

MYTH AND MEMORY – VANCOUVER



The Chinese Store on the corner has gone,
just went past yesterday and there it was,
less fruit than before but still there and now
today it's gone with only the old cases to remind you

from Markets: II by Judith Copithor

When we read the physical and social history of a place and look at the photos, this information is laid over our present experience of the city. Time and place have become mythologized. It is almost unbelievable to think that where a vibrant community now shops, meets, and passes through, a dense forest once stood; a quiet and remote place with a young city only a few km away.

When we walk along Hastings St., we are acutely aware that we are walking in the footsteps of others who were people like us but whose experience

of the street may have been quite different.

What was their experience of Hastings street?

Can it be found in the posed portraits of bankers and merchants? Or in the grainy photographs of a jumbled street-scape of horses, trolley-cars and hurrying pedestrians?



Site Analysis: Introduction

scenes on hastings

Communities that Work

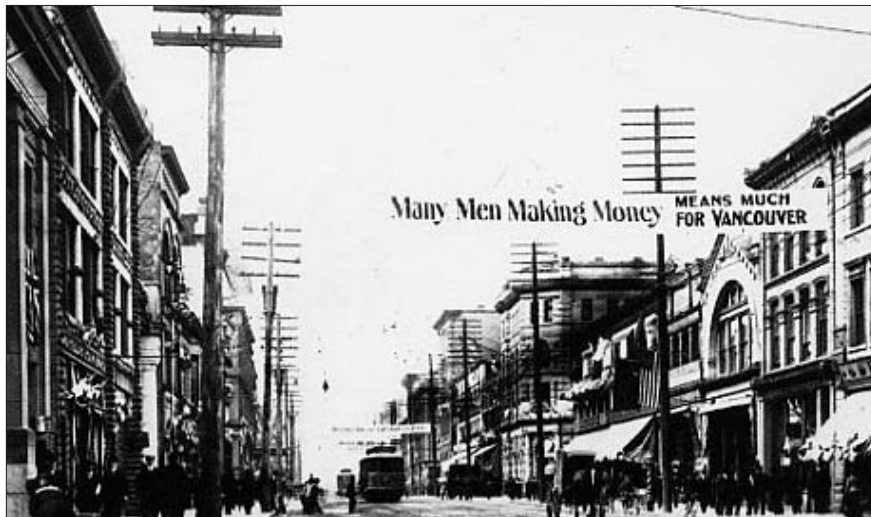
Much of Hastings Street is and has been a working landscape. The presence of the port and Hastings Mill influenced who lived on and around Hastings and how the street developed. Loggers and others came to the city as a break from their stints in the woods and the fish boats.

Eddie reached the Regal Rooms all right, and met there a couple of friends, and after they had slapped each largely upon the shoulders they went out to make a night of it...

from *The Equations of Love* by Ethel Wilson

We can imagine a cyclical lifestyle of long periods of work, redundancy, success, security and hardship

At The most Westerly end of the street where business people rush in and out of office buildings, “work” takes on a different meaning. Banks of classic style still line the street. At one time, the street was filled with men in dark felt hats.



PART 1

The street takes a turn at Cambie and the presence of Woodward's still calls up a time when this edge felt like a center. The woman on the corner in the floppy hat sings about Judgement Day grasping her own book of myths. She used to buy her groceries in the basement of the Woodward's building.

Behind the closed eyes of the department -store we can imagine a Saturday morning before Christmas, windows filled with toys and lights.



Site Analysis: Introduction

Past the Main and Hastings intersection there is still evidence of the vibrant Chinese community south of the strip, grocery stores, pharmacies and restaurants are hanging on, have passed through different series of owners and are constantly evolving.



Travelling further east into an industrial flatland, the presence of the port is even more prominent. This is an area that is still at work, small industry, warehouses, and manufacturing. A "hotel and pension" tells of the progression from a logging camp to something more permanent. Apartment buildings for workers are tucked in the side streets.



The ascent to Hastings Sunrise and Vancouver heights is steep, it grew as a more traditional neighborhood with somewhat high aspirations but somehow fell back into a working class neighborhood, the shops and services are a layering of cultures and backgrounds.

