



To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee
From: Vern Jacques, Acting Director, Recreation & Cultural Services
Re: Britannia Heritage Shipyard Historic Zone - History

Date: June 26, 2008
File: 06-2025-20-003/Vol 01

Staff Recommendation

That detailed interpretation and exhibit plans for each of the five buildings within the Historic Zone be brought back to Council for approval before tendering.

Vern Jacques
Acting Director – Recreation and Cultural Services
(604-276-4930)

Att. 5

FOR ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY					
ROUTED TO:		CONCURRENCE		CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
Facility Management.....		Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>		<i>file white</i>	
REVIEWED BY TAG		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		REVIEWED BY CAO	
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Staff Report

Origin

At the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Committee meeting on June 24, 2008 the following referral motion was made:

That the report entitled 'Britannia Heritage Shipyard Historic Zone' be referred back to staff for further analysis and report back with information on the various plans endorsed by Council with respect to the Britannia Heritage Shipyard, including comments on the current scope of work.

This report provides information on previous plans prepared on the development of the Britannia site, capital funding allocated since 2000, further information on the scope of work in the current construction project and proposed work in the next phase to complete the buildings and landscape in the historic zone and the research and interpretation plan for the buildings in the Historic Zone.

Analysis

At the Council meeting of June 9th, 2008, Council approved a resolution that the current project (Phase 2) be completed as awarded with the deletion of the public washrooms. At the last PRCS Committee meeting, the Committee recommended that all future business plans, conservation plans and interpretive plans be adopted by Council for all heritage resources. As a result, staff are recommending that the detailed interpretation plan for each of the five buildings in the Historic Zone be brought back to Council for approval before tendering.

In response to the above referral a series of analyses have been provided for Council's information.

Chronology of Plans for Britannia

Attachment 1 is a chronology of the plans that have been prepared on the development of the Britannia site. Each plan has used the previous plans as a base and incorporated updated or new information, more detailed analysis and in the case of buildings, response to new building codes.

All of the reports were presented to Council and were adopted or received for information except the 1998 Britannia Development Strategy and the 2006 Historic Zone Interpretation Plan.

Britannia Capital Projects and Phases

Attachment 2 outlines the capital projects for years 2000 to 2008. Phase 2 of the Historic Zone (2007 funding) is proceeding as per Council direction. Staff are confident the historical integrity of the buildings is intact and the Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places have been followed. Phase 3 is currently in the design phase. Attachment 3 provides a detailed outline of these two phases. Interior restoration of Murchison House 1 for the Visitor & Interpretation Centre and Stilt Pile House 2 for the Caretaker residence are included in Phase 2.

Interiors of the other three buildings as well as the interpretation themes of all buildings are included in Phase 3. Attachment 4 outlines the approved scope of work for the current Phase 2 construction (as outlined in the report *Britannia Heritage Shipyard Historic Zone* dated June 19, 2008 from the General Manager – Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services).

Britannia Heritage Shipyard Historic Zone Interpretation Plan

The Interpretation Plan (Attachment 5) was produced in 2006. It outlines the historical social context of life on the waterfront.

Research on each of the buildings in the Historic Zone was conducted, and interpretive principles and interpretation themes and focus suggested. Statements of significance information for each of the buildings is included in the Interpretation Plan. This plan will be used to inform the detailed interpretive plans to be developed during Phase 3. These plans will be developed in the coming months and it is recommended that these plans be brought back to Council for approval before detailed exhibit construction plans are developed.

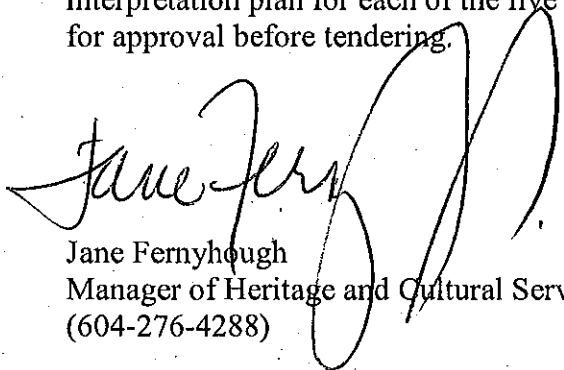
Financial Impact

There is no financial impact to this report.

Conclusion

This report provides background information for Council on Britannia Heritage Shipyard and the plans that have been completed, capital projects, an outline of the work to be accomplished in phase 2 and 3 of the Historic Zone and presents the Historic Zone Interpretation Plan. Each subsequent report and plan development has built on the information from the previous plans. Changes are based on new information, more detailed analysis and building code changes.

Council has already approved a resolution that the current project (Phase 2) be completed as awarded with the deletion of the public washrooms. Staff are recommending that the detailed interpretation plan for each of the five buildings in the Historic Zone be brought back to Council for approval before tendering.



Jane Fernyhough
Manager of Heritage and Cultural Services
(604-276-4288)

Attachment 1

Britannia Heritage Shipyard Report Chronology

Plan	Date	Purpose of Plan
1993 Britannia Heritage Shipyard Development Plan	adopted by Council March 1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • laid out principles for the development of the site; • recommended an operating model • laid out activity zones within the park
1994 Park Concept Plan	adopted by Council Sept 1994	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • design philosophy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ balance between park and historic site activities (open to the public; security provided for buildings and artefacts) ○ heritage conservation issues (all extant buildings retained; no one specific date for interpretation of the entire project; replace site elements such as boardwalks and bulkheads in same locations with same materials) ○ site character issues (retention of existing characteristics to give site a quality of age, time & history; addition, repair or changes should be based on the authentic historic characteristics and uses of the site) • laid out a recommended site plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ active boatbuilding and shipyard area ○ historic residential interpretation area ○ central open area ○ visitor services & education area ○ foreshore area • recommended plant materials and surface materials • reported on the heritage value of the nine buildings on site at the time.
1995 Britannia Shipyard Plan proposed Historic Zone	adopted by Council Nov 1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • laid out possible functions for the area (administrative function for the park and shipyard; passive displays; retail activities; historical interpretation & re-creation; • recommended a maximum of four buildings in the zone (Murchison Houses already on site plus possible inclusion of two appropriate buildings; • Council recommendation included evaluating the inclusion of the Chinese Bunkhouse.
1998 Steveston Community Industrial Adjustment Study Feasibility Report	received for information by Council May 1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proposed the Britannia site should become a Marine Trades Training Centre with Britannia as a self sustaining tourist destination as well as an opportunity for displaced fisheries workers and displaced workers from other industries to be trained and employed. A Phase 2 study was recommended included a Job Analysis and Building Code Analysis.
1998 Britannia Development Strategy	not forwarded to Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information used to inform subsequent building restorations • provides the recommended building code analysis of six of the buildings on site and a detailed cost breakdown for bringing them up to 1998 building code for various suggested uses.
2001 Britannia Business Plan	adopted by Council Jan 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • laid out a vision, principles and goals for the site; • recommended priorities for site development • recommended a management and operating model • recommended an operating and capital development financial plan

Plan	Date	Purpose of Plan
2004 Historic Zone Development Plan	adopted by Council Dec 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • detailed plan of the historic zone • placement and interpretation of buildings • circulation plan and connection to rest of site • landscape plan • interpretation plan • funding • phasing
2006 Britannia Interpretation Plan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information & research will be used to inform the interpretation & exhibit plans • outlines Historic Zone context and character • site values and significance • historical research of each building within the zone • recommends an interpretive strategy for each of the buildings in the Historic Zone • includes suggestions for exhibit design
2006 Britannia Marketing Plan	adopted by Council Sept 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implement a branding program across all forms of communication • develop an integrated marketing network • enhance online presence • further develop exhibits and interpretation • expand product and program offerings • build partnerships within the community • develop a fundraising program • expand volunteer program • develop a marketing resource plan • leverage public relations and media opportunities • explore strategic advertising opportunities
2008 Britannia Business Plan Update	adopted by Council June 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased operating budget • Revenue generation strategies • Site improvements • Management model • Capital improvements

Attachment 2

**Britannia Heritage Shipyard
Capital Projects 2000 – 2008**

Year	Project	Amount	Additional Information
2000	No budget item for 2000		
2001	Shipyard Building Structural upgrade	488,700	
2002	Front Dock	173,000	
2002	Front dock (additional funding) & Dredging	243,000	\$200,000 for dredging; \$43,000 additional funding for shipyard
2003	Seine Net Loft substructure stabilization	259,000	
2004	Japanese Duplex & Cannery Office foundations	250,000	
2005	Historic Zone – building foundations & placement	400,000	Phase 1
2006	Historic Zone – pond & landscaping; site services; parking lot relocation & landscaping	550,000	Phase 1
2007	Historic Zone – Chinese bunkhouse stabilization, exterior building finishing, landscaping	1,645,000	Phase 2
2008	Historic Zone – building interiors, interpretation & exhibits	500,000	Phase 3
	TOTAL	4,508,700	

Attachment 3

Britannia Heritage Shipyard Historic Zone – Phase 2 & 3

Phase 2

Completion of Phase 2 will see the construction fencing removed, the area opened to the public with the Visitor Centre and Caretaker suite completed and ready for occupancy. Completion of the interpretation and way-finding will be in Phase 3

Phase 2b Chinese Bunkhouse COMPLETED (ProCan Construction)

Remove and retain existing interior shiplap; install building paper, insulation, vapour barrier and plywood sheathing for seismic stabilization; remove and retain windows; remove existing roof; install new trusses as required, install plywood sheathing, strapping and new cedar shingles

Phase 2A Historic Zone CURRENT PROJECT (Parkwood Construction)

Murchison 1

Exterior finishes; repair and replace as necessary siding, doors, windows, flashings; remove and retain interior horizontal tongue and groove, install electrical upgrades; install building paper, insulation, and vapour barrier; install 1 hour fire rated walls as necessary; re-install interior tongue and groove (new where necessary), install electric fixtures; paint interior and exterior.

Murchison 2

Exterior finishes; repair and replace as necessary siding, doors, windows, flashings; remove and retain interior vertical tongue and groove and shiplap, install electrical upgrades; install building paper, insulation, and vapour barrier; install 1 hour fire rated walls as necessary; re-install interior tongue and groove and shiplap (new where necessary) as indicated; install electric fixtures; paint interior and exterior. Note: Washrooms and drywall finishes other than 1 hour fire rated walls have been removed from the contract and will not be done in this phase.

Stilt House 1

Exterior finishes; repair and replace as necessary siding doors, windows, flashings; remove interior wallboard and drywall, remove floor tiles (asbestos containing materials); remove and retain (if possible) existing cabinets; install electrical upgrades; install building paper, insulation, and vapour barrier; install 1 hour fire rated walls as necessary; install electric fixtures; paint interior and exterior.

Stilt House 2

Exterior finishes; repair and replace as necessary siding, doors, windows, flashings; remove interior wallboard and drywall, remove floor coverings; remove and retain (if possible) existing wainscoting; remove and retain (if possible) existing cabinets; install electrical upgrades; install plumbing upgrades; install building paper, insulation, and vapour barrier; install 1 hour fire rated walls as necessary, install interior cabinets and walls for caretaker residence; install electric fixtures; paint interior and exterior.

Chinese Bunkhouse

Exterior finishes; repair and replace as necessary siding, doors, windows, flashings; install new windows, frames and sills to match existing; install fire exit and stairway; install sprinkler system; rough in plumbing and electrical; install new entrance doors north and south; paint interior and exterior.

Heritage Zone Site

Install new boardwalks at north side of buildings and south east at Chinese bunkhouse; install new water line for sprinklers; install gravel access road to Chinese bunkhouse; relocate existing soils and create berm and seating; augment existing plantings as required; install landscaping and orchard;

Phase 3

Cannery Office

Interpretation and way-finding (2008 PROJECT). Completion of Phase 3 will see all areas interpreted, interiors completed and buildings open to the public.

Cannery Office

Install support framing, building paper, insulation and vapour barrier, install electrical and plumbing; install interior walls; repair and replace existing exterior siding; repair and replace windows and doors as necessary to match existing; design, fabricate and install interior finishes as appropriate for building usage.

Signage and Interpretation

As appropriate for all building usage; design, fabricate and install interior finishes as appropriate for building usage; design, fabricate and install exhibits, artefacts and interpretation panels as appropriate.

Way-finding

Design, fabricate and install appropriate directional signage as required for site direction and continuity.

Attachment 4

BRITANNIA HERITAGE SHIPYARD - APPROVED SCOPE OF WORK PHASE 2

Use	Exterior	Interior	Code/Occupancy
<p>Murchison House 1</p> <p>This building is intended to house the visitor/interpretation centre, which includes an entry, information and reception area and a gift shop for visitors to the site. The house has a covered porch where brochures and maps can be available when the building is closed. Interpretation of the house as a cannery dwelling will be combined with these functions through changing exhibits, both inside, on the porch and outside the boardwalk. The interpretation of the building focus is on the Customs and Police office functions performed by John Murchison.</p>	<p>Finished as found.</p> <p>Repair and repaint all siding.</p> <p>Repair & refinish all windows & doors or install new to match existing.</p>	<p>Insulate & install vapour barrier above ceiling & in walls.</p> <p>Remove cable, conduit & fluorescent light fixture.</p> <p>Reinstall vertical tongue & groove paneling throughout & over 1/2" drywall on east wall only.</p>	<p>This building is expected to house volunteers, staff and visitors year round.</p> <p>East wall requires 1 hour fire rating.</p>
<p>Murchison House 2</p> <p>Redesign of house for exhibit purposes which will interpret the historic use of the building. The primary focus will be on the home and social structure of a cannery manager contrasting it to the living conditions of the workers as seen in the adjoining Stilt Pile House 1. Sisters of the Atonement & their care of children will also be interpreted.</p> <p>The second floor, not publicly accessible, has a meeting room and volunteer lounge for site volunteers.</p>	<p>Finished as found.</p> <p>Remove temporary cable and patch.</p> <p>Repair & repaint all siding.</p> <p>Repair & refinish all windows & doors or install new to match existing.</p>	<p>Install insulation & vapour barrier above ceiling & in walls.</p> <p>Reinstall interior shiplap & over 1/2" drywall on east & west walls.</p> <p>Refinish wood floors.</p>	<p>This building is expected to be accessible to visitors year round. The upstairs to be used by staff & volunteers.</p> <p>East & west walls require 1 hour fire rating.</p> <p>Exiting from 2nd floor requires an exterior door on east side of the building.</p>
<p>Stilt Pile House 1</p> <p>This building is designed as an exhibition viewing space to interpret the bunkhouse life of single men that worked in the canneries and shipyard.</p>	<p>Finished as found.</p> <p>Replace damaged horizontal siding.</p> <p>Repair & refinish all windows & doors or install new to match existing.</p>	<p>Install insulation & vapour barrier above ceiling & in walls.</p> <p>Remove asbestos floor tiles & install new flooring.</p> <p>Remove fluorescent light fixture.</p>	<p>This building is expected to be accessible to visitors year round.</p> <p>East & west walls require 1 hour fire rating.</p>

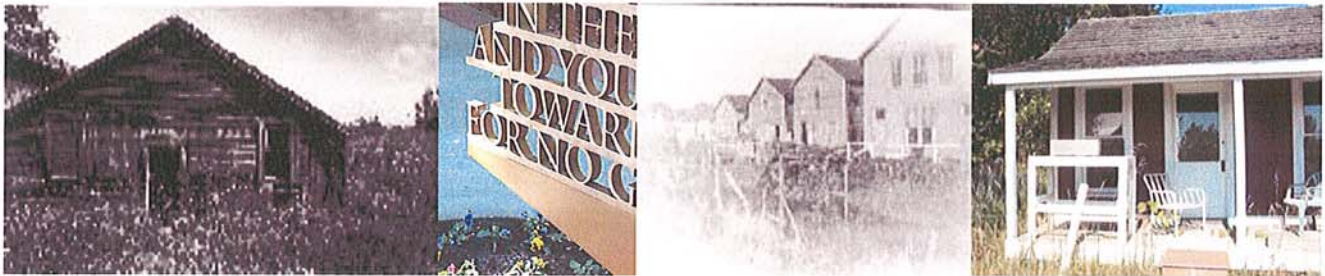
Use	Exterior	Interior	Code/Occupancy
Stilt Pile House 2	<p>new to match existing.</p> <p>Finished as found</p> <p>Replace & repaint windows & doors to match existing</p> <p>Replace damaged shingles</p>	<p>Replace wallboard with plywood & over drywall on east & west walls.</p> <p>Install insulation & vapour barrier above ceiling & in walls.</p> <p>Finished to period for exhibit portion.</p> <p>Restore lobby wall in caretaker's suite.</p> <p>Finished to code for occupancy, which will include period fixtures, cabinets and finishes.</p> <p>Refinish wood floor (entrance, kitchen & living room) install vinyl flooring (display area) and ceramic tile (washroom).</p> <p>Remove interior hall, floor & ceiling finishes & replace with drywall.</p>	<p>This house will be occupied year round with a caretaker in residence.</p> <p>The exhibit component of the house will be viewed by visitors year round.</p>
Chinese Bunkhouse	<p>Finished as found</p> <p>Existing windows, frames and sills being replaced with new to match existing and in existing locations.</p> <p>Damaged board & baton</p>	<p>Insulation & vapour barrier were installed as part of the roofing & seismic upgrade project Fall 2007.</p> <p>New 1-hour fire rated exit stairwell.</p>	<p>West wall requires 1 hour fire rating.</p> <p>This building is expected to be viewed by visitors year round. In addition it will function as a public and rental space for gatherings and events.</p>

Use	Exterior	Interior	Code/Occupancy
	siding areas replaces with new to match existing. Roof replaced as part of the roofing & seismic upgrade project Fall 2007.	stairwell. Finish to period as possible for public space.	

Attachment 5

**Britannia Heritage Shipyard
Historic Zone Interpretation Plan**

Britannia Heritage Shipyard Historic Zone Interpretation Plan



September 2006

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Denise Cook Design
2006

Introduction

1.0 Historic Zone Context

The Fishing and Canning Industries on the West Coast

All of the buildings within the Historic Zone at Britannia represent structures that are not directly involved in the processing of fish, but which provide accommodation support structures for the cannery or the Boatworks. Specifically, they include workers housing, specifically Chinese, Japanese and white bunkhouses, and fishermen's housing.

The first Steveston-area cannery, the Phoenix, was built in 1882 and began operation the next summer. The Garry Point, Richmond, and Britannia canneries were constructed in 1889. The London, Dumfries, and Hume canneries were built 1891, followed in 1893 by the Pacific Coast, Imperial, Lighthouse, Canadian Pacific, and Brunswick canneries. The Gulf of Georgia cannery, rebuilt from the Garry Point cannery in 1894, was the largest on the west coast until 1902. The Atlas and Star canneries were constructed in 1895, the Colonial cannery in 1897, and the Scottish Canadian cannery in 1899. Three new canneries – Steveston, Burrard, and Great West - were added in 1905-06. Not all were in operation in any given salmon season, and some had fairly short life spans.

Cannery consolidation began in 1891 when the Anglo-British Columbia Packing Company, financed in England, bought out the Garry Point, Phoenix, and Britannia canneries, each employing about 80 fishermen and 150 cannery workers. In 1895 a dozen canneries were operating in the Steveston area, in 1901 fifteen canneries producing 375,000 cases of salmon. In 1902 BC Packers, incorporated in the United States, purchased eight of the Steveston-area canneries - Atlas, Brunswick, Canadian Pacific, Colonial, Hume, Imperial, London, and Pacific Coast. By 1911 just seven canneries were operating along the Steveston waterfront.

In the fishing industry, and in the economy of British Columbia generally, the outstanding event of 1902 was the formation of the British Columbia Packer's Association, out of New Jersey. A previous attempt to amalgamate the business of all Fraser River canneries by a New York brokerage firm in 1899 was unsuccessful.

