



# Victoria Historical Society Publication

NUMBER 22, WINTER 2009

## ~ PROGRAMME FOR 2009 - 2010 ~

All meetings begin at 7:30 pm at the James Bay New Horizons Centre, 234 Menzies Street except the December one.

### 26 November, 2009

*The Quadra Story: the History of Quadra Island.* Jeanette Taylor follows up on her book *Tidal Passages* (on the Discovery Islands) with this rich history and stories about Quadra Island.

### 09 December, 2009

Christmas dinner at the **Uvic University Club**. Sylvia Van Kirk will speak on *Celebrating Victoria Pioneers: the Macdonalds of Armadale*. Sen. William Macdonald and his wife Catherine were early Vancouver Island pioneers who made significant accomplishments in their times. Dinner pre-registration is required.

### 28 January, 2010

*British Columbia a Century Ago.* Patricia Roy, a noted BC historian, and former president of the BCHF, will give an illustrated talk on the first decade of the 1900's which saw the formation of our modern province.

### 25 February, 2010

*The Toponymy of Vancouver Island.* Michael Layland is a map historian and former president of VHS. He will describe how and when the place names were given and appeared on maps and charts.

### 25 March, 2010

*San Juan Island, its History and BC Connections.* Mike Vouri is the Chief of Interpretation for the San Juan Islands National Historic Park. He was the host of the trip of VHS members made to the island last spring.

### 22 April, 2010

*Victoria Fire Department's Fire Department.* Dave Parker is the author of the book *First Water Tigers*, and former curator of history at the RBCM. He has done research and knows the history of the VFD intimately.

### 27 May, 2010

*Victoria's Royal Theatre.* Ken Johnson has been connected with the Royal Theatre in many ways. He received a citation from the Hallmark Society for his work in restoration of the facade.

For more information, visit:

[www.victoriahistoricalsociety.bc.ca](http://www.victoriahistoricalsociety.bc.ca)



## ~ CHRISTMAS DINNER MEETING ~

A reminder that the date and place of the Christmas Dinner Meeting has been changed from those previously published.

It will be held on Wednesday, 09 December, 2009 at 18:15 at the University Club, UVic. The cost for the dinner will be \$32.00 per person, and you are welcome to bring guests. When purchasing tickets please advise if anyone in your group is vegetarian or has specific dietary restrictions.

There are car parks adjacent to the club, but try to arrive just after 18:00, because at that time the system changes from an hourly rate to a flat evening rate (\$2.00).

If you are driving, it is best to avoid the Ring Road. Take the West Campus Road off Gordon Head Road and follow the signs to the University Club. Maps indicating the location of the club and the car parks will be available at the meeting.

If you anticipate difficulty getting to the meeting using public transit, please advise when purchasing your ticket(s) and efforts will be made to arrange a ride for you.



~ COMING EVENTS ~

**Light at the End of Empire**  
*Fisgard, Race rocks and the early development of lighthouses on Canada's West Coast*

by Dale Mumford

In 2010 Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Site will celebrate its 150th anniversary. Fisgard and Race Rocks were the only lighthouses built during the colonial period of British Columbia's history. Discover the early history of these vital aids to navigation and the system that grew from these first two lights.

Dale Mumford is the Community Relations Officer for Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites and has spent more than 30 years with Parks Canada interpreting the history of Fisgard Lighthouse and BC's early lighthouses.

Thursday, 17 December, 2009 at 19:00, Maritime Museum of British Columbia, Bastion Square, Victoria.

General admission \$12.00, MMBC members \$10.00  
Seating is limited. To reserve call 250 385 4222, ext. 103



~ PROPOSED BUS TOUR ~

*Gulf of Georgia Cannery, London Farm & Britannia Heritage Shipyard*

We leave by Wilson Bus from a common point in Victoria at 7:30 am sharp on Thursday, March 4 and catch the 9:00 am B.C. Ferry. (Breakfast on board – at your own expense). Please arrive at least 20 minutes early as the bus cannot wait.

We arrive at the Cannery about 11:20 am and spend about 1½ hours touring the exhibits. The Cannery is one of B.C.'s few historically intact canneries and commemorates the history of the West Coast fishing industry from the 1870's and is a National Historic Site.

