

PORT ALBERNI

VALLEY VIBE

SUMMER 2021

A LOOK BACK
IN TIME

RIVERBEND
REVIVAL

BUSINESS
SPOTLIGHTS

LANDMARKS

#EXPLORE
PORTALBERNI



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- Dispose of all food scraps, including meat, bones and dairy, as well as yard waste and soiled papers like greasy pizza boxes.
- If you're using a liner it should be paper, not plastic. Plastic bags cannot be accepted even if labeled compostable.
- Organics carts have bear-proof locking mechanisms. Make sure to unclip lock from the cart and hook the clips together, when placing roadside.

Recycling:

- The following items can go in blue cart for pickup: mixed paper, cardboard and boxboard; paper packaging that contained liquids; paper beverage cups and lids; tin and aluminum containers or foil; plastic bottles, containers and tubs under 25L; and empty aerosol cans.
- Leave all recycling items loose in the cart without a liner or bags.
- Do not leave any overflow, all items must fit in the cart.



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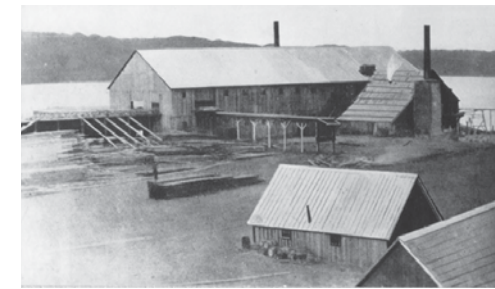
PN287 The far right of this image is the current site of the Harbour Quay a dirt road leads to New Alberni with the Somass Hotel to the left with buildings and trees in the background. circa 1910

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Exploring the Landmarks of the Alberni Valley

Living in Port Alberni, you have the unique opportunity to glimpse into the past and present all around our beautiful town. From the rich history of the First Nations shown throughout North and South Port, to the heritage buildings scattered throughout the Valley, almost anywhere you look you'll be met with a spot in this town with a rich story of its heritage. Take a journey with us this summer as we explore the fascinating landmarks we've become so accustomed to seeing in our day to day life, maybe you'll learn something new!



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PORT ALBERNI CITY HALL

The Port Alberni City Hall that we know today is located at 4850 Argyle St, and it officially opened its doors on May 20, 1959. This is the third City Hall in the Alberni Valley, but the first of the amalgamated communities. The first City Hall was built in 1903 and was located on Kingsway Ave, but wasn't officially used as City Hall until 1912 after the city was incorporated. The second City Hall was built in 1928 on Argyle and 5th, just up the street from the current City Hall building; it was demolished after the third and current City Hall was built. Our current City Hall originally housed the library and public health unit. This building along with the Federal Building located directly across from City Hall represented a new civic core for Port Alberni following the economic boom of 1958.



AVM Photo Collection PN00102 Alberni's first council. A group portrait of seven gentlemen in three piece suits. Two sit at a wooden table. Five sit or stand behind wooden partitions. Identified l-r: John Grieve, Frank Gibson, A.W. Neill, C.F. Bishop - Mayor, George Forrest, James Hills, G.A. Spencer. Written on the back in pencil "Pioneer Group".

The present day City Hall is valued greatly because it maintains continuity to the Alberni Valley's past. Designed by architects Wade, Stockdill and Armour of Victoria, this building portrays the 1950's International Style architecture with horizontal articulation, horizontal bands of blue porcelain- enamel panels, and clear glazed surfaces. It is built from wood, steel, and glass, which was typical of this era. The landscape offers a look into the past, with a war memorial, old growth log, a shelter made of timbers from the first sawmill in the Valley, and a lilac bush descended from an original plant owned by A. Waterhouse, one of the city's founders. After the amalgamation of Alberni and Alberni Valley in 1967, this building became a symbol of the newly integrated community and combined municipality of Port Alberni.

The amalgamation of the two cities was the first voluntary amalgamation in Canada. After the tsunami of 1967 the two cities recognized that they needed to work together to recover after hundreds of homes were destroyed. The amalgamation allowed the city to combine resources and recover losses from the devastation of the tsunami. Although there was still a divide between the residents of Alberni and Port Alberni, over the years that divide has lessened and the Valley has become one.

ROLLIN ARTS CENTRE

The Rollin Arts Centre and Garden is located at 3061 8th Ave and was originally built in 1914 as a home for Fred and Ellen Rollin. This simple two story building has a simple wooden exterior with a hip roof, and a balcony off the second floor. The building offers a spectacular view into the early years of Port Alberni, providing links to the memories of early settlers to the Valley, and is now home to our community arts centre and public garden.



AVM Photograph Collection PN03943 circa 1913. Fred Rollin stands in the yard of his home, in front of a picket fence. He wears a suit, white shirt and tie and flowers in his lapel.

The beautiful garden pays tribute to Fred Rollin, who was an avid gardener, outdoorsmen, and naturalist. Fred was known throughout the city for his spectacular garden and unusual species of trees, shrubs, and spring bulbs. The grounds and garden were developed in 1987 and feature a formal garden, native plants, a traditional Japanese garden, a classic fountain and balustrade, a terrace and gazebo, and a children's garden. The garden is still maintained today and offers a peaceful respite from the hub of the Harbour Quay surrounding areas.

While the garden pays tribute to Fred, the present use of

the Rollin Arts building pays homage to Ellen Rollin; she was one of only two music teachers in the Valley for many years. It became a permanent arts centre in 1977 with the help of many volunteers, and is one of the first arts council operated centres in BC.

The Rollin Arts Centre is a symbol of those who have committed themselves to bringing a strong presence of art to the Alberni Valley. It offers an art gallery and gift shop that showcases a variety of local arts and crafts from over 150 local artists as well as a peaceful respite from city life in its gardens.

TRAIN STATION + RAILWAY

The railway system on Vancouver Island was originally known as the Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway (E&N); construction began in 1884 and by 1905 had expanded the original E&N Railway line to Port Alberni. The railway name has since changed from E&N to Vancouver Island Railway, and finally the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) that we know today. The railway was incorporated in 1883 by coal baron Robert Dunsmuir to support the coal and lumber industries, as well as the Royal Navy Base in Esquimalt.



AVM Photograph Collection PN00994 Dec. 1911 First train leaving Port Alberni. Group of people standing on the platform at the station. Train is in the background, approaching the station.

The first train came to Port Alberni in December 1911, arriving in the newly built train station. Between 1911 and 1953, the train station was a bustling part of Port Alberni, with trains coming in and out of town delivering passengers, mail, and goods to the Valley. While the train was used primarily to ship lumber and coal, there were

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passenger lines that connected throughout Vancouver Island. The train station became the social and economic hub of the community, with crowds of people excitedly waiting for the next train to arrive.

