# British Columbia HISTORY

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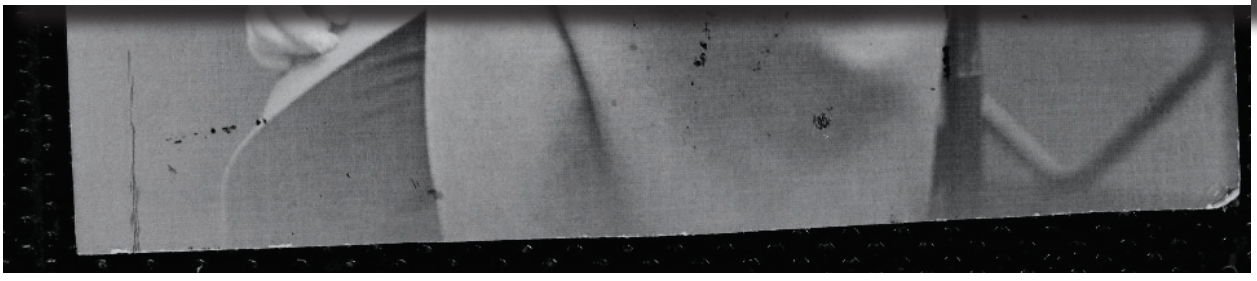
**This Issue: Leon Koerner | Batteries | Censorship | Books and more**



## British Columbia History

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# British Columbia Historical Federation

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British Columbia **HISTORY**

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## From the Editor

Oh Boy, it's been some time between issues of BC History and I apologise for the delays. Technical delays aside, it has been an exceptionally busy period for me - much of my income comes from freelancing - with a number of major projects landing on my desk all at once. I've become very familiar with early the morning hours these past months.

I am now catching up and you will soon have all of the expected issues of the magazine shortly.

On another note, the gremlins were out in full force last issue and messed up the Stanley Park Rock Garden article, first by mis-stating the author's name, Chris Hay, and then mis-stating the garden's creator John Montgomery's name in the photo captions. our apologies to the author.

Please enjoy this issue, and the next ones which will follow shortly.

## BCHF Prizes | Awards | Scholarships

"Any country worthy of a future should be interested in its past"
W. Kaye Lamb, 1937

***W. KAYE LAMB Essay Scholarships***
***Deadline 15 May 2008***
*The British Columbia Historical Federation awards two scholarships annually for essays written by students at BC colleges or universities, on a topic relating to British Columbia history. One scholarship ($750) is for an essay written by a student in a first or second year course; the other ($1000) is for an essay written by a student in a third or fourth year course.*

*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 be1,500-3,000 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*

***BC History Web Site Prize***
*The British Columbia Historical Federation and David Mattison are jointly sponsoring a yearly cash award of $250 to recognize Web sites that contribute to the understanding and appreciation of British Columbia's past. The award honours individual initiative in writing and presentation.*

*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*

***Anne & Philip Yandle Best Article Award***
*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 ot 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.*

# "C" Battery and the Skeena Incident

By Ronald Greene

The following is a transcript from a hand written journal entitled, "Historical Record of "C" Battery, Regiment Canadian Artillery." The journal appears to have been written in 1893. It was one of four large journals saved by a friend, then working in Ottawa, when it was thrown out many years ago. His widow recently donated it to the 5th (B.C.) Field Artillery Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery Museum and Archives in Victoria.

*Ronald Greene*

The History of the Battery is so wrapped up in the History of the Regiment that it would be incomplete without a brief summary of the causes leading up to the original formation of the Canadian Artillery.

The withdrawal of the Imperial Troops from Canada (excepting Halifax Nova Scotia) in 1870 & 71 caused the fortified towns of Kingston and Quebec to be left without a Garrison. The whole of the Works of their Armanents [sic] together with all barrack buildings in these places, and also those at Montreal Isle Aux Noix and Toronto, were handed over to the Canadian Militia Authorities.

The following General Order will show the means taken by the Government to provide for the care of these different places.

*Headquarters*
*General Orders (24) Ottawa 20th October 1871*
*No. 1*
*Batteries of Garrison Artillery*

*An appropriation having been sanctioned by Parliament for the pay, maintenance and equipment of two Batteries of Garrison Artillery, in order to provide for the care and protection of the Forts, Magazines, Armament, and Warlike Stores, recently or about to be handed over the Dominion Government in the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, the formation of these Batteries is hereby authorized.*

This Force although organized in 1871 remained without legal status until 1883 when the Government amended the Militia Act by providing for it as follows, 'Her Majesty may, for the purposes of providing for the care and protection of forts, magazines, armaments, warlike stores and such like services, and also for the purposes of securing the establishment of schools for military instruction in connection with corps enlisted for continuous service …"

Under the provision of this enactment 'C' Battery was authorized by General Order dated August 10th 1883 and Major J.G. Holmes of 'A' Battery was promoted Lieutenant Colonel and appointed the Commandant.

Lieutenant Colonel Holmes was at this time in British Columbia — he having been detailed for duty there as Deputy Adjutant General, of Militia, which duty, was taken up by him, on the 1st day of May of that year. …

From that time until 1887 nothing was done towards the formation of the Battery … By General Order of the 21st October 1887 the following officers were posted to 'C' Battery.

Major Jas. Peters
Lieutenant Thos. Benson
Lieutenant G.H. Ogilvie

Of the above officers Major Peters and Lieutenant Ogilvie served with distinction in the North West Campaign of 1885, the former being mentioned in dispatches.

[A General Order of 6th October 1887 provided

*C Battery in 1888 at Beacon Hill Park*

for 100 non-commissioned officers and gunners to be furnished from 'A' and 'B' Batteries to be moved to British Columbia. Not more than 15 married men could be selected and their families, but not their servants, would also be transported free to British Columbia].

Temporary quarters were provided for the non-commissioned officers and men in a building known as the Agricultural Hall situated near Beacon Hill Park, the officers going into lodgings. … The Battery was met at the wharf on its arrival …An address of welcome was made by His Worship the Mayor, Mr. Fell and addresses by other leading citizens followed, among whom may be mentioned Senator Macdonald and E.C. Baker, Esq. M.P…

A few weeks after the arrival of the Battery the Hon. the Minister of Militia and Defence Sir. A. P. Caron, K.C.M.G. accompanied by the Adjutant General Colonel W. Powell, paid Victoria a visit and after examination, approved of the site for Barracks selected by Lieut. Colonel Holmes, and its purchase was authorized. The land was bought from the Puget Sound Company, and was situated on Work Point Victoria Harbour. It was 11.95 acres in extent and cost $5400.00.

A contract was also entered into for the erection of three huts now (1893) used as men's Barracks ands Sergeants mess.

They were completed in 1888 under the supervision of the Militia Department. The Contractor was Mr. Joshua Holland and the cost was $17,916.50.

To this may be added the cost of fittings and additions to the value of $739.60.

No other work being done the Battery remained in the temporary quarters, a few men being quartered in the new huts and employed in clearing the ground which was densely timbered in every part.

In 1888 the Battery was ordered to the Skeena River to suppress a disturbance among the Indians there.

The following reports gives an account of the expedition.

*Report on the Force which proceeded to the Skeena River B.C. in aid of the Civil Power*
*Victoria B.C. 26th August 1888*
*To the Adjutant General of Militia*
*Ottawa*

*Sir:*
*I have the honor to forward herewith the following report with reference to the force which proceeded to the Skeena River in connection with the suppression of the reported rising of the Indians at Hazelton during the months of July and August of the present year.*
*On the 12th July last, I received a message from the Attorney General of the Province to say that he would like to see me; on calling at the office I was informed that there was serious trouble on the Skeena River with the Indians, and asking me what could be done regarding the Province obtaining the assistance of the Battery to suppress the uprising.*
*I explained my views to him the matter and the interview ended. On the 13th instant again, by request, I had an interview with the Premier, at which were present the remainder of the Provincial Cabinet. After considerable discussion in which I declined to take part I was handed a requisition as follows: —*
*Victoria B.C. 14th July 1888*

*To the Senior Officer of the Active Militia*
*It having been made appear to us three Justices of the Peace having jurisdiction in the County of Nanaimo, that a disturbance of the peace has occurred at Hazelton in the said county, and that further disturbances beyond the powers of the civil authorities to deal with, are, in the opinion of the undersigned, anticipated as likely to occur at the same place, we therefore do require you to call out the Active Militia for Active Service with their arms and ammunition and with all speed proceed to Hazelton in aid of the civil power to prevent and deal with such disturbances.*
*A.E.B. Davies J.P Jno. Robson J.P.*
*J. H. Turner J.P.*

On receipt of the above, I, by District Order called 'C' Battery R.C.A., and ordered it to be in readiness to proceed as soon as possible.

By agreement with the Provincial Government, it was arranged that I should order whatever stores I required, which I did; and as the nature of the country required an especial equipment, I decided that the men should wear brown canvas clothing.

No service pattern accoutrements were taken, but cartridge belts to contain 40 rounds were made. The men's field kit was carried in a squad bag, made into a pack containing a blanket and the great coat in addition, the whole covered with waterproof sheet, slings were made by using the bed straps issued for use in the barrack room. The advantage of this over the valise equipment was, that there was less complication in the matter of straps.

The load could be instantly removed from the person, and it was quite as easily carried. I had previously (on an elk hunting trip) carried a similar pack for several days over a very rough country, and was thus quite familiar with it.

Rations and hospital stores for six weeks supply were taken, together with 200 rounds Snider cartridge per man.

*C Battery in 1891 at Work Point*

On Monday the 16th July, the Battery paraded at 11 a.m. and was inspected by His Honor the Lieutenant Governor, and immediately afterwards started for Esquimalt. The force on parade was as follows:

*Lt. Colonel J.G. Holmes, Commandant*
*Major James Peters, Commanding Battery*
*Captain T.R. Benson*
*Lieutenant G.H. Ogilvie*
*Lieutenant F.M. Gaudet*
*Surgeon J.A. Duncan*
*Lt. Colonel E.G. Prior, B.C.G.A. attached*

Three staff sergeants, four sergeants and seventy-three rank and file. On arrival at Esquimalt, the force embarked on board *H.M.S. Caroline*, Captain Sir William Wiseman, Bart., and without delay steamed away for Port Essington. Camp equipment to a limited extent was carried with the force. The bulk of the stores under the charge of a Q.M. Sergeant, was sent on the Steamer *Boscovitz*.

After a pleasant run of four days the mouth of the Skeena was reached. As the channel to Essington, was not well known a day was spent, in surveying it and on Saturday the *Caroline* steamed up the river and anchored opposite the village.

Sir William Wiseman, the Honorable Mr. Turner, and myself, at once proceeded on shore and made enquiries at Mr. Cunningham's, if there was any late news from up the river. We there found a young man named Hankin who had just come down from Hazelton, and he said that there had been no further disturbances, and he did not anticipate any. He was of the opinion that the specials could settle the difficulty, especially as the Indians would be aware that a Naval and Military Force was at their backs. I afterwards ascertained that a canoe and some Indians belonging to the Forks (Hazelton) had gone up the river a few hours after our arrival carrying the news with them.

The magistrates, Messrs Turner and Roycroft, then requested me to land the Battery and remain near Essington, while the constables, twelve in number, under Mr. Roycroft, proceeded up the river. This I agreed to, with the understanding that Mr. Roycroft should let me know as soon as possible, by special messenger, whether the services of the Battery would be required or not.

On Sunday I proceed in one of the *Caroline's* boats to select a site for camp. Major Peters accompanied me, and we selected a spot on the River Okstahl, [the current spelling is Ecstall] about a mile and a half from the village, it being desirable for many reasons that the men should not have free access to it [the village].

The ground was densely wooded, and no piece of ground not so covered could be found.

On Monday the whole of the Battery with the camp equipment, etc., landed under command of Major Peters, who immediately set the men at work clearing sufficient space for the tents, and by night fall all were under shelter.

I remained on board the *Caroline* until next day, and with Sir William Wiseman and Mr. Turner visited several of the canneries, where large numbers of Indians were assembled.

The reserve ammunition and stores arrived at Essington on Saturday and were placed in a warehouse at Mr. Cunningham's wharf. This being a suitable and convenient place, I retained it as a store, and drew from there daily as required.

Our stay in camp was rather monotonous; much work was done in building huts and clearing a small parade ground, our tent accommodation being very limited.

Rifle practice was carried on, as also some drill in extended order, which was rather difficult owing to the almost impassable nature of the country, in fact, I am satisfied that had we to advance up the river we were quite safe from flank attack, providing the river were carefully searched for a reasonable distance back. No forces could travel through this country except by the river for more than a few miles and carry anything in the way of arms, ammunition and food.

Pending receipt of word from Mr. Roycroft, all the Officers and many of the Non-Commissioned Officers and men took advantage of our situation to climb the adjacent mountains, most of them from 4,000 to 6,000 feet high and snow capped. This was work of the hardest description and showed the pluck and endurance off all who undertook it in a marked way.

Considerable game, such as bears, mountain goats, etc., were killed and the skins brought back as trophies.

I mention this as showing how adaptable the men were to work, which was very similar to what we should have had to perform, had the force proceeded to fights its way to Hazelton.

On the 6th August I received a letter from Mr. Roycroft to say that everything was satisfactorily settled at the Forks.

On the 8th I received a letter from the Attorney General of the Province to say that the steamer *Cariboo Fly* would bring the Battery back to Victoria, by which I was induced to permit of our missing one boat, *The Sardonyx* by which means Mr. Roycroft and the specials, who arrived down on the 19th inst proceeded to Victoria.

I felt sure that the steamer to bring us down would arrive daily, as it was reasonable to be expected that no arrangement could have been made with a ship unless it was to start for us at once.

However, day after day went by and no sign of the ship. On the 18th instant the steamer *Princess Louise* of Victoria came into Essington. I at once sent the Supply Officer on board to ascertain if she would take us to Victoria, as owing to the bad weather setting in and our work being ended, also the presence with us of several sick and injured men, I decided not to wait any longer for the other ship.

The Captain of the *Louise* having reported his ability and willingness to carry us, I concluded an agreement with him on the 19th inst. to carry us at once to Victoria.

On the morning of the 20th camp was broken up and we embarked, reaching Victoria on Saturday, the 25th inst.

In conclusion I feel it my duty to place on record the Kindness of Captain Sir William Wiseman and officers and men of Her Majesty's Ship *Caroline* to the Corps on our passage up, and also to Captain Irving of the steamer *Princess Louise* for his similar favors on our passage down.

In conclusion I may briefly refer to a matter which has been suggested, viz, That had there been any serious fighting we were too weak a force for the work. I was quite aware of this from the outset. Had such occurred I intended from the first simply to have held the river and prevented Indians, ammunition and supplies from ascending; and after ascertaining our actual requirements, which could only be done on the spot, have sent for such reinforcements as would have been required.

Although the proceeding has had a peaceful termination I feel and am happy to know that it will have a permanent salutary effect on the Indian element in the North West.

Many Indians from all parts of the country were assembled at the mouth of the river for the salmon fishing, and the presence of a ship of war so far up the river, and an armed force remaining independently of her, which has been carried out for the first time in this country, will have the effect of widely disseminating a knowledge of the power of the Government to put down promptly all future similar uprisings.

I wish to speak in the highest terms of the zeal and energy displayed by Major Peters and the

Notes:

1. *The Daily Colonist*, July 18, 1888, p. 4, " 'C' Battery Miner's suits. T.B. Pearson & Co., of Johnson street had the order for the one hundred brown duck suits provided 'C' battery, and by putting a large staff of workmen on were enabled to turn them out in twelve hours' time."

2. These were the cartridges for the Snider Enfield rifle which were first developed in 1866. The casing was rolled brass. They were a .577 inch diameter. Among a number of internet references are www.researchpress.co.uk/firearms/britain/snider/se18661109eng.htm, a reproduction of an 1866 article and http://www.researchpress.co.uk/cgi-bin/forum/...

3. E.G. Prior had just been promoted to Colonel of the B.C. Artillery, *Daily Colonist*, July 6, 1888, p. 1. He later served as an M.P. and federal cabinet minister, then both as Premier and Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia. See *BC Historical News*, 34-02, p. 2 for an outline of his career.

4. *The Daily Colonist*, July 31, 1888, p. 1 quotes Mr. Hopkins, the missionary stationed at Essington, who heard from Herbert Hankins.

*C Battery in 1888 at Skeena*

Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers generally, in carrying out the various duties, and of the especially good conduct of the men during the whole time of the Battery's absence from Victoria.

Lieutenant Colonel Prior, Commanding British Columbia Garrison Artillery, who came forward promptly and volunteered his services in any capacity, is, I think, deserving of special mention. His knowledge of the Chinook language was very useful, and had the expedition proceeded up the river his position as Supply and Transport Officer, would have been no sinecure, and the duties of which he is, from the little experience already had, I am satisfied, able to perform most satisfactorily.

I have the honor to be,
Sir
Your obedient servant,
J.G. Holmes Lieut. Colonel
Acting Deputy Adjutant General

…On the 12th June 1890 the Battery abandoned the old quarters at Beacon Hill and went under canvas at the new Barrack ground…."

*The incident which led to "C" Battery being sent north evolved from the killing of a medicine man by Kitwancool Jim, who believed the man had poisoned his children. A warrant was issued for Jim's arrest. On the 19th of June the special constables heard that he was in a house at Kitmangar, reportedly fifteen miles below Hazelton. When they arrived at the house Jim was among the twenty or so natives in the house. When he was called upon to surrender Kitwancool Jim made a break for the bush. A warning shot did not deter him; a second shot hit him and he died shortly thereafter. The report of the constable-in-charge said that Kitwancool Jim had a pistol in his hand when he was running away.*

*The constables proceeded to the Hudson's Bay Company post at Hazelton, but there were confined to the fort by a group of natives in a threatening attitude, who demanded either $1,000 or the life of a white man. A slightly later report[4] states that, "When Kitwillcool Jim (not Kitwancool nor Kitmacool), was killed by the constable he was on the Kitzegucla reserve. The village of Kitzegucla is situated on the right bank of Skeena about thirteen miles below Hazleton [sic], and to this village Kitwillcool Jim's wife went to inform the Kitzeguclas that the Kitwillcools were angry with them for allowing Jim to be killed, and that for revenge they were coming down to burn Kitzeguclas and kill the inhabitants. The Kitzeguclas prepared for war..." This led to the call for "C" Battery.* •

**CAPITAL PUNISHMENT**
**Rejected:** *"Too German" 1917*

**ARMS AND THE WOMAN**
**Rejected.** *"Pro-German-Hungarian-German Peace Propaganda*

**AMERICANS COME**
**Rejected:** *"not suitable for BC"*

**PATHE NEWS #68**
**CUT:** *subtitle: "'No compromise with Britain' was the keynote of one of the last addresses delivered by De Valera at Dublin."*
NB. Mention of the Irish rebellion against England was prohibited. Anything derogatory to the Crown was prohibited.

**FAST STEPPERS #3 6/23/24**
**SUBSTITUTE SUBTITLES AS FOLLOWS:**
**ORIGINAL:** *"Here's to the King of England—to Mrs. King and all the little kings."*
**REPLACE WITH:** *"Here's to the King of England"*

**CUT THREE SCENES OF FIGHT WHERE ENGLISHMAN WAS DEFEATED.**

**COCOANUTS (MARX BROTHERS) 8/9/29**
**CUT:** *all references to the Prince of Wales and the King.*

**RIVER'S END:**
**REJECTED:** *Not suitable for this Province. Unpleasant reflection on Royal Canadian Mounted Police.*

**DEVIL'S ISLAND 5/3/27**
**REJECTED:** *At request of the French Consul as being a misrepresentation of French Law.*

The subject of sex was the mainstay of his operation and he found a worthy villain in the form of the great director and actor, Erich von Stroheim, who brought a European perspective to Hollywood dramas.

**THE DEVIL'S PASS KEY** (1919), von Stroheim's first success was rejected as "sensuous, immoral and vulgar."

**FOOLISH WIVES**, a few years later was reluctantly passed----- with cuts:

**FOOLISH WIVES** (VON STROHEIM)
*" **CUT**: scenes of Sergius looking at Mrs. Hughes legs."*

The 1920s were a difficult time for the censor's office The social climate was becoming more liberal after the war but the censor's mandate was the same. He had to deal with even greater breaches of social acceptability. Walter Hepburn replaced C. L. Gordon in 1919 but the bulk of the cutting and banning was done by Joseph Walters -- 1924 -- 1930. Sex remained the routine problem. A few examples:

**DANCING MOTHERS 1/3/26**
**REJECTED:** *Too much infidelity/*

The intertitles of silent films were also in need of changing, deleting, or re-writing.

**THE MISSING LINK 29'7'27**
**ELIMINATE SUB TITLE:** *"England—where Royalty is born with a gold spoon in the mouth---and others with an ordinary nipple."*

**PRINCE OF HEADWAITERS 20/7/1927**
**CUT SUBTITLES:** *"ADDRESSES: Muriel,... Phone: Capitol 1653, red-headed, giddy, too thin for cold weather"*

*"Olga,....Phone: Vanderbuilt, 6829, shy, but always responds to a gin cork thrown over a transom".*

**TAXI DANCER:** This feature had a record 41 cuts made in its 70 minute length. One wonders how it could be understood after that.

