

Logs, Lumber, and Ships Dollarton to Maplewood

Liz Bollmann

Deep Cove Heritage Society

Good afternoon and thank you for turning out on a typical February day for this area. Mist, rain etc. and thank you to the Parkgate Library for providing a welcoming, warm location of us to gather. Thanks go to **Vanessa Bedford Gill**, our **Adult Services Librarian**, for making this possible. My name is Liz Bollmann, current president of Deep Cove Heritage Society. Our scope covers all of the areas east of the Seymour River in North Vancouver. We are in the process of revising our website to launch at our Annual General Meeting March 21. I am excited to see it as we have new sections, more stories and content for you. More about that later. This talk is focused on the industrial side of the areas and gives a snapshot of the businesses that began here.



Tsleil-Waututh Nation

PEOPLE OF THE INLET

Our Story

The area east of the Seymour River has been home to the Tsleil-Waututh Nation for many generations. They continue to work as stewards of this land and I gratefully acknowledge the opportunity to be a part of the community that lives and works in the unceded territories of the Coast Salish peoples, including the Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish Nations. I strongly recommend that you look at their website, seek opportunities to hear their stories directly from them and support their initiatives.



Logging in BC

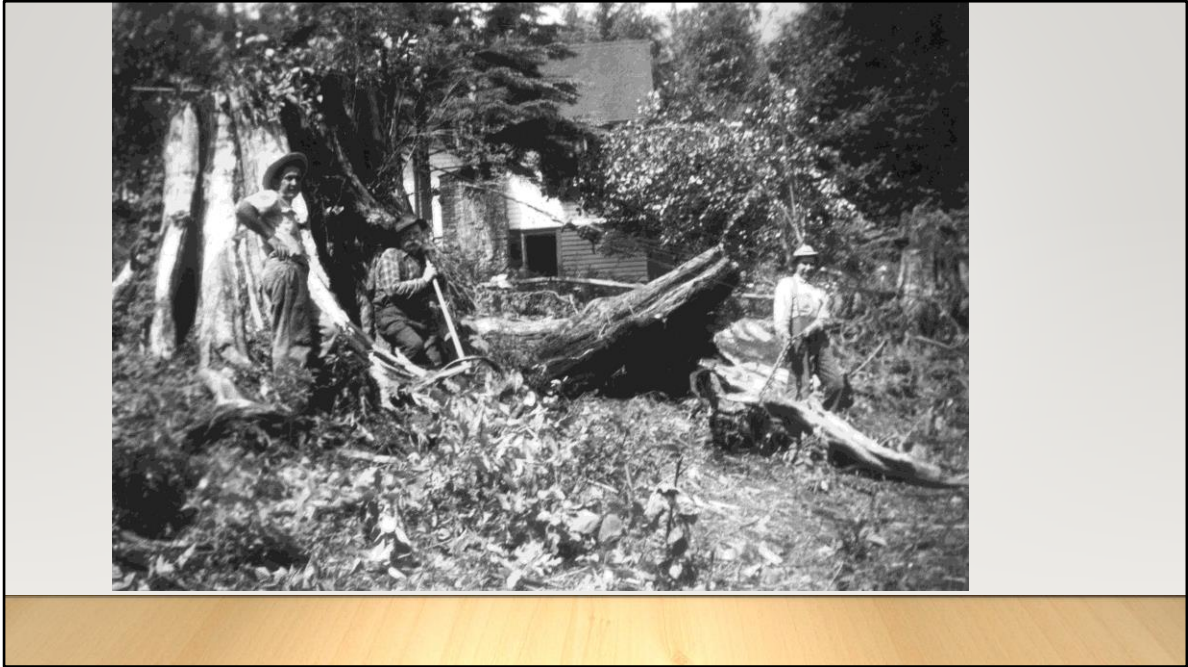
Early logging in BC. Not sure of dates. Slides from Heritage office that were undated. Possible these were taken in Lynn Valley or Fromme area. A check of the Monova Archives shows a similar picture of the two loggers felling a tree for a fire break on Seymour. This springboard method of felling trees was used all over BC.



Logging on the Burrard Reserve, using horses.



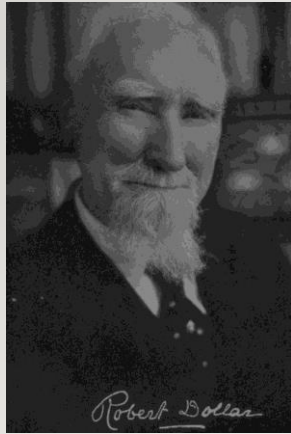
Jack Gillis using horses to pull out cut logs.



Clearing for homestead buildings, early 1920s.



Cedarside or Cedar Mill early 1920s. The sign on the building says Vancouver Cedar Mill. This was the first mill built in North Vancouver, before Robert Dollar bought land to build his mill. The cement structure in Whey-ah-Wichen (Little Cates) is the remains of the beehive burner for this mill. This mill operated until 1931. Introduce book *Where the Mountains meet the sea*. Mentions Red Fir Lumber Company 1910 which became Cedarside



Dollar Mill



Robert Dollar bought 100 acres of land in 1916 and opened his mill in 1917. This picture is the mill building about 1918 taken from the dock. The dock was built to accommodate the loading of ships. Lumber had to be transported by ships as rail and bridge access was not available. After WWI, in 1925m Second Narrows bridge was rebuilt (resurfaced) and rail and road traffic was available. But the rail line did not extend to Dollarton, so lumber shipments continued from the dock.