Since the 1902 season was too far advanced for changes brought about by changes in ownership and administration, the first season of industry operation with B.C. Packers as a major player was 1903. In that same year, a number of plants closed down to implement cost reduction measures.¹

The Anglo-British Columbia Packing Company

Founded in 1890 by Henry Ogle Bell-Irving, by 1891, the Anglo-British Columbia Packing Company had purchased seven Fraser River canneries and two on the Skeena River and it accounted for more than one quarter of British Columbia's total salmon pack. In 1901 Henry Bell-Irving and Company Ltd. was incorporated as Canadian agent for the A.B.C. Packing Company which had been registered in Britain. The company remained with the Bell-Irving family for three generations. A.B.C.'s affiliated canneries included the Alert Bay Plant (1947-1968), Boswell Cannery (1924-1934), Caledonia Cannery (1928-1959), Good Hope Cannery (1895-1968), Knight Inlet Cannery (1924-1961), McTavish Cannery (1923-1939), North Pacific Cannery (1937-1958), Phoenix Cannery (1915-1967), and Seymour Cannery (1911-1913), as well as the Britannia Shipyards (1934-1967).

¹ Ralston, Keith. *B.C. Salmon Canneries*. p.

The buildings in the Historic Zone are associated with one of the ABC's northern canneries, and with several on the Steveston waterfront.

In 1907, Captain Richard E. Gosse built a cannery at Sargeant Pass at the mouth of Knight Inlet near Minstrel Island. In 1910, he moved the plant to Glendale Cove in Knight Inlet proper at the mouth of a pink salmon stream. In 1911, he sold the Glendale cannery to the Anglo-British Columbia Packing Company, which operated the plant continuously until 1946 when gillnet and seine facilities were moved to Alert Bay. In 1954, Glendale was dismantled.²

Built in 1889 by Windsor and Hobson, the Garry Point cannery was located at the foot of 4th Avenue. A map commissioned by William Herbert Steves in 1889 subdividing the Steveston townsite showed the waterfront divided into small lots except for the 2-acre parcel at the cannery location; the property had been sold to Windsor and Hobson in 1889. In 1891, the ABC Packing Company acquired the Garry Point Canning Co.: two acres around the plant and 55 acres of land nearby.³ In 1893 river currents undermined the cannery and it was thought to be worthless. Windsor and Hobson bought the property back and in 1894 built the Gulf of Georgia cannery in the same location.

Two small canneries, the Dumfries and the Annandale were adjuncts to the other ABC Packing Co. establishments to enable the company to secure additional licences from the government in order to increase the capacity of fish caught, if necessary. In 1895, there was a fire at the Phoenix and Dumfries canneries which adjoined each other on the Steveston waterfront.

In 1950, the company centralized control of both the seine and gillnet fishing fleets at their new establishment at Alert Bay, and this resulted in a reduction of the overhead expenses at the Phoenix cannery.⁴ The Anglo-British Columbia Packing Co. history is important in understanding the buildings in the Historic Zone because the majority of them have associations with this company.

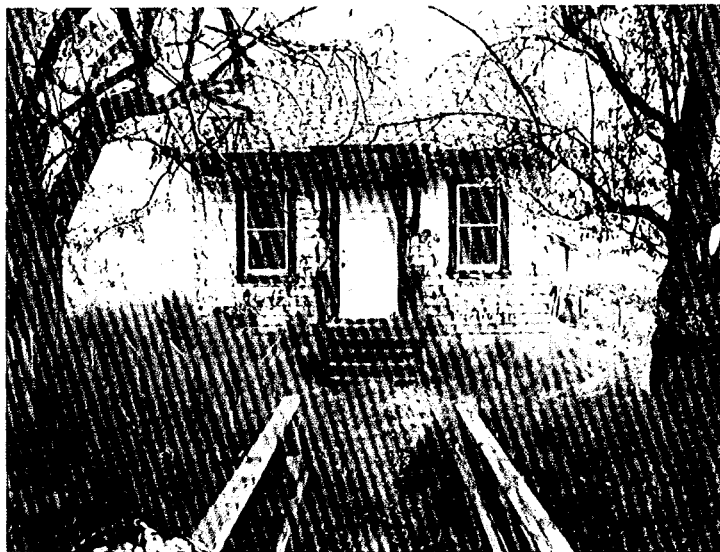


Figure 1. Cannery built house on the Britannia waterfront 1973. Source: Rex Weyler in Marlatt, *Steveston Recollected*.

² Campbell K. Mack. *Cannery Village, Company Town* p.74

³ Ralston, Keith. *B.C. Salmon Canneries*. p.

⁴ ABC Packing Co Annual Reports 1891, 1892, 1895, 1903, 1950.

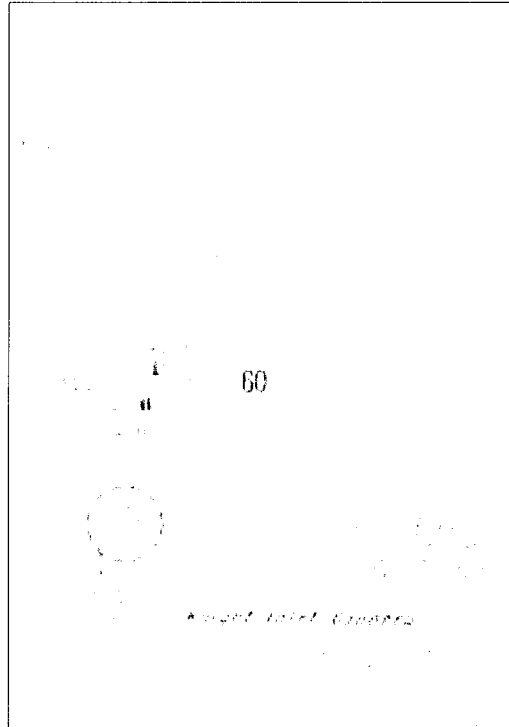


Figure 2. Knight Inlet Cannery 1923 fire insurance plan showing the location of the China House. (UBC Archives)

Ethnicity

Take a Steveston car and ride with it until it has carried you in the cannery village by the Fraser. Your ride will take you from nearly all that is familiar, and in the end you will find yourself where the speech of five tongues meets you with a pleasant shock. The explosive gutturals of totem-faced Indians, the harsh words of wandering ex-soldiers of Sikh regiments or sailors from the navy of Nippon, and running through the babble like song of a violin, the thin cries of the Chinese, remind you that here is the land where story books are written. Even the English has the oddness of vernacular bred in lone places far from where centralization keeps it pure.⁵

Racial divisions were very much a part of the canneries, including Britannia. The canneries had separate living quarters for Europeans, Japanese, Chinese and First Nations. Housing types included Chinese and Japanese bunkhouses, First Nations huts, family housing and European houses.

Upon entering Confederation, British Columbia had to phase out or rewrite many pieces of legislation to conform to federal policies, and consequently adopted the laws of Canada on matters that were now federal responsibilities. This took time, but by December 1873, immigration had reached the top of the pile. A notice was posted in the *British Columbia Gazette* advising the residents of the Province that there for a limited time there was an opportunity to become a British Subject under the old Colonial rules that would save several years waiting under the new Canadian law:

⁵ Gamett Weston, 'Steveston by the Fraser,' *British Columbia Magazine*, August 1911, quoted in Stacey, Duncan *Salmonopolis* p.9

Notice is hereby given to all Aliens resident within the Province of British Columbia who may be desirous of becoming naturalized British Subjects that, up to the 1st day of July 1874, the law of British Columbia, as to naturalization, will remain in force, by which law only one year's residence within the Province is required to enable an Alien to obtain the rights of a British Subject.

On and after the 1st day of July, 1874, the law of Canada, respecting Aliens, will come into operation in this Province, by which law a residence of three years in the Dominion of Canada is required before an Alien can be naturalized.⁶

Canada was seriously interested in attracting as many new immigrants as possible, so immigrant entry requirements were not too onerous. From 1862, the only persons that would not be admitted to Canada were the "penniless, aimless, or otherwise shiftless persons". After 1 July 1874, immigration to British Columbia proceeded under the laws of Canada. The construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway sparked mass Chinese emigration to British Columbia; more than 15,000 men arrived on the West Coast between 1881 and 1885 to help build the railway. Many new immigrants left their home countries to escape from urban slums, rural poverty, religious or political persecution. Others, such as the Chinese, sought short-term employment to provide for families left behind.

By late in the century, the Chinese had become a largely urban population, although there were enclaves of Chinese immigrants working in rural areas as woodcutters, domestic servants and cooks, and operating laundry services. For the most part the Chinese kept to themselves and did not fully assimilate into the community. This led to a spell of blatant racism and discrimination in B.C. In 1885, the Government of Canada passed the highly discriminatory *Chinese Immigration Act* that imposed a fifty-dollar entry tax on every Chinese person entering the country. The entry tax, or "head tax" as it came to be known, slowed immigration for a spell but it was soon clear that more effective measures would be required.

The province then tried to prevent their employment in the coal mines and on public works. This legislation was, in great part, declared unconstitutional as being directed against a particular nation. The small tax proved to be no barrier; the stream of Chinese immigration flowed over it. During the nineties, the demand was insistent that the tax be increased. Year after Year, the Legislature pressed upon the Dominion Government the necessity for action, but to no purpose.⁷

In its attempts to lobby Ottawa, the provincial government frequently sought the advice of its citizens regarding the impact of the Chinese on their businesses and communities. Amongst its duties, the Provincial Bureau of Statistics was responsible for organizing property assessments, and for gathering other useful data regarding employment.⁸ This was accomplished by requiring various industries to complete questionnaires from time to time.

Around 1902, various associations and citizens groups began to organize at the non-government level to find ways to ban "Orientals" from participating in labouring jobs. During 1907 just about 7,600 Japanese entered Canada by way of Hawaii in order to avoid the *Immigration Regulations*. In order to appease Canada, the Japanese Government entered into an agreement with Canada in 1908 that limited the numbers of passports that would be issued for entry in Canada. The effect was

⁶ *British Columbia Gazette*, 11 April 1874, p. 58

⁷ Howay, *British Columbia*, p. 263-264.

⁸ R.E. Gosnell, in addition to being the first statistician for the B.C. Government, was also the first British Columbia Legislative Librarian and first Provincial Archivist. Between 1897 and 1914, Gosnell self-published five editions of *The Year Book of British Columbia and Manual of Provincial Information*.

dramatic; in 1909 there were less than five hundred Japanese entries.⁹ The Province continued to find new ways to prevent the employment of Japanese or Chinese workers. A letter sent from the Lieutenant-Governor to the Provincial Secretary in 1913, turned the centre of attention of the issue towards the fishery, a key part of Steveston's economy:

Proposed change in the fishery regulations and policies for Fisher District No. 2 is designed to foster immigration of white fishermen to the Pacific Coast. According to Hon. W.J. Bowser, Commissioner of Fisheries for B.C., the main object is to 'dot the coastline with villages of white fishing folk, available as raw material for the Empire's navvies'. The Dominion and Provincial authorities have agreed, among other things to reserve until March 15 each year as many licenses in each area as there is reason to anticipate will be applied for by *bona fide* white fishermen, owning their own boats and gear, and to assign the remaining boats allowed to the existing canneries pro rata the present boat rating (for the present year 425, or half the number of the existing licensed boats are assigned for the independent white fishermen. The number of Japanese in Fishery District No. 2 is between 700 and 1000. If the whole of 425 licenses were given to the white fishermen the number of the Japanese fishermen would be reduced to half of the above figures.¹⁰

Increasingly, the Japanese came to dominate fishing for the Steveston-area canneries. The first Japanese arrived in Steveston in 1887 and initiated a large migration of several thousand from that area of Japan. The first Japanese boat builder followed later in the same decade.

The Japanese naturalized as soon as they could after the required three-year residence, which meant that as British subjects they could obtain fishing licenses. By 1919 two thirds of the fishing licenses on the Fraser River were held by Japanese, most of whom owned their own boats. Public pressure led by the Fraser River Fishermen's Protective Association, founded in 1914 as an anti-Japanese group, caused the federal Ministry of Fisheries to reduce the number issued to 'other than white resident British subjects and Canadian Indians' in 1924, and again the next year. One of the biggest changes affecting all fishermen was the introduction of boat motors, in particular the Easthope engine built in Vancouver from 1913 onwards, with an assembly and repair shop opened in Steveston in 1930. In 1895, the B.C. Government denied Japanese the right to vote in elections, and in 1907 Japan agreed to set an annual limit of 400 Japanese male immigrants coming to Canada.

On 7 December 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbour in Hawaii, and Canada declared war with Japan. From that point, events moved very swiftly. Under the *War Measures Act*, all Japanese nationals in Canada were required to register by 7 February of the following year with the Registrar of Enemy Aliens.¹¹ Some 1200 fishing vessels were rounded up and confiscated by the Canadian Navy (Figure 3-80). By 16 December a new Order-in-Council required all persons of Japanese origin, regardless of citizen to register as enemy aliens. Then, a month later, the Government of Canada, through another Order-in-Council, created a 100-mile 'protected area' on the coast of British Columbia from which male enemy aliens were to be excluded.¹² On 24 February 1942, an order was issued to remove all male Japanese Canadians between the ages of eighteen and forty-five from the 100-mile zone along coastal British Columbia. Two days later, mass evacuation began; some people were only given 24 hours notice that they had to leave.

⁹ Howay, p. 265

¹⁰ BCA, GR-1088 Box 21, File 16. Memoranda sent by Thos. W. Paterson, Lieutenant-Governor to the Provincial Secretary, 18 June 1913

¹¹ Canada. Privy Council, Order-in-Council 9591. 7 December 1941.

¹² Canada. Privy Council, Order-in-Council 365, 16 January 1942.

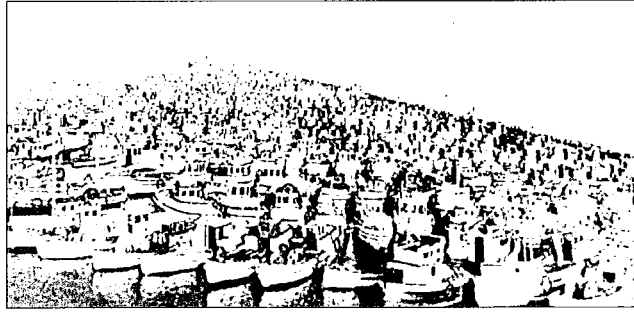


Figure 3. Seized fishing boats on the Fraser River 1942. (BCA)

In March 1942, Japanese Canadians were ordered to turn over all property and belongings to the Custodian of Enemy Alien Property as a "protective measure only". At the end of June 1942, the Director of Soldier Settlement was given complete authority to buy or lease confiscated Japanese-Canadian farms in British Columbia. By January 1943, the Government passed another Order-in-Council that allowed the government to sell Japanese-Canadian property held in custody without owners' consent; in all some 572 farms in B.C. were sold, most at highly discounted rates.¹³

In late 1945, the Federal Cabinet empowered the government to assess the loyalty of Japanese-Canadians, order their immediate deportation, and strip them of their citizenship. Japanese-Canadians living in BC were forced to move to Eastern Canada or be deported to Japan. Following the war, the islands were not immune from a movement of considerable resistance amongst the predominantly white, Anglo-Saxon West Coast population to stop the resettlement of their communities by former Japanese-Canadian friends and neighbours. On 15 June 1948, the *Dominion Elections Act* was amended to remove the clause denying the right to vote to Japanese-Canadians. By 31 March of the following year, the last restrictions imposed against Japanese-Canadians under the *War Measures Act* were lifted, and all Japanese-Canadians re-gained the full rights of citizenship and freedom to live and move anywhere in Canada.

After the war number of Japanese families returned to Richmond; a few were able to buy back their old homes, at inflated prices, other living in the newer ranch and bungalow style housing of the 1950s. The Japanese community reintegrated into Steveston. In 1953 the United church in Steveston, formerly the Methodist church, was reportedly the first in British Columbia to have a joint Japanese-white congregation. The Japanese community gave financial assistance for a community centre opened in 1957 in exchange for having space for judo and kendo clubs. A separate martial arts centre was built as part of the 1971 Richmond centennial. By the mid-1970s about 2,000 Japanese had returned to Steveston. The Japanese internment is an event that has a bearing to some degree on the history of four of the five buildings in the Historic Zone and on the Japanese Duplex.

The Labour Force

Salmon canning was quintessentially a western industry. Its employment of wage labourers, segmented by their ethnic differences, marked it as a product of the west. Its upper echelons of European Canadian owners, managers, fishermen and machinists and its well-divided crews of Asian Canadian, First Nations and European and Asian women workers manifested the diversity of the west.

¹³ Canada. Privy Council, Order-in-Council 469, 19 January 1943

A typical work week in the Steveston canneries around 1900 began on a Monday morning with the blowing of the cannery whistles, the signal for the crews to come to work, as there was no regular starting time. The cannery starting time was dictated by the delivery of the salmon to the plant by its fishing fleet.¹⁴

A typical late 19th century canning operation in Steveston would have five white employees: foreman, machine man, retort man, engineer and bookkeeper. There would be approximately fifty to sixty Chinese who made the cans prior to the canning season and who did all the canning except for washing the fish and filling the cans, which was accomplished by Japanese and First Nations workers. Methods of assembly line mechanization were used early on in the canneries, and included division of labour, repetitive operations, and assembly lines later seen in factories all over North America.¹⁵

Initially, First Nations provided the bulk of the cannery labour force. The men fished while the women knitted and repaired nets and worked in the canneries. First Nations people came from various villages along the coast, following a seasonal work pattern that brought them to the canneries in the early summer and then to the hope fields of the Fraser Valley and Washington State in early fall. In the mid-1880s, the major source of cannery labour in B.C. was Chinese contract labour, with contractors agreeing to supply a certain number of men for the canning season in return for a stipulated fee per case of salmon processed. The contractors negotiated wages, living arrangements and working arrangements, acting as intermediary and translator between employer and employee. Living in bunkhouses near the canneries during the summer, they worked the rest of the year in mining or logging camps or on the railway.¹⁶ While the Chinese men, many of whom had been labourers on the railway, were employed as cannery workers, they were almost never fishermen.

The choice of Chinese cannery labour was neither easy nor inescapable. Cannery owners and industry observers oversimplified explanation of the Chinese displacement of white workers as the preference for an indispensable and cheap labour force. The notions of Asian immigrants as docile and dependable persisted, yet Asian workers demonstrated by their actions that they were active participants in the shaping of their work environment.¹⁷

Chinese workers, foreman and contractors with non-Chinese cannery owners created a flexible system of labour recruitment and management centred on the canning process. That system withstood major political and market changes. Formal power and authority was represented in the written agreements between owners and contractors. Although owners had the greater power, contractors had the ability to affect the course of events through physical disruptions and work stoppages. Their role in both getting the salmon packed and making the system work to their advantage let them help determine the shape of the labour system that had evolved.

Japanese fishermen,

You know, in those days they filled, the cans were all hand filled. It was on contract work, piece work in other words. 90% of the fellows were Japanese. And they go by the trays, so much a tray, and every tray you punch, punch a hole in a ticket, you see, they give them a ticket. They don't pay them every month, they pay them every season.

And they go to work at the cannery, filling cans you know. Its 90% almost, Japanese women that work the cannery, filling cans. There's Phoenix, Phoenix cannery, the Great West, and the Imperial, those

¹⁴ Stacey, Duncan *Steveston's Cannery Channel* p. 4

¹⁵ Stacey, Duncan *Steveston's Cannery Channel* p. 2

¹⁶ Stacey, Duncan *Salmonopolis* p.9

¹⁷ Friday, Chris. *The Pacific Coast Canned Salmon Industry* p.7

were the three main canneries that survived all the rest along the coast here.¹⁸

The separation of the living quarters reflected the division of labour. The Chinese worked solely in the canneries under the Chinese contractor who negotiated with cannery management. First Nations and Japanese workers were more diversified, as they fished, made and repaired nets, and worked in the canneries, filling cans and washing fish. They were also more likely to have their families involved in the work. Labour as a theme is reflected in all of the buildings in the historic zone.