**DON JUAN:** only required 21 cuts

**FLESH AND THE DEVIL,** 1927: only 4 cuts "re: kissing and petting"

Mr. Walters was also sensitive to the threats coming from political ideologies that were unsuitable for British Columbia. He famously banned the 1925 Russian film BATTLESHIP POTEMKIN. His comment was simply the two words "communistic propaganda". This film is regarded as one of the most important films of the 20th century. Its innovative artistry could be considered revolutionary but not in the understanding of Mr. Walters. The film remained banned in British Columbia for the next 25 years. There was no mechanism for "un-banning" a film.

Many other social concerns attracted the interest of the censors through the years.

**THE BIG HOUSE** (Cagney-Warners)
**Reject:** *"Brutalizing spectacle of US penitentiary revolt. Educational on jail breaks"*

**BORN RECKLESS**
**Reject:** *"deals with crime and criminals"*

**I AM A FUGITIVE FROM A CHAIN GANG** (WARNERS)
*"This picture is passed with the addition of the following forward:*

*THIS DRAMATIC STORY DEALS WITH A PRISON SYSTEM PURPORTING TO EXIST IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY, AND IS NOT INTENDED TO, NOR DOES IT PORTRAY ANY PENAL INSTITUTION WITHIN THE BRITISH EMPIRE.*

**HELL'S HIGHWAY (RKO)**
**REJECTED:** *"A picture evidently designed to correct a condition in contract penal labour situation in the U.S.A. Not suitable for presentation in B.C.. Liable to have wrong propaganda effect against forces of law and order detrimental during present crisis"*

We are not sure what "crisis" he was referring to.

The coming of sound at the end of the 1920s created other challenges for the British Columbia censors. Newsreels became of greater interest and we can find some very strange decisions based on the need to protect British Colombians from unsuitable news. Here are some decisions that were made in the early 30s by James A. Smith who reigned until 1936.

Rebellions in the British Empire had to be eliminated in newsreels.

**FOX DISC NEWS #98**
*"eliminate title: "Hundreds seriously injured when riots break out anew in India---and all accompanying scenes".*

**FOX DISC NEWS #67**
*"eliminate all of "Will Durrant talks in India on the Hindu crisis."*

*The Russian film BATTLESHIP POTEMKIN banned by the BC Censor in 1925*

**UNIVERSAL NEWS #46 June 14, 1930:**
*"Cut subtitle "50,000 Jews protest immigration ban in Palestine by British". and all scenes relating to same"*

**UNIVERSAL NEWS # 70 Sept 5, 1930**
**"Eliminate:** *"U.S. Coast Guard captures 10 Britons and $200,000 rum cargo"*

**FOX MOVIE. NEWS # 47**
**"cut story** *'Shanghai's Mayor accuses Japan of duplicity in interview with Miss Foster"*

All references to the British Empire or the Royal Family had to be positive and racial purity was protected as follows.

**GREEN GODDESS 1932**
**reject:** *"portrays supposed member of the Allied Indian Princes (wearing the Imperial Order of India) as seditious and antagonistic to the Empire."*

**UNDER A TEXAS MOON 1930**
**Eliminate:** *"references to the King of England and the revolt of the Colonies."*

Open racism is evident in some of the comments.

**EAST IS WEST: 1930**
**REJECT:** *"The B.C. Board goes on record in objecting to Eurasian romances as the consensus of opinion is that these romances and marriages are not in the best interests of the Province."*

This is the plot of that film; "Ming Toy is on the auction block in China. She is saved by Billy and taken to San Francisco by Lo Sang Kee. To save her from deportation she is sold to Charlie Yong, the Chop Suey King. Billy kidnaps her with plans of marriage."

The lyrics in musicals were an ongoing problem. In a lost MGM film, SAFETY IN NUMBERS, the heroine sings this to her man:

*"Young man you appeal to me*
*I've never been in this condition.*
*Young man you appeal to me*
*You have the key to my ignition.*
*All you need is a band, dear*
*You could be the Vallee of the land*
*Young man you appeal to me.*

*Censor's comment :"Eliminate entire song, "You Have the Key to My Ignition"*

He also wanted the film to be re-edited as follows:

*Eliminate scene in Cleo's room, but allow the girls to enter, passing Buddy in the doorway of the room up to where they are standing around, not showing bedroom or bed, which is to be eliminated entirely, along with dialogue that refers to "She's putting on something loose".*

This demand for the re-arranging of films was not unusual for Mr.Smith. It was a difficult and expensive job for the distributor, especially in British Columbia which had only primitive film editing resources. Plus, the scenes had to be returned to their original state before the film print left the Province.

Animated Cartoon characters were another concern of the Censor.

**SO QUIET ON THE CANINE FRONT:**
**"CUT:** *scenes of man dog and woman dog in haystack"*

**SPOOKS:**
**"CUT:** *scene of spook lifting rabbit's dress"*
**BARN DANCE:**
**"CUT:** *objectionable scene of cow's udder"*

**MICKEY'S FOLLIES** (Disney)
**REJECTED:** *"Vulgarity"*

**SKELETON DANCE** (Disney)
**REJECTED:** *"gruesome"*

There were hundreds of small cuts required, in feature dramas

**SHE COULDN'T SAY NO:**
**CUT:** *view of girl thumbing nose*

**SUNNY SIDE UP:**
*"eliminate: scene showing Birth Control Magazine."*

Any mention of birth control was taboo.

**TEMPTATION:**
**Eliminate:** *"Oh be reasonable, you've got nothing to fear in my hands" "Then why don't you leave them in your pocket?"*

**AS YOU DESIRE ME** (Greta Garbo)
*"Eliminate pause between the words 'charming' and 'friend'".*

I'd call that a "pregnant pause" but I imagine the censor wouldn't allow that language either.

**BEAUTY AND THE BOSS:**
**CUT:** *"I'm hanging over your head like a ripe peach? If you'd only give the tree a little shake"*

**MERRY FRINKS:** 7/4/34
*"**ELIMINATE:** scene of maid spraying bed with perfume" It seems that any suggestion that sex was pleasurable was to be prohibited.*

**DREAM HOUSE:**
*"shorten scene of man sitting on toilet"*

**MR ROBINSON CRUSOE:**
*"eliminate scene of monkey going into W.C."*

The censor sometimes made a reference to contemporary events that are unclear but a fascinating subject for further research. For example:

**DISORDERLY CONDUCT:**
*" **REJECTED:** reason: story of gangsters and corrupt police methods. Unsuitable for exhibition in BC at the present time" ?*

The censor felt that some films would be more acceptable if the title was changed.

**HELLFIRE AUSTIN:**
*a letter from the distributor quotes a "Miss Dagger" in the censor's office as advising that the film could not be shown unless the title was changed to DARE DEVIL AUSTIN. The distributor agreed, as they usually did.*

Sometimes the censor's demands were incredibly detailed, right down to a single frame of film (1/24th of a second)

**HOTEL CONTINENTAL** (1932)
*"**CUT** at reel 1, 5ft. 14 frames"*
*"Men have bought me clothes before, but you're the first on that hasn't wanted to help me put them on. I'm just as surprised as you are" (cut from frame mark C658 to and including C699)"*

It must have taken hours of labour to edit at this level of detail. The same is true of the detailed transcription of all the lyrics of objectionable songs.

Some features were so dangerous that they needed detailed comment.

**NEW MORALS FOR OLD**
**REJECTED:** *"This picture, in the view of the Censors, is misleading propaganda for the object of presenting immorality in specious form. By no possibility can the theme be eliminated that living without marriage is presented as the "new morality":-*

*A most dangerous doctrine likely to cause great suffering among the innocent. The fact that ultimately a gesture to convention is included, ostensibly to get by censorship,does not justify making such scenarios."*

One of the most famous of censorable films was RAIN, from the Somerset Maugham short story about an encounter between a clergyman and a prostitute in the South Seas. Every version was a provocation.

**RAIN**
**REJECTED:** *Picture would be gravely offensive to Evangelical congregations in B.C. As being subversive to the teaching of the Founder of Christianity.*

*Because of the garbling of gospel through false interpretation of cruelty and harshness of religious leader.*

*By subtle inference conversion being nothing less than hypnotism based on sexual desire.*

*While the picture might be aid to militant atheism, it is certainly not conducive to Christian belief in power of divinity to keep from sin.*

*Exalts human romance as the only reality versus Christian belief.*

*Objectionable repetition of sacred prayers and phrases while there are also included the profane exclamations of a soldier.*

"Free love" was also "gravely offensive" even if it was only hinted at.

**BODY AND SOUL**
*"Story of a decent cultured woman putting herself in position of her late husband's mistress …, falling in love with unsophisticated young soldier, taking him to her apartment in London and getting him drunk—story implies that they had intimate relations with one another that night. The shame and remorse of "Mal" and his upbraiding the woman for leading him astray. Her plea, glorifying her action of free love smacks too much of the doctrine of free love as practiced in Soviet Russia and has that Government's approbation."*

Why did the Censor need to write this? Did he think the distributor cared? Sometimes the censor had to give up.

**CAUGHT CHEATING (4/20/31)**
**REJECTED:** *Reasons:*
*- Police and citizens browbeaten by gangsters*
*- Salacious wisecracks*
*- Drunken orgies*
*- Married women caught cheating*
*- Dialogue on how to get rid of victims of gangsters*
*- Scenes of ganster fight and bodies lying around room.*

*NOTE FROM CENSOR: "This picture could not be cut to the satisfaction of the Board of Censors and leave any sense to the story."*

But he was always concerned about the more vulnerable members of the audience.

**DRACULA** 1932
**REJECTED:** *Reason: The eliminations suggested by Board of Censors were on account of the unwholesome and gruesome effect, which in their opinion would be injurious to nervous women and children, and totally unnecessary to the strength of the picture,(these cuts ) were refused acceptance by the Exchange; therefore the picture stands rejected.*

The cuts asked for were:

*Coffin lid opens, showing a Woman rising from coffin.*
*Rat shown in coffin to point where Dracula appears (32 feet)*
*Dialogue of Renfield and Martin regarding eating of flies, spiders.*

*Cries of infants, where woman vampire is evidently sucking their blood.*

*Newspaper report of same.*

*Dialogue about rat's blood.*

Smith started writing lengthy comments on the moral degeneracy of films that must have been a puzzle to the film's distributor who was the only reader. For example:

**THE WOMAN I STOLE; (1933)**
**REJECTED:** *"The whole theme of the story is the unfaithfulness of the wife, low intrigue carried on under the same roof with husband which runs the full length of the story, culminating finally in the discarding of the woman for a little hussy picked up in a speak-easy, and the sailing away of both the woman's husband and her lover in complete amity with this female companion.*

*Unwholesome and degenerating exhibition of dishonoured females, entirely lacking in portrayal of chivalry upon the part of the chief actor.*

# Censured! Unsuitable for British Columbians

## Film Censorship In British Columbia, 1914 -1963

By Stanley Fox

I became interested in film censorship because I've been a film maker, film producer, and presenter for most of my life and I dealt with two of our provincial censors when I was in charge of programming for the Vancouver film society. When archivist Dennis Duffy told me that the B.C. Archives held 50 years of correspondence from the office of the censor's I was anxious to learn more. It was a revealing experience to discover the censor's reasons for the cutting and banning of motion pictures.

In British Columbia motion picture exhibition began in the first years of the 20th century. By 1913 the leaders of society had become alarmed at the range of expression in the subject matter of films and the effect they might be having on their largely uneducated audiences. It was decided that before films were shown to the public they should be examined by an authority invested with the powers of law.

In March 1913, the legislature passed The Moving Pictures Act, and created the office of Censor of Moving Pictures in the Department of the Attorney-General. Under the terms of the legislation, the censor had the authority to permit or prohibit the exhibition of any motion pictures in the province. It was his duty to "prevent the depiction of scenes of an immoral or obscene nature, the representation of crime or pictures reproducing any brutalizing spectacle, or which indicate or suggest lewdness or indecency, or the infidelity or unfaithfulness of husband or wife, or any other such pictures which he may consider injurious to morals or against the public welfare or which may offer evil suggestions to the minds of children, or which may be likely to offend the public, (s.6)."

The censorship provisions of the Moving Pictures Act remained virtually unaltered until 1970. In that year the position of censor was replaced by a Film-Classification Director and a General/Adult/Restricted rating system was introduced for films which were to be exhibited in commercial theatres.

We are accustomed to thinking of film censorship as being concerned with sexual morality but often the elimination of material was done for political and social reasons. This makes the study of film censorship of wider interest than might first be supposed. It also reinforces the view that any government agency that is not subject to public scrutiny may expand its role in its own interests.

The province's first censor, C.L. Gordon, "A journalist of considerable experience", was appointed in April 1913

It appears that he was particularly offended by the work of the most talented of the early filmmakers, directors like D. W. Griffith, George Mellies and Charlie Chaplin. These are his comments.

**HIS NIGHT OUT**
(CHAPLIN)
**Reject:** *"Burlesque of a minister"*

**CAUGHT IN THE PARK**
(KEYSTONE CHAPLIN)
**Reject:** *"Disgusting exhibition of rankly suggestive vulgarity"*

**BATTY BILLY AND SUICIDE CLUB**
(MELLIES) May 27 1914.
**Reject:** *"Gruesome and vulgar"*

**BATTLE OF THE SEXES**
(GRIFFITH) JUNE 1914.
**Reject:** *"Broadly suggestive, immoral, infidelity rampant."*

**MAN'S GENESIS**
(GRIFFITH) 1915
**Reject:** *"Bestial, brutal and repulsive depiction of primitive man"*

There is no director credited for the following films but the reason for rejection is interesting.

**THE BABY**
**Reject.** *"Nine scenes of wanton women smoking cigarettes"*
and:
**REWARD**
**Reject.** *"Immoral story -four reels of slime of the vilest variety"*

There is a note on the censor's report as follows:

*"This choice collection of objectionable matter - nineteen reels - is larger than usual but we had a busy week, passing 260 reels"*

and on another page it notes that "Number of reels examined brings down percentage of rejections" One wonders, did they have a quota to meet?

Mr. Gordon believed that he should also ban films for political reasons and these bans were final. There was no appeal process until 1929. He was often offended by the number of American flags in a film.

**IN THE CLUTCHES OF GANGSTERS**
**Rejected.** *"Unnecessary display of US flags and excessive depiction of crime"*

**COONTOWN SUFFRAGETTES**
**Rejected** *"U.S. flags" 1914*
(apparently the title was not a problem!)

Stanley Fox has spent a long career in the realm of film and television production. He has been a director and producer in the Film Department at CBC Vancouver, Director of the Vancouver Film Festival, Associate Professor and Chairman of the Department of Film at york University, Toronto and Director of Adult programs at TV Ontario.

All quotations from :

GR-0490
BRITISH COLUMBIA. ATTORNEY GENERAL. CENSOR OF MOVING PICTURES, 1914-1963, 1.0 M (8 BOXES)
B.C. ARCHIVES

***This class of story cannot fail to have a pernicious influence on the less carefully brought up youths at a formative age. Besides, it also directly contravenes the Statutes governing pictures in British Columbia.***

*On might also refer to the scene in speak-easy of the totally unnecessary and overdone love-making of young girl, culminating in disrespectful action of man in pitching girl headlong out of his apartment."*

Mr. Smith was replaced the next year by J. B. Hughes. Mr. Hughes seemed to be a clone of Mr. Smith or they had had an identical moral education.

Hughes continued the practice of writing "editorials" on the state of society which seem to have the sole purpose of apparently of venting his personal angst. For example:

**MAN'S CASTLE 1/19/34**
**REJECTED:** *reasons:*
*Story of tragic figures caught in web of despair. Objectionable on account of confused ethical code throughout……..*

*Such stories (of which there are alas! So many in literature and drama and no doubt in real life today) but add to the general unsoundness of present day public morality in the present world-crisis. [NB. I think he is referring to the Great Depression]*

*Further, the portrayal of a young girl submissive to brutal and revolting expressions from her lover are detrimental propaganda among young adults of susceptible age and weak wills, and leads romantic and foolish girls of this latter type to a low standard of forbearance. Instead of a decent self-respect which is the heritage of the free-born woman of Anglo-Saxon civilization. We admit the story is dramatic, well played and appealing to the emotions in many ways, especially the characterization of the godly old derelict minister, this however makes the poison of low standards all the more dangerous. In the end, of course, as a nod to conventions, there is a common law form of marriage ceremony thought necessary on account of the author introducing the inevitable enceinte condition of the young woman.*

The upheaval of the Depression and World War Two sensitized the censors to dangerous new social and political content in motion pictures. They were uniformly opposed to "ideologies" as much as "free love" and they were stalwart patriots. Still, some of the decisions are puzzling.

**ADVENTURE IN SAHARA**
**REJECTED:** *see letter;\ Apr 17, 1939*
*to Columbia Pictures*

*Dear Sir:*
*We have reviewed the picture "ADVENTURE IN SAHARA" and the Board is unanimous in its decision that this picture should not be shown in British Columbia.*

*It is a slanderous portrayal of conditions existing in the French Foreign Legion. We failed to find one redeeming feature as to why this picture should be shown. It portrays alleged cruelty inflicted on the rank and file by an officer responsible to his Government for the comfort of the officers and men of his command.*

*This story will be accepted as a true portrayal of the sufferings the men of the Foreign Legion are forced to go through, thereby making it an untruthful slander.*

*It could be used, and the opportunity might be taken by those in our midst who are enemies of democracy, to portray the conditions meted out to the men in the rank and file in the democratic armies. Fascism, Nazism and Communism, or, in a word, those advocating the principles of dictatorship, would have a clear field in this picture to carry on their propaganda.*

*We feel that authority at the present time is being challenged at every opportunity, and if this picture was permitted to be shown in our public theatres, unquestionably it would be used as a case against constituted law and authority.*

*Therefore this Board feels that it cannot concientiously recommend that this picture be permitted to be shown in British Columbia.*
*Yours faithfully*
*J. B Hughes,*
*C E N S O R*

**ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT**
the famous aniti-war film, had 206 ft. of cuts.

**LENINGRAD:** (a simple travelogue)
**REJECTED***: "obvious propaganda".*

**LIFE IN BLOOM (RUSSIAN)**
**REJECTED by R. W. McDonald Nov. 16 1952**
excerpt from letter to W. Adamson, International Films, Vancouver:
*"It is the opinion of the interpreter that the younger generation of Slavic Canadians who understand the dialogue are open to the doctrine that violent revolution is a necessary and desirable thing and that and that only good can come from it. From what I myself can gather from viewing the film, the general theme seems to support this opinion."*

**PEACE WILL WIN**
**REJECTED** *4/52*
*"I consider this picture to contain elements of strong propaganda which could arouse great animosity between different political groups"*

*"I must also advise, however, that you are within your rights to appeal my decision before the Appeal Board of British Columbia."*

NB: this film was submitted by Ray Gardner who I believe was a major activist in the Peace Movement which was said to be a "communist front".

**OUTRAGES OF THE ORIENT**
**REJECTED** *4/52*
*"This picture portrays the atrocities perpetrated by the invading Japanese armies upon the Philippine Islands in 1942 and in the light of present day events and a world trying to rise above feelings of hatred and revenge, I consider the showing of this picture to be against the public welfare."*

**CHINESE PEOPLES' VICTORY**
(CHINESE)
*REJECTED*
letter to D. Rutka of New World Films 5/54

*"This picture deals with a subject which has international complications for the people of this province, in particular, people of Chinese extraction. In view of the fact that our country is still on diplomatic terms with the Chinese government, headed by Chiang Kai Shek I think it would not be in the public welfare to release this picture."*

NB: The Chinese Communists had been in power for several years.

**LENIN IN 1918**
**REJECTED***: no note*

**ONE HUNDRED PHOENIX DANCED TO GREET THE SUN (CHINESE)**

**CUT:** *subtitles "Long Live the Party"*
*"Long Live Chairman Mao"*
*" And Hand the Cape to Chairman Mao"*

But note that the film was passed with cuts! Evidently it was not as "bad" as the Russian films.

**DIARY OF A NAZI 11/2/48**
**REJECTED**
*Letter to "Mr. Marks, Artkino Pictures (Canada) 319 W. Pender St. Vancouver B.C.*
*"I have rejected this picture because it is a cruel sadistic picture depicting the Nazi at their worst. On the other hand it depicts the Russians in an altogether different form and its general use today would be purely Russian propaganda giving the greatest comfort and encouragement to Communistic organizations."*
*J. B Hughes*
*Censor of Moving Pictures.*

The exhibition of horror pictures during World War II concerned Mr Hughes. On January 11, 1944 he wrote to the Manager of Columbia Pictures regarding

**RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE.**

*Manager,*
*Columbia Pictures*
*1210 Burrard St.*
*Vancouver BC*

*Dear Sir:*
*re: film RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE*

*On December 6th I forwarded to you a list of eliminations which would have to be made in your film feature, RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE. In all there were some twenty cuts.*

*As you have notified me today by telephone that you cannot accept our decision to make these eliminations, this is to notify you that the feature will be rejected, reason for rejection being that this is a horror picture and depicts some of the most horrifying scenes. As this type of picture are being watched very closely and if the horror scenes cannot be removed, I cannot allow the picture to be shown, particularly at this time when peoples' nerves are on the highest edge, a picture of this type has a very bad effect on a mixed audience, old people deplore such scenes, those who have men in the services are wrought up to such a high pitch that their entertainment calls for something less terrifying than a picture of this kind depicts.*

*Audiences, especially youngsters, who crowd to see pictures of this kind, it is reported to me, places them in a high tension, and I therefore must rule that this picture cannot be approved by the Censor.*

*Yours faithfully,*
*J. B. Hughes.*

NOTE: there is a penciled note on this letter: "Passed by the Appeal Board with cuts"

And, in an amazing decision the Censor, sent this to the distributor of Monogram Pictures in 1943.

