



**To:** Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee  
**From:** Jane Fernyhough, Manager, Cultural Services  
**Re:** Relocation of the two 1890-1900 stilt houses at Garry Point to the Britannia Heritage Shipyard

**Date:** January 14, 2003  
**File:** -

**Staff Recommendation**

That:

1. Staff and the Britannia Heritage Shipyard Advisory Board complete a Development Plan for the Historic Zone at Britannia Heritage Shipyard and report back to Council in the Fall, 2003; and,
2. The two Garry Point stilt houses be moved to Britannia Heritage Shipyard Historic Zone;

Jane Fernyhough  
Manager, Heritage and Cultural Services

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ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Facilities Management.....	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Budget and Accounting.....	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Parks .....	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	

## Staff Report

### Origin

At the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee meeting of September 24, 2002 the following referral was made:

*That:*

*(1) Preparations to move the two Garry Point stilt houses to the Britannia Heritage Shipyard site in order to complete the Historic Zone be referred to staff; and,*

*(2) Staff consult with Britannia stakeholders on the matter.*

The referral was accompanied by a report from Councillor Steves followed by a short history of the houses, which are attached as Appendix 1.

At the General Purposes meeting of December 23, 2002 a request was made for information regarding the Murchison Houses and the Britannia Business Plan. This report will deal with both referrals.

### Analysis

#### Stilt Piling Houses

The Stilt Piling Houses are listed on the City of Richmond's Heritage Inventory as two of the last of this type of "employee housing that once bordered most of the river front canneries that populated Steveston's cannery channel". "They were designed to contend with flood plain conditions and the lack of adequate dyke protection during the early days of the Steveston fishery."

Both buildings are currently occupied. A visual inspection by Facilities Management staff indicates their condition appears to be good except the roof of the largest of the houses. This appears to be in a bad state of repair and will need to be repaired immediately or covered in tarpaulin for the near future.

The owner of the houses has agreed to donate the money he would save by not demolishing and disposing of the stilt houses to help defray the cost of moving them.

#### Britannia Heritage Shipyard Park

The Britannia Heritage Shipyard Park Concept Plan (adopted by Council, September 1994) contains a section on the Historic Residential Interpretation Sub-Area (Historic Zone). This section refers to the "intention to recreate a residential area for interpretation purposes by excavating a marsh area like the one which would have been there before sand fill was pumped onto the shore during channel dredging activities. The details of the design and construction of the marsh have not been fully studied. At the time this work is contemplated, a detailed design,

engineering, and environmental study will be needed to determine the most appropriate construction techniques, materials, landscaping and water management methods to utilize.”

At the City Council meeting of November 14, 1995 Council adopted the following recommendations:

1. “That the concept of an Historic Zone within the Britannia Heritage Shipyard Park, as outlined in the report (dated October 12<sup>th</sup>, 1995 from the Manager of Leisure Services) on the Britannia Heritage Shipyard – Study Area Plan, be approved and included in the application for rezoning” and;
2. “That a “collection policy” for future buildings within the historic zone be developed which would include criteria for what small buildings may be appropriate, and their possible uses, and whether or not the Chinese bunkhouse should be included on the site.”

It was further recommended in this study that the Zone be put in a state of “managed/creative holding, in which only actions absolutely necessary to secure its long term purpose will be undertaken. This deferred development is necessary to avoid diverting Civic or Society energy from the restoration and completion of the remainder of the Britannia Heritage Shipyard Park.”

### **Britannia Business Plan**

In the Britannia Business Plan, adopted by Council at the City Council meeting of January 22, 2001 the Historic Zone, including the Murchison Houses was number 6 on the priority capital list to have the planning and the completion of the three buildings currently on site to occur in the 2003-2005 timeframe. The Business Plan recommended the Murchison Houses have “public access particularly to the ground floors, restored to depict living conditions of the era”. The Tall Ship Festival and subsequent interest in the site highlighted the need for offices and welcome centre to be in a location closer to the shipyard and boatworks buildings than their current location in the Murikami buildings. A recommendation to the Advisory Board to convert one of the houses to fulfil this need was endorsed and capital funding was requested in 2003 to complete the Murchison Houses. This request was not recommended.

The Business Plan also raised the question of the need to have a caretaker residence somewhere on site. With increased interest in the site has come an increase in vandalism and night time activities. A landside caretaker residence in an appropriate location on site should be discussed during the preparation of a Development Plan and uses for the Murchison and stilt houses.