At its peak, the Canadian Pacific Railway had 45 stations on the main line, and 8 in Port Alberni. Passenger service ran until 1953, when it was discontinued by CPR. The last remaining station in Port Alberni is located at the entrance to the Harbour Quay and is registered as a heritage building due to its value as a key early entry and departure point of the city; representing a connection with the other communities on Vancouver Island between 1912 and 1970. The Train Station was built in 1911 from drawings done by R.A Bainbridge, it was updated in the 1950's, reflecting the changing nature of business and transport in the Valley, the last update was done in 1990 when the second storey was added.

Since 1983 the Alberni Pacific Railway has been maintained by volunteers from the Western Vancouver Island Industrial Heritage Society. This group of volunteers were responsible for restoring the Port Alberni Railway Station in 1990 to its original appearance. Up until 2018 when the 1929 Baldwin Steam Engine had boiler issues, the community enjoyed train rides from McLeans Mill to the

Port Alberni Train Station. The WVIHHS hopes to have their trains up and running in the future. Today, the station is used as a museum and ticket office for the train station.

HISTORICALLY THE ORANGE BRIDGE (ALSO KNOWN AS RIVERBEND BRIDGE)

The Riverbend Bridge, or more commonly known by locals as The Orange Bridge, hasn't always been the steel structure we know today. The first bridge was built as a wooden truss structure in 1890 by Mr. Pinkerton, who was a local pioneer. The following year the acreage at rivers bend was purchased by James Thomson who moved from Vancouver to the Alberni Valley with his wife and five children. It was known for many years as the Thomson Bridge.

Between 1890-1913 the bridge was replaced by the Rockett Brothers before Norman Wood erected another wooden truss in 1913. George Cathcard was responsible for the final wooden bridge project in 1928 before the Dominion

Bridge Company upgraded from a wood to steel structure.

For decades the bridge was painted a bright orange colour, which gave it the historical name of The Orange Bridge. Unfortunately, maintaining the orange colour proved difficult, due to fading, chipping, and difficulty colour matching. The orange colour was discontinued in



AVM Photograph Collection circa 1913. Five automobiles are lined up on the corner of Johnston and Victoria Quay at the junction of the Somass River and Kitsuksis Creek. Many people are gathered there as well. Boat "Dexter", seen in the river, belonged to Wallace Fisheries, Kildonan.

the mid-1990's and the bridge was painted the grey colour known today. As locals still reference the Riverbend Bridge as the Orange Bridge, it has caused some confusion for travellers making their way through the Alberni Valley. The Orange Bridge name has stuck with us through the ages!

The bridge is a hot spot in the summer for local youths, who use the surrounding cliffside to jump in the water and cool off. The Somass River which runs below the bridge is a part of the salmon run, which takes place from mid-September to November.

CLOCK TOWER AT THE HARBOUR QUAY

The Clock Tower at the Harbour Quay was constructed between 1983-1984 after Fred Duncan, a long time owner-publisher of the Alberni Valley Times, made a contribution through his estate. Prior to the amalgamation, the Valley had two rival magazines, the Twin City Times and the West Coast Advocate. Fred purchased the West Coast Advocate after the amalgamation and combined the two magazines

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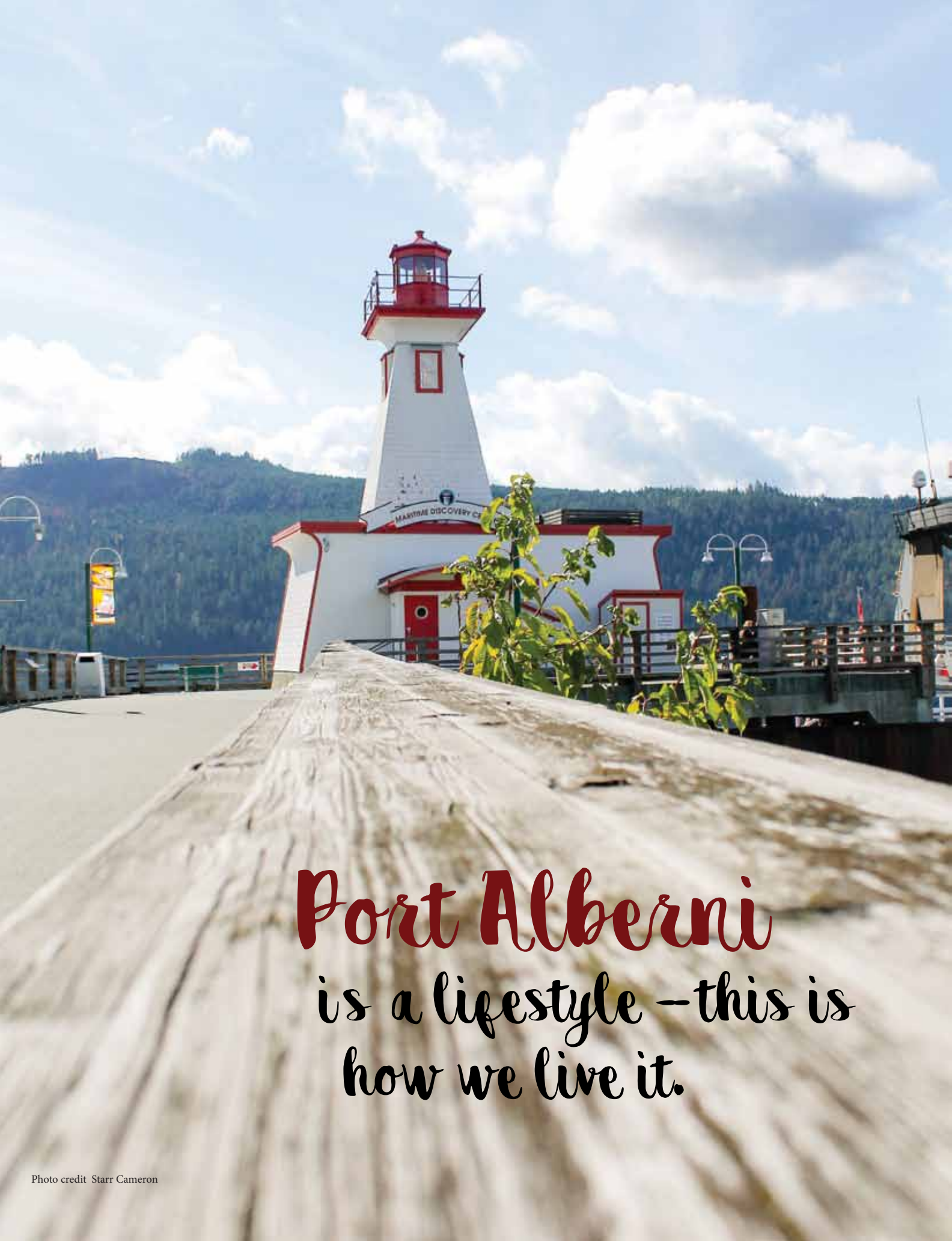
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how we live it.

