

**Britannia Mine Oral History Project
Collection /
UBC Department of History (collector)**

Revised September, 2010

[University of British Columbia Archives](#)



a place of mind
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



The Library

Table of Contents

- **Fonds Description**
 - Title / Dates of Creation / Physical Description
 - Administrative History
 - Scope and Content
 - Notes
- **File List**
- **Catalogue entry** (UBC Library catalogue)

Fonds Description

**Britannia Mine Oral History Project Collection /
Department of History (collector).** – 1986-88.

35 cm of textual records.

45 audio tapes.

Administrative History

In 1987 and 1988, University of British Columbia students in Diane Newells History 303 course ("The Canadian West") conducted a series of oral interviews with former Britannia Beach residents. Designed to provide students with a first-hand understanding of life in a mining community, this project was carried out in co-operation with the British Columbia Mining Museum. The material in this collection provides important insights into the history of the Britannia Mining and Smelting Company and its impact on the community and also provides useful information about conducting an oral history project.

Scope and Content

The fonds consists of project background and administrative information as well as student-generated material arising from their oral interview exercise. The student material consists of two parts generated in 1987 and in 1988. The first (box 2) includes copies of questions, transcripts and student comments on the interviews. The inventory also lists the oral history tape number. The second includes only the copy of the students commentary.

Notes

Audio recordings of the interviews with Britannia residents have also been described in the University of British Columbia Archives Audio-Visual Database

digitalcollections.library.ubc.ca.

File List

Box 1

- 1-1 History 303 course material prepared by Dianne Newell
- 1-2 List of interviewees for project (1996/87)
- 1-3 Interviewee/student consent forms (1986-1988)
- 1-4 Miscellaneous project information
- 1-5 Miscellaneous resource/background information pertaining to Britannia
- 1-6 Photographs of Britannia
- 1-7 Information on mining terms

Box 2

- 2-1 Britannia Beach interview with William M. Adamson
Interview of William M. Adamson by Michael Henry
3 February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-1) 1 hr. transcript and essay

Adamson discusses work at the Mines as well as his participation in its unions.
- 2-2 Britannia Mines disasters interview of Mr. Clement Barabash
Interview of Clement Barabash by Luke Atleo
12 February 1987.
2 audio cassettes (UBC AT 1878-2) 1 hr., 30 min. accompanying materials

Barabash discusses life at Britannia Beach, his work experiences at the mine and the dangers of working in the Britannia Mine.
- 2-3 Britannia from 1937 to 1972 one woman's perspective
Interview of Olive Baxter by Sue Hall
15 February 1987
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-3) 1 hr., 30 min. accompanying materials

Baxter discusses her experience of the living conditions and social activities at Britannia Beach as well as the role the union played on the community.
- 2-4 History of the "Townsite/Mount Sheer" An interview with: Mrs. Clair Bennet by Winston Jang

February 1987.

1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-4) 30 min. accompanying materials

Bennet discusses her experience of isolation and race relations while living at Townsite/Mount Sheer - a site of residence for the Britannia Mine workers.

2-5 Life in a Mining Town.

Interview of Mrs. Merele Bennett by Susan Shearer

16 February 1987.

1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-5) 45 min. accompanying materials

Bennett discusses the living conditions and social amenities of Britannia Beach.

2-6 Oral interview with Mrs. Bowers by Jeff Zwick

9 February 1987.

1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-6) 25 min. accompanying essay and transcript

Bower discusses her father's work at the mine as well as a description of emergency response used by the Britannia Mine, particularly during the 1962 cave-in.

2-7 Interview with Mrs. Pat Brohman concerning the mines and the museum by Leonie Plunkett

February 1987.

1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-7) 1 hr., 5 min. accompanying essay and transcript.

Brohman discusses her husband's work at the mine as well as her own historical and museum work at Britannia.

2-8 Childhood memories at Britannia.

Interview of Margaret Caldicott by Risha Walden

20 February 1987.

1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-8) 25 min. accompanying material

Caldicott discusses her experience of living in Britannia Beach as well as the 1921 flood.