Site Analysis: Myth and Memory – Vancouver

"Fresh Eyes" on Hastings

Visitors from across the continents have arrived and claimed stake in this area as home. Their reception has ranged from celebration to blatant racism and has contributed to a street mythology that defies any single or simple collective expression.



The northern edge of the Hastings/Sunrise district served as a natural rest stop for natives en route by canoe to hunting/ gathering/ fishing in Deer lake and Burnaby Lake.

Early Musqueam, Squamish, and other Coast Salish began the tradition of utilizing this portion of Vancouver as a significant water-based point of entry.

The first Chinese immigrants arrived in 1858, drawn by promises of New World gold. By 1921, "Chinatown" was home to some 3500 people and a vibrant hub of trading activity. The persistent growth of this community may be remarkable given the level of rejection from the "settled" Vancouver community.



NOTICE TO ALL JAPANESE PERSONS AND PERSONS OF JAPANESE RACIAL ORIGIN

TAKE NOTICE that under Orders Nos. 21, 22, 23 and 24 of the British Columbia Security Commission, the following areas were made prohibited areas to all persons of the Japanese race:—

LULU ISLAND (including Steveston)	SAPPERTON
SEA ISLAND	BURQUITLAM
EBURNE	PORT MOODY
MARPOLE	IOCO
DISTRICT OF QUEENSBOROUGH	PORT COQUITLAM
CITY OF NEW WESTMINSTER	MAILLARDVILLE
	FRASER MILLS

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE that any person of the Japanese race found within any of the said prohibited areas without a written permit from the British Columbia Security Commission or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police shall be liable to the penalties provided under Order in Council P.C. 1665.

AUSTIN C. TAYLOR,
Chairman,
British Columbia Security Commission

"We have many Chinese workers. They are generally abused, and yet everybody employs them." Sir Matthew Begbie, 1885

The Hastings area served as home to a thriving Japantown prior to WWII. In 1942, 22,000 Japanese Canadians were rounded up and interned at Hastings park, prior to being forcibly removed from the west coast and exiled until 1949. Traces remain only in the guise of a few old-timers who returned post internment and certain poorly known but significant monuments.

"Hashikeyashi|agiya no katani|kumoi tachikamo"

"Looking back at home, I see smoke rising from kitchen fires"

(inscribed on the small Issei Plaque in Oppenheimer Park, flanked by Japanese cherry trees, dedicated in 1977)

As refugees from a war-ravaged Europe began to arrive, the predominantly British fabric of Vancouver took on an increasingly ethnic flavor. Hastings Vancouver became home to a large number of Italian and Swedish arrivals.

People still come to Hastings street every day to work, shop, or to live. Whether they come from another country or simply another part of the city, the street brings them together. Places like the Carnegie Centre, (site of Vancouver's first city hall) are evidence of an active and vital community.

The sharing of traditions and memories affords a chance to create a collective mythology rich in diversity and layers. Distinct ethnic communities remain, but we are increasingly aware of cultural tendrils that cross boundaries to share past, present, and future experiences.



OUT! OUT! OUT!

To survive the trauma (of life and its hardships), much strength is needed - a sense of worth, spirit, morale, public sympathy, know-how, good friends, (a collective shared sense of community).

- S. Roddan

Site Analysis: Myth and Memory – Vancouver

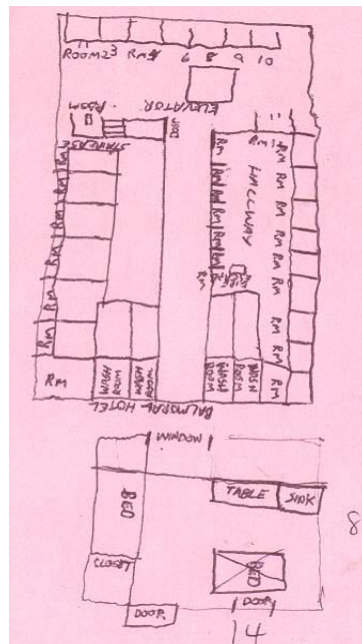


Aspirations: Grandiose & Personal



In 1967 a San Francisco based firm proposed a dreamed scheme that a waterfront freeway would best be served by leveling 600 houses in Strathcona and laying a 10 metre-high overpass over Carrall Street. This dreamed scheme immediately confronted protest from every part of the city.