Photo credit Starr Cameron

into one, the Alberni Valley Times. The Alberni Valley Times published daily on weekdays from 1967- 2007.

In 2018 the city of Port Alberni entered into a partnership with the Tseshah First Nations to give the Harbour Quay Clock Tower a facelift. Included in the facelift is an art piece which is being designed by Willard Gallic Jr, a Tseshah artist, and manufactured by Electron Metalwork. The art piece is said to portray the history of the Harbour Quay, which was originally used by the Tseshah First Nations as a winter village where they celebrated their yearly harvest with a “wolf ritual”. The city has started referring to the clock tower as a Story Tower, which is fitting based on the direction it is going. The Story Tower will compliment the new mural located at the entrance of the Harbour Quay, titled Building Relationships Brick by Brick, nicely.

LIGHTHOUSE AND HOME TO THE MARITIME HERITAGE SOCIETY

Home to the Port Alberni Maritime Heritage Society, formed in 1989 to preserve maritime heritage on the West Coast, is the Lighthouse down the inlet from the Harbour Quay. While the base of the lighthouse was built in the 1990’s by the Maritime Heritage Society, the lantern was donated by the Chrome Island Lighthouse in 1989. Originally located atop the keeper’s house in 1891, the Chrome Island Lighthouse was upgraded to a skeletal tower with an enclosed lantern room in 1922 before finally upgrading to a concrete tower in 1989. Chrome Island is located on the East Coast of Vancouver Island at the entrance to Baynes Sound just off the southern tip of Denman Island.

While the beacon on the lighthouse does work and is turned on during the day in the summer season, the lighthouse building is primarily used as a museum to help educate the public on maritime history. Inside you will find displays of the original lighthouse structures and their keepers, as well as a variety of other materials of local maritime history. The heroic story of Minnie Patterson of Cape Beale Lighthouse is told here; Minnie and her husband Tom kept the light from 1895 to 1908. In December of 1906, a storm rolled in, and with it, the Coloma ship taking a cargo of lumber from the Puget Sound to Australia. The ship sprung a leak and was spotted by the Patterson’s, unfortunately they were unable to communicate with the Bamfield Inlet to get help to the sinking ship, so Minnie and her dog ventured over 9km

on foot in the pouring rain to get help. Once she arrived in Bamfield, she found that help wasn’t there, so took it upon herself to row out to the Quadra for help. After all of this she walked back to her home at the lighthouse to care for her five children. Unfortunately, this excursion took a toll on her body and she passed away five years later.



AVM Photograph Collect PNo6589 circa 1913. George Huff's car (an early automobile) with 3 men and a woman, partly pulled off the road in Cathedral Grove. The car is dwarfed by the stand of tall trees. Capt. G.A. Huff owned several businesses in Alberni in the years around the turn of the century. He was at one time M.L.A. for Alberni Cowichan area.

In 2011 she was awarded an engraved silver tray by the Government of Canada.

CATHEDRAL GROVE

MacMillan Provincial Park, or more commonly known as Cathedral Grove has served as a gateway to the West Coast since time immemorial. Located on the traditional territories of the K’ómoks, Tseshah, and the Te’mexw peoples, the 136 hectares of protected forest serve as an intricate ecosystem for animals and plants alike. The forest is filled with Douglas-fir, Western Hemlock, Grand fir and Western Red Cedar trees, and offers the most accessible access to old growth forests. The 136 hectares of Cathedral Grove was donated by H.R MacMillan in 1944 to the BC government after numerous protests to protect the forest. Unfortunately the area surrounding the protected space was logged and threatened to harm the ecosystem within.

Once you step into the forests of MacMillan Provincial Park, it’s no surprise where the name Cathedral Grove came from; with trees reaching as high as 80 meters high in some places, the forest resembles a great cathedral,

even more beautiful than traditional gothic cathedrals. While gothic cathedrals date back hundreds of years, the forests of Cathedral Grove are over 1000 years old, with trees as old as 800 years.



AVM Photograph Collection PN00759 circa 1910. Victoria Quay. Alberni Trading Store on the right. George Drinkwater's barbershop and bathhouse - third from right, and the old Alberni Hotel is on the far end. A man stands in a wagon pulled by two horses near the store.

The presence of the local Indigenous culture can be found throughout the forest with culturally modified trees (CMT), where the bark from cedars have been stripped off, or "strip cat faces", and evidence of burn felling with blackened hollowed out trees. Cedars are considered sacred in Indigenous culture for their life-giving properties; providing shelter, tools, transportation (canoes), and Totem Poles. Cathedral Grove served as an ancient trading trail linking the East and West Coast of Vancouver Island. Connecting Mount Arrowsmith, the Beaufort Range, and Cathedral Grove was known as "Yuts-whol-aht" or "Walking through the face of Mountains."



AVM Photograph Collection PN00156 circa 1911. Construction crew preparing the site for the E & N Train Station. Somass Hotel in background.

The original road that travelled around Cameron Lake and through Cathedral Grove was unpaved, rocky, and with a lot of bends. The road travelling through the Grove was only wide enough for one car to squeeze between the massive trees. Cathedral Grove has been a tourist destination since at least the 1920's, when the Cameron Chalet was a thriving destination spot. What now takes us about 25 minutes to venture around the lake and through the Grove, would have taken considerably longer in the 1920's, especially if travelling by horse and carriage. Once the road was paved in the 1950's, and cars became more accessible, travelling through Cathedral Grove became more accessible, and continued to be a tourist hub for many travellers making their way to the West Coast of Vancouver Island.

ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH

Sitting on the corner of Elizabeth and Johnson, the original St. Andrew's church was built in 1892 by volunteers as a community project for the Presbyterian Church. In 1914 a new church was built and was entrusted to the status of church hall. Unfortunately, the new building burned down only two years later, and church goers were forced back to the original building.



PN805 - St Andrew's Presbyterian Church Johnston Road. circa 1912

The present structure was built in 1939 after it became St. Andrew's United Church in 1925. After the amalgamation in 2001 with the United Church, the building was left empty. It has since been converted into a fish and chips restaurant which has maintained the original building design inside and out.

SPROAT LAKE

Sproat Lake holds a special kind of wonder for locals, and has been a popular destination for centuries, dating back to the original First Nations of the Alberni Valley.

