

Collingwood Chronicles

by
Loretta Houben



Funded by the Vancouver Neighbourhood Small Grant 2022

Why did I write this historical book?

I've lived in the Collingwood area of Vancouver BC for most of my life, except for five years when I married in 1982 and my husband and I lived in New Westminster BC, where rents were very low. When housing prices began to escalate in 1987, just after British Columbia's Expo world fair held in Vancouver, we were drawn back to this area and purchased our first home on Monmouth avenue, the same street where I had grown up. Then over time, we moved into a newer house also located in Collingwood and closer to the Joyce Skytrain station.

I enjoyed walking in the area of Collingwood, which has many quiet streets and parks. I noticed in the 1990s that the older homes were disappearing, and more densification was taking place. I began researching certain places like the first library on Ruby street, and one thing led to another. I've been researching many buildings and also events which happened over the past one hundred and thirty years and have enjoyed writing articles for the Renfrew Collingwood Community newspaper.

The newspaper is where I learned about a Collingwood Neighbourhood Small Grant available. I applied for it and was thrilled when I was granted one in June 2022. With the grant, this historical book was printed. I'm deeply grateful for the assistance and funding. I hope you enjoy the stories and articles. A few Collingwood residents responded to my call for their own stories and memories of life here, and I thank you.

This book is just a brief glance back at Collingwood's history, and in particular covers the area close to the Joyce Collingwood Skytrain station, from the 1910 period to the 1960s. I've used the Vancouver Archives photo library, the UBC library, and various articles about the Collingwood area, all found online. Facebook groups have also been a great resource for information, and the BC City Directories online, provided by the Vancouver Public Library.

Images used on the cover are from the Vancouver Archives and the UBC Library.

Description of photos, from left to right: the Bursill Library on Ruby street, Carleton School, Boundary road and Park interurban station at Vanness, the Collingwood Inn, the Collingwood East interurban station at Joyce and Vanness, and the Collingwood Baptist church at Joyce and Monmouth.

Matthew Houben kindly edited this book.

With grateful thanks to the Neighbourhood Small Grant.

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Introduction to Collingwood History

In 1891, the British Columbia Electric Railway, known as the BCER, was installed from downtown Vancouver to New Westminster BC. It was the catalyst which propelled new communities to spring up overnight. One of these communities was the Collingwood area in the early 1900s. The land was originally used as farms, but after Joyce road was built, building lots were soon subdivided and put up for sale.

The Greater Vancouver Chinook, a small newspaper for South Vancouver, listed lots for sale for \$800 each. The real estate companies, such as Bailey, Telford and Company located near the new Collingwood East Station on Joyce and Vanness, made a booming business. Many shops sprang up along Joyce and Westminster Road (later Kingsway) and flourished as the area grew. Schools, churches, and all amenities needed for daily life were available from 1910 onward.

The community thrived and grew and continues in 2022. This book will give you a glimpse of Collingwood life from its brief beginning over 130 years ago. What gives this area its charm? Why are so many people drawn here? You decide.

Two New Subdivisions

COLLINGWOOD

Choice Building Lots

Property in Collingwood is advancing rapidly. Houses, Stores, and Schools are building in every direction, and the time to buy is NOW, at the easiest terms obtainable. We can offer you LOW PRICES, FINEST LOCATION, and EASIEST TERMS.

Look at the map below and pick out your lot quickly, as we have only 16 lots left in the two subdivisions, and the terms are

Collingwood is only 20 minutes on the car from the centre of the City, and this property is only 2 BLOCKS FROM THE CITY LIMITS.

Water, Electric Light, Telephone, Sidewalks and good roads.

Close to the Car

Wellington Road
Elham Road
Joyce Road
Van Ness Avenue
B.C.E.Ry
Collingwood East Station
Hf Hardy Road
Theatre
House
Office
Store
B.C.E.Ry

**\$50 Cash
\$10 Monthly**

Interest quarterly at 7 per cent.

Don't wait, or you will be too late.

We sold our last subdivision in TEN DAYS

SALE OF BAILEY TELFORD & CO. LTD.

Courtesy of the UBC Library, Vancouver Chinook May 25, 1912

Early Collingwood History

The area encompassing the Collingwood/Renfrew part of Vancouver includes Boundary road, E 41st Ave, Nanaimo street, and Broadway. This brief history looks back on what made the Collingwood section pleasing and popular to many people in such a short period of time.