David P. Ross, "I am living in Balmoral Hotel, which is a terrible building. There are 30 people, living in rooms of 8ft. x 14ft. each, on each floor sharing two bathtubs and two toilets. The hallway in between rows of rooms is only 3ft. wide."

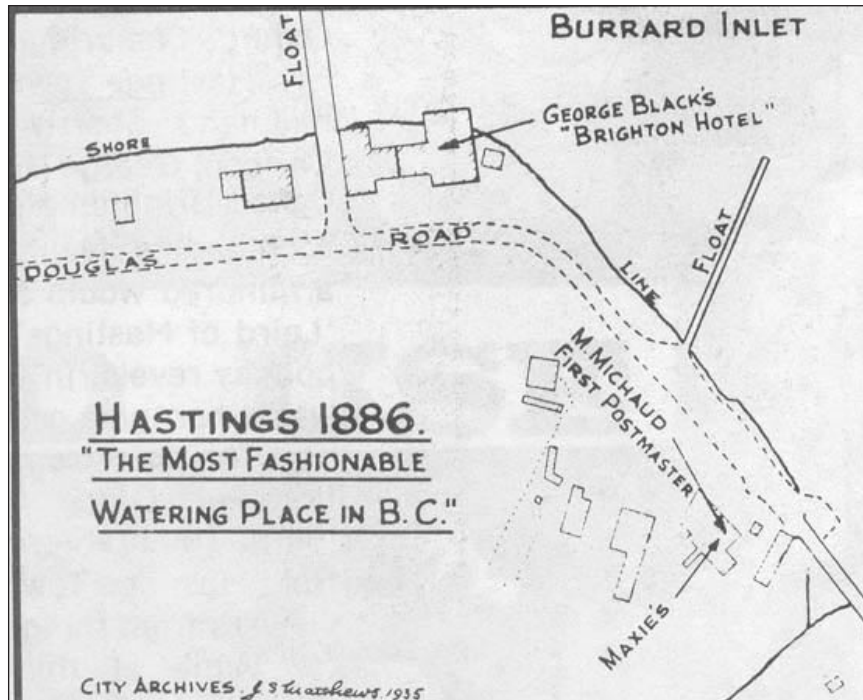


Layout of Balmoral Hotel drawn by D. Ross

Michael Clague, "Individual voices are often ignored in the process of urban planning. People in this area are living on the margins. All they aspire to is to have a safer and better living environment with basic amenities and communal facilities. The lack of both public and private spaces is the major problem because of governmental ignorance and social alienation."

People with musical interests and artistic talent have no place to gather, except outside the Carnegie Library. Most of the people, who have often been left out by the society, actually want to work. They deserve dignity and others' respect in order to build up their courage."





Left: Site of the would-be Hastings Park, 1886.

Above: Aerial of the original Hastings Park.

Below: Reclaimed landscape of Hastings Park with original fair ground structures in the

In 1908, a group of 'prominent' citizens decided to form an Exhibition Association and realized the potential of Hasting Park. Their prominence derived from their status all possessing the time and money to pursue their interests as members of various House, Hunting and Agricultural Societies. From that moment, the fate of the park was linked with the Vancouver Exhibition Association.

After the name was changed to Exhibition Park in 1946, big business began to roll along the already established inroads into the exhibition grounds in the Fifties. By 1952 the VEA had accumulated a surplus of over half a million dollars, and they received a money by-law of almost two million dollars for the construction of the B.C. Building and Empire Stadium. Today, Hastings Park remains at the centre of a tug of war. Different groups have very different aspirations for the fate of the park.