### **Stakeholder Input**

Since the houses are listed on the City’s Heritage Inventory, the issue of the development of the current location of the stilt piling houses was forwarded to the Heritage Commission for comment. At their meeting on July 18, 2002, the Heritage Commission recommended that the houses be documented before their demolition with photographs and as found drawings.

The Britannia Heritage Shipyard Advisory Board at their September meeting discussed the issue of moving the stilt piling houses to Britannia. The Advisory Board approved the following motion:

“That the Britannia Heritage Shipyard Advisory Board advises that it is not prudent to move the Stilt Piling Houses to Britannia unless there is an updated Development Plan together with a capital financing plan for the historic precinct (including the 3 existing buildings and their permanent locations and the integration of these 2 additional buildings) and such a plan should detail the intended uses for all buildings and how these uses integrate with the existing Britannia Business Plan. If so directed by Council, the Advisory Board will develop these plans. It should be recognized by Council that the capital plan in place and the current operating budgets are based on the Business Plan adopted by Council.”

Three options are presented for Council’s consideration.

Option 1: Document the Stilt Houses for further reference and allow demolition

As part of the development application and rezoning process have the applicant fully document the houses with as-found drawings and photographs.

Pros:

- Ensures that the type of housing is accurately depicted for future generations
- Allows for the reproduction of the buildings within the Britannia Historic Zone in the future should the Development Plan determine this to be desirable
- Provides time for the Advisory Board and staff to develop the comprehensive Development Plan for the Historic Zone, including the placement and use of buildings and the financial implications for the entire historic zone area without disruption to the Britannia Business Plan and capital priorities already in place and approved by council.

Cons:

- The heritage designated stilt piling houses will probably be demolished.

Option 2: Move the Houses to another location and store

Move the houses to the Parks Nursery at Gilbert Road and store on temporary beams until a Development Plan is complete and the necessary financing is acquired and the capital priorities laid out in the Britannia Business Plan have been adjusted to incorporate them.

Pros:

- Preserves the heritage designated stilt piling houses
- Does not put two more “old” buildings in need of restoration at Britannia until there is a plan and financing is in place
- Space is available at the nursery

Cons:

- Puts the two buildings “out of sight and out of mind”
- Necessitates moving the buildings twice

Option 3: Move the houses to Britannia and store; Prepare Development Plan (recommended)

Move the houses to the Historic Zone on temporary beams and store until the Development Plan is complete, the necessary financing is acquired and the capital priorities laid out in the Britannia

Business Plan have been adjusted to incorporate any recommendations from the Plan. The Advisory Board has agreed that they would play a lead role in the Development Plan, which would include:

- A review of the Concept Plan (endorsed by Council September 1994) and the Study Area Plan (adopted by Council November 1995);
- Completion of the necessary detailed design, engineering and environmental studies to determine appropriate construction techniques, materials, landscaping and water management methods; and,
- Recommendations for the use and interpretative directions of the buildings including the use of one or two of the houses for the site office and welcome centre and accommodation for a site caretaker.

Pros:

- The houses are preserved
- A detailed Development Plan is completed in a designated time frame

Cons:

- The two buildings will add to the “derelict” image of the site in the short term.
- The buildings are not part of the five year Business Plan approved by Council, which the Advisory Board is charged with implementing.

**Financial Impact**

The owner of the buildings has agreed to contribute the money he would save from demolition costs towards the costs of relocating the buildings to Britannia. Any additional funds required for site preparation and the Development Plan technical studies that cannot be done by staff can be taken from the Britannia Film Revenue account.

Site preparation	\$ 1,000
Brace buildings	2,000
Move buildings (quote from Supreme House Movers Ltd)	8,450
Block for storing	3,000
Minus contribution from the developer	- 3,000
City costs plus contingency (20%)	1,500
Preparation of a Development Plan (technical expertise)	<u>5,000</u>
	\$19,950

Funding for the houses and any park development recommended in the Development Plan will be requested through the Capital budget process.

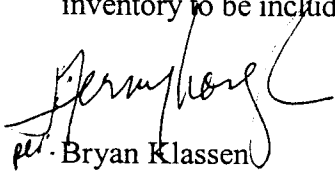
**Conclusion**

A detailed Development Plan for the Historic Zone at Britannia will allow for the completion of the development of the Historic Zone and provide for the best use of resources at the site. It is time for the Zone to emerge from the “managed/creative holding” state recommended in 1995 in order to

January 14, 2003

- 6 -

move forward on the completion of the park. Preserving the heritage designated stilt pile houses will provide additional representation of the living conditions of the people of Steveston who were involved in the fishing industry as well as completing the "maximum of four small buildings" inventory to be included in this Zone.