Collingwood got its name from a town in Ontario. Many names in early British Columbia came from other places, or from the pioneers who built up the area. Before BC became a province in 1871, and before European settlers arrived, the First Nations people used the Collingwood area to hunt and fish. They would travel down a trail which extended from what is now New Westminster, all the way to the downtown area near False Creek. Whenever possible they would travel by canoe, using the Fraser River, instead of traveling by foot, so there is no record of them remaining in this area for long.

The trail extending from New Westminster and passing near Joyce road had many names, until it was named Kingsway on September 30, 1913, and widened and paved. One of the names was False Creek Trail and passed near a large lake in the Collingwood area, before it was settled by farmers. The only reference to this lake which I've found to date is this description, from the book, "History of Burnaby" by George Green.

"At Joyce road, the path (False Creek Trail) lay along the shore of a lake of considerable size. It filled the low flat between Kingsway and Collingwood East Station." (now Joyce Collingwood Skytrain Station)

It was supposedly named Moody Lake, after Colonel Richard Moody. He was appointed the Commander of the Royal Engineers, Columbia Detachment, and the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works for British Columbia, and he was also the first Lieutenant-Governor of BC from 1858 to 1863.

Colonel Moody and his Royal Engineers built New Westminster, which was the capital of BC from 1859 to 1866.

The first businesses in Collingwood in 1914

Joyce road, now known as Joyce street, runs north from Kingsway. It was named after Abraham Joyce, who was a school trustee for Carleton Elementary School from 1897 to 1898.

Many early businesses, stores and churches were located along Joyce. The BC Directories online (1860-1955) is sponsored by the Vancouver Public Library. Here is the link: <https://bccd.vpl.ca/> This is a valuable resource for discovering clues from the past.

The 1914 directory is the first time that Joyce road is listed and shows residents and businesses with the names of cross streets. There are also names of the early settlers, along with many shops. A few are listed as vacant. There is a dry goods store near Archimedes, plus a Collingwood Electric Co., a grocer, and a Watson and Wood shoemakers.

A physician, three vacant stores, a shoemaker, a meat store, a barber and pool place, a dentist, a druggist, and a dry goods store are listed near Euclid. Near Vanness there is an associated brokerage company, Fraser Brothers grocers, a postmaster, a Collingwood East post office, a real estate agent, a bank of Vancouver Collingwood East branch, a restaurant, William H and Son second hand dealer, a tailor, and even a Collingwood Theatre near Wellington avenue.

Continuing past Wellington, homes are listed, plus Collingwood Baptist Church. Joyce road had it all! Near the west side of the present Skytrain, there was the Collingwood East station for the BCER tram that travelled from downtown Vancouver to New Westminster. Near Rupert Street the Collingwood West station was located, and the Park Street station was at Boundary and Vanness.

JOYCE NORTH (Collingwood) runs north from 2525 School Rd to 29th Av E.