Sproat Lake was home to the Kleh-Koot-Aht tribe who were a part of the Hupacasath First Nations. One of the most prominent features of the lake is the Petroglyph Carvings located at Sproat Lake Provincial Park. The K'ak'awin petroglyphs are thought to depict a tsunami that raged through the valley in the 1500's, bringing ocean fish, including a killer whale, into the lake. As the teachings go, the killer whale was said to have lived in the lake for months before eventually dying on the shoreline.

Further down the lake, in the Taylor Arm section, there is an island referred to as Massacre Island. The story goes



AVM Photograph Collection PN00661 circa 1911. The first train and passengers going into Port Alberni at the Cameron Lake Chalet

that there was massive warfare going on between tribes at the Sproat Lake falls, and the Hupacasaths utilized Massacre Island as refuge from the fighting. One night they were attacked by enemies, by morning the island was littered with bodies as the Hupacasaths triumphed over their attackers. Those who survived made the trip back to the falls to tell the harrowing story.

The original name given to the lake was Kleh-Koot or "wide open", and the eastern most arm of the lake is still referred to as Kleh-Koot; once settlers arrived the lake was renamed in 1913 by Robert Brown, who named the lake in honour of Gilbert Sproat. Sproat arrived in the Valley in 1860 from Scotland, he was an honoured colonial officer and entrepreneur, he helped found one of Port Alberni's

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first sawmills. When the sawmill burnt down in 1865 he moved back to England, but continued to play an active role in the colony, finally moving back to the province in 1876.

In 1855 a road was constructed from Port Alberni to Sproat Lake, and since then it has been a highly sought after residence.

After the building of Klitsa Lodge in 1910, which originally started as a summer home for prominent lawyer E.P Davis, Sproat Lake began attracting people from across the world. In 1915 a houseboat was built for Mrs.Wark who used it to serve tea and lunch. In 1919 she purchased Klitsa Lodge from E.P Davis, which became a popular summer destination and over the years many of the rich and famous visited this spot. In 1920, a millionaire from New York, Cornelius Vanderbilt Jr., and his wife were travelling past Sproat Lake on their way to California when Mrs. Vanderbilt spotted Arbutus Island and fell in love; Mr. Vanderbilt then purchased the island for his wife and lodge was built for the couple and their wealthy friends to

visit during the summer, aptly named Vanderbilt Lodge. Locals began calling the island Vanderbilt Island, and it is still referred to as that to this day.

Sproat Lake has been home to water bombers, specifically, the Martin Mars Bomber. The Martin Mars was originally built by the Martin Company for the United States Navy, and was used in World War II as a long range ocean patrol flying boat. Only seven were built, and four surviving aircrafts were later converted into firefighting water bombers which were purchased by Forest Industries Flying Tankers (FIFT) in 1959. The aircrafts were flown to Fairey Aviation at Victoria and converted into water bombers. Only two tankers have survived, and are stationed on Sproat Lake. These bombers offer a sense of community pride to both Sproat Lake and Port Alberni residences.

Sproat Lake's history is rich and fascinating. From the First Nations people who have lived off the land for thousands of years, to the European settlers, Sproat Lake has a long and intricate story to tell. With it's magnificent

mountain ranges, and seemingly endless blue waters, surrounded by old and new growth forests. Sproat Lake truly is one of the best places to visit this summer.

THE RIVERBEND REVIVAL

For most of us alive today the Riverbend Store has been a fixture always in place – a little green and white thread woven deeply into the fabric of Alberni life and memory. There are some things that can never be changed. The stories made and shared within the walls and even the name “Riverbend” itself has an eternal life.

The location has long welcomed locals and travellers to the banks of the Somass River as a place of rest and replenishment. The oral history reveals the pre-Riverbend era even includes wooden bunk-houses built to sleep crews of a local forestry operation. Like the water at the rivers bend it's a place we can slow down and go with the flow.

Built in 1936, the Riverbend Store began a journey with the residents of the Alberni Valley that would last generations. Providing a menu of items largely unchanged over decades the Riverbend Store has remained family-owned and operated selling groceries, basic fishing/camping amenities, submarine sandwiches and ice-cream. Also candy; cause who doesn't like candy.

The Alberni Valley's relationship with cars and things that go holds an almost religious-like presence in the hearts of its people. The Riverbend endured many of its younger years as a gas station and in its day became a temple of adventure and good times before transforming into one of Vancouver Island's most known mushroom buyer locations.

Purchased by a husband and wife team in summer 2020, the revival of the Riverbend is a new chapter in an old story. As new owners/caretakers, Chris and Wish (Alicia) are proud and honoured to be a part of the Riverbend's story. Their love of old things and people has inspired them to revitalize the building and forge a connection with Alberni's past and future. The Riverbend Café and General Store will offer a curated and rotating selection of hyper-local makers, bakers, artists and eclectic wierdos.

Set to swing its doors open this summer, the Riverbend Café and General Store is excited to welcome guest and new friends to the store. ☐



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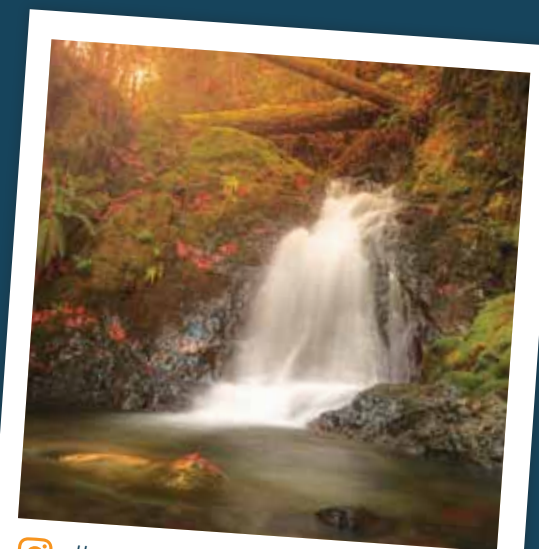
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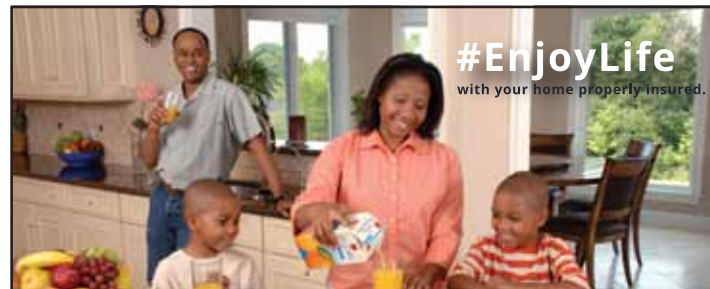
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A community investment with promising returns

Coastal Community Credit Union's Port Alberni locations will join the Johnston Road neighbourhood in Summer 2022.

