation as a colony of the United States, saw the establishment of a Hawaiian Métis community in British Columbia, where they had the same civil rights as the European and African settler community. In contrast was the situation in the neighbouring republic, where the Hawaiians and their descendents had the status of the Chinese, which facilitated their assimilation with the aboriginal population in that country. This is not to suggest that racism, or pressure for assimilation with the aboriginal population, were absent in British Columbia. Indeed, the very existence of a Hawaiian community was oblivious or irrelevant to the bulk of the majority society, but the Hawaiians were able to make political and social

contributions here which would have been impossible below the line.

The second section of the book consists of an alphabetical series of short biographical essays on approximately 800 Hawaiians who either visited or settled on the North West Coast. The various forms of each individual's name used in primary sources are given as well as the actual Hawaiian name of that person, in those cases where it can be ascertained. This feature will be of great use to genealogists.

This book will probably remain a standard and essential reference for persons interested in the fur trade era, immigration to British Columbia, newcomer- First Nations relations and the Hawaiian diaspora. It is well written, based on extensive research in Hudson's Bay Company and Hawaiian government records as well as those in various British Columbian, Californian and Oregon archives. Few of the emigrants were literate in English, if they were literate at all. Thus, if the voices of the emigrants themselves or unofficial accounts of their stories exist, they will have to be found at some future date in the nineteenth century Hawaiian language popular press or family papers which are yet to be discovered, but the basic story is unlikely to change.

Michael Halleran lives in Victoria

Harbour City: Nanaimo in Transition, 1920-1967.

Jan Peterson. Victoria, Heritage House, 2006. 176 p.
\$19.95 paperback.

Jan Peterson's final volume in her Nanaimo trilogy is a fitting conclusion to her vibrant local history, packed with detail, colourful stories, and lively energetic writing. It is filled with evocative images that capture the mood of the changing times, and the attention of the reader, beginning in the very first haunting line that foreshadows the looming changes: "The rhythm of the day in Nanaimo was set by mine whistles and by the chimes of 'Big Frank,' the Dominion Post Office clock" (p. 11). With quick brush strokes, Peterson portrays Nanaimo as a thriving community that

was flexible, vibrant and inter-connected, a microcosm of the dynamic national and international forces of the times that affected industry, politics, education, culture and social relations. As the "coal mining industry slowly and painfully became a footnote in Nanaimo's history," (p. 110), the people of Nanaimo met the challenges and adversity of the collapse of the mining industry by adapting to the possibilities offered by its harbour and forest resources. The transition is evocatively captured on the cover of the book in Michael Dean's painting, *Princess Marguerite*, at the CPR wharf, Cameron Island, Nanaimo -- the belching smoke stack a harbinger of a later 21st century intransigent environmental challenge.

In the midst of the social and economic progress clearly delineated in the book, there are occasional hints of an alternate world of devastation that call for further study. These include: a 1937 ad for Hotel Malaspina which read, "expert white help only" (p. 53); the story of the 1942 arrest, registration and evacuation of Japanese members of the community (pp. 133-5); and George Pearke's speech in 1948 lamenting the state of the Indian reserve filled with hovels with no lights, water or sewers, and children who had received no education for the previous five to six years (p. 143).

The book is divided into 20 thematic and colorfully titled chapters that develop chronologically, starting with the "Roaring Twenties" and ending with the "Fabulous Fifties" and sixties. It touches on many themes, including law, mining, education, fire, religion, politics, doctors, harbours, forestry and mayors, ending with a celebration of the community efforts that built the Nanaimo Community Museum to preserve, in the words of William Barraclough, the history of "those thoughtful persons who preceded us" (p. 202). Peterson honours the names of individuals in list after list of those who contributed their amazing energy, insight and time to the public sphere of life. Reflecting the inter-connectedness of Nanaimo's vocal, argumentative and committed civic life, it is not uncommon to see one person listed in many spheres

of community life, including City Council, School Board, Hospital Board, Church, Music Festival, Rotary Club and sports.