**APE MAN**
**REJECTED:** *reason in letter to Monogram pictures:*
*".....the picture has been rejected because this is a horror picture and extremely frightening, and as we have decided to reject all horror pictures for the duration of the war, this one is placed in that category." April 2, 1943*

This policy affected films as harmless as;

**ABBOTT & COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN 12/43**
*Eliminate: transformation of Wolfman reel 1 R 5 close ups of Wolfman.*

*BEFORE THIS: letter from Hughes to Universal:*
*"..... **REJECTED**: " This is nothing more than a reproduction in most part of the horror pictures "Frankenstein and Dracula and as horror pictures are being banned from showing, this is classified as such."*

NB There is a penciled note on this letter "rejected by appeal board".

The post war era brought an increase in the number of foreign films distributed in B.C. The majority of these films were offensive in whole of in part to the Censor Board.

The British Film, BLACK NARCISSUS provoked a classic reaction.

**BLACK NARCISSUS 9/12/47**
**" REJECTED:**
*Letter: Hughes to Eagle Lion*

*".....The general effect of the photography showing the magnificence of the scenery and the beauty of the location, is such as to draw from the audience the greatest of appreciation. However the story to my mind attacks one of the leading religious institutions today in the English speaking world.*

*In our "ACT" provisions are made that any scenes being depicted on the screen that will be offensive to any body of people or may be likely to offend the public, shall not be permitted to be shown.*

*My interpretation of this picture is this - the characters in the film and the attitudes displayed therein, create an impression that constitutes an affront to religion and religious life. It ignores the spiritual motivation, which is the foundation and the safeguard of religious life and it offensively tends to characterize such life as an escape for the abnormal, for the neurotic, and the frustrated. Therefore I have decided that this picture should not be shown in British Columbia."*

NB: passed by Appeal Board 9/28/47

We do not have the space to detail the censor's work through the rest of this period. These are some of the titles that were judged to have "problems":

**RASHOMON, MANON, FROM HERE TO ETERNITY, THE FRENCH LINE, THE WILD ONE, I AM A CAMERA, BABY DOLL, AND GOD CREATED WOMAN, ROOM AT THE TOP, LADY CHATTERLY'S LOVER, A KIND OF LOVING, SATURDAY NIGHT AND SUNDAY MORNING.**

So it went through the 1950's and 1960's. Eventually the Censor's Office became the Film Classification Office. The papers I examined terminate in 1963. I found these records to be a fascinating supplement to the social history of British Columbia. •

# Leon Koerner:
## Industrialist and Philanthropist Extraordinaire

By Rosemary Cunningham

On 16 February 2006 Leon Joseph Koerner was inducted into the Business Laureates of British Columbia Hall of Fame. The fact that this honour comes to Koerner fifty-four years after his retirement from the business world and thirty-four years after his death attests to the endurance of his reputation long past the time one would expect it to have faded from public memory. Who was Leon Koerner, and what did he accomplish to warrant such an accolade?

Leon was born in Novy Hrozenkov, a small town in Moravia, on 12 May 1892, the second son and eighth child of a family of ten children born to well-to-do Jewish parents. His father owned and operated a lumber business know as IKAG (Isidore Koerner Ltd.). In 1898 the Koerner family moved to Novy Jicin, a larger town northwest of Novy Hrozenkov, and, as the business and the family thrived, Leon diligently prepared himself for his career in the family firm. Of the four Koerner sons, Leon achieved the highest level of post-secondary education, including attendance at the Sorbonne and the London School of Economics, as well as important practical experience in finance at several banking centres in Europe. He also became proficient in the English language. During World War I Leon joined the Austro-Hungarian army, rose to the rank of Captain in the artillery, was wounded and decorated for bravery. In 1920, when Isidore retired, his sons took over the business; although the eldest son became the senior partner, Leon was the de facto head of the firm.

Between 1920 and 1938 Leon continued to assert his dominance in the firm, and throughout Europe he gained a reputation as the most influential of the Koerner brothers, both in the family firm and in the broader affairs of the forest industry. By expanding the business during the 1920s, and participating during the 1930s in an organization known as CUPOD (Czechoslovak Lumber Sales Prague Ltd.), a state-run cooperative which effectively returned the forest industry to profitability after the Great Depression and ensured the continued financial well-being of IKAG, the Koerners became very wealthy.[1] In the course of amassing their wealth, they also contributed to the economy of the country: at the height of their international business operations they employed 15,000 people in their forests, mills, factories and offices throughout Czechoslovakia and Europe.[2]

During the 1930s Leon traveled widely abroad and in Europe as CUPOD's International Business Advisor and functioned at a very high level promoting Czechoslovakian lumber and wood products, thereby adding to his already impressive knowledge of world conditions. This experience was crucial to his and his family's future in view of subsequent events.

In the late 1930s, the territorial ambitions and the anti-Semitic policies of the Third Reich made Europe, Central Europe particularly, a very uncomfortable place for Jews. During the summer of 1938 the political situation had become alarming: Germany was focusing its acquisitive attention on the Sudetenland, and an invasion of Czechoslovakia, the homeland of the Koerner family for centuries, was a very real threat, not only to the country but also to the Koerners themselves. Consequently, Leon, his youngest brother, Walter, and John Koerner, their nephew, left Prague on 23 September 1938 on the urging of Otto Koerner, a third brother who had moved his family to Amsterdam from Vienna just before the Anschluss. Leon and Walter's destination was London; John joined his parents in Paris.[3] Of the six daughters in the Koerner family, three were already living outside continental Europe. The other three, who could not be persuaded to leave, remained behind in Czechoslovakia. They all perished in Nazi concentration camps during World War II.

The trauma of abandoning family, friends and fortune (without any compensation) for a future that promised nothing but uncertainty is not hard to imagine. Leon was much affected by his exile. He and his wife, Thea, were in Vancouver in February 1939 as a stop on an extended trip designed to alleviate his distress. Many years after immigrating to Canada, he admitted that "he reached Vancouver 'in an acute state of depression'. He was still smoldering at the manner in which Chamberlain had abandoned Czechoslovakia . . . still harrowed by the disappearance of friends and relatives into Hitler's concentration camps, and still furious at the loss of a fortune."[4] Leon did not find Vancouver to his liking. He was offended by local indifference to his letters of introduction and ridicule of his formal European manners, and was preparing to leave for California when fate intervened. Thea contracted the mumps and was ordered to bed for a month. With time on his hands, Leon took the opportunity to visit some coastal and Vancouver Island lumber mills, and said, " 'What I saw absolutely amazed me'," but he did not elaborate.[5] One possible explanation is his testimony to the 1945 Sloan Royal Commission of Forestry: " 'European logs are small sized logs, about a fifth or a tenth of the contents of British Columbia logs . . . in Europe there is no,

*Overleaf: Capt. Leon J. Koerner, c. 1917*
**Reproduced with the kindness of George Shindler.**

or practically no clear lumber available'."[6] He learned that the forest industry was still suffering the effects of the Great Depression: a surplus of mill capacity and logs, and bargain basement prices for those mills forced out of business for lack of markets. For anyone with vision, it was a golden opportunity to enter an industry about to be jolted out of the doldrums by the unprecedented demand that would be created by the seemingly imminent outbreak of World War II.

Leon was shrewd enough to change his attitude to British Columbia as a desirable place to relocate the family business. Throwing off the black cloud that had hung over him for months, he acted quickly and decisively: on 19 March 1939 he "made the $1000 down payment on a ghost mill in . . . New Westminster, which hadn't sawn a board in over two years."[7] His plan, which met with much derision amongst local operators, was to saw hemlock (a wood that most B.C. lumbermen ignored as inferior due to its high moisture content and tendency to warp and discolour if not properly dried) and sell it to the British. From his experience with a similar tree indigenous to Europe called 'Fichte' in German and 'Borovice' or 'Sosna' in Czech, he knew how to overcome these problems by special drying processes.[8] However, Leon was aware that hemlock's bad reputation would make it nearly impossible to sell, and when he found out the tree had another name — Alaska Pine — he asked Ernest Manning, the Chief Forester for B.C., if it would be legal to sell his lumber under that name, Manning replied: " 'If you can sell hemlock to Britain, you can call the stuff any darn name you like'."[9] It is surprising that all but a few operators ignored Western Hemlock (Tsuga heterophylla) as a marketable wood. The majority cannot have been aware of its excellent properties or think it worth the trouble to learn how to treat it. It did not deserve its bad reputation:

*For some purposes [Western Hemlock] is, . . . when properly seasoned, superior to Douglas Fir, especially for interior finishes because free from resin, and for edge-grained flooring because of the uniform hardness of the spring and summer wood accretion, thus ensuring slow and even wearing without ridges or splinters. Oddly enough, it grows harder with age. Western hemlock as material for wooden containers has no superior. When properly dried it is odourless, tasteless, light in weight, takes nails without splitting and is free from pitchy gum or colouring matter. Aesthetically it may be termed a beautiful wood, taking a soft and satiny finish or one of shining polish and luster. When impregnated with specially prepared solutions of urea-formaldehyde resins it is converted into a hard wood of many varied uses.*[10]

Otto Koerner and his family came immediately

1. Details of the Koerners' involvement in CUPOD were found in the CUPOD papers in the National Archives of Czechoslovakia, Prague.
2. McKenzie Porter, "Leon Koerner's one-man-giveaway program," *Maclean's*, 4 August 1956, 34
3. John's father was Theodore Koerner, the oldest in the family. He and his wife left Prague shortly before the others.
4. Porter, "Leon Koerner's one-man-giveaway program," 35.
5. Harold Hilliard, "They've Built a Forest Empire," *Star Weekly*, 15 November 1952, 2.
6. Box 7-1, Leon Koerner papers, Special Collections, University of British Columbia Library.
7. Hilliard, "They've Built a Forest Empire," 2.
8. John Koerner, who supplied these terms, says that they identify a wood that is similar to Alaska Pine, but from a different tree.
9. Porter, "Leon Koerner's one-man-giveaway program," 37.
10. *Report of the Commissioner The Honourable Gordon McG. Sloan, Chief Justice of British Columbia relating to The Forest Resources of British Columbia 1945* (Victoria, B.C.: King's Printer, 1945), Q61.
11. "B.C. hemlock to find market abroad again," *Vancouver Sun*, July 1939, 5.
12. Hilliard, "They've Built a Forest Empire," 2.
13. Porter, "Leon Koerner's one-man-giveaway program," 37.
14. Noel Harrison, interview by author, 9 Jan. 2003, Vancouver, tape recording. Leon was a very good judge of character; Harrison rose through the ranks to a very senior management position.
15. John Koerner, interview.
16. Porter, "Leon Koerner's one-man-giveaway program," 35.
17. Hilliard, "They've Built a Forest Empire," 2.
18. Ibid
19 "An old friend in a new guise: Leon Koerner turns to British Columbia to replace Czechoslovakia and Poland," *Timber and Plywood*, Annual Special Issue (London: Middlesex, 1939), n.p.

to Vancouver, and the process of bringing some of the firm's experienced personnel from Europe began. By July 1939 Leon had assembled a nucleus of highly skilled people from Europe, and had hired forty-four Canadian workers to begin work under the business named for its controversial raw material, Alaska Pine. The press reported on 11 July 1939, "yesterday, the Alaska Pine Co. began operation of its $250,000 mill, having recently purchased the old plant of the International Products Co. The mill employs 100 workers and has a capacity of 125,000 feet per day. . . . Workmen are being recruited from former members of the operating outfit of the Kraft concern."[11]

To say the enterprise was viewed with skepticism is an understatement of considerable magnitude: "When people saw what we were trying to do many said: 'Those Koerners are crazy,'" Leon recalled many years later.[12] Mayor Fred Hume of New Westminster "pleaded with him not to waste his money," and local tradesmen "for months refused to cash Alaska Pine's pay cheques."[13] Leon stuck to his plan.

He continued to hire Canadians, sometimes under unusual circumstances and for unusual reasons. Noel Harrison, a 1939 graduate of the University of British Columbia, who was taken on as a trainee in sawmill operations in March 1940, recalls how he came to be employed:

> *My father-in-law to be, Alex Manson, a Supreme Court judge, was also the president of the Vancouver Institute. . . . Leon Koerner had been invited to give a lecture . . . and Judge Manson gave a reception for him afterwards, as was the practice of the president at the time. I went to the lecture and to the reception, and was introduced to Leon Koerner. He asked me what I was doing, and I said . . . that I was seeking occupation. He told me to see him at his office the following Monday morning, and he hired me. Retrospectively I think the principal reason for hiring me was not any particular interest in me. Rather he was setting up his network still, and Judge Manson had been very helpful to him when he first came in various matters - legal, immigration and so on.*[14]

John Koerner, his brother, Fred, and their parents immigrated to Vancouver shortly after the mill opened. John and Fred went to work at Alaska Pine the day after their arrival, but their father, Theodore, the oldest of the four brothers, never again played any part in the family business due to poor health caused by the enormous upset of relocation. All the brothers were reunited when Walter and his family arrived in Vancouver in late November 1939.

The question arises: how did the family manage financially during this transitional period? John Koerner surmises, "There must have been money in London," and indeed there was.[15] Before the Nazis could seize all their assets, the brothers had acted swiftly to collect as many outstanding debts as possible owing to the firm and to safeguard a number of foreign investments. "On the securities they deposited at Brown, Shipley and Co. Ltd., a London banking house with which the family had done business for more than fifty years, they raised a credit of three hundred thousand pounds, then roughly one million two hundred thousand dollars."[16] One assumes that each of the brothers also had his own personal account in London into which he had transferred substantial sums in anticipation of the coming conflict.

The outbreak of war in September 1939 caused such confusion in the lumber industry that Leon temporarily shut the mill. "Everyone thought we were broke," he later said.[17] To everyone's surprise, the mill reopened in two weeks, and thereafter there were only rare and brief interruptions in production for the duration of the war. Initially the Koerners had the edge in overseas markets over their local competitors by virtue of their European experience. They knew the measurements required for the British market and they were well aware of the products being offered by their Scandinavian competitors. Furthermore, they could buy hemlock for half the cost of the fir the locals were buying. The company's first sales of hemlock under the trade name Alaska Pine were offered to the British at 10% less than European white woods "on the understanding that if we prove our point – that it was as good as or better than the European product – all future sales would be at a higher price."[18] The British were impressed: "Folks . . . especially those who like to look at good wood, might well inspect [Alaska Pine] parcels, similar to those of Alaska Pine shelvings and floorings we saw a few weeks ago at the Surrey Commercial Docks. They are equal to any first class Swedish manufacture."[19] The local press reported on the outcome of the first offering to the British: "Alaska Pine Company . . . undertook the manufacture of kiln-dried hemlock early this year . . . and the success of the first shipments [to Britain] has brought new offers sufficient to keep the plant in operation during the coming year. Production of Alaska Pine Company is displacing Baltic timber in the British market."[20]

As the war progressed, the British demand for Alaska Pine products, which included planed goods, boards, shelving, flooring, box wood and box shooks,

20. "B.C. hemlock wins favor in Britain," *Daily Province*, 28 December 1939, 21.
21. Porter, "Leon Koerner's one-man-giveaway program," 34.
22. Box 3-1, Leon Koerner papers.
23. Porter, "Leon Koerner's one-man-giveaway program,"37.
24. "New Hemlock Plant Holds Open House," *Vancouver Sun*, 10 September 1941, 17.
25. McKenzie Porter, "Canadian Citizen Number 0388," *British Columbia: a Centennial* Anthology, ed. Reginald Eyre Watters (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1958), 509.
26. APEAC, *Minutes*, 18 June 1942, Box 1-3,Leon Koerner papers.
27. George Percy, interview by author, 18 June 1999, Vancouver, tape recording.
28. W. J. "Bill" McMaster, interview by author, 6 January 2003, Vancouver, tape recording.
29. Percy interview. Percy moved from his first job with Alaska Pine as logging superintendent at several logging camps to become Log Production Manager at head office.
30. Harrison interview.
31. McMaster interview.
32. Leon and Thea visited and stayed at many of these camps.
33. "Alaska Pine and Abitibi Go Into Partnership," *Victoria Daily Times*, 12 December 1950, 17.
34. Responses to a questionnaire of unknown provenance, Box 3, Leon Koerner papers.
35. "Rayonier Buys Alaska Pine," *Timber of Canada*, Dec. 1954, 54.
36. Ross R. Douglas, interview by author, 6 Oct. 1999, White Rock, B.C., tape recording.
37. Peter Pearse, interview by author, 25 May 1999, Vancouver, tape recording.
38. www.vancouverfoundation.bc.ca.
39. UBC Development office.
40. Efforts to find the whereabouts of these valuable books have proved unsuccessful.
41. Leon Koerner, Probate file, B.C. Archives, Victoria, B.C., file no. 120,843, Call no. GR-2991, 91-05410661.

soared. By 1942 Britain's Timber Controller was begging the Koerners to increase their shipments. In order to comply, they acquired another run-down mill, which, after refit, enabled them to double production. During the war, these two mills and the box factory, Universal Box, acquired in 1942, supplied 75% of the ammunition and ration boxes used by the armed forces of the British Commonwealth.[21] The use of top grade hemlock in the manufacture of the Mosquito aircraft in 1941 increased demand even further.

Because the Koerners had no timber holdings at first, they had to count on independent log merchants for their supply. To free themselves from dependence on this unreliable, capricious, and often costly source, they began buying timber along the coast and on Vancouver Island as early as 1940. Two years later they acquired Jones Lake Logging Co. and its timber supply, and the following year Pioneer Timber Co. at Port McNeill. A subsidiary, Northern Timber Co., was set up to acquire more timberland and they gradually acquired more timber holdings and mills on Vancouver Island, in the Fraser Valley and the Queen Charlotte Islands.

A questionnaire filled out by Alaska Pine for the Department of Labour in 1942 provides the following information about the company: it owned a lumber mill, a planer mill and a box factory; its head office was in New Westminster, B.C., at 4th Avenue and 15th Street; and the firm which had had only 44 employees two years earlier, now had 455 employees and nine foremen; Leon was listed as President in charge of personnel management, but in reality he supervised every aspect of the operation.[22]

Leon and his brothers, accustomed to the more servile attitude of European workers, were taken aback at first by their plain-speaking Canadian workers, but Leon soon changed his attitude and instructed his brothers to do the same: "This is one of only two countries in the world where a man can do what he's best suited for and suffer no feeling of social inferiority . . . [Our workers] are natural, candid and proud. They are strong, healthy, intelligent and mechanically minded. And they are loyal if you treat them well. They are the finest workers in the world. We must break with the past, for this is our future."[23]

"Mr. Leon," as he came to be addressed by workers and managers alike, followed his words with actions that set a standard unprecedented in the industry. Plant cleanliness and safety were his first concerns. Concrete runways were laid between the stacks of lumber, an industry novelty that permitted the men to work in dry boots for the first time. Leon saw to it that the yard was kept free of debris and patches of grease; later the entire yards were paved. Obligatory safety helmets were issued, another industry first. These measures significantly reduced the accident rate and its subsequent loss of time at the mill. Construction of a lunchroom and indoor washrooms and toilets followed, unheard of in the industry before then. Justifiably proud and wanting to show off their model mill, on 9 September 1941 the brothers held an Open House, in itself an innovative thing to do. The event was reported as follows: "An industry, representing an investment of $500,000, providing a payroll of 460, and which will materially add to the wealth of British Columbia, is the plant of the Alaska Pine Company inspected by 260 members of the Vancouver and New Westminster Boards of Trade and civic leaders, Tuesday . . .. The Trade Board members were amazed at the efficiency and the general set-up of the plant."[24] Some years later, Albert Rose, a foreman, recalled: "When I joined the company in 1943, I was amazed — everything was so clean. I had always been used to mills where you ate your lunch sitting on a log, washed your hands in the boiler room, and went into the bush to the toilet. But here was a fine cafeteria, indoor plumbing, and concrete runways between the stacks to save the men from getting their feet wet."[25] As if these innovations were not enough, Alaska Pine introduced another first in the industry: higher pay for night shift workers.

Unions posed no threat to the Koerners, who were well accustomed to them in Europe. By 1940 Leon had already created the Alaska Pine Employees' Advisory Committee (APEAC) to act as the bargaining agent for the plant, and to give the rank and file a pipeline to management until they became certified under the IWA in 1943. The APEAC minutes provide selective information about the day-to-day operations of the business and company policy, as the following excerpt shows. They recorded that it was "Company policy to make work conditions as pleasant as possible for all employees" and "of its own free will has given employees free Life Insurance, Sickness and Accident Insurance, Doctor's care for employees and their dependants [sic], holiday pay in lieu of holidays to employees having one year's service, and also special considerations at Christmas time."[26] Christmas 'considerations' included bonuses based on length of service, turkeys for all employees with over three months service, and an annual Christmas children's

42. The Leon and Thea Koerner Foundation. Medical research has not been funded since 1972, because the amounts required exceeded the Foundation's disposable income.
43. The Leon and Thea Koerner Foundation, *Financial statements*, 30 August 2005.
44. The Chris Spencer Foundation (1949) and the Mr. and Mrs. P. A. Woodward Foundation (1951) were the first two.
45. Irving Abella and Harold Troper, *None is Too Many*, 3d ed. (Toronto: Lester Publishing Company, 1991), xxii.
46. Koerner to F.C. Blair, 20 December 1939 and 27 June 1940, Box 13-16, Leon Koerner papers.
47. Ibid, 27 June 1940

party with Santa Claus distributing presents for all.