Family and Gender Relations

The types of dwelling houses in the historic zone reflect the different family units and types of households that existed at Britannia.

The bunkhouse was the home of Chinese met, who generally remained single. Single Japanese men also lived in bunkhouses, but when the wives of Japanese workers began arriving from Japan, the men couldn't live in a big bunkhouse with the others, so the cannery gave them small houses, such as the Japanese Duplex. These houses were like long barracks partitioned off, very poor, but there was no charge for them. There was a mori house, a day care, where the mothers would take turns looking after the children when the other women went to work. Japanese women also often took their children to work with them in the canneries.

Other Japanese who worked as fishermen and raised families in Steveston or Britannia lived in modest homes, often provided by the canning companies. Families of managers or other employees higher up in the hierarchy of the business lived in more luxurious homes on the cannery site; this is reflected in the oral history of the Shorey family, and interpreted through the Murchison House #2. All of the families raised children on the site. Children played on the boardwalk or the dock, or in side the various site buildings. They walked, cycled or took the tram to school. The daughter of the machine shop manager notes:

I was just a little child running free, and I was never spoken to in an unkind or thoughtless way. With than much freedom, running around here with so many 'rough types', they certainly excellent quality 'rough types', I'd say.

Yet there was a stigma to living here, I had to overcome it. Anybody that lived around the fish boats and the dyke, we were looked down upon by the people in Richmond that were farming people.¹⁹

Social Activity

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, opium smoking, a custom brought over from China, was a pastime of some of the Chinese cannery workers; several Chinese merchants legally sold the drug in Victoria, New Westminster and Vancouver. A rising fear of drug use changed this in 1908 when the manufacture and sale of opium was banned in Canada. This did not stop the flow of the drug into the country, although few Canadian-born Chinese or white people ever acquired the habit.

We used to see them on the weekends, and they would be lying there with their long opium pipes at Hong Wo's, the next place up.²⁰

¹⁸ Jimmy Hing oral history Richmond Archives

¹⁹ Barbara Hereen oral history, *Steambox, Boardwalks, Belts and Ways* p.31

²⁰ Barbara Hereen oral history, *Steambox, Boardwalks, Belts and Ways* p.27

Chris Friday presents evidence that Chinese labourers in the canneries found unexpected ways to relieve the tensions of the work and life at the cannery. Building and flying kites of all kinds in the steady winds at the Pacific coast plants was a favourite activity – some emitted musical notes and others were so large that they took a dozen or more men to handle the lines.²¹

In 1895 Hong Wo and Company General Merchants opened a two-story building on wooden piles between two of the major canneries, where fishermen could pick up their supplies. The owner was Ling Chung Lam who had arrived in Canada from Canton in 1881 and become a Canadian citizen in 1884. Lam also owned 100 acres of farmland which he planted in potatoes, beans, cucumbers, and cauliflower, and had greenhouses for growing tomatoes, all of which he sold in the store. On the Britannia site, the Takagaka Store, located next to the present Japanese Duplex, served the Britannia employees. Oral histories recall children buying soda from the Takagaka store.

Steveston's non-migratory and married labourers centred their leisure activities on church affairs, picnics, dances, prize fights, sports and the opera house and saloons. Saloons were a male domain, and women rarely frequented them. Baseball was played on the Britannia site by the Japanese. Managers and others higher up in the cannery or shipyard hierarchy entertained themselves with boating, parties, bridge, dancing and music. Swimming and badminton were two sports that were enjoyed.

Britannia as a Shipbuilding Centre

After 1913, when CNR blasting on the Fraser River caused a dramatic decrease in the number of fish available, the Britannia Cannery was hard hit. After 1918, the site became a shipyard where boats were constructed, repaired and housed over the winter for the Anglo-British Columbia cannery fleet and for private owners. As early as 1895, boat builders had been working at the Britannia Cannery, a tradition carried on at Britannia with the formation of the Richmond Boat Builders in 1936 and the Murakami Boatworks.

The Britannia site remained as a cannery for only a short period of its history. The transition of Britannia from cannery to boatworks, and the connection between boat building and repair and the fishing and canning economy is important in understanding the structures in the historic zone and their evolution over time.

²¹ Friday, Chris. *The Pacific Coast Canned Salmon Industry* p.55

2.0 Britannia's Historic Zone

2.1 Historic Zone Character

The history and type of the buildings that have been selected for placement in the Historic Zone are the primary contributors to its character. The inclusion of the Murchison houses (pre-fabrication methods, contrast of housing types, association with the canning industry, association with ethnicity), the Stilt-piling houses (contrast of two housing types, association with the canning and fishing industries, likely association with First Nations, association with ethnicity), and the Chinese bunkhouse (connection to northern canneries, labour, particular lifestyle, association with ethnicity) provides an opportunity to re-create the social and cultural diversity that existed on the Steveston waterfront in the late 19th and first half of the 20th century.

The historic zone area is generally flat, sloping gently down to the river foreshore. A residential area consisting of the structures above has been created here, with the buildings placed in a row east-west facing the river and ending with the bunkhouse at the eastern edge. A pond and marsh area has been excavated and will be planted with the appropriate native plant material. A boardwalk will be constructed to recall the original riverside boardwalks that fronted the canneries; all of the structures will be accessed from the boardwalk, which represents an opportunity for interior activities or artifacts to spill out and bridge the gap between inside and outside.

Inventories of the furnishings, supplies and implements for cannery buildings are a valuable resource for understanding the interiors and their functions. In 1891, the Britannia site had land and buildings comprised of:

5 acres of land, 1 cannery, 1 store, 1 mess house, 1 foreman's house, 2 small dwelling houses, 1 cabin, 1 woodhouse, 1 China house and 23 Siwash cabins.

Improvements included 140 feet of tank lumber, 350 feet of rust lumber, 23 m shingles.

The office contained:

1 safe, 1 desk, 1 letter press brush and bowl, 2 rulers, 2 letter files, 1 spike, 1 brass stamp, 2 rubber stamps, 1 stove and pipe, 1 table, 3 CS&B chairs, 1 ensign, 1 tape line, 1 duster, shelving, counter, stand, table, 1 self-counter scales, bedstead, spring mattress, 3 blankets, 4 sheets, 4 pillow shams, 6 towels, 1 toilet set, 1 lamp.

The mess house contained:

1 range complete, 3 iron pots, 3 frying pans, 2 iron saucepans, 1 Agate pane, bread, pudding, tea, coffee, 2 large iron bake pans, 3 small iron bake pans, 1 small tin bake pan, 1 tin dish pan, 2 tin dippers, 1 tin coffee pot, 1 tin wash boiler, 1 copper, 1 steamer, 1 colander, 1 ladle, 1 flour sieve, 2 flour scoops, coffee mill, egg beater, nutmeg grater, potato pounder, meat say, chopping tray, chopping knife, Bath board, wash tub, wash board.

Tools included:

1 garden rake
2 garden hoes
2 cows

There were also coal oil lamps, cooking stoves and box stoves. There would be the necessity for a coal house.²²

²² Inventories of furnishings and implements have been taken from the Bell-Irving Collection, Richmond Archives. Further inventories of cannery site buildings will be sought to supplement this list.

For housing styles, builders and owners looked to Britain, eastern Canada and, in the early 20th century, to the United States. Building designs, especially for middle-class homes, were rarely produced by individual architects. Rather, the owners and builders found guidance in plan books, catalogues and building journals. One journal, *The Builder*, published in England as early as 1842, provided the most current British designs and floor plans. Canadians published their own interpretations of the current styles in *The Canadian Architect and Builder*, which began printing in Toronto in 1888. For lower-income homeowners and the owners and managers of resource-based companies, whole house kits could be ordered from the Sears catalogue in the United States, the Eaton's catalogue in Canada, or direct from companies such as British Columbia Mills Timber and Trading Company. The packages claimed to include all materials, from finishes to much needed instructions. Both of the Murchison houses are thought to be balloon framed pre-fabricated structures.

2.2 Site Values and Significance

The new Britannia Historic Zone is a key component of the Britannia Shipyard. The heritage values of the buildings in this area have been evaluated within the context of the Shipyard site and integrated into the overall statement of values for the Shipyard. In 2004, the Britannia Steering Committee recommended that the Historic Zone be considered as an entity and not as a collection of individual parts or buildings. In this regard, the collection of buildings as a whole, in their proposed locations, has been assessed for their value within the larger context of the Britannia Shipyard site. This assessment has provided the framework for the research and for the interpretive recommendations.

A National Historic Site, the Britannia Shipyard is a superb example of a Fraser River cannery with many of its buildings intact, providing an appropriate context for the buildings in the Historic Zone. The site has a number of physical assets which reflect both its use as a cannery and as a shipyard, with both of these uses remaining clearly intelligible in the landscape. As a cannery site of the late 19th century, the overall plan reflects this in its component elements, including diverse buildings, the pattern of its layout along the boardwalk, and the wooden bulkhead which extended the useful land, protected the site and permitted the extension of cannery-related buildings over the water. This layout reflects the industrial use and social hierarchy that defines the site and provides its sense of historic place. Its relationship to H.O. Bell-Irving and the Anglo-British Columbia Packing Company is significant, as is its continued use of the site by the community for boat building and repair and as a tangible reminder of Richmond's past to the community, City and region.

2.3 Inventory of Features in the Historic Zone

This section lists the primary features that are located in the historic zone, and which can be addressed in the interpretation outside the buildings.

Biological areas

- Tidal flats outside the bulkhead
- Created ponds as part of the Historic Zone development
- Planting including the proposed orchard
- Existing trees

Cultural resources

- Boardwalk
- Buildings including the Chinese bunkhouse, stilt piling houses and Murchison houses and their stories
- View south from the Historic Zone to the Shipyard, tidal flats and the river
- View north from the Historic Zone to proposed park, Richmond and the North Shore mountains

- Sensory areas
- Building interiors
- Boardwalk and tidal flats
- Created ponds and associated planting

Facilities

- Future gift shop
- Future public amenities

Orientation areas

- Area to the west of the historic zone at its entry, to be used as an information and gathering area

3.0 Interpretive Strategy

3.1 Approach

What are the stories that should be told here? One objective of the interpretation should be exploring ways to excite people into remembering the richness of the commonplace and the value of the everyday. The opportunity should be taken to bring history directly to the people, a social history that involves collection of ordinary, everyday activities that re-recreate basic life experiences that serve as focal points for the new social history: birth, education, work, marriage, diet, cultural expression, the provision of clothing, material possessions, and the inter-relationships between often diverse groups of people. Social history celebrates life and emancipates everyone who left traces of themselves in the records or on the ground. Artifacts can be used to create activities and activities can recall the underlying framework of beliefs that gave meaning to both the routine and the extraordinary in people's lives.

The collection of buildings in the Historic Zone have heritage value in their capacity for interpreting the social and cultural history of the cannery and shipbuilding industries, as well as the role of these in the wider context of Steveston. An important historical theme is the establishment of the commercial fishing and canning industries and their use of First Nations, Chinese, Japanese and, later, a European work force. This overarching residential-cultural theme can be interpreted well within the Historic

Zone because of the nature of the buildings that have been moved here. Each of the buildings shows variation in planning and construction that can be related to the ethnic group that inhabited it.

Interpretive methods are suggested for each building in the individual prescription sheets that follow. Other ideas can focus on the Historic Zone as an entity, and assist in coalescing the individual buildings into a unified whole that reflects the a way of life on the Steveston waterfront in the early part of the twentieth century. Public art installations, both temporary and permanent, could be considered as part of the interpretive prescription. Artifacts should be based on measured drawings of archaeologically recovered prototypes or based on contemporary graphic materials such as photographs, prints or paintings. Oral histories must be used extensively to understand the context and flavour of the place.

Given, in some cases, the gaps in the historical record of the buildings, a strict interior or exterior restoration is not recommended here. The visitor should understand, feel and retain the flavour and character of the lives of the diverse population of cannery and fishery workers and their families through exhibits and storytelling. In all of the buildings, the principle of maximum retention of fabric should be taken for the buildings to function as research artifacts as well as museum structures.

3.2 Audience

Any interpretive plan must consider the needs of its users. The presentation of materials, the type of activities, and the infrastructure support can vary with different people or groups visiting or working on the site. At the detailed design level, language, visual communication, ergonomics, site supplies, and physical infrastructure such as trail surfaces and site grades should be considered using the same list.

A diverse population will visit the Britannia Shipyard site. The riverfront walkway is used frequently by local for commuting to work and recreation, and because the site encompasses parkland, there is likely to be more local visitation. Steveston itself is a big draw for tourists.

- Tourists
- The local population including the adjacent residential areas, Steveston and wider Richmond
- Children with their families
- School groups
- One-time only visitors
- Repeat visitors
- Foreign tourists
- Working students
- Young adventurers
- Seniors

3.3 Interpretive Narrative Thread

The theme for the Historic Zone is the residential-cultural theme. This captures the social values and stories of the site, as well as the physical nature of the buildings and their interiors, and the spaces in between. Because all of the buildings in the Historic Zone are not originally from the Britannia site, the theme is made richer by the layers of occupation and subsequently the capacity for storytelling that each of the buildings holds.

The theme is expressed in the overall narrative thread which is proposed to be that of the experience and way of life of past cannery workers. Their lives were much more than menial labour and modest accommodations. The small scale of the settlements and the designated quarters occupied by cannery workers of Aboriginal, Chinese, Japanese, and every other descent placed side by side, created opportunities that would otherwise not have been possible. Friendships were made, husband

or wives found, children born and raised and assistance given with home or work tasks. The interpretation should reveal the sense of community that the cannery experience gave.

1. Ethnicity and cultural diversity

Considered as an aspect of the maritime experience, the experiences of fishery and cannery workers tended to promote patterns of acceptance and interaction among diverse cultural groups. There were, however, patterns of ethnic tensions and conflict within these industrial communities, either specific to those communities or mirroring the larger communities. Employment patterns were often seen to have significant ethnic components.

Sub-themes:

- Japanese in the fishing industry, boatbuilding, housing, WWII, Sisters of Atonement
- Chinese workers and their role, history, living conditions, social life, contract workers
- First Nations in Steveston
- European workers and tradesmen
- Labour issues
- Relationships between the various groups
- Cannery workers and fishermen as prospective missionary converts

2. Society and community

This theme will address the relationships between people – families, cannery workers, fishermen, children, managers and others – as expressed by the stories of the buildings in the Historic Zone.

The preparation of food and communal eating is a key part of understanding any culture or social group. This would be fascinating at Britannia because of the mix of cultures brought together by the necessity of making a living. An approach to food preparation also informs the use of the building interiors.

Information on the individual cultures of the working classes and how it has changed over the decades should be part of the interpretive prescription.

Sub-themes:

- Important stories from a variety of perspectives
- Women and children
- Making a home
- Social life and recreation
- Takagaka Store

3. A typology of housing

The diversity of housing types now located within the Historic Zone are a reflection of both the canning and fishing industries, local design influences and a reflection of worker's lives.

Each of these dwellings tells the life stories of the families who lived here. The rooms should be furnished to resemble the homes of families who lived in the building at different times with an emphasis on those who worked in the canning and fishing industries at Britannia and elsewhere. The buildings represent the residents of the buildings – from families with children to single workers. Furnishings should take into account the residents' background and their different circumstances.

Sub-themes:

- Layout, arrangement, uses for rooms
- Expression of individual social status yet connected to the industry as a whole

- Adaptive re-use of housing over time as demonstrated at Britannia
- How the buildings and their stories demonstrate the history and changes of the fishing and canning industries
- Housing types representing different social circumstances
- Construction: local materials, pre-fabricated housing, design
- Use of a particular building type

4. The cannery experience: interconnectedness within the industry

This theme explores the way in which the canning industry made the province smaller

Sub-themes:

- The inter-relationships within the industry
- Connection to the northern canneries

5. Cultural expression of the maritime experience

This theme explores the ways in which the cannery, fishery and boat-building is reflected in the cultural products of the time. Within this theme is expressed the diversity of the ethnic groups involved in these industries.

Sub-themes:

- Cultural expression can include the arts, sports, music, games, material culture.

3.4 Interpretive Methods

There are a number of interpretive methods available and these are described below. These methods, or variations on them, are used throughout the historic zone, and are listed in the individual prescription sheets.

- Guided tours, included both comprehensive and highlights tours. These tours should stimulate visitors with questions, involve them in a discussion or activity, and focus visitors on looking at the exhibits in detail.
- Self-guided tour brochures
- School tours that integrate the interpretive content into school curricula.
- Audio tours, particularly those using cellular telephone technology
- Audio-visual programs, which consist of film or video projected onto walls or floors, or the use of holograms to recreate a scene, building or feature
- Discovery rooms or smaller areas within the galleries that provide hands-on tactile and interactive experiences
- Museum theatre or third person interpretation as a means of telling stories
- Demonstrations

4.0 The Britannia Historic Zone and Individual Buildings

4.1 Historic Zone

The landscape development in the Historic Zone indicates that this area will give visitors the perception of the dwellings and community of a cannery on the Steveston waterfront. This area will function as both an orientation area and an interpretive station that addresses each of the primary themes as well as its fit within the Britannia Shipyard site more generally.

By the time visitors reach this area, they will have received general information about the Britannia site from existing signs and viewing some of the other buildings. As such, this area can focus specifically on the overall theme of the social and cultural history of the Britannia site. The gift shop or entry to this area should contain maps or brochures for self-guided tours, and someone to answer questions and give directions. The use of signage should be limited and subtle, and other means should be utilized where possible to disseminate the information.



Figure 4. Proposed site arrangement of the Historic Zone. (City of Richmond)

4.2 Buildings

Murchison Houses

Henry Bell-Irving's diaries refer to a division of the ABC Company, the Garry Point Canning Co.²³ This cannery was the precursor to the Gulf of Georgia Cannery, and oral histories suggest that the Murchison Houses may have been originally located to the south west of the present Gulf of Georgia, thus possibly related to the Garry Point Canning Co.²⁴ This suggests the possibility that the Murchison houses may have been originally associated with the Anglo-British Columbia Packing Company.

A date of 1895 has been given through oral sources as the year in which the Murchison houses were acquired and moved to their 2nd Avenue location by John Edward Murchison.²⁵ However, land title documents indicate that in 1895 the land was owned by Robinson Alexander McMorran, and that Murchison was not listed on title until 1903. McMorran and Murchison acquired the entire block 37, part of Lot 3 originally crown granted to William Herbert Steves. This suggests that the houses were either moved onto the lot by McMorran in 1895 as oral sources suggest, or they were acquired by Murchison at a later date, sometime in 1903. Complicating this is a newspaper article that states the buildings were moved to the 2nd Avenue site in 1897.

In 1943, title to the property passed to Fabian Vezeau. This time frame corresponds to the dates in which the Sisters of the Atonement were removed to Greenwood, B.C.

When the two individual houses were acquired by Murchison, they were connected with the gable end of the smaller house attached to the long side of the larger, two-storey house. The buildings were also reversed, so that the rear of each faced 2nd Avenue. From this it can be concluded that Murchison installed the porch roofs on the street-facing sides, although from a review of precedent structures from photographs and pattern books it is likely that the original front facades had similar porch structures.

Because it is likely that these houses were acquired from an area of cannery worker's housing near the Garry Point cannery, it is conceivable that they became available as surplus after the cannery shut down and sold by the ABC Canning Co. in 1894 and prior to the construction of the Gulf of Georgia cannery. The smaller of the two is almost certainly a bunkhouse. The larger, two-storey house was likely the family home of a cannery employee, fisherman or other tradesman. They were not necessarily related to each other.