128 Hurrell Ernest A
128-130 Hurrell Priscilla
G conf

152 Dwan Richd

Kingsway intersects

198 Shanks Wm A

Church begins

207 Vacant store

Cherry begins

242 Squair Ernest R

253 Vacant store

255 Fearney Chas B hdw

Archimedes begins

257 Vacant store

270 Brinnen Block

270 Brinnen James dry
goods

272 Collingwood Elec Co

274 Vacant

280 Brinnen James

281 Nelder Wm

283 Sherer John E grocer

285 Watson & Wood shoe-
mkrs

286 Vacant store

288 Vacant store

289 Vacant

Euclid Av intersects

335 Cooper Wm

336 Morris David

355 Saunders Henry

369 Baird Walter S phys

374 Vacant store

376 Vacant store

379 Vacant

380 Forman D feed

382 Cranfield Mrs — mlnr

386 Vacant store

388 Forman David

389 Wood James E shoe-
mkr

392 Vacant

394 Scott Fredk meats

395 Harris Leo E barber
and pool

396—1 Randall Orville F
dentist

4 Buller F J phys

397—1 Colliss Regd

2 Tait Regd

398 Chambers Albt drug-
gist

399 Kerr Mrs Florence dry
gds

Vanness Av intersects

401 Associated Brokerage
Co

402 Fraser Bros grocers

406 Macgregor James M
postmaster

412 Collingwood E post
office

413 Brett Wm H real est

414 Bank of Vancouver
Collingwood E
branch

415 Simpson Frank rest

418 Robinson Matthew
confr

418 Pioneer Transfer

428 Brown Geo

432 Kent Wm H & Son
sec hand dlr

439 Merrick Richd

443 Vacant

449 Burness Joseph W
tailor

453 Vacant

460 Padgham Alfd T