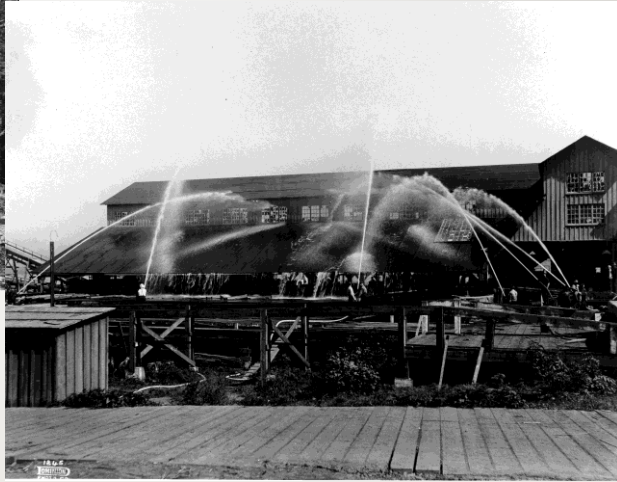
With the building of the mill and increase of labour needed, housing was needed for the workers. The community of Dollarton began with the cottages built on Dollar Mill land for the workers and grew after the development of Dollarton Highway in 1931.



Ship loading lumber at Dollar Mill. The Mill operated from 1917 to 1942.



Electric crane with a load of lumber 1919 and lumber tractor and wood wagon 1918.



Safety was important and precautions were taken to prevent fires. The three tanks are labeled as one for domestic use and two for fires. The second picture is of a fire drill showing the men directing hoses at the mill buildings. Fire buckets were present in the mill itself for any small outbreak. The Heritage office has one bucket and the bottom of it is curved, so that it will not stand flat. This was apparently to prevent theft, as it would be useless in a home.

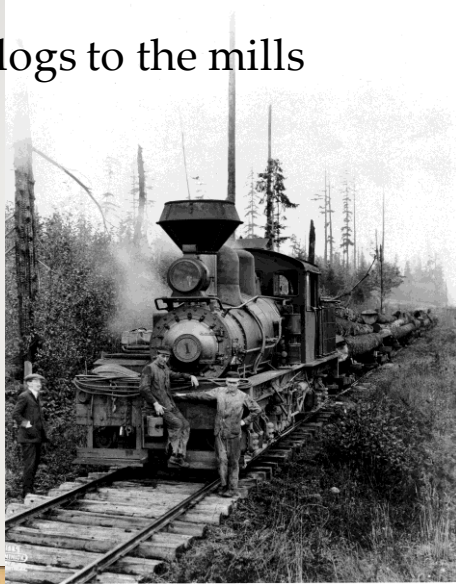


This picture shows the position of the mill on the inlet. Not sure of the date but looks like it was taken towards the end of the era of the mill.

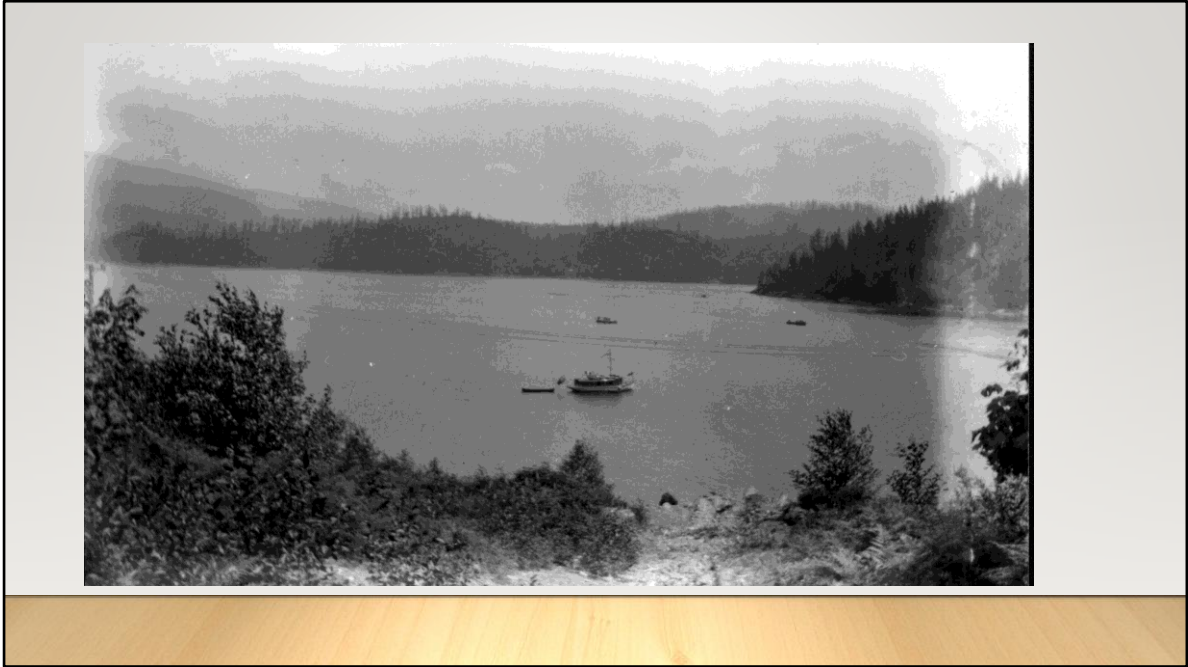


Along with the homes that were built in the area of the mill, a store and school opened. Robert Stirrat opened his second store and Roche Point School was built for the children of the growing community.