What is now a separate Coastal Community branch and insurance office will soon come together in a brand new build. Next summer, look for us as one location at **4721 Johnston Road**, part of an area currently being revitalized and reimagined. The new build is underway.

When it opens, members and clients will enjoy the modern space, which unites the expertise of our banking, insurance*, wealth management** and commercial services business lines. This will allow us to be even more effective in improving Islanders' financial health.

"Like this vibrant community we're a part of, we're also evolving to better suit people's



On behalf of Council, we thank Coastal Community Credit Union for this investment, which demonstrates a long-term commitment to our community. We would also like to thank the hard-working and dedicated staff for always creating a welcoming and positive atmosphere.

— Mayor Sharie Minions

needs," says Adrian Legin, Coastal Community's President and CEO. "If you want an advice-based conversation on your financial priorities and how to achieve them, then our people in our new location with its hub of services will help with that. For your day-to-day needs, we're regularly investing in our digital channels to free up more of your time. We're very excited that this move will enable us to provide financial health advice at a new level."

Putting down roots at Johnston Road also represents our Credit Union's commitment to the greater community located within the traditional unceded territories of Tseshaht and Hupacasath First Nations.

For decades, Coastal Community has been a part of Port Alberni's rich history. Now we're investing again in its bright future. The address may be new, but you can expect the same great personalized service and ongoing commitment to improving your financial health.



COASTAL COMMUNITY

TOGETHER, LET'S DO GREAT THINGS

References to "insurance" refer to the insurance services provided through Coastal Community Insurance Services (2007) Ltd. References to "wealth management" refer to the financial planning and investment services provided through Coastal Community Private Wealth Group, a division of Coastal Community Financial Management Inc.



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April 21st, 2021 • May 19th, 2021





hupacasath First Nation

5500 Ahahswinis Dr., Port Alberni
Phone: 250-724-4041 • hupacasath.ca



The Hupacasath First Nations have owned, used, and occupied the traditional territories of Central Vancouver Island for thousands of years. The use of these territories are governed by the seasons, as the Hupacasath First Nations follow the migratory pattern of deer and the seasonal runs of the salmon.

The Kleekoot, which is located on the Stamp and Sproat Rivers west of Sproat Lake, this reserve was used primarily for fishing and hunting; potlatches, berry picking, and fish preparation was done here as well. Heading down the river to the traditional territory of Ahahswinis which now includes the township of Port Alberni.

This area was commonly used as the main village for the Hupacasath peoples; they would take part in fishing, potlatches, berry and fruit picking, as well as hunting. The welcoming figures located at Victoria Quay pay homage to the Hupacasath First Nations.

As well, a life-sized monumental wood carving depicts the strength and skills of the Nuu-chah-nulth whalers, who would take to the open waters in massive wooden canoes to hunt whales and other sea life. The two large carvings that stand tall at the bottom of Johnston Road with outstretched arms represent the welcoming of people into their territory from the land and from the water. The

male, which was carved first, faces the highway welcoming people into the valley. The female which faces the water, which was historically the highway of the First Nations people, welcomes neighbours from the Barclay Sound.

The Inlet was used primarily for hunting and fishing. Down the Inlet to Chu-ca-ca-cook, which is the smallest Hupacasath reserve, located west of the Inlet and north of Nahmint Bay; this reserve was used primarily as a stop over place to rest and fish as they travelled the Inlet. The Broken Group Islands and Barkley Sound, is a place where traditionally they would conduct business with other First Nations Groups; trading, bartering, visiting relatives and

attending potlatches.

The Inlet holds an immense amount of history for the Hupacasath First Nations. They have travelled on land and sea for thousands of years, sustainably supporting themselves. Their presence can be felt throughout Port Alberni, but especially along the Inlet. Check out the beautiful welcoming statues and phenomenal life-sized canoe at the end of Johnston Road at Victoria Quay and prepare to feel awed at the magnificent culture.





William Henry Derby and the Arlington Hotel

By Glen A. Mofford

The following article is dedicated to the memory of Kristi Dobson, local writer, photographer and runner.

On the southwest corner of 5022 Johnson Road (Alberni Highway) and Margaret Street is the Blue Marlin Inn, but most customers and regulars in the pub remember the old name, the Arlington Hotel and especially the “Arlie Pub.” The hotel celebrates its 128th birthday this year having opened in 1893. My article will look at a few special events that took place in the 1920s that may be interesting for you, the reader, as well as significant to the community then and into the future.

The Arlington Hotel, now operating as the Blue Marlin Inn, was the social centre in the Alberni since it was built in 1893 by Mathew A. Ward. The hotel opened with a ‘barn dance social’ where lanterns strung on a rope handrail led the way to the dining room. Mrs.

Ward provided extra entertainment by playing the piano. By 1912 the Wards sold the popular hotel to James

A. McNiff and O.H. Meagher who expanded the hotel to sixty rooms and had electric lights installed. Prohibition came on September 1, 1917, closing the bar but the business managed to survive both the First World War and prohibition.

The mid-1920s saw the biggest changes. Prohibition ended in British Columbia 1921 and by April 1925, beer-by-the-glass was available in the new beer parlours inside hotels that applied for it which included the Arlington in Alberni, Beaufort, Somass and King Edward in Port Alberni. A nine ounce domestic glass of beer sold for ten cents. The beer parlour was initially very Spartan as no entertainment was allowed. No food was sold or consumed on the premises. Patrons could only order domestic beer and had to sit down to drink it. In spite of the new restrictions, hotel owners welcomed the reopening of their bars as it provided a significant source of revenue. John “Jack” Burke, a jolly, hard-working man with a pot belly was the popular owner of the Arlington and ran it from 1925 to 1934.



On January 6, 1925, the eight hour day came in effect in the Alberni Valley – important legislation for a labour intensive logging, milling and fishing community. Another significant piece of legislation passed by the federal Liberal government in the House of Commons on March 4, 1927, was Bill 26, the Old Age Pension Act. Local Alberni representative Alan Webster Neill worked hard for the bill when the BC Legislation also voted in favour the Old Age Pension Act became Law. Neill was rewarded for his hard work to present the very first pension cheque – \$20, the maximum allowed at that time, to a deserving local resident in the Alberni Valley.

Seventy-five year old William Henry Derby was chosen as the first recipient. He was certainly qualified as he worked hard for years as a teamster. Pension Cheque number A-1 was presented to Mr. Derby by Alan Neill in the agent’s office in Port Alberni on October 16, 1927.

The press had a field day as did the government. Photographs of the presentation were taken by well-know local photographer Joseph Clegg. After the ceremony Derby took off the tie, cashed his cheque and was later found in the Arlington Hotel beer parlour drinking his ten-cent beers with four rolls of dimes on the table.