Bryan Klassen  
Britannia Site Supervisor

BK:bk



## City of Richmond

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**To:** Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Services Committee    **Date:** Sept. 30,2002

**From:** Harold Steves, Committee Chair

**RE: History of the two 1890 – 1900 stilt houses at Garry Point  
and their future use at the Britannia Heritage Shipyard.**

### **History:**

The two stilt houses are located a registered archaeological site DgRt 1. This site is discussed in detail on pages 46 to 48 of the "Archaeological Heritage Resource Overview" prepared by Dr. Leonard Ham for the Heritage Advisory Committee in 1987. The two houses are located on the native village site. The Indian burial ground was at the foot of Chatham St. towards Scotch Pond.

The house further south was owned by the Hornbrook family in the 1940 –50 era and later the Reid family. It was on stilts which were partly boarded in. There were small trenches across the mud floor to drain away the water when the tide went out. The Reids found Native artifacts on the property.

The more northerly shingle house was the home of the Point family from about 1900 to mid 1950's. Chief Point, the hereditary Chief of the Musqueam, was born at Garry Point. As the family at Garry Point, Point became their family name. On page 48 Ham notes that the location of the Point family home may correspond with the former location of Atlas Cannery bunkhouses. However, new information indicates the two houses were either ABC Packing Co houses built by Henry Bell-Irving, owner of both the Britannia and Scottish Canadian Canneries, or Native houses.

When H.O Bell-Irving acquired Garry Point (Lot 9) in 1896, there was a long established Indian village on his property on the crab apple ridge. Bell-Irving went to Indian Affairs, had the Reserve status lifted and most of the Indians relocated to the Musqueam Reserve. The Point family stayed.

While the boundary for Lot 9 was supposed to be 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. the maps are not clear. It would appear that the A.B.C. Co housing built by Bell-Irving was actually on Lot 10 owned by W.H. Steves. It is unclear whether the 7<sup>th</sup> Ave dyke went between the Indian houses or the ABC Packing Co houses. Either way the two houses are historically important. As the Scottish Canadian Cannery was a sister cannery to the Britannia (constructed to get a larger share of fish for Bell-Irving ) these houses fit in well with the Britannia History.

### **Future use:**

The two houses are still on stilts. A concrete footing has been built around the perimeter and a concrete floor put in. As people are living in both houses they are in excellent condition. The floor joists and timbers under the buildings are in excellent condition.

It is proposed to move the entire upper floor of the northerly shingle building intact. The southerly clapboard building would have the back section removed and only the very front section that was constructed first moved to the site. This reduces the cost of moving considerably as the smaller building can be moved on a trailer. The total cost of moving 1 ½ buildings is \$7900, less a donation from the owner equaling the cost of demolition. The cost of raising cable lines is \$553. However, we were able to get the cable companies to donate this service in the past.

Upon arriving at the Britannia site the two buildings should be immediately placed on creosote timbers or pier blocks north of their final location. This will allow the buildings to be used. When the historic zone is excavated sometime in the future they can be moved forward and placed on stilts. Temporary boardwalks to the houses now would provide for public viewing. If the two Murchison houses were also moved into position displays could be set up in the buildings. Part of the larger Murchison house could be used for an office.

In the long term it may be important to use one house for a caretaker suite.

Set up to show pioneer life, the buildings would show several or all of the following uses that these buildings were actually used for; Japanese fishermen's bunkhouse, white fishermen's bunkhouse; Antonian Sisters' daycare for Japanese children, Customs Officer Murchison's office, Chief Points residence, Fisherman's home.

As the Historic Zone, Richmond Boatworks and Britannia Shipyard are all fenced in, this would allow us to charge admission to the site and bring in much needed revenue.



**CONFIDENTIAL**BRITISH COLUMBIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SITE INVENTORY FORM

DgRt 1

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION 1989

41. Recorder: Ham, L.C. 1989

42. Remarks:

Information has been found in the Black Papers (National Archives of Canada, RG10, Vol. 3961, F147, 194; PABC Reel B0340) relating to the Musqueam village at Garry Point. These papers include correspondence and maps from the Henry Bell-Irving Co. (Anglo British Columbia Packing Co.) and Indian Affairs documenting Bell-Irving's eviction of Musqueam Indians from their village.

