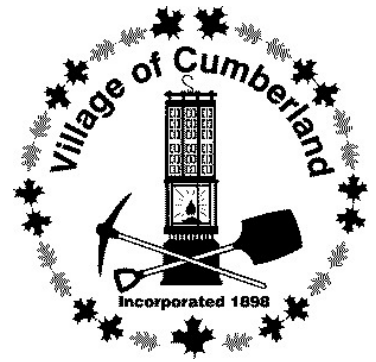


# HERITAGE COMMITTEE AGENDA



**The Corporation of the Village of Cumberland  
Heritage Committee Meeting  
February 15, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.  
Council Chamber, 2675 Dunsmuir Avenue**

*We are honoured to gather on the unceded  
traditional territory of the K'ómoks First Nation.*

- 1. Approval of the Agenda**
- 2. Minutes**  
Adoption of Minutes of January 18, 2024
- 3. Unfinished Business**  
None
- 4. New Business**
  - 4.1 Cumberland Hotel – questions for Statement of Significance
  - 4.2 Draft Statements of Significance for review (attached)
    - 2719 Dunsmuir Avenue
    - Bevan Houses
    - Coal Creek Historic Park - updated and original Coal Creek Historic Park 2018 SOS for reference
    - Wellington Colliery Railway
    - 00 Survey Marker
- 5. Next Meeting**  
The next scheduled meeting of the Heritage Committee is on Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.
- 6. Adjournment**

**The Corporation of the Village of Cumberland  
Heritage Committee Minutes**

**November 16, 2023 at 4:00 p.m.  
Council Chamber, 2675 Dunsmuir Avenue**



**Members Present:** Meaghan Cursons, Chair  
Neil Borecky, Councillor  
Hugh McLean  
Lois Harris

**Regrets:** Tanis Frame

**Staff Present:** Karin Albert, Senior Planner

**Heritage Consultants:** Elana Zysblat and Jurian ter Hurst (via video conference)

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The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m.

**1. Agenda**

**Moved by:** Harris

**Seconded by:** Cursons

That the Unfinished Business Item be moved after New Business and that the Heritage Committee approve the thus amended agenda for November 16, 2023.

**Carried Unanimously**

**2. Minutes**

**Moved by:** Borecky

**Seconded by:** McLean

THAT the Heritage Committee adopt the minutes of October 19, 2023.

**Carried Unanimously**

**3. New Business**

**3.1 Statements of Significance**

Heritage consultants Elana and Jurian discussed a number of questions with the Committee that have arisen during the research for the five Statements of Significance that they are working on.

***00 monument/survey marker***

- The survey point is significant in that all the historic surveys of the underground mine workings use it as a reference point. Without the 00 survey

marker, the old mining surveys could not be connected to the modern survey system.

- Represents the reason for settlement, the birth of the community.
- One of few remaining physical evidence of coal mining in the community as all mining entrances have been closed up, the tibble has been pulled down, etc.
- Other mining remnants are No. 3 mine entrance within the Community Forest, No. 4 fan house, Scott slope at Coal Beach, Japanese No. 1 town within Coal Creek Historic Park.
- The 00 survey marker is intact as laid, the first mark and the only one that has endured intact.
- Also important and connected to the 00 survey marker is the story of Robert (Rocky) Williams and his work to translate the old survey points that map all the boreholes into the modern survey system.
- The 00 survey marker could become a touchstone to history if officially marked and interpreted through a sign.
- An interpretive sign along the trail would help passerbys learn about the historic context of where they walk. A good location due to the open view to the Village which helps viewers locate themselves in relation to the 00 survey marker as well as the railway grade of the former Wellington Colliery railway.

#### ***Wellington Collieries Railway Grade***

- Significance is the presence of the railway in Cumberland, how it served Cumberland.
- The railway used to run through the community from the highway to Scott slope at Coal Beach and north to the Puntledge River but severed by the landfill.
- It provided a historic connection to Royston and Union Bay coke yards, transported coal, workers, and houses (like the Bevan Houses)
- The evidence of the railway is the grades that it ran on. Character defining elements are the remaining sections that have not been removed. Those sections can be recognized through their straight alignment, a steady grade that never exceeds a very gentle slope, a very well compacted base and strong base that could support railway cars and today makes an ideal, well draining trail surface, fill (elevated segments) or cuts/excavations along the grade to be able to maintain the gentle grade.
- The SoS can't go beyond the administrative boundaries of the Village but can express the importance of the connection/association with adjacent communities of Royston and Union Bay.
- A map of the full extent can be included in the SoS.
- It is important to mention the terminuses of the former railway. There used to be a railway station where the parking lot of the Rec Centre is today. The Y junction (where the grade splits to head north and east) is at Ulverston Avenue, close to Royston Road.

### ***Perseverance Creek Wetlands***

- The wetlands hug Cumberland from one direction.
- Should they have their own SoS or more information be included in an updated Coal Creek Historic Park SoS?
- To be considered a cultural landscape and qualify for an SoS and addition to the Heritage Register, according to the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, there has to be a human element to the place.
- In this case, that is the modification of the wetlands by the Japanese and Chinese communities who built drainage ditches to manage the wetlands water levels.
- Committee confirmed to include recognition of the Perseverance Creek Wetlands within the Coal Creek Historic Park SoS but include an explanation that the wetlands extend.

### **3.2.1 Community Heritage Register Project**

- The Committee discussed the importance of a thematic framework to inform decisions about the recognition of heritage resources. Cumberland's [Heritage Management Plan](#) (p.6,7) identifies five themes which are still relevant.
- The Committee reviewed the Village's Heritage Inventory, tagging each listing with one of the following categories:
  - A. Built
  - B. Monument/engineering works
  - C. Cultural Landscape
  - D. Event/ephemeral (out)
- Those listing tagged with A, B, and/or C will be further reviewed for additional values and considered for a recommendation to Council for addition to the Community Heritage Register. Listings tagged with D do not qualify as a heritage register listing because they are events, ephemeral or intangible.
- Hugh will enter the tagged listings into Excel for further review at an upcoming meeting. Additional values may still need to be identified as well as heritage resources to be added that are not on the inventory. The following gaps were identified at this meeting: Ginger Goodwin and Joe Naylor gravestones, the Spanish Civil War monument, neighbourhood clusters.

### **4. Unfinished Business**

- Karin reported that the Committee's request to be the conduit for public engagement on arts and culture during the OCP review was not supported by staff and Council as that is not within the Committee's mandate.
- Arts and culture policies will be part of the OCP review and there will be public engagement on that topic that Committee members are welcome to attend.

- In addition, work on an Arts and Culture Plan is planned for 2025.

**5. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Heritage Committee is Thursday, January 18, 2024.

**6. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

# Statement of Significance

2719 Dunsmuir Avenue, Cumberland, BC :: Cumberland Drug Store ~ 1933



Prepared by Elana Zysblat, CAHP :: Ance Building Services :: December 2023  
Research & Analysis by Jurian ter Horst, MA :: ter Horst Research

**[MAP with 2719 Dunsmuir location]**

## **Description of Historic Place**

Cumberland Drug Store is a two-storey, stucco-clad, commercial building a prominent cornice and with residential units above and at the rear, located on the south side of Dunsmuir Avenue in downtown Cumberland, BC.

## **Heritage Values**

Constructed in 1933, Cumberland Drug Store has historical value for its association with Cumberland's Big Fire of July 13, 1933, which destroyed almost two blocks of buildings on Dunsmuir Avenue, and is testament to the rapid revitalization of Cumberland's commercial street after the fire. The original business at this location, Lang's Drug Store, was destroyed in the fire, and was replaced by the subject building with the insurance payment from the fire, which became Cumberland Drug Store,.

Cumberland Drug Store holds historical value for its association with Robert Campbell Lang, a long-time owner of the property (1922-1940) and a well-known pharmacist in Cumberland and Courtenay. Lang was President of the Courtenay Rotary Club and the Cumberland Board of Trade, helped found the Cumberland Boy Scouts, was a member of Courtenay City Council, and was President of the BC Pharmaceutical Association in the 1940s.

The subject building also holds historical value for its association with Roy Clement and his son, Addison ("Add") Clement, who together with James ("Jim") Dick ran the store from 1933 until 1954, and owned the store until 1960. Add Clement was a member of many Comox Valley organizations, and was named Citizen of the Year 1991 by the Comox Valley and Cumberland Chambers of Commerce for his long-standing dedication to volunteer causes.

The building holds further historical value for its association with John Leung. Leung opened a family-run grocery at the Cumberland Drug Store building in 1974 (Leung's Grocery, 1974-1988). Then-owners Peter and Blanche Chandler closed the Cumberland Drug Store when the federal government took over the costs of senior citizens drugs, and running a pharmacy was no longer sustainable.

Designed by Frederick J. Mitchell of Victoria, who also designed McKinnon's (2717 Dunsmuir Avenue), the subject building has architectural and aesthetic value for its Revival-era commercial design with apartments, which well represents the architectural trends of the 1930s and is also important for representing the typical configuration of early small town and neighbourhood commercial building designs.

This historic place has socio-economic value for its continued commercial use as a drug store from 1912, when Albert Henry Peacey first built a drug store on the property, until 1974. Its continued and ongoing commercial use since 1974 is valued as a testimony for Cumberland's

diverse mom-and-pop businesses, including Leung's Grocery, Bits and Pieces Hardware, 2<sup>nd</sup> Stop Books, Village Crafts, Bev's Quilts and Crafts, Moon's Records, and today, B-Side Studio.

This historic place holds further socio-economic value for its continued residential use since 1933, providing affordable rental units in Cumberland's downtown to this day.

Finally, this historic place holds scientific and environmental value for its traditional construction techniques, for its historic, locally-sourced, low energy-intensive materials – their quality, durability and repairability – and for the embodied energy (the total energy expended over the building's 90 years lifecycle) held in the building.

### **Character-defining Elements**

The elements that define the heritage character of Cumberland Drug Store are its:

- Continuous commercial use since 1912
- Continuous residential use since 1933
- Original location on the south side of Dunsmuir Avenue, between Second Street and Third Street
- Original commercial siting on the lot, right at the property line
- Commercial form and massing, with apartments above and behind
- Two-storey, wood-frame structure
- Architectural elements associated with the Revival architectural style, including:
  - Flat roof
  - Stucco siding
  - External brick chimney (west elevation)

As well as:

- Prominent cornice
- Large storefront windows
- Storefront signage
- A decorative iron feature below the cornice
- Recessed corner (east elevation)
- Original window openings on all elevations (except for storefront)

**Current Photos**



front view



rear view



side view (west elevation)



side view (east elevation)

## Archival Photos



Photograph of the old Lang's Drug Store, a year before it was destroyed by fire in 1933.  
Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, 2719 Dunsmuir Avenue – Building file, 1932 / C030-016.



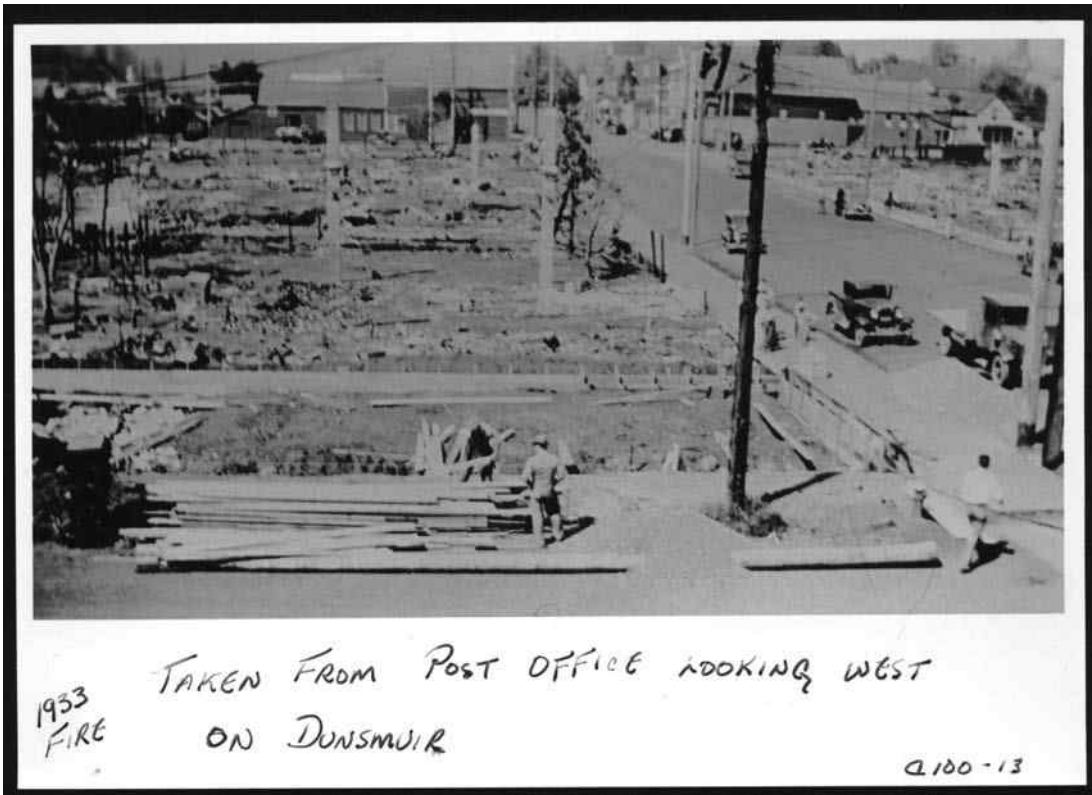
Robert Campbell Lang.

Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, 2719 Dunsmuir Avenue – Building file, 1945.

On July 13, 1933, fire broke out in the King George Hotel, burning down not only hotel and Lang's Drug Store, but also other stores such as Pay & Save Grocery, McLean's Jewellery Store, Mumford's Grocery Store, McKinnon's Dry Goods, the Cumberland Hotel and eleven residences. By December 1933, the construction of the new buildings on this block was already completed.



View of the south side of Dunsmuir Avenue during the fire of July 13, 1933. Obscured by the smoke on the right stands Lang's Drug Store, constructed in 1912, going up in flames. Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, 2010.007.004c, 1933.



Photograph of Dunsmuir Avenue between Second Street and Third Street, after the fire of July 13, 1933. It shows that the fire demolished all buildings on the south side of this block. Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, C100-013, 1933.

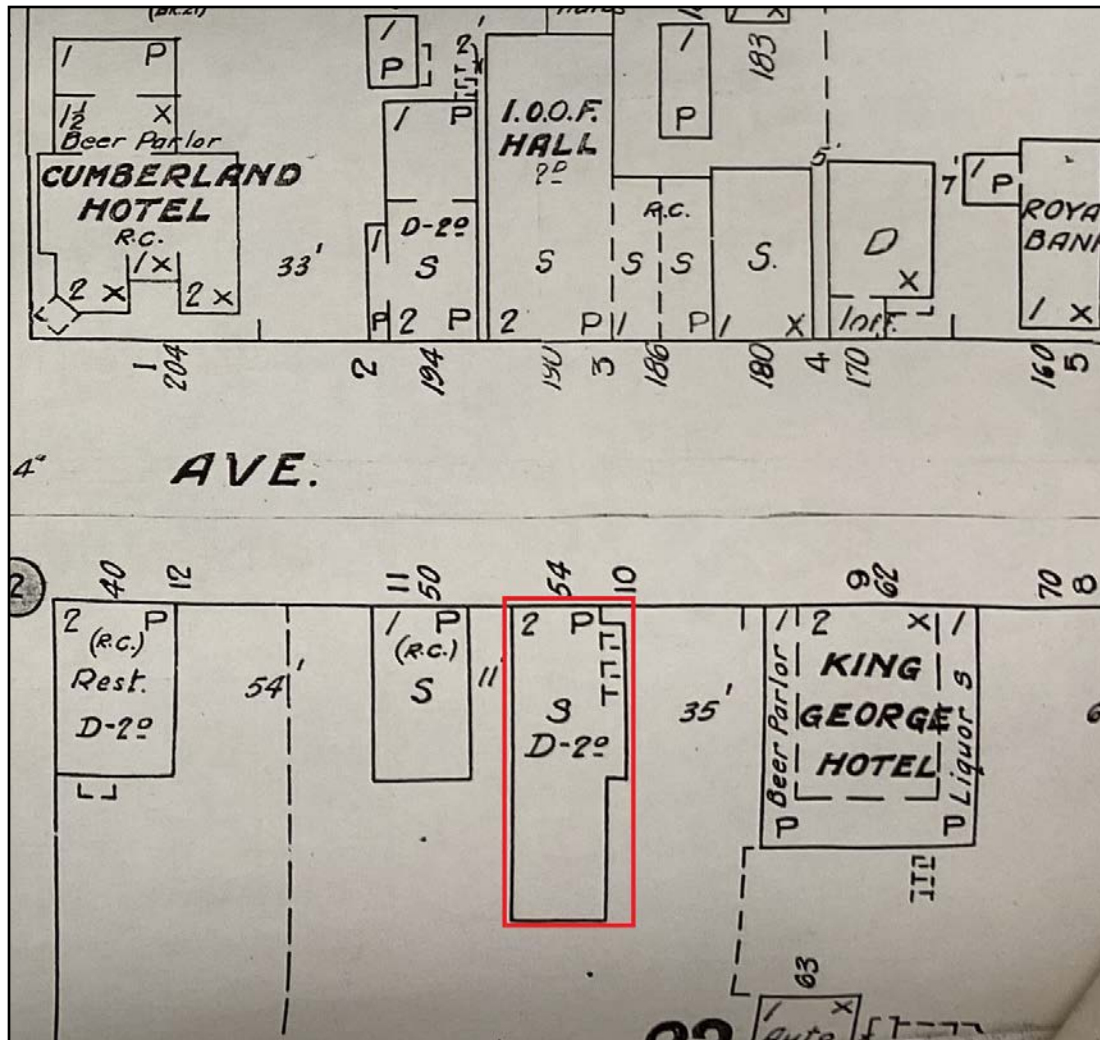


Photograph of Dunsmuir Avenue, looking east from Second Street [date unknown]. The red arrow points to Cumberland Drug Store. Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, C270-041.

**CUMBERLAND DRUG  
STORE**  
*The Rexall Store*

To this business, now owned and operated by R. A. Clement, belongs the distinction of being the oldest drug store north of Nanaimo. There is another thing about it which probably few local people fully realize—it carried one of the largest drug store stocks on Vancouver Island. Housed in a fine large building and with interior appointments of the best, this store offers its customers everything they need in pure drugs, proprietary medicines, toilet and gift articles, confectionery, stationery, school supplies, smokers' needs, cameras and films. The prescription department is handled with efficiency and promptness and only the purest drugs are used in compounding.

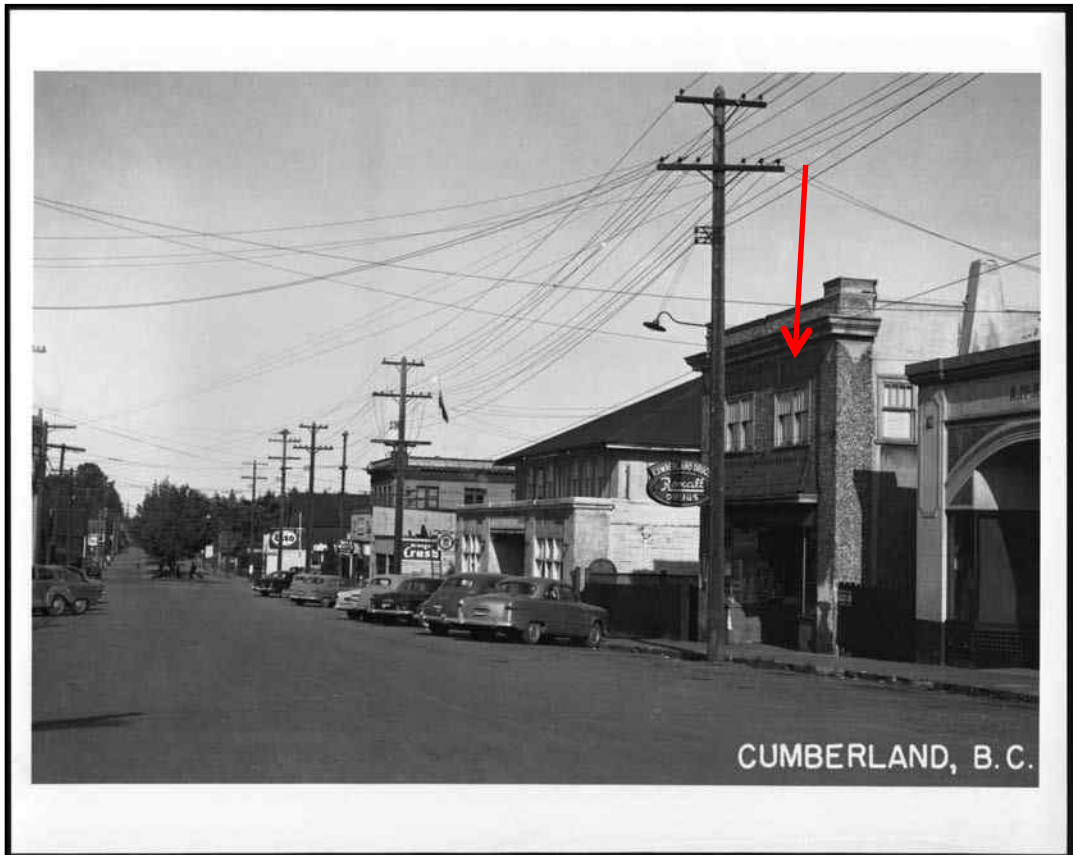
Cumberland Drug Store was also known as the Rexall Store. The old drug store was located at the same location as the 1933 building, and the drug store was therefore considered "being the oldest drug store north of Nanaimo," according to this newspaper article. Source: Vancouver Sun, July 4, 1936.



Fire insurance map of Cumberland, 1935. The location of the subject building is marked with a red rectangular. The map shows that the second floor of the building was allocated for residential use. Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, Fire Insurance Plan 1921, revised in 1935.



Photograph of Dunsmuir Avenue, looking west from 4<sup>th</sup> Street. The red arrow points to Cumberland Drug Store. Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, C270-035, c. 1950.



Photograph of Dunsmuir Avenue, looking east from Second Street, 1951-1952. The red arrow points to Cumberland Drug Store, also known as Rexall Drugs Store. Left to the drug store is the King George Hotel. Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, C270-036.



Aerial photograph of Cumberland, 1960. Cumberland Drug Store is marked circled in red. The photograph shows the residential units at the rear of the building.

Source: University of Saskatchewan, University Archives & Special Collections.



Photograph of Cumberland Drug Store. The photograph shows the building with its original recessed entry, storefront windows, stucco cladding at ground floor and tiled canopy. Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, 2719 Dunsmuir Avenue – Building file, year unknown.



Photograph of John Leung from Leung's Grocery.

Leung was born in Cumberland's Chinatown in 1930, and was a life-long champion of Cumberland's heritage. Leung was founding member of the Cumberland Museum & Archives.

Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, C270-045, year unknown.



Photograph of Bev's Quilts and Crafts at 2719 Dunsmuir Avenue, 1988-1990s. Beverley A. Smith started Bev's Quilt and Crafts in 1988 in the former drug store, and operated her shop until 1998. Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, 2719 Dunsmuir Avenue – Building file, year unknown.



Photograph of the subject building [date unknown].

More recent alterations to the building, completed by the 1980s, include a new storefront. Aluminum door and windows replaced the original wood windows and front door, as well as an arched, deeply recessed entry; vertical boards replaced an original tiled canopy; and coke oven bricks replaced the original stucco. Almost all original wood windows were replaced by aluminum windows.

Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, 2719 Dunsmuir Avenue – Building file, year unknown.