2-9 "If you let it get you down...." An interview with Robert Campbell by Trevor Livelton

14 February 1987

1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-9) 47 min. accompanying material

- 2-10 An interview with Hector Carden on his experiences at the Britannia Mines and Smelting Company from 1928 to 1942 by Ian Cannon.
3 March 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-10) 40 min. accompanying materials

Carden discusses his work history and accident at the Britannia Mine as well as the company that ran the mine.

- 2-11 Timekeeping procedures and perceptions of Britannia Mines' social life.
Interview with Jack Charlton by Shirley Leon
3 March 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-11) 25 min. accompanying material

Leon discusses her work as an office worker for the Britannia Mine and also describes the social life at Britannia Beach.

- 2-12 Britannia's Ida Curnow, 1922-23; 1929-49.
Interview with Mrs. Ida Curnow by Elsie Turcotte
February 1987
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-12) 25 min. accompanying essay and transcript

Curnow discusses her life as a resident of Britannia Beach.

- 2-13 [Work experience of the Britannia Mine].
Interview with John Davies by Doug Ogilvie
16 February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-13) 35 min. accompanying material

Davies discusses his short-term work experience as a teenager at the Britannia Mine as well as his social experience.

- 2-14 Britannia Mines John Dickinson Mechanical mill foreman.
Interview with John Dickinson conducted by Janice Clark
February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-14) 40 min. accompanying material.

Dickinson discusses his work experience at the Britannia Mine, as well as community activities at Britannia Beach.

2-15 Reg Eades Jr. 1924-1926, 1939.

Interview with Reg Eades conducted by Doug Rogers.

8 February 1987.

1 audio cassettes (UBC AT 1878-15) 40 min. accompanying material

Eades discusses community life at Britannia Beach as well as the Britannia Beach Mining and Smelting Company Ltd. and unions.

2-16 Account of an oral interview with Joan Ehler from Britannia Beach.

Interview with Joan Ehler conducted by Shelagh Rowles

February 1987.

1 audio cassettes (UBC AT 1878-16) 25 min. accompanying material

Ehler discusses her work experience as a secretary for Britannia Mines as well as her community activities in Britannia Beach.

2-17 Teaching at the Britannia Mine School 1925-1932.

Interview with Dorothy Frisby conducted by Darcy Dybhavn

12 February 1987.

1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-17) 20 min. accompanying material

Frisby discusses her work experience as an elementary school teacher for the Britannia Mine School.

2-18 Mrs. Gillingham Homemaker and resident of Britannia Beach, Howe Sound, B.C. 1921-1948.

Interview with Lucille Gillingham conducted by Beverly Petrenko 18 February 1997.

1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-18) 55 min. accompanying material

Gillingham discusses the social activities of Britannia Beach as the wife of the Britannia Mines' accountant.

2-19 Living in Britannia.

Interview with Alice Graney conducted by Maureen Murphy

February 1987.

1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-19) 40 min. accompanying material

Graney discusses social and community activities of Britannia Beach.

- 2-20 Housewife / Instructor of elocution interview with Mrs. Muriel Green.
Interview with Muriel Green conducted by Lisa MacIntosh
17 February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-20) 1 hr., 30 min. accompanying essay

Green discusses aspects of Britannia Beach community life.

- 2-21 Interview with Patricia Hardy.
Interview with Patricia Hardy by Cathy Selman
23 February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-21) 30 min. accompanying essay

Hardy describes the work of her family in the Mine as well as community life at Britannia Beach.

- 2-22 Thomas Howard the life of a miner at Britannia.
Interview with Thomas Howard by Tom Vlastic
February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-22) 20 min. accompanying essay

Howard describes the process and dangers of mining at Britannia. In addition, he describes community life.

- 2-23 Growing up in Britannia interview with Ray Knudsen.
Interview with Ray Knudsen conducted by Teresa Weber
9 February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-23) 30 min. accompanying essay

Knudsen describes community life at Britannia Beach and the impact of the closure of the Mine.

