

Vancouver Historical Society

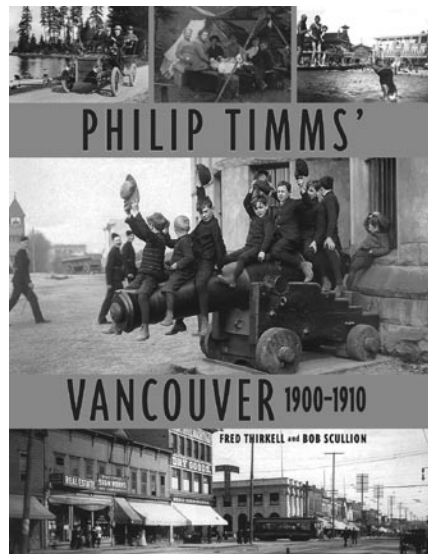
NEWSLETTER

ISSN 0042 - 2487

Vol. 47 No. 2 Oct. 2007

Philip Timm's Vancouver: Photographs and Postcards from 1900-1910 *October Speakers: Fred Thirkell and Bob Scullion*

Toronto-born photographer Philip Timms (1874-1973) came to Vancouver in 1898 with the prospect of prosperity from the Klondike Gold Rush. A complex man, amateur archaeologist, vegetarian, musician and devout Christian, Timms managed his own photography and printing shop for decades producing thousands of postcards and photographs. In the early years, he caught the essence of Vancouver's golden age between 1900 and 1910, riding his bicycle around the city and the Lower Mainland, sensitively capturing all aspects of city life, from buildings to families to scenery, many photos of which were turned into postcards. This talk by two eminent postcard historians is another visual treat of a valuable pictorial Vancouver legacy.



couver and the Fraser Valley (1996), *Places Remembered: Greater Vancouver, New Westminster and the Fraser Valley* (1997); *Vancouver & Beyond: Pictures and Stories from the Postcard Era, 1900-1914* (2000); *Frank Gowen's Vancouver, 1914-1931* (2001); *British Columbia 100 years ago: Portraits of a Province* (2002); *Breaking News: the Postcard Images of George Alfred Barrowclough* (2004) and *Philip Timms' Vancouver: 1900-1910* (2006).

Vancouver-born Fred Thirkell was educated in Vancouver and graduated from UBC. His longtime interest in postcards manifested itself in 1986 in

Vancouver's Past: thirty-two ready to mail beautifully reproduced antique picture postcards. From that point he collaborated with Glasgow-born and fellow postcard historian, Bob Scullion, to produce *Postcards from the Past: Edwardian Images of Greater Van-*

LEFT: Phillip Timms (Courtesy VPL # 18546; BELOW: Authors Fred Thirkell and Bob Scullion.



Next Meeting: Thursday, October 25 at 7:30 pm at the Vancouver Museum

PREZNOTES

As the VHS rounds out its 71st year of existence preserving and instilling interest in the city's history through various means, we have met the global internet age head-on with our website (www.vancouver-historical-society.ca) which receives 2000 hits a month. Even though this site is about Society matters, (genuine historical goodies can be obtained from Chuck Davis' marvelous site (www.vancouverhistory.ca), we have nevertheless, become a conduit or referral agency for historical inquiries.

Currently the inquiry section, info@vancouver-historical-society.ca, receives from different points in the globe half a dozen inquiries a week, all of which are immediately answered by directing them to the Public Library, City Archives, Genealogical Society or some other institution(s), or suggesting they use the links on our VHS website. Sometimes we forward an inquiry to a particular VHS director or member who has relevant expertise.

Occasionally we have to get creative. A recent inquirer wanted to know about the Kwalate River Landslide on Knight Inlet in the 1500's! Not exactly VHS territory, but a quick Google search produced an abstract of a recent journal article on that very event! Our inquirer was delighted and also learned the first lesson of modern historiography: always start with Google.

We are also receiving inquiries about directing no-longer-wanted private collections of Vancouver historical material, which people don't want to throw away. As we cannot store these ourselves, we channel all such collections to the appropriate archives or museums as we did with the "lost" invaluable Spencer time capsule.