## Research Findings

**Legal Address: PARCEL A (DD 70688N) OF LOTS 10 AND 11, BLOCK 7, DISTRICT LOT 21, NELSON DISTRICT, PLAN 522**

**Sources:** BC Assessment (<https://www.bcassessment.ca/>); Village of Cumberland iMap (<https://imapcumberland.imaptoo.ca/imapviewer/>)

**Civic Address: 2719 Dunsmuir Avenue, Cumberland, BC, V0R 1S0**

**Source:** BC Assessment (<https://www.bcassessment.ca/>)

**Date of Construction:** 1933

**Sources:** BC Assessment (<https://www.bcassessment.ca/>); Cumberland Museum & Archives, 2719 Dunsmuir Avenue – Building file; Jennifer Barr. 1997. Cumberland Heritage

**Original Developer/Owner: Robert Campbell Lang**

**Sources:** Cumberland Museum & Archives, 2719 Dunsmuir Avenue – Building file; Jennifer Barr. 1997. Cumberland Heritage

**Architect: Frederick J. Mitchell**

**Source:** Cumberland Museum & Archives, 2719 Dunsmuir Avenue – Building file

**Name:** Cumberland Drug Store

## Businesses

1933-1974: Cumberland Drug Store / Rexall Store / Cumberland Drugs

1974-1988: Leung's Grocery

1988-1998: Bev's Quilts and Crafts

## Research Resources

Barr, Jennifer. 1997. *Cumberland Heritage: A selected History of People, Buildings, Institutions and Sites 1888-1950*. Corporation of the Village of Cumberland.

BC Assessment (<https://www.bcassessment.ca/>)

Cumberland Museum & Archives

- Archival photographs
- 2719 Dunsmuir Avenue - Building file

Eugene, Marjorie E. 1995. *100 Flaming Years: the Cumberland Volunteer Fire Department*. Plateau Publishing.

Isenor, Dick E.; Stephens, Edith G.; Watson, Donna E. 1988. *One Hundred Spirited Years: A History of Cumberland*. Ptarmigan Press.

Newspapers.com

University of Saskatchewan, University Archives & Special Collections

Village of Cumberland iMap (<https://imapcumberland.imaptoo.ca/imapviewer/>)

Site visit: November, 2023.

# Statement of Significance

Bevan Houses, Cumberland, BC ~ 1910-1911 / 1918



Prepared by Elana Zysblat, CAHP :: Ance Building Services :: January 2024  
Research & Analysis by Jurian ter Horst, MA :: ter Horst Research



## Description of Historic Place

The Bevan Houses are a grouping of over 30 standard model wood-frame, one-storey, hip-roof houses with front porches, located on Dunsmuir, Penrith, Maryport and Windermere Avenues between Fifth and Seventh Streets in Cumberland, BC. The houses were built as company homes for mineworkers' families in nearby Bevan in 1910-1911 and were relocated to Cumberland in 1918.

## Heritage Values

Constructed in 1910-1911, the Bevan Houses have historical and social value for their association with Bevan, a former mining campsite laid out by the Canadian Collieries (Dunsmuir) Ltd. in 1910, adjacent to Mine No. 7 to house the miners' families. They stand testament to the approximately 50 identical company houses built at this campsite in 1910 and 1911, and to the typical layout and character of early BC mining townsites, which often featured standard company mining house models for the workers' families as well as a local serving store, hotel, post office and school, as was the case in Bevan.

The buildings also hold historical value for their large-scale relocation story in 1918 due to mining activity reduction in the No. 7 Mine seam, reducing the number of mineworkers needed in Bevan. A total of 37 known Bevan Houses were relocated 7 kilometres from Bevan to an extension of Cumberland, initially known as the New Townsite (or Townsite), a residential subdivision developed to serve the Canadian Collieries (Dunsmuir) Ltd.'s active mines at the time. The enduring ownership model of these buildings even after relocation, is an important representation of early BC mining business models – the houses remained rentals available only to the Colliery employees, and ownership by the company was retained until 1959 when it left the mining industry on Vancouver Island.

The Bevan Houses hold aesthetic value as early 20<sup>th</sup>-century vernacular cottages, as expressed by their modest one-storey scale and simple design and floorplan. While all of the surviving bungalows have been to some degree altered from the original company design, they are all important as individual and collective Bevan Houses, readable for one or more characteristic – their square shape, distinguishable roofline, porch composition and/or their contextual grouping next to other Bevan Houses in the few blocks that once made up Cumberland's New Townsite, but are now well-integrated into the heart of residential Cumberland.

Finally, these historic places hold scientific and environmental value for their traditional construction techniques, for their historic, locally-sourced, low energy-intensive materials – their quality, durability and reparability – and for the embodied energy (the total energy expended over the buildings' more than 110 years lifecycle) held in the buildings. The houses are further valued for their early and ongoing adaptability and reuse, as all 37 relocated houses still survive in Cumberland, and each one models an individualized approach and evolution to contemporary living.

## Character-defining Elements

The elements that define the heritage character of the Bevan Houses are their:

- Continuous residential use since 1910/1911
- Condensed location on Dunsmuir, Penrith, Maryport and Windermere Avenues, between Fifth and Seventh Streets (“Townsite”)
- Residential form, massing, and setback, representative of early BC mining townsites
- One-storey, wood-frame structure
- Architectural elements associated with the Bevan Houses design, including:
  - Rectangular floorplan
  - Low pitched hip roof
  - Half- or full-width front porch with hip roof, columns and railing

Common updates include:

- Full or partial enclosure of the front porch
- Rear additions, and/or front or side additions
- Attached garage

Less common updates include:

- Lifting or excavating to create additional level

- Addresses in Cumberland identified as Bevan Houses include:

1. 2792 Dunsmuir Avenue
2. 2796 Dunsmuir Avenue
3. 2800 Dunsmuir Avenue
4. 2804 Dunsmuir Avenue
5. 2806 Dunsmuir Avenue
6. 2814 Dunsmuir Avenue
7. 2818 Dunsmuir Avenue
8. 2822 Dunsmuir Avenue
9. 2824 Dunsmuir Avenue
10. 2799 Penrith Avenue
11. 2803 Penrith Avenue
12. 2807 Penrith Avenue
13. 2815 Penrith Avenue
14. 2817 Penrith Avenue
15. 2821 Penrith Avenue
16. 2804 Penrith Avenue
17. 2806 Penrith Avenue
18. 2814 Penrith Avenue
19. 2818 Penrith Avenue
20. 2822 Penrith Avenue
21. 2793 Maryport Avenue
22. 2797 Maryport Avenue
23. 2799 Maryport Avenue

24. 2803 Maryport Avenue
25. 2807 Maryport Avenue
26. 2815 Maryport Avenue
27. 2817 Maryport Avenue
28. 2821 Maryport Avenue
29. 2792 Maryport Avenue
30. 2798 Maryport Avenue
31. 2800 Maryport Avenue
32. 2804 Maryport Avenue
33. 2806 Maryport Avenue
34. 2803 Windermere Avenue
35. 2807 Windermere Avenue
36. 2815 Windermere Avenue
37. 2817 Windermere Avenue
38. 2821 Windermere Avenue

**Current Photos**



2804 Maryport Avenue



2821 Maryport Avenue

This house models a case where the cottage was lifted to create a second level of living space



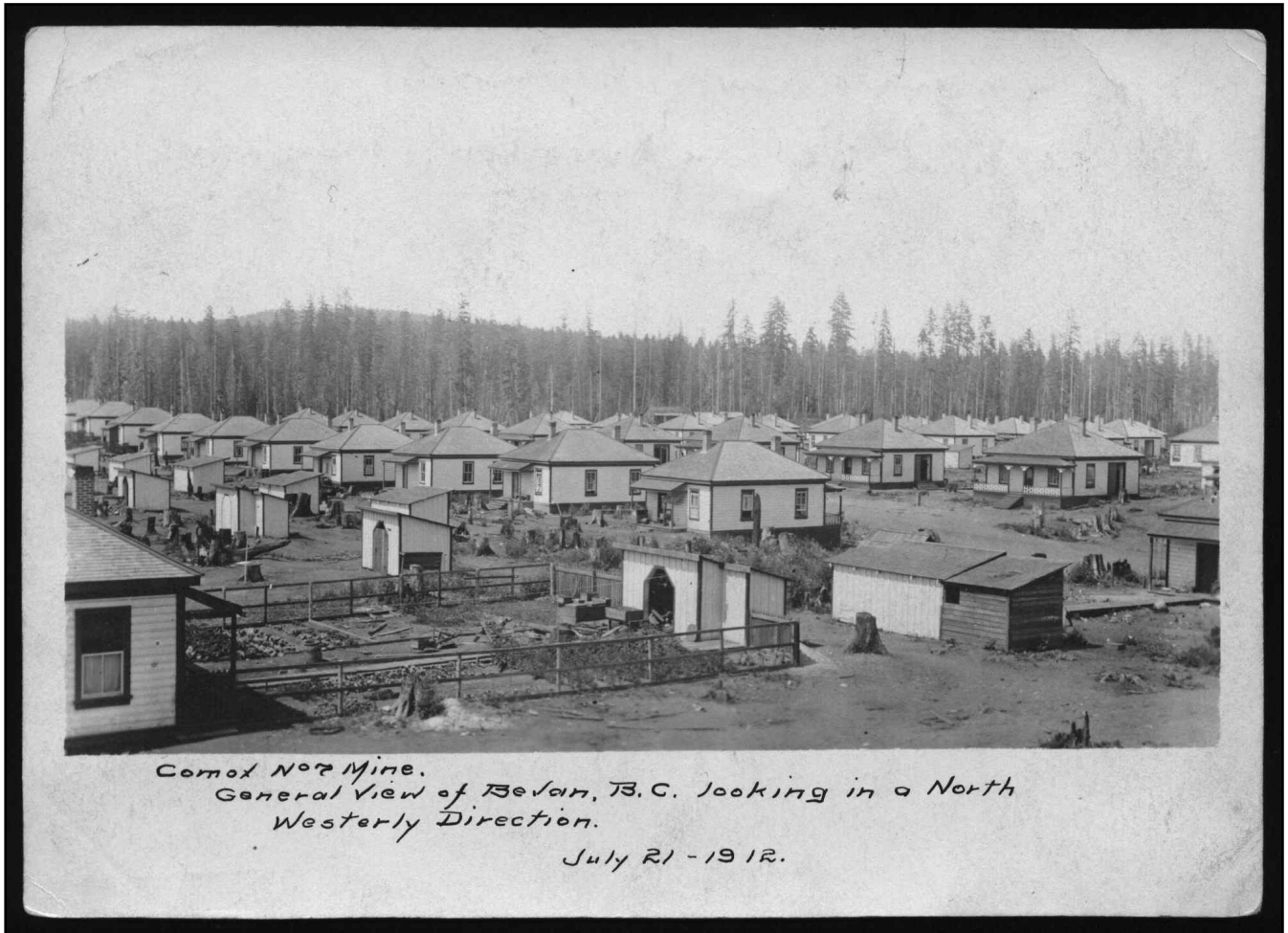
2807 Maryport Avenue

This house models a case where the living space was expanded through a 1.5 storey addition with a gable roof



2822 Penrith Avenue

## Archival Images & Records



View of Bevan in July 1912. There were two design plans for the Bevan Houses: a two-bedroom, 28 sq. ft. model and a three-bedroom, 38 sq. ft. model. They were originally clad in drop siding, and roofed with cedar shingles. The houses were painted white with green trim. Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, C020-012.



Photograph of a house in Bevan. Source: BC Archives, D-07699 [year unknown].



Photograph of a Manager's house in Bevan. These houses were larger than the miners' houses. Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, C020-010.

## HANDSOME ADDITION TO CITY OF CUMBERLAND.

**Contract Let and Work Started to Move Nearly Forty Houses from Bevan to be erected to the East of the City, for the Accommodation of the Employees of the Canadian Collieries (Dunsmuir), Limited.**

A force of men are now employed by the Canadian Collieries Dunsmuir Ltd., immediately to the east and adjoining the City limits of Cumberland, clearing the land towards what is known as the "Y" or Football grounds. In all some six or seven City Blocks, which have been surveyed into town lots sixty by one hundred and twenty.. The Colliery Company recently moved into Cumberland five six-roomed houses which were built at Bevan six years ago. They were renovated throughout and made modern in every respect, with baths, wash basins, flush closets, hot and cold water, and now erected on a continuation of Dunsmuir Avenue and occupied by the Colliery Employees.