Section 9 (Blk 3, Rge 7, NWD) was obtained at public auction and included in a Crown Grant to W.D. Cossett (1861 08 12), then sold to C.G. Hobson (1889 10 31), then sold to the Garry Point Canning Co. (1890 08 13), thence to Henry Bell-Irving 16 October 1891, and to Bell-Irving's company the Anglo British Columbian Packing Co. (1892 12 14). Throughout this entire 35 years the Musqueam continued to live at Garry Point.

The only accurate point of reference on the Bell-Irving maps is the Dominion Observatory (Gamble's), and the Musqueam village is ca. 144 to 168 m northeast from Gamble's, which places it at the south end of Seventh Avenue and Moncton Street. (see attached maps). This corresponds to the location where Ms. Cathy Reid of Steveston stated her grandfather had found Indian artifacts (pers. comm., July 1988).

9A

The Garry Point Cannery was only used as a salmon saltery and was severely damaged or fell into the river during floods in 1892 and 1894 (Stacey, pers comm., 89 08 05). Bell-Irving in his correspondence to Indian Affairs complaining about the Indian "squatters" claims to need the area to expand or build a new cannery. The Musqueam of course were upset at abandoning their village, and in spite of their claim that they had requested that the Reserve Commission give them a reserve there, as the area had been crown granted 35 years earlier, Indian Affairs arranged for them to receive \$240 for their buildings and gardens and they re-settled at IR No.2 (Musqueam).

It would appear that any deposits associated with this village may have been incorporated into the Garry Point Park, and may now be under several m of fill. If the village was further to the east or northeast, there may yet be deposits beneath the Federal parking lot, or in the lots immediately east of Seventh Avenue. The crudeness of the attached maps makes it difficult to accurately pinpoint the precise village location. In addition, the above information only documents the period 1861 to 1896, and there is potential for earlier deposits to the north (NW-NE), although there are currently few lots left which may have any intact deposits. It is also possible that considerable pieces of Garry Point were lost to erosion between 1859 and 1896 and evidence of earlier occupations have been lost. I also have some reservations about whether Bell-Irving was actually on Section 9 as if his and Mr. Greens' maps are correct, the A.B.C.P. Co. seem to occupy half of Section 10 (formerly 13). Additional historic map research is necessary to clarify this.