All the above is in addition to providing monthly speakers, sponsoring research and publications, sponsoring or co-sponsoring historical events, etc.

The VHS, with its rock solid foundation of enthusiastic members, is alive and well and meeting Vancouver history head on.

Bruce M. Watson, President

Well Done, Charles!

Charles Hou, past VHS program chair and creator of the Begbie Canadian History Contest, has made a new contribution to local history. At the invitation of the Burnaby School Board, he has helped to develop a DVD documentary on the lives of five Burnaby WWII veterans and prepared an accompanying package of educational materials for school use. You can view excerpts from the documentary and inspect the other materials online at: www.burnaby.ca/fromtheheart. If you'd like, you can even order your own copy of the DVD for just \$5.00.

45 years ago in October...

In 1962, on October 12th and into the 13th, Hurricane Frieda slammed into coastal Oregon, Washington, and B.C.

Starting as a typhoon west of the International Date Line, the storm moved east (instead of the usual westward pattern for typhoons), and became a hurricane while merging with another tropical storm in the eastern Pacific Ocean.

Winds gusted to 129 mph during the four-hour storm. In Vancouver, windows were shattered. Power lines came down resulting in a blackout from Horseshoe Bay all the way to Hope. The city lost as many as 3,000 trees — most of them in Stanley Park.

It took more than a year to clean up the fallen trees in the park. Stanley Park's miniature railway was built the following year in one of the resulting new clearings.

VHS Park Interpretive Signs

After several attempts to secure funding for two VHS historical interpretive signs, one at Stanley Park's Hallelujah Point and the other in neighbouring Devonian Park, the VHS Executive has decided to fund the \$5000 needed from VHS operating expenses.

This rather large sum would pay for design, manufacture and installation of two interpretive signs similar to those currently around Lost Lagoon. Approximately one meter long, they will be designed to meet Park Board appearance and durability standards. Any contributions to help defray costs would be more than welcome.

Welcome Our New Members

Catherine Broom Leslie Mobbs
Kirsten Chursinoff & Ernst Schneider

History Prizes Announced

The Chinese Canadian Historical Society is pleased to announce the Edgar Wickberg prizes. These prizes will be awarded annually for the study of the history of Chinese Canadians in British Columbia. These two awards are open to current and recent students of post-secondary institutions in British Columbia who have demonstrated promise of research achievement in this area. For further information, please visit www.cchsbc.ca or address inquiries to CCHSBC, Kerrisdale Postal Station, PO Box 18032, Vancouver, B. C. V6M 4L3. The deadline for applications is December 31, 2007.

House History

Freelance journalist Eve Lazarus has written a collection of stories about the social histories of selected heritage homes in Greater Vancouver. *At Home with History* is a collection of stories that bring to life stories of bootleggers and brothels, police corruption, murders and ghosts. The book includes chapters that focus on Strathcona, the West End, Shaughnessy, Mount Pleasant and New Westminster. For the growing number of heritage homebuyers and renovators, it includes a chapter on how to research the social history of your own home. Lazarus has written for *The Vancouver Sun*, *The Globe & Mail*, *B.C. Business* and *Canadian Family*.



Become Street Smart

Who was Davie? Why do we have a Broadway? What street was named for a Spanish Secretary of State? What street recalls a river in the Ukraine? What happened to Cedar Street? Become street smart. Discover the stories behind the naming of Vancouver's streets with Elizabeth Walker's *Street Names of Vancouver*. We have limited copies for sale. Every sale benefits the Vancouver Historical Society. It's the perfect book for anyone with an interest in Vancouver.

Order yours today.
Call 604-878-9140

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, November 22, 2007, 7:30 pm

Lambs to the Slaughter: How and why Vancouver became a haven for penny stock crooks

Speaker: David Baines

Vancouver Sun columnist David Baines will explain how home-grown speculation over the years, helped by ineffectual regulation, allowed Vancouver to become a haven for stock market predators.

Thursday, January 24, 2008, 7:30 pm

The History of the Italian Community in Vancouver

Speaker: Ray Culos

The acting of Bruno Gerussi, the jurisprudence of Angelo E. Branca, the cuisine of Umberto Menghi and the elegant sculptures of Charles (Carlos) Marega are just but a few contributions of Vancouverites of Italian heritage. Learn more of this community's fascinating story with Ray Culos.