The management of the Canadian Collieries are now evidently satisfied that the six-roomed dwelling houses built at Bevan can be removed to the object in view of making the surroundings and home life of their employees as pleasant as possible have given the H. T. Peterson Construction Company, of Vancouver, a contract to remove thirty-seven of these cottages from Bevan to Cumberland. A branch line of the railroad has been laid into the streets of Bevan and a force of men are now engaged in cutting the houses into two or three sec-

Contractor H.T. Peterson from Vancouver was hired to relocate the Colliery Company houses from Bevan to the Townsite, bordering Cumberland, in 1918. The houses were moved on a spur line into Cumberland. Source: The Islander, August 10, 1918.

tions, as the case may be, and loading them on to flat cars to be removed into Cumberland. Similar work is being done at this end. A spur line of track from the main right-of-way of the Wellington Colliery Railway has been laid into the streets adjoining the City of Cumberland and upon their arrival the sections will be removed and each house will be erected on a full sized town lot 60x120, which will give the occupant sufficient garden space to grow his own vegetables. While the houses are being removed there will be ten or fifteen men engaged at the Bevan end, and an equal number on the townsite adjoining the City, and it is expected the houses will be divided into sections, removed and erected, at the rate of two a month. The entire work is under the direction and supervision of W. A. Owen, Construction Engineer of the Canadian Collieries, Dunsmuir, Ltd., and when completed it will be no small addition and will increase the residential portion of this city and vicinity to the extent of some 45 homes. The employees are highly elated to know that the Canadian Collieries are taking such a stand for their accommodation and comfort.

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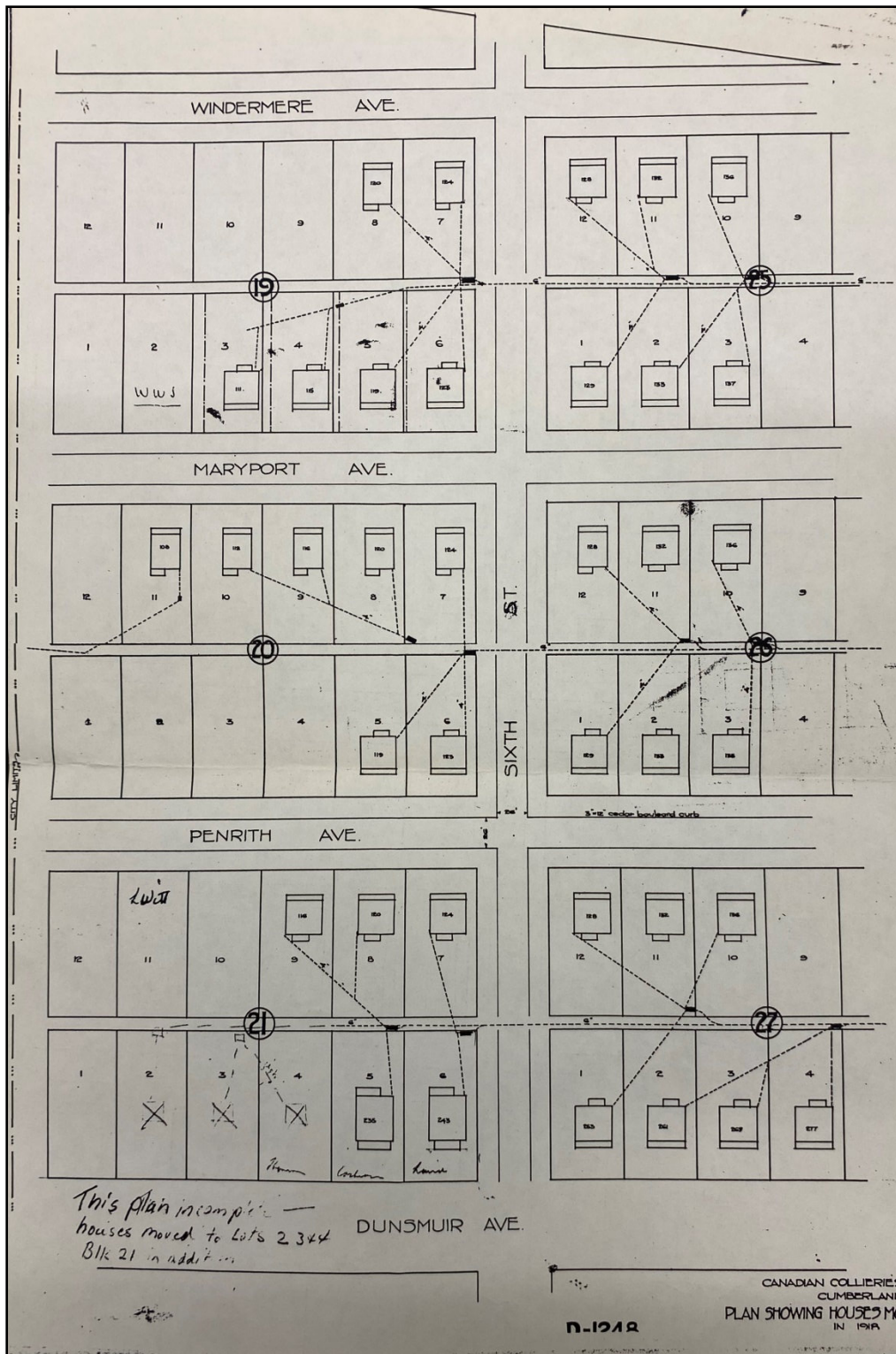
H. T. Peterson & Co., of Vancouver, contractors for the removal of thirty-seven dwelling houses from Bevan to Cumberland, for the Canadian Collieries (Dunsmuir), Ltd., have almost completed their contract. The 37 houses, each consisting of six rooms and with all modern conveniences, are now on the townsite adjoining the eastern limits of the city of Cumberland, and will help to make up in no small way to the beauty and surroundings of Cumberland. The management of the Canadian Collieries is now having these houses renovated throughout and are to be commended for their kind consideration of the comfort and home life of their employees, who prefer to reside near the centre of the coal mining district.

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In total 37 houses were relocated from Bevan to the Townsite. The houses were renovated.

All 37 houses survive in Cumberland.

Source: The Islander, November 23, 1918.



A plan that shows where 37 houses from Bevan would be relocated to in the Townsite. Not all houses were moved exactly as planned: more houses were placed on Dunsmuir Avenue and fewer on Windermere Avenue. Source: Cumberland Museum and Archives, Canadian Collieries (D) Ltd. Plan, 1918.



Aerial view of Cumberland, 1960. The photograph shows eight Bevan houses on Dunsmuir Avenue, and more to the north of them on Penrith Avenue. Source: University of Saskatchewan, University Archives & Special Collections.



View of Windermere Avenue at Sixth Street, 1982. The photograph shows three Bevan Houses.  
Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, 2017.053.006.



View of Penrith Avenue, January 1997. The photograph shows three Bevan Houses.  
Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, C270-016.



Photograph of the Bevan Houses at 2814, 2818, 2822, and 2824 Dunsmuir Avenue,  
1997. Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, C270-015.



A photograph of 2792 Dunsmuir Avenue, 1996. Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, 2792 Dunsmuir Avenue, building file.



Photograph of 2824 Dunsmuir Avenue, 2005. Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, GEF.001.001 Bevan.



Photograph of 2800 Dunsmuir Avenue, 2005. Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, 2800 Dunsmuir Avenue, building file.



Photograph of 2806 Dunsmuir Avenue, 2005. Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, 2806 Dunsmuir Avenue, building file.

## Research Resources

Annand, Betty. 2002. *Voices from Bevan*. Rising Sun Publications.

Barr, Jennifer. 1997. *Cumberland Heritage: A selected History of People, Buildings, Institutions and Sites 1888-1950*. Corporation of the Village of Cumberland.

BC Archives:

- Archival photographs

BC Assessment (<https://www.bcassessment.ca/>)

Cumberland Museum & Archives

- Archival photographs
- Building files
- Maps

Hind, Patrick O. 2013. *Cumberland Collieries' Railway. Vancouver Island, B.C. 1888 to 1960*. Cumberland Museum and Archives.

Isenor, Dick E.; Stephens, Edith G.; Watson, Donna E. 1988. *One Hundred Spirited Years: A History of Cumberland*. Ptarmigan Press.

Newspapers.com

University of Saskatchewan, University Archives & Special Collections

Site visit: November, 2023.

# Statement of Significance

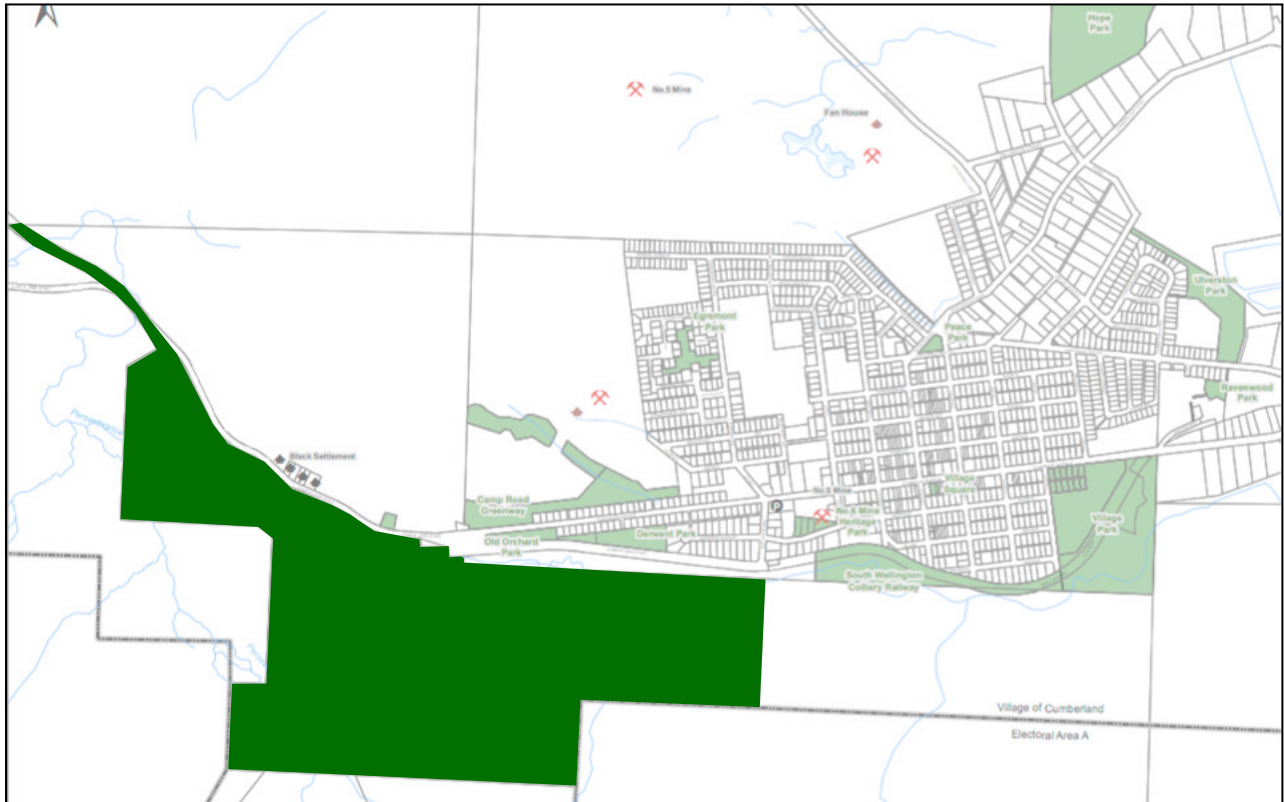
## Coal Creek Historic Park

Comox Lake Road, Cumberland B.C.  
Established 2002



Prepared by Denise Cook Design + Elana Zysblat, Ance Building Services - September 2018  
[updated January 2024 by Elana Zysblat & Jurian ter Horst](#)

## Coal Creek Historic Park - south of Comox Lake Road, west of Cumberland



### Description of Historic Place

Coal Creek Historic Park is a 40 hectare park and cultural landscape recognized as a provincial heritage site under section 18 of the BC Heritage Conservation Act. The park, located [in the wetlands](#) west of the Village of Cumberland just south of Comox Lake Road, contains the sites of Cumberland's former Chinatown, former No. 1 Japanese Town, portions of the historic Wellington Colliery Railway trail, the former No. 1 Mine site and the No. 2 Mine portal site.