Initially, the established operators resented the progressive attitude of the Koerners towards their workforce, because it drew attention to their own cavalier attitudes. George Percy, who left a competitor to join Alaska Pine in 1945 as a logging superintendent, recalls that in the early days of Alaska Pine's history:

*There was tremendous resistance to the Koerners. They started logging in the Fraser Valley. The competition resented them, saying "the Europeans could stay in the Fraser Valley, they are not getting in anywhere else." They had a tough row to hoe against the tycoon philosophy that was "get in, take what you want, get out." The tycoons thought they owned B.C. and could do what they pleased. The Koerners had a great social conscience - the result of their European experience. They were the first to make logging camps comfortable for the workers. They paved the yard at Alaska Pine. Nobody had thought of doing that before. They changed the philosophy of the timber industry. There was no social responsibility before they came.*[27]

A prime examples of this absence of social responsibility was the lack of concern for the protection and well-being of the people who worked in the coastal forest industry. The Great Depression had wiped out much of the progress made during the 1920s as a result of pressure by independent and unionized workers. Businesses that survived effected their economies on the backs of their employees by reducing wages and relegating working conditions to the lowest priority. Severe as well as minor injuries were commonplace in both forests and mills, and fatalities occurred with disturbing frequency. Employers were under no obligation, moral or regulatory, to ensure the safety of their workers, and since it would have cost them money to do so, most did nothing, subscribing to the attitude that working in the woods and mills was a dangerous occupation and meant accepting risks.

Leon's attitude was entirely different. Safety in the workplace was a major concern and money to promote it was well spent as far as he was concerned. He knew from his European experience that a well treated work force was more productive, less likely to be transitory, and generally more inclined to a cooperative mindset rather than a confrontational one. Alaska Pine's safety standards were so far above the norm that other operators were eventually forced, albeit reluctantly, to bring their operations into line. Accidents were not eliminated at Alaska Pine, but when they did occur, the Koerners showed great concern and intensified efforts to ensure that the cause, whether human carelessness or a mechanical problem, was rectified. The company paid for workers to be certified as first-aid workers by the St. John Ambulance Association, had one present on every shift, and provided a well-equipped first aid room. In order to keep the issue in front of the workforce, safety was a prominent feature in every issue of the company's monthly newsletter, the *A P Chronicle*.

The initial hostility of competitors became grudging acceptance and, eventually, respect in the community as competitors had to acknowledge what the Koerners had accomplished in a very short period and change their own business practices and attitudes because of it.

Several factors contributed to the success of Alaska Pine in the early years. First and foremost, Leon and his brothers knew the lumber business inside out. As owners of a private business, they had complete control over operations and finances and could adjust to market conditions quickly. Their use of hemlock products lessened the local ill will and resentment they would have experienced had they opted to use fir and cedar, the raw material of the established operators. Noel Harrison cites the Koerners' excellent employee relations as an important contribution to the company's success. W.J. "Bill" McMaster, assistant manager of log trading at Alaska Pine, thinks it was due in part to their excellent reputation in banking and financial circles, which enabled them to expand and put large amounts of capital into their operations.[28] Last, and certainly not least, the owners of the company never shirked hard work themselves.

The timing of the Koerners' relocation to Canada was extremely favourable. They were able to buy into the lumber business at depressed prices and, after a relatively modest outlay, profit from a great surge in demand for the next six years. This made them very wealthy but once the war was over, demand for many of their products, particularly wooden boxes, dried up. In the midst of this difficult period of post-war adjustment, tragedy struck: Otto suffered a massive heart attack attributed to overwork, and died at the age of fifty-two on 30 August 1946.

Walter succeeded Otto as president of Universal Box in addition to his own position as General Manager of Alaska Pine, an empire which had grown to include ten wholly owned subsidiaries: Alaska Pine Co. Ltd.; Alaska Pine Sales Ltd; Alaska Pine Trading Ltd.; Emory Creek Logging Co. Ltd.; Great

West Lumber Co. Ltd.; Jones Lake Logging Co. Ltd.; Marine Transport Ltd.; Northern Timber Co. Ltd.; Pioneer Timber Ltd.; Universal Box Co. Ltd. The company moved its head office to the Marine Building in downtown Vancouver.

Leon and his brothers had assembled an extremely competent workforce and took measures to ensure a supply of qualified Canadian managers for the future. One of the ways they did this was to finance a management training programme for returning veterans interested in the lumber business and for promising people already in their employ. One of the men chosen for advanced management training was George Percy, who recalls the benefit he received: "I had only a high school education. The Koerners sent me to the Banff School of Business. They sent two every year for many years."[29]

Another system used to ensure a stable and well-trained workforce was the cadet programme, designed as an apprenticeship during which the trainee was moved through all phases of the sawmill or logging operations of the company. Noel Harrison, one of the two original cadets taken on in 1940 at the Alaska Pine mill in New Westminster, described the experience:

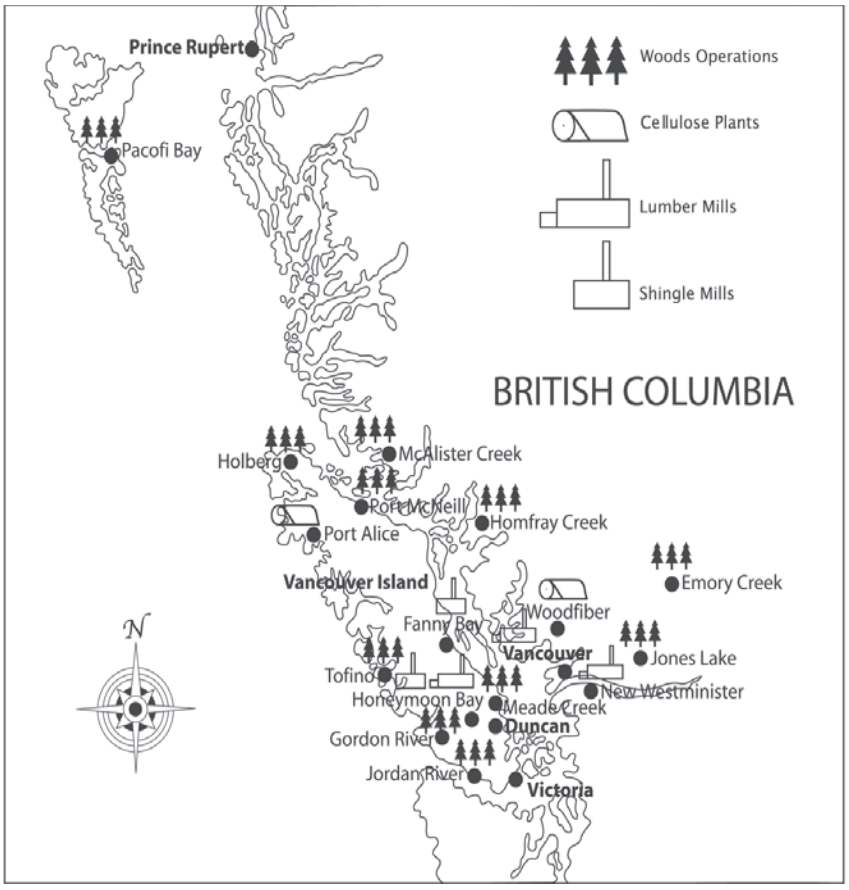
*I started at the very bottom, pulling lumber off the green chain for six weeks. I was then deemed to be a person who could stand the rough side of things and was moved to work on the river where the logs came into the sawmill to learn the sorting process of the logs operation—the mechanics of movement of the raw materials from the river into the sawmill and the first breakdown machine known as the head rig, the large band saw mill that breaks the log down. I was still in that stage when I was called up [into the air force]. I was earning forty-five cents an hour at first, got a raise after a month or two, and then was put on salary at one hundred dollars a month. I got one raise to one hundred and ten dollars a month before joining up.*[30]

Bill McMaster joined Alaska Pine as a post-war cadet, and offers some insight into the difference between the Koerner system and that of one of their competitors:

*We were not employed as, well, boom man in my case, or as a planer man or a tallyman, but we helped those that were. I started in the booming ground and came out in the shipping end of the business. It worked very well. This was post-war and there were a lot of us. Some fellows went in to the H.R. MacMillan Export Company [cadet programme], but they went in as employees. A friend of mine went in as a spark chaser, and after six months he figured, I'm here forever, and he quit. It didn't work, but the Koerner system, and I would think this is European, I think worked very well. We came out and were supposed to know how you make lumber from logs.*[31]

Paradoxically, the post-war years were both difficult and years of considerable expansion. In 1946, the brothers acquired Lake Logging Company in the Lake Cowichan area of Vancouver Island and renamed it Western Forest Industries. Subsequently, the Koerners established Honeymoon Bay on Lake Cowichan and Gordon River, inland and to the west some fifty miles, as their first model communities that enabled workers to live in the woods where they worked. As other logging operations and mill sites were acquired, new communities, superior in facilities and amenities to those of their competitors, were built to accommodate the workers and their families at Jordan River, Meade Creek, Port McNeill, Port Hardy and Port Alice on Vancouver Island and Holberg Camp in the Queen Charlotte Islands.[32]

In the late 1940s the Koerners saw the need to expand into the pulp business partly to counteract the depressed lumber and box market. To that end the brothers began to negotiate the purchase of




*Alaska Pine and Cellulose Operations, 1951. Reproduced from APC Chronicle 9:10 (1951): 20, by Usha Wennerstrand with permission of the editor, John M. A. Koerner.*

the B.C. Pulp and Paper Company from the Isaac Walton Killam Group. A search for a partner to share in financing the deal led the Koerners to the Abitibi Pulp and Paper Company, a Toronto-based company known to be interested in expanding into B.C. At the end of 1950, in a deal reported to have involved $30 to $35 million, Alaska Pine and Abitibi acquired B.C. Pulp and Paper and became equal partners in the new joint venture, named the Alaska Pine and Cellulose Company.[33]

The second largest lumber firm in British Columbia after the merger, Alaska Pine and Cellulose had grown from its modest beginnings to an empire whose assets in 1951 included two more sawmills, eight logging camps, two rayon pulp mills and two shingle mills. The capital investment in the plant and equipment after provision for depreciation was over $32 million. Investment in timber properties amounted to $8,500,000. Gross value of products produced per year exceeded $50 million. Alaska Pine and Cellulose employed 4,950; its head office was 401 Marine Building, Vancouver.[34] By this time Leon was in poor health, and, although he remained as a director, he retired as president in 1952.

Upon the merger of Alaska Pine and Abitibi, Alaska Pine passed out of the category of a private family business and was at a crossroad. Competition in the pulp business was stiff, especially from Rayonier, a New York firm that was a North American leader in high quality pulp production. Rayonier, with an acquisitive eye on the timber holdings and rights of Alaska Pine and Cellulose, approached the company with an offer that appealed to Leon because it would give him the freedom and means at that stage of his life to embark on his philanthropic plans. In 1954, the Koerners agreed to sell controlling interest in the company, some 80,000 shares valued at approximately $20 million, to Rayonier.[35]

The sale to Rayonier effectively closed Leon's remarkable career as a prominent industrialist. However, he did not confine himself solely to making money during his first two decades in Canada. From the outset what he saw of the lumber industry's modus operandi appalled him. R. R. Douglas, who became Vice-President of Forestry in the company, recalled that "in pre-war days, utilization in B.C. was terrible. Companies might use only half the tree. The leftovers were lying on the ground and disposed of by slash burning. The Koerners were shocked by this waste. They had operated on sustained yield in Europe in their own forests. Utilization was different in Europe. European timber was all second growth and all the tree was used."[36]

Peter Pearse, a consultant on natural resources management and a former professor of economics at the University of B.C., concurs: "The forest industry in 1939 had a frontier mindset — cut the best logs and get out. It moved from a volatile, unstable industry to one with concepts of stewardship and sustained yield after the war. 1945 and the Sloan Commission was the turning point."[37] While it cannot be said that Leon's submission to the 1945 Sloan submission was single-handedly responsible for the Commissioner's sweeping recommendations, which included implementation of a reforestation programme according to the concepts of sustained yield and stewardship, his experience, reputation and opinions carried a good deal of weight.

During his early years in Vancouver Leon observed how differently local families of comparative privilege viewed the needs of the community and of those less fortunate in it. In Europe, people of socio-economic advantage were accustomed to contributing to the welfare of the community and the needy as their responsibility. By contrast, with few exceptions, wealthy Vancouverites fell into two categories: spenders and savers. The conservative savers wanted to make sure they had enough money for their old age or to provide for their children should something happen to them; the spenders were the high rollers whose lifestyle was characterized by conspicuous consumption. The notion that the community might long for and benefit from creative giving to lift it out of its provincialism simply did not occur to those with means until 1943, when a public-spirited industrialist, W. J. VanDusen, pledged $10,000 and encouraged nine other wealthy men to do the same to establish a community fund with one of its goals being "to support endeavors which improve life in the community."[38] It took seven years for the Vancouver Foundation to become a reality, but as members of the armed forces returned from abroad with an expanded view of the world, and cultured European immigrants introduced a new level of sophistication to the community, Vancouverites began to emerge from their pioneer mentality to place a value on the visual and performing arts as a means of nourishing the spirit of their city and province.

To demonstrate how strongly both Leon and Walter felt about the needs of the spirit, they chose to commemorate their brother, Otto, by giving $25,000 to the University of British Columbia in 1946


*Leon J. Koerner, 1967.*
**Fred Schilfer photo 2984, copyright Jewish Historical Society of BC. Reproduced with permission.**

to establish a fund from which the interest would be used to purchase "books and materials for music and fine arts."[39] Two years later, Leon and Walter presented the City Council of Vancouver with a valuable three-volume reproduction of Captain George Vancouver's complete account of his journeys as a gift to the city's citizens.[40]

After arriving in Vancouver, Leon had acquired a reputation for generosity to numerous causes and organizations. For example, in 1951 he donated $10,000 to the Faculty of Law at the University of British Columbia for its library; in 1958 he donated three units of the expensive respiratory equipment he used to relieve his bronchitis and emphysema to UBC's Faculty of Medicine and two to St Paul's Hospital; in 1962 he donated $25,000 to UBC for the establishment of an Opthalmological Research Unit in its new hospital. However, it was his decision to create the Leon and Thea Koerner Foundation in 1955 with a one million dollar endowment that took him out of the category of generous supporter into one of philanthropist. Four years later, Leon made further contributions to the Foundation. When his wife died in 1959, her will provided that Leon should enjoy for his lifetime the income from the capital of her estate, $450,000; upon his death it should go to the Foundation. Leon chose to disclaim his legacy in favour of the Foundation, and when he died in 1972, he bequeathed the residue of his own estate, nearly $100,000, to the Foundation.[41]

During its fifty years of operation, the Foundation has awarded grants totaling over $8 million to organizations throughout B.C. in the fields of cultural and creative arts, higher education, medical research, social services and grants-in-aid.[42] Sound stewardship has increased the capital of the Foundation from its original endowment to slightly over $5 million as of 30 August 2005.[43] Although by comparison to other foundations, the Leon and Thea Koerner Foundation's fund is small, its significance in B.C. should not be underestimated. Over the years its reputation for rigorous selectivity in awarding grants resulted in an accompanying cachet: numerous organizations have reported that meriting a Foundation grant enabled them to obtain additional funding elsewhere. Recently, the Board of Governors agreed a to raise the level of a maximum grant from $4000 to $10,000, which should enhance the Foundation's effectiveness.

Had Leon's philanthropic activities ended with the creation of the Leon and Thea Koerner Foundation, he would always have the distinction of being the founder of the third private foundation in the province, and the first to be established by an immigrant.[44] However, there was more to follow.

During conversations with his University of B.C. friends and colleagues, Leon became aware of the momentum within the university community to begin a building programme to replace many of the army huts brought onto the campus as a pragmatic solution to the huge increase in enrollment at the end of World War II. In response to a $5 million capital gifts fund raising drive launched in 1957, Leon pledged $500,000 for a Faculty Club to replace the temporary huts then being used for that purpose. In 1958 Leon put up an additional $100,000. The Faculty Club opened with much fanfare on 15 June 1959. After a brief closure during the mid-1990s due to unresolved financial

problems, the center was reopened on 12 March 1999 as a multi-use facility renamed The Leon and Thea Koerner University Centre.

After his wife's death, Leon was determined to create something to preserve her memory in a lasting way. He approached the Governors of The Leon and Thea Koerner Foundation, who agreed to donate $400,000 of the money from Thea's estate to help finance a centre for graduate students on the UBC campus, to which Leon added his own contribution of $400,000. The center, named Thea Koerner House, officially opened on 24 May 1961. For the opening Leon commissioned local artist, Jack Harmon, to design and cast the large bronze centerpiece fountain in the plaza pool. It is called *Transcendence* and is still one of the university's most beautiful pieces of public art.

During their early years in Canada, Leon and his brothers all developed a deep and sincere love for Canada, and valued the asylum and opportunity they had been given with profound gratitude. Leon, particularly, never missed an occasion to express his feelings publicly, often in an emotional manner. Cynics may argue that such gratitude is too effusive to be sincere. They would do well to apprise themselves of Canada's dismal record in admitting Jews to this country: "Between 1933 and 1945 Canada found room within her borders for fewer than 5,000 Jews; after the war, until the founding of Israel in 1948, she admitted but 8,000 more. That record is arguably the worst of all refugee-receiving states."[45] The Koerners had every reason to be profoundly grateful. Bearing in mind Canada's rigid anti-Semitic immigration policies and the general climate of covert and not so covert anti-Semitism at the time, there can be no doubt the Koerners were allowed to immigrate, not for humanitarian reasons, but for what they could offer: desperately needed jobs for Canadians in a major resource industries and an introduction of new capital into the depressed economy. If proof is wanting, excerpts from two letters Leon wrote to F. C. Blair, the federal government's Director of Immigration, who could have denied the Koerners entry into Canada, surely provides it: "The approaching Christmas holidays and the New Year afford me the opportunity of thanking you in my name and the names of my associates, to whom you have granted permits to land in this lovely country, for all the kindness you have rendered us. We wish to repeat . . . the promise to do our best for the prosperity of Canada."[46] Six months later Leon wrote again in the same vein: " Everything at Alaska Pine is going along quite well, and we are working two 10 hour shifts in the box factory and in the planer mill . . . with over 250 men on the payroll. As you, Mr. Blair, remember my first promise was to employ 100 to 150 men . . . and we are employing now double that amount with only nine Czechoslovakians. The working capital . . . brought over from Europe exceeds $500,000." [47]

Other European Jews suffered the same agony of being uprooted from their homelands and forced to relocate in unfamiliar countries to escape Nazi tyranny. What makes Leon extraordinary was his determination to rebuild his family's lives and their livelihood, and through his prosperity contribute to his adopted country, and particularly to British Columbia, great economic and social benefits that were unprecedented for their time and are still apparent in many aspects of life in the province. Although Leon received recognition and honours during his lifetime, it is fitting that he is not forgotten. •

# Wallace Island:
## A Microcosm of Gulf Islands Development

By Helen Edwards

Helen Edwards is active in heritage and history circles. in the Pacific Northwest. She has written extensively on Victoria's architecture and history. This is her first article for BC History.

Wallace Island, located in Trincomali Channel off the northeast shore of Salt Spring Island is perhaps best known as the home of David Conover, the Army photographer who discovered Marilyn Monroe. But it is the story of Jeremiah Chivers, the first European landowner on the island, that speaks directly to the development and settlement of British Columbia. In many of the Gulf Islands, as in the rest of the province, a long period of aboriginal habitation dating back at least 5,000 years was followed by a frontier society of loggers, fishermen, farmers and miners. Although Wallace Island never developed to the extent that the larger islands have, it is nonetheless representative of the trends. Jeremiah Chivers' extended family also represents the evolution of the province with their connections to milestones in British Columbia history.

Jeremiah Chivers was born in Glasgow, Scotland on January 28, 1838 to Catherine (Meikle) Chivers and her husband John, a paper box maker. He was their third child – a daughter Elizabeth was born in 1831 and Margaret in 1834. He came from a long line of Jeremiahs, named for a Huguenot ancestor who had fled France following the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in October 1685. After the Revocation, over 80,000 French manufacturers and workmen fled to the British Isles, bringing such industries as papermaking, silk making, tanning, furniture making, and silversmithing. As a result, England and Scotland became exporters, rather than importers of items such as velvets, satins, silks, taffetas, laces, gloves, buttons, serge cloth, beaver and felt hats, linens, ironware, cutlery, feathers, fans, girdles, pins, needles, combs, footwear, and many more items manufactured by the new Huguenot citizens. Jeremiah's grandfather, also named Jeremiah, was a stocking weaver and his uncle George was a master boot and shoe maker.

Leaving his home in Glasgow in 1862, the younger Jeremiah traveled to Leith with his sister Margaret where he boarded the *Cyclone*, one of many passengers bound for the promise of the gold fields of the Cariboo. His only companion was his white terrier "Foxy" – from then Jeremiah was never without at least one dog. The voyage was completed in just over four months "partly because they had favourable weather around Cape Horn." "Uncle," as his family knew him, wrote of his exploits to his family and maintained a diary, a portion of which is still in the family's possession. Among his fellow passengers were Dr. Jackson, who was Victoria's medical officer at the time of the smallpox outbreak, and noted photographer Frederick Dally, who recorded details of the long voyage in a diary.