During the dismantling and reconstruction of the two buildings, it was documented that each was of pre-fabricated construction. As has been noted, both worker and family housing was available as packaged kits. Oral history suggests that they were the product of a New Westminster company.

²³ Bell-Irving family fonds 590-G-I and 500-A-I City of Vancouver Archives.

²⁴ Harold Steves as quoted by Gordon Kibble, personal communication 2006.

²⁵ Gordon Kibble personal communication 2005.



Figure 5. The two Murchison houses in their location on 2nd Avenue shortly before their move to Britannia. (Gordon Kibble photo)

4.2.1 Murchison House No. 1

The smaller Murchison House (above left) is a small scale, rectangular one-storey wooden structure. The house has a medium pitched side gable roof with a shed extension and horizontal wood exterior cladding. It is wood framed and is supported on wooden posts. Its massing reflects the interior volume of space which is divided into two rooms.

The house is significant for its pre-fabricated, modest building style, and as such, a demonstration of the role of the pre-fabricated building companies operating in B.C., which provided economical, easily constructed building components to developing industries in the province. The house also exemplifies the relationship of its simple, domestic form, materials such as its bevelled lap siding exterior, and its two-room interior layout to its function of providing basic housing for single men, a relationship which assists in understanding the living conditions in Steveston and in the cannery complexes on the Fraser River early in the 20th century.

4.2.2 Murchison House No. 2

The larger Murchison House is a rectangular two-storey domestic wooden structure. The house has a medium pitched front gable roof and horizontal wood exterior cladding. It is wood framed and is supported on wooden posts. Its vertical massing reflects the interior volume of space which has two rooms on the main floor, and three on the second floor.

The house is significant for its pre-fabricated, building style and materials, and for its balloon framing, and as such, a demonstration of the role of the pre-fabricated building companies operating in B.C., which provided economical, easily constructed building components to developing industries in the province. The two-storey height, exterior drop siding which was popular and widely available, and the lamb's tail window details are a representation of family accommodation. Larger and more complex than the other houses in the historic zone, the house exemplifies the relationship of its simple, domestic form to its function of providing basic housing for the family of a manager or other more senior employee of a canning company, particularly in light of its relationship to the Garry Point canning company. This relationship assists in the understanding of the living conditions in Steveston and in the cannery complexes on the Fraser River.

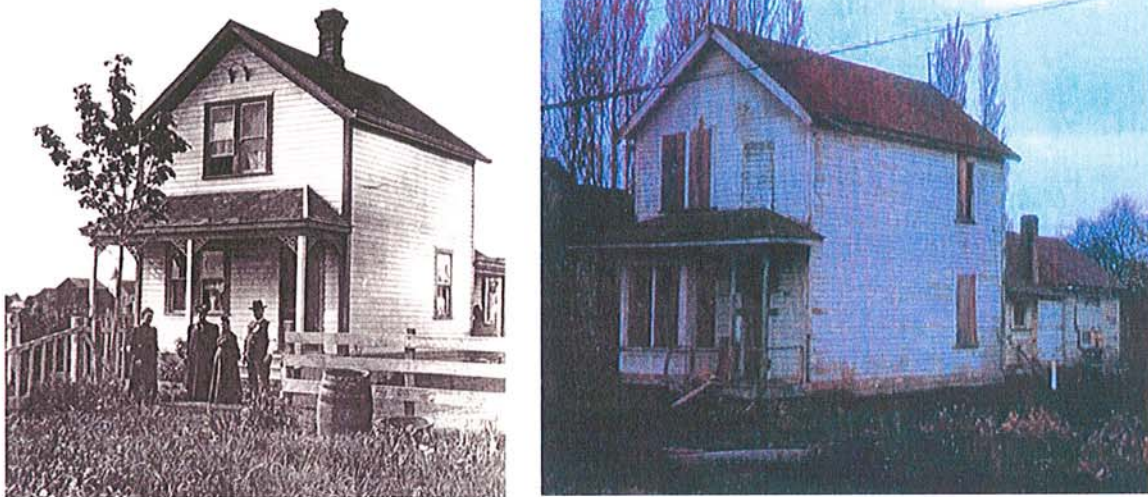


Figure 6. Steveston houses similar in nature to Murchison House No. 2.
(Richmond Museum)

Stilt Piling Houses

The Annual Reports of the Anglo-British Columbia Packing Company for 1893 and 1894 list as assets "Indian Houses at Garry Point" worth £226 19s and £201 19s respectively. It is not known whether this refers to the 'Indian Bunkhouses' shown on the fire insurance plan or other houses in the vicinity. In 1895 the Annual Report notes an "Amount realized for the sale of land at Garry Point £1,030 18s 7d", although this was possibly part of Lot 9, the area today known as Garry Point Park. It is possible that one or both of the Stilt Piling houses may have been originally associated with the Anglo-British Columbia Packing Company.

The two Stilt Piling houses were originally located on Section 10 in Steveston, land crown granted to Thomas Sawdy Bone in 1882. 55 acres of this lot was sold to William Herbert Steves in 1889. In 1893, this 55 acres was acquired by the British Columbia Land and Investment Agency Ltd.²⁶ The houses were built sometime after 1897, and given the prevalence of cannery activity in this area of Steveston, were almost certainly constructed as industry-related dwellings.

By 1909, the land was owned by the Burrard Canning Company, and in 1936 title passed to the Corporation of the Township of Richmond. In 1937, both houses were owned by Japanese. In 1945 title passed to the Honourable the Secretary of State of Canada, indicating that their owners were subject to the internment of World War II and that their land and buildings had become the property of the federal government.

While not pre-fabricated dwellings, as with the Murchison houses, the smaller of the two Stilt houses was likely used as a bunkhouse. The larger house has more rooms, more detailed interior finishes, and is clad in shingles, indicated that it may have been built as a family home for a manager, tradesman or other person higher up in the industrial hierarchy.

Oral history suggests that this house was home to Musqueam Chief Point and his family from about 1900²⁷, although this name does not appear on title. This connection cannot be traced through the directories, nor does it appear in the 1891, 1991 or 1901 census.²⁸

²⁶ This may have been a company belonging to H. Bell Irving. H. Steves notes that a mapping error may place these two houses on Lot 9 (Garry Point) which Bell-Irving did own.

²⁷ Harold Steves personal communication 2005.

²⁸ The Canada census for 1911 has just been released and will be consulted. Also being sought is oral information from Terry Point.

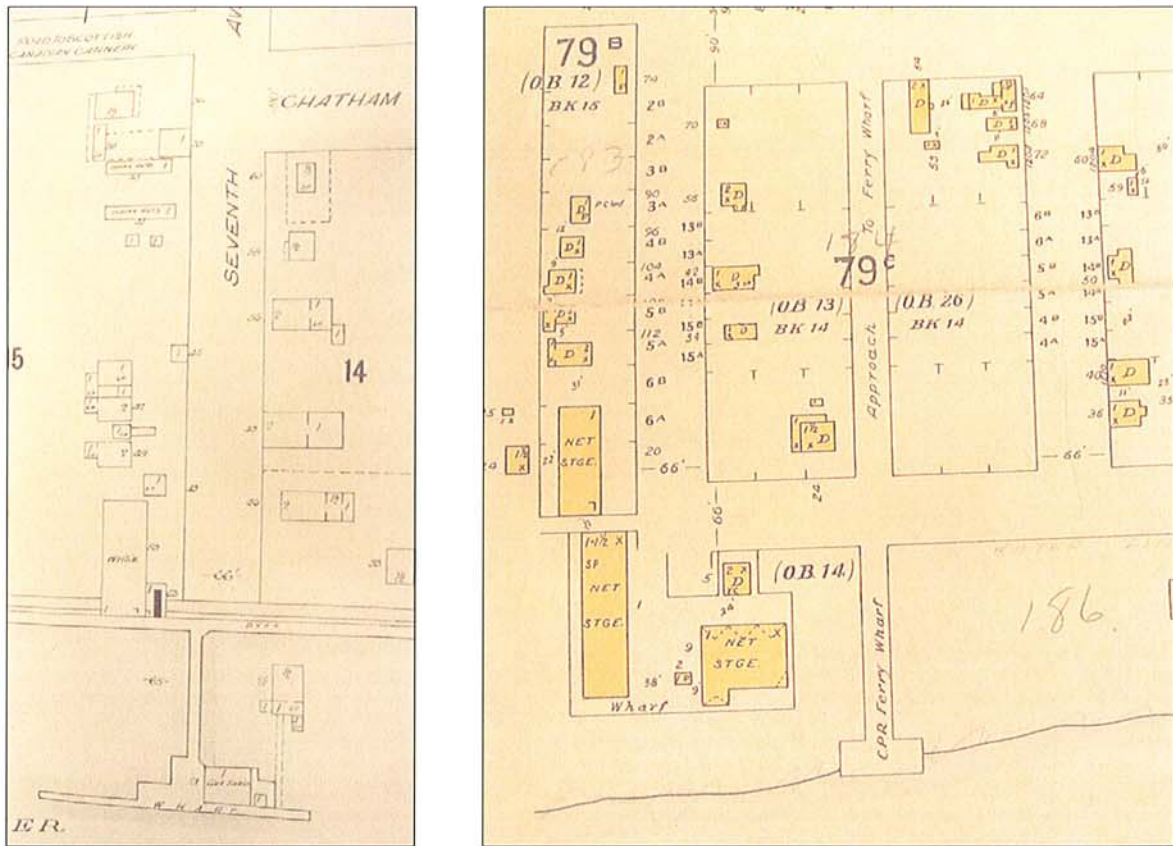


Figure 7. Fire insurance plan 1897 (left) and 1938 of 7th Avenue in Steveston, the location of the two Stilt Piling houses. (UBC Archives)

4.2.3 Stilt Piling House No. 1

Stilt House #1 is a small, rectangular one-storey domestic wooden structure. The house has a medium pitched front gable roof and horizontal wood exterior cladding. It is wood framed and is supported on wooden posts. The building has two rooms.

Figure 7 shows the house with the area on stilts below the main floor enclosed with horizontal wood siding. The gabled entry porch was removed when the building was taken to Britannia but the original entry into the house at the gable end was retained.

While many canneries relied upon pre-fabricated buildings to house its workers, Stilt House #1 was built as an individual structure. As accommodation for a cannery employees, it is the overall plan of the house, its materials, modest scale, stilt piling foundation and simple ordering of internal spaces that defines the building and provides its sense of historic place. The simple horizontal board walls and shingled gable ends, and the simplicity of its overall form and internal layout suggests that it was utilitarian workers' housing, possibly bachelor's quarters.

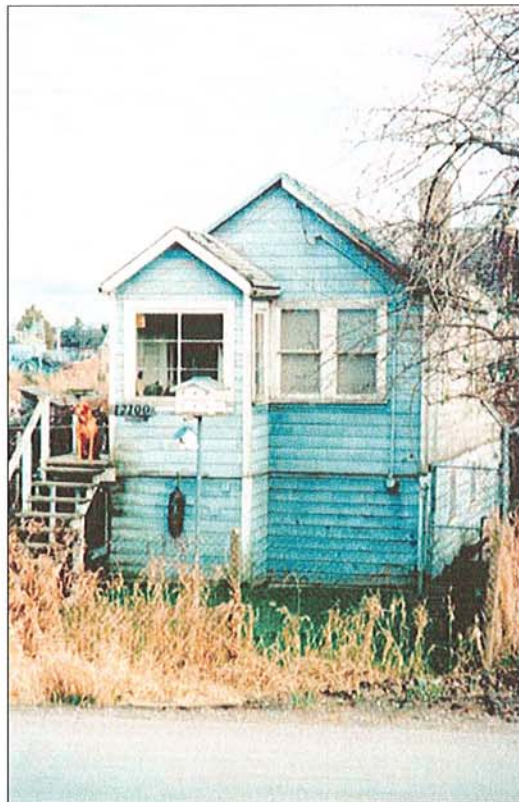


Figure 8. Stilt Piling House 1 in its original location at 12080 7th Avenue in Steveston c.2001.

4.2.4 Stilt Piling House No. 2

Stilt House #2 is a one-story, modestly scaled rectangular dwelling structure with a medium pitched shed gable roof. It is clad in brown shingle siding. It is wood framed and is supported on wooden posts.

While many canneries relied upon pre-fabricated buildings to house its workers, Stilt House #1 was built as an individual structure. While still relatively simple in nature, its moderate scale, detailing and materials such as the exterior shingle siding and interior wood paneling suggest its construction for use by a manager or other officer in the Anglo-Pacific Packing Company or, later, the Burrard Canning Company.



Figure 9. Stilt Piling House 2 in its original location at 12100 7th Avenue in Steveston c.2001.

4.2.5 Chinese Bunkhouse

Here we are in transplanted China.²⁹

The Chinese Bunkhouse is a massive, rectangular two-storey wooden structure with a shallow hipped roof and board and batten exterior cladding. It is wood framed and is supported on wooden posts. Its exterior massing reflects the large interior volume of space.

According to oral histories, the Chinese Bunkhouse (or China House) on the Britannia site was originally constructed for the Anglo-British Columbia Packing Company's Knight Inlet cannery.³⁰ The Chinese bunkhouse was in use at the Knight Inlet Cannery (also known as the Glendale Cannery) on the central coast of B.C. as early as 1915, and is important as an integral component of these coastal canneries. Owned by the Anglo-British Columbia Packing Company, Knight Inlet was typical of the small northern and mid-coast canneries, consisting of the cannery complex, net loft, wharf, net racks, charcoal burner, bunk house, mess hall and dwellings for First Nations, Japanese and Chinese cannery workers. The building is significant as a reminder of the social factors, diverse ethnic integration, and day to day living conditions that were a unique development of the canning industry, in Steveston, and on the north and central coasts.

In the west coast canneries, the China House was a must for housing the Chinese cannery crew, usually designed to hold 40-50 Chinese employees. It was managed by the Chinese foreman and was built to the specification of the Chinese contractor. Often distinguished by the red dragon flag of China floating from a pole attached to the roof, the China House was always a mysterious place and generally off-limits to non-Chinese. The amenities varied slightly from house to house, but typically the sleeping arrangements consisted of a long narrow hall with cubicles opening into it from each side. Wooden bunks, three-high, were closed in for privacy.³¹ A dimension of 8' x 10' is mentioned³² although it is not known if this was typical. In the northern canneries, the interiors were simpler and more spartan than those in Steveston or areas closer to larger settlements.³³

The buildings had wooden floors with the only source of heat being a single wood or coal-burning stove. The workers had to provide their own bedding and furnishings. Some had bathhouses with tubs, showers and a laundry. Charms, prayers and friends, made in China, decorated the smoke-begrimed walls, there are odours – stale cabbage, rice and opium, grease, steamed fish and perspiration, smoke from the stove – low benches and tables are placed about the room, there are bamboo and rattan sheets to sit on.

There would be a cook and bullcooks associated with the China House who assisted the foreman and looked after the housekeeping. This was an exacting task because the Chinese were meticulous about cleanliness. The common room was the dining room and the games room where mah-jong and other gambling games were favourites. Smoking was universal and water-pipes were common. What was smoked in these besides tobacco was seldom discussed, but was the subject of much speculation by outsiders.

Typically, Britannia had a bunkhouse for the Chinese crew. In the early days of the cannery it was contract work, the Chinese contractor would contract the labour for approximately 35c an hour.

Chinese help was hired mostly because they were more energetic, and "they go for cheap". That's the [main reason] cheap labour, so

²⁹ Reverend Appleyard quoted in Duncan Stacey *Salmonopolis* p.73

³⁰ Gerry Miller personal communication 2005.

³¹ Campbell K. Mack. *Cannery Village, Company Town* p.74

³² Friday, Chris. *The Pacific Coast Canned Salmon Industry* p.50

³³ Gerry Miller personal communication 2005.

long as they've got a job and a few dollars. If they earn anything from \$100 to \$150 a year, at that time, it was good money. Some of the good boys would save every nickel of it and a couple, three years, they'd take a trip back to China. Some of the good timers, well, they go out there, go to the gambling joint and buy a couple drinks and go with the hookies. They spent it. They're all single you know, the Chinese population of Vancouver at the time, as a matter of fact, as far as I know in British Columbia and also back east too. They don't allow Oriental women in Canada you see, at that time, just the men.³⁴

Cannery workers did not have nets to mend in the evenings as the fishermen did. Sometimes the canneries did not operate eight hours a day every day. When fresh fish were brought in, the cannery managers estimated that it would take three or four hours to process it. Workers received two meals per day. Breakfast was served at 9 o'clock, work started at 9:30, and continued through till 4 o'clock. Meals were served in the bunkhouse. The canning company hired a cook to cook for you in the bunkhouse. After work the Chinese contract employees would play in the bunkhouse, they're playing Mah Jong, a Chinese card game to pass the time. Mostly Chinese dominos and Mah Jong.³⁵

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Chinese labour contractors brought thousands of Chinese men to the Pacific Northwest to build railroads and to work in canneries, logging camps and coal mines. Companies depended on labour contractors to recruit workers, to move them where they were needed, to feed and house them, and to keep track of their pay.



Figure 10. China House at Port Edward, typical of British Columbia's northern canneries.

³⁴ Jimmy Hing Oral History RCA

³⁵ Jimmy Hing oral history RCA

4.2.6 Japanese Duplex

The Japanese Duplex is a two-storey wood frame building, originally used as married quarters for two or more Japanese-Canadian families employed at the Phoenix Cannery. It was originally part of a cluster of 16 buildings, which formed a small Japanese community for workers at the Phoenix. Earlier research suggests that the building was construction prior to 1919, and possibly in the late 1800s. The ground floor is divided into four chambers. Horizontal siding shows evidence of former window openings.

The Japanese in canneries lived in their own bunkhouses, with a house boss acting as liaison with the canners for a percentage of each resident's earnings. When the fishermen began to relocate their wives and families to Steveston, Japanese women found work in the canneries. The men could no longer live in bunkhouses with the others, so married housing was built, by the canneries, along the boardwalks. The houses were placed close together on pilings, long barracks partitioned off, very rustic and poor, but there was no charge for them. Instead, the canneries bought the fish cheap.

[There were] wooden houses jammed on pilings, close together, leaning, with wooden walks, muddy alleys, laundry, and dry marsh grass that stutters out of silt the dykes retain.³⁶

Other descriptions of Japanese housing come from employees at the Britannia Shipyard:

I used to go out there and all the Japanese live around the dyke here in shacks, you know, in unpainted houses like this one here.

The Japanese mostly around here (Britannia) on company property. They fished for the company and lived on company property and there's a way down number, right from here to near No. 2 Road too, there's quite a few that lived down there, and also down in Steveston a ways. Of course in around Steveston all those old shacks are all torn down now. They used to live in the shacks, help one another, you know, during the rough time, and do the work. Like in the old days all the net mending, mending net and all that, you know, they'd get together and help each other, they don't hire any help. If I hit a snag and tore my net well we all get together and help mend the net. If yours got torn now we all get together and help. Same thing with the boatwork, they do that painting and repairing.³⁷

There was no electricity in the early days of the canneries; oil lamps were hung from hooks in the houses. There was no heater, just a gangara [tin] stove, which took a lot of wood to keep going at night. Driftwood was collected from the beach, and piled up in front of the house to dry; inside the house it was very cold. It was built from only one layer of wood and paper was put up over the walls to insulate it.