Landmarks: Past & Present

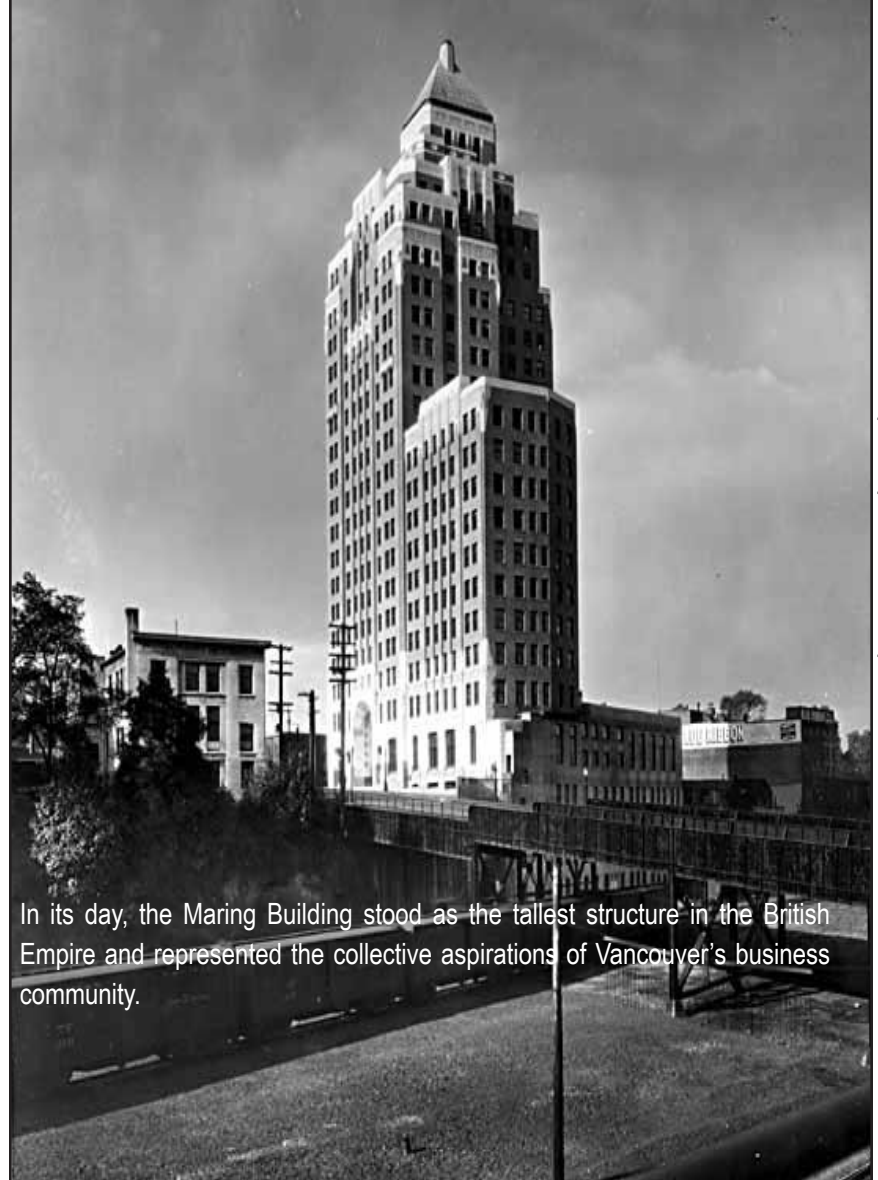


Traversing the length of Vancouver Hastings Street is a revelation of monuments, great and small, to past experiences. Some landmarks were designed to be just that, whereas others have emerged through the process of collective myth-making. Memories and myths are captured forever in the existing traces of past users. In some cases, traces are missing and we are left with little more than a collective memory that fades with time.

Empire Games where, in front of a crowd of 35,000, Roger Banister of England and John Landy of Australia became the first men to break the four-minute mile. Empire Stadium now exists only as a series of closed contour lines on topographical maps.



Built in the Art Deco style, the Marine Building is rich with terracotta reliefs depicting the Vancouver of the 1930's. Industries ranging from logging to shipbuilding are represented, as are steam trains, bi-planes, zeppelins and ships.