Getting the logs to the mills



Logging train and 50 Shay locomotive – Robert Dollar logging camp, Union Bay, BC. This could possibly be somewhere local. The picture appears in Monova Archives database and in the DCHS archives.



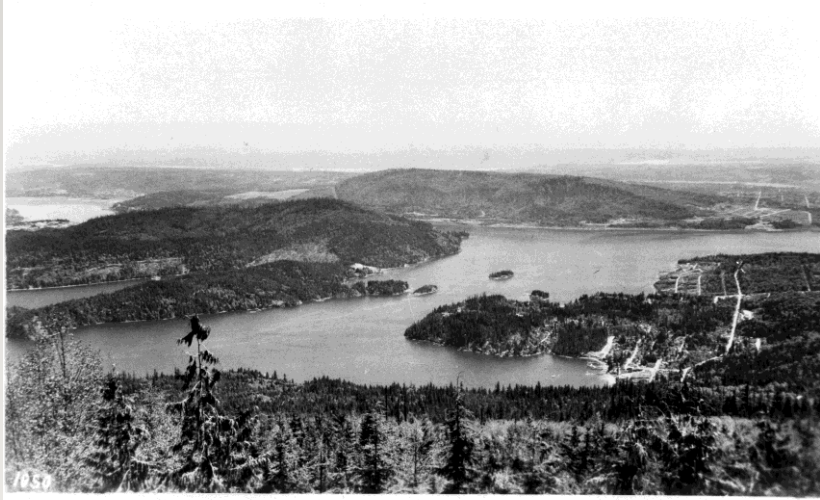
Log chute in Deep Cove – not dated. Examples and history of the log chutes in Lynn Valley can be seen around Rice Lake and in the Monova Archives.



When the logs reached the waters of the Inlet, they were held in booming grounds until the tugs could take them to the mills. Most of the logs from the cuts on Seymour would have been transported to the mills in North Vancouver but not necessarily to the Dollar Mill. The mill may have used logs from their own logging camps.



Another picture of booming grounds in Deep Cove.



Deep Cove, B. C. from Seymour Mountain

**The Gibson Family made Deep Cove their home
from 1921~1953**

By Jim Gibson

Spring 2007 Newsletter

February 1923 was notable as during a bitter cold spell the Gibson's were blessed with another son, me, James Jr. As fate would have it a fire that completely devastated the operation destroyed the logging company. Now there was little or no employment opportunities left in the cove area. For many years the "fire scar" was visible upon the mountaintop as a reminder of the past.

The fire mentioned above destroyed all the cut trees that were felled for skidding down the mountain.

Historical Mount Seymour
by Wendy Bullen Stephenson

Spring 2017 Newsletter

Long before there was a road through to (or up) Mount Seymour there was logging activity on the mountain. In the 1880s, the Hastings Mill Company logged the west side of the mountain for cedar and fir. They dragged the felled trees into the Seymour River and then floated them to log booms in the ocean where they were gathered.

By 1917 the Deep Cove Lumber Company was logging the east side of Mount Seymour. Owner Fred Buck constructed a five-kilometre-long plank road to the foot of the mountain to carry Seymour's logs to what is now Gallant Avenue in Deep Cove. From there the logs were dragged down a skid road into the ocean and then towed to booming grounds and subsequently to nearby mills.

While there is no further logging on Seymour, the path opened by Buck's Old Logging Road that led close to alpine areas has been integrated into current hiking trails (the Old Buck Trail).

From our board member in the 2017 newsletter.