Besides the great story-telling, another strength of the book is Pederson's use of well documented and clearly footnoted primary sources, including Nanaimo newspapers articles, archival records, oral histories and photographs, which enrich the vibrant sense of immediacy created by the writing style. It is enhanced by a comprehensive bibliography of primarily local history studies and newspapers, and includes an impressive list of archival documents created and preserved in Nanaimo, which is a personal delight. There is also a good index, and several appendices, including a comprehensive list of all mayors and council-members from 1920-1967.

The book is a great read for anyone interested in the history of Nanaimo.

Previous books in the trilogy:

Black Diamond City: Nanaimo the Victorian Era, Victoria: Heritage House, 2002.

Hub City: Nanaimo, 1886-1920. Victoria: Heritage House, 2003.

Jane Turner is a retired archivist and former resident of Nanaimo

Old Indian Trails of the Canadian Rockies

Mary T. S. Schaffer. Vancouver, BC, Rocky Mountain Books, 2007. xi + 179 p. \$19.95 oftcover.

It is a sad fact that Canadians have allowed books written by those intrepid persons who explored and made the first ascents in our Canadian Rockies to lapse into out-of-print status since they make important contributions to our knowledge of the region and, in addition, are great adventure stories that should be available on an ongoing basis. The publisher, Rocky Mountain Books, is to be commended for initiating a series of reprints of these classics with A. P. Coleman's *The Canadian Rockies – New and Old Trails* and has followed with the one under review. It is hoped that this initiative will be successful and that many more titles will soon follow.

Mary Schaffer's book is of particular importance since she was the first woman

to organize a trip of exploration in an era when women were expected to leave such foolish endeavours to men. She was born into an upper class Quaker household in Philadelphia and became interested in the outdoors only because she married Dr. George Shaffer who was a medical doctor and an amateur botanist. Together, they first visited the Rockies in 1889 shortly after the CPR connected the west coast to the remainder of Canada. Mary slowly developed a love for the wild places and her skills as an amateur artist were refined to include detailed and scaled water colour paintings of the flora that her husband discovered. She also developed significant skills as a photographer. Sadly her husband died suddenly in 1903. She memorialized her grief by enlisting the assistance of Stewardson Brown, the Herbarium Curator at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia to complete the pioneering work started by her late husband since she lacked the necessary botanical knowledge. The book - *Alpine Flora of the Canadian Mountains* - was published in 1907. Mary, by this time 45 years of age, had visited most of the areas already explored in Banff National Park and was eager for more challenging adventures. She had shared these travels while working on her book with her friend, Mollie Adams. She decided to enlist the services of a Banff outfitter, Bill Warren and his assistant, Sid Unwin, to spend the summers of 1907 and 1908 exploring the region in Jasper National Park east of the valley through which the North Saskatchewan River flowed. There were rumours of the existence of a large lake, now known as Maligne Lake. This became their objective and they succeeded in reaching and exploring it during these two trips.

Old Indian Trails of the Canadian Rockies describes these travels in a very careful fashion for it was not considered ladylike for women to travel alone in the wilderness without husbands or family. Mary was a pioneer feminist of a radical brand but still she was extremely circumspect and careful to avoid personal scandal. Nevertheless, her perspective as a woman is always present in

her story and differs from the unemotional style used by the male explorers and climbers of this area. It is for this good reason, amongst many others, that this book deserves to be available to succeeding generations who have learned to love the outdoor wilderness and seek the peace and tranquility that Mary loved. Readers should know that a fine biography of her life written by the author of the foreword, Janice Sanford Beck, is in print to complement this reprint. Unfortunately, cost constraints prevented including Mary's photographs published in the original edition. The out-of-print *A Hunter Of Peace* by E. J. Hart also included her story as well as copies of the hand coloured versions of Mary's original photographs that she had used for slide shows about her trips. Mary married Bill Warren in 1915 and they lived the remainder of their lives in a house in Banff that is now part of the Whyte Museum and Archives.