On his way to the Cariboo, Jeremiah travelled by boat and canoe as far as Yale; then took the Hudson's Bay Trail to Lytton. Along the trail to the Cariboo, roadhouses served meals and provided points of contact for the prospectors. On the banks of the Thompson River, Jeremiah noted the presence of winter homes of the local First Nations – made of mud or clay, conical in shape, and with no doors. Entrance was via a smoke hole in the roof, and the ladder was a young pine tree. He also prospected in Cassiar, Omineca and Skeena country and operated a trading business in Alaska – one of the first to do so – before returning to the south where he settled on Galiano Island on December 29, 1875. Despite reports to the contrary, his mining and trading ventures must have been moderately successful, as he regularly sent money to his parents and gold nuggets to his sisters.

His sister Margaret, still living in Scotland, had married John Shaw on February 3, 1863. By the mid-1870s, her husband, a stonecutter, had developed silicosis, also known as stone cutter's disease, and had been advised to "go abroad." Jeremiah encouraged the family - two adults and their four children (Robert, Margaret, John, and "Uncle's" namesake Jeremiah Chivers) - to come to Galiano Island. As her parents were now deceased, Margaret felt she was free to leave Scotland for the sake of her husband's health.

The family left from Leith in 1877, travelling via the steamer *Ethiopia* to New York City where they boarded a train to Sacramento where they boarded a steamer for the trip down the Sacramento River to San Francisco. The *City of Panama* brought them to Victoria, and the *Emma* stopped on her trip to Nanaimo to transfer the family and their goods to Jeremiah's ample rowboat. Jeremiah's niece Margaret Shaw Walter, aged 13 at the time, fully described the trip and their arrival in *Early Days among the Gulf Islands*.

Jeremiah acquired through pre-emption 4073 160 acres – Lot 83 – on Galiano Island fronting on what is now Shaw's Landing. On June 5, 1882, he had filed a "Certificate of Improvement" noting that he had occupied the land and had made improvements "in the extent of Two Dollars and Fifty Cents an Acre," and on November 9,1888, secured a crown grant after payment of the fee of $10.00. John Shaw had obtained 60 acres in Section 7 early in 1888 for a fee of $5.00.

1. This is the date listed on the 1901 Canadian census as Jeremiah's birth date. A search of Scottish records notes his baptism in Glasgow on March 19, 1837. Scottish archival officials advise that often citizens did not know their birthdates as before 1855 the only records were kept in parish churches. Not until national registration of births was required can records be considered accurate.
2. Record of the 1871 census for Scotland as accessed via HYPERLINK "http://scotlandspeople.gov.uk" http://scotlandspeople.gov.uk.
3. Elizabeth married butcher John Muir on December 31, 1859; their family, including son William, remained in Scotland. Little is known of Jeremiah's uncle Jeremiah (born August 1, 1803) or his aunt Jemima Crawford Chivers (1814-1891). However, the lineage of Uncle George Chivers (1807-1863) and Aunt Jean (born 1810 and married to John Dickson on December 31, 1816) is well documented. It would appear that descendants of these branches of the family tree remained in Scotland. The 1901 Scottish census, the last to be made publicly available, lists many Chivers descendants and has been a valuable source of information.

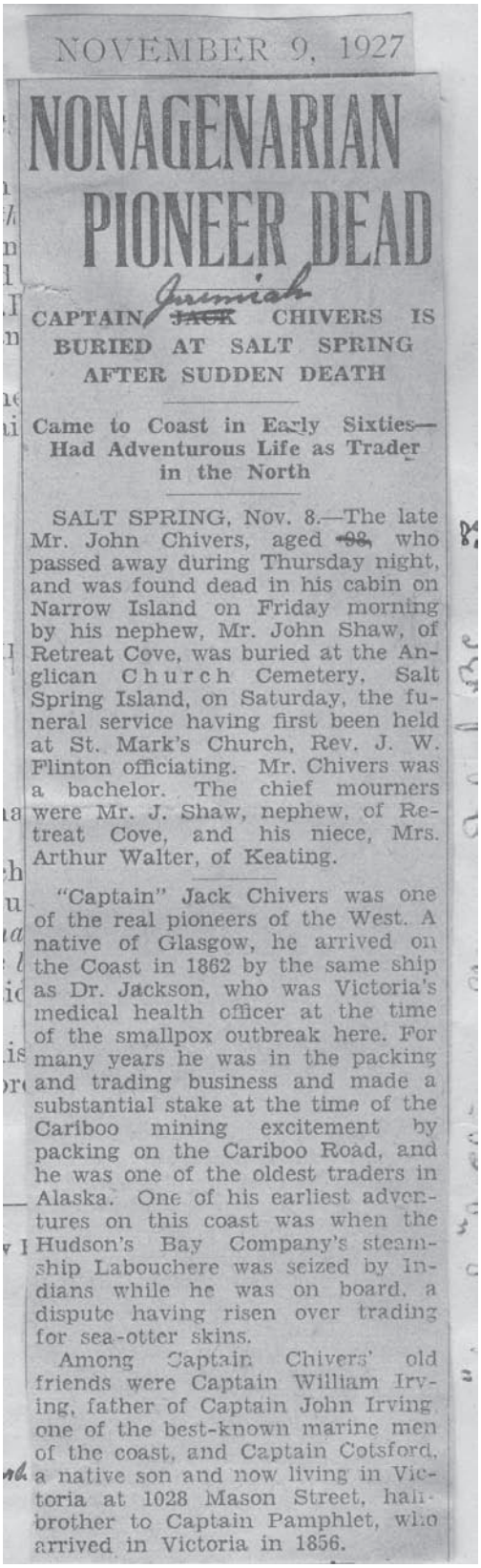
*Jeremiah with his dogs in front of the cabin*

In 1889, Jeremiah purchased via Crown grant 145 acres comprising Lot 12 of Wallace Island, then called Narrow Island, and moved there with his dog, transferring ownership of the Galiano property to the Shaws. In this case, he paid both the crown grant fee of $5.00 and the purchase price of $145.00. He was also required to declare that "the land … is unfit for cultivation, does not include meadow or swamp land, and is valueless for lumbering purposes." On his new property, he built a two-room home, furnished it with homemade furniture, and planted a small orchard, living long enough to see the trees grow into full production. He never married, but his family reports that he lived a happy life with numerous trips to Galiano Island to visit his relatives and to Salt Spring Island to sell his fruit. Eventually Jeremiah built himself a four-roomed cottage with larger windows, a good fireplace, and many conveniences. Unfortunately, he set fire to some brush intending to clear some more land, the wind changed, and the new cottage was destroyed. He never rebuilt, continuing to live in the small cabin until his death in 1927. He is buried in the family plot at St. Mark's Anglican Church Cemetery on Salt Spring Island, on land that had been donated by his niece's husband, Arthur Walter. On his headstone is a verse taken from Isaiah XLI:6.

On Jeremiah's death, the land on Wallace Island reverted to the crown. The Mouat Brothers who eventually acquired it, sold it in 1936 to a California boys' school that established a summer camp. It was at this camp that David Conover worked as a counselor during his college years.

Jeremiah's nephew, Arthur Brittan Walter,

4. OPR Births and Baptisms accessed via HYPERLINK "http://scotlandspeople.gov.uk" http://scotlandspeople.gov.uk.
5. The origin of his surname dates back to William Le Chievre who accompanied William the Conqueror to England in 1066. The name evolved to different forms including Chevre, Chevyr, Chever, Chevers, Cheevers, and Chivers. The original name was anglicized on arrival in the British Isles and appears in different forms in different regions of England, Scotland and Ireland. The Irish branch is best known for his manufacture of jams, jellies and preserves that continues to the present day.
6. The earliest "Jeremiah Chivers" found so far in Scotland was Jeremiah's grandfather born in 1777; there are several generations of "Jeremiahs" in England and Ireland.
Margaret Shaw Walter, *Early Days Among the Gulf Islands* (Victoria: Diggen-Hibben Ltd., 1946), 44.
7.Jeremiah Chivers' great-great grandnieces, the granddaughters of Arthur Walter, live in New Brunswick and are currently cataloguing the family records, the source for much of the content of this article. The collection is an extensive one if the excerpts they have provided are any indication.
8. "Nonagenarian Pioneer Dead," *The Daily Colonist*, November 9, 1927, 17.
9. For more information on Frederick Dally and his work in British Columbia see http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com.
10."The Log of the China Clipper built Tea-Ship *Cyclone* from London May 5th 1862 to Sep 18th, 1862 to Victoria, Vancouver Island," British Columbia Archives MS-2443.
Walter, *Early Days*, 44-45.
11. http://scotlandspeople.com, death certificates for John Chivers (1874) and Catherine Meikle Chivers (1869).
12. Confirmation of the family's passage was found in the manifest of the *Ethiopia* as located at Ancestry.com.
13. Walter, *Early Days*, 5-11.



NOVEMBER 9, 1927

# NONAGENARIAN PIONEER DEAD

## CAPTAIN ~~JACK~~ Jeremiah CHIVERS IS BURIED AT SALT SPRING AFTER SUDDEN DEATH

### Came to Coast in Early Sixties—Had Adventurous Life as Trader in the North

SALT SPRING, Nov. 8.—The late Mr. John Chivers, aged ~~98~~, who passed away during Thursday night, and was found dead in his cabin on Narrow Island on Friday morning by his nephew, Mr. John Shaw, of Retreat Cove, was buried at the Anglican Church Cemetery, Salt Spring Island, on Saturday, the funeral service having first been held at St. Mark's Church, Rev. J. W. Flinton officiating. Mr. Chivers was a bachelor. The chief mourners were Mr. J. Shaw, nephew, of Retreat Cove, and his niece, Mrs. Arthur Walter, of Keating.

"Captain" Jack Chivers was one of the real pioneers of the West. A native of Glasgow, he arrived on the Coast in 1862 by the same ship as Dr. Jackson, who was Victoria's medical health officer at the time of the smallpox outbreak here. For many years he was in the packing and trading business and made a substantial stake at the time of the Cariboo mining excitement by packing on the Cariboo Road, and he was one of the oldest traders in Alaska. One of his earliest adventures on this coast was when the Hudson's Bay Company's steamship Labouchere was seized by Indians while he was on board, a dispute having risen over trading for sea-otter skins.

Among Captain Chivers' old friends were Captain William Irving, father of Captain John Irving, one of the best-known marine men of the coast, and Captain Cotsford, a native son and now living in Victoria at 1028 Mason Street, half-brother to Captain Pamphlet, who arrived in Victoria in 1856.

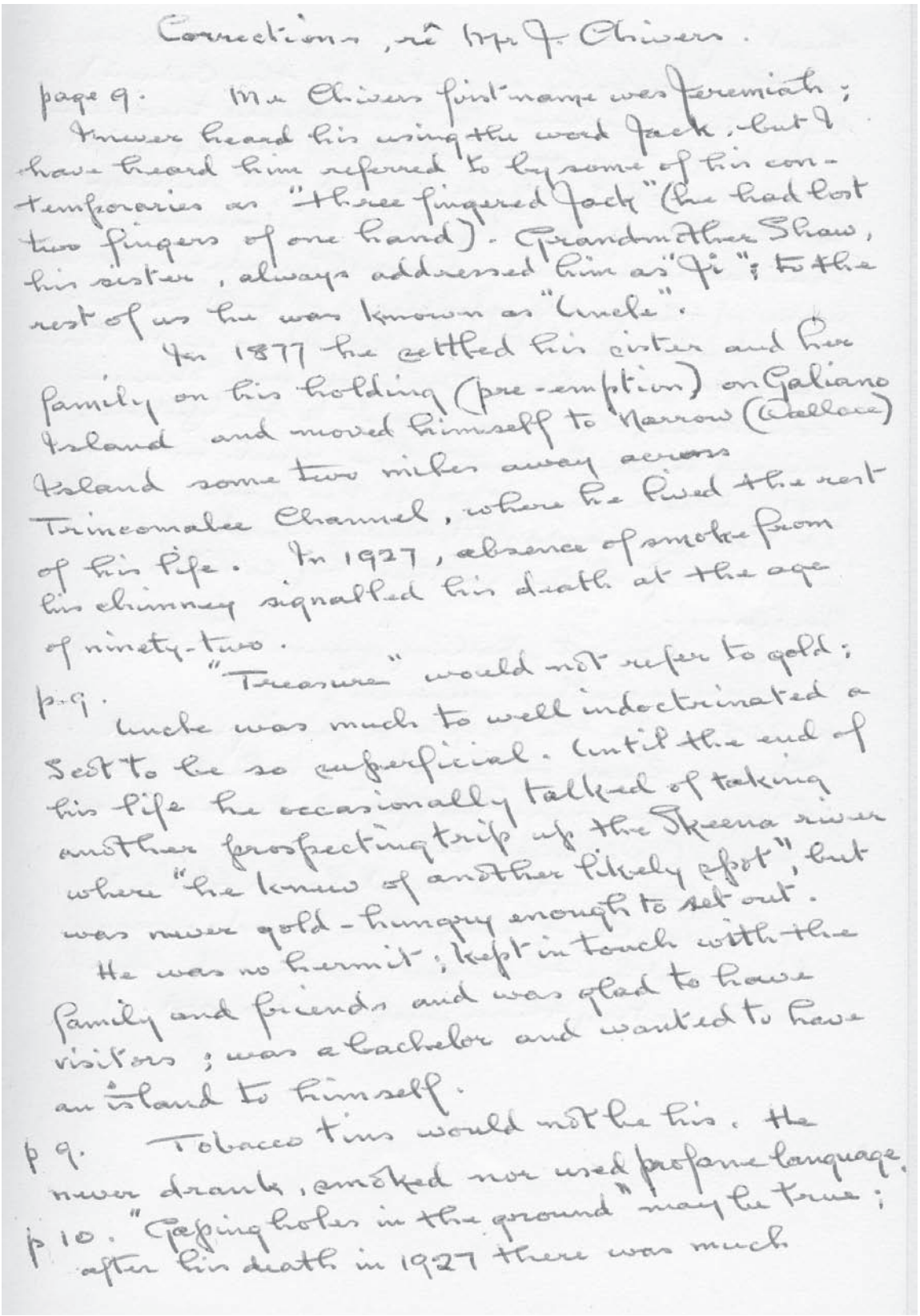
wrote notes in the flyleaf of Conover's first book *Once Upon An Island*, correcting what he considered to be errors in the text and adding to the details of the life of this BC pioneer. Margaret Shaw remained at the family farm on Galiano Island after her husband's death in 1890; John Shaw became the first Postmaster on the island - a post he would hold for twenty years. Margaret married Englishman Arthur Walter in 1888 and moved to his property "Woodhill" on Salt Spring Island. Jeremiah Chivers Shaw signed up with Canadian Pacific Steamships at age 16, and was the master of several ships. He was tragically lost in October 1918 when the *Princess Sophia* ran aground on Vanderbilt Reef in Lynn Canal.

The story of David Conover is better documented, but is the connection with Hollywood glamour that led to the success of his Wallace Island Resort. On June 25, 1945, Private Conover was sent by CO Ronald Reagan to take publicity shots of women in war work at Radioplane Corp. He discovered Norma Jean Dougherty working in the production line and recognized her natural beauty. After a two-week photo shoot, he was sent overseas to the Philippines but left her money to study modeling. Norma Jean soon became a star in the movie industry, changing her name to Marilyn Monroe.

Remembering his summer work on Wallace Island, David went there with his wife Jeanne on his discharge from the army in 1946. They sold their Los Angeles bungalow and purchased the island. First living in Jeremiah's original home, they built a wharf, then slowly developed a resort of which three buildings remain. They scavenged building materials from the shore in order to meet ends meet and, at one time, bought the Secretary Islands to the north, logged them, then sold them two years later to help pay the mortgage on Wallace Island. Proceeds from the sale of Conover's early photographs of Marilyn Monroe helped to finance the Wallace Island Resort. In 1952, the Conovers went to Hollywood; a 1953 publicity shot for the Wallace Island Resort includes Marilyn Monroe in the photograph. Contrary to popular belief, she never visited the island, although several Hollywood stars did anchor their yachts off the island. The Conovers maintained sporadic contact with the Hollywood starlet over the next decade until her death.

Once the financial worries were over, the resort operated well. As David noted: "when we bought the island we didn't realize the bargain we had in mink, eagles, and deer; neither did we know that we were buying a monstrous 'status symbol.' Abroad, every American is considered wealthy, but add the opulence of island ownership and you've become a multimillionaire. Island poor- what a paradox! How fortunate we are to be blessed with so rich a poverty."

A good portion of the island including the resort was sold in 1960 to a group from Seattle, WA who formed the Wallace Island Holding Company while David built a new home on the unsold acreage where he lived until his death in 1983. In 1990 the Wallace Island Holding Company sold its portion of the island to the provincial government; today it is the Wallace Island Provincial Marine Park. The two resident European families are remembered through place names on the island. Jeremiah Chivers is recalled by Chivers Point at the north end of Wallace Island while the Conovers are remembered in Conover's Cove. The boaters and divers who enjoy Wallace Island Marine Park most likely have no idea of the connection of this small island with a pioneer miner or his fascinating extensive family history. It is a tale that is worth telling. •



Corrections re Mr J. Chivers.

page 9. Mr Chivers first name was Jeremiah; I never heard him using the word Jack, but I have heard him referred to by some of his contemporaries as "three fingered Jack" (he had lost two fingers of one hand). Grandmother Shaw, his sister, always addressed him as "Ji"; to the rest of us he was known as "Uncle".

In 1877 he settled his sister and her family on his holding (pre-emption) on Galiano Island and moved himself to Narrow (Wallace) Island some two miles away across Trincomalee Channel, where he lived the rest of his life. In 1927, absence of smoke from his chimney signalled his death at the age of ninety-two.

p. 9. "Treasure" would not refer to gold; Uncle was much too well indoctrinated a Scot to be so superficial. Until the end of his life he occasionally talked of taking another prospecting trip up the Skeena river where "he knew of another likely spot", but was never gold-hungry enough to set out.

He was no hermit; kept in touch with the family and friends and was glad to have visitors; was a bachelor and wanted to have an island to himself.

p 9. Tobacco tins would not be his. He never drank, smoked nor used profane language.

p 10. "Caping holes in the ground" may be true; after his death in 1927 there was much

14. All information on land acquisitions was obtained from the British Columbia Archives.
15. Captain Wallace Houston, RN, who surveyed it, originally named it Narrow Island and named Trincomali Channel after his own ship, HMS Trincomalee (the name was changed slightly over the years). In a later survey in 1905, Captain John Parry changed the name to Wallace Island in recognition of Captain Houston's connection with the island.
16. "Wallace Island Reported Sold," *The Daily Colonist*, January 23, 1936.
17. "Leaves Wife Here." *Victoria Times*, October 10, 1929, p. 10.
18. Ken Coates and Bill Morrison, *The Sinking of the Princess Sophia: Taking the North Down With Her* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press Canada, 1990).
19. David Conover, *Finding Marilyn: A Romance by David Conover, The Photographer Who Discovered Marilyn Monroe* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1981).
20. David Conover, *Once Upon an Island* (New York: Crown, 1967).

*Jeremiah's nephew, Arthur Brittan Walter's notes in the flyleaf of Conover's first book* Once Upon An Island, *correcting what he considered to be errors in the text*

# From Budapest to Sitka

Translated and annotated by J. E. HORVATH

**A Hungarian travelogue of the U.S. and Canada: Oszkár Vojnich, *Budapesttől Sitkáig. Utijegyzetek* [From Budapest to Sitka. Travel Notes]. Budapest, 1894.**

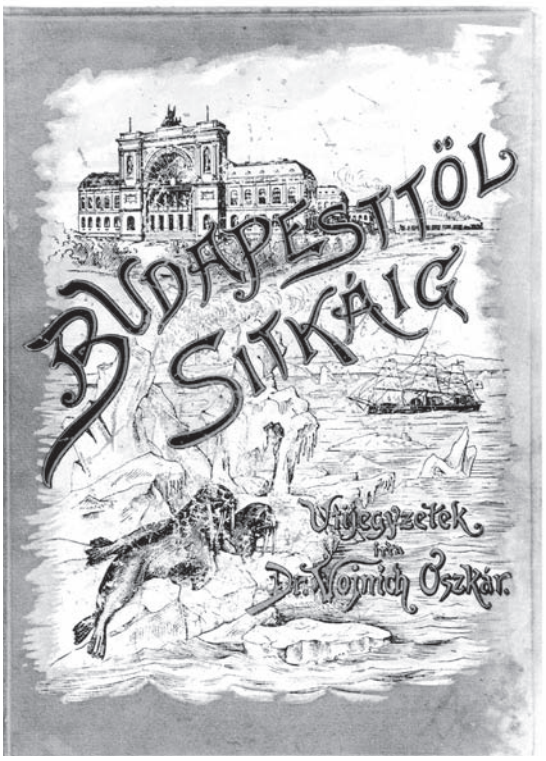
On the twelfth of June 1893, three young Hungarian gentlemen left Budapest on the first stage of their journey to the wilderness. They were Dr. Oszkár Vojnich, to whom we are indebted for the records kept of the expedition, Dr. Emil Kosztka, and Béla Krisztinkovich, my wife's grandfather. They embarked at Hamburg, and traveled from New York to Pittsburgh, St.Louis, Colorado, San Francisco, and points north.