### Heritage Values of the Historic Place

Coal Creek Historic Park has historical, cultural, social, [ecological](#) and aesthetic value for encompassing some of Cumberland's most important historic sites. It is an enduring record [both](#) of the Chinese Canadian and Japanese Canadian communities of Cumberland and their strong ties to the industrial development of Vancouver Island, most notably coal mining and railway building, [as well as to more recent initiatives to conserve existing infrastructure and to restore the natural habitat of the area.](#)

[Traditionally used for hunting and fishing by the K'ómoks First Nation prior to European settlement,](#) Coal Creek Historic Park has deep roots as the nucleus for Chinese and Japanese Canadians working in the coal mines on central Vancouver Island starting in the late 1880s. [Once extensive communities, Cumberland's Chinatown was one of the larger Chinese](#)

settlements in British Columbia, with a population at its peak of approximately 1500 people. There were several small settlements of Japanese, including No.1 Japanese Town which is within the boundary of Coal Creek Historic Park, with a total population of approximately 600 residents in and around Cumberland until internment in 1942. The place is historically significant for representing the contribution of both these communities to the coal mining economy in the Cumberland region and to the economic and cultural development of the province.

The Park's natural wetland environment attests to the resilience of these ethnic minorities who had to build their towns and gardens in this less-desirable marshy terrain, in some places needing to drain the marshes. The geographical separation of these groups (including a Black community who had a small settlement nearby) from the European-centric Union Camp (now known as Camp Road), illustrates the racial segregation of living and working life in B.C.'s early industrial communities. At the time, federal legislation such as the Chinese Immigration Act of 1885 which established the head tax, and the 1908 Hayashi-Lemieux Agreement and 1923 Chinese Immigration Act which restricted Japanese and Chinese immigration respectively. (Deleted sentence here)

With its primarily male occupants, the site is important for linking the Chinese and Japanese Canadian labour forces to coal mining and mine owner Robert Dunsmuir, who, while a pioneer industrialist, was known for lack of safety procedures in his mines and non-union labour practices that featured the prevalent and often exploitative use of Chinese and Japanese Canadian miners and railway construction workers. The proximity of these [communities'](#) settlements to former No. 1 and 2 mine sites and the former Wellington Colliery railroad, today a trail connecting the former Chinatown and No. 1 Japanese Town Site, provides evidence of the industries which created these communities.

Coal Creek Historic Park is valued for its cultural and social legacy as home to former vibrant, self-sufficient settlements. While built initially as mining camps, Chinatown and No. 1 Japanese Town Site were villages with cultural activities, schools and services. At its height, Chinatown had grocery and hardware stores, restaurants, apothecaries, bakeries, two theatres, a temple and gambling houses, while No. 1 Japanese Town Site had two general stores, a town hall, a bath house, a language school, a baseball diamond and community vegetable gardens. The Coal Creek communities maintained an economic relationship with the Village, with many of their residents connected to the larger community, primarily through the existence of a merchant class, the provision of foodstuffs and work as domestic servants or other service occupations.

Coal Creek Historic Park is valued as evidence of two pioneer townsites, seen in the Saito House in the No. 1 Japanese Town Site, building remains delineating historic Hai Gai and Shan Gai streets in Chinatown with accompanying [interpretive signage installed in 2019](#), Japanese-specific plants like fuki brought by the first settlers, remnant gardens and fruit trees left from Chinese and Japanese Canadian food cultivation. An enduring legacy is the Cumberland

Chinatown reunion picnic which takes place in June each year celebrating its 45th anniversary in 2022.

While the area declined and was the target of vandalism in the 1960s, the site became a Village amenity in 2002. Today the Park is valued both as a significant heritage site and as a nature reserve of regional ecological significance. It has socio-ecological value for its association with both the positive and negative impacts of invasive land use by European, Chinese and Japanese settlers for mining, logging and farming purposes. Testament to a renewed appreciation of Cumberland's wetlands, starting in the 1970s when cultural and recreational tourism emerged in former mining towns in BC due to the repurposing of the industrial infrastructure, and again in the 1990s when nature and recreation activists found each other in a shared vision for the future of Cumberland's environment, initiatives were and continue to be taken by community groups to both restore the natural habitat and conserve the remains of the historic infrastructure for natural, commemorative and recreational purposes.

### Character Defining Elements

- Natural environment of freshwater marshes, forests and creeks
- Location of the former No. 1 Japanese Town Site, Chinatown, No. 1 and 2 mines, and Wellington Colliery Railroad
- Surviving roads of Chinatown (Hai Gai and Shan Gai) with interpretive signage marking
- Prominent locations and buildings
- Gnarled old fruit trees
- [Surviving ditches that were dug to drain the organic wetland soils to build Chinatown](#)
- Surviving roads of No. 1 Japanese Town Site and Mine access roads
- Wellington Colliery Railroad former rail grade used as recreational trail, linking Chinatown with No. 1 Japanese Town and beyond
- Coal hills adjacent to No. 1 Japanese Town
- No. 1 mine slope
- No. 2 mine shaft
- Asian-style bridge installed in 2013 on the Wellington Colliery Railroad trail over a tributary of Perseverance Creek
- Saito House - only surviving house of no 1. Japanese Town Site
- Jumbo's Cabin - only house surviving of Chinatown
- Interpretive and park information signage at Jumbo's Cabin
- Chinatown entrance sign and plaque
- No. 1 Japanese Town Site plaque
- 31 flowering cherry trees planted in the former No. 1 Japanese Town Site in 2009
- A large gravel clearing located on and to the south of the former site of Chinatown used as
- A community gathering area for special events and other recreation activities
- Picnic pavilion with engraved benches and plaque- built in 2011 by the Coal Creek
- Advisory Committee and members of original resident families

## Research Resources

Barr, Jennifer. 1997. Cumberland Heritage: A selected History of People, Buildings, Institutions and Sites 1888-1950. Corporation of the Village of Cumberland.

BC Archives - Archival photographs of Cumberland

Comox Valley Project Watershed Society. 2003. Perseverance Creek Mapping and Inventory Project: Sensitive Habitat Inventory and Mapping Survey

Comox Valley Record. July 15, 2015. Remembering Cumberland's Chinatown

Cumberland Islander - various archival editions

Cumberland Museum & Archives - Japanese and Chinese people and buildings archival photographs

Heritage BC - Chinese and Japanese Cultural Maps of BC. <https://heritagebc.ca/chinese-canadian-location/coal-creek-historic-park-chinatown-cumberland/>

Finch/Hellerud, Lawrence/Moran/Vierke/Harwood, Laloge, Mason & Sproule. 1992. Cumberland's Chinatown- Exploring the Need for Preservation

Isenor, D. E.; Stephens, E. G.; Watson, D. E. 1988. One Hundred Spirited Years: A History of Cumberland. Ptarmigan Press.

Iwaasa-Dobbs, Hanae. March 1, 2006. The Revised Masakichi-Chise Saito House Presentation for the Ad Hoc Group.

Land Title Act ET101546. 2002. Restrictive Covenant on subject property

Lidster, Ian. May 7, 2010. A Lasting Tribute: Cumberland committee honours Japanese families by turning the No. 1 Townsite into a park. inFocus Magazine

Qu'west Consulting (George Penfold). 2004. Cumberland Chinatown, Japanese Settlement Historic Park Plan

Richardson, Angela (on behalf of the Chinatown/No. 1 Japanese Town Ad Hoc Group). 2006. Park Projection Study: Perseverance Creek Historic Park

Village of Cumberland <https://cumberland.ca/coal-creek-historic-park/> and Chinatown 1888-1968 brochure [https://cumberland.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Chinatown.Layout.FINAL\\_.pdf](https://cumberland.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Chinatown.Layout.FINAL_.pdf)

Village of Cumberland. 2014. Coal Creek Historic Park Master Plan. <https://cumberland.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Final-Coal-Creek-Master-Plan-July-20141.pdf>

[Wetland Restoration Consulting. 2020. Wetland & Stream Restoration Assessment of Perseverance Creek and Boundary Wetlands, Cumberland, B.C.](#)

[Site visits, March 2018 and November 2023](#)



Entrance to Coal Creek Historic Park with Jumbo's Cabin and a self-guided interpretive map.



Self-guided interpretive map to Coal Creek Historic Park.



Wetlands and creeks in Coal Creek Historic Park



way finding and interpretive signage in Chinatown





Entrance to former Chinatown site



Chinatown site and picnic pavilion



No. 1 Japanese Town Site plaque



Bridge installed in 2013 on the Wellington Colliery Railroad trail over Perseverance Creek

Village of Cumberland  
Statement of Significance

# Coal Creek Historic Park



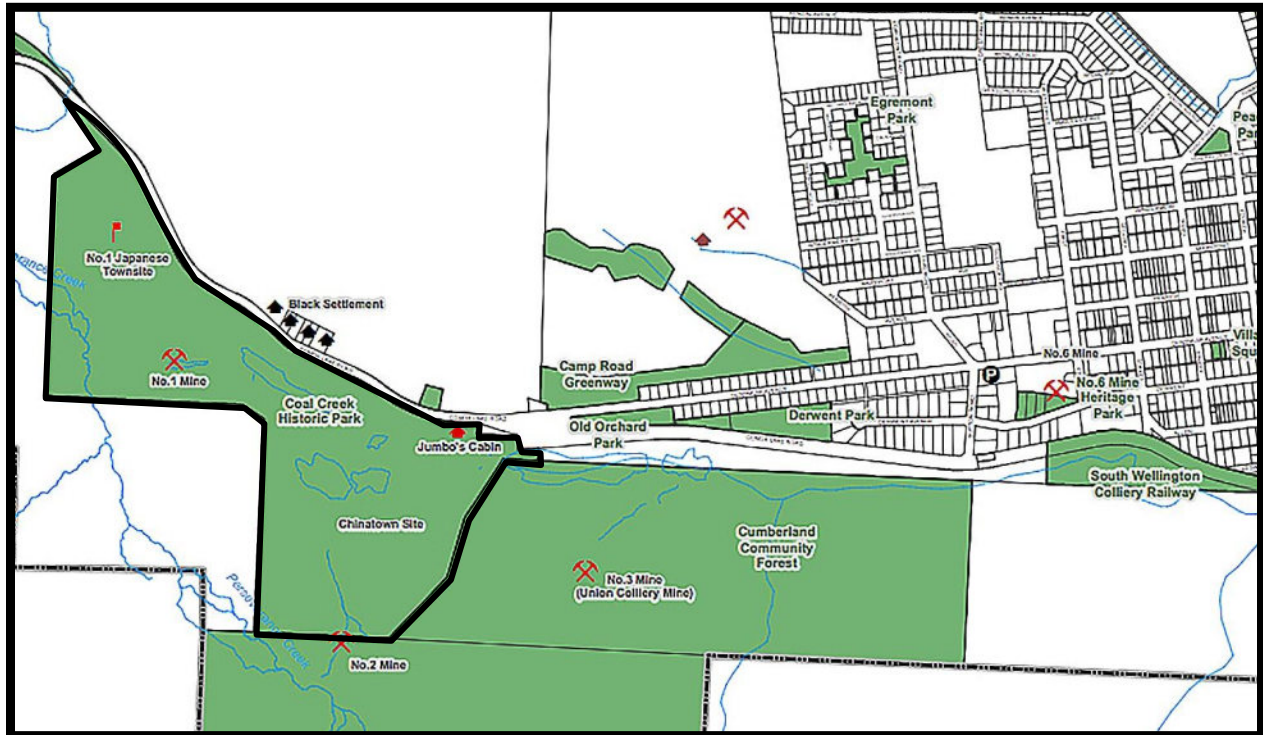
Comox Lake Road, Cumberland B.C.  
Established 2002



Prepared by Denise Cook Design + Elana Zysblat, Ance Building Services and  
funded in part by Heritage BC through the Heritage Legacy Fund - November 2018



## Coal Creek Historic Park - south of Comox Lake Road, west of Cumberland



### Description of Historic Place

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### Heritage Values of the Historic Place

Coal Creek Historic Park has historical, cultural, social and aesthetic value encompassing some of Cumberland's most important historic sites. It provides an enduring record of the Chinese and Japanese Canadian communities of Cumberland and their strong ties to industrial development on Vancouver Island, most notably coal mining and railway building.