Harvey A. Buckmaster has hiked extensively in Banff and Jasper National Parks and is a collector of archival material about this area.

Unsettling Encounters: First Nations Imagery in the Art of Emily Carr

Gerta Moray. Vancouver, UBC Press, 2006. 400 p., illus., bibliog., \$75.00 hardcover.

Wild Flowers

Emily Carr, illustrations by Emily Henrietta Woods. Victoria, B.C., Royal British Columbia Museum, 2006 (distributed by UBC Press), 96 p., illus. \$19.95 paperback.

Aspate of recent books and exhibitions, not to mention plays and even music, indicates that the Emily Carr Industry is still in a growth phase. The Vancouver Art Gallery exhibition in the autumn of 2006 received a tremendous amount of publicity and attracted large crowds; its accompanying coffee-table book, *Emily Carr* by Ian M. Thom, Charles C. Hill and Johanne Lamoureux (Douglas & McIntyre), provides essays and interpretations of Carr's life and exhibitions, adding new information to

that of the late Doris Shadbolt, whose *Art of Emily Carr*, first published in 1979, was the standard work for a generation.

Published in the same year as the book by Thom *et al*, Gerta Moray's *Unsettling Encounters* is like a fresh breeze blowing away the dust and cobwebs that have accumulated on the artist's story in the six decades since her death. Moray, a professor of art history at the University of Guelph, reassesses Carr's body of work, rebalancing all of her influences to give a superb portrait of "her life and times." The book is divided into three sections: Contexts for a Colonial Artist; A Pictorial Record of Native Villages and Totem Poles, 1899-1913; and Homesick for Indian. The lavishly illustrated middle part of the book reproduces the life-changing work she created on her trips to the north; later, text and reproductions of classic oils like *Vanquished*, *Indian Church*, *Big Raven* and *Guyasdoms D'Sonoqua* show how she adapted to the dictates of Modernism under the guidance of Lawren Harris, finding therein national recognition and an opened doorway into the pantheon. Hundreds of period black and white photographs show gallery interiors, friends and travel scenes, bringing to life the world in which Carr struggled for acceptance.

Throughout the book, Carr comes across as a storyteller in paint, words and actions – an activist artist in the modern sense – an intermediary in the relations between the settler and indigenous cultures. But was she the artistic equivalent of Grey Owl, just a romantic and picturesque figure, or was she to be judged as a serious artist? And, as a woman, was she dismissed by critics and handicapped in the competitive, masculine arena of the eastern Canadian art Establishment?

I had not realized how early and quickly the Emily Carr legend developed, how it was said that she "understood the Indians," and how she walked a fine line between producing commercial knock-offs of Native art themes while instilling her own fine art with the power and spirit she had witnessed in the totems and carvings in the northern villages. What is clear is that,

as an artist, she was not blessed with great technical skill in drawing and conveying pictorial space but, as she matured, her use of colour and form developed enormous emotional power.

The most satisfying aspect of the book is the reinstatement of Carr's early documentary work in the Native villages of northern BC to the pinnacle where Carr herself believed it belonged. Other books have tended to dismiss it as overly representational and uninteresting artistically, but to Carr it remained a critical part of the story she spent her life telling.

To me, this book was as much a revelation for my understanding of her as Robert L. Herbert's *Impressionism: Art, Leisure, and Parisian Society* (1988, Yale University Press) was for understanding 19th century French art. Moray writes clearly with little "art-speak" jargon and paints a convincing picture of the complex, contradictory worlds of the dominant settler culture, the declining Native one, and the aspirations of the tiny elite of anthropologists, museum curators and artists who strove to define a Canadian identity in the 1920s and 1930s.