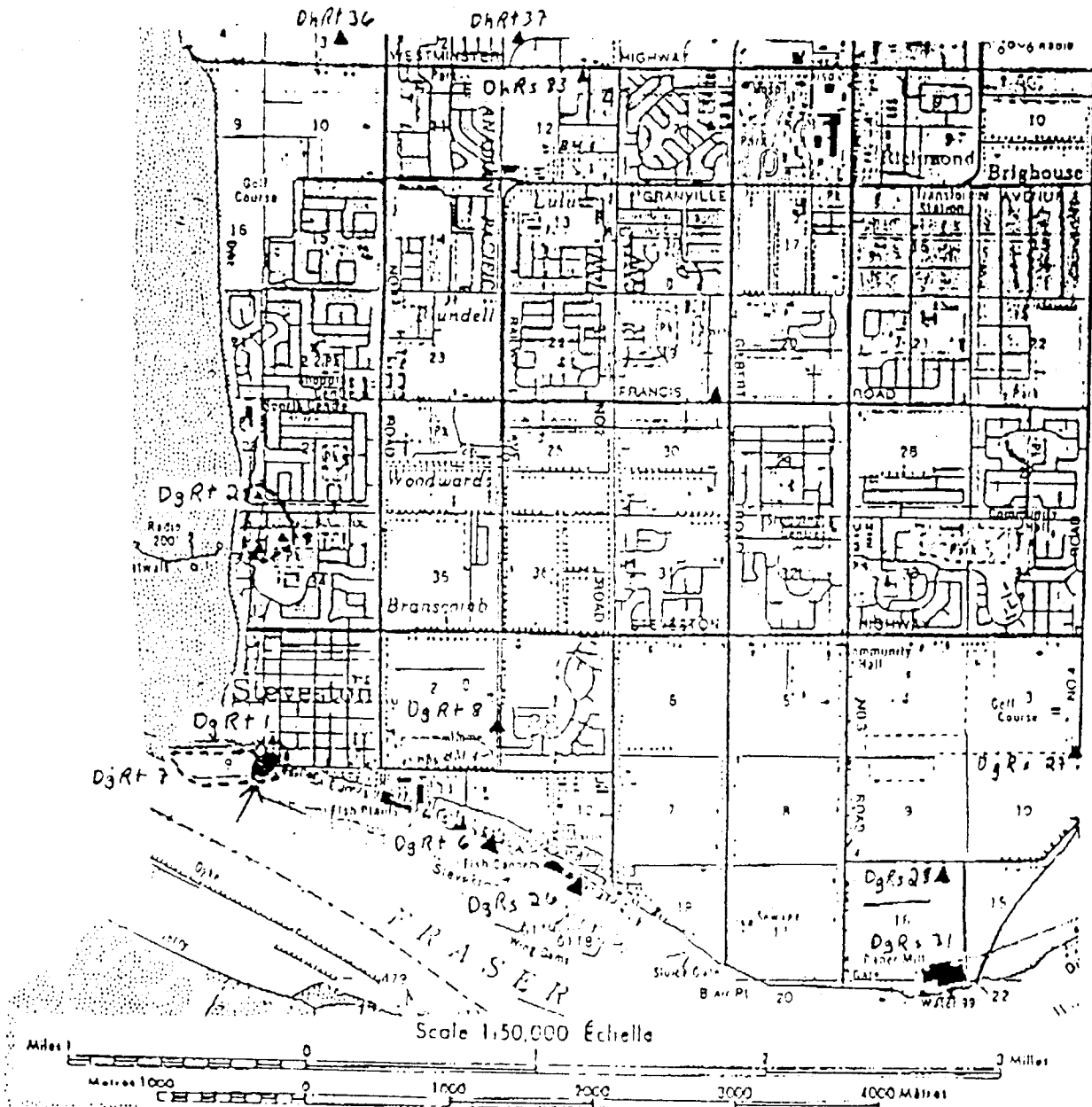
27

The area at the south end of 7th Avenue is now under several m. of fill

DgR+ 1

# CONFIDENTIAL

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION 1989