In 1928 the Alberni Valley was shaken by a mild earthquake, but nothing had such a lasting effect than the life-changing important legislation passed in those years and the fact that at least one man, Bill Derby, had his priorities in place when he headed straight to his favourite bar to celebrate and share the first old age pension cheque with his buddies. □

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SPOTLIGHT ON BUSINESSES IN THE ALBERNI VALLEY

Val MacDonald,
Alberni Colour Corner

With over 20 years of experience with Benjamin Moore, 13 years ago this September Val has owned and operated Alberni Colour Corner here in the Alberni Valley. For the past 8 years she has been involved on the board of directors with Huu-ay-aht First Nations.



Dave Koszegi, Realtor

A veteran of the industry with a fresh, enthusiastic and values-driven approach to Real Estate, Dave Koszegi has been widely recognized for his sincere dedication to helping families buy and sell in the Alberni Valley!



Dorothy Clarkstone & Matt Dearin, Notary Publics

In 1993, Dorothy purchased her Notary practice in the Alberni Valley, and moved here the following year. Matthew Dearin joined the firm in 2017. Starting off with one staff member, they have grown every year, and now together they operate two offices in the Alberni Valley.



Jennifer Norn,
Jowseys Furniture

Starting in 1947 when Jennifer's grandparents opened the store, Jennifer grew up in the store. And as a three generation run store, Jennifer for the past 25 years she has been running the store as her own. Excited to celebrate their 74th Anniversary this fall.



Jessica and Tatiana have been friends for over a decade, exploring the ends of the Continent through their adventures in business as well as fun. The duo always shared a fascination with self-care, the healing industry, and beauty products. The pair, began their journey 8 years ago when they moved to Port Alberni and opened *The Power of Three*.



Dave Potter, Totem Tree Service

Dave grew up in the valley, and with over 25 years experience, 10 years ago decided to start his own tree service. Over the last decade Dave has been a strong operation in our valley, and now his son, Kai, manages the day to day operations.

Bob Foster,
True Clean Carpet Care

Bob is the sole owner / operator at True Carpet Clean in the Valley. Bob says that he never gets tired of seeing happy faces of those seeing their carpets and upholstery after they have been cleaned. "It makes it all worthwhile for me — and after over 15 years in the business, it's why I love what I do," said Bob.



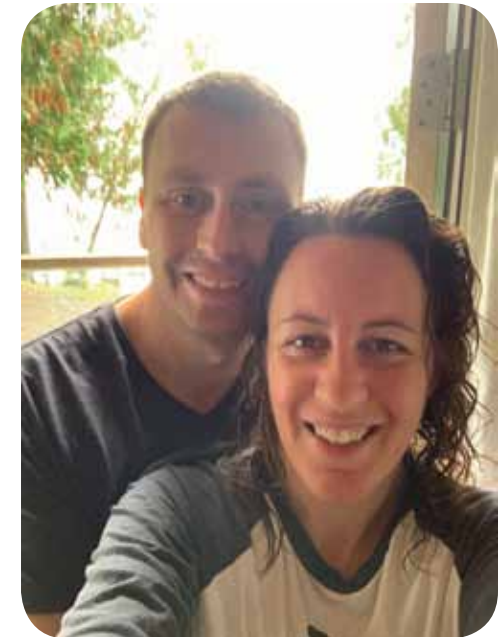
Cheryl MacLean,
Investment & Insurance Broker

Cheryl has been in the financial services industry serving our valley for over 25 years. Cheryl's passion is to make sure you are properly covered and save you money.



Cameron & Megan Warrender,
Island Inspire Contracting

Both born and raised in the Alberni Valley – two years ago this couple decided to start their own small construction business offering home renovations of all kinds. Cameron with over 13 years experience in the concrete and construction industry, and Megan ready to tackle the behind the scenes coordinating, the husband and wife pair were up for the challenge.



Mica Verbrugge, Effingham Oysters

Prior to purchasing the Effingham Oyster farm in 2014, Mica worked as a commercial fisherman, captaining Spot Prawn and Tuna boats. The connections he made over the last 20 years in the fishing industry have positioned him to take his business to the next level.

Mica believes in the importance of supporting local and making quality, affordable BC seafood and shellfish available to everyone.

