

Vancouver Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

ISSN 0042 - 2487

Vol. 46 No. 1

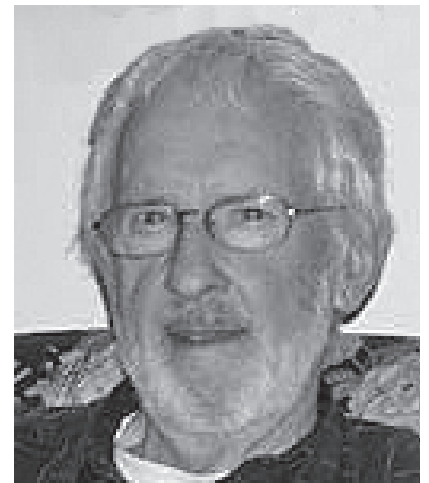
September 2006

Rare Cyril Littlebury Photographs of Early Vancouver: Each Picture Tells a Story

September Speaker: Dudley Booth

While Phillip Timms and Leonard Frank come to mind as early Vancouver photographers, most people are not familiar with Cyril R. Littlebury (1898-1936). Between 1922-1932, Littlebury captured the vibrant life of the still young Vancouver in several thousand photographs, 1,500 of which survive today. Negatives of these photographs were handed down in 1946 to 14-year-old photographer **Dudley Booth** who over time has been able to print and digitize them while archiving and researching the subjects.

Dudley takes his audience back in time so they can discover what it was like “to sit in the front cockpit of a Gypsy Moth fighter plane as it flies past Prospect Point.” Take a walk down Georgia Street in 1925, hear the wood spoke wheels of the cars, as they squeak with each revolution and notice that there are no lines on the road, stop signs or crosswalks. People can depart the harbour on a steam ship and witness the end of the era of tall ships as the *Puako* is towed into harbour for the last time. See what the valley of the Capilano River was like before it was filled with hundreds of feet of water.



Dudley Booth was born and raised in Vancouver and attended high school in the West End. Since his teens, he has pursued photography with a keen eye, developing and printing in his dark room. The 1,500 Littlebury negatives he acquired at a young age have taken him on a decades long research into Vancouver's past. Booth now lives with his wife in retirement from a sales management career, in Port Moody.



LEFT: The city's second Hotel Vancouver at Granville and Georgia, seen from Georgia at Burrard.

Next Meeting: Thursday, September 28, at 7:30 pm in the Vancouver Museum

PREZNOTES

A Productive Summer!

This newsletter marks the beginning of a new VHS program season. But lest you think the VHS is dormant over the summer, let me fill you in on what's been happening.

First, have you discovered *Your Ride Guide*? If you're a *Vancouver Sun* subscriber, you received a copy with your newspaper in June. It's a new magazine-sized full colour publication distributed by TransLink. Copies are still available from TransLink or you can download it at: www.translink.bc.ca/files/pdf/YRG.pdf. In text and photos, it provides a lively commentary on Vancouver scenes and history as viewed from our major transit lines. No, it's not a VHS project, but we're proud of it just the same. *Your Ride Guide* was created and published by McGraw Media – McGraw as in Jim McGraw, the editor of the VHS newsletter you're reading right now – and it makes every transit ride a veritable VHS guided tour. Try it – and thank Jim the next time you see him at a VHS meeting.

Another person to thank for a productive summer's work is our diligent vice president and program chair, Bruce Watson. Bruce has arranged an outstanding schedule of speakers for our 2006-2007 meetings, including a special "December bonus."

Bruce, Jean Barman, Larry Wong and others have also been at work on another project. They've nearly completed gathering data and drafting text for a series of historical markers in and near Stanley Park to remind Vancouverites of the area's history and past residents. We'll soon be seeking Parks Board approval. Stay tuned!

Last, but by no means least, work on our "City Reflections" DVD project has continued over the summer, with VHS researchers assisting our energetic Harbeck Committee. It's all due to come together in the last half of 2007.

Paul Flucke, President
604-732-7742; paulflucke@shaw.ca

Welcome New Members

Dr. Norman Robinson
Monica Brekelmans
Ursula MacLeod

Bob Jacoby
Elizabeth Brock
Eve Lazarus

Recent Donations

Since the beginning of this fiscal year (May 1, 2006), VHS members have made ten donations totaling \$615 to our Operating Fund, plus two donations totaling \$700 to our City Reflections DVD project. Thanks to all of you – it's a great start on the new year!