⊗ most likely site location

49° 11' 25"  
123° 07' 33"

03R11

151348

Rec 3, 1896?

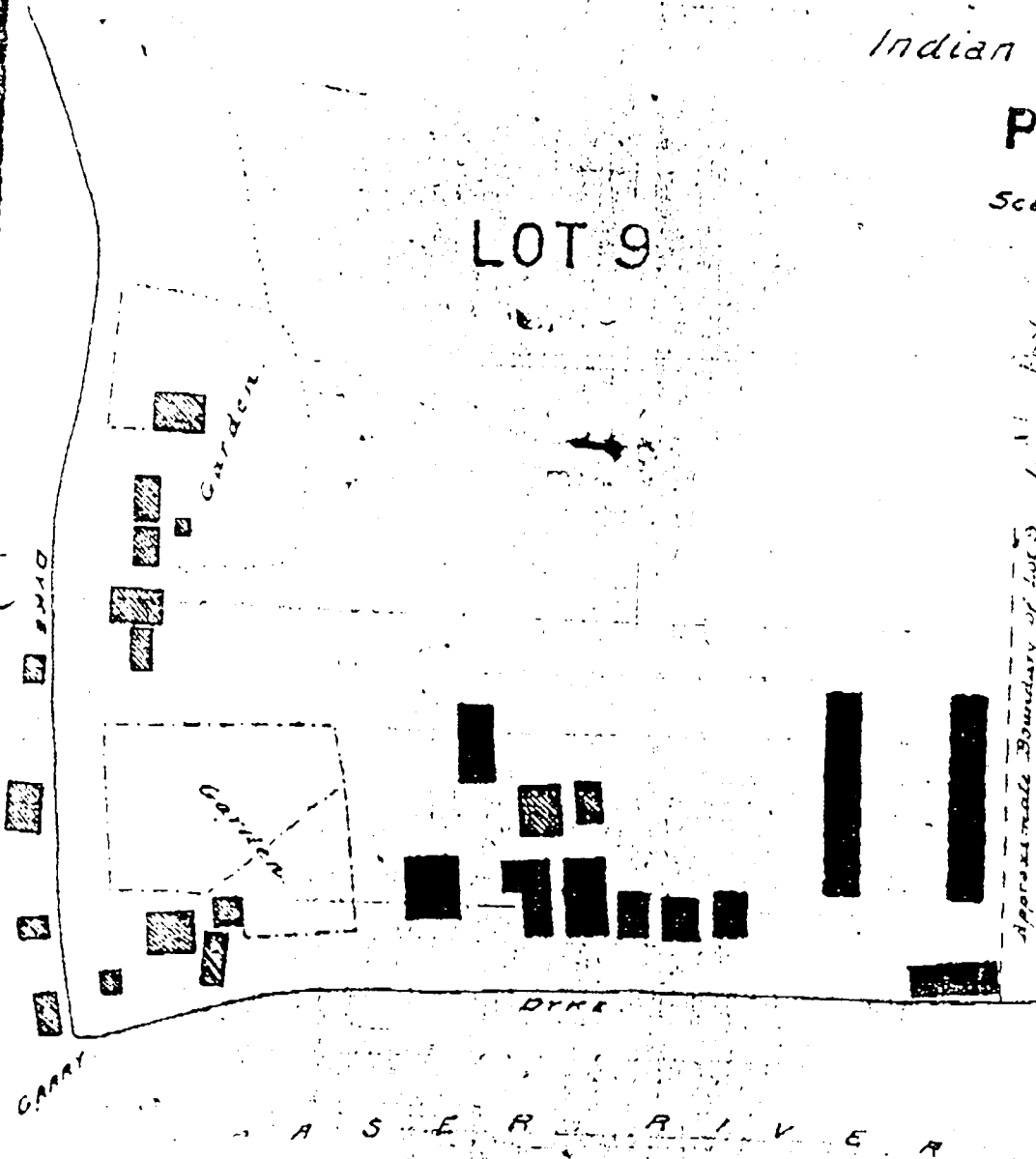
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1 cm = 8 m