Thursday, February 28, 2008, 7:30 pm

Musqueam — First People of Vancouver

Speaker: Larry Grant

Discover how the Musqueam people have used and occupied their traditional territory for several thousand years. This territory includes much of what is now Vancouver and the surrounding area. Elder Larry Grant describes the rich history of the Musqueam.

Thursday, March 27, 2008, 7:30 pm

Inside the H.Y. Louie Family

Speaker: Willis Louie

From humble beginnings as wholesale grocers in Chinatown, the Louie family went on to own Independent Groceries Alliance (IGA) and eventually also London Drugs. The evening promises to be an intriguing glimpse into one family's history, which is very much tied to that of Vancouver.

Thursday, April 24, 2008, 7:30 pm

History of the Vancouver Post Office

Speaker: Jim Bain

From 1869 when postmaster Maximilian Michaud first cancelled outgoing letters at his Burrard Inlet post office to the mail sorting machinery of today's giant Vancouver Mail Processing Plant, the local post office has gone through many changes. A former Divisional Manager sorts through its colourful history.

The Voyages of Captain Vancouver

September Speaker: John Horton

There was a fine double-barreled evening of information and art appreciation for members — and potential members — of the Vancouver Historical Society on September 27. They filled the Joyce Walley Room at the Vancouver Museum to hear a talk by, and look at the paintings of, the well-known marine artist John Horton. The paintings are based on the voyages in these waters of Capt. George Vancouver. They give us a vivid record, with almost photographic realism, of Vancouver's detailed and meticulous explorations.

VHS board member Larry Wong, who introduced Mr. Horton, commented that it seemed you could almost *walk into* the paintings.

Their realism and Mr. Horton's narrative combined to take us back more than 200 years on a genuinely memorable voyage. "I sailed in Vancouver's wake," he told us.

He showed us plans of Vancouver's main vessel, HMS *Discovery*. The 150-foot-long ship, we learned, was built "along the lines of a 'Whitby collier.'" It seems Capt. James Cook liked the latter ships — originally designed to carry coal — because of their shape and capacity. Vancouver had sailed with Cook, and so he was familiar with them. (Speaking of Cook, killed by Hawaiian natives on February 14, 1779, Mr. Horton told a story new to us. The day after Cook's death, a delegation of native men came to speak to his crew to explain what they had done and asked specifically to speak to Vancouver. That, said Mr. Horton, was perhaps an indication of the regard in which he was held.)

The climate on the Pacific coast in the 1790s was worse than it is today, the speaker said, so sailing conditions were often unpleasant. The exquisitely detailed charts that Van-

couver made were based on surveys made from small open boats — with their crews sometimes rowing for 18 hours a day. The large ships, the *Discovery* and her companion ship the *Chatham*, wouldn't have been practical for entry into the hundreds of small inlets along the coast. The two vessels would winter in Hawaii during the years of exploration, and a chart Mr. Horton showed us indicated Vancouver and his men made that trans-Pacific voyage several times.

Vancouver's negotiations with the Spanish explorers at Nootka were important. "If the claims of Spain had been upheld," Mr. Horton said, "Canada would have stopped at the Rockies."

Thanks to Mr. Horton's skilled brush, we were with Vancouver at Cape Mudge and Menzies Bay, and were with him when the *Discovery* ran aground (a painting titled *The Melancholy Moment*). But a full description of the visual and historical goodies in this talk could fill several pages. He earned very enthusiastic applause.

During the question period that followed the talk, one audience member, Victor Guerin of the Musqueam First Nation, had a response to one observation of Capt. Vancouver's. Mr. Horton had quoted the good captain as saying that, not seeing the natives as he departed this part of the coast, he assumed they were still asleep. "They weren't asleep," said Mr. Guerin, "they weren't there! They had gone to Point Grey!"

To see John Horton's Capt. Vancouver-themed paintings in vivid color, and read more of his descriptions of Vancouver's explorations, visit www.fidelisartprints.com/captainvancouver.

Vancouver Historical Society - Leadership, 2007 - 2008 (elected May 24, 2007)

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