In San Francisco they found much to astound them. They were particularly fascinated by the huge Chinese settlement, and the strange life they saw there. They visited an opium den, where they closely observed the appearance of the smokers. They marveled at the richness of a country that could afford to pay its soldiers the princely sum of twenty dollars per month (they had visited an army camp at San Francisco). They took an excursion to Yosemite Park, where they were awed by the giant pine trees (giant sequoias), the "Bridalveil Falls," the "Three Brothers" rock formation, the 5243-foot high "Inspiration Point," the huge, 8823-foot high "Half Dome," and "Yosemite Falls," the world's third highest waterfall that cascades from 2548 feet down into the valley. Yet, they also recognized the deforestation of the mountains. Dr. Vojnich recalled:

*In the afternoon the sounds of the sawmill loudly proclaimed to us: "Not for long will you proudly stand here, you 200-feet tall pine trees, for I will destroy you as I have already destroyed your worthy companions in a large part of North America!" It makes one's blood boil to see at what rate profit seekers are cutting down nature's ornaments! There is no system: the felled trees are not replaced with new ones; these people are making money from what nature has created over a long period of time...*

From California, they traveled to Tacoma, from where they took a side trip to Seattle which Dr. Vojnich described as having "one of the prettiest locations of all we have seen so far. " He remarked on the general clearing-fires in the woods around, "which promise buildings and cultivated fields in the future" while noting that because of the "great prehistoric forests that cover most of the Northwestern area, the trees have very little value, and therefore it is more advantageous that they be cut down to make way for commercial installations." "Still," he thought, "there should be a limit to this cutting down, and some sort of design to the development." These prophetic lines were written in 1893!

On the trip to Seattle and back again, low-lying clouds trapped the smoke from forest fires, "a common




sight in the Northwest," obscured the horizon. One wonders if Dr. Vojnich had any idea of the breadth of his prophecy when he wrote, "New wooden houses erected in the midst of burning debris herald the new civilization that will flourish in years to come. Twenty years is a long time in the life of an American city." Their friend Krisztinkovich left them in Tacoma and returned alone to Chicago, but Drs. Vojnich and Kosztka continued their explorations up the coast to British Columbia and Alaska. At midnight on August 4, 1893, they left Tacoma on the *City of Topeka* which anchored the next day, at about three in the afternoon, in Victoria where it remained for about four hours.

*When we arrived in the bay in front of Victoria, we saw a freighter run aground, listing heavily, her stern completely submerged. A smaller ship struggled to free her, while the surrounding water was alive with sailboats filled with curious spectators.*

*During this four-hour rest, in the company of three German acquaintances from the boat and the wife of one of them, we explored Victoria, the capital city of British Columbia. It is very similar to American cities we have seen in its style of architecture, but still the presence of British influence is obvious. The individual shops have a more European look; for instance, one cannot buy a revolver in a drugstore here. Also, we noticed something that had never happened in all our time in America [the United States] — twice we were greeted by perfect strangers!*

*Instead of the American men smoking short-stemmed pipes that we had become accustomed to seeing, we encountered "European" men with modest manners.*

The city has a beautiful setting, and in the suburbs every home has its own garden. In a population of seventeen thousand, there are three thousand Chinese, living together in one area. At night, when the fog lifts, we can see the snowy peaks of the Cascade Mountains on the mainland.

The next day the travelers saw Nanaimo. The doctor reported:

*We have been anchored since 2 a.m. in a little bay off the Gulf of Georgia, where our ship is loading coal. This morning we walked about three miles into Nanaimo, a city of about five thousand people, with our three friends from the boat. We learned from a gentleman who lived there that the city has a great income from the coal fields, and he told us that the average miner earned three dollars a day. This might rise as high as seven dollars a day in some places!*

Since the coal-loading operation took many hours, they remained at Nanaimo until three o'clock the next afternoon. During the evening they encountered a social phenomenon, which had already puzzled them when they saw it in the U.S. They were quite amazed to find the same sort of thing -- a group of perhaps ten men and women who gathered on a street-corner, singing hymns and exhorting their fellow men to a better life -- on the streets of this little town in remote B.C. The doctor mused on this new and interesting phenomenon:

*When we were in the country of the "big advertisement," I couldn't help but think that this must be some form of publicity, and therefore not worth inquiring about. But today in Nanaimo I again saw a similar procession, and one of our companions gave me an explanation of this strange group. It is known as the Salvation Army, and is a charitable organization run on military lines. It is widespread in England, Germany and America, and its main religious ideal is moderation in all things. The head personality is a man named Booth, an Englishman who uses the title of General. In each location there is a separate Captain, and under him is an organization of other officers. This group has a good influence on the common people — before anyone enrolls he is required to testify to his crimes and vices, and to promise to live within the rules of the Army. The people on the street corner are there to invite the spectators to join, and each "meeting" is introduced by a speaker who narrates his own story of salvation from a life of sin.*

After leaving Nanaimo, the ship set forth on the long voyage through coastal waters to Sitka Island, off Alaska. Between the shore and the neighbouring islands the water was smooth.

Dr Emil Kosztka  Uncle Suesse  Dr Oszkár Vojnich  Béla Krisztinkovich

*There are eleven thousand islands between Nanaimo and Sitka — of these the rocky shores and green forests are continuously fascinating. The view is captivating at all times of day and commands the attention of the traveler. It is too bad that the cloudy horizon constantly present in British Columbia forebodes week-long rainy spells.*

*When we were in Discovery Passage the sun came out briefly towards twilight, and to the west could be seen a huge rainbow leaning on the chain of snowy peaks. It was an ending worthy of the scenery of this beautiful day.*

*At eleven o'clock that night the boat stopped in the mile-wide passage. The engines were going and the stern wheel was spinning madly, but the boat made no headway because the water at low tide flowed so rapidly steering was almost impossible. The diary says:*

*Therefore we must wait for the tide to return so that we can pass. We waited until fifteen minutes after midnight for the water to calm down and allow us to proceed.*

Blinding rain and heavy clouds marked the next day, 7 August. . "That's the coast of British Columbia," remarked Dr. Vojnich philosophically. The passengers saw many seals on the shore and many fish jumping for food. Just before dusk they sighted a whale about one hundred yards from the ship, "spouting three great jets," and they also met a ship on its way south to Victoria. The following day they arrived in Alaska. This general description, well conveyed the travelers' impression of emptiness:

*Out of thirty-two thousand inhabitants, only one-*

*"GIANT TREE" in the Mariposa Valley*

*seventh are civilized, and there are seventeen square miles to each person in the area. As we approached the shore we saw great schools of salmon, and since we hadn't seen too many of these on the B.C. coast we think this means a change in the weather.*

This was borne out by sunshine on the following day.

At Metlakatla the passengers observed the operation in a fish plant where Indian workers, both men and women, clean, cut up and can the pieces of fish. On the way to Fort Wrangell three porpoises, easily six hundred pounds in weight apiece, followed the boat. At the Fort they saw their first totem pole, and were much impressed by this form of art which Dr. Vojinch explained were "anywhere from six to twelve meters in height, and are sometimes designed as monuments to the dead, sometimes as records of the feats of heroes. They remind me of the cemetery poles in certain parts of Transylvania."

Dr. Vojnich and his friends visited the home of an old native wood carver whose name, unfortunately, he does not mention. Through interpretation by the English-speaking chief (he calls the interpreter "Chief kin") he learned the significance of the totem poles and the meaning of some of the symbols represented. In this region, the Eagle and the Bear were the dominant families. In his detailed notes, the doctor recorded:

*The Eagle Clan has three symbols: the eagle, the frog, and a three-headed god (elf). The Bear Clan's three symbols are the bear, the wolf, and the whale. If a member of the Eagle family has a totem pole erected, the eagle, the frog or the three-headed god is carved at the top of the pole, while on the lower part relatives of the owner may be represented. The Indian (carver), on the lower part of the totem pole standing in his room, had carved a moon-face with big eyes and without a neck; above it, a crouching figure holding a fish on his lap, surmounted by an erect figure with a hat on his head, holding an unrecognizable object in his hands. The whole pole is painted in red, blue, black and brown.*

Dr. Vojnich, unable to reconcile the figures on this totem with the carver's explanation, remarked that the artist apparently used his imagination, rather than tradition, in this design. But there was much more to be seen:

*A few steps from this house three totem poles were standing, two with a bird, and the third with a crouching man on top. We saw three more poles in front of the chief's house, another four at the edge of the village, and three on the other shore. These totem poles are all more than a hundred years old, and almost completely rotten.*

On August 11th the vessel went from Fort Wrangel to Juneau in heavy rain. The high point was the sighting of a small pod of whales. That night, all the passengers went ashore to a local dance hall, where they encountered further novel sights:

*Sailors and gold miners dance with the copper-skinned ladies. They spin their partners to the music of a harmonium, a violin, and a flute. Their Yankee dances are probably taken from the French quadrille. Some of the men offer apples and oranges to the ladies between dances, and the men also cool themselves with the terribly expensive whiskey and beer, which are for sale in the dance hall… In one corner a few miners throw their hard-earned gold into the dealer's pot — gambling is very popular in America.*

At Sitka they visited the local museum, and saw "two huge totems, also Indian and Eskimo clothes, hunting and fishing weapons and so on." The boat passengers literally besieged the shops and the Indian vendors along the main street of the little town. "Everyone who returned to the ship was clutching some souvenir, despite the high prices."

Beside the narrow bay where their ship was anchored in Sitka were a huge steamship, six small sailboats and a warship with three small guns. This warship would have made little impression on any honestly built ship: she had participated in an interesting maneuver the other day, hitting an iceberg and a rock and almost knocking a whale into the sea.

As for fishing, "There are so many fish in the sea here you have only to reach down into the water to catch them."

Dr. Vojnich's professional interest was aroused by reports of Indian witch doctors, unknown in Sitka since 1863, who still practiced in its hinterland. He felt some envy on hearing that one such Indian doctor was "the richest man in the village." However, the reported nature of the therapy practiced cast a pall over the listeners. Apparently, after collecting generous offerings of blankets, "the witch doctor calls on spirits to tell him the name of another Indian who has bewitched the sick man." This Indian was then tied up, or left still bound, in the path of the rising tide.

Their coastal journey over, the travelers returned to the East Coast after a stopover in Chicago, that city of tumultuous life. The extensive varieties of advertising most impressed them:

*You can see all kinds of advertising on the streets of Chicago; we have even seen characters in mediaeval costume selling newspapers. In one huge shop window is a display of women from all over the world, all with exceptionally long hair, and these have been gathered here just to sell someone's hair tonic. The Admiral Cigarette manufacturers advertise by means of a real ship model*

*drawn on a cart. A midget dressed in Admiral's uniform is seated on the ship, and on the side, in huge letters, is the message, "Admiral Cigarettes." It is natural anywhere to see houses and lots with "For Sale" signs on them, but it is not a usual occurrence to see as we have here, a horse hitched to a post on State Street with a big "For Sale" sign hung around its neck!*

From Chicago, the three friends, united again, detoured into Canada in order to see the St. Lawrence River basin. During nearly thirty-six hours on the St. Lawrence and Lake Ontario, they found much to admire.

*On September 18th we left Chicago and between ten o'clock and half-past, traveled by train along the right bank of the Niagara River. We went as far as Newiston by train, where we boarded a ship for the journey across Lake Ontario to Toronto and thence down the St. Lawrence River to Montreal, arriving in that city at eight p.m. on the following day.*

*Lake Ontario is like a small sea, sometimes quite rough, and sailing on its green water is quite interesting. The really exciting part of the voyage between Toronto and Montreal begins in Kingston, which is on Lake Ontario at the source of the St. Lawrence River.*

*Our ship anchored at Kingston at five o'clock in the morning, and most of the passengers came aboard here. We then sailed through seventeen hundred islands on a stretch of the river forty miles long and forty-seven miles wide. These are known locally as The Thousand Isles [Islands], and they are a great vacation spots. Summer holidaymakers inhabit most of the islands, and one can see resorts and hotels on the larger ones. Many of the smaller ones are decorated by the villas of the rich. The trip through these islands is very beautiful and interesting.*

The Hungarian visitors were much impressed by the natural hazards and by the means employed by human ingenuity to circumvent them.

*Between the Island of Long Sault and the Canadian shores river, we sailed through swirling rapids one and a half meters high. Later on, on a stretch twenty miles long, we left even more rapids behind. The skipper avoided the Lachine Rapids, about a mile from Montreal, because of the time of day, and much to the annoyance and disappointment of the passengers, chose to sail around the rapids on a canal built for ships going upstream. Therefore our only entertainment was in watching the sluice gates and the mechanism of the swinging bridges above us. The construction of these bridges is ingenious — the same bridge which had turned completely around on its axis to let us pass, was already in position again to carry the oncoming train when we were scarcely six or seven hundred feet beyond it. Only a few men were required to operate it.*

Of their arrival in Montreal Dr. Vojnich wrote:

*We came here on the 19th at eight in the evening, and explored its downtown area until one in the morning. Although it is a few hundred years old, Montreal has a distinctly European aspect. Its population is half French. Montreal and Buffalo are among the best American cities, mostly because of their cleanliness, nice buildings and wide streets; of course they belong to British-governed Canada [sic].*

The reader will note the travelers' interest in town planning and civil engineering at a time when Budapest was undergoing rapid expansions. Thus, we should not be surprised at their next decisions.

*My friend Emil and I had both regretted missing the Lachine Rapids, and we agreed that even if we had to stay awhile we would make an effort to visit them. We did just that. From eight o'clock until twenty minutes after, we traveled by train to the port beyond the Rapids, where we found a little ship called the Filgate, which made the daily struggle through the dangerous waters. Leaving the beautiful Canadian Pacific Bridge, which stands on thirteen stone pillars, we could recognize the rapids while still quite a distance away, by their foaming white surface.*

The hazards encountered by the obstacles nature had placed in the path of progress were a source of awe and excitement:

*The excitement started when we reached the narrow channel, here only a few meters wide, where we could see the flat rocks only a few feet below the surface of the water. Just one bad guess in the steering and the ship would be dashed to pieces. It is easy to understand now why our captain avoided this place last night at dusk. The navigable part is visible only in broad daylight.*

Their adventure over, the world travelers returned to New York and took ship, the *Elbe,* to Europe, arriving after nine days at sea. When Dr. Vojnich returned to his journal on November 2, he was back in Budapest after an absence of four months and three weeks. One of his outstanding recollections was of his trip on the magnificent St. Lawrence River:

*I have traveled the Rhine from Cologne to Mainz, a trip that affords maximum opportunity to admire the beauties of the river scenery as well as the ruins of the many castles that lend a most romantic air to the view. I have also traveled the American Rhine, the Hudson River, which lacks the luster of the castle ruins and altogether misses the beauty of the original. But the trip down the St. Lawrence, with its vista of summer homes on the seventeen hundred islands, gives a more enchanting view than either of the others. •*

# Dave Murray and the Atlantic Cafe

Token History

by Ronald Greene

Big Dave" Murray was born May 25, 1863 in Scotland, in Kincardine by the Firth of Forth. At the turn of the century he came out to Victoria and when he became established he sent for his sweetheart, Margaret "Maggie" Rodger, who was fifteen years his younger. Upon her arrival in December 1904 they were married.[1] The union resulted in four daughters, one of whom, Lillian, died in infancy.

By 1902 Murray and James Hogg were running the Adelphi Saloon which was located at Government and Yates Street. The liquor licence was transferred to David Murray from Messrs Chaffee and Freeman who had held it only six months although the saloon had been in existence in 1889 when the City of Victoria licence registers were first established. Murray held the Adelphi licence until the end of 1907 when he did not renew it and the Adelphi Saloon ceased to exist. Some months earlier, in March 1907, he had purchased the licence for the London Hotel at 629 Johnson Street (south east corner of Broad Street) from Joseph Patrick Byrne, renaming the business the Atlantic Hotel. The Atlantic Cafe was in the same building, and Murray took it over c. 1910. The Atlantic Cafe was operated under various managers. "Big Dave" ran the hotel and saloon until prohibition came into force on October 1, 1917 and the hotel several years after that. However, running a hotel without a liquor licence was a marginal business in those times and Murray went broke, partly because he put his bills in the hands of a bill-collector who managed to collect them and promptly abscond with Murray's money. After this he left the hotel and moved to his farm at Strawberry Vale (Burnside Road). It was there, in the house named "Brae Head" that he lived until his death February 18, 1936.[2]

David Murray obtained his nickname from his great weight. Even in his later years when he had thinned down considerably he weighed 250 lb. Despite being a saloon owner, in many ways he was quite strait-laced – for instance he would not let his wife in the saloon during business hours. His driving would cause alarm today. He owned a model "T" Ford and he would set the gas at 27 mph on his way home and come hell or high water he kept going at that setting. As would befit his Scots origin, David Murray was an ardent member of the St. Andrews and Caledonian Society. His death occurred in the middle of a poker game. It was said that his canary died of loneliness following his death and they were buried together.[3]

Aluminum tokens in the denominations of 5 and 10 cents are known. It is possible that there were larger denominations used as well but none have come to light over the years. Other places in Victoria, the Kaiserhof (5, 10, 25 and 50 cents), the Canada Bar (5, 10, 25 and 50 cents), and the Cafe Mona (25 cents, through 45 cents) all issued a series of denominations. It is also possible that the Atlantic Cafe tokens were used in conjunction with a meal plan for people taking room and board at the hotel. •





Notes:

1. British Columbia Archives, GR2962, Marriage Registration 04-09-012884, microfilm B11368

2. British Columbia Archives, GR2951, Death Registration 36-09-510711, microfilm B13155

3. Interview with David Murray's daughter, Margaret Charlebois, July 5, 1964

# Archives and Archivists

Submitted by Dani Brown

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

## A New Home for the Surrey Archives

### Surrey Archives

The Surrey Archives was established in April 1976. Through the foresight and generosity of residents, a collection of photographs and personal papers was donated to form the basis of the documentation of the history of Surrey. Over the past thirty years, this collection has grown from its original focus on community records to also include the records of the City of Surrey.

### Technical Upgrade

The Surrey Archives has moved into the rehabilitated 1912 Municipal Hall. The collections were moved in October 2006 from a 1,200 square foot space in the old Surrey Museum (now functioning as the Cloverdale Seniors Centre) to a much-improved space and location. The Surrey Archives is located beside the new 24,000 square foot Museum on a high profile site on Highway 10 in the historic community of Cloverdale. The facility now boasts a 900 square foot public Reference Room that includes a research library, two microfilm reader-printers and two public computer terminals. The Reference Room is immediately adjacent to the map storage files and the microfilm and oral history collection where researchers can watch or listen to historical files on video or cassette tapes.

The main collections storage room is 1,000 square feet and includes high density compactable shelving. This system increases the collections capacity and will allow expansion over the coming decade. The collections accommodation is such an improvement, that the City Clerk transferred the original Council Minute Books from 1906-1995. The early ledger books are beautifully bound and hand written!

Overall, the historic facility was completely re-wired to remove suspect ancient wiring and to upgrade the fibre optics and telephone system. A new HVAC system was installed to provide greater environmental controls and air conditioning. The building is distinctive for its large main floor wood-frame windows, facing west, south and east. These drafty windows were all re-set and re-sealed. An interior shutter system was installed to provide further protection from ultra violet and to reduce draft. The windows in the collections room are sealed. The windows in the public Reference Room provide natural daylight that can be controlled with either the blinds or shutters depending on the time of year and weather.

*Municpal Hall in the 1930s*

The Surrey Archives also has a dedicated classroom space with technical equipment for a teaching environment and a rental multi-purpose room in the basement. The Archives is well positioned between the Surrey Museum and the Cloverdale Library and is part of the destination synergy of the Surrey Learning and Discovery Campus. In this location, the Surrey Archives is visible, accessible and is operating on increased hours of public service. All in all, this move has resulted in improved conditions for the collection and expanded services for the public.

### Archives Collections

The collections of the Surrey Archives are available to anyone interested in the history and heritage of Surrey. They include:

- 50,000 historical and contemporary photographs
- Maps and cartographic records
- Taped interviews and video records of pioneers
- Newspapers on microfilm
- School registers from the 1880s to 1971
- Personal scrapbooks and diaries
- City reports and Council minutes
- Records of Community Associations
- Records of local businesses and associations
- City and provincial directories
- Information related to Surrey's Heritage Register
- Large library of reference books on such diverse topics as local and BC history, native peoples, antique identification, heritage gardening, and heritage architecture.

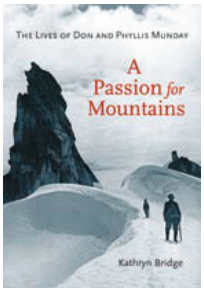
### Visitors Welcome

Visitors are invited to register for a free Surrey Archives user card. Reference staff are available to assist visitors to find materials relevant to their research enquiry.