# SKETCH OF Indian Houses and POINT GARRISON

Scale 1 Inch = 66 Feet

## LOT 9



-  Indian house
-  A.B.C.P.C. House

29 Plan made by Mr Green  
for Indian Affairs

DgRt

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Bell-Irving  
Dec 20, 1896

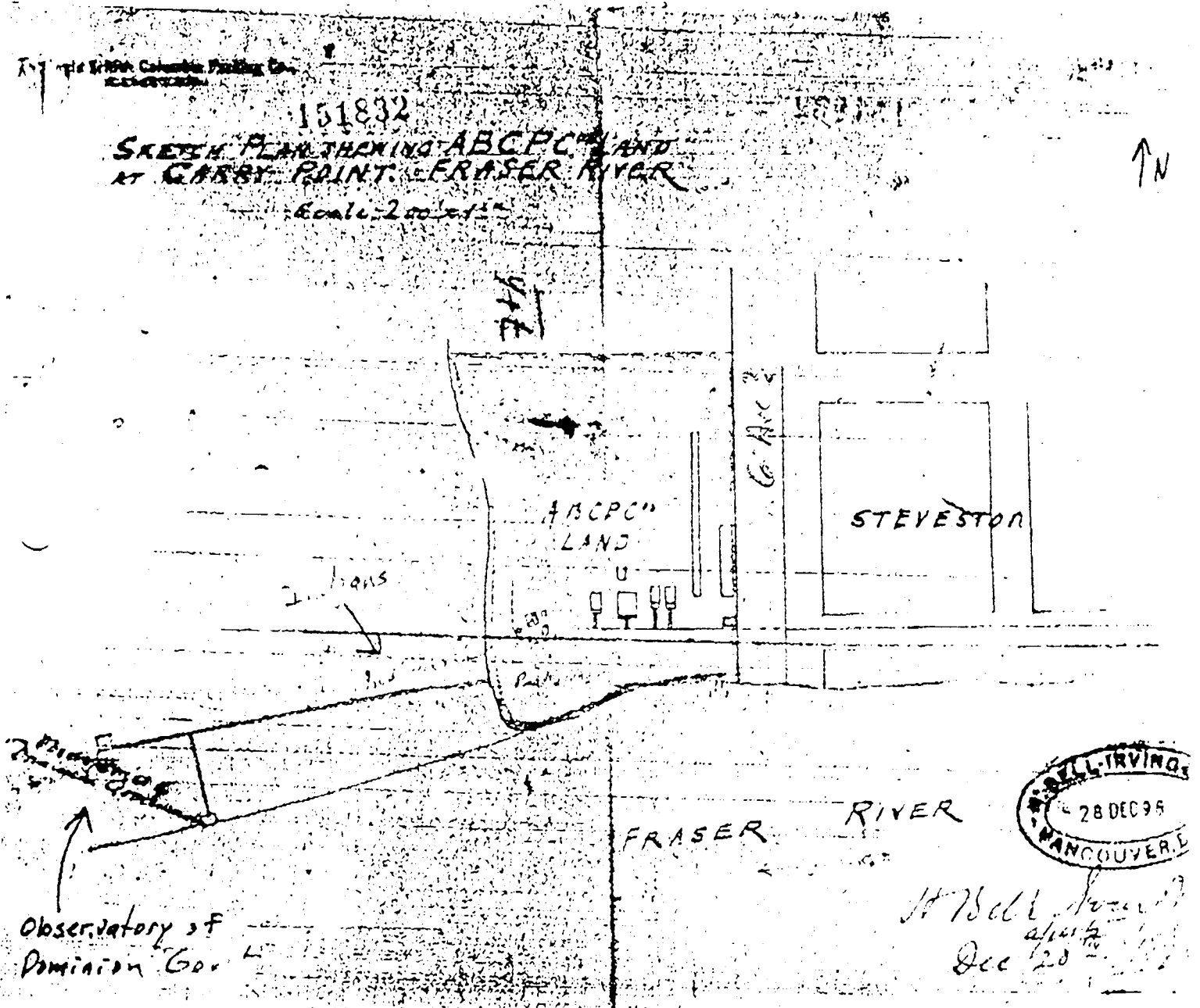
1 cm = 24

THE IRVING-COLUMBIA PRINTING CO.  
VANCOUVER, B.C.

151832

SKETCH PLAN SHOWING ABCPC<sup>2</sup> LAND  
AT GARRY POINT, FRASER RIVER

Scale: 200 x 1"



H Bell-Irving  
Dec 20 1896

plowing (HS) in the playing field behind the Manoah Steves Elementary School at 10111 4th Ave. While there does not appear to be any immediate threat to any deposits which may still be here, the area should be tested and monitored should the School Board develop plans to modify the playing field behind the school.

**LuLu Island, BLK3N, RGE7W, NWD.**

DgRt 1 Garry Point Site

There can be little doubt but that more archaeologists have spent more time trying to find this site than any other in Southwestern British Columbia. It is probably the best documented Indian settlement in Richmond, yet there is not a single shred of archaeological evidence to support its existence.

This site was located at Garry Point between the south end of Crabapple Ridge and the mouth of Steveston Slough, presently the area between 7th and 5th Avenues and Chatham and Broadway Streets. It was originally a cluster of permanent Musqueam house sites (Duff 1952:27; Rozen 1979:55), and in more recent times (historic period ?) a fishing camp (Barnett 1975:33; Kew 1970; Rozen 1979:55). Rozen (1979:55) provides the Musqueam name of this site, "kw'áyo<sup>2</sup>7xw'" (KWAY-ah-wh), meaning "boiling [bubbling, churning] water". As with the case for the Terra Nova site, this name probably referred to natural gas bubbling in Steveston Slough (see DhRt 36 above).

In addition to the above ethnographic references, Indian occupation of Garry Point is indicated on an 1885 chart from the Public Archives of Canada (see Figure 3-7). There are also several references to an Indian settlement at the west end of Chatham Street (Garry Point - Crabapple Ridge) contained in the Richmond Oral History Tapes (GF, HLS, WT).