When I came in 1925 I was six months pregnant. It was in July, fishing season, so I started work in the cannery almost right away. In the old days there wasn't enough fish for a whole days work. Whenever the fish came in, they'd let us know by whistle, day or night. Sometimes we worked one hour a day, sometimes five hours, sometimes ten hours a day. There was a mori house, a day care, where mothers

³⁶ Daphne Marlatt *Steveston* p.16

³⁷ Jimmy Hing oral history Richmond Archives

would take turns looking after the kids when we went to work. I was one of them the year after I arrived.³⁸

5.0 Interpretive Prescriptions

The pages that follow describe interpretive ideas for building interiors and the immediate surrounding landscape, and potential elements. Working with the identified themes and sub-themes, and with the history, characteristics and required programming for each building, conceptual interpretive elements are developed. These elements answer the question “what should be interpreted here”? Each prescription sheet includes:

- a description of resources and the interpretive strategy
- interpretive objectives and the information or experience that is to be communicated
- some specifics of material elements, design ideas and suggested schematic information content
- a floor plan showing the proposed uses/interpretive notes for the individual rooms and areas

The prescription sheets have been ordered to correspond with the proposed locations of the buildings in the Historic Zone. The overall interpretive intent is to ‘visit’ five very different dwellings, each of which tells the story of a different aspect of life on the Britannia site.

³⁸ Moto Suzuki oral history in Daphne Marlatt *Steveston Recollected* p.23

5.1 Historic Zone

Interpretive significance:

The interpretive significance of the historic zone lies in its ability to demonstrate and interpret the living conditions of a variety of groups within the setting of an early cannery camp. It also allows the opportunity for the public to understand the history of Britannia Shipyard, the economics of the canning industry, and the connection of Britannia and Steveston to the larger canning and fishing industries on the British Columbia coast.

Site-wide interpretive objectives

Gaining an understanding and appreciation of the interpretive themes from the previous section should be regarded as cognitive visitor experience goals.

The historic zone should provide as wide a range as possible of quality visitor experiences. These experiences will be based on a knowledge of the resources, as well as the overall purpose of the park as a whole, which is to demonstrate and celebrate an early cannery and boat building complex on the Fraser River. The initial and future interpretation should be compatible with the long-term preservation of heritage resources – the buildings and the landscape features.

Accommodation for persons with disabilities is an important aspect to consider on site. Access to programs, buildings, activities, and maritime experiences for individuals with disabilities should be designed into both the physical structure and the interpretive features of the Historic Zone.

The interpretive opportunities should be diverse, designed to assist, inform, inspire, educate, and challenge visitors, with a specific target of providing active and interactive displays and activities as much as possible. A diversity of experiences will accommodate both one time only repeat visitors.

The mandate of the interpretive program is that it is site specific, relating to those activities, events and stories that took place on the Britannia site. This celebrates the unique characteristics of Britannia, and separates the site from others with similar themes. It is also a way of ensuring that the visitors become more immersed in the site's sense of history and place through immediacy and specificity. The primary focus of the interpretation is intended to be the depiction of living conditions of those who worked in the industries on the Steveston waterfront in the early twentieth century.

Notwithstanding that the interpretation is to be targeted specifically to the Steveston waterfront, part of the understanding of the site comes from being able to place it within a larger context. Visitors should be made aware of the connections between British Columbia, Steveston, Britannia and the Historic Zone and the canning and fishing industries, as well as with the social history of the industry and the era. Several themes relate to or are typical of the more general resource extraction and industrial history of the province, and connections to this wider history should be made.

The collection of examples of the different housing types in Steveston and Britannia that were related to the fishing and canning industries has been an

important goal for the Historic Zone. The following is the interpretation proposed for each of the structures:

- The China House will illustrate the living conditions in a Chinese bunkhouse.
- The Japanese dwelling will interpret the living arrangements of two Japanese families.
- The large Murchison house will show a single family dwelling for a cannery manager or other employee of similar status.
- Stitt Piling House #1 (the smaller house) will illustrate a bunk house for single men working in the cannery.
- Stitt Piling House #2 (the larger house) will be interpreted as a single family dwelling, such as that of a fisherman and his family.
- The small Murchison house will accommodate the site entry/gift shop, while illustrating its evolving uses, typical of many of these industry-related buildings.

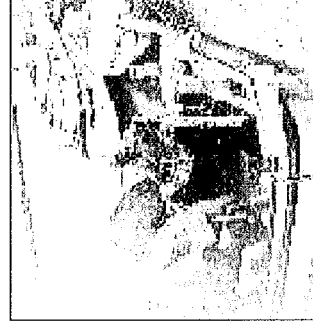
Interpretation in the historic zone should set the context for each of the individual buildings by an overall perception of the richness and variety of the cannery/shipyard social and residential experience. This should include addressing the themes. The spatial layout of the historic zone is an opportunity to interpret what happens in between and outside the buildings, and their relationship to each other and to the natural environment of the river. The historic zone should provide opportunities to:

- Understand the siting of the buildings on the river and how it relates to the early design of cannery and fishing camps
- Understand the natural environment of the river and how it relates to the location and economic development of the camps
- Interpret the ways in which the different groups of workers in the canneries interacted and the relationships between owners, managers, workers, wives, children
- Make visible the interior activities of the buildings by allowing them to spill out onto the boardwalk
- Understand how people used the exterior spaces in their day to day lives: for socializing, growing gardens, mending nets, storing or repairing boats, and other activities
- Use materials creatively to enhance exterior interpretation
- Explain the connections between the individual buildings, the Britannia site and the landscape

Visitors must be made aware that the buildings and landscapes do not represent the original layout of Britannia, but rather, they are an illustration of the character and feeling of the place. It should also be explained that this development has allowed the conservation of a number of Steveston buildings that otherwise would be demolished.

It is important that the overall historic zone environment supports the re-creation of the living conditions of the buildings. A sense of roughness, realized through the use of building materials, planting, artefacts and multi sensory devices should give the visitor a sense of the activity, noise, colour, and general rough textures of the early cannery and shipbuilding camps.

The historic zone has the opportunity to interpret a wide range of themes and subject matter. What are the limits of what should be presented in the historic zone? While the purpose of the interpretation is to engage visitors, there is also an obligation to the larger culture. As such, some of the themes may deal with sensitive issues and decisions must be made about the exhibition of any controversial subject matter.



Interpretive principles

General principles and methods for the interpretive content of the historic zone and the buildings are included below. Specific recommendations for each building are found in the prescription sheets that follow.

- The guiding principle behind the interpretation is that the public gain an understanding of the big picture stories behind the depiction of everyday life in the historic zone, and the complex web of relationships between the people and the site's history.
- Use dynamic and hands-on, rather than static displays, for the living conditions whenever possible.
- Develop non-traditional signage design and other unique ways to impart information.
- The design of interpretive features, graphics and exhibits should be bold, large-scale, contemporary, and with an edge, instilling a sense of wonder and surprise as the meaning of the everyday on the site is revealed.
- Use multi-sensory interpretive methods that include sound, smell, touch, and visual effects, for example:
 - Whistle to announce the arrival of fish
 - Horn to announce the opening of the fishery at the beginning of the day
 - Variety of languages
 - Cooking, fish, seaweed, sea, woodworking smells and sounds
- Use audio guides and visual media for interpretation and an extension of the visitor experience
 - Use of cellular phone technology for self-guided audio tours
 - Design audio content to include voices, including narration and interviews, music and sound effects
 - Film or video can be used to project images onto various surfaces such as walls
 - The use of holograms should be explored to recreate objects or scenes

Third person interpretation

- There may be an opportunity on occasion to program third person interpretation, in which staff participate in the demonstration of a skill or activity, preferably in appropriate dress.
- Third person interpretation can be either with or without visitor participation.
- Demonstrations
 - There are many opportunities for demonstrations on the site and at least one should be programmed for each of the six buildings. Possible demonstrations are listed in the prescription sheets.
- Develop hand-held maps or brochures, a number of which could be created over time. By focussing on different subjects or emphasizing particular aspects of the site, these brochures could take on the role of exhibition catalogue, while the historic zone becomes the venue for a number of changing exhibits.

- General brochure that interprets the entire zone
- Focus in detail on a specific event
- Focus in detail on a particular theme or aspect of the site
- Relate to a particular celebration or important historical date or time in the history of a culture
- Be designed to appeal to different audiences
- Provide rules of games, present a mystery or puzzle, or outline site-specific activities
- Provide instruction or technique (an early recipe; how a net mending needle is used)

Physical development of the historic zone can have an interpretive component. The development plan already has in place the boardwalk, bulkhead, pond and planting which recalls the early landscape of Britannia, and this should be explained. Agricultural reports from the time period should be used to determine the types of orchard trees or plants available to Britannia and to explain planting methods and context. Cuttings from fruit trees at Terra Nova could be cultivated to procure appropriate plant material.

Early site features can also be used as inspiration for signage in the historic zone and throughout Britannia.

Create landmarks:

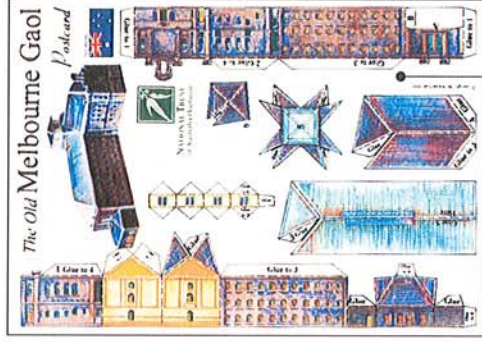
- Install telephone poles, that once existed along the boardwalk, at intervals to create a landmark and carry messages.
- Use materials and colours that celebrate yet relate to the history of the site.
- Install artefacts that tell stories about the inside of the buildings, outside the buildings and on the boardwalk.
- Locate signs or markers in paving.
- Use planting as an interpretive medium:
 - Recreate domestic gardens near or around buildings as appropriate
 - Interpret the proposed natural planting and ecological zones through the use of signs, markers, and demonstrated uses related to different ethnic groups.

Interpreting for children

- There are limitless ways in which the historic zone interpretation can involve children. Some ideas include:
- An interpretive 'trail' along the boardwalk and into the various buildings that provides clues to the activities of children as they are followed throughout a typical day. Clues could include articles of clothing, toys, evidence of activities, etc.
 - 'A dollar at Britannia', a series of interpretive objects or panels which follows a dollar through various purchases, illustrating the different kinds of transactions and products to be had in Britannia and Steveston during the early 20th century.
 - A hand held brochure that provides clues to hidden interpretive details or objects along the boardwalk and in the interiors of the houses. These details could be incorporated into the boardwalk (litt a loose board), in domestic

objects, in boats, in planting, or other places on site.

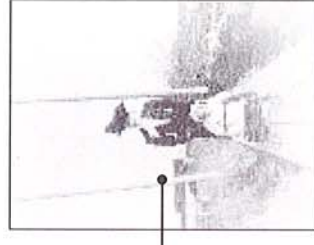
- A hand held brochure that illustrates and provides rules for different kinds of games played by children at Britannia. These could be linked to specific places in the historic zone, inside the buildings and out.



The buildings, boats and other structures and objects related to the site can be used to create hands-on activities such as cardboard or wooden sculptures that can be sold in the gift shop.

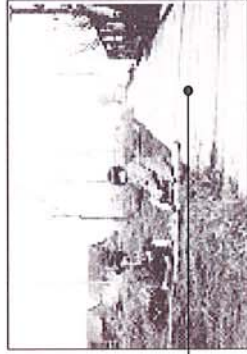
This is a postcard that can be constructed into a cardboard model.

Photographs can be use for exhibit displays or analyzed to recreate scenes, elements, activities and associations through interpretation.





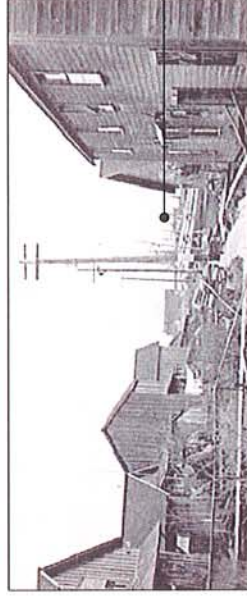
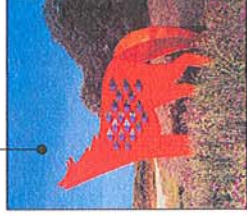
Colour and texture can play an interpretive role - visual, tactile, emotional - in building interiors and in the historic zone.



Interpret day to day experiences both inside the buildings and on the boardwalk.

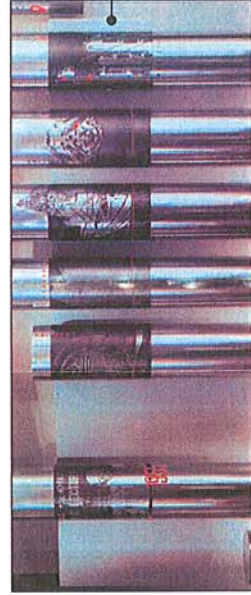


Public art can be used judiciously as an interpretive tool and to assist wayfinding.



Provide places for games to be played, inside and out. This is a game similar to checkers played by Hawaiians in the 18th century.

Interior and exterior physical elements can carry interpretive information. The lower photograph uses stainless steel 'drilling cores' to interpret mineral exploration.



5.2 Murchison House No. 1: Mix of People, Mix of Housing



- punched and folded cardboard, wooden assembly blocks.
- Try to have simple refreshments available that riff on the types of foods served to the bunkhouse men; these can be enjoyed on the porch.
- If Murchison's office becomes a functional space, furnish it to resemble the office of an early Steveston police chief.
- Use audio and video components to demonstrate 'a day in the life' of bunkhouse residents.

Building conservation:

- Replace the front entry porch to indicate the main visitor entry.
- Retain and repair the interior walls, windows and trim.
- Install rough wood floor
- Replace doors

Exterior interpretation:

- Provide furnishings that indicate its use as a of the front porch as a functional space for the bunkhouse and invite visitors to use it. Include chairs, table, wooden barrel, washing basin, clothesline, boots or other personal paraphernalia.
- Use graphics on the porch and floor to show quotations, songs, gambling games, spills, burns, boot marks, tobacco stains, and other signs of use.

Interpretive significance:

Murchison House No. 1 is significant for its representation of early cannery housing structures. This house is the first structure in the Historic Zone and is intended to function as an entry, information area, reception and gift shop. Interpretation of the house as a cannery dwelling will be combined with these functions through changing exhibits, both inside and on the porch and boardwalk. Signs and markers will function as sources of interpretation, directions and information.

Interpretive objectives/visitor experience goals:

- To communicate the original past use of the house as a two-room cannery or fishery bunkhouse.
- Show the relationship of the buildings in the historic zone to the history of Britannia.
- To understand the different housing types, their construction, who lived in them, and how they were arranged in cannery or fish camps.
- To show how housing reflects the hierarchy of workers and the cultural associations at Britannia and in Steveston's early canneries more generally.
- To understand the role of the bunkhouse, the generally single men who lived in it, and what their working day was like.
- To provide an understanding of the re-use of buildings in the canning and fishing industries.
- To understand the concept of pre-fabricated housing used in cannery, fish and other camps at Britannia and around the province.

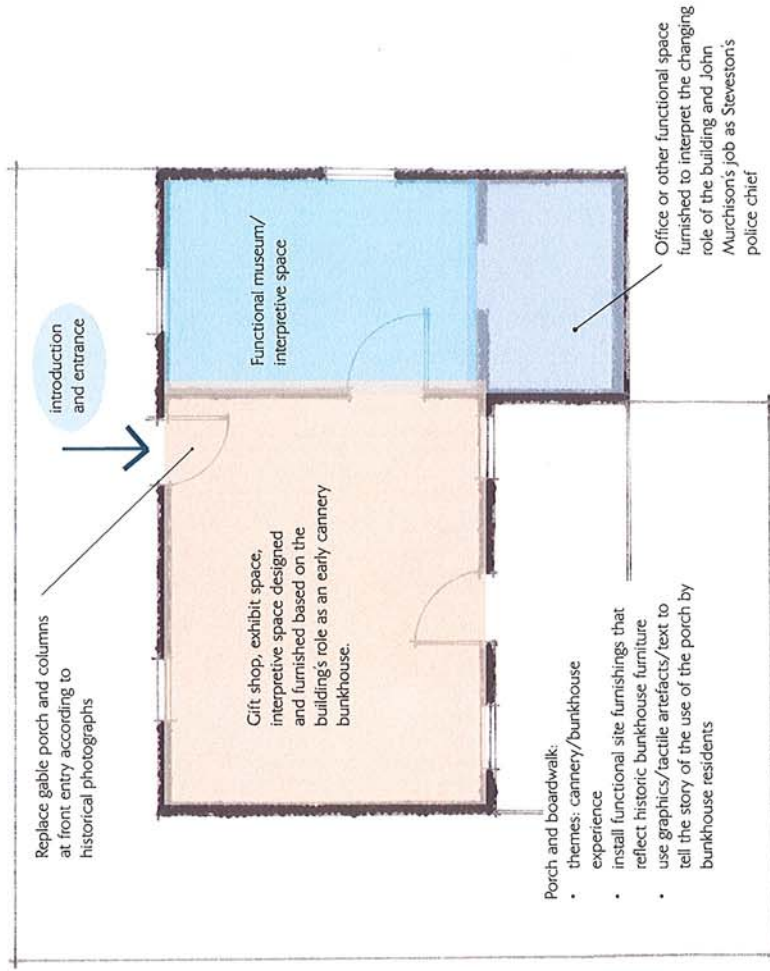
- To show that the building has had past uses and adaptations by retaining and interpreting the enclosed office of John Murchison.

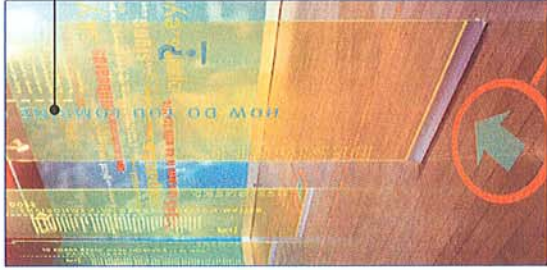
Means of expression:

- Markers should indicate gathering points for tours, demonstrations or activities.
- Activities and buildings functions should be subsumed into the bunkhouse furnishings: use bunkhouse furnishings as the inspiration for the furniture in the assembly area and gift shop.
- Primary signage integrated into the interpretation will direct people to the historic zone and other areas of the site.
- An outdoor orientation exhibit near the shelter/visitor centre should be produced. This exhibit should provide information regarding the historic zone and introduce the primary interpretive themes
- Orientation should focus on activity planning during the site visit – for both the Historic Zone and the Britannia site in general, suggesting to visitors how they can maximize their enjoyment of the site, taking into consideration interest level, time available, and group type and size.
- Design a space for changing exhibits that reflects the interior of a bunkhouse, such as wooden bunks as shelving, freestanding clear panels with interpretive messages to delineate spaces.
- Create an exhibit that interprets the typology of housing on the Britannia site, using a display of building models, types of materials, designs, window types.
- Create hands-on kits that demonstrate individual buildings, for example,

Murchison House No. 1 Layout

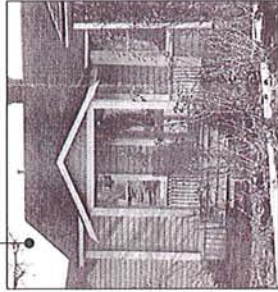
The layout of the Murchison House No. 1 is dependent on the functional needs of its proposed uses. Originally a cannery bunkhouse, and then used by John Murchison as an office, the building aesthetic should reflect these past uses while it is being utilized as the orientation centre and gift shop for the historic zone.





Clear panels can be used to hold screened historical photographs, interpretive text, site information, maps and other visuals. Transparency keeps the space open and contrasts historic and contemporary aesthetics.

Reinstate the front porch detailing of the original Murchison House.



Use the verandah for interpretive settings and activities



Create an exhibit of models of the different domestic buildings at Britannia to explore and contrast their designs and locations. The models could be dynamic or constructed in pieces that can be taken apart. They could also be sold in the gift shop.

Use artefacts such as bunkhouse furnishings for contemporary uses, such as seating.



Refinish existing interior walls and trim. If possible, find more authentic exterior and interior doors. Use wood planks for the floor.