Esther Birney Remembered

Long-time VHS member, Esther Birney (nee Bull) passed away on July 20th this past summer, aged 97. Born in London, England, Esther immigrated to Canada in 1936 with Canadian writer Earle Birney, whom she had met while he studied in England. After receiving her degree from the University of Toronto, Esther began a long career as a social worker first in Toronto and then in Vancouver. She joined the VHS in the 1970s, serving on the membership committee from 1977 to 1981. Esther became the VHS' archivist from 1983 to 2001. She edited the 1986 special Vancouver Centennial edition of the *British Columbia Historical News*. In 1991, she received the VHS Award of Historical Merit for her exceptional service to the Society.



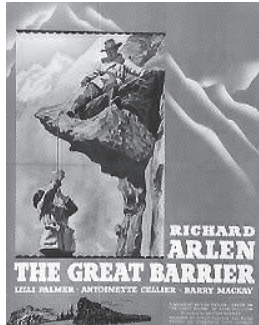
The Greenest Building in Vancouver

On September 8, 2006, the new federal government building located at 401 Burrard Street was officially named the Howard Charles Green Building. At the ceremony Public Works Minister Michael Fortier thanked the Vancouver Historical Society for being part of the naming committee, on which VHS member Jean Barman served at the request of President Paul Flucke. The committee was unanimous in its recommendation of the name, selected from some 350 proposals put forward by the general public.

The new building lays claim to being Vancouver's greenest building. Its name honours a long serving Vancouver and British Columbian Member of Parliament (1935-63). The colour of the glass gives the building a greenish tinge. Third and very importantly, the building's design and construction signals a fundamental change in the federal government's attitude toward sustainable technology and upkeep. 'Going green' was integral to design and construction, and is everywhere present, from the reused marble in the lobby to bicycles available for going to meetings to personal wastebaskets the size of pencil jars on the assumption everything else will be recycled. The lobby is open to the public and has a coffee bar, so have a look!

Movie Special Event

On Tuesday evening at 7:00 pm, December 12th, the VHS has arranged for a showing of the 1937 movie, *The Great Barrier*, starring Richard Arlen and Lilli Palmer. Filmed around Revelstoke almost 70 years ago, the movie shows the Canadian Pacific Railway's difficulties in building a route through the mountains of B.C. Although it takes many liberties with historical accuracy, it's great fun to watch. Appropriately, it will be shown at the former CPR locomotive roundhouse, all that remains of the old Drake Street railyards. The roundhouse later became part of Expo 86 and today is known as The Roundhouse, a community and performance centre serving the new residential areas in Yaletown and along False Creek. The Roundhouse is at the corner of Davie and Pacific in Vancouver, accessible by transit on the C21 and C23 routes. There is also paid parking available.



Looking for Qualified Webmaster

The VHS is looking for a qualified webmaster on a volunteer basis. Donna Jean MacKinnon, who has been handling website duties for the past two years, now has other commitments. We sincerely thank Donna Jean for all of her work. Quasar Design and Data Management Inc. has been temporarily filling the position since Sept. 1st of this year. If you are VHS member and interested in this volunteer position, please contact Paul Flucke, President. (paulflucke@shaw.ca or 604-732-7742)

Vancouver Museum Seeks Volunteers

Energetic, outgoing volunteers needed to help lead education programs for school children.

Contact: Shannon at 604-730-5303 or e-mail at: volunteer@vanmuseum.bc.ca

Summer Field Trips *-Continued from Back Cover*

exchanges between the CPR and provincial government, and city rezoning in 1968, opened up new opportunities. Today, with an attractive seawall, marinas, modern apartments and condos and park amenities, it is hard to remember the bad old days. So much history in so little space!

Upcoming Speakers & Events

The VHS invites everyone (including non-members) to attend our monthly talks. The talks are free. They are held at the Vancouver Museum, 1100 Chestnut Street (close to Vanier Park) at 7:30 pm on the fourth Thursday of every month (unless noted).

Thursday, September 28, 2006

Rare Cyril R. Littlebury photographs of early Vancouver: Each picture tells a story
Speaker: Dudley R. Booth
The Booth family rescued 1,000 rare negatives destined for the garbage dump and painstakingly developed and researched the photos of early Vancouver photographer Cyril R. Littlebury. A visual treat.

Thursday, November 2, 2006

(Please Note—due to a special event at the Vancouver Museum, this talk will be on the first Thursday of November instead of the usual last Thursday of October)
The Making of Simon Fraser University
Speaker: Hugh Johnston
Simon Fraser University sprang onto the world stage in 1965, coinciding with the biggest building boom in the history of universities and the awakening of the counter culture from the rigor mortis of the comfortable 1950s.

Thursday, November 23, 2006

Saving the Pantages Theatre
Speakers: John Atkin and Peter Fairchild
Opened in 1908 in Vancouver's original entertainment district, and venue to notable performers of the time, the Pantages Theatre went through seven different name changes until it was closed in 1994. Hear the history of this architectural gem and current attempts to save it.