In its day, the Maring Building stood as the tallest structure in the British Empire and represented the collective aspirations of Vancouver's business community.



The neon signs that line the street were a modern and quintessentially urban form when they initially appeared. Now they speak nostalgically of an earlier time, their aging charm just one of the successive layers of history that form the backdrop to people's everyday lives in the area.

this row(ed), the sway:

the first way
 the short-cut
 the clear-cut
 the back door
 the quick route
 the mud bath
 the milk-run
 the boardwalk
 the bored walk
 the low-rise
 the highway
 the stagecoach
 another stage
 the pit-stop
 the piss-stop
 the piss-up
 the line-up
 the gateway
 the safe way
 the drive-in
 the drag-strip

from "Kingsway" by
 Michael Turner



The image below suggests that the urban-suburban divide may have happened at roughly the same point along the strip even in the 1920s when this photo was taken. Even before knowing the exact location of the shot, the topography and scale is identifiable.





As you travel the length of the street, either physically or analytically, the rhythm of the topography, and the common vocabulary of the infrastructure stays with you as you pass through different units of history, language, and community.

The original townsites that existed along the strip are still evident as units, in which people still live, shop and work. The industrial areas are still identifiable as working landscapes. Although the street literally traverses the economic and cultural extremes of the city (both past and present) it is also an emblem of our common experience of urbanity.

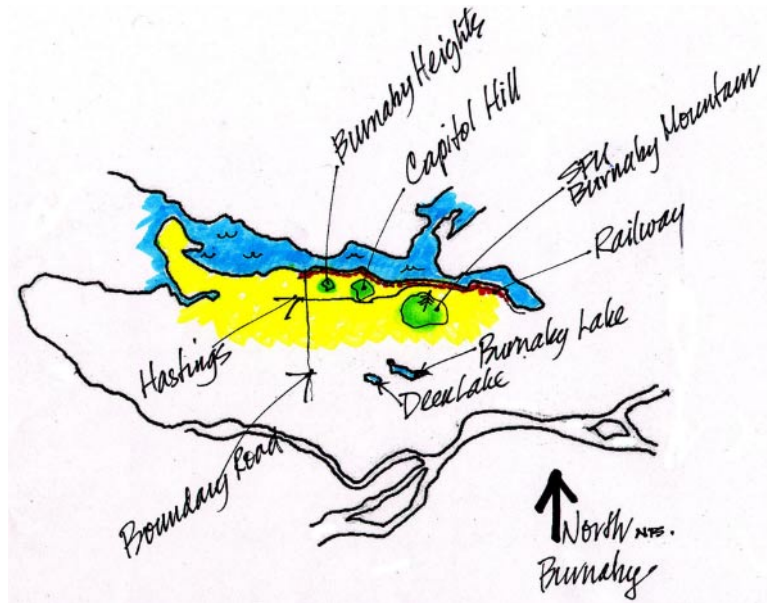


In the course of attempting to recover a collective history we realized that history isn't a list of facts, dates and names but a composite of different people's stories and myths. It's impossible to be comprehensive or objective. The history of a place is partial, fragmented, and shifting. Meaning is best communicated through an attempt to be evocative, and through the process of imagining the possibilities and stories of the past.