Coal Creek Historic Park has deep roots as the nucleus of Chinese and Japanese Canadians working in the coal mines on central Vancouver Island starting in the late 1880s. Once extensive communities, Cumberland's Chinatown was the largest in Canada towards the end of World War I, and its Japanese community the largest on Vancouver Island until internment in 1942. The place is historically significant for representing the contribution of both communities to the coal mining economy in the Cumberland region and to the economic and cultural development of the province.

The Park's natural wetland environment attests to the resilience of these ethnic minorities who had to build their towns and gardens in this less-desirable marshy terrain, in some places needing to drain the marshes. The geographical separation of these groups (including a Black community who had a small settlement nearby) from the European-centric Union Camp (now known as Camp Road), illustrates the racial segregation of living and working life in B.C.'s early industrial communities. At the time, federal legislation such as the *Chinese Immigration Act* of 1885 established a head tax, and the 1908 *Hayashi-Lemieux Agreement* and 1923 *Chinese Immigration Act* restricted Japanese and Chinese immigration respectively. The Park also illustrates the internal racial differences of Japanese and Chinese workers at the time, seen in the creation of two ethnically separate communities.

The site is important for linking the Chinese and Japanese Canadian labour forces to coal mining and mine owner Robert Dunsmuir. Dunsmuir, while known as a pioneer industrialist, was also known for his lack of safety procedures and non-union labour practices. He was often exploitative of Chinese and Japanese Canadian miners and railway construction workers. The proximity of these settlements to former No. 1 and 2 Mine Sites and the former Wellington Colliery railroad provides evidence of the industries which created these communities. Today a trail links the former town sites.

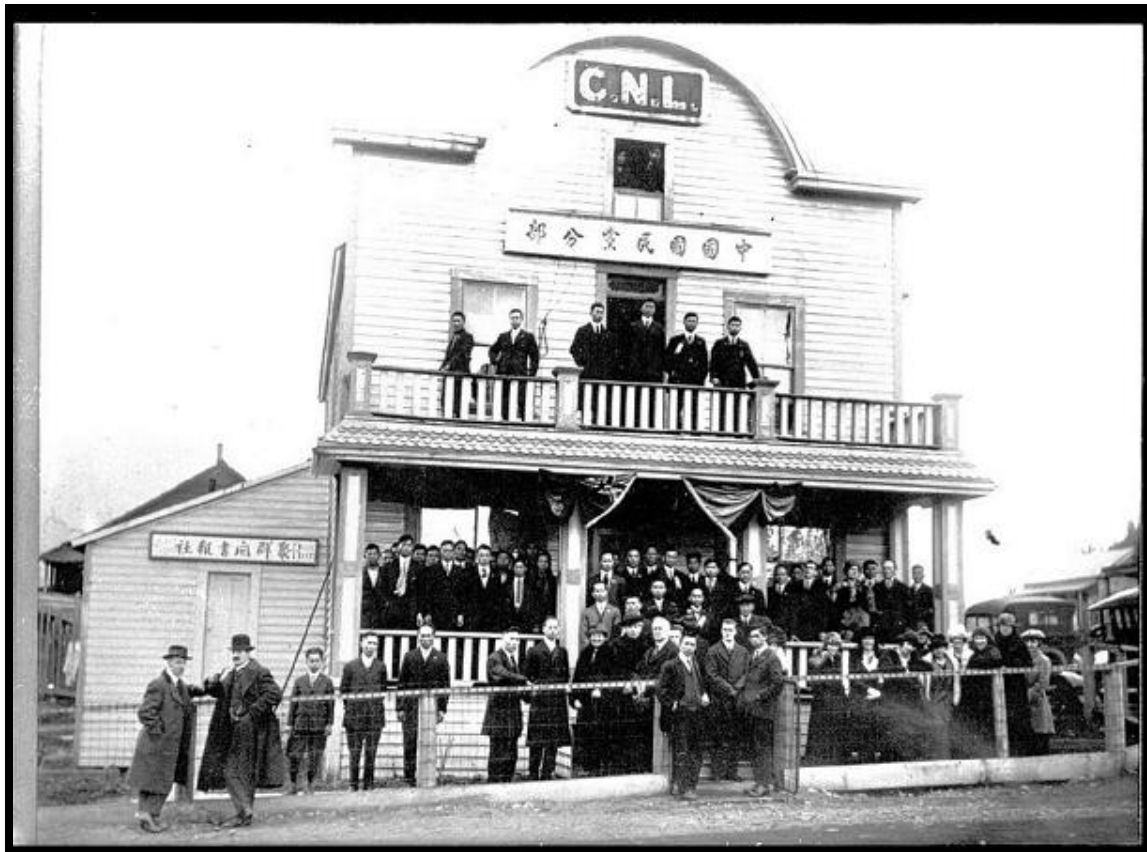
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Coal Creek Historic Park is valued as evidence of the two pioneer townsites, seen in the Saito House in the No. 1 Japanese Town Site, building remains delineating historic Hai Gai and Shan Gai streets in Chinatown, and remnant gardens and trees left from Chinese and Japanese Canadian food cultivation. An enduring legacy is the Cumberland reunion picnic which takes place each year, with its 40th anniversary in 2015.

While the area declined and was the target of vandalism in the 1960s, the site became a protected Village amenity in 2002. Cumberland residents value the Park both as a significant heritage site and as a nature reserve of regional ecological significance. With the help of the Cumberland Chinatown-No. 1 Japanese Ad Hoc Group (2006-2007) and Coal Creek Historic Park Advisory Committee (2008-ongoing), Cumberland's Japanese and Chinese Canadian communities are being commemorated and honoured for their lasting importance as part of the identity of Cumberland through the designation of this significant cultural landscape.

## Character Defining Elements

- Natural environment of freshwater marshes, creeks and forests
- Location of the former No. 1 Japanese Town Site, Chinatown, No. 1 and 2 mines, and Wellington Colliery Railroad
- Surviving roads of Chinatown (Hai Gai and Shan Gai) with interpretive signage marking prominent locations and buildings
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- Picnic pavilion with engraved benches and plaque-built in 2011 by the Coal Creek Advisory Committee and members of original resident families



## Research Resources

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Village of Cumberland. *Coal Creek Historic Park Master Plan 2014*



Entrance to Coal Creek Historic Park with Jumbo's Cabin and a self-guided interpretive sign/map.



Self-guided Interpretive Sign and Map.



Entrance to former Chinatown Site



Chinatown site and picnic pavilion



Wetlands and creeks in Coal Creek Historic Park



Wayfinding and interpretive signage in Chinatown





No. 1 Japanese Town Site plaque



Bridge installed in 2013 on the Wellington Colliery Railroad trail over Perseverance Creek

# Statement of Significance

Wellington Colliery Railway, Cumberland, BC :: 1889-1912



Prepared by Elana Zysblat, CAHP :: Ance Building Services :: January 2024  
Research & Analysis by Jurian ter Horst, MA :: ter Horst Research

## **Description of Historic Place**

The Wellington Colliery Railway is a former triangular-shaped railway line that connected Union Bay, Cumberland, and Royston, transferring both passengers between these places as well as coal from Mine numbers 1 through 8 to Union Bay. Surviving evidence of the line exists in unbuilt, open areas of the Village of Cumberland on all four sides, as well as in areas outside of Cumberland's boundaries.

## **Heritage Values**

The Wellington Colliery Railway holds historical value for its association with the regional coal mining industry in the Comox Valley in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Its first track from Union to Union Bay completed in 1889, the railway line is valued for its association with the mining campsite of Union, established by Robert Dunsmuir and Sons just west of the settlement that would soon after become known as Cumberland, as well as with civil engineer William George Pinder, who was tasked with surveying the rail line, and with engineer Joseph Hunter, who supervised the construction of the railway.

The Wellington Colliery Railway has historical and social value as a transportation system that supported important extraction economies in the Cumberland area. The surviving railbeds are testament to the transfer of coal from the mines in the Cumberland area to the wharf at Union Bay; the movement of mining company staff, miners and their families between Cumberland, Royston, Union Bay, and Mines numbers 1 through 8, as well as of passenger service between the mid-1890s and 1931. When the Comox Valley mines gradually closed in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, and the tracks of the Wellington Colliery Railway were lifted in stages between 1935 and 1953, the remaining railbeds were adapted as logging roads, serving yet another important regional extraction economy for many decades.

The Wellington Colliery Railway has cultural value for its association with formal and informal outdoor recreation in Cumberland. Purchased in 2014 by the Comox Valley Regional District - seeing the value of this former transportation network as hiking, walking and biking routes used for decades by both locals and visitors - the railbeds of the former Wellington Colliery Railway are valued for offering public access to Cumberland's natural environment and to former industry, settlement and transportation sites of importance.

## **Character-defining Elements**

The elements that define the heritage character of the Wellington Colliery Railway are its:

- Original location of lines in the Cumberland area
- Flat rail beds that traverse the natural wetlands, forests and plains of the Cumberland area, and any evidence of their construction, including the grading and ballasting of the beds,
- Industrial transportation use from 1889 to 1953

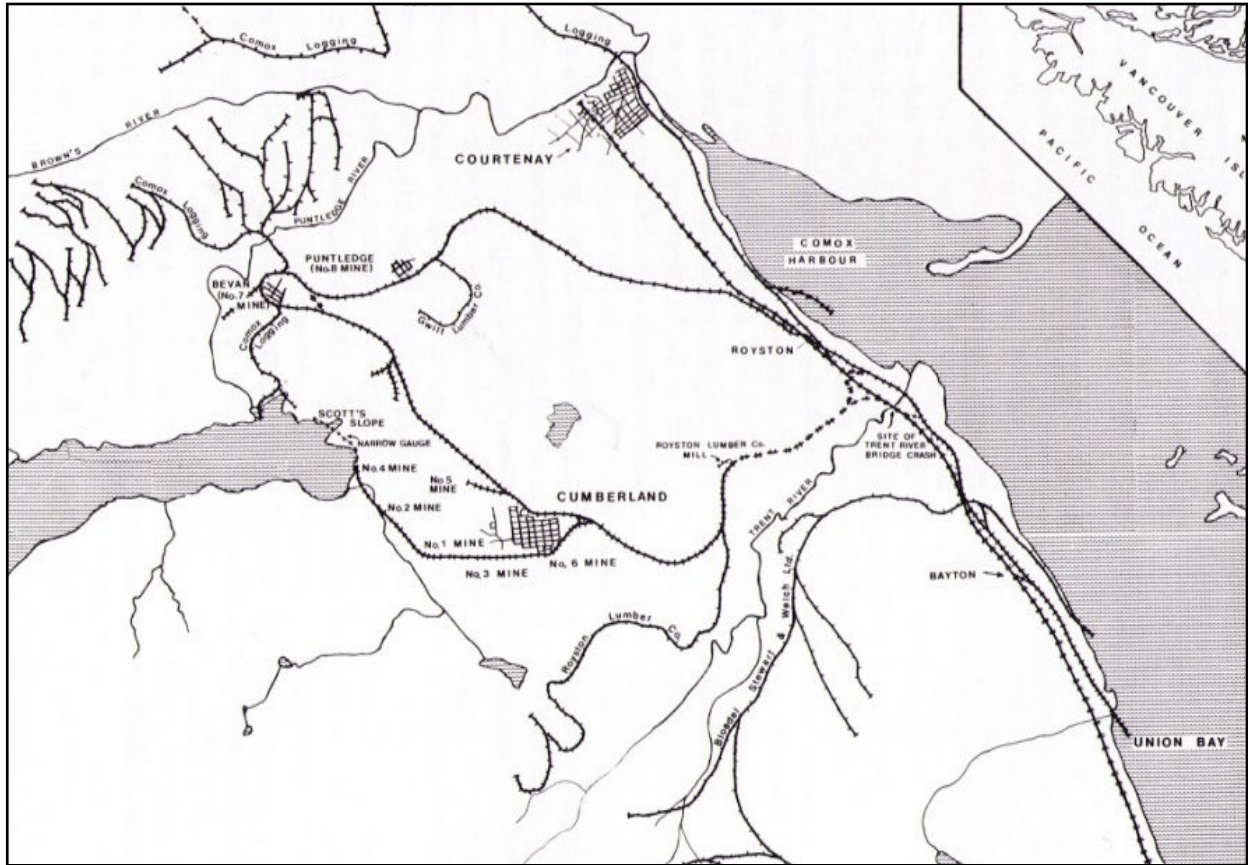
- Passenger transportation from mid-1890s to 1931
- Recreational use - both historic and contemporary

**Current Photos**





## Archival Images & Records



Map of the Wellington Colliery Railway in and around Cumberland. With the opening of new mines, the railway line between Union Bay, Union/Cumberland and the No. 1 to 4 Mines was later extended to the north of Cumberland to No. 5 Mine, as well as No.7 (Bevan) and No. 8 (Puntledge) Mines, creating a loop that reached Royston in 1912.