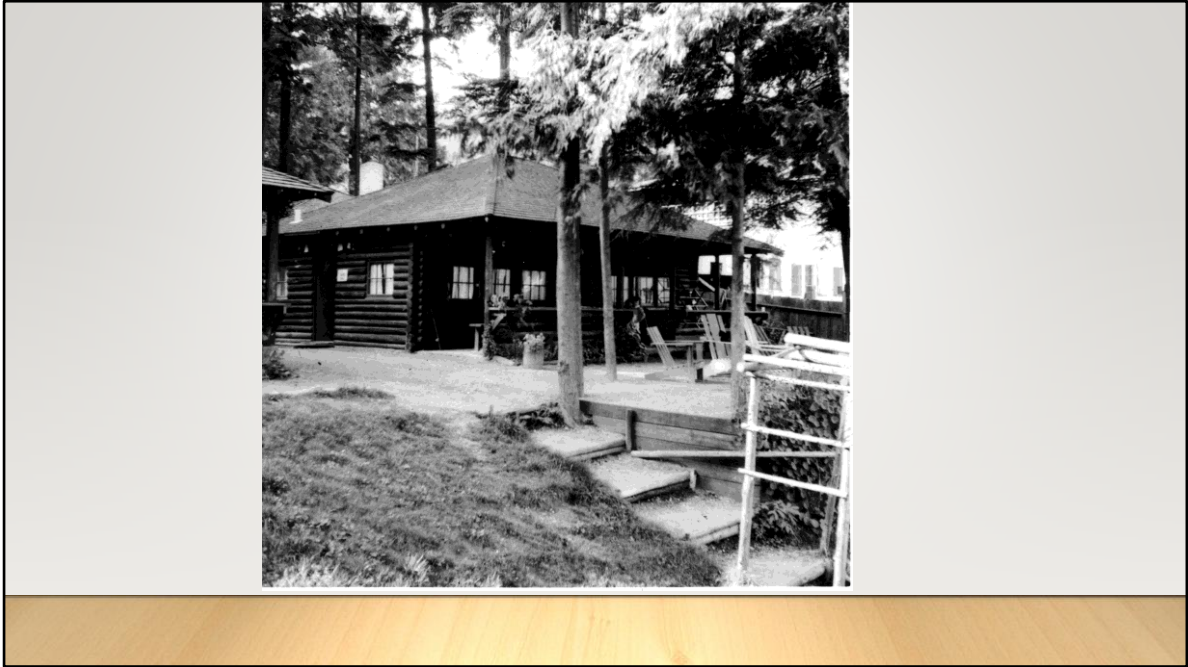


Putting the logs to good use

Lumber and logs from Seymour were put to good use as building materials. Pictures are of Ross Regan's cabin. First log in place and the finished product 1948.



Deep Cove's Log Cabin Inn and the Gillis Homestead show examples of the local buildings.



Deep Cove Motel - early 1950s. Last of the cabins came down in 1986.

Dollarton General Store



Robert Stirrat 1955

The first stores in the area were family establishments.

Dollarton
Retail
Development



As the community of Dollarton grew, the need for services and groceries grew. In 1963, the Dollar Shopping Centre opened with the Royal Bank and Shop Easy Grocery as anchors.

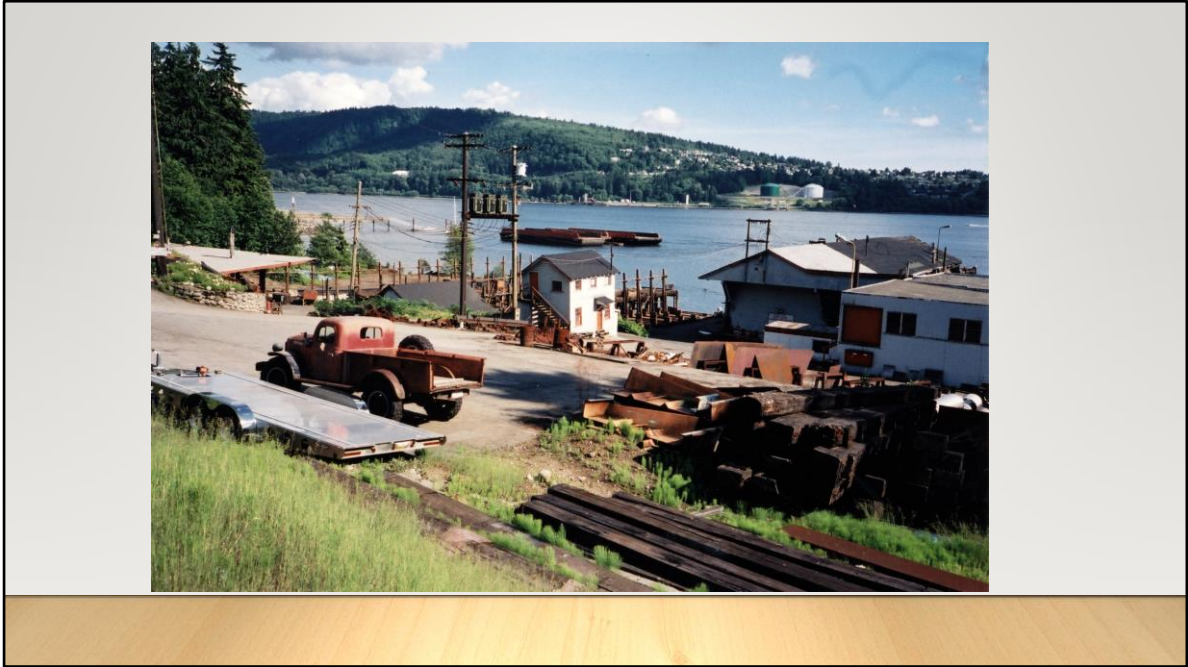


McKenzie Barge & Derrick Co., Inc., was established in North Vancouver in 1922, as a base for its marine construction activities. McKenzie Barge and Marineways was founded in 1930.

Shipbuilding in Dollarton



SS GM Venture built at Allied Shipbuilders 1960. Information from The Nauticapedia. This slide is labelled as Dollarton Shipyards, but a search for the vessel on line indicated it was built at Allied Shipyards at the foot of the Seymour River in the Maplewood area.



McKenzie Barge in 1970s looking across Inlet



McKenzie Barge from the water. The pictures are undated.