5.3 Murchison House No. 2: Cannery and Shipyard Management



Interpretive significance:

The design and known history of the Murchison House No. 2 is such that it represents both the cannery experience and a higher level of economic and political power than the other buildings in the historic zone. As such it will be used to interpret the home and social structure of a cannery manager. The stories told here will be based in part on the history of the Shorey House, once the home of the manager of the Britannia machine shop. These houses had large living rooms, kitchens and bedrooms with back rooms for storage and canning vegetables and fruit.

The front room of the lower floor will be exhibit space, the back room of the lower floor will be public amenities, and the top floor will house a caretaker's suite. The public will access the amenity space through the exhibit area; it is proposed that the re-creation of an interior of a manager's house will be combined with exhibit space. The public should be made aware of the original location of the manager's house relative to other housing on the Britannia site.

Interpretive objectives/visitor experience goals:

- To promote an understanding of the many different roles of people working in the canning/shipyard industries, as all of the employees did not work on the canning lines. Interpretation should focus on other occupations such as a manager, supplier, machine worker, merchant, bookkeeper, what these jobs involved, and the role of these people in the industry and on the Britannia site.
- Illustrate the 'different world' of the cannery owner and manager, including the business side of the cannery operation, the ties to the

larger economic forces of the industry, and the provincial (e.g., the northern canneries) and the international scope of the industry.

- Illustrate the living conditions and social life of the cannery manager and his family in contrast to other employees, and the relationship to European, particularly English, styles, activities and manners.
- To show how the manager's families were integrated into the day to day life of the cannery/shipyard, and the relationships with the other cannery workers.
- To illustrate the activities an articulate the feelings of children who grew up on the Britannia site, including such themes as play, schooling, and the perception of the site and its workers.
- Give visitors information on the past uses of the house, particularly as it relates to the sub-theme of Japanese women, such as its use as a Japanese mission and day care facility.
- Explain the balloon frame construction of the house and its significance.

Means of expression:

- Establish the lower floor of the interior as a manager's home, including English wall paneling, plate rail, wallpaper, curtains. Reinstall or install a wood floor, and carpeting. Include furnishings such as a piano, chairs, business desk and card tables.
- Design the rear public amenity space as a 'storage area' including shelves, jars of fruit, table, recreational and household equipment, with interpretive information on the labels.
- Integrate changing exhibits within the parlour setting: use documents and artifacts to depict the different types of workers, jobs and activities in the fishery and the canneries, as well as looking in detail at domestic objects such as kitchen implements, textiles, toys, and industrial objects used in the cannery and shipyard. Use bookshelves as display cases.
- Use the parlour furnishings, tables, chairs, piano, and images printed on sheer curtain material as three-dimensional exhibits. Utilize wall spaces for exhibit panels, walls and fabric for projected images and information.
- Audio should include stories about day to day life of a manager's family at Britannia, and music appropriate to the time.
- Provide decks of cards with rules, dance steps in books or on the floor, music and recreational equipment such as badminton racquets to involve visitors in the social activities of the manager's house.
- Provide hands-on artefacts such as machine tools, ledgers, stamps, pens to illustrate the business side of the manager's role.
- Provide hands-on artefacts and assemble changing exhibits that include children's toys, rules to games that were played, books, drawings. Include in-ground patterns for games (e.g., hopscotch) or mazes that tell stories from a child's perspective.
- Provide traces or clues that show the presence of Japanese women and changing exhibits that explore their work and their relationship to religious groups, their children, and their experience of internment.

Building conservation:

- Exterior features of the Murchison house, such as the porch, should be reconstructed based on early photographs. Retain and refinish existing windows.

Exterior interpretation:

- Show the exterior activities of the house, including the garden, fruit orchard, cows. Use actual plant material available at the time, artifacts (wood piles, milk buckets, hay, gardening implements, rain barrels), interpretive signs and installations.

Murchison House No. 2 Layout

The Murchison House No. 2 will be fully accessible through its front door off the boardwalk.

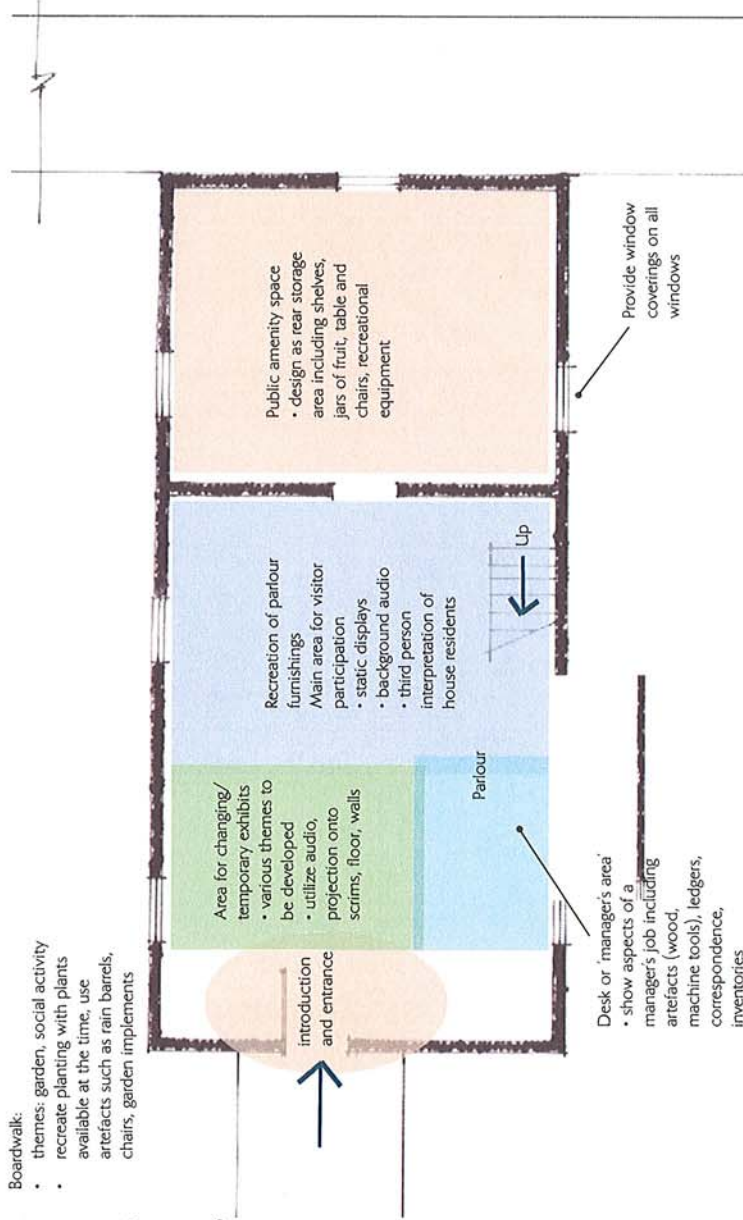
Much of the reconstruction here is based on the oral histories related to the Storey House. The house was originally built by Marshall English who built the Phoenix Cannery in 1882, and was added to by different cannery/shipyard managers over the years.

Characteristics of the house include high ceilings, a large living room and a back room used for storage and canning. The walls were wood panelled, with a plate rail near the top and wallpaper from the plate rail to the ceiling. The windows had frilled curtains.

Outside, an orchard planted in the 1880s produced apples, plums and pears. The garden had an ivy fence, a rocky and acacia trees from California. A garden of flowers and fruit stretched from the house to the cannery walk; there was a shed for coal and wood. The manager looked after the Bell-Irving cows during the winter and were rewarded with milk and butter. The cows were shipped by raft to summer accommodation on Paisley Island.

This level of society was very social, entertaining with music, games, swimming, dancing.

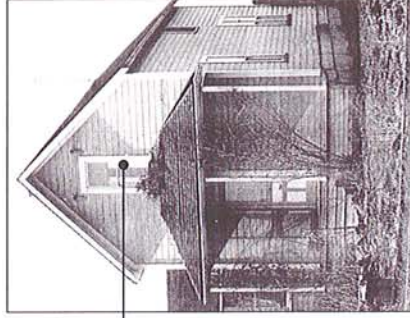
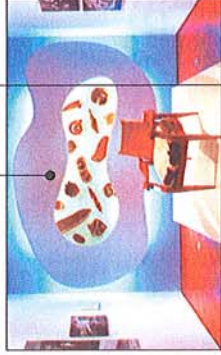
The proposed layout of the house accommodates a number of these activities.





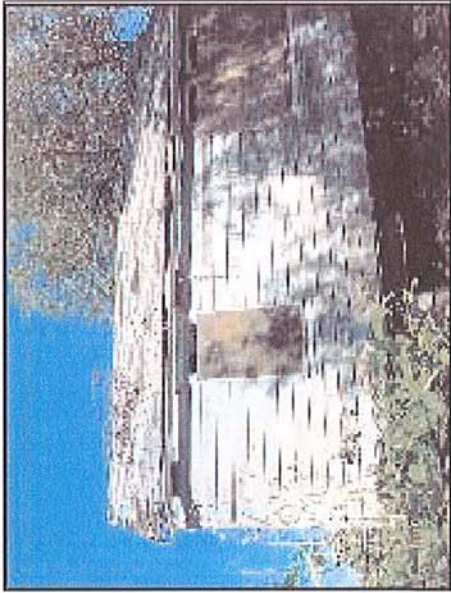
Recreate a parlour setting that reflects the time frame and socioeconomic status of a Britannia site manager based on oral histories. Use this as a setting for changing exhibits and as an entry into the public amenities in the back.

Use light, colour and furnishings to interpret the parlour, described as having "high ceilings, open and light." Use shelving and placement creatively to provide opportunities for the display of artefacts in changing and hands on exhibits. Unique and well thought out contemporary design can be effective in reflecting the lifestyle and interiors of the time period.



Reinstate the front porch detailing of the original Murchison House No. 2.

5.4 Stilt Piling House No. 1: The Cannery Experience



Mans of expression:

- Design each end of the bunkhouse to depict a different aspect of the workers' lives outside the cannery. One side should be interpreted as a sleeping area, the other should depict communal activities.
- Furnish the bunkhouse with wooden bunks against both long walls. Include a table and other furnishings in the main boardwalk end of the building. Use artefacts such as clothing on clotheslines, tools of the trade, footwear, lamps, heating stove, bottles, books, decks of cards to show the lifestyle and activities of the men in the bunkhouses.
- Interpretive messages with stories and quotations about the daily lives of the men can be carried on the clotheslines, on the walls and on the floor.
- Use lighting and sound to reflect the atmosphere and tight living conditions in the bunkhouses, for example, lighting over the gaming table, the cannery whistle, music, language, night time sounds. Images of a worker's day could be projected onto walls. An interpretive piece could be installed on the floor, or the boardwalk outside, that shows artifacts, the rules of a gambling game, or that illustrates the cannery/shipyard work cycle.
- Installations such as sculptural or more abstract media pieces should depict people and activities within the bunkhouse.
- Use audio and video components to demonstrate 'a day in the life' of the bunkhouse residents.

Building conservation:

- Traditional bunkhouses did not have kitchens as the men ate in the mess house. The existing kitchen should be removed.
- Retain and repair the interior and exterior finishes. The interior walls should consist of vertical wood planks, finished but with a roughness to them. The floor should be wooden boards.
- Retain and repair existing windows.

Exterior interpretation:

- While there is no public access to this building, the doors, with barriers, should be opened to allow exterior interpretation.
- Have a dress up area that contains worker's clothing to try on, including boots, hats, gloves and possibly tools - tactile interpretation of fabrics.
- Chairs and outdoor clotheslines can describe the use of outdoor space. The clothesline can have articles of clothing with interpretive messages, or various artifacts can be hung from them.
- Third person interpretation could include a worker sitting in a chair telling stories about life in the cannery/shipyard.

Interpretive significance:

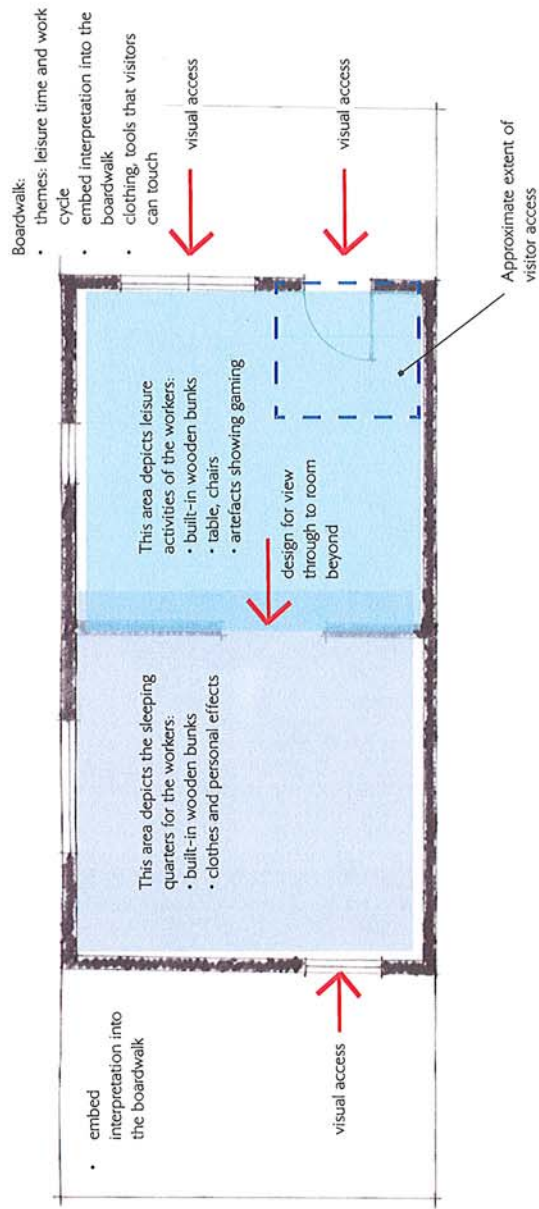
The Stilt Piling House is an opportunity to interpret bunkhouse life for single men in the cannery and shipyard. White male workers in the canneries were generally employed as foremen, mechanics and steam engineers as steam power was used for the canning line and fishing retorts. A typical work week in the canneries began on a Monday morning with the blowing of the cannery whistles, a signal of the delivery of salmon to the plant by its fishing fleet. After work or during the weekly fishing closure, the single workers gambled in the bunkhouses.

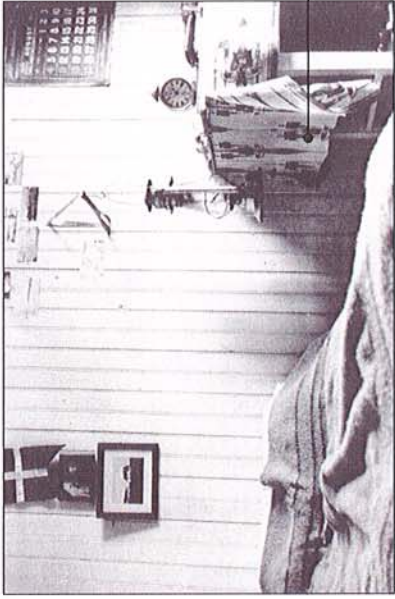
Interpretive objectives/visitor experience goals:

- Visitors to this building should get a real sense of the living conditions for a general cannery worker living in a bunkhouse like this, generally single men, mainly white.
- There should be an understanding of the seasonal and daily cycle of a typical cannery worker, and the place of these workers in the hierarchy of the cannery/shipyard.
- Explain the different types of jobs that were held by the bunkhouse inhabitants: foremen, mechanics, engineers (as noted above).
- Establish an understanding of day to day activities: where the workers ate, what they wore, how they got paid, how they brushed their teeth, what they did in their leisure time, friendships and animosities that developed, and how people felt about their work.
- The concept that this bunkhouse was one of many on the site and in the Steveston canneries in general should be understood.

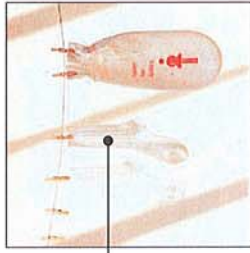
Stilt Piling House No. 1 Layout

There will not be public access to the Stilt House No. 1, and visual access will be from the gable ends. The layout takes advantage of this by showing two aspects of bunkhouse life, one located at each end of the building.

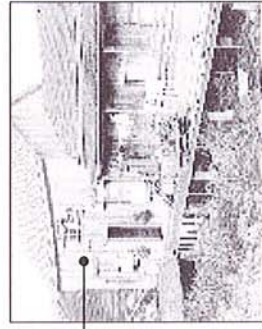




Recreate the rough yet strangely organized interior of a bunkhouse for single men.



Use the idea of the workers' clothesline to interpret the types of clothing and textiles they used and wore, as well as to hold interpretive images and text.

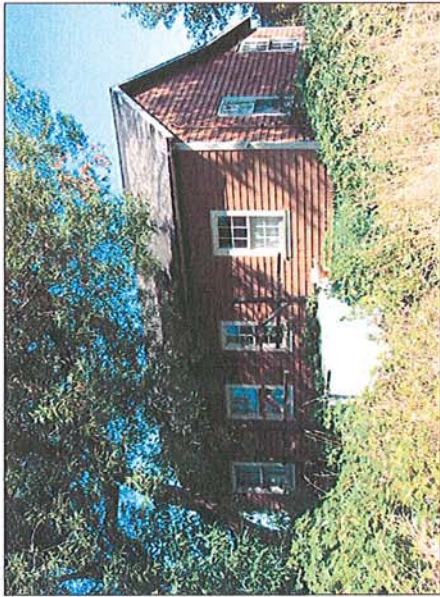


Recreate the exterior life of the building on the immediate boardwalk.



Use a variety of media to insert interpretive information into the ground plane.

5.5 Stilt Piling House No. 2: Japanese in the Fishery



Interpretive significance:

The primary interpretation of Stilt Piling house 2 will focus on the Japanese and their families in the fishing industry. The house was owned at one time by Shoichi Yoshida, likely a Japanese fisherman, and was subsequently taken over by the federal government during the internment. It was later owned by another fisherman, David William Reid. Unverified reports identify this house as the dwelling of Chief Point of the Musqueam First Nation. If the latter can be substantiated, it may be possible to interpret both if necessary, using as one interpretive objective the evolution of this building over time.

The house will have controlled physical access from the boardwalk through the front door, and visual access only through the front and back windows, as well as a window on the west side. The rooms of the house are identified on the floor plan on the following page.

Oral histories (Coby Kobayashi) describe small single family dwellings at Britannia as having a big kitchen to the east, a living room, one bedroom downstairs and three up, a boathouse for boat repair, net storage, boat, boat slip and chicken house.

Interpretive objectives/visitor experience goals:

- Visitors should understand the relationship between the fishery and the canning industry.
- The history of the Japanese in Richmond and Britannia should be discussed, in the context of their skills at boat building and fishing gained in their homeland, as well as the maintenance of close ties with Japan.
- Describe the life of a Japanese fisherman and his family at the Britannia

Cannery or in Steveston more generally, and to give visitors a sense of participation in the daily life of the family - the various tasks of the family members, the skills and discipline needed by each, and discovering the life histories of Japanese families at Britannia.

- Because of its history, the house represents a good opportunity to discuss the internment of the Japanese in 1942, as well as early restrictions on immigration and fishing licences.
- Discuss Richmond's low elevation and high water table, the necessity for dykes and ditches, and the construction of housing on stilts as a response to these natural conditions.
- Day to day details should be distilled from oral histories and other sources, such as playing on the dyke, net mending, cleaning fish, fishing boats, working for a cannery fleet, navigation, organization.
- There should be an understanding of how Japanese traditions, culture, activities and food were combined with the way of life in British Columbia.