No. 4 Mine closed in 1935, and the tracks to the mine were then gradually removed. With the permanent closure of No. 5 Mine, the railway running into Cumberland was no longer needed, and in 1947, the tracks between Bevan and Cumberland were lifted. In 1953, No. 8 Mine in Puntledge was the last mine to close, and in the same year, the Collieries' railway between Comox Lake and Union Bay was dismantled.

Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, via Village of Cumberland.



Map of the Wellington Colliery Railway Trail in Cumberland, by Gwyn Sproule, 2000. The trail, marked with a bold red line, predominantly follows the former Wellington Colliery Railway. Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, via Village of Cumberland.



This 1958 aerial view of Cumberland shows the railbed of the former Wellington Colliery Railway to the south of the town (marked with a red arrow).

Source: University of Saskatchewan, University Archives and Special Collections.



This 1960 aerial view of Cumberland shows the railbed of the former Wellington Colliery Railway to the southwest of the town, into Coal Creek Historic Park (marked with a red arrow).

Source: University of Saskatchewan, University Archives and Special Collections.

# TIME TABLE No. 1.

## EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1ST. 1914.

READ UP							STATIONS	READ DOWN						
Sat.	Fri.	Thur.	Wed.	Tue.	Mon.	Sun.		Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
4.35 p.m.	7.35 p.m.	4.35 p.m.	7.35 p.m.	4.35 p.m. 9.35 a.m.	4.35 p.m.	9.35 a.m.	<b>Cumberland</b>	7.00 a.m. 1.00 p.m.	A.M. 10:30	7.00 a.m. 2:00 p.m.	A.M. 10:30	A.M. 7:00	A.M. 10:30	A.M. 7:00
4.10 p.m.	7.10 p.m.	4.10 p.m.	7.10 p.m.	4.10 p.m. 9.10 a.m.	4.10 p.m.	9.10 a.m.	<b>Bevan</b>	7.25 a.m. 1.25 p.m.	10:55	7.25 a.m. 2:25 p.m.	10:55	7:25	10:55	7:25
4.05 p.m.	7.05 p.m.	4.05 p.m.	7.05 p.m.	4.05 p.m. 9.05 a.m.	4.05 p.m.	9.05 a.m.	<b>Puntledge</b>	7.30 a.m. 1.30 p.m.	11:00	7.30 a.m. 2:30 p.m.	11:00	7:30	11:00	7:30
4.00 p.m.	7.00 p.m.	4.00 p.m.	7.00 p.m.	4.00 p.m. 9.00 a.m.	4.00 p.m.	9.00 a.m.	<b>(f) Lake Trail Road</b>	7.35 a.m. 1.35 p.m.	11:05	7.35 a.m. 2:35 p.m.	11:05	7:35	11:05	7:35
3.55 p.m.	6.55 p.m.	3.55 p.m.	6.55 p.m.	3.55 p.m. 8.55 a.m.	3.55 p.m.	8.55 a.m.	<b>(f) Courtenay Road</b>	7.40 a.m. 1.40 p.m.	11:10	7.40 a.m. 2:40 p.m.	11:10	7:40	11:10	7:40
3.50 p.m.	6.50 p.m.	3.50 p.m.	6.50 p.m.	3.50 p.m. 8.50 a.m.	3.50 p.m.	8.50 a.m.	<b>(f) Minto Road</b>	7.45 a.m. 1.45 p.m.	11:15	7.45 a.m. 2:45 p.m.	11:15	7:45	11:15	7:45
3.45 p.m.	6.45 p.m.	3.45 p.m.	6.45 p.m.	3.45 p.m. 8.45 a.m.	3.45 p.m.	8.45 a.m.	<b>Royston</b>	7.50 a.m. 1.50 p.m.	11:20	7.50 a.m. 2:50 p.m.	11:20	7:50	11:20	7:50
3.30 p.m.	6.30 p.m.	3.30 p.m.	6.30 p.m.	3.30 p.m. 8.30 a.m.	3.30 p.m.	8.30 a.m.	<b>Union Bay</b>	8.00 a.m. 2:00 p.m.	11:35	8.00 a.m. 3:00 p.m.	11:35	8:00	11:35	8:00

An extra train will leave Cumberland for Bevan on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays at 9:30 p.m. Stations marked (f) are flag stops only.

### Wellington Colliery Railway Company.

Time table No. 1 of the Wellington Colliery Railway Company. Source: The Islander, November 14, 1914.

The passenger trains on the Wellington Colliery Railway Co., between Cumberland and Union Bay, via Royston and Bevan, are now lighted with electric light.

News article about the introduction of electric light in the passenger trains between Cumberland and Union Bay. Source: The Islander, September 18, 1915.



Archival photograph of the Wellington Colliery Line railbed, around the former Chinatown in Coal Creek Historic Park, 1992. Source: Cumberland Museum & Archives, HIF.015.002.

## Research Resources

Barr, Jennifer. 1997. *Cumberland Heritage: A selected History of People, Buildings, Institutions and Sites 1888-1950*. Corporation of the Village of Cumberland.

Cumberland Museum & Archives

- Archival photographs
- Maps

Hind, Patrick O. 2013. *Cumberland Collieries' Railway. Vancouver Island, B.C. 1888 to 1960*. Cumberland Museum and Archives.

Isenor, Dick E.; Stephens, Edith G.; Watson, Donna E. 1988. *One Hundred Spirited Years: A History of Cumberland*. Ptarmigan Press.

Newspapers.com

University of Saskatchewan, University Archives & Special Collections

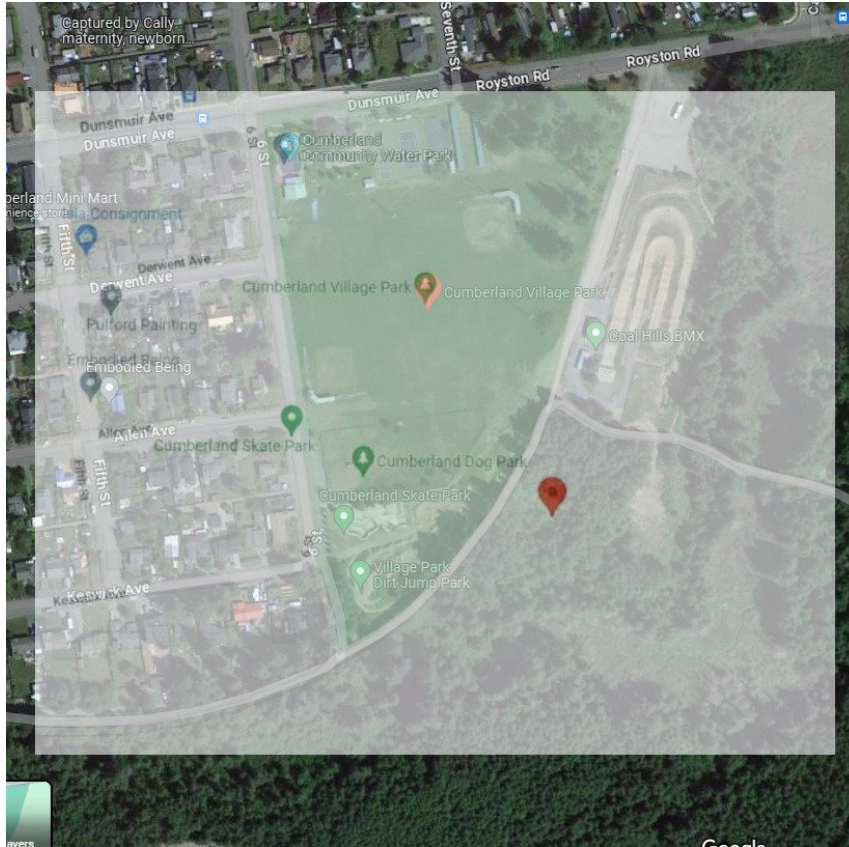
Site visit: November, 2023.

# Statement of Significance

00 Survey Marker, Cumberland, BC :: ~ date unconfirmed 1860s/1870s/1880s?



Prepared by Elana Zysblat, CAHP :: Ance Building Services :: January 2024  
Research & Analysis by Jurian ter Horst, MA :: ter Horst Research



## MAP TO BE REPLACED

### Description of Historic Place

The Cumberland 00 Survey Marker is a historic geodetic survey - a small iron disk, embedded in a sunken concrete pillar to permanently mark the starting point on the ground, for the original mapping system of approximately 130 mining boreholes (test pits) dug over a period of over 60 years, starting in the late 1880s. The marker is located on the ground in the southeast edge of Village Park in Cumberland, BC.

### Heritage Values

The Cumberland 00 Survey Marker has historical value as the starting point of mining mapping surveys that were performed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in the Cumberland/Comox coal fields, which initiated the start of mining in the Comox Valley.

- "In late 1869 a third group surveyed the very promising site in what was to become the Cumberland seam. They called themselves the Union Coal Company (...)." Patrick O. Hind, *Cumberland Collieries' Railway*, p. 5.

- "(...) in December 1873 Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, Robert Beaven instructed [George Fawcett] Drabble to lay out the coal company's [Union Coal Company] claim at what became Cumberland. By July 1874, the mine owners had spent \$10,000 in prospecting the seams and building the tramway, but all for nothing. After this initial works and layout, work on the mine stopped, due to the high cost of opening a mine, tramway, and shipping facility in the wilderness."
- In search of coal seams in the 1880s, the Union Colliery Company [Robert Dunsmuir and Sons] explored the Comox Valley, and in 1888 the area near Coal Creek was chosen as most promising. The settlement at the mines was called Union. As the geographical limitations of the site were soon recognized, in 1893 100 acres located east of Union were designated as a new townsite, called Cumberland.
- "I have forwarded your questions to Dr Gwyneth Cathyl Huhn Coal geologist. she knows the significance of the 00 survey monument. It was placed in its current position by the Wellington Coal company after the first mines opened. There was a reason for that location. The retired surveyor Rocky Williams resurveyed and converted the company survey measurements to UTM and sent the documents to the ministry of mines for the record." Email, Karin Albert/Gwyn Sproule, November 18, 2023.

The Cumberland 00 Survey Marker has historical value as the only intact, endured remnant of coal mining history in Cumberland, and as a touchstone in the community. Physical evidence of Cumberland's coal mining history survives at No. 3 Mine (access point) and No. 4 Mine [specify?], Scott's Slope and No. 1 Japan Town.

The marker has historical and social value for its association with two local story holders: Robert (Rocky) Williams (1927-2021) and Gwyn Sproule. Williams, after a career of 13 years as a surveyor at Canadian Collieries (D) Ltd. and 35 years as a B.C. Land Surveyor, took on the search for the boreholes between Cumberland and Bevan as a retirement project. He rediscovered the marker and passed on its location and significance to others in Cumberland, including community historian Gwyn Sproule.

The Cumberland 00 Survey Marker has environmental and cultural value as the point of origin for stratigraphic research performed by mining companies in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that resulted in extensive knowledge of the region's natural environment. The marker has further value as a bridge between the old and new mapping systems, carried out by Robert Williams, who converted the Canadian Collieries (D) Ltd. coordinates into UTM coordinates.