Tuesday, December 12, 2006 (Note earlier start time: 7:00 pm)
(A Special Event at the Performance Centre at The Roundhouse, Yaletown)

The Great Barrier: Hollywood's version of the Canadian Pacific Railway building its line through the Rockies
Moderator: Chuck Davis

Thursday, January 25, 2007

100-60-40-10: The Rise and Fall (and Rise Again) of Pacific Vancouver
Speaker: Henry Yu
The year 2007 marks a series of anniversaries of watershed moments in Vancouver's relationship to Canada and the Pacific world. Come and see the changes that took place and nudged Vancouver into its place as a global city.

Thursday, February 22, 2007

Vancouver Through the Archives of the CBC
Speaker: Colin Preston
The CBC TV archives are a visual treasure trove of insights into the last 50 or so years of Vancouver history. We explore with Colin.

The rest of our 2006-2007 program will be announced in future newsletters.

Summer Field Trips

In case you weren't there, here's a glimpse of what you missed on our three Summer 2006 field trips as reported by Chuck Davis, Paul Flucke and Elizabeth Walker.

HMCS Discovery – June 17

About 20 of us enjoyed this visit to HMCS *Discovery*, the Canadian Naval Reserve base on Deadman's Island in Stanley Park. For many of us, it was our first entry onto the Island. Lt. Jack Wyne, a reserve officer who has served here for many years, conducted the tour.

We learned that of the 24 Naval Reserve Units across Canada, *Discovery* is arguably the most beautiful and apparently the oldest original location, established on the island in 1943. Because the base is land-locked and not an actual sea-going ship, it (and others like it) is by Naval tradition called a "stone frigate." Her crew of 150-250, refer to her as a ship, perhaps named for Captain George Vancouver's famous vessel. Reservists, including new recruits, gather here for training as signalmen, diesel operators, bosuns, and the like.

Lt. Wyne led us around the grounds and through several of the buildings, where we viewed photos, paintings and other memorabilia. And how about this? -- *Discovery's* official crest is a "rebus" or visual pun. It's a capital Y with a disc above it: **Disc-over-Y**.

Mountain View Cemetery – July 22

There's a lot of history in cemeteries – not just the graves, but the land itself, its management, and society's changing attitudes toward death. Our tour, led by historian John Atkin and Mountain View's general manager, Glen Hodges, took in all of these.

Mountain View was founded by the City of Vancouver

in 1887, and is still owned and operated by the city. The original tract of land west of Fraser Street between 33rd and 37th Avenues has been greatly enlarged by subsequent additions. Its total area is now 105 acres, with some 100,000 bodies interred.

Appropriately, the first grave we visited was that of James Skitt Matthews, Vancouver's first archivist. From there, John led us on a loop tour, pointing out significant graves and commenting on the history of particular ethnic and military clusters.

While John focused on history, Glen introduced us to the cemetery *business*: how the 1970's policy of flat markers to create a "parklike" feeling is now being reversed to allow more vertical markers that "look like a cemetery;" ingenious efforts over the years to accommodate more burials in a finite area; current major improvements to landscaping and planting; the societal trend toward cremation and Mountain View's plans for above-ground columbaria for interment of ashes.

Leg-in-Boot Square – August 19

We gathered with tour leader Donna Jean MacKinnon in that quiet plaza on the south shore of False Creek where, in 1887, a leg in a boot was supposedly found. Here, we learned, Mackie Creek flowed down from present-day Douglas Park, and pioneer lumberman Jeremiah Rogers skidded logs down to False Creek from the Fairview slopes. A sawmill was built here in 1886, to be followed by planing mills, lime kilns, machine shops and other industries. Many of us remembered the polluting smoke from the "beehive burners."

After World War II industry declined and False Creek became a "problem area," but in 1967 significant land

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Vancouver Historical Society - Leadership, 2005 - 2006 (elected May 25, 2006)

EXECUTIVE:

President	Paul Flucke
Vice President (Programs)	Bruce Watson
Treasurer (Vacant)	Paul Flucke (pro tem)
Secretary (Historica Fair)	Sidney Madden
Director (Newsletter Mailing)	Barbara Coles
Director	Chuck Davis
Director (Membership)	Elizabeth Hawkins
Director (Newsletter Editor)	Jim McGraw
Director (Research Service)	Wayne Norton
Director	Larry Wong

OTHERS:

Webmaster	Donna Jean MacKinnon (until Sept. 1, 2006)
	Quasar Design and Data Management Inc.
Info Line	Nancy Stubbs
Archivist	Elizabeth Walker

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