About 1:00 pm we will catch our bus to London Farms for a very nice tea with light food and deserts. (Consider this a light lunch) We will spend

about 1-½ hours for lunch and there will be time to have a quick look around the historic farmhouse. London Farms is a four-acre historic site overlooking the Fraser River. Construction of the farm house began in 1880 by the London Brothers. The farm and the house have been restored to reflect life in Richmond during this period.

About 2:45 pm we will board our bus again for the Britannia Boat Works (about ½ a mile away) and spend about 1½ hours viewing the exhibits and ongoing projects. Britannia is also a National Historic Site and is an authentic representation of a once thriving community of canneries, boatyards, residences and stores. The buildings date back to the 1880's. You will see wooden vessels under repair, maritime displays, walk on the boardwalk and see displays of a Japanese house and a Chinese bunkhouse.

About 4:30 we will board our bus and return to catch the 7:00 pm ferry. (Dinner on the ferry - at your expense) We should arrive at our point of commencement about 9:20 pm, and then home.

SUMMARY OF COSTS :

Bus	\$65.00
Ferry ( free if you are over 65)	\$0.00 *see note
Cannery	\$7.00
Lunch	\$12.00
Britannia	\$4.00

Total cost to each \$88.00 \*see note

Note\*

You must be 65 and present a B.C. Gold Card for a free ferry ride. All others must add (\$13.50 x 2 = \$27) to the cost of the trip (\$88 + \$27 = \$115.)

Please inform **John Whittaker (jswhitt@shaw.ca) or 250 598-3982** if you would like to join us on this interesting trip. Cheques can be mailed to the above at 2640 Estevan Ave., Victoria. BC. V8R 2T2. The tour is intended primarily for members and their guests.



~ LOSS OF LILLOOET HOUSE ~

**CITY ISSUES REVEALED**

Lillooet House, built in 1903 and lived in 1903-10 by James Andrew Douglas, the grandson of James Douglas, was demolished this October. James Andrew through his father James William, shared an inheritance of an area including Moss Rock with a younger brother John. Lillooet was a large structure, designed by William Ridgeway Wilson, in

Bungalow style with projecting eaves and massive timber columns and a stone *porte cochere* at 323 Windermere Place. Three of the holly trees came from Governor Douglas' garden in James Bay. The site, on a high hill with splendid views, had a garden of local plants associated with Garry Oaks.

A later owner in the early 1920s was Frank Masters, a well-known baker and confectioner. The road leading to Windermere became Masters Road. A series of changes in structure and use followed; after 1949 new owners created seven lots along Windermere through Master Rd. The last long-term owner deliberately removed remaining fireplaces in the 1980s and continued neglect of the building.

At the October 22nd, 2009 meeting VHS members approved a motion to send a letter to Council expressing dismay at the loss of a known historic site. Several years ago city staff and Council recognized its worth and assigned an assistant heritage planner and skilled expert with British training, Richard Lindzey, to draw up concept plans, which would retain the house and allow some development around it. Apparently this work had little effect.

The first demolition permit was issued in 2007, expiring after 2 years. The present developer Mike Miller bought all the lots and did not need a rezoning, since his proposal followed the zoning requirement. Limited consultation resulted without a hearing. Mr. Miller this year spoke to the city Inspector whose orally renewed permission was not put on the record. The developer began to remove rocks, including Lillooet's sloping garden and continues to do so.

The developer, for the sake of giving correct information, requested a meeting time and city mail-out notification with the Fairfield Community Association's Planning and Zoning Committee and the neighbours. On Nov. 16, he held a "conversation", not a hearing. The first part was for questions, the second for comments. Neighbours' questions raised concerns about the continual blasting. Mr. Miller spoke of scheduling solutions and was trying to oblige by being available and giving public information about blasting as it happened.

Hallmark Society President Nick Russell asked what process Mr. Miller went through for the demolition decision. The answer was that, after consultation with some neighbours, concern arose about the traffic generated by the number of units to be in the house. So he demolished it. (Surely, he could have

reduced the number of units!) Anyway, he had saved the special building stones to use on site and given other building parts. Myself as a Fairfield resident and heritage representative asked Mr. Miller about Richard Lindzey's solutions. He knew nothing of this, mentioning he had bought the house within the past two years. The response given to his repeated emphasis on saving some building elements for reuse was that we wanted the house and garden kept.