**As urban dwellers we engage in the process of myth-making every day.
We are history!**

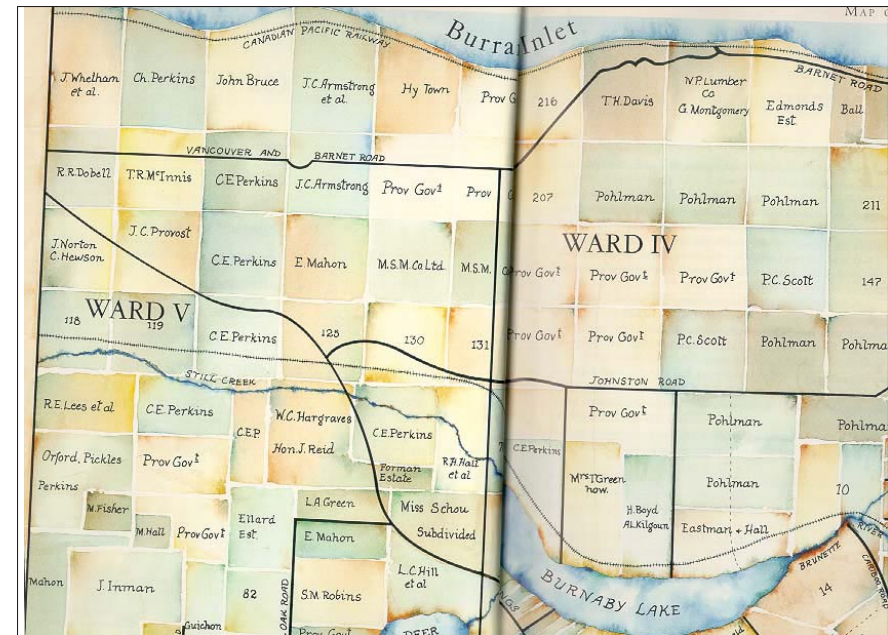
J.Chan, G.Hogan, K. Luke, N. Vujevic, A. Woodend





1800's

"In January 1860, Governor James Douglas passed the first preemption act and the Royal Engineers were charged with the task of surveying the lands around New Westminster for settlement. Purchasers could obtain a 160-acre District Lot parcel of Crown Land for ten shillings an acre. However despite the intention of the Government to stimulate agricultural production through land sales, its policy was the subject of much criticism as the land was sold without any condition of settlement. As a result, some of Burnaby's best agricultural lands were obtained by non-resident land speculators - including some government officials. Colonel Moody, himself obtained large acreages of North Road and around Burnaby Lake." (Armstrong, 2) It was in 1868 the the town site of Hastings was surveyed and sold by the British Columbia Government to land speculators, prospective residents, as well as entrepreneurs.



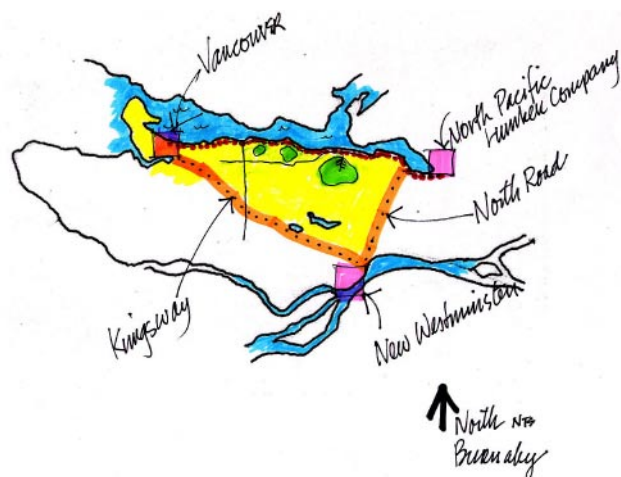
McGeachie. p 6-7. Watercolor adaptation of circa 1900 map of the Municipality of B.C. showing ward system.

In 1868, Brighton was renamed Hastings, after Admiral Hastings who represented the Queen, "his distinguished name would add undoubtedly to the popularity of any community." (Green, 75) It was at this time that the Stamp Mill became Hastings Mill.

A man named Van Horne who decided to extend the rail line from Port Moody to Vancouver implemented the rail lines in 1884. "Curiously enough, it did not run through the center of it, via Deer Lake, but along the shores of the Inlet, where a right-of-way had no doubt been more easily acquired because of the herring which had been drawn across the trail for the benefit of the keen-scented property holders." (Green, 95) With much authority, "Lachlan Hamilton, a land commissioner for the CPR had the most influence over naming street in Vancouver. He officially named Hastings Street," (Walker, 52) in 1886.

scenes on hastings

In 1882, neighbours in the community of Hastings Street, disgruntled with how the property taxes were being funneled to the new provincial capital of B.C., formed a coalition advocating that the taxes be utilized within the local grasp. In order to retain the taxes within the Hastings Street zone, the neighbours applied, "for a municipal charter that would guarantee their taxes went to local roads and services. The municipality received its charter of incorporation on September 24, 1892." (Burnaby City Web Site)



1900

By the beginning of the new century, census showed a growing population of 400 residents in the municipality, however, a great majority resided in Southern Burnaby since the main road leading to the North Pacific Lumber Co., a large source of jobs for the community, dipped down from Vancouver to Southern Burnaby and then back up along the coast.