“That Was my first job, i worked there for years. family run biz. i used to snoop around on my breaks ,you just felt like you were in a time capsule.the little old house was a bunkhouse,back in the day before Dollarton hwy and the iron workers memorial bridge. the men would live there during their shifts. The painters took over the bottom floor and that was our lunch room. just watching this video takes me back to a time long passed.I Learned my trade there,”

<https://youtu.be/8OwGMYFrmV4>

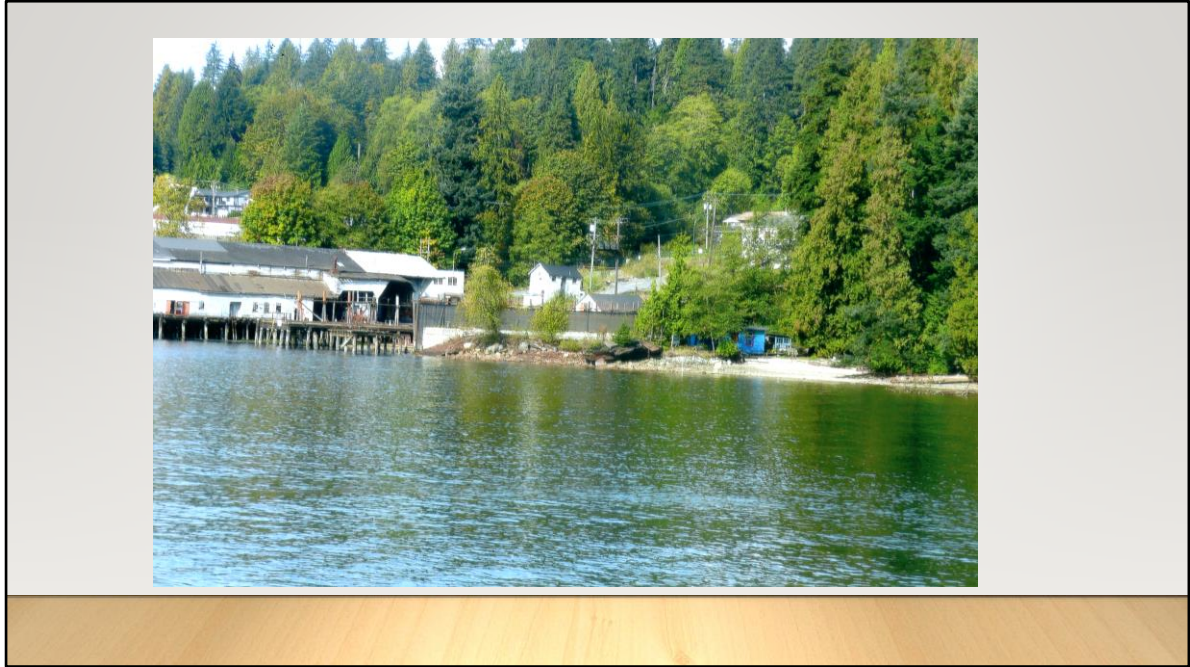
Taken in 2015 just before final demolition of the yard and buildings. Comment was taken from the YouTube video, taken by Michael Arnold, updated in 2011. It looks like there could be a research project here. There is not a lot of information on the shipyards in the Monova Archives.



Matsumoto Shipyards 1973. Sam Matsumoto built boats in Prince Rupert before World War II but was interned during the war years. After the war in the 1950s, he established Matsumoto Shipyards in the Dollarton section of North Vancouver and was a leader in aluminum boat construction.



Matsumoto Shipyards 1982



McKenzie Barge, Matsumotos Shipyards – now Cove Landing housing development – Shows the Blue Cabin that was saved and moved to become a floating Artist’s Residence. (Richmond)

Housing



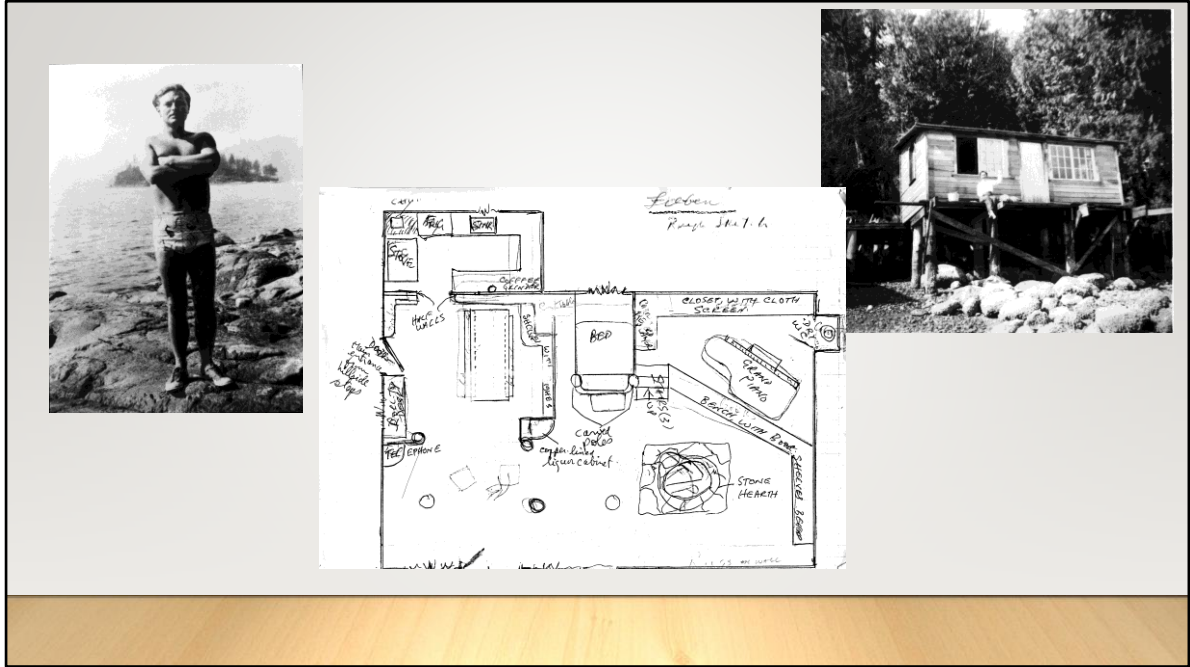
Although the mill built cottages for the workers, others made their own accommodations. Squatters' shacks grew on the shores of the inlet.