At comment time the neighbours were eloquent on three points. Many of them touched on the lack of notification, consultation, and input into the result. One did not know of the blasting until after it began. Another wondered why a relative at her present address was consulted twenty years ago, but not herself now. Secondly, unhappiness with blasting rocks, particularly so near to a park prized for its rockiness, was expressed as grieving for the lost rocks of Moss Rocks. Thirdly, concerns about further removal of trees and vegetation came out strongly. One woman summarized it well, when she mourned "this Bear Mountain approach" to a beloved place.

My own comment was that the name "Moss Rocks" in itself would be an indication that drastic blasting could be needed. Could there not be a policy on blasting which included this factor as an important criterion for decisions on development, whether requiring rezoning or not, whether permission being given by staff or Council? Planning Chair Wayne Hollihan stated that a year and half ago Council had said they were to develop a blasting policy.

Currently developers, having run out of the easier places, are going for the more historic and/or more difficult terrain. Lillooet's situation illustrates how regulation is clearly needed for:

- Much stronger protection of historic sites, buildings and grounds, through specific and active processes, as registration for places known before (like Lillooet) and those just identified (like the Maclure house at Richardson and Vancouver);
- Discouragement of the "demolition by neglect" method by not easily granting demolitions, which should also require a more formal, documented process; Mandatory hearings for significant places and/or large developments, even if present

zoning is being followed, with authorities allowed to refuse development;

- Blasting policy to protect precious places, buildings and grounds, with refusal allowed.

To achieve any of these takes strong political action/legislation at different government levels, especially provincial and local. It's time to do it or we'll lose so much more.

*Mary Doody Jones*



### ~ BOOK NEWS ~

Readers may recall an article in an earlier newsletter containing extracts from the diary of the Rev. Edward White, written while on a journey from England to take up a living in British Columbia.

His diaries together with other material collected by his descendant Janet White are now available in book form. Ms. White writes as follows:

I have just published a book of the diaries of Rev. Edward White, called *Reverend Edward White: Sky Pilot*. It contains all his diaries from 1859 to the end of 1867, which includes three years in Nanaimo. It also contains his autobiography of his early life to 1858, articles written by him for *The Guardian* newspaper, and the *British Columbian*, an article based on all his letters to the *Christian Guardian*, letters to his wife, a history of the early Queen's Avenue United Church, which he founded and first built, written by his co-missionary, Rev. Ebenezer Robson (brother to John Robson).

I will be selling it through Irving House (New Westminster Archives) in the next few weeks. I am hoping to sell it for under \$20.00, but if anyone is interested, please contact me ([jwhite@telus.net](mailto:jwhite@telus.net)). His early entries on Victoria, especially Feb. 10, 1859, daily to April 1st, 1859, plus his regular visits are recorded and quite interesting. (265 pages).

*Janet White*



### ~ FORT STREET 1909 ~

What did Fort Street look like 100 years ago? In some ways, similar to today; running from School Street (now Ormond) west to Wharf, the street is macadamized, (but not asphalted) except between Government & Douglas where wooden blocks are in place. Concrete sidewalks and

a sewer system have been installed. Streetcars run frequently from Government Street all the way out for a five cent fare. There are very few automobiles; horses still provide most personal transport and haul all the freight. Rules of the road are generally ignored. All modes of transportation supplemented by pedestrians and wheels (bicycles) weave around the streetcars.

The east end of Fort, once rural, is becoming built up with residences. At the west end is the business district with warehouses, realtors, banks, insurance offices and retail services. Many buildings of that era are extant and are marked in the text with an asterisk (\*). Note that some of the street numbers have been changed since 1909.

Heading west and down Fort from School, we pass the 1903 Aikman residence at 1195\* and its neighbour Breadalbane at 1185\*. This is the home of Reverend John & Agnes Campbell and family. Many weddings have been performed here. On the north side at 1192\* is the Walter & Mary Walker residence. Walter is a partner in Hall & Walker coal merchants and also a school trustee. Next door at 1190\* is a home constructed by John Elford in 1890 as a revenue property and occupied by widow Jennie McCullough.