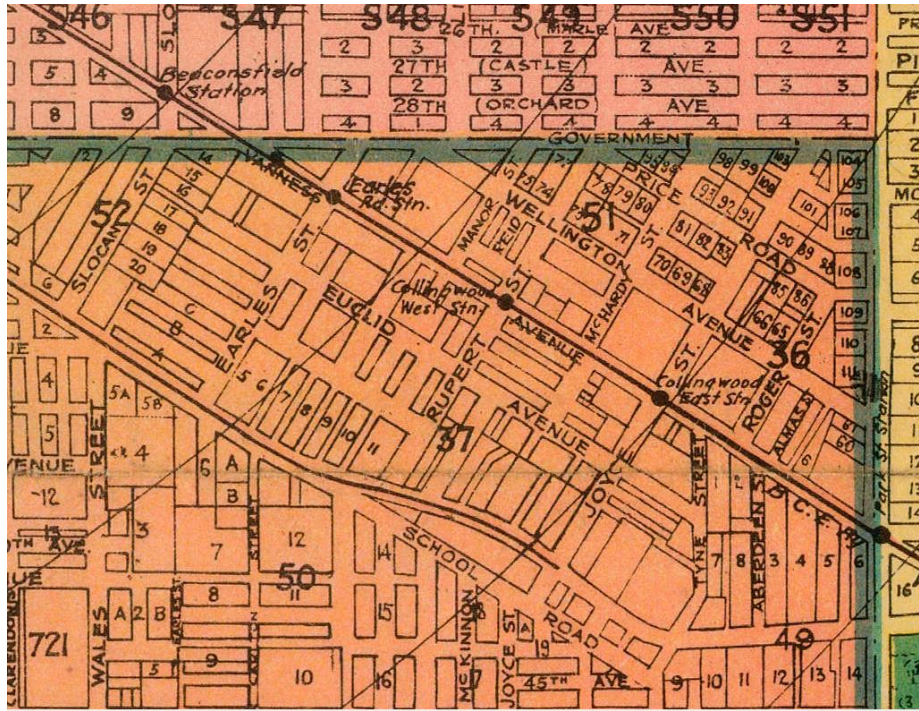
475 Allan Wm A

478 Chapman James exp-
man

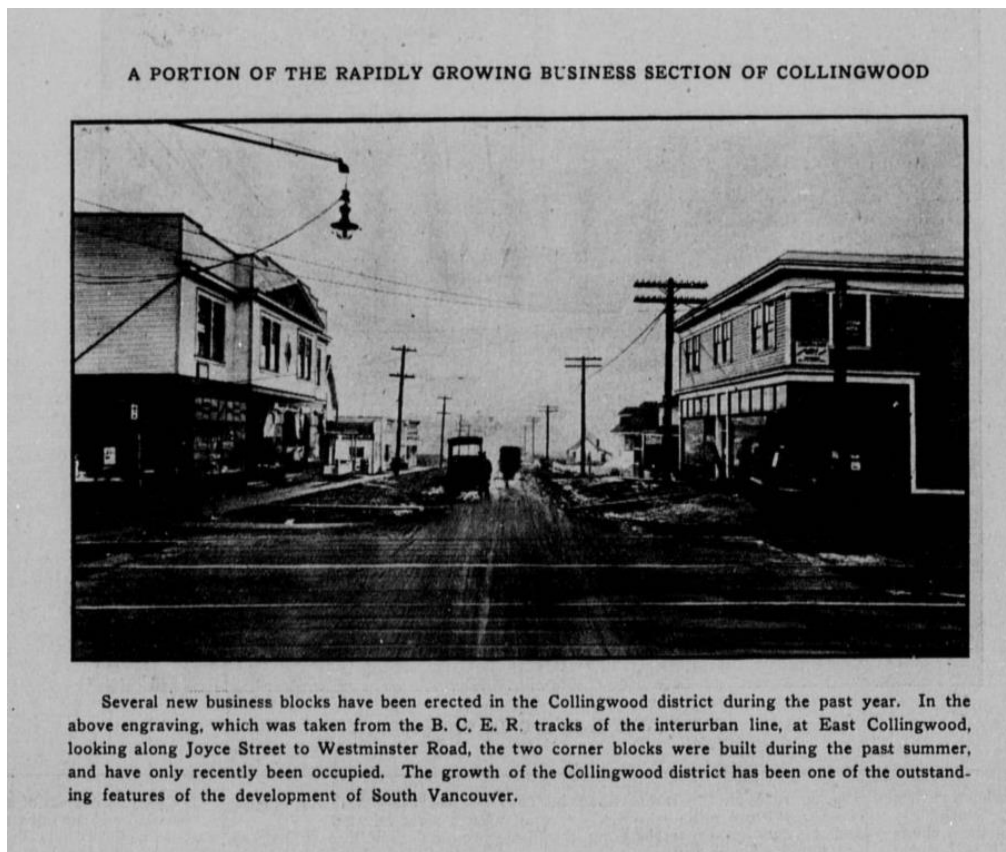
e s Collingwood Theatre

Wellington Av intersects

From the 1914 BC Directories courtesy of VPL Library,
showing some of the businesses along Joyce Road.



Above: 1912 map of Collingwood area showing old street names and the BCER stations, from Vancouver Archives. Below: Dec 1912, Vancouver Chinook newspaper, UBC Library



Sir Guy Carleton School History

European settlers began living in the Collingwood area in the 1870s. By 1895 there were enough children to open a small school located in Peter Dubois' store on Westminster road and Lincoln street. In 1896, a two-room schoolhouse was built near the SE corner of Joyce and Westminster, which was named Vancouver East School. In 1908 the name was changed to Collingwood Heights School, then to Sir Guy Carleton in 1911.

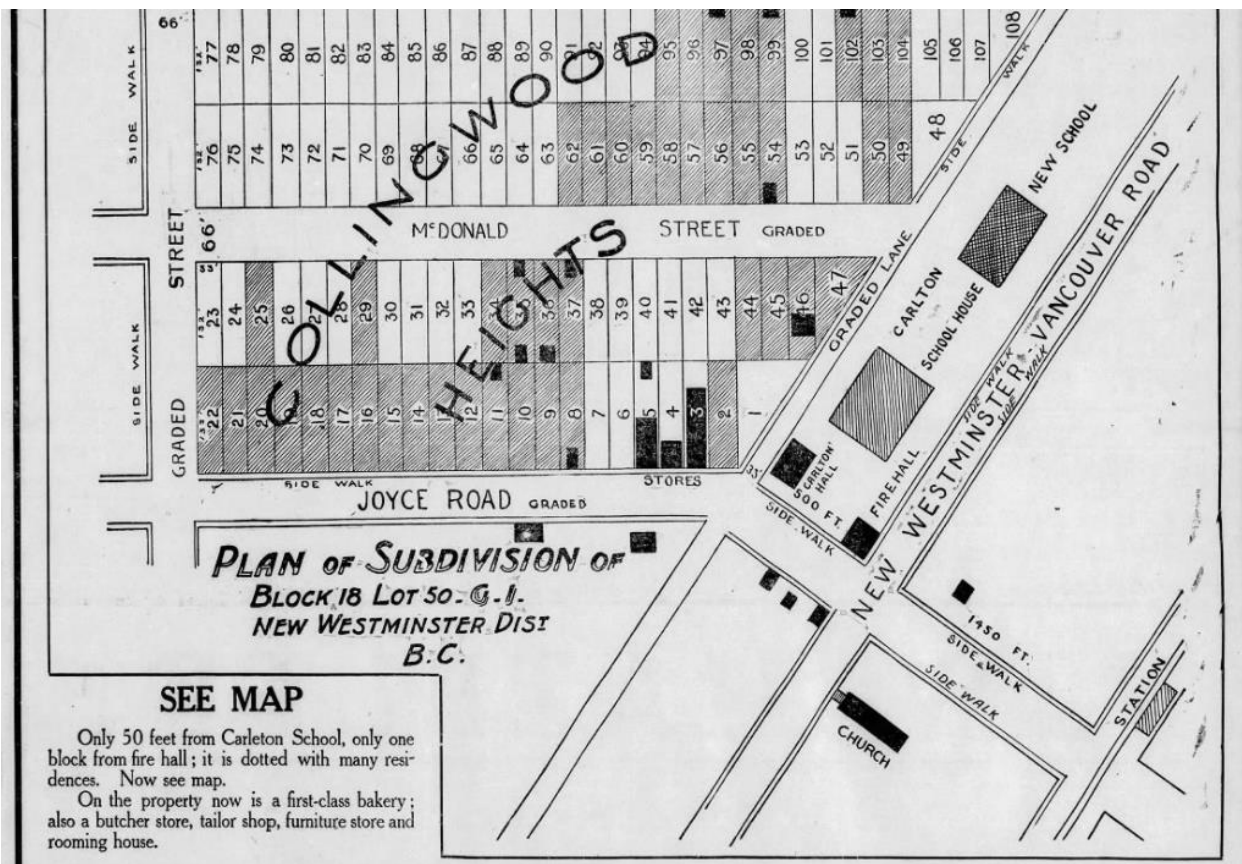
Over the years two more buildings were erected beside the little school, as the population grew. The original schoolroom became Carleton Hall, and years later was moved behind the two main buildings, to its present location. That building is the oldest school house in Vancouver, and fortunately it was repaired after a fire by arson burned it in 2008. It's currently used (as of 2022) by Green Thumb Theatre.