The Blue Cabin



The Blue Cabin is a dwelling that has resisted ownership for 80 years or more. Built circa 1927 in Coal Harbour, Vancouver, by a Scandinavian craftsman, the cabin was towed to the western boundary of Cates Park in 1932 when its builder took a job with McKenzie Barge & Derrick Co., Ltd. (later McKenzie Barge and Marine Ways Ltd.). There, he set the cabin on pilings above the high and low tides on Tsleil-Waututh (səlilwətaɫ) territory within the District of North Vancouver,¹ adjacent to the McKenzie Barge site, and lived in it while he worked there.

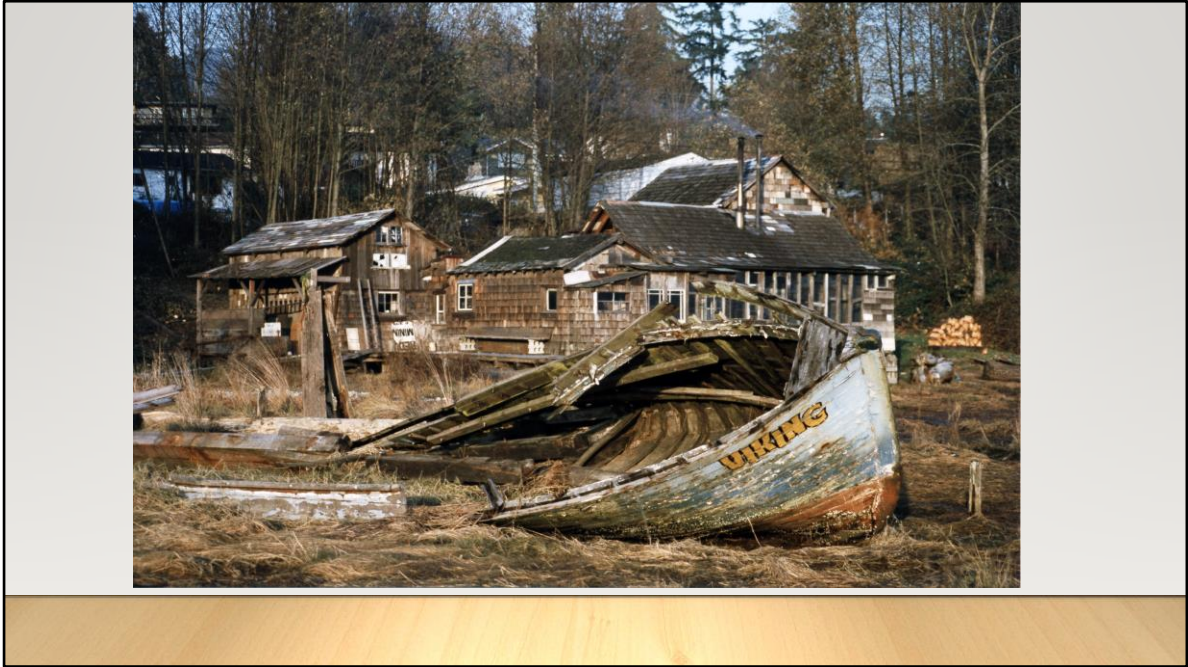


Another famous personality was Malcolm Lowry, author of *Under the Volcano*. He lived for a time in a squatter's shack on the beach. Note the grand piano.



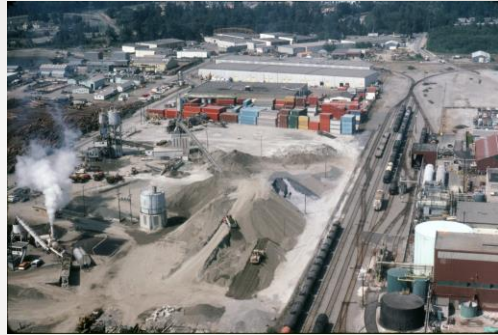
“The Maplewood Mudflats area was the site of a significant squatter population in the 1960's and 70's. A collection of 'home-made' houses were built out over the tidal mudflats. In 1973 the District of North Vancouver decided to evict the tenants, and the houses were burned.”

From Monova Archives



C 1970s

Maplewood Industry



Beginning in the late 1950s, Maplewood was developed as industrial sites. Access to transportation and flat lands eased the way for development. There was not a lot of residential homes in the direct path of the industrial developments at that time.