Emily Carr's famous oils of the 1930s grew out of her reinterpretation of her 1912-era documentary work. Moray writes in great detail about Carr rediscovering her Fauvist past from her European art education and how the "Indian pictures" of A.Y. Jackson and the Svengali-like influence of Lawren Harris came to direct her art towards a more iconic, semi-abstract style of painting with less of the "history and cold fact" she felt was in her early paintings. She dabbled in Harris's theosophy and found some sympathies between it and her own nature-loving, animist beliefs, but kept to her own path. Moray almost, but not quite, answers the great riddle for Carr junkies: did Harris imply, "paint like me and you'll get into the National Gallery," or did Carr think, "if I paint like him I'll get the commercial breakthrough I've been waiting for since I first put a brush in my hand"? It's a tantalizing question, but the answer remains uncertain. Regardless, her formal experimentation allowed "contemporary

Canadian critics to claim a place for her in the context of the European and American pioneers of modern art."

As her health began to fail in the late 1930s and she could no longer face the challenges of painting large-scale oils, even in her studio, Carr turned increasingly to writing and developed an extraordinary gift for whimsy and lyricism. If her late paintings could be almost oppressively dark and solid, her prose was transparent and deft. *Klee Wyck* is a classic journal of her adventures as a travelling artist, the perfect flip side of the coin of her "Indian paintings" from the 1912 voyages. *The Book of Small* could well be the perfect memoir of childhood, and *The House of All Sorts* shows her at her most eccentric, a weird boardinghouse operator in provincial, uptight Victoria during the 1920s – her years in her other wilderness, when she was a fish out of water artistically and socially, couldn't sell a painting and abandoned her career.

Wild Flowers is Emily Carr struggling to find her voice; reading it is perhaps like listening to the early compositions of Mozart. The book is a series of word portraits, some better and more finished than others, which Carr wrote as she was feeling her way into new expressive forms. Archivist and historian Kathryn Bridge provides some context to this writing and introduces the book's illustrator, Emily Henrietta Woods, who was Carr's childhood drawing teacher. It is an interesting juxtaposition, as Woods's flower watercolours are traditional, stiff and rather opaque, not unlike the Victoria culture that Carr spent her life rebelling against. It's a slim volume, in every sense of the word. Does it represent the final plumbing of the Carr oeuvre, as the Anthologies were to the Beatles? I doubt it.

Michael Kluckner is a writer and artist now living in Australia

Miscellany

Anne and Philip Yandle Best Article Award

Each year, the British Columbia Historical Federation offers a certificate and cash prize to the author of an article published in *British Columbia History* that best enhances knowledge of the history of British Columbia and provides enjoyable reading. Judging is based upon subject development, writing skill, freshness of material, and its appeal to a general readership interested in all aspects of the history of the province.

In 2007, the Federation renamed its Best Article Award in honor of Anne and Philip Yandle dedicated members of the Federation and the cofounders of *British Columbia Historical News* (1968), the predecessor to *British Columbia History* (2005). During the journal's first ten years, the Yandles edited, typed, mimeographed, collated and mailed the publication. For many years Anne served as the journal's Book Review Editor.

The winner for 2006 is Greg Nesteroff for, "Boris Karloff in British Columbia," which appeared in *British Columbia History*, 39.1.

Greg's article received considerable attention from the media with articles in local newspapers and interest from the CBC •

Genealogy Guide Available

We're pleased to announce the publication of the 15th edition of the Cloverdale Library's genealogy guide. The best news is that it will be available free on-line at:

<http://www.spl.surrey.bc.ca/Programs+and+Services/Genealogy/Canadian+Genealogical+Resources+Guide.htm>

It's searchable by using Ctrl+F & the Table of Contents is also hyper-linked.

Print copies will be showing up in the collection soon. We will also be making copies available for sale for the public and all the ordering information is available on our website.

Laurie J. Cooke Information Services Librarian Cloverdale Branch, Surrey Public Library
604-598-7328
lcooke@surrey.ca

Fishing Industry History Online

The City of Richmond Archives is pleased to announce a new online resource on its website. < <http://www.richmond.ca/cityhall/archives/exhibits/barkerletterbooks.htm> >

The first fifteen years of letters from the Barker Letter Books, donated to the City of Richmond Archives by British Columbia Packers Limited in 2001, have been transcribed and are now available online. This will be of interest to researchers of the historical development of the fishing industry in British Columbia.