A look Back at the King Edward Hotel

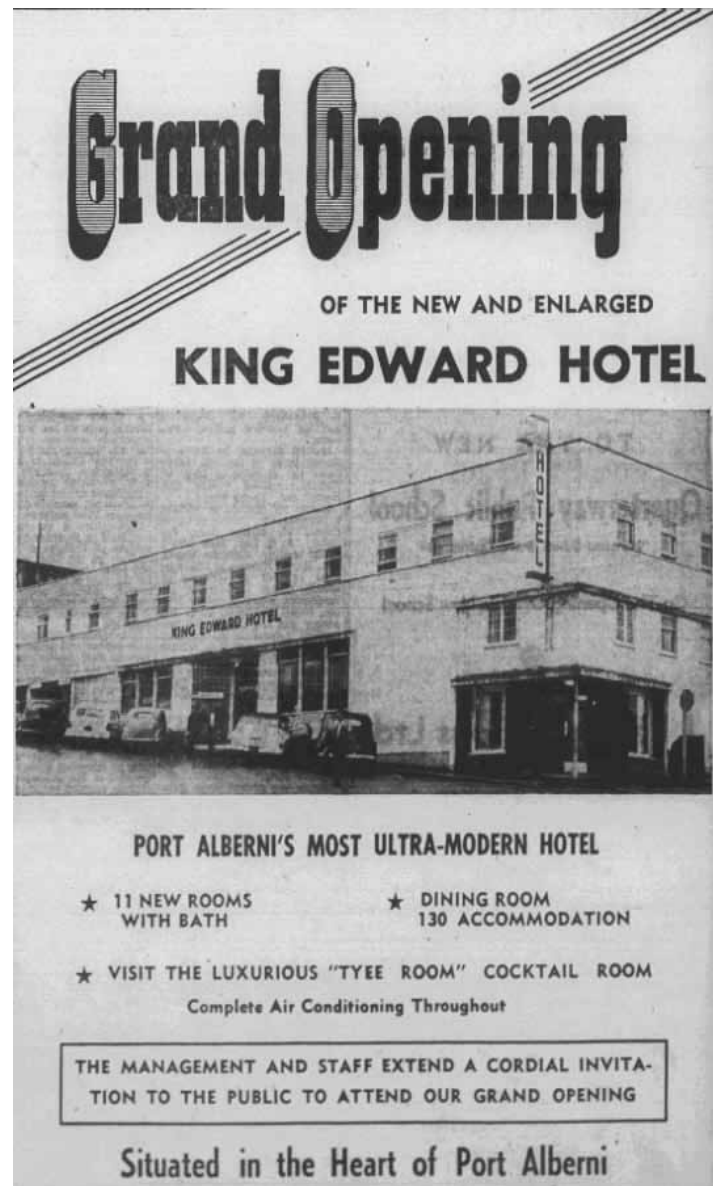
By Glen A. Mofford

The Port Hotel at Argyle and First Avenue in Port Alberni has an interesting past. The hotel and pub are located on the same site where 114 years ago James S. Rollin (Rollin Art Centre) built the 38-room King Edward Hotel. In 1907, with lumber from the local sawmill owned by Mr. Bird, Rollin built his new hotel resulting in two major hotels in Port Alberni, the Somass at the bottom of Argyle Street, and the new King Edward Hotel with talk of a third hotel to be built on Third Avenue (the Beaufort Hotel). Alberni to the north had the Alberni Hotel and the Arlington Hotel. The twin cities were growing, and the addition of the new hotels was an important part of that growth. The following is a brief history of the King Edward Hotel with an emphasis on the rebuilt version following the devastating fire of 1947.

From 1907 to 1947, the King Edward Hotel operated in Port Alberni. Various owners and manager came and went through those forty years and many changes from improvements and expansions took place to the appearance of the hotel. In 1933 and in spite of the Great Depression and its effects both worldwide and on the Alberni Valley, Jack Suffren, owner of the King Edward Hotel for the past seven years, decided to build an addition to his hotel. The entrance to the three-story King Edward Hotel building changed to eliminate the lawn and stairway entrance and provide[d] a new building for a street-level beer parlour.¹

On a fateful day in the summer of 1944, a guest at the King Edward, Mr. Michael Wallace of Nanaimo, somehow managed to fall off the verandah and ended up at the Westcoast Hospital in serious condition. He would pull through.² Other than these few mishaps and a brawl or two in the new beer parlour, hotel life continued along without significant incident until 1947.

In the early hours of Tuesday November 18, 1947, guest at the King Edward were woken by frantic shouting and the smell of smoke. A fire broke out and was moving swiftly through the hotel. The fire moved so rapidly that some hotel guests were forced to escape the flames and smoke by jumping out their room windows. Nine people



were treated for minor injuries including the hotel owner, Mr. Isador Rosenbaum, his wife and two daughters.³ There was one fatality, Tom "Casey" Jones, a watchman at Bloedel, Stewart & Welsh sawmill, whose body was recovered in the aftermath of the blaze.⁴ This was the third major fire that took place in Port Alberni in the 1940s that included the destruction of the Somass Hotel.

The Rosenbaum family promised to replace the building and within a year a thirty-room modern hotel complete with restaurant and beer parlour was constructed by F. Wilf Souther of Souther Construction. Mayor Jordan officially opened the new King Edward Hotel in November 1948 with the first guests registered on November 21. Mr. and Mrs. Earle Kalani, formally of the Newport Hotel in Vancouver have been appointed to the management of the hotel.⁵

In June 1954, the new King Edward Hotel was threatened with destruction by fire. A minor fire in one of the rooms

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was spreading but a quick response by the firefighters put the blaze under control after some fire and water damage. The biggest loss was to the firefighters and the town as the Deputy Chief, Jock Redford collapsed during the event and died from a sudden heart attack.⁶ The hotel was repaired and a year later expanded east along Argyle with the addition of ten rooms and an expansion of the dining room. The improvements and expansion were significant, and it took until March 1956 to complete. A new cocktail lounge, the Tye Room, complete with fishnets and pictures of salmon on the walls all tastefully decorated with furnishings from the commercial and home furnishing department of the local Woodward's Department Store. The Tye Room was a nice change from the beer parlour in many ways, one being that the sexes could intermix in one room as beer parlours had the men's side and ladies with escorts. Management warned that foul language in the cocktail lounge would not be tolerated and shortly after it opened a customer in the lounge learned that the rules were enforced.

In 2004 a new owner came along and changed the name of the hotel from the King Edward to the Port Hotel. The hotel went through a costly renovation and modernization. It is still with us today having survived a fire next door and



a pandemic. Who knows what the future may bring for the Port Hotel? Whatever happens, one can enjoy a beer and lunch there knowing that they are on the site where the history stretches back to 1907. □



¹Jan Peterson, *Twin Cities* (Lantzville, BC: Oolichan Books, 1994), 126.


²*Nanaimo Daily News*, August 26, 1944, 3.

³*Alberni Valley Times*, "Recalling the King Edward Hotel Fire," December 1970.

⁴Jan Peterson, *Twin Cities*, 216.

⁵*Westcoast Advocate*, November 25, 1948, 1.

⁶*Nanaimo Daily News*, June 8, 1954, 1.



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McLean Mill

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AVM Photograph PN8729 - This is an aerial view of a mill site (McLean Mill) taken circa 1950.

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Step back in time and surround yourself with the rich history of the McLean Mill National Historic Site. This unique heirloom of the early British Columbia forestry industry, is a steam-powered sawmill and lumber company located on 12.8 hectares of land backing onto the Beaufort Range. The national historic site contains 35 buildings and structures that form a self-contained community of residences, offices, and service buildings centered around a sawmill and millpond. The RB McLean Lumber Company was a family-run business established by Robert Bartlett McLean, his wife Cora, and their three sons, Walter, Arnold and Phillip, that ran from 1926 to 1965. Although small in scale in comparison, the logging, milling and marketing operations of the McLean Mill were similar to larger mills within the province.

The historical significance of the McLean Mill was recognized in 1989 by the Historic Society and Monuments Board of Canada and subsequently declared a National Historic Site. The site's historical importance rests primarily in its collection of expansive resources related to logging, sawmilling, transportation, and labour; as well as its close association to significant aspects of the forest industry.

Much of the original machinery and buildings have survived, making it a rare example of a sawmill complex from the first half of the 20th century. The site is in situ, meaning that most of this site is just how they would have left it. This level of preservation and accuracy can be rare for this type of site, and it gives us important insight into

the historical context. Business records for the McLean Mill fill over 400 file boxes and are stored as part of the archives at the Alberni Valley Museum. Did you know there have been 2 archaeological digs on site?

While the centre of McLean Lumber Company was the mill, a community grew up around the operation that built a tiny village. The firm employed up to 40 people and before the 1950's, the work site was sufficiently remote enough from Port Alberni that it warranted providing room and board to the employees. Many families from the Alberni Valley still have connections with the McLean Mill, as it was an important aspect of both Port Alberni's economic and social history.

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AVM Photograph PN14023 - A group of people swimming at the McLean Mill pond. People identified in the photo are: Muriel McLean (young woman standing 2nd from left), and Howard McLean (young boy sitting on railing beside Muriel). The other little girl is one of Muriel's nieces. One of the Japanese houses (the Sumi's) can be seen in the background. Circa 1926.