Means of expression:

- Include domestic details such as photographs and children's toys to emphasize the theme of family life.
- Utilize one of the north facing rooms as an interpretive storage room where artefacts and equipment used in the fishing industry can be seen. Some of this equipment can be moved outside to the boardwalk during visiting hours and used for demonstrations.
- Interpret the second room as a child's bedroom with appropriate furnishings
- Integrate signs into the exterior boardwalk and artefacts.
- Visual and textual interpretive information should be incorporated into interior furnishings.
- The kitchen should have some hands-on exhibits including the preparation and use of salmon and details about traditional Japanese use of fish domestically.
- Use audio and video components to demonstrate 'a day in the life' of the various family members.
- Create exhibits and hands-on tactile displays or a discovery room using a variety of fishing equipment, wall treatment such as a photograph for the visible portion of the sitting room, kitchen implements, soft furnishings, food.

Building conservation:

- Retain interior finishes including the wainscoting and install wooden floors in the kitchen and bedrooms.
- Retain and repair the wall treatments in the hallway.
- Furnishings should be modest but comfortable and suitable to the time period 1900-1950.

Exterior interpretation:

- Utilize the boardwalk around the house for interpretive features, such as nets, net racks, buckets, tools etc. relating to the fishing industry.
- If possible, moor a boat in the pond next to the house, and recreate a chicken house.
- Ensure that the house's support on stilts in the pond is clearly visible.

"Like in the old days all the net mending, mending net and all that, you know, they'd [the Japanese fishermen] get together and help each other, they don't hire any help. If I hit a snag and tore my net well we all get together and help mend the net. If yours got torn now we all get together and help."

Jimmy Hing oral history.

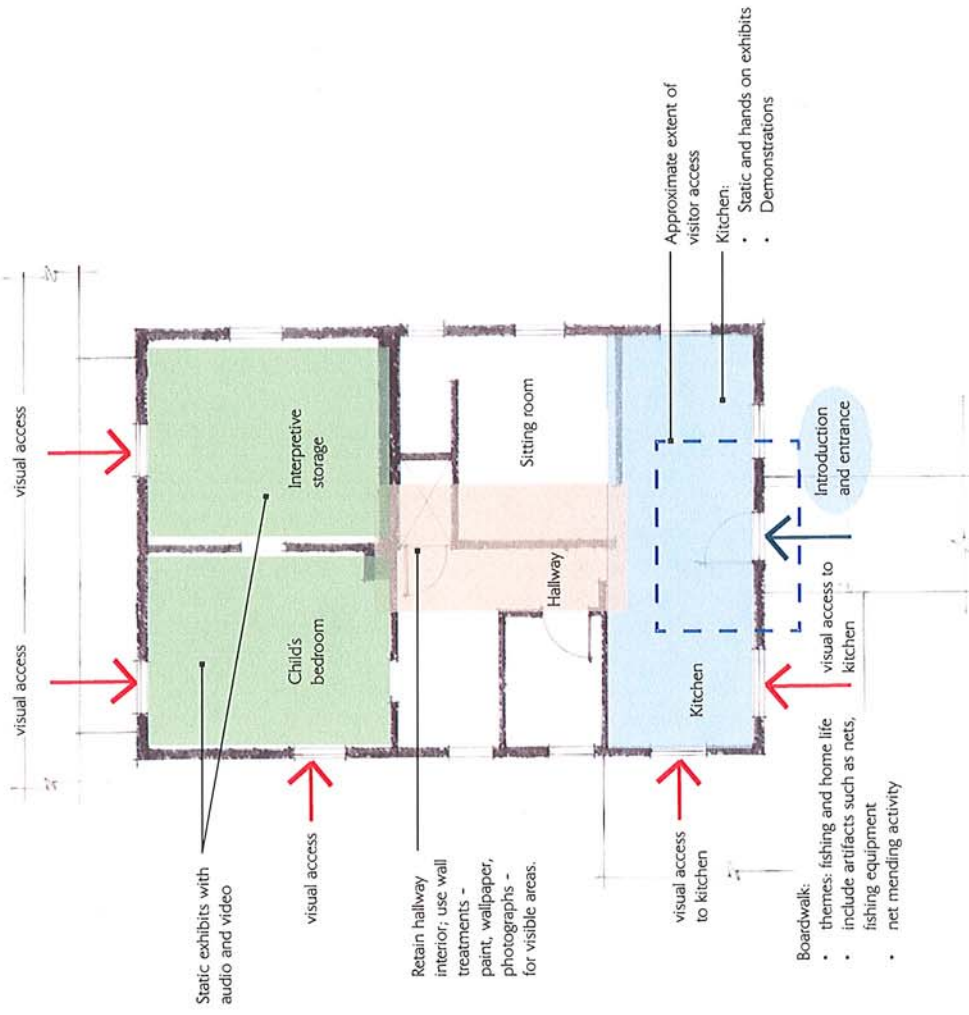
Stilt Piling House No. 2 Layout

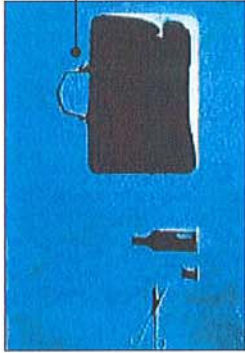
Proposed layout for Stilt Piling House No. 2 includes both visual and physical access to the building as shown. The homes of Japanese fishermen were described as modest but comfortable.

There will be limited entry into the kitchen area from the boardwalk.

Bedroom furnishings should be re-created for visual access only. If possible the kitchen should be reinstated as a working kitchen as this is the only opportunity on the site to explore actual cooking methods and to have food demonstrations.

For storage rooms use window coverings so there is no visual access from outside.





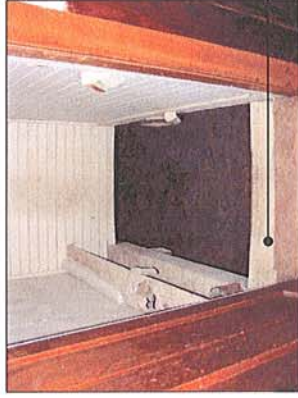
Use hands on techniques and panels with appropriate imagery to show activities related to the fishing industry.



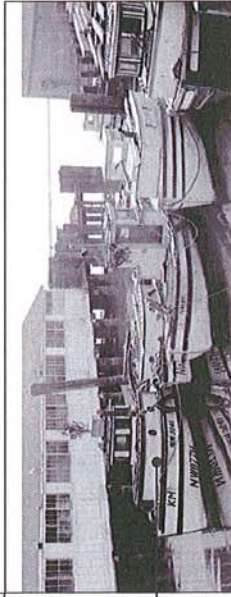
Demonstrations should include net making or mending, types of nets, the way they work and the various floats.



Discuss and display different types of boats. If possible, have a boat moored in the pond near the entrance to the house. Use boat imagery in artefacts and signs.



Retain and recreate the kitchen at the front of the house if possible. Ensure interpretation looks at the construction of the house on stilts and the physical/geographical reasons for it.



5.6 China House: Exploring a Culture



Means of expression:

- Introduction and entry: Entry from the boardwalk into the China House should be designed with a transition that facilitates the movement from the outside into another world.
- Flexibility will be a key factor in the interpretive installations in the Bunkhouse. Part of the lower floor should depict the communal area with part of it used for storage. The upper floor should show the bunks and cubicles (three bunks per cubicle) that were part of the sleeping arrangements, as well as clothing storage, bedding materials and personal effects.

Building conservation:

- Retain the existing wooden floors, wooden interior and staircase. Repair the windows and establish the new entry to be similar to the original. The rough wood interior (walls and floor) should be retained.

Exterior Interpretation:

- Include a small food garden, water barrel, and outdoor cooking facilities. Bunkhouses often kept domestic animals which could be interpreted through panels, artworks and sound effects.

- Leisure pursuits undertaken by the Chinese can form the basis for interpretive activities such as kite making or other art forms. Have hands-on exhibits that show traditional games; mah jong tiles with written rules, or third person interpretation to teach the rules, for example.
- Use sign panels and demonstrations to show a typical day in the life of a Chinese contract worker. Use audio and video components to demonstrate 'a day in the life' of the various family members - video or slide images could be projected onto movable screens or scrims.
- Food preparation as interpretive demonstrations or for special events. This could focus on the ethnicity of foods that were prepared in the various mess houses and bunkhouses by the different ethnic groups, where it came from, traditional diets, and the role of on-site store. Exhibits should include foodstuffs used by the China House cook, such as rice and vegetables, and cooking and eating implements.
- The existing interior finishes should retain a degree of roughness. Furnishings should include simple wooden benches and tables. Install a wood burning stove on the lower floor.
- Provide low wooden benches and tables, bamboo and rattan sheets and floor coverings. Utilize different types of materials in the interpretive/exhibit design as a way of expressing the character of the place and as a tactile interpretive feature, including bamboo screens, rough cotton fabric, paper.
- Put traditional decorations on the walls or on the movable panels; charms, prayers, fends.
- Install a flag on the exterior of the building.
- Interior lighting should be dim and the atmosphere smoky. Investigate the use of smell as an interpretive feature, including incense, opium, cooking smells. The use of projected images would assist in creating a mysterious and exotic atmosphere.

Interpretive significance:

The Chinese Bunkhouse represents the Chinese experience in Steveston, in particular within the economics and society of the canning industry. In addition to its interpretive role, the bunkhouse will function as a public space for gatherings or meetings of different community groups.

Interpretive objectives/visitor experience goals:

- Visitors to the Chinese Bunkhouse will be introduced to the role of the Chinese workers in the canneries, and that they were the major labour force in the canneries, particularly on the canning lines.
- Explain the hierarchy of ethnic labour and labour types that existed in the canneries.
- Understand the ways in which Chinese culture was integrated into cannery life.
- Reinforce the sub-themes relating to Chinese workers and their history, living conditions, social life, and economic conditions as contract workers, and their other occupations when the fishing season ended.
- Describe the role of the Chinese contractor in the cannery system.
- Explain the construction, layout and role of the bunkhouse and the reality of communal life for Chinese workers.
- Make the connection to the northern canneries and the consolidation of the industry within a few key members such as the Bell-Irvings and B. C. Packers.
- Understand the attitude towards the Chinese early in the 19th century, and the type of discrimination that they faced.



China House Layout

One of the challenges of the China House is the need for the space to permit multiple uses while still retaining the interpretive experience. To overcome this, the lower floor should have a degree of flexibility in its furnishings. It is suggested that the lower floor be constructed as a stage set, with panels and furniture that can be easily moved into the proposed storage area during public functions.

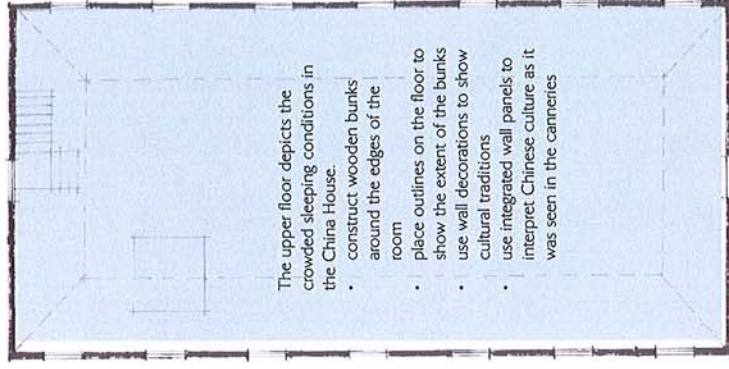
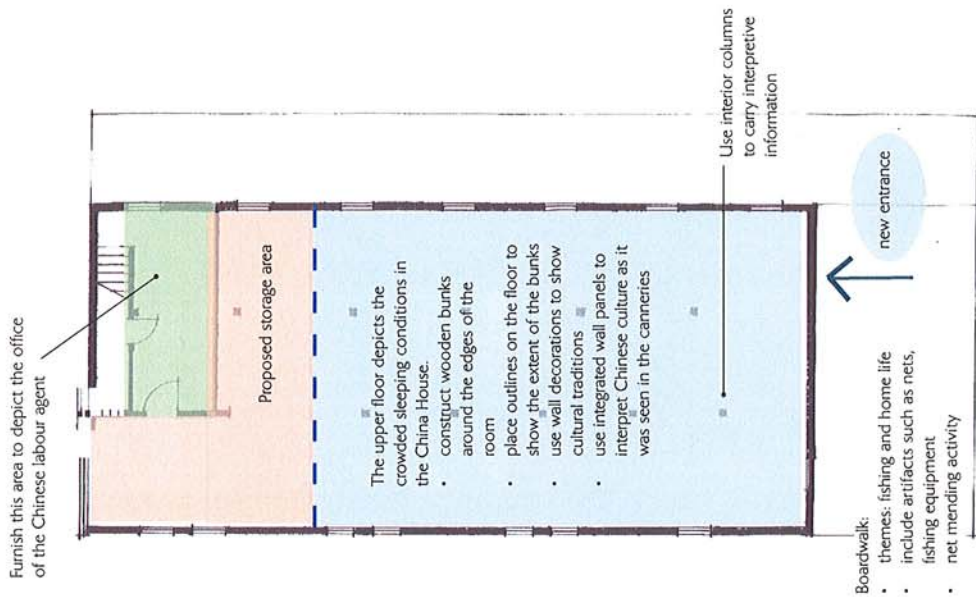
The sensual nature of the proposed China House interpretation can be used to advantage - fabrics, colours, wall decorations, bamboo, textures - to conceal the interior furnishings during public events.

Access to the top floor would be through the storage area and the Chinese labour agent's office. The office can be designed to be functional, and the storage area arranged in such a way as to retain some interpretive value (similar to the interpretive storage proposed for Stilt House No. 2). Required dimensions for the proposed storage area would be worked out during the detailed design phase.

The change in entry to the south end of the building means the loss of the small foyer area at the original entry.

"Every cannery has its 'China House', which is a large, cheap-looking wooden building, designed to hold 40 or 50 Chinamen employed. It is often distinguished by the dragon flag of China floating from a pole attached to the roof".

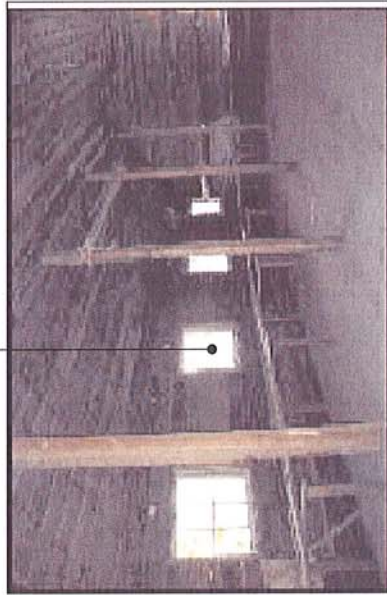
Reverend Appleyard quoted in Duncan, *Saltholmeopolis*, p. 73.



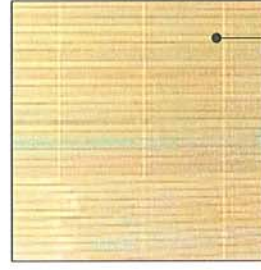
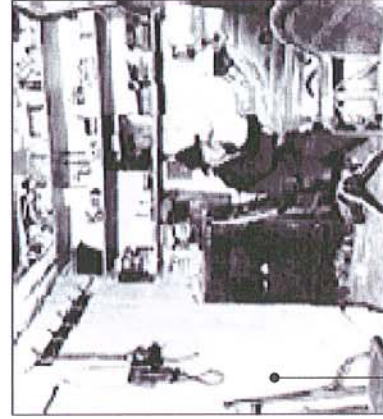
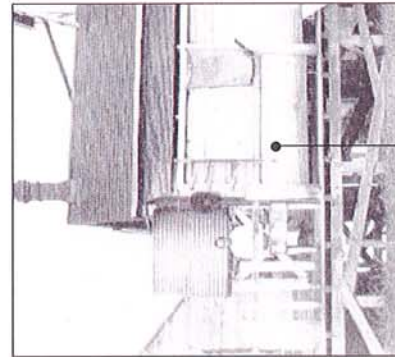
Reflect the influences of Chinese culture: a map of the Chinese Empire in 1910; the flag of Imperial China from 1890-1912.



Recreate the China House sleeping quarters on the top floor.



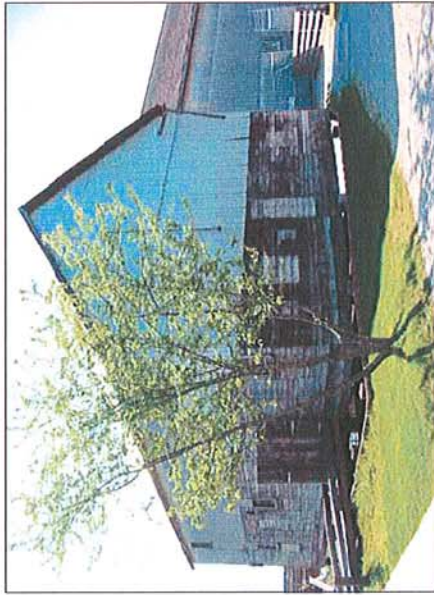
Have hands on exhibits and demonstrations of Chinese games and crafts.



Use a variety of materials in the interior

Illustrate aspects of the Chinese experience, such as the China House cook and the labour contractor.

5.7 Japanese Duplex: Ties to Japan



Interpretive significance:

The Japanese Duplex presents an opportunity to show the living conditions and culture of Japanese canning and fishing families. While the focus of the Silt House No. 2 interpretation is primarily on the salmon fishery and a single family Japanese home, the Japanese Duplex will contrast the story of Japanese families in communal housing and their ties to Japan.

Interpretive objectives/visitor experience goals:

- Visitors to the Japanese Duplex should understand the living conditions of two Japanese families working in the canning and fishing industries and how their lives contrasted with other groups.
- The notion and significance of the cluster of Japanese dwellings at Britannia should be explored, indicating both the division of labour and race, and the idea of communal dwelling.
- There should be an understanding of the experience of Japanese women in the canneries, such as being brought as wives from Japan.
- Address the idea of whole families working in the canneries, as well as the experience of children and how they were schooled.
- Discuss the ways in which Japanese children were cared for and what their lives were like: being carried in a backpack in the cannery, or attending early communal day care, the mori house. This may be an opportunity to understand the work of the Sisters of the Atonement with the Japanese and the day care that was run out of their church.
- From a working perspective, the interpretation in the Japanese Duplex should explore the notions of labour and the various Japanese associations, such as the Kyokai, that came into being during the fishing industry.

The interior of the building should express the experience of emigrating from Japan, and the traces of the culture that came with the people arriving to work in the fishery.

Means of expression:

- The interior of the Duplex should show the individual living arrangements for two families. Include a wood stove, cooking and domestic facilities, coal oil lamps, how children had a bath, and other domestic arrangements.
- Use demonstrations of activities such as net mending, and the storage and use of fishing gear.
- Illustrate the types of clothing that were worn by the families.
- Interior furnishings should include both traditional Japanese fittings that would have been brought from Japan, and the simple furnishings of cannery housing, such as a tin bath, wooden beds with futons, simple wood tables and chairs.
- Use multi-sensory interpretation to recreate living conditions, such as the cold interior, sounds of the water under the house, flooding.
- Recreate a scenario of a meeting to discuss labour issues that affected Japanese workers and their families. Use text, images and artifacts to describe the topics that were discussed, such as worker's rights or the price of fish. Recordings could also be used to recreate conversations.
- Provide details such as driftwood piled in front of the house for firewood, paper placed on the walls for insulation.
- Recreate the journey of a child going to school, to the store, playing with friends through games, maps, books and papers, floor mazes.

Building conservation:

- Restore interior walls based on the oral history accounts of a central corridor with a living area on each side. Replace walls if necessary to establish privacy for each of the two dwelling units.
- Reinstall the boarded over windows to allow natural light into the interior.