McGeachie. p 33. North Pacific Lumber Co. Barnet Hwy. 1909

"BC government constructs Hastings Street from Cassiar to link with Barnet Road; thus reducing an otherwise lengthy trip from Douglas Road to New Westminster

and then north along North Road to Burrard Inlet." (Armstrong, 106)

1910s

In the early part of the century, new settlers to the area began to toil and clear the land in North Burnaby. It was in 1910 when J.C.B. Goodridge, "built a rude shack beside the trail we today call Hastings Street." This trail consisted of mud as a base and did not allow for the easy access for commuters on the tow-horse democrat—the first bus, for the men and women would disembark from the soles and walk up the hills, "in order that the team might be able to draw the light vehicle up the hill." (Green, 168) One year later, mass amounts of influx began in the Hastings Street area when 1,100 lots were sold to eager buyers and soon after, the population soared to 3500 residents.

"The first Oil Refinery in Western Canada was planned at Impoco on the shores of Burrard Inlet. In February 1912, this storage station at Berry Point (now Chevron Refinery) in Burnaby received a total of 125, 542 imperial gallons of refined oil, and 1006799 gallons of fuel oil." (Green, 171) With employment in the area, the oil refinery and the lumber mill were large sources of economic stability, the number of residents increased to 15,000 and the first church in the area, Vancouver Heights Presbyterian Church, was erected. With such a growing and progressing society, Hastings Street was planked within the same year of 1912.



McGeachie. p 41. Pioneer tent home, Eaton Street and Ingleton, 1912.

By 1913, this prospering community had the privilege and good fortune of seeing,

scenes on hastings

portion of the lower mainland, transportation was not to be left behind in the race to modernize and connect this growing community to Vancouver. It was at this time when the occasional car would drive down Hastings Street on a corduroy roadway and street cars were introduced as the Burnaby Extension, "a separate system from that servicing Vancouver." (Armstrong, 108)



Green. p 151. First Streetcar (Capital Hill). December 22, 1913.



Green. p 154. Hastings Street and Ross Avenue (Now Ellesmere) 1911.



McGeachie. p 41. Hastings Grove Store and Bus (Curtis Street East of Duthie Ave) 1912.



McGeachie. p 46. Lochdale Store & Post Office (Hastings and Sperling) 1913.

In 1919, Burnaby passed the Conservation of Assets Bylaw, enforcing the reservation of all monies received through the sale of property left with unpaid

scenes on hastings

1920s

“During the 1920s, the sale of residential property and construction increased in Burnaby. But industry was slow to establish work places in the Municipality, partly because plenty of land was available in Vancouver and New Westminister and partly because Burnaby could not afford to open up and service its large expanses of wild land. Consequently, many residents found employment in the two port cities, and Burnaby became known as a bedroom community a tag that stuck for several decades” (McGeachie, 56)

“Capitol Hill School was built on the Western side of Ellesmere in 1913. In the spring of 1924 the school had burned down and rebuilt in its present location.” (Green, 168)

“On December 18th, 1929 newspaper headlines read “First White Way is Officially Turned On: Hastings Street from Boundary to Gilmore Rescued from Gloom” Burnaby’s first ornamental street lighting system, was completed at a cost of \$10,000.” (McGeachie, 59) These new streetlights emitted a glow that displayed the new two lane, concrete Hastings Street.

1930s

By 1930, the population tolled 23,500 residents, there existed a peewee golf course, and on February 24th, 1930 Regent Theatre was the first theatre in Burnaby to update its theatre from silent films to “talking pictures.”