The story of social and working life at the site can be best told through its buildings. The first buildings constructed were houses for the McLean's: one each for R.B., Arnold, Philip and Walter. Of these, only Arnold's is still extant, and it was added onto by his son Howard in 1949. The McLean houses often served as the centre for evening socializing among the married people in the camp.

Although the centre of business was the office, the centre of camp life was the cook house. This is where the single men ate, and served as a place where anyone could stop for warmth, coffee, and conversation. When you visit the site, you'll see the little side bedroom where many of the cooks lived. The first cook, R.B.'s wife, Cora McLean, made big breakfasts consisting of bacon, eggs, and hotcakes. She was also well known for her baked cookies and doughnuts.

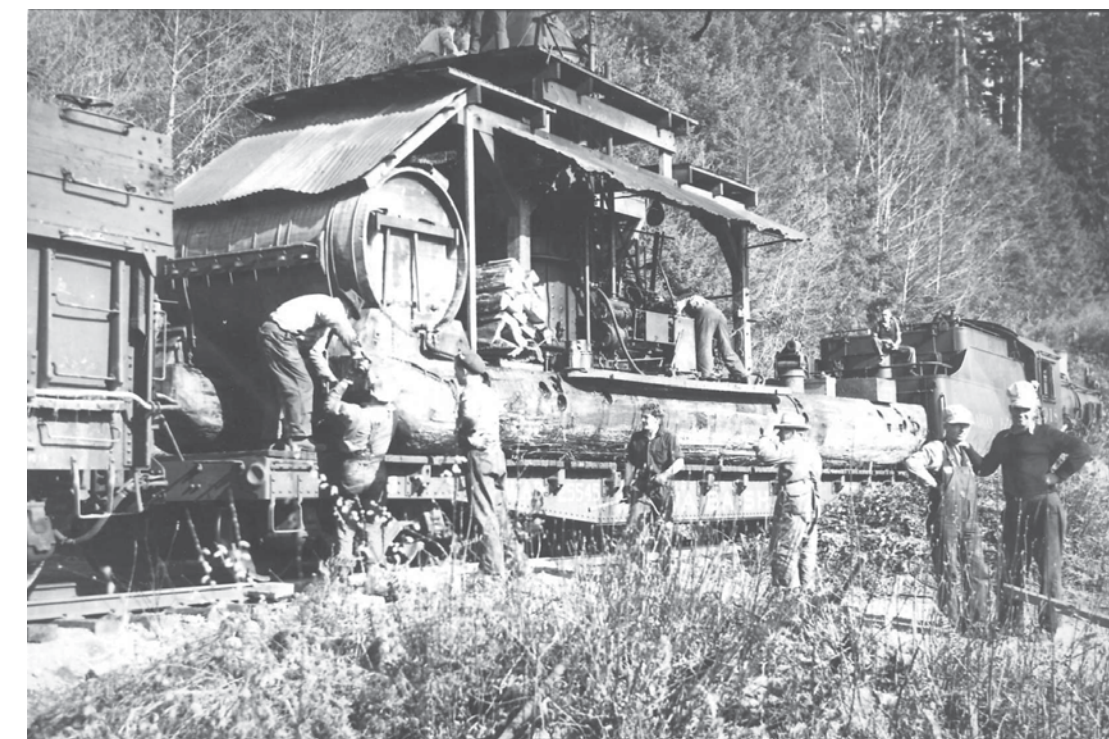
When it was time to rest after a hard day's work, the bunkhouses provided a dry place for the single

men to sleep. Poker and cribbage were a favourite evening pass time. As you peek through the windows of the one remaining bunkhouse, you will witness modest accommodations with two bedrooms and a central area for drying clothes and for washing up.

Although tiny by comparison with other mills built in the same era, the McLean Mill embodies a number of characteristics that typify its time and place. It produced lumber for export and participated in the burgeoning sales that

made Port Alberni a centre of the industry.

Immerse yourself in a bygone time as you step onto the historic site. Enjoy a scenic stroll through the rustic, forested property and discover an important piece of Port Alberni history. #exploreportalberni ☐



AVM Photograph PN12919 - A group of men working on and around the Washington Steam Donkey on a railway car at the McLean Mill. Circa 1930.

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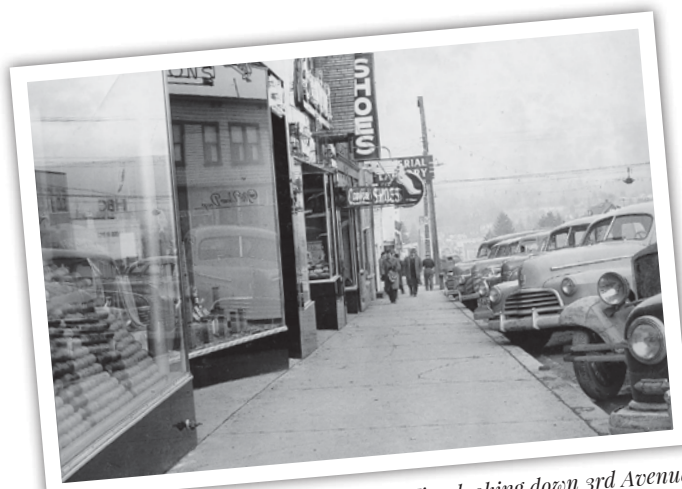
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A LOOK BACK IN TIME



AVM Photograph Collection PNo1548. View looking down 3rd Avenue near Argyle St. in 1948, Store fronts occupy 1. Dick's Market / 2. McVicar's Drug Store / 3. Compton's Jewellery Store / 4. Comfort Shoe Store / 5. Imperial Laundry / 6. McGarrigle's Meat Market / 7. Across Argyle St on Corner-A.T. Sanders' Building Lawyer (Pool Hall.)



AVM Photograph Collection PNo8201. In this photo is Argyle Street. In the right foreground is a railway crossing sign. On the right side of the photo about half way up is a building with a sign reading, HOTEL KING EDWARD.



AVM Photograph Collection PNA1.41 cir ca 1900. A group of people, including H.H. Brozgne, near Angel Rock at Cameron Lake. Four men stand on a gravel road.



AVM Photograph Collection PNI4127. The E&N Railway Station on the corner of Argyle St. and Kingsway, before it was restored. A sign saying "Port Alberni" hangs from the roof at the side of the building closest to the foreground.



AVM Photograph Collection PNo0410. Circa 1920. Port Alberni City Hall, corner of 5th. Ave. and Argyle St.



AVM Photograph Collection PNo0729. Old Post Office in Port Alberni on the corner of Third Avenue and Angus Street.



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