The Surrey Archives is located at 17671-56 Avenue, Surrey, BC. Hours are Tuesdays to Thursdays, 10am to 6pm, and Fridays and Saturdays, 10am to 5pm. Closed Sundays, Mondays and Statutory Holidays. For more information, please phone Reference Specialist Ryan Gallagher at 604-502-6459, or e-mail to: rgallagher@surrey.ca. •

# 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




***A Passion for Mountains: the lives of Don and Phyllis Munday.***
*Kathryn Bridge. Calgary, Victoria and Vancouver, Rocky Mountain Books, 2006. 240 p., illus. $26.95, paperback.*

For one who knew the Mundays and mountaineered with them in their later years, this is a remarkably complete account of their lives and of their two hundred or more ascents, many of them firsts, of western Canadian mountains. Archivist Kathryn Bridge has drawn from the Munday's diaries, journals, newspapers and museum records of mountaineering and exploration, notably of the barrier Coast Range of B.C. It well deserves a place in B.C. history in an era before the 1914-1918 war and into the 1950s. She has woven into the history much of their lives and their determination to overcome handicaps, personal in Don's case of wounds and chlorine gassing in World War I.

The Mundays' lives and exploits represent people now gone, when many young people, out of curiosity and for recreation, followed in the steps of pioneer land surveyors, timber cruisers and prospectors backpacking and bushwhacking their way into nearby mountains. Sketchily the lowland valleys and rivers had been mapped, the mountains largely unmapped and unknown. Don's book about Mt. Waddington, The Unknown Mountain, the highest mountain wholly within B.C. may be recalled. The era was further characterized by the formation of the B.C. Mountaineering Club, The Alpine Club of Canada, natural history and outdoor clubs. The Mundays played a large role in this historical period.

Regrettably there is only one map to track the Mundays' climbs in B.C. and Alberta. The black and white photography is excellent, generous and well captioned. Ms. Bridge makes clear how different modern climbing is from that of the Mundays' era, so important to the understanding of the nature of Don's and Phyl's exploits, but she states little of the differences in equipment, techniques or the support today from maps, aircraft or general accessibility except in the introduction to her book. Would it not have been useful to expand on Don's invaluable experience in the First World War which he brought to the training of mountain infantry in the 1939-1945 war, sponsored by the Alpine Club, his temperate contributions to the controversy over logging for profit in Garibaldi Provincial Park which ultimately led to the formation of more parks and the present provincial park system, to Don's measurements of glacier retreat starting in the early 1920's, and to his interest in alpine tree ring analysis? Could the author not have expanded on Phyl's interest in botany, and in later years, her publication of coloured pamphlets on alpine wildflowers, but perhaps that is a subject for another book? In any event, this is a fine account of the Mundays and their contribution to mountaineering in the province.

**Dr. Vernon C. (Bert) Brink**, *Professor Emeritus, Department of Plant Science, U.B.C., is an Honourary Member of the Alpine Club of Canada.*


***A Place to Stand: A Tale of the Peace River Country***
*J.W. Secrist. Bloomington, Indiana, Authohouse, 2006. 307 p. $19.99 paperback.*

A Place to Stand is a historical novel delivering authentic tales of the Peace River country through the lives of three generations of the Brennan family. The author Jerry Secrist, a retired teacher living in British Columbia's north east region, has listened well to the people of his community. He portrays his characters as courageous and determined, qualities demanded of pioneering homesteaders and their descendants. But Secrist also describes their flaws, revealing incidents of hard drinking, petty rivalries and violence.

The novel's central character is Liam Brennan whose memories of early life in Ireland dissolve without regret as he begins a new life following military service in the First World War. He travels with his Belgian wife Marta to the last undeveloped fertile wilderness of North America and together they build a home on the Peace River near Fort St. John.

Liam and Marta are met by their First Nations neighbor, Noah, soon after they arrive. This encounter is brief and holds some tension but will come to a satisfying conclusion when Liam and Noah meet again as old men. The Brennans have four children and enjoy economic success as their farm expands over time. Liam never stops working and when a government-initiated dam is built along the Peace River following the Second World War, Liam reluctantly assists, knowing 'progress' comes with a price.

While Liam revels in his homestead, Marta, though a strong and loyal wife, is less at ease, especially in the early years. Their two eldest sons Jack and Willie die tragically in their twenties and their younger twin children, Joanna and Paul turn from the farm in favor of the educated, urban world.

On the margins of the family are grandson Carson and granddaughter Tassy. Carson is a troubled youth, but finds grace saving Liam's life following a bear attack. Tassy explores her First Nations' roots, building her sense of self with Marta's generous and empathetic help. As a result, both grandchildren come to fill the 'empty nest' in Liam and Marta's home.

A Place to Stand would benefit from tougher editing. The novel really begins when the Brennans arrive at their homestead. Brennan's war experience and encounter with Marta in the opening pages would be told more effectively in flashback sequences. Also unnecessary is the brief turn

to first-person narrations in the middle of the novel, breaking the flow of 'omniscient' storyteller.

But this is a labor of love and the author's heart-felt feeling for the beauty of the Peace district appears in many passages, such as: "In the background they saw a mountain range running what looked like perpendicular to the river. There was a great notch in the mountains, and through it, they could see, stretching away into the hazy mist of the western horizon, range after range of purplish, snow-capped mountains." These tales of the Peace River country give the reader a deeper insight into a special corner of British Columbia.

**Janet Nicol** *is a high school history teacher and freelance writer living in Vancouver.*


*Baychimo: Arctic ghost ship.*
*Anthony Dalton. Victoria, B.C., Heritage House, 2006. 240 p., illus., maps. $19.95 paperback.*

This is a very fine example of what a good writer can make of the 'biography' of a ship – especially if the ship has suffered a bizarre fate.

*Baychimo* was a 1300-ton steamship used by the Hudson's Bay Company in the Company's arctic service between 1921 and 1931, based chiefly in Vancouver and operating principally in the Beaufort Sea and among the icebound islands of Canada's north coast. A large part of Dalton's book describes the vessel's several challenging missions into that region, all of which included harrowingly narrow escapes from disaster that foreshadowed *Baychimo's* ultimate end.

Quite grippingly the author opens his account on an eerie note: the vividly suspenseful narrative of a 1933 encounter amid the shifting pack ice on Alaska's northern coast. The crew of a little trading schooner happened upon a large ship, abandoned and entirely encased in ice. Boarding the 'ghost', they identified her as *Baychimo,* adrift in *Mary Celeste* fashion with cargo, ship's ledgers and personal belongings aboard, but no human presence.

What had happened to the HBC's proud arctic ship?

Anthony Dalton tells *Baychimo's* story with considerable narrative skill and also with insight into the crucial role of this ship in western Canada's and the Hudson Bay Company's history. Each of the life-and-death battles with pack ice during summer voyages to the Company's arctic posts brought the ship back in late autumn to Vancouver's Burrard drydock or Victoria's Yarrows shipyard in a heavily damaged condition. Her master, Captain Sydney Cornwell, wrote official memoranda to Company headquarters warning of the likelihood of the ship's meeting with disaster because she was not strong enough to contend with arctic ice.

Before proceeding to the final disaster, however, the author tells in much detail (from effectively used archival sources) the many heroic exploits of this ship and her crew. An ironic episode occurred in 1930, when *Baychimo* attempted the first west-to-east transit of the Northwest Passage. En route, the HBC ship towed the RCMP's famous *St. Roch* off a reef on which she had been stranded for five days. While *Baychimo* failed to complete her attempted transit of the Passage, *St. Roch* in fact became the first ship to negotiate the ice-clogged arctic route from Canada's west to east coast.

The following year, attempting too late in the season to escape from the Beaufort Sea, *Baychimo* became inextricably trapped among wind-driven floes. Her final days are here told in dramatic detail, and with full exploration of the physics of the situation among the floes, including a chilling evocation of the ominous *hum* of ice under great pressure. Convinced that the ship was about to be crushed, her captain ordered the evacuation of his crew and abandonment of the ship. Within days after their encampment on a nearby shore ice movement had carried the ship out of their sight.

The book then examines the strangest part of *Baychimo's* story: the subsequent forty-year period in which the ship was repeatedly sighted at widely separate locations (once perhaps even in the North Atlantic), and actually boarded on more than one occasion. A fascinating aspect of Dalton's treatment of this phenomenon is his extensive study of the oceanic currents and corresponding ice movements that may account for the ghost ship's decades of unmanned voyaging – the 'Beaufort Gyre', the 'Transpolar Drift' and a complex of other dynamics.

No less fascinating than the ship's own story is the author's vivid portrayal of the personalities involved in the saga: the skilled but petulant Captain Sydney Cornwell, his perhaps more rational young foil, the ship's accountant Richard Bonnycastle, the colourful freelance trader Charlie Klengenberg. The ship's travails and some of these associated personalities are brought to life in the book's dozens of archival photos.

If I were to express one small quibble about this book it would be a mild complaint that there might have been more and better detailed maps. Our arctic seaboard is, let's admit, very much less familiar to most of us than our more southern coasts.

Any quibble, however, seems rather petty in connection with so superbly crafted an historic tale as this one. It is a significant episode in Canada's past, and a story here extremely well told.

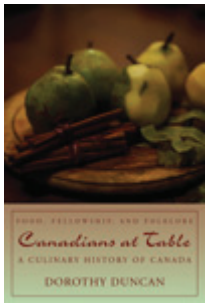
**Philip Teece** *is a retired librarian who these days divides his time between reading and sailing the B.C. coast.*


*Canadian Mountain Place Names - The Rockies and Columbia Mountains*

*Glen W. Boles, Roger W. Laurilla and William L. Putnam. Calgary, Alberta, Rocky Mountain Books, 2006. 279 p., illus. $19.95 paperback.*

In 1990 these authors published *Place Names of the Canadian Alps*. This revised version was completed in time for the Alpine Club of Canada's 2006 centennial celebrations. The title was changed to clarify the location of the classic areas of mountaineering opened up by the CPR. The book covers the Rocky Mountains in Alberta and BC and the Selkirk, Purcell, Monashee and Cariboo Ranges of the Columbia Mountains to the west in BC. It is of particular importance and value to climbers and hikers and will also be of general interest to all who love the marvelous and still relatively pristine mountain topography we are blessed to have in BC and Alberta. Each entry contains a concise summary of pertinent information about the naming process. Comparison of the two books reveals that many entries have been corrected, revised or new information added. It contains an enormous amount of detailed and valuable information and it is unreasonable to expect it to be error free. The reviewer intends to communicate the few errors that he has identified to the authors. Boles has contributed some delightful line drawings and there is a small selection of fine mountain photographs by Boles and Laurilla. The authors have made a valuable contribution to the scholarship of our mountains by compiling the information in this book. It is an important reference and makes interesting browsing. Every reader will learn fascinating new tidbits of local history and will find it a useful reference to carry when traveling in mountain BC and Alberta. The publishers are to be commended for their commitment to ensuring that quality mountain and outdoor books are made available at reasonable prices.

**Harvey A. Buckmaster** *has hiked and climbed in the mountains of Alberta and parts of BC for most of his life.*




*Canadians at Table: A Culinary History of Canada.*

*Dorothy Duncan. Toronto, Ontario, Dundurn Press, 2006. 248 p. $35.00 hard cover.*

This is a delightful book. The author presents bite sized servings of Canadian history. Duncan has achieved the unusual goal of documenting the foods in each period yet in the Preface she challenges readers to expand on her research, "Every topic touched here deserves to be explored and recorded in greater detail. Every topic deserves its own publication(s) to understand and appreciate its true significance."

*"In the Beginning"* (Chapter One) contemplates the challenges experienced by First Nations at their different settlements across North America, then credits their willingness to share survival food and techniques with newcomers from across the ocean.

Chapter Two is on the Vikings at L'Anse aux Meadows. This bite of history was not in textbooks when the Baby Boomers were in the public school system. Duncan paints an enthusiastic word picture of this recently unearthed colony which makes me wish to visit the site.

Each chapter tells how new arrivals in Canada adapted to circumstances in different locales. Chapter Three is on harvesting fish mainly on the sea coast but also where lakes and rivers held freshwater varieties. Chapter Four tells us about the Acadians and early French settlements. Next she deals with Hudson's Bay Company Fur Traders.

Chapter Seven recounts the relocation of United Empire Loyalists to Upper Canada between 1773 and 1814.

*"Bread was the foundation for Every Meal"* envisions pioneers struggling to build new homes and having to find or grow food while still clearing land. Although this implies that bread was always available it actually is an overview which includes descriptions of baking as a cooperative, community activity. A fireplace was still used for cooking in many homes during the Victorian era while citizens aimed to improve the quality and quantity of food on their tables.

Considerable contrast between groups settling the prairies meant that national specialties were shared, or modified to use available supplies. As well as First Nations, Métis, Scottish, and French Canadian, arrivals at "the cultural crossroads" included British, Icelandic, German, Chinese, American, Ukrainian, Polish, Belgian, Swedish, Norwegian, Italian, Greek , Danish, Dutch, Slovak, Czech, Mennonite and Jewish settlers each claiming 160 acres for a $10 filing fee.

As soon as tracks were laid and trains could run city dwellers took advantage of the opportunity to arrange gala group picnics at some lakeshore or desirable destination. The provisioning of track laying crews also tied food into the coming of the railroad. When transcontinental travel became a fact, elegant dining cars were added to the string of sleeping cars. If the traveler had to resist the temptation to partake of expensive, palate provoking dining car fare, sandwiches were available at certain stops along the route.

Chapter Twelve on the Women's Institute has many mouth watering references as well as providing material for those who insist on separating Women's History from the mainstream records.

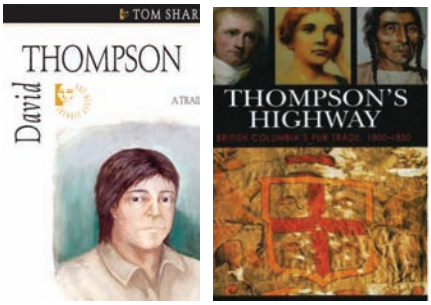
Fairs and markets have long been traditional gathering places where local specialty foods can be purchased. Another approach to when, what and where foods

are served comes in the chapter on festivals, holidays, or religious observances.

Safe and speedy transportation of meat and produce has made these products available year round. Commercial growers have resorted to the use of many chemicals to meet increased demand of their products. Now consumers are contemplating "organic" items. The author suggests that Canadians have changed their food habits and will continue to change in the future.

This is an excellent summary of the culinary history of Canada. It not only tells you what the author has discovered with extensive research, it also provokes the reader to consider what food is being eaten, where it was grown, why it is on the menu, whether it is appropriate and what alternatives would be beneficial. Duncan is to be congratulated on her neat bite-sized lessons about *Canadians at Table.*

**Naomi Miller** *is a former President of BCHF*




***David Thompson: A Trail of Stars.***
*Tom Shardlow. Montreal, XYZ Publishing, 2006. 170 p., illus. map. $17.95 paperback.*

***Thompson's Highway: British Columbia's Fur Trade, 1800-1850: the literary origins of British Columbia.***
*Alan Twigg. Vancouver, Ronsdale Press, 2006. 251 p., illus. map, appendix, bibliography. $24.95 paperback.*

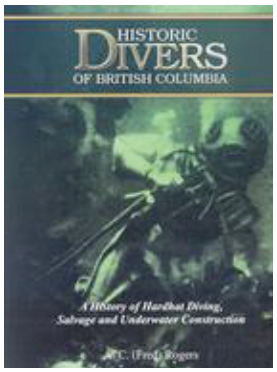
In the fall 2004 issue of *British Columbia Historical News*, Barry Cotton introduced the David Thompson bi-centennial celebrations, being planned through the years 2007 to 2011, with a study of the early publications and recent scholarly discussions relating to Thompson - fur trader, explorer, naturalist, surveyor, and mapmaker. The bi-centennial is now underway with multinational recognition of this man who died in poverty and without recognition from the country he helped to define. Events and conferences are planned in Canada (B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec), in the United States (Montana, Idaho, Washington, and North Dakota), as well as in Britain.

A complete bibliography of David Thompson begins with the Champlain Society's publication in 1916, *David Thompson's narrative of his explorations in Western America, 1784-1812*, edited by J.B. Tyrell. We can expect even more writing about Thompson as a consequence of multi-discipline conferences and meetings linked to the bicentennial. Authors Shardlow and Twigg provide two approaches to informing readers interested in understanding David Thompson and his place in history.

Tom Shardlow's *David Thompson: A Trail of Stars* is number 29 in the Quest Library biography series and is based on previously published accounts of Thompson's travels and on his unpublished journals in the Archives of Ontario. The story illustrates the trials and tribulations of Thompson, traveling with guides, other fur traders, and his Métis wife and family, as he searched, in all seasons, for a viable pass through the Rocky Mountains. Each attempt was meticulously mapped and documented in Thompson's journals and field notes. The creative nonfiction approach will appeal to students of Canadian history at the high school level and it will provide an overview of the subject to amateur historians.

David Thompson is one of many achievers discussed by Alan Twigg in *Thompson's Highway: British Columbia's Fur Trade, 1800-1850*, which is the third in a series on the literary and social history of Canada. In this volume, *The Literary Origins of British Columbia*, Twigg acknowledges, as have other historians, that Thompson deserves credit as a writer. In this book, David Thompson is presented in the context of other leaders of the time - explorers such as Alexander Mackenzie and Simon Fraser, artist Paul Kane, naturalist David Douglas, and administrators George Simpson and James Douglas. Thirty-four individuals are discussed within the context of the opening up of British Columbia but it was Thompson who searched out and finally found the route from the source of the Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean. Twigg includes an appendix describing fifty forts built prior to 1850, as well as an extensive bibliography for readers who want to follow up on any of the personalities discussed.

**Deidre Simmons** *lives in Victoria, B.C. and is an Archives Consultant and author of Servite in Caritate: The First One Hundred Years of St. Margaret's School 1908-2008.*




***Historic Divers of British Columbia.***
*A.C. (Fred) Rogers. Duncan, B.C. Firgrove Publishing, 2003. 232 p., illus. $29.95 paperback.*

Historic Divers of British Columbia chronicles the history of commercial hard hat diving in British Columbia. These early divers wore heavy brass helmets, canvas suits and received air from the surface from a manually operated diving air pump. Hardhat diving was hard and often dangerous work and over time numerous hard hat divers lost their lives.

Author Fred Rogers began skin diving in 1954 and graduated to Scuba diving in 1955.

His visited his first wreck the steam tug Point Grey in Porlier Pass in 1955. Bit by the bug, Fred began researching and diving wrecks up and down the BC coast.

In 1973 he published his first book "Shipwrecks of British Columbia". This was followed by "More Shipwrecks of British Columbia" in 1992.

Fred begins his Historic Divers book by exploring the origins of diving. Ancient scenes

found around the Mediterranean suggest that divers were descending under the sea to retrieve lost items as early as 4500 BC. By the mid 1800s inventors had developed diving suits that would allow men to descend beneath the sea for long enough periods of time to do serious work.

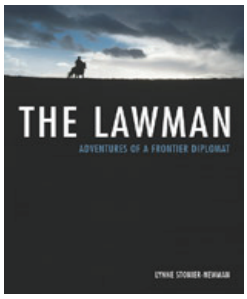
A maritime province British Columbia needed the help of divers early in its history. Divers were used to construct docks, install bridge foundations, lay water mains and recover wrecked vessels. They were also periodically asked to carry out the disturbing and thankless task of looking for and recovering bodies. Such was the case when the Point Ellice bridge collapsed on May 26, 1896 with the loss of 55 people and when the Princess Sophia sank with the loss of all her passengers and crew October 25, 1918.

The first recorded commercial divers in BC were brothers Thomas and George Harman in 1870. Many pioneer divers followed. Diving often ran in a family. The Zess family had at least 4 divers. There was Isaac (dad) Zess who had two sons Bill and younger brother Bob (Ollie). Bill has a son Phil who followed in his dads footsteps. Through out the book Fred shares with the reader the stories of these early divers on their various exploits whether it be raising a ship or installing a water main.

This book could not have been written doing research on the internet. The very early history was gleaned from the Colonist newspaper which was very good at recording maritime activity prior to 1900, and often features the exploits of early divers. The more recent stories come from the few divers who are still alive or from family members who wanted to share the stories about their fathers and grandfathers who were commercial divers.

Given his long association with diving Fred has been very effective at conveying the deep emotion and experiences that many of the early divers would have experienced. If readers like maritime history, Historic Divers of British Columbia is a must read.

**Jacques Marc** *of Victoria, B.C., is President of the Underwater Archaeological Society of British Columbia*




***The Lawman; adventures of a frontier diplomat.***
*Lynne Stonier-Newman. Surrey, B.C., TouchWood Editions, 2006, 232 p. illus., bibliography. $19.95 paperback.*

An engaging mix of historical fact and imaginative historical re-creation, Lynne Stonier-Newman's book is a rewarding and emotionally riveting read. Drawing for its verifiable realism upon lesser known accounts of cities and towns such as Chase, Ashcroft, Nanaimo and old Silverton, and relying heavily upon government documents, provincial archival resources and in particular the scrapbook and journal of the British Columbia Provincial Police Superintendent and subject of the book, Frederick S. Hussey, the Kamloops author has produced a fascinating profile of the man who shaped and led the provincial constabulary from 1891 to 1911. Hussey's lasting impact, as Stonier-Newman emphasizes throughout her study, was due largely to the force of his personality, his ability to anticipate problems and his tact and diplomacy in resolving them - whether in dealing with a drunken lout in a jail cell or in presenting budget requests to the provincial MLAs. Early in his career, Stonier-Newman states, Hussey "learned to listen rather than to talk" a trait he required of his constables as well, once refusing to hire one because, "He has no ability to give orders with soft gloves." But as she also shows he knew as well how to bite his tongue when dealing with bureaucrats and politicians who didn't understand the intricacies of dealing with a province-wide police force, especially the much disliked Attorney General, Joseph Martin.