### **Character-defining Elements**

The elements that define the heritage character of the 00 Survey Marker are its:

- Original location on the southeast edge of Village Park (coordinates: ...).
- Associated network of boreholes throughout the Cumberland and Bevan area

- Its small size, and concrete and iron material
- Accessibility from Village Park and the Wellington Colliery Railway trail

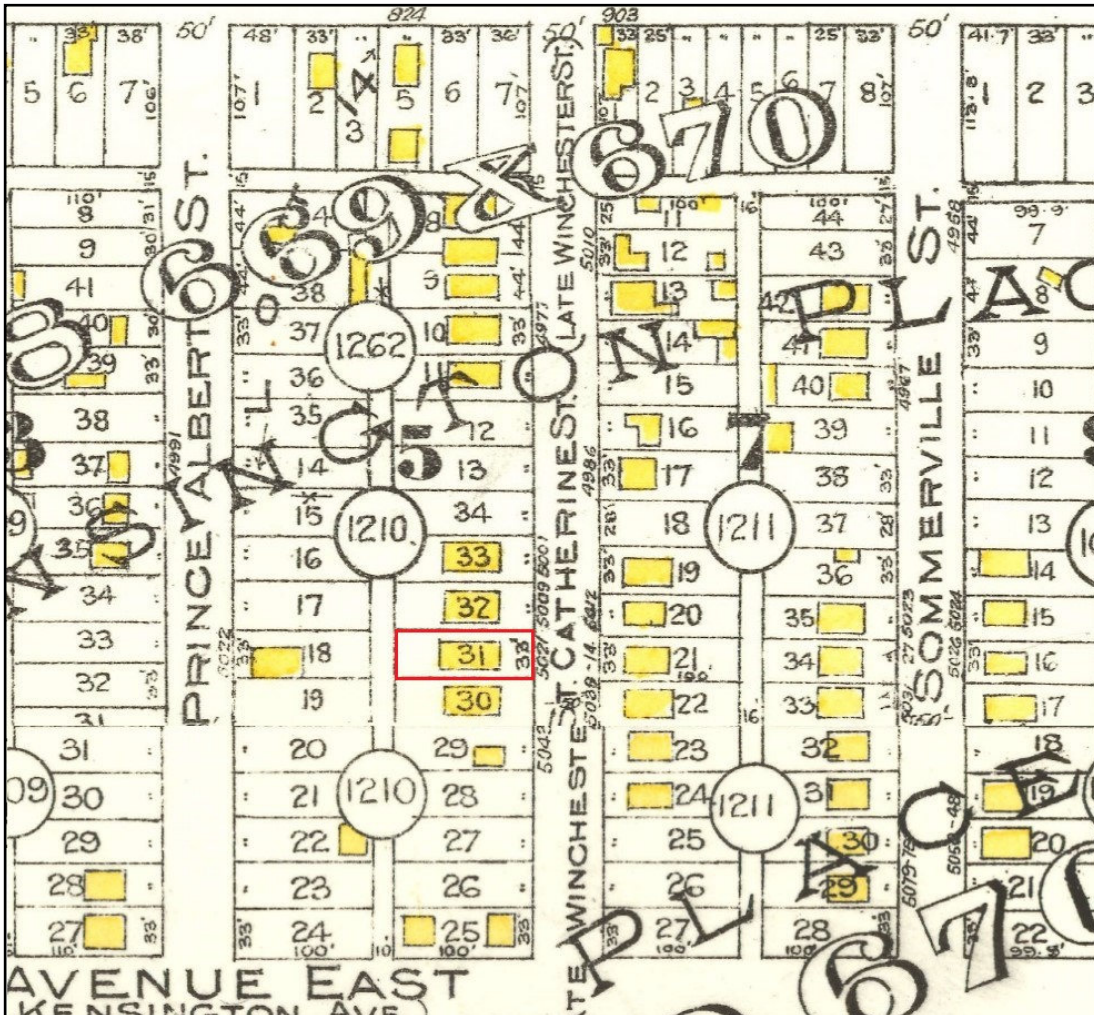
## Current Photos



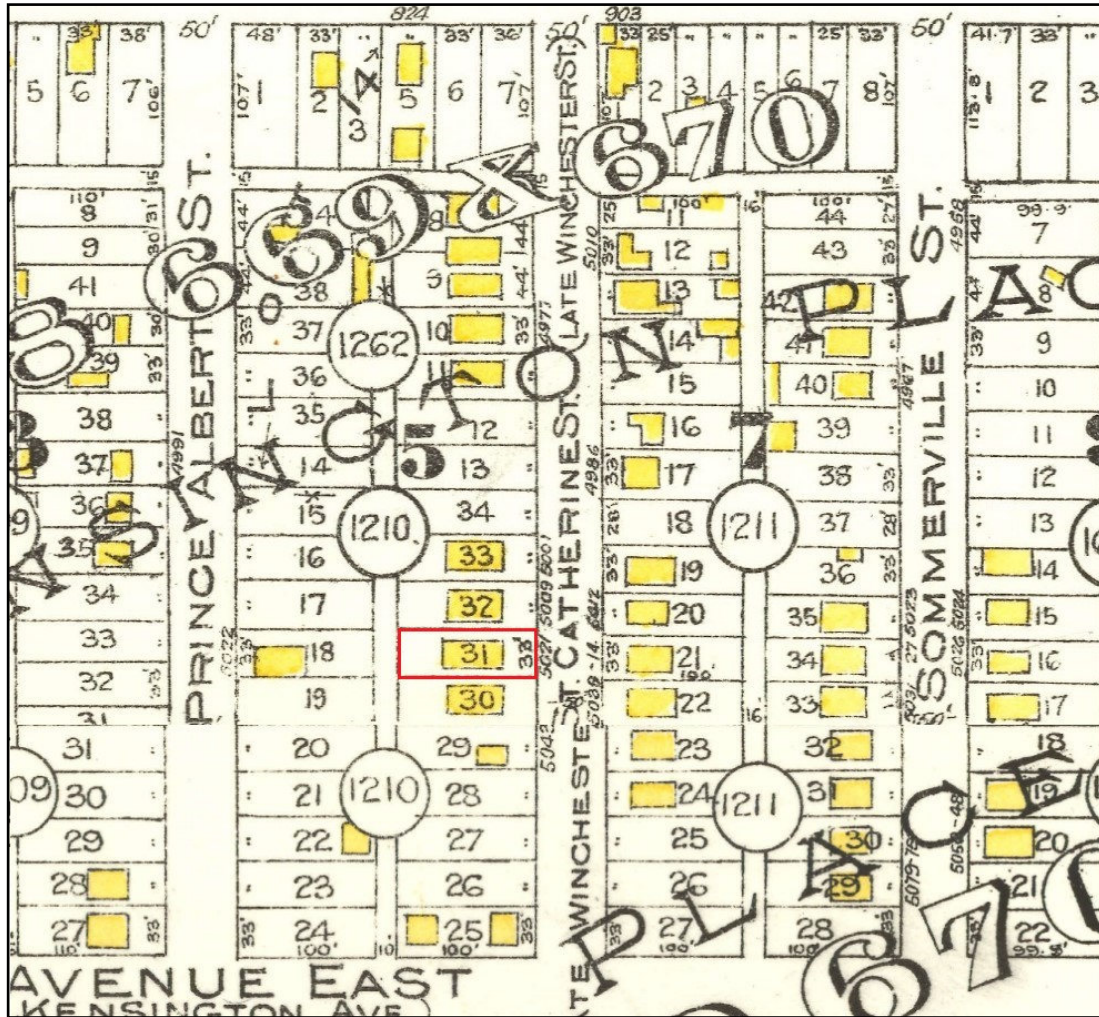
Left: The 00 Survey Marker. It is located just below the surface.

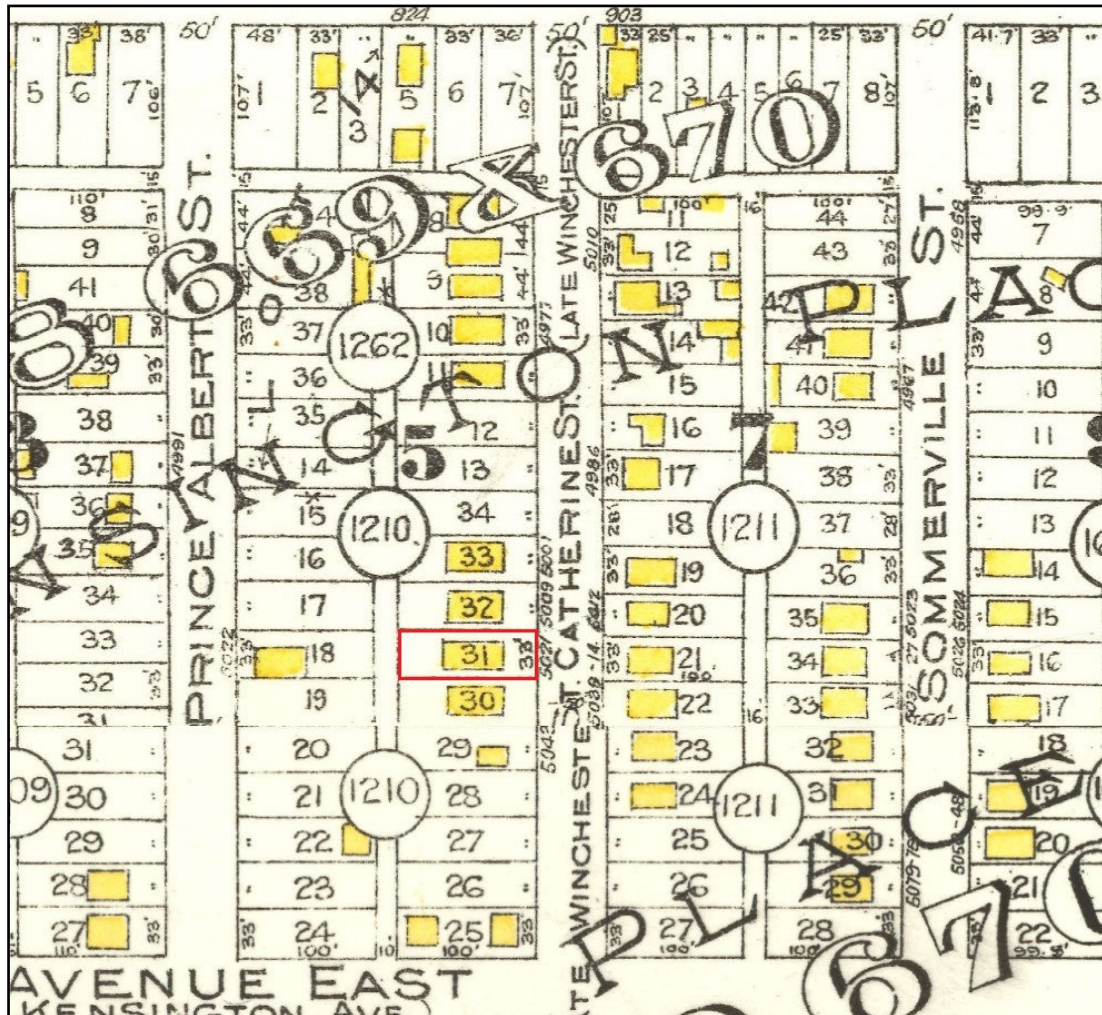
Right: The 00 Survey Marker in context of its immediate environment in a logged area in the Cumberland Community Forest, southeast of Village Park. The location of the monument is marked with a red circle.

Archival Images & Records



ADD COORDINATES MAP (1).





ADD PHOTO OF ROBERT WILLIAMS.

Williams generated a list of coordinates of the boreholes by scaling off plotted positions on 8 separate maps by the Canadian Collieries (D) Ltd. at the Cumberland Museum & Archives. Williams was able to locate the 00 Survey Marker, and consequently completed two base traverse loops. Through the loops and three other, very important government survey monuments, Williams eventually converted the Canadian Collieries (D) Ltd. coordinates into UTM coordinates.

## Research Resources

Barr, Jennifer. 1997. *Cumberland Heritage: A selected History of People, Buildings, Institutions and Sites 1888-1950*. Corporation of the Village of Cumberland.

Cumberland Museum & Archives

- Maps

Hind, Patrick O. 2013. *Cumberland Collieries' Railway*. Vancouver Island, B.C. 1888 to 1960. Cumberland Museum and Archives.

Isenor, Dick E.; Stephens, Edith G.; Watson, Donna E. 1988. *One Hundred Spirited Years: A History of Cumberland*. Ptarmigan Press.

Newspapers.com

Oral history:

- Gwyn Sproule

Plans of the Village of Cumberland showing the location of Past Coal Mining Activities within the Municipal Boundaries. January, 2000.

The Village of Cumberland:

- Documentation on the marker and surveys

Site visit: November, 2023.