- 2-24 Britannia Beach community life in a company town interview with Ernie Malm.
Interview with Ernie Malm conducted by Sheila Wyse
1 February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-24) 1 hr., 15 min. accompanying essay

Malm describes community life at Britannia Beach and the flood of 1921.

- 2-25 Oral history of Britannia mines Bill and Mavis McKee.
Interview with Mavis McKee by Sheryl Dubberly
18 February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-25) 20 min. accompanying essay

McKee describes life as a child at Britannia Beach.

- 2-26 Oral history of Britannia mines Bill and Mavis McKee.
Interview with Bill McKee by Sheryl Pauer
18 February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-26) 30 min. accompanying essay

McKee describes life as a child at Britannia Beach.

- 2-27 The Interview of a Britannia waitress Marie McMath.
Interview with Marie McMath conducted by Mike Torresan
February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-27) 10 min. accompanying essay

McMath discusses life in Britannia Beach and the experience of being the wife of a miner.

- 2-28 Britannia Mines 1937-1939 interview with Bob McMath.
Interview with Bob McMath conducted by Keith Shaw
12 February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-28) 25 min. accompanying essay

McMath discusses working at Britannia Mines and the relationship between the Company and its employees.

- 2-29 Introduction to Britannia interview with Al MacNair.
Interview with Al MacNair conducted by John Pennant.
1 February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-29) 1 hr. accompanying essay

MacNair discusses mining as an occupation as well as the union at the Mine.

- 2-30 Second term project #2 Britannia Mine interview with John Archie McPhee

and Vera Mold.

Interview with John Archie McPhee and Vera Mold conducted by Stephen Ball
1 February 1987.

1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-30) 30 min. accompanying essay

Mold and McPhee discuss community life at Britannia Beach including race and class relations. In addition they discuss community leaders.

2-31 Britannia interview with Lilly Ann Nassey.

Interview with Lilly Ann Nassey conducted by Dale Enns
February 1987.

1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-30) 20 min. accompanying essay

Nassey discusses community life at Britannia Beach and the impact of World War II on the Community.

2-32 Life at Britannia interviewing Jim Newberry.

Interview with Jim Newberry conducted by Heather Jones
February 1987.

1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-32) 35 min. accompanying essay

Newberry discusses community life at Britannia Beach including relations with the Japanese community.

2-33 Oral history project on Britannia Mines based on an interview with Reg Nordman.

Interview with Reg. Norman conducted by Robert Blackaby
3 March 1987.

1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-33) 20 min. accompanying essay

Norman discusses social and technical aspects of life and work at the Britannia Mine.

2-34 Britannia, 1933 to 1940 the pros and cons of opportunity.

Interview with Jame Petrie conducted by Dana McFarland
27 December 1986.

1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-34) 50 min. accompanying essay

Petrie discusses community life at Britannia Beach including race relations. In addition, he discusses working conditions at Britannia Mine.

- 2-35 The World of Britannia according to Robert Phillip.
Interview with Robert Philip conducted by Thomas Berger
16 March 1987.
2 audio cassettes (UBC AT 1878-35/36) 1 hr., 55 min. accompanying essay
- Phillip describes his work at Britannia Mines as well as Britannia Beach community life.
- 2-36 Interview with Mrs. Eleanor Puckering (nee Matheson) about Britannia Beach B.C.
Interview with Eleanor Puckering with Lynn Pedde
16 February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-37) 15 min. accompanying essay
- Puckering discusses community life at Britannia Beach.
- 2-37 Oral history project Britannia Beach.
Interview with John (Jack) Ross conducted by Holli Garvin
9 March 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-38) 50 min. accompanying essay
- Ross discusses his work at Britannia Mine and community life in the area.
- 2-38 Susan Warner interviews Mr. Archie Smith on the Britannia Mine.
Interview with Archie Smith conducted by Susan Warner
16 March 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-39) 40 min. accompanying essay
- Smith describes his work at Britannia Mines. In addition, he discusses community life and the Japanese community at Britannia Beach.
- 2-39 Oral history assignment Mrs. Ella Smith.
Interview with Ella Smith conducted by Ross Brennan
20 February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-40) 15 min. accompanying essay
- Smith discusses life at Britannia Beach including the flu epidemic of 1919 and the flood of 1921.