An aerial view of the flats in 1953 and in 1971. Industries from the area: Deeks McBride Sand and Rock Company, Allied Shipbuilders, Hooker Chemicals, and the NV Transfer Station.



Maplewood Flats

Wild Bird Trust designated as a conservation area in 1993 and as a non profit organization, has grown to develop a long term plan including reconciliation with Tseil-Waututh Nation and a focus on ecological issues at the site.



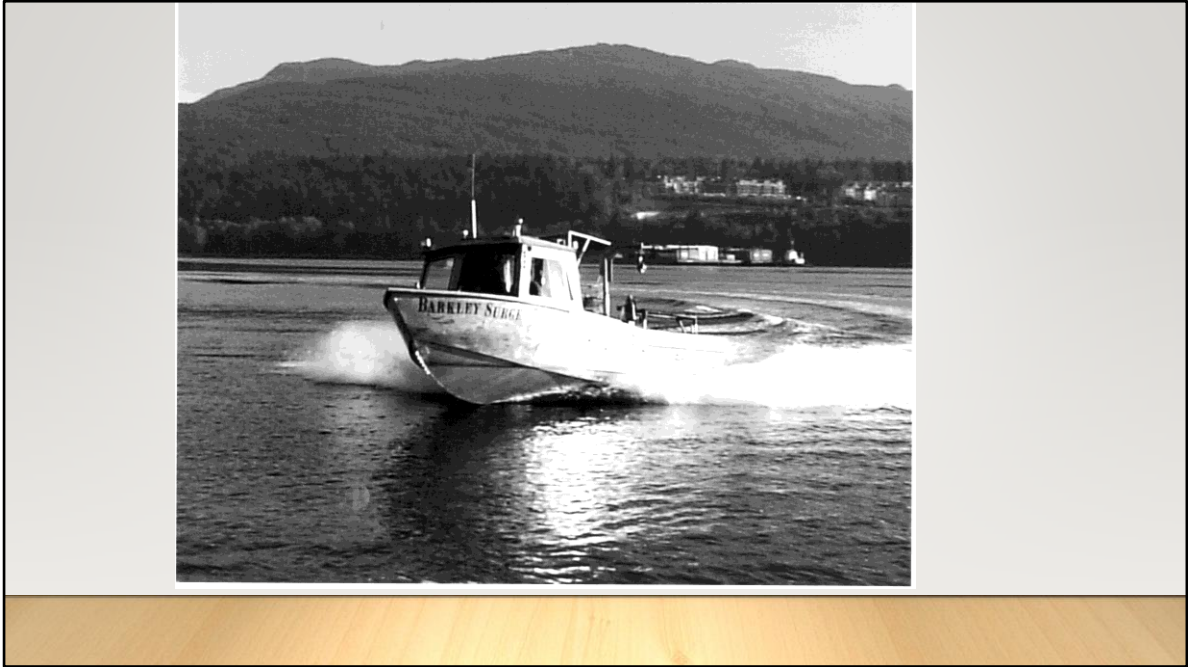
Maplewood Farm



Maplewood is also known now as the home of the Maplewood Farm. In 1944, the farm was a dairy run by Jack and Helen Smith. The dairy operated until regulations changed and the Smiths sold their herd of daily cows. During the period between 1946 and 1970, when the District acquired the land, it housed dog breeding and training facilities.



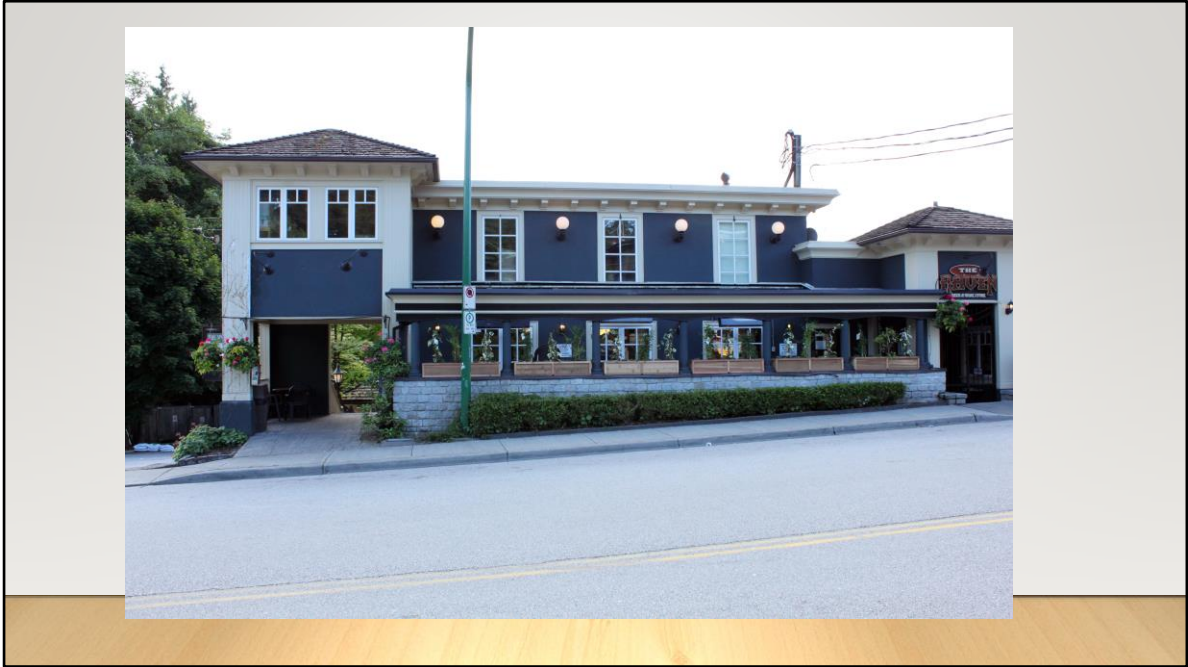
Other businesses established in the Maplewood area. The Crab Shack has had many different locations in the Maplewood area.