McGeachie. p 69. Dow General Store. Hastings Street and Spelling Ave. 1930

PART 1



McGeachie. p 63. Pee Wee Golf COurse. 4110 East Hastings ST. July 1930 & 2001

“The Van Heights golf course, opened on May 17, 1931 at Gilmore and Hastings, offered “four hours of fun from 6 to 10 for 25 cents. ...Gilmore Avenue School won the Province Cup as public school soccer champions of Greater Vancouver and the North Burnaby High School Basketball team won the Wilson Cup for the fourth consecutive year.” (McGeachie, 73)

By the mid thirties, industry, commerce, adn commercialization began to grow with leaps and bounds. Robertson’s Hardware, Pegent Fish Market,a s well as other entreprizes sought to make a niche along the busy thoroughway of Hastings.



McGeachie. p 93. 1939 view of Hastings Street Southwest 4000 block

1940s



McGeachie. p 88. 1946. B.C. Electric Streetcar #241, Boundary Rd. & Hastings Street.



McGeachie. p 89. Capital hill Community Hall 1948.

Thirty men and women turn out over several summer days to rebuild a new Capitol Hill Community Association building. Hastings Street Car line is shut down in 1949.

1950s

North Burnaby Merchants Association is formed to protect and promote the Hastings shopping district. "Parts of Hastings Street gets sidewalks after a local girl, Betty Stevenson gets a foot injury by a bid rock. Neighbors petition city hall to get sidewalks." (Pride, 497) Hastings Street is widened to 86 feet after it was thought that the standard road right of way width of 66 feet was considered inadequate and 20 feet is taken from the south side of Hastings street lots. With the excitement that happened over the pst 100 years, B.C.'s Centennial is marked by Burnaby building, a \$60,000 pavilion on top of Burnaby Mountain.

1960s

Brentwood Mall opens and threatens shopping along Hastings Street. In 1963 Hastings Street is widened and not long after on September 9th, 1965 Simon Fraser University opened its doors to provide for higher education.



1963 Robertson's Hardware front facade "chopped" off & Fish Market physically moved back to allow for street widening.

scenes on hastings

1970s-1980s

Durring the 1970's and 1980's the expansion of the suburbs, east of Burnaby Mountain increases the traffic along Hastings Street.

1990's-Present

Census 1991: Burnaby Population: 158,000 (British Heritage 20%, Chinese & South Asian heritage 20%, German heritage 4%, Frech & Douch heritage 1%.)

Eileen Dailly Pool and Leisure Center opens in 1992 and saw Burnaby celebrate its 100th anniversary. When this happened, the area officially changed from the Corporation of the District of Burnaby to the City of Burnaby. In the mid 1990's, parallel parking lanes along the street were taken away durring rush hour to alleviate traffic

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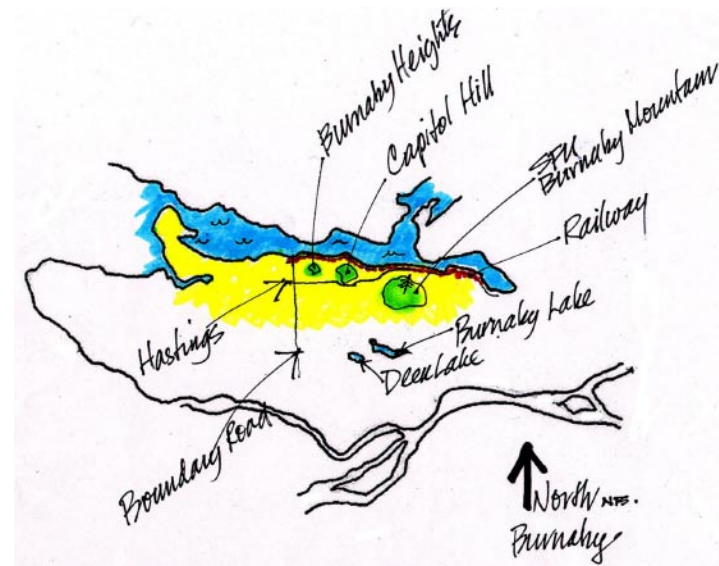
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