The book excels in being considerably more than the traditional tribute to a lesser known icon deserving of greater fame. It is as much a celebration and analysis of Hussey's psyche as it is a highlighting of his accomplishments in an era when immigration dramatically boosted the provincial population, gold attracted transients from around the world, settlers and natives disputed land claims, often violently, the telephone and telegraph enhanced communications, and automobiles began to vie for space with horses and buggies on city streets. It was also a time when Hussey rewrote B.C.'s Police Act between times of conferring with his trusted deputy, Sergeant John Langley (later Victoria's Chief of Police), and traveling as necessary from Victoria by ship, train, stage coach, sleigh and horseback to visit "his lads" in Vancouver, Kamloops, Quesnelle Forks, Revelstoke and the East and West Kootenays to name a few of the detachments. It was also a period when he dealt with floods, epidemics and coal mine strikes and explosions, chased bootleggers with the help of the British Navy, and pursued stage coach robbers such as Harry Brown and Sam Slick, aka Samuel Blankly, train robber Billy Miner, aka George Edwards, and the ever elusive Simon Gun-an-noot. All in a day's work he coped with the fallout from the Asiatic exclusion acts, railed about missionary sects that brainwashed the Natives, and assisted American colleagues in a joint raid on opium smugglers in a New Westminster soya sauce factory and a Seattle toy warehouse. But whether Hussey dealt with Langley or "his lads", his best friend Lawrence Dickenson and his son Frank, the icons and politicians of the day (Matthew Begbie, Richard Moody, Premiers Robson, Davie, Turner, Semlin, Martin, Dunsmuir, Prior, and McBride or Prime Minister in waiting W.L. Mackenzie King or King Edward) or Solomon-like settled "a village-wide feud over hogs running loose on the dusty streets" of Spences Bridge, Hussey was always a man of integrity, character and good humour. Much of his humanity in the book comes from Stonier-Newman's use of the dramatic and emotional tension of his battles with the debilitating infection that eventually

ruined his right eye, with the on-again, off-again troubles of his May-December marriage and his wife's miscarriage that effectively destroyed their union despite a later reconciliation, and, in the final pages of the book, with the corrosive cancer that took his life. There are the little touches as well - Hussey's three successive dogs, all called Mac and always at his feet, his horses that he raced to numerous wins in his younger days, the toll that his sister's death took, his willingness to take a pay cut as an example to his men and his lifelong commitment to acting, as his obituary in the Victoria Colonist of July 22, 1911 said, as a "courageous, able, honest man, who recognized his duty and served his country well." Stonier-Newman's book has done much to consolidate this perception, and should be read widely.

**M. Wayne Cunningham**, *Kamloops, B.C.*

***To Touch A Dream. A Wilderness Adventure.***
*Sunny Wright. Vancouver, Ronsdale Press, 2006, 187p. $21.95 paperback*

This latter day history presents wonderful adventures, experiments, and learning experiences. Sunny Wright left work in a plywood mill at the coast to pursue a dream. She was accompanied by her five year old daughter Lisa and her workmate Betty. In 1969 they headed north driving new pickups (Betty obtained her driving license only three weeks prior to departure). North of Vanderhoof they found a property within their budget where an old barn became their living quarters. Sunny's descriptions of coping with each challenge in their new life are excellent. She learned by doing. Sometimes there was a trial and error period but many lessons were imparted by helpful neighbors.

Neither of "the girls" as the neighbours called them, had been camping so one of the first things they had to learn was about wood fires and harvesting firewood. After very cautious beginnings with a chain saw the two became so skilful that they won sawing competitions at a community fair. Then there was hunting. Sunny had become a crack shot on a rifle range. Now she tested her ability to shoot a moose, transport it home, skin and dress the meat.

Lisa did Grade One by correspondence. Their new home was 6 miles from Braeside Elementary School. The muddy track which they used could scarcely be called a road, but Sunny and her neighbors found a bylaw which forced the Highways Department to improve it for all seasons travel. When winter came Sunny, with no electricity for a block heater, devised a way to thaw her truck to be able to drive Lisa to school. Lisa had perfect attendance until she was smitten with a severe case of bronchitis. Lisa spent several days in hospital. Betty and Sunny signed up for a First Aid course.

To earn money Sunny tried trapping near her home. A skunk interfered with the modest success here so later she purchased a trap line with the proviso that the previous owner accompany her to train her properly. The Babine Indian was a taciturn fellow. She struggled through the three month period, almost lost him in the Stuart River then discovered that she had made a friend for life. Other schemes saw them raising rabbits to sell for meat, driving a pilot car for a mover of prefab homes, then illicit making of and bootlegging whiskey. Each activity brought in lots of money but had to be abandoned for good reasons.

The "girls" called them, moved a bit closer to civilization, sold their earlier hideaway, and built a log home to fulfill their dream. In this new locale they had a ready water supply, could connect to telephone and open a new business. K-9 KENNELS advertised that they would care for any and all pets. What with boarding animals and raising sled dogs they had a very busy life but made friends from all over the Nechako area.

Some of the chapters describe community gatherings such as cross country ski or snowmobile outings. Good rapport with other families in the district injects fun into isolated homesteads plus proves to be a lifeline in cases of emergency. Sunny undertook challenges such as offering to be "the Canadian guide" for Americans wanting to hunt moose and later grizzly bears. The only episode which puzzled me was her attempt to chase a dozen bears out of a large field of oats. Another risky ride was taken when she canoed downriver during ice breakup. An unhappy mistake caused their barn and contents to burn but emergency response by neighbors saved other outbuildings. Two weeks after the fire 28 families assembled with building materials, tools, generators and enough food to feed an army. A new, sturdier building was erected by late evening and donated hay stacked inside. CBC Radio featured this heartwarming Barn Raising story as evidence that helpful communities still exist.

When Lisa was about to enter high school Sunny was troubled by a painful lump in her breast. The doctor in Vanderhoof dismissed it as temporary. Even on repeat visits the doctor avoided action so Sunny drove to Prince George. There she was slated for a radical mastectomy and follow up radiation with medical staff very pessimistic about healing. Sunny slumped mentally and physically till Christmas. Lisa suddenly exploded, "I hate you Mom." After a tearful exchange of words Sunny had to admit she had been wrapped up within herself preparing for death when she could have been returning to daily chores in the beauty of her Dream Home up north. She regained her positive attitude and physical stamina. By summer's end she was very fit and went on record at the Cancer Clinic as "miraculously cancer free."

This story of a modem pioneer was a delight to read. Although there was an unexpected ending to this period in the lives of three girls in the bush, a reader can enjoy the drama.

*Naomi Miller, a former editor of British Columbia Historical News, pioneered as a child with her parents near Kaslo.*

***B.C. Binning***

*Abraham J. Rogatnick, Ian M. Thom, and Adele Weder. Introduction by Arthur Erickson. Vancouver/Toronto, Douglas & McIntryre, 2006, xi,180p., illus. $50.00 hardcover.*

This is a glorious book, about a wonderful BC artist, Bert Binning. It is lavishly illustrated and beautifully formatted and contains much to enlighten even those who are knowledgeable about Binning's work and influence in Vancouver and far beyond.

The organization is unusual as it consists of an introduction and three essays by people who knew Bert Binning that provide the reader with different insights into his personality and his work. Arthur Erickson's Introduction pays homage to both Bert and Jessie Binning for their "rewarding and formative" contributions to his subsequent distinguished career as an architect. He learned about the beauty of the simple line and what it could imply from Binning when he was an art student. Abraham Rogatnick contributes A Passion For the Contemporary, Adele Weder discusses The House and Ian Thom explores Binning As A Draftsman and Binning As A Painter. Richard Prince provides an Afterward. Nine color photographs by Simon Scott entitled Binning House, Photographic Portfolio are appropriately located after the essay on the iconic house in West Vancouver, now a National Historic Site, that Bert Binning designed in 1941 and built where the Binnings lived for the remainder of their lives.

The one consequence of combining three essays by different authors is that there is some overlap in the material covered. This is one of the strengths of this book as it helps the reader build a very firm image and feel for Bert Binning in his various roles as an architect, artist, teacher and administrator. These are penetrating essays that plumb the depths of the psyche of this remarkable man. His strength of character lay in his modesty and his shyness became an asset as it enabled him to be a careful and wry observer of his fellow humans. He loved to gently poke fun at their foibles in his spidery cartoon drawings but they are never malicious or mean in intent. He managed to be part of an era of exploring art by reducing it to two dimensions as in his many paintings of sailboats. His remarkable flexibility was demonstrated in many different ways. For example, his mosaics for various Vancouver buildings range from the use of bold simple design and colours as in the BC Electric Building to the detailed design depicting BC basic resources and industry mosaic mural for the Imperial Bank of Commerce. His abstract paintings of the fifties and sixties are characterized by the use of strong bold colours and unusual forms. The range and breadth of his artistic skills was truly remarkable but his understanding of the power of simplicity of line and colour dominated everything that challenged his imagination.

This is an exciting book that opens the reader's mind to the oeuvre and life of a unique and remarkable creative Canadian. It can be savoured and reread over and over again and deserves a special place on the bookshelf of anyone interested in Canadian art.

*Harvey Buckmaster is a retired university professor with eclectic interests in art and BC history.*

***Red Iron Over the Canyon.***

*Joe Irving, Victoria: Trafford Publishing. 2006. 285 p., illus. $25.00 paperback*

According to Joe 'Red' Irving, "This is a book about the history of my life and also a part of the history of structural ironwork in the province of British Columbia and other places that I worked."

Although beginning with Irving's birth in 1911 and his formative years in the West Kootenay, this book primarily covers his working career from the age of 17 until retirement in 1976. During all that time he laboured on various construction sites. As a competent and conscientious ironworker, Irving was seldom unemployed — "If you have two good hands and some ambition, you can accomplish a good many things." [284] His usual response to a call from the union office to report for work at a different site was "I said O.K."

Irving was a prominent iron tradesman during a period when many British Columbia bridges, dams, and power lines were being constructed. He had little patience for inexperienced supervisors, particularly those on dam sites — "A white hard hat, a cigar and a two-way radio in a pickup truck seemed to be the ingredients that constituted a supervisor" [254] Working at locations throughout Western North America from Washington to the Yukon, his chaptered vignettes captivate the reader with descriptive and sometimes humorous detail — in 1957, he supervised the construction of "Phil Gaglardi's Penticostal [sic] Church" and, when completed, he mused: "Maybe this is the only way that ironworkers get to see the inside of a church. But then again, they don't have to listen to the sermon." [223]

After earning his high school diploma at the age of 93, Irving completed this paperback autobiography in 2005. The story is well crafted, detailed without too much technical jargon, includes construction site photos, illustrations and a glossary of various tools used in the iron trade. Although there is no table of contents or index, the 58 short chapters (some, only two pages long) and their headings suffice. There are a few minor typos and the author has a tendency to repeat a few favorite phrases ("and then" 'in short order"), but the style is appropriate to the time and subject. In fact, Irving's colloquialisms add charm to the book and his gregarious, no-nonsense personality comes through.

In 2005, Joe 'Red' Irving received an Honorary Life Membership from the BC & Yukon Territory Building and Construction Trades Council for his "lasting contribution to the building of the province of British Columbia." This autobiography is an excellent chronology of steel construction in the province and it portrays that development in an entertaining yet informative way. This is a book union or labour historians should read.

*R.J. (Ron) Welwood*
*Editor, bchistory.ca and Past-President, BCHF*

# Noteworthy books.

Includes books not reviewed but that are of interest and may be reviewed at a later date.

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*Basking sharks: the slaughter of B.C.'s gentle giants.*
*Scott Wallace and Brian Gisborne, Vancouver, B.C., New Star Books, 2006. $19.00.*

*Brother X11: the strange odyssey of a 20th century prophet and his quest for a new world.*
*John Oliphant. Kelowna, B.C., Twelfth House Press, 2006. $24.95 paperback.*

*Chainsaws, a history.*
*David Lee. Madeira Park, B.C., Harbour Publishing, 2006. $49.95.*

*Chasing the moon.*
*Penny Chamberlain. Winlaw, B.C., Sono Nis press, 2006. $9.95 paperback. Juvenile fiction.*

*Desolation Sound, a history.*
*Heather Harbord. Madeira Park, B.C., Harbour Publishing, 2007. $24.95 paperback.*

*Emily Carr.*
*Ian M. Thom, Charles C. Hill and Johanne Lamoureux. Vancouver, B.C., Douglas & McIntyre, 2006. $75.00.*

*Following the boulder train: travels with prospectors and rock doctors.*
*Tom Henry. Madeira Park, B.C., Harbour publishing, 2006. $16.95, paperback.*

*Government House: the ceremonial home of all British Columbians.*
*Rosemary Neering. Winlaw, B.C. Sono Nis Press, 2007.*

*Heart of the Cariboo-Chilcotin: more stories worth keeping.*
*Ed. Diana Wilson. Surrey, B.C. Heritage House, 2007. $19.95.*

*In the land of the red goat.*
*Bob Henderson. Smithers, B.C., Creekstone Press, 2007. $21.00 paperback.*

*Indian myths and legends from the North Pacific Coast of America: a translation of Franz Boas' 1895 edition of Indianische Sagen von der Nord-Pacifischen Kuste Amerikas, ed.*
*Randy Bouchard and Dorothy Kennedy. Vancouver, B.C. Talonbooks, 2007. $39.95.*

*Mapping the wilderness: the story of David Thompson.*
*Tom Shardlow. Toronto, Ont., Napoleon Publishing, 2006. $18.95 hardcover. Young readers.*

*No time to say goodbye: children's' stories of Kuyper Island Residential School.*
*Sylvia Olsen. Winlaw, B.C., Sono Nis press, 2006. $9.95 paperback. Teen fiction.*

*Oak Bay, British Columbia: in photographs, 1906-2006.*
*The Corporation of the District of Oak Bay, 2006. $20.00 hardcover.*

*Raven travelling: two centuries of Haida art.*
*Daina Augaitis, and Nike Collison and Robert Davison, and Peter Macnair and Bill Reid and others. Vancouver, B.C., Douglas & McIntyre, 2006. $65.00.*

*Robert Service: under the spell of the Yukon.*
*Enid Mallory. Surrey, B.C., Heritage House, 2006. $32.95 hardcover.*

*Secret of the dance.*
*Andrea Spalding and Alfred Scow. Victoria, B.C., Orca Books, 2006. $19.95 picturebook. Young readers.*

*Steam along the Boundary: Canadian Pacific, Great Northern, and the great Boundary copper boom.*
*Robert D. Turner and J.S. David Wilkie. Winlaw, B.C., Sono Nis Press, 2007. $49.95 hardcover.*

*Sternwheelers and canyon cats: whitewater freighting on the Upper Fraser.*
*Jack Boudreau. Madeira Park, B.C., Caitlin Press, 2006. $18.95.*

*The ambitious city: a history of North Vancouver.*
*Warren Sommer. Madeira Park, B.C., Harbour Publishing, 2007. 24.95 paperback.*

*The First Nations of British Columbia: an anthropological survey.*
*Robert J. Muckle. 2nd ed. Vancouver, B.C., U.B.C. Press, 2007. $19.95 paperback.*

*The story of Dunbar: voices of a Vancouver neighbourhood.*
*Peggy Scholfield, ed. Vancouver, B.C., Ronsdale Press, 2007. $39.95 paperback.*

*This and that, Emily Carr.*
*Edited by Ann-Lee Switzer. Victoria, B.C., Ti-Jean Press, 2007. $17.00 paperback.*

*Yetsa's sweater.*
*Sylvia Olsen. Illustrated by Joan Larsen. Winlaw, B.C., Sono Nis press, 2006. $19.95 paperback. Illustrated picturebook.*

# Miscellany

## Greenhouse Restoration at Hatley Park National Historic Site/Royal Roads University Nets Two Awards

Three years ago, the 90-year-old greenhouse at Hatley Park National Historic Site was on the verge of irreparable damage. Today, the building has been restored so successfully that it has won two prestigious heritage awards.

Royal Roads University, the steward of the DND-owned property, and Vintage Woodworks Inc., the company that carried out the restoration work, received the Outstanding Achievement Award from the Heritage Society of B.C. for the greenhouse project. That award was presented June 1 in North Vancouver at the annual Heritage B.C. conference.

The project has also netted the Award of Merit from the Hallmark Society, a non-profit organization in Victoria that advocates for the preservation, conservation, and restoration of heritage assets. The award acknowledges outstanding exterior and/or interior restoration of residential, commercial or institutional buildings or other innovative projects. It was presented at the society's annual awards event tonight to RRU and Vintage Woodworks.

Earlier in the day, the university held a reception for staff members and others involved with the project, including representatives of the Fisher Foundation, which funded the $750,000 restoration, and the Hallmark and Heritage societies.

The greenhouse is one of the original structures at Hatley Park, the former home of one-time British Columbia premier and lieutenant-governor James Dunsmuir. Constructed in 1914, it was designed by Lord & Burnham Company, a prominent American greenhouse manufacturer that built many major public conservatories in the U.S. The Hatley Park greenhouse holds special significance as the only building on the historic site that has been continually used for its originally-intended purpose.

"It's very old, it's unique, and it's very significant to the original estate and the functions of food production that took place here," said Dave Rutherford, manager of grounds and gardens at Royal Roads University. "There's a lot of concern today about our food production systems and the need to re-connect with some of the early roots we had with the land, plants, and food production. This project is one way to do that."

The restoration included the removal of every piece of glass (about 70 per cent of which was re-installed), cleaning, painting and repairing the metal and wood frames, replicating missing architectural details, and installing a new hot water heating system using original pipes that had been out of service since 1938.

"The fact a university would put this much effort into restoring an agricultural building is remarkable," said Jim Stiven, co-owner of Vintage Woodworks. "The support from the university and the donor allowed us to achieve a level of attention to historic detail that compares to any heritage restoration project in the world."

Stiven says the decision to keep the original glazing allowed the project to retain 90 per cent of the original material in its original location – an unusually high rate that was achievable in part because of the exceptionally high quality of the design, materials and installation used in the original greenhouse.

The RRU Foundation plans to raise another $350,000 for phase two of the project, which will re-stock the greenhouse with heritage fruit and vegetable systems and turn it into a display greenhouse that will offer horticultural education programs and historical displays. Further work will restore and re-establish the walled garden that surrounds the greenhouse, and the orchard that had been an original feature of the estate.

The interior of the greenhouse is expected to open to the public in the summer of 2008, the 100th anniversary of the creation of the Dunsmuir family's Hatley Park estate.

PAGE 2 – Monday, June 11, 2007

Community

Managing Editor Bob Hall – 352-3552 ext. 112
e-mail: bob@nelsondailynews.com

Nelson Daily News

BC HISTORICAL FEDERATION

**Local history buffs honoured**

NELSON — Boris Karloff's brief theatrical career in Nelson c. 1911 is a well-known bit of local lore. Historian, sleuth, and writer Greg Nesteroff of Castlegar unearthed the minutiae of Karloff's (real name, William Pratt) early wanderings through British Columbia, his acting career and his many loves and liaisons.

Nesteroff spun the Karloff story into a prize-winning article in *British Columbia History*, the quarterly journal of the BC Historical Federation. "Boris Karloff in British Columbia" was awarded the Anne and Philip Yandle Best Article Award for 2006.

Along with Nelson writer Eileen Delehanty Pearkes, Nesteroff researched and wrote the text for the Permanent historical Exhibition at Touchstones Nelson.

He is a story-teller, reporter, broadcaster and writer with a passion for fun and detail. The award was accepted on his behalf at the BC Historical Conference Awards Banquet in Victoria on May 12, by Ron Welwood of Nelson.

Welwood also accepted his own award as an Honorary Life member of the Federation in recognition for his many years of service on the BC Historical Federation Executive as well as his work on the Federation's website, bchistory.ca.

He is also recognized as a long-standing member of Nelson's Heritage Commission and author of the city's three tour brochures.

— PHOTO SUBMITTED

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.

In my review (vol. 39m No. 2, pp. 29-30) of Daryl Ashby's ***John Muir: West Coast Pioneer***, (Ronsdale Press, 2005) I incorrectly stated that the author had written that the Muirs came out to Vancouver Island on the *Norman Morison* when he very correctly had written that they came out in the *Harpooner*. My apologies to the author and publisher for some very careless reporting on my part.

**Bruce M. Watson.**



Another couple of cards from Ron Hyde's collection.

The top card shows the Fort Hope Tavern in Hope BC about 1934.

Our second card Prince Rupert in 1910.

*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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*Question regarding membership should be sent to;*
*Ron Hyde, Secretary #2012880 Railway Ave., Richmond BC VlE 6G2 Phone 604.277.2627 Fax 604.277.2657 rbhyde@shaw.ca*

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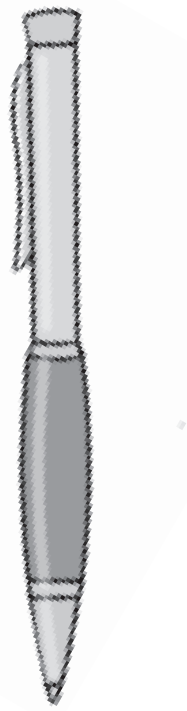

## 24th Annual Competition for Writers of BC History Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for Historical Writing Deadline: 31 December 2007

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.**