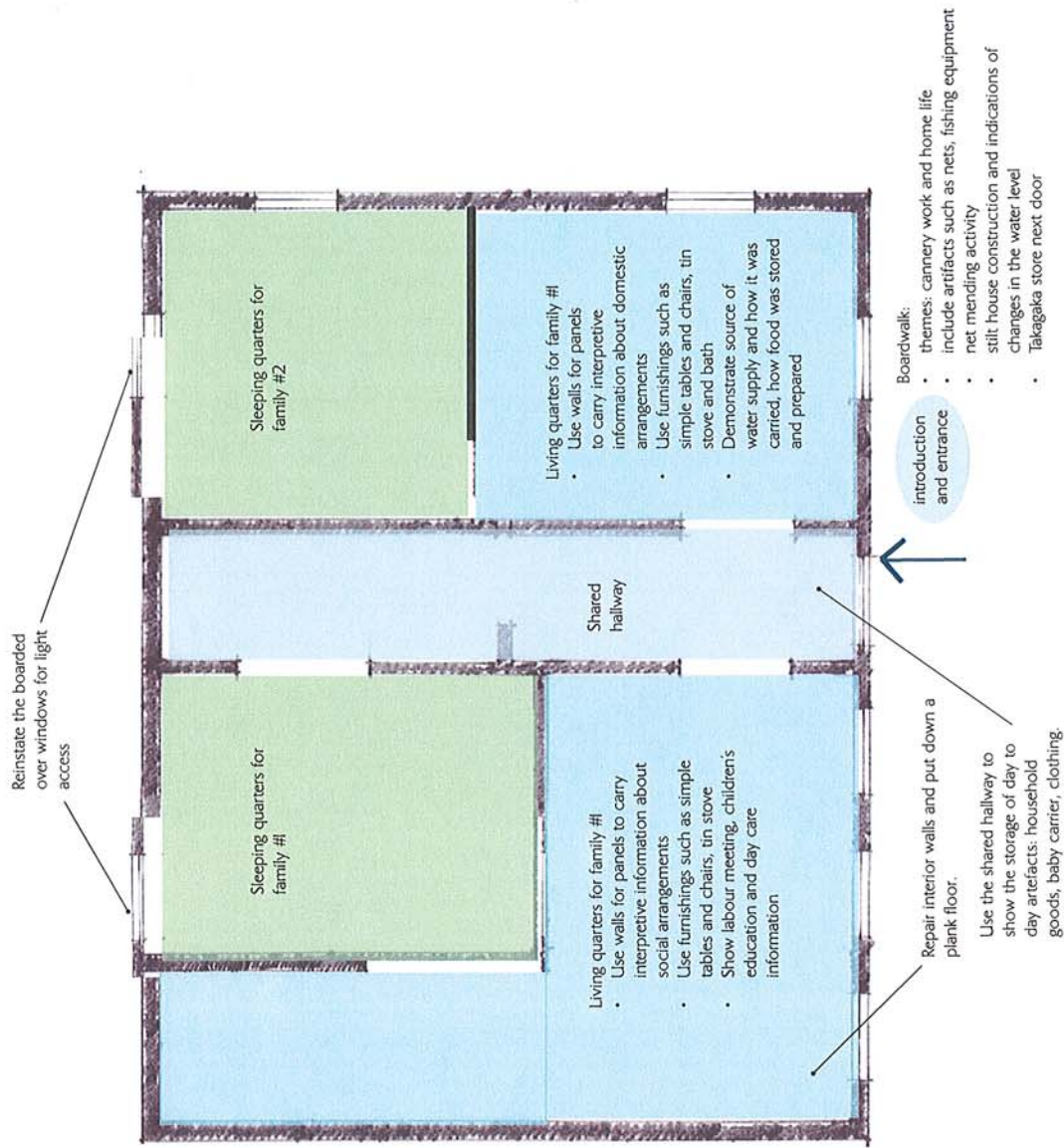
Exterior interpretation:

- If possible, show the footprints of other buildings that made up the Japanese enclave that existed around the location of the Japanese Duplex.
- Recreate the footprint of the Takagaka store next door and interpret in the floor plan some of the items that were available for purchase, through impressions in concrete, text, art or other means. Use this in combination with a hand held brochure or one of the children's clue seeking activities.

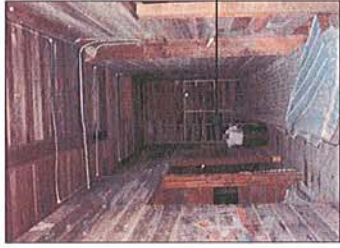
Japanese Duplex Layout

"I used to go out there and all the Japanese live around the dyke here in shacks, you know, in unpainted houses like this one here. And they go to work at the cannery, filling cans you know. It's 90% almost, Japanese women that work the cannery, filling cans."

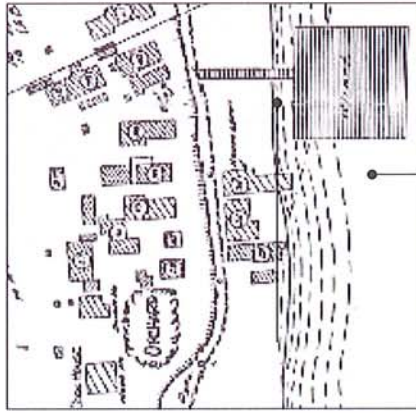
Jimmy Fling oral history



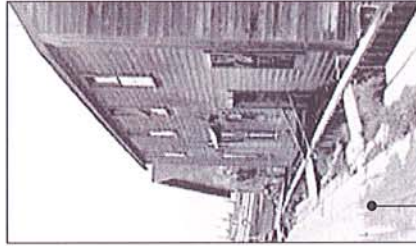
Demonstrations should include net making or mending, types of nets, the way they work and the various floats.



Reconstruct interior walls to reflect living quarters for two families, with a main corridor from the front entry that connects them.



Interpret the concept of the Japanese enclave and the Takagaka store using ground plane features and sign panels.



Interpret the entry experience of a building on stilts.



Insert building footprints and information on the Takagaka store into the ground plane. This concept can also be used to show changes in river water level as oral histories describe flooding.

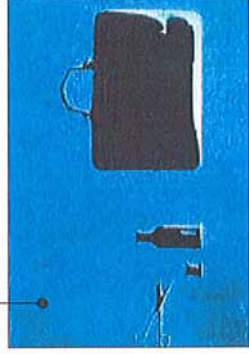
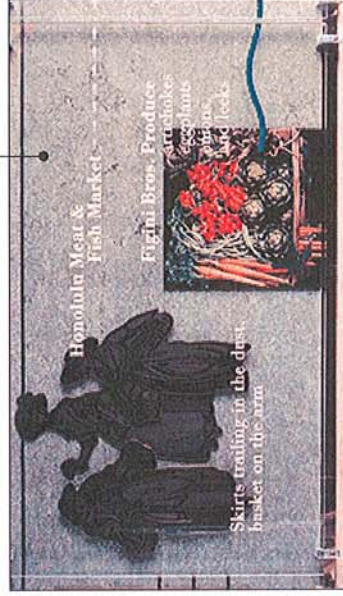


6.0 Interpretive Signs and Wayfinding

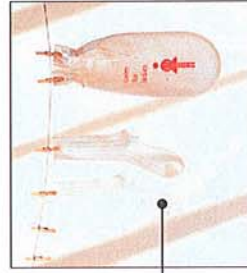
Design principles: interpretive markers and signs

The following principles apply to the presentation of written and graphic information for interpretation and exhibits, both interior and exterior.

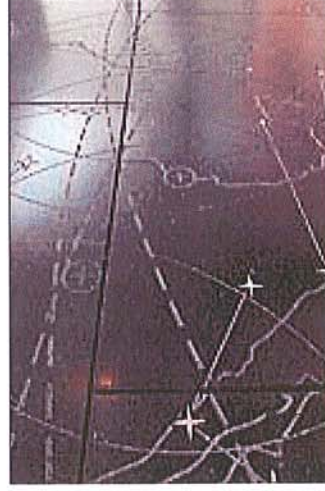
- Explore different material as appropriate, such as cloth (laundry, flags, sails, nets), paper (letters, lists, books, newspaper), stone, wood, metal, bamboo, glass
- Explore different forms for signs (size, shape, format, colour) based on site-inspired elements, architecture, artefacts and features
- Integrate textual material into interpretive exhibits by responding to the story line, as well as using discrete signs or labels
- Create discrete signs that can be a surprising was of presenting material - the 'aha' factor
- Use artefacts as signs and carriers of information (one source of ideas is the early site inventories in the Bell-Irving collection)
- Use artefacts as symbols and icons relating to the social history and physical fabric of Britannia and the historic zone.
- Utilize all dimensions - ground plane, overhead, suspended, vertical walls - to carry interpretive information.
- Use a melding of words, images, forms and space.



Use various materials, techniques - collage, impression - and meaningful graphic symbols on any interior sign panels to convey interpretive information.



Use a variety of materials - domestic, industrial - and different type and graphics as ways of carrying interpretive information. The materials themselves become interpretive elements.



Signs can be tactile as well as visual.



Design hands-on activities into interpretive signs and markers.

Site-wide and historic zone wayfinding

Currently there are two sign programs on or near the Britannia site: park and trail informational and interpretive signs and Britannia Shipyard interpretive signs. There is one Britannia site identity sign at the west entrance to the site. Britannia site signs should be developed into a comprehensive set of components that can be adapted for use in a number of applications as the site develops.

It is also possible for the wayfinding system to be integrated into the interpretation for the historic zone. Wayfinding signs should be designed in conjunction with interpretive and exhibit graphics.

Fundamental principles of wayfinding should be applied to the site in order to create an environment which is as self-navigable as possible. This includes identifying arrival points, destination zones and decision points, creating clear and memorable paths, using consistent graphics, and the use of landmarks and surface materials, both existing and created. The public realm sign component package should reflect the historic character and identity of the Britannia Site and suit its unique setting, while being crisp and contemporary in design.

A person must know where they are in order to form a plan to find their way to somewhere else, so spaces must have a distinct identity. Wayfinding adds orientation cues to natural landscape features, including entrances, signs, names, colour, artwork, landscaping and sound. Wayfinding information must be broken down into manageable parts, seeking the fewest signs using the fewest words, and proceeding in a hierarchy of information.

Britannia's existing setting provides a number of natural landmarks and orientation clues, including the river, the boardwalk and bulkhead and the buildings themselves, that provide a starting point for wayfinding design. Landmarks that function as interpretive features (telephone poles, artefacts, paving) can be integrated into the wayfinding system.

The final site wayfinding plan will include the following components:

- Site analysis plan to identify landmarks, reference points, decision points
- System components
- Wayfinding component location plan
- Conceptual and design intent drawings
- Message schedule

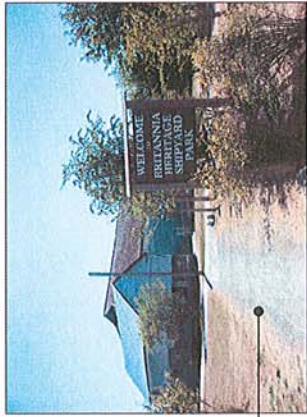
A wayfinding language for Britannia would include entry features, ground plane markers, landmarks and a discrete number of signs. A system of icons and symbols could be developed that would reflect the multicultural and hierarchical nature of the site. Materials would be selected to capture the character of the site.



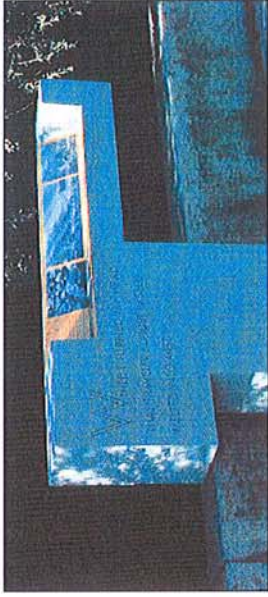
Preliminary recommendations for wayfinding

- Conduct a site analysis to divide the site into a series of destination zones. These are the larger scale areas to which visitors will be directed, after which they will receive more detailed information on the features within each zone. This will set up a logical sequence of movement throughout the site.
- Create a recognizable entry for all pedestrian access points into the site.
- Ensure that arriving visitors know where the 'centre of the site' is, where they can orient themselves and receive information.
- Include pedestrian directional signs to Steveston, and other neighbourhood features as appropriate, with walking distances or times.
- Use the buildings as reference points, particularly the Shipyard building, and utilize the river and the boardwalk as site orientation features.
- Commence wayfinding to the destination zones at the at the crossroads near the eastern parking lot and at the western parking lot/entry to the site.
- Park instructional signs should be integrated into the overall wayfinding plan and graphics package, as should the Britannia interpretive signs.
- Using the boardwalk as a starting point, create memorable paths that move through the site.

For the historic zone, visitors will be directed to the entry/giftshop building (Murchison House No. 1) where they will receive further orientation to the exhibits within the historic zone. This orientation can consist of a combination of signs, landmarks, markers, audio and hand-held brochures.



Signs or arrival elements should occur at each entry to the site.

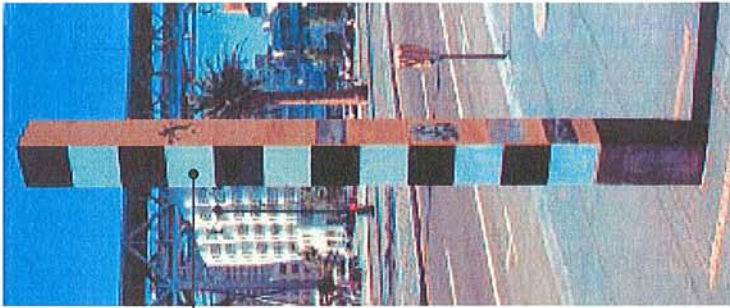


Signs and furnishings should be carefully located and reflect the character of the site.



Park regulatory and site information signs should be integrated visually and spatially. Signs should be provided that give directional and distance information to Steveston and elsewhere.

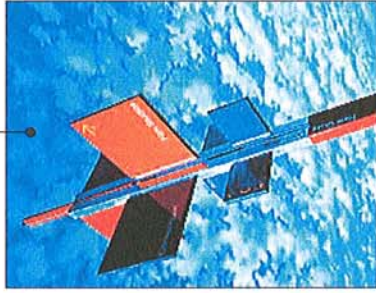
Site elements can contain both interpretive and wayfinding information.



Markers can be a surprising discovery both inside and out.



Use different materials and appropriate designs for signs that reflect the particular character of the site.



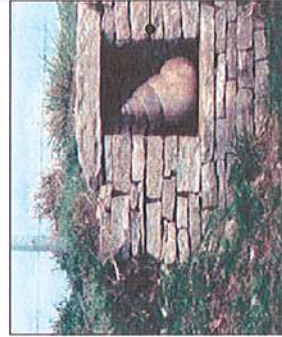
Use a variety of materials to carry interpretive and wayfinding information.



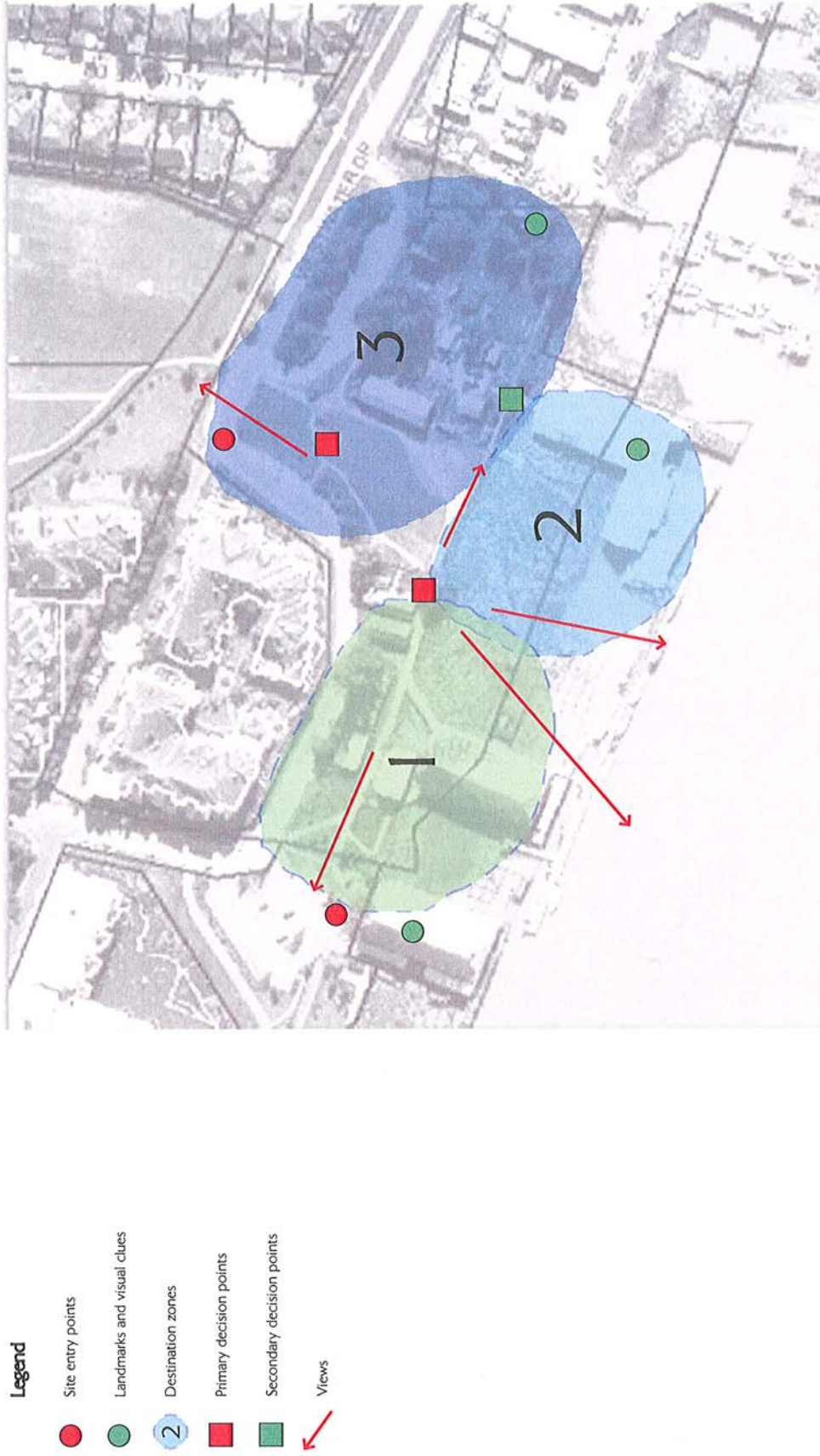
The ground plane can be used to show directions, interpretive information, games or mazes.



Creative use of artefacts both inside the buildings and out.



6.1 Site Analysis for Wayfinding



7.0 Exhibit Design

Using the interpretive plan as a starting point, the next steps in the process will include the design of the exhibits for the interiors and, where appropriate, the exteriors of each of the buildings in the historic zone, as well as the historic zone itself. Exhibit design plans should be prepared for each component of the historic zone and address the following:

a. Exhibit Brief

- Core Idea
- Thematic Framework
- Thematic Structure
- Storyline

b. Resource Plan

- Materials
- Artefacts, specimens or works of art
- Graphics
- Other media

c. Exhibition Scripts and Text

d. Public Programme Plan

- Print and electronic media
- Curatorial
- Education

e. Evaluation and Implementation

f. Temporary or Changing Exhibits

Temporary and/or changing exhibits are desirable as a means to ensuring the return of regular visitors, sparking a new interest in those who have not previously visited, and attracting the attention of cultural tourists. All of the buildings have the potential for small-scale temporary or changing exhibits. These could include:

- Changing exhibits in the front room of Murchison House No. 2.
- Exterior installations on the front porch of the gift shop building; changing, small scale exhibits in the gift shop lobby.
- Temporary exhibitions by artists inspired by the site, furnishings and subjects in the historic zone.
- Programming or activity that expresses and individual theme or sub-theme.



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