Crossing Linden we pass on the north side at 1178 the Lee Skene residence. Mr. Skene is a contractor and partner in the Sidney Island Brick Works. Passing some vacant land we next see Wentworth Villa at 1156\* built in 1862 for Captain Henry Ella, one of the first houses on Fort Street hill. It is occupied by his widow Martha. Her neighbour at 1146 is foreman Louis Pauly and family. At 1140\* is the 1907 residence built for John & Louise Haggerty and family; principals of John Haggerty & Company contractors and teamsters.

Trebatha at 1124\* is the 1887 home of dentist Dr Thomas Jones. Three smaller homes take us down to Cook Street. On the south side are a number of recently constructed homes. At 1175 Cresta Linda built in 1908 for jeweller William Challoner. There are houses under construction on this block. At 1141\* police constable William Webb and wife operate a boarding house. William Langley, barrister, whose offices are located on Government Street lives at 1133\*.

The extended Bantly family live next door; musician & teacher Benedict, wife and five children at 1125\* and Ann Bantly, widow of tobacconist Marcus with four children and lodger at 1127\*. There are two more residences before the J.T. Higgins property on the south east corner at Cook

operated as a floral business with greenhouses and the family residence.

On the south west corner of Fort & Cook is Bert Todd's property gifted to his fiancé Ada Seabrook in October this year. Adjoining Todd's property at 1051 is the residence of Chief of Police John M. Langley, wife and son. Their next door neighbours at 1045 are Manuel Wylde, manager of the Daily Times newspaper, his wife, daughter, children's nurse and a Japanese domestic.

At 1019, a large property occupied by Henry Callow & family and operating as a florist/gardener on the site which contains greenhouses. On the other side, a grocery store on the north east corner shares space with a Baptist Church. On a large property sits the Mary Anne Charles residence at 1038 Fort\*. She is the widow of former HBC and CP Navigation officer William Charles who died in 1903. The house was built in 1886. At 1028\* Fort is the 1908 August P. Schroeder residence. 1016 Fort\* is the home of William J. Rant, master mariner.

Crossing Vancouver Street, we note a few small homes including 950 Fort\* occupied by Deforest F. Ayres, agent & manager. 938 houses the Assembly Roller Rink, formerly the Victoria Assembly Rooms dance hall built in 1886. Edward Hunt lives at 957; his tailoring business is just down the street at 638 Fort. Professor E.G. Wickens operates his Academy of Music at 920. There was a fire at the business and residence of Andrew Murphy, contractor, 917-919 Fort but damage to the wooden structure was minimal.

As we continue west from Quadra Street we notice that building density increases. This block could be called the "laundry district" as it is home to five businesses offering cleaning, dyeing and skin dressing services. It is also the home of the Swedish Massage Sanatorium, G. Bjornfeld masseur, at 821. After a brisk rub-down, one could retire to The Hall Saloon at 811 Fort, operated by James Hill and his daughters, for some liquid refreshment. John Lutz, manager of Jordan River Lumber Company lives at 849. At the south east corner of Fort & Quadra, 901 occupied by Mrs. Leland's greengrocers and Edwin Leblanc & family is for sale for \$10,000. Property consists of two stores & two cottages producing an annual income of \$560.

Blanchard to Douglas is dominated by the Island Transfer Company yard, stables and freight operation which take up most of the south side to mid block Wilcox Lane where the Market Saloon welcomes thirsty teamsters. Beyond this, various contractors, food emporiums, physicians and Mrs.

Stanner's hairdressing parlour occupy the balance of the south side, ending at Douglas with popular Terry's Drug Store. On the north side we find a number of trades; at 742 is H.W. Davies auctioneers and beside this at 736, on the site of the old Jessop school and in the former Philharmonic Hall is a bowling alley operated by Elite Amusement Company. Later Woods brothers will operate a garage here. John Deauville operates The Exchange, a used book store at 718. Andrew Sheret moved to 710 Fort to operate the plumbing and heating business he established in 1892. (This business still exists in Victoria and throughout B.C.) On the north east corner at Douglas is the Balmoral Hotel.