- 2-40 The Canadian west oral history assignment Britannia interviewee, Mrs. Mary Smith.
Interview with Mary Smith conducted by Karen Lessey
February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-41) 25 min. accompanying essay

Smith discusses the impact of World War II on Britannia Beach community life.
- 2-41 Folder Missing but tape available
[Britannia interview with Hanna Swanson].
Interview with Hanna Swanson conducted by Sheila Wyse
17 February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-42) 1 hr. accompanying essay

Swanson discusses life at Britannia Beach.
- 2-42 Recollections of Britannia Beach interview with Jim Walton.
Interview with Jim Walton conducted by Mike Ewert
15 February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-43) 1 hr. accompanying essay

Walton discusses his childhood at Britannia Beach.
- 2-43 An Interview with Mrs. Katherine White
Interview with Katherine White by Krista Graham
February 1987
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-44) accompanying essay
- 2-44 Britannia mines a child's perspective an interview with Mrs. Astrid Wolthers.
Interview with Astrid Wolthers conducted by Bonnie Johnston
11 February 1987.
1 audio cassette (UBC AT 1878-45) 1 hr., 30 min. accompanying essay

Wolthers discusses social and racial relations at Britannia Beach.

Box 3

Student reports (no tapes) Spring 1988

- 3-1 Interview with Allan Cameron by Michael Booth
"Interview with Alan Cameron and the Impact of the Depression on Britannia Beach"
- 3-2 Interview with Leo Darrah by Dean Pellegrino
"Relations between the Men at Britannia's Empress Camp"
- 3-3 Interview with Leslie McLean by Jim Elliot
"History 303 Oral Project: An Interview with Jim Elliot"
- 3-4 Interview with Elsie Hamelin by Katherine Decker
"Life at Britannia"
- 3-5 Interview with Phil Hamelin by Janet McCarron
"Britannia Mines, 1935-1958"
- 3-6 Interview with Dr. L.C. Kindree by Nancy Hopkins
"Medicine at Britannia, 1963-1974: Recollections of Dr. L.C. Kindree"
- 3-7 Interview with Alexander Lowe by Janet Crozet
[No title]
- 3-8 Interview with Edwin Lucas by Robynn Redlich
[No title]
- 3-9 Interview with Ralph Macdonald by Angela Rusheinski
"Mr. Macdonald at Britannia"
- 3-10 Interview with Phyllis Malm by Julie E. Macdonald
"Mount Sheer: A Flourishing Community Regardless of its Geographic Isolation"
- 3-11 Interview with Betty Mason by Andrea Peter
"A Life Like No Other: A War Bride Remembers Her Years at Minaty Bay, Britannia, 1946-1962"
- 3-12 Interview with Elof Manson by Stephen J. Garland
"Britannia: The Evolution of the Ghost Town and the Elimination of a Way of Life"

- 3-13 Interview with Bernie McGuire by Marianne Bennett
"Britannia in Need of Reform?"
- 3-14 Interview with Lynda Patrick by Deborah Ratcliffe
"A Young Girl's Perspective of Mount Sheer"
- 3-15 Interview with Robert Philip by Marni Hardin
"Robert Philip" A View from the Centre of Town"
- 3-16 Interview with Robinson Porter by Jimmy Kanavos
[No title]
- 3-17 Interview with Dotis Randall by Cindy Dailey
[No title]
- 3-18 Interview with Fred Savinkoff by Hilary Montroy
[No title]
- 3-19 Interview with John Stanton by K. Annette Burkhardt
"John Stanton and the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers
(of Canada) 1956-1963"
- 3-20 Interview with Alfred Stenbridge by George E. Nangle
[No title]
- 3-21 Interview with Harry Warren by Paul Etter
[No title]
- 3-22 Interview with Tom Waterland by Kenneth J. Schmidt
"Recollections of a Boyhood Life at the Britannia Townsite"
- 3-23 Interview with Donnie Waterland by Janey Crowe
"Growing up in a Single Resource Community: One Woman's Experience"