The Barker Letter Books were compiled between 1905 and 1926. They consist of the outgoing correspondence of William Henry Barker, an early General Manager of the company. Mr. Barker, born in Manchester, England in 1853, joined the British Columbia Packers' Association in October, 1904 as General Manager. It was the beginning of a 22-year career with the company of which he later became President.

The letters chronicle revolutionary changes in the fishing industry in British Columbia: machines replaced hand-labour; new technology in the manufacturing of cans improved safety and reduced labour costs; engines replaced oars in fishing boats; and the regulation of the fishery by the Canadian government became more restrictive and comprehensive.

Volunteers have been responsible for the painstaking transcription and proofreading process. They continue to work on Volume 2, 1920 to 1926, which will be available later in the winter.

Lynne Waller, Archivist, City of Richmond Archives
7700 Minoru Gate, Richmond, BC V6Y 1R9
lwaller@richmond.ca 604-247-8305
www.richmond.ca/archives

Archives Temporary Closure

Please be advised that the Archives of the Anglican Diocese of New Westminster / Provincial Synod of BC and Yukon as well as the United Church BC Conference Archives will be closed while they move into their newly built archives. They will officially re-open January 24, 2008.



Ron Welwood (left) presents Greg Nesteroff with the Anne and Philip Yandle Best Article Award for 2006 that was recently awarded by the BC Historical Federation to the local writer for his piece on Boris Karloff's ties to Nelson. Welwood accepted the award on Nesteroff's behalf in Victoria. Welwood was also honoured by the federation for his service.

Appearing in
the Nelson
Daily News



Main Streets in Chilliwack and Nelson BC

The British Columbia Historical Federation is an umbrella organization embracing regional societies.

LOCAL HISTORICAL SOCIETIES are entitled to become Member Societies of the BC Historical Federation. All members of these local historical societies shall by that very fact be members of the Federation.

AFFILIATED GROUPS are organizations with specialized interests or objects of a historical nature.

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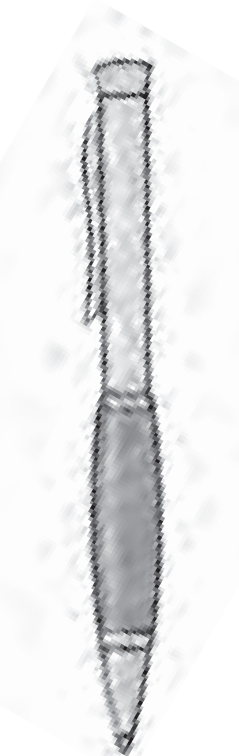
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24th Annual Competition for Writers of BC History Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for Historical Writing Deadline: 31 December 2007

The British Columbia Historical Federation invites book submissions for their annual Competition for Writers of BC History. Books representing any facet of BC history, published in 2006 will be considered by the judges who are looking for quality presentations and fresh material. Community histories, biographies, records of a project or organization as well as personal reflections, etc. are eligible for consideration. Reprints or revisions of books are not eligible.

Lieutenant-Governor's Medal

The Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for Historical Writing will be awarded to an individual writer whose book contributes significantly to the history of British Columbia. Additional prizes may be awarded to other books at the discretion of the judges.

Publicity

All entries receive considerable publicity. Winners will receive a Certificate of Merit, a monetary award and an invitation to the Awards Banquet of the Federation's annual conference.

Submissions

For mailing instructions please contact:
Barb Hynek,
Chair/Judge of the BCHF Book Competition
2477 140th Street, Surrey, B.C. V4P 2C5
Email: bhynek@telus.net
Phone: 604.535.9090

Books entered become property of the BC Historical Federation.

By submitting books for this competition, authors agree that the British Columbia Historical Federation may use their names in press releases and Federation publications regarding the book competition.