Continuing west from Douglas Street, the building on the north east corner houses Campbell's Drug Store advertising "Sasparilla blood purifier & Japanese hair tonic". Five more real estate companies occupy this block. The next real estate boom is starting. Building lots in Fairfield are available for \$500. Shoemakers, tailors, upholsterers, some living above their businesses round out the north side.

At 647 on the south side John Thaw and his wife run an apartment building. One of the tenants, Miss Jenkinson visited the Alaska Yukon Pacific Exhibition in Seattle earlier this year. At the south west corner of Fort & Broad is the 1879 Fell building\* occupied by Copas & Young grocers. Here we can buy 4lbs of Tetley tea for one dollar or 2 large cans of tomatoes for 25 cents. Above the grocery store is the Royal Hotel. This is a handy place to stay in Victoria, located in the heart of the business district and with a liquor store below at 633.

The north side of Fort Street between Broad & Government is dominated by the Five Sisters Block; a four storey structure containing eighty or so businesses. Among these are the Royal Bank on the north west corner, architects Thomas Hooper, Samuel Maclure & Francis Rattenbury, 15 real estate agents, several lawyers, a few tailors, music teachers and Mrs. Newton's Cosy Corner Café. The building contains several residences which also serve as business premises. The rest of this block contains shops and offices including, on the north side, Boggs real estate where a 50 acre Saanich farm is offered at \$12,500.

The offices of Cameron Lumber Company, whose plant is on the gorge at Garbally, are at 624. On the south side Clay's Bakery offers cakes, pastries and chocolates at their tearoom and catering business. Greer, Courtney & Skene, operators of

the Sidney Island Brick Works are at 623 and Pemberton & Son providing real estate, financial and insurance services are at 625. On the south east corner of Fort & Government the Brown Jug pub is a popular watering hole.

From Government to Langley Streets, a couple of landmark buildings catch our eye: On the south west corner at Government the 1886 W.H. Williams designed Canadian Bank of Commerce\* with offices above. Tellers here earn \$18 for a 60 hour week. West of this the iconic 1893 Maclure designed Temple building\*. Here we find well known Victoria businesses Robert Ward & Company, insurance & financial services, Crease & Crease barristers, and consulates of Norway, Sweden & Belgium. The north side of this block is dominated by the 1869 Southgate & Lascelles building\* occupied by the Canadian Pacific Railway. At 522-524 offices house surveyors, marine suppliers and steamship agents.



Between Langley and Wharf, the Rattenbury designed B.C. Electric & Victoria Gas Company offices were built in 1905\*. At the corner of Fort & Wharf is the Pither & Leiser Wholesale Wines & Liquors establishment\*. On the north west corner at Langley 516-518 is the Hiram Walker Bonded Warehouse; J.W. Ambery the representative. Next door at 512-514 is a 1898 two storey brick office building\* occupied by James Mellis and Company, mantles, grates and tiles. West of this is the Pacific Transfer Company freight yard followed by their offices and storage at 506\*. This is also the residence of owner Arthur Kent. The Oddfellows Hall built in 1863\* is on the north east corner.

As we reach the end of historic Fort Street, the vista of the inner harbour greets us, as lively and fascinating in 1909 as it is today.

*Cliff Chandler*



## Members of the Board for the Year 2009 – 2010

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Joyce Mackie	Membership	Carolyn Webber	Webmaster
		June Domke	Refreshments
		Shirley Cuthbertson	Archives



The Victoria Historical Society meets on the fourth Thursday of each month from September to May, at the James Bay New Horizons Centre, 234 Menzies Street, Victoria.

Meetings begin at 7:30 and comprise a short business meeting and a refreshment break followed by a talk or presentation by a guest speaker.

Visitors are always welcome and encouraged to become members of our Society.

This newsletter is published four times a year and distributed to members electronically or by mail. It is also available on our web site [www.victoriahistoricalsociety.bc.ca](http://www.victoriahistoricalsociety.bc.ca) and at our regular meetings at the door