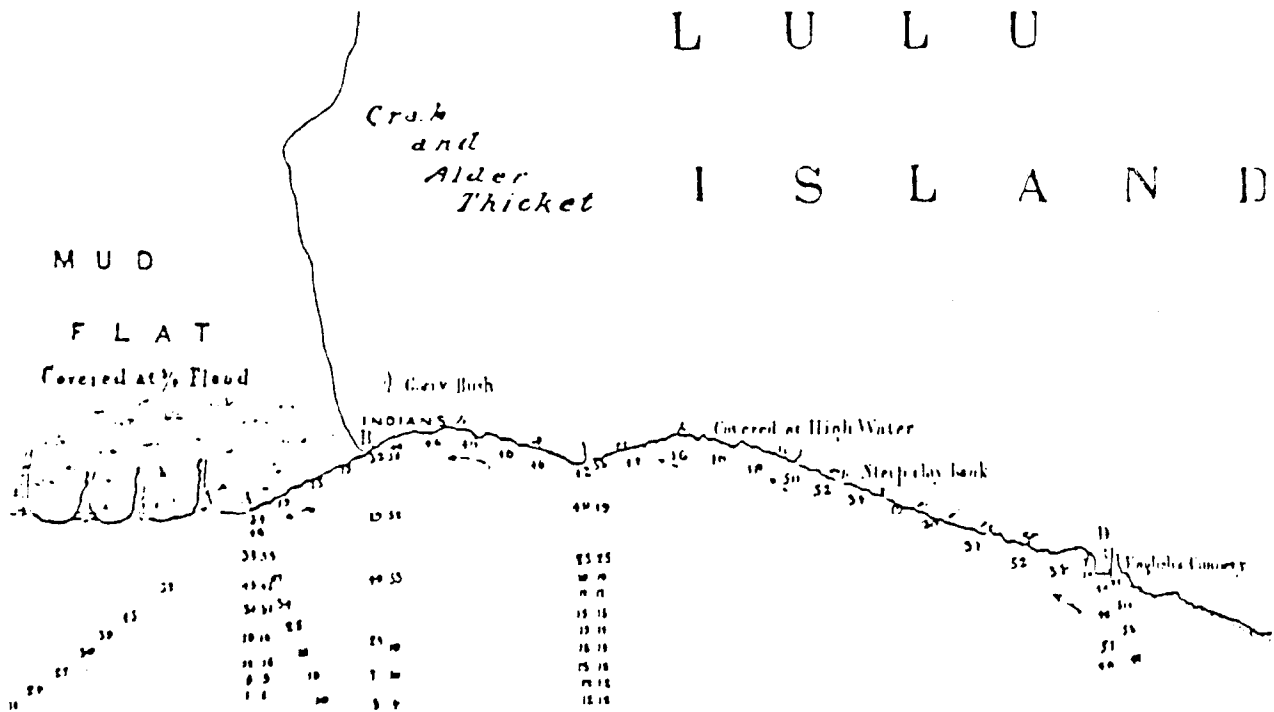


Figure 3-7 1885 Chart Steveston Waterfront (Public Archives Canada).  
 [Richmond Archives MP-86-33.2]

The original shoreline in Steveston was in the vicinity of Chatham Street, and somewhere between 6th and 4th Avenues Steveston Slough entered the South Arm. North of Chatham Street, at least to Broadway Street and possibly as far north as Garry Street was shrubland, while south of Chatham it was intertidal saltmarsh as far as the low water mark at about Moncton Street. To the northwest was Crabapple Ridge and to the east was grassland (see Figure 3-1).

While the change in the location of the Steveston shoreline in the historic period explains why many archaeologists have looked in the wrong place for this site (intertidal zone), it still does not explain why what would have been quite a large site has not been found. Between 1894 and 1895 both the Atlas and Gulf of Georgia Canneries had been built and were

in operation (Reid 1973:42-3). It is likely the Indians, already under pressure to abandon traditional camp sites, took up seasonal residency in the Atlas Cannery bunkhouses. In fact, the location traditionally referred to in Steveston as the former Point family (Musqueam) home corresponds with the former location of Atlas Cannery Indian bunkhouses.

Once traditional camp sites were abandoned their deposits were probably quickly mined for fill, as happened at DhRt 24 on Sea Island, very likely before 1900. The late Harold Steves Sr. is recorded on the original DgRt 1 site form as remembering Indian "shacks" standing in 1910, but I strongly suspect these were cannery bunkhouses and not original native houses. In the Richmond Oral History Tapes he discusses this village but states it was before his time and that he remembered his aunt talking about it (HLS).

I have made numerous visits to the area since 1978 and observed freshly cleaned out ditches, waterline excavations, bulldozed lots being prepared for house construction and gardens, but have yet to observe any trace of what could be the remains of this site. Traces may yet show up, but no recommendations are being made for future research at this site.

Northwest of the Garry Point village (DgRt 1) and along the southern end of Crabapple Ridge, were tree burials (presently the area to the northwest of 7th Avenue and Broadway Street). Alan Carl obtained information from the late Harold Steves Sr. concerning tree burials on Crabapple Ridge but recorded it on the DgRt 2 site form. Reference is also made in the Richmond Oral History Tapes to tree burials at this location (WT), and there was at one time the remains of a dugout canoe in the bushes at the south end of the ridge (HS). No specific recommendations are being made for future research at this part of DgRt 1.