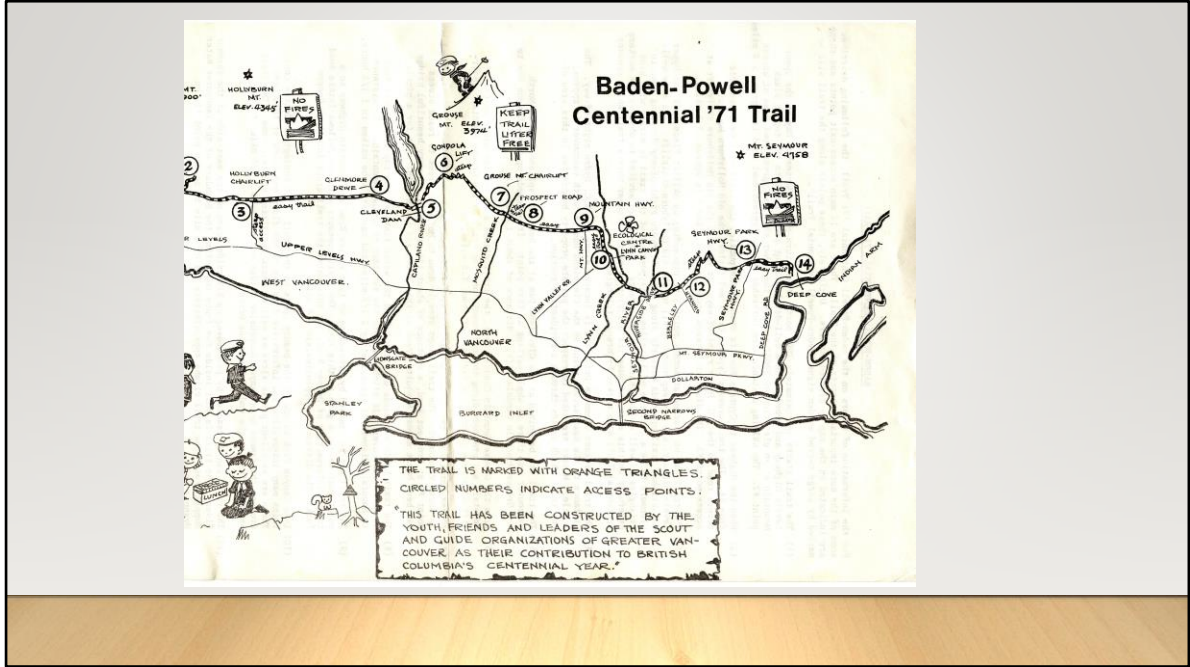
Crabbing boat in the Inlet



As the communities of Dollarton, Roche Point, Seymour, and Maplewood grew and evolved, the businesses in the area adapted to the changes. The Amble Inn was well known and a favourite. It was used as a set for The Littlest Hobo tv show, filmed in the 1960s the first series. 1963 - 1965



Now it has changed again. Irish Pub?



The slopes of Seymour have changed and the forests are full of mountain bike and hiking trails. No more logging trucks. In 1971, the Baden Powell trail was created. The trail does not actually go to Quarry Rock. The trail to the Rock is a side trail and technically on private property. That is not mentioned in any online information about the hike. Info varies from an easy walk to a decent hike.



View from the Rock 1997. Over looking our Inlet, Quarry Rock has become a major tourist attraction. Tourism had changed our communities and we learn to adapt.



THE FOREST HISTORY ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Celebrating our 42nd year in 2024



The association encourages the collection, preservation, cataloguing, and use of historical material related to the conservation, management, and utilization of the forests of the province. The Forest History Association of B.C. publishes a newsletter containing articles, biographies, lists of new literature, book reviews, notices of meetings, and requests for information from researchers.

As a special note, DCHS AGM will be held Mar 21 in the evening and we have a guest speaker, Eric Andersen from Squamish. He will be presenting a talk and discussion of the history of logging in the East of Seymour area and touching on the history of logging on the North Shore.

DCHS CatalogIT Hub

From our website, you will be able to search for photographs by category and by search words.

Deep Cove Heritage Society

Links to CatalogIT Hub and website.



Thank you for attending!

Please consider joining the Society and receive our quarterly newsletters with more stories and information on North Vancouver – East of Seymour, special member pricing and advance notice of our events and workshops.

Special note: Annual General Meeting – March 21, 2024 In person at Deep Cove Cultural Centre or attend on line via Zoom. Registration required. Please call our office for details. 604-929-5744 – leave a message, please.