1915 Carleton School Victory Garden (WWI)

Note Carleton Hall on the far left.

Courtesy VSB blog



Ad from Jul 1912 Vancouver Sun, showing plan of subdivision fifty feet from Carleton School. Note Carleton Hall, the two school buildings next to it, and the firehall.

Prince of Wales visit in 1919.

The Prince of Wales, who later became King Edward VIII and who abdicated in December 1936, took a two-month tour of Canada in 1919 and ended by visiting Vancouver BC in September 1919, before heading to Victoria BC. He loved the West and bought a ranch in Alberta, which he kept until 1962.

On his visit here, which included a dinner and dance downtown, a visit to Hastings Mill and Stanley Park, and a trip to New Westminster, he stopped at Carleton School and thousands of people thronged the huge school yard which fronts Kingsway to hear him.

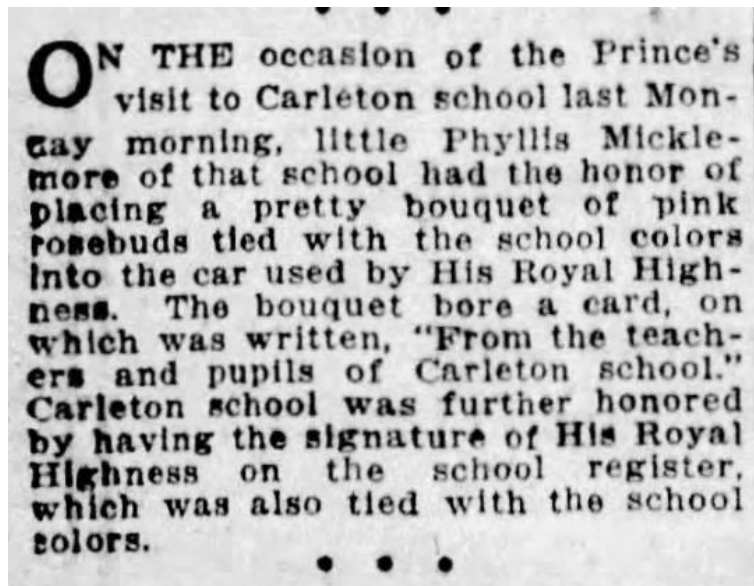
Prince Edward was extremely popular, and he loved the crowds so much, his right hand was nearly shaken off. His doctor advised him to desist from hand shaking on his second day here in order to avoid injury.



HRH Prince of Wales speaking at Carleton School grounds on September 29, 1919. Photo from Vancouver Archives.

According to the Vancouver Sun, dated September 29, 1919, the Royal Party was scheduled to stop twenty minutes at Carleton School, where H.R.H. the Prince of Wales was to be welcomed by 5,500 school children from the area. He was scheduled to be there at 11:00 am. An arch was erected over Kingsway and a school holiday was announced. Representatives of the Great War Veteran's association, the Mother's and Wives' association, and the Board of Trade and the Army and Navy Veterans were all to be present, along with the Boy Scouts and Sea Scouts. The 72nd Seaforth Highlanders' band was also to be there in full review order.

The municipal hall was decorated. The Prince and his party were to be escorted to a roped-off, raised space in the grounds on the east side of the hall. The address on behalf of the corporation of Burnaby was to be given to the Prince by Reeve Sanderson. The school children were to sing a verse of "O Canada".



From the Vancouver Sun, Oct 6, 1919.

Connaught School 1913-1932

For quite a while I've been fascinated with old school buildings, and Sir Wilfred Grenfell School is no exception. The school opened on December 3, 1958.

Behind the cement structure which faces Wellington avenue there is a much older building made of wood. According to the BC Directories online, John Norquay Annex was at this location from 1933 to 1955, at Price and Rupert.

From 1913 to 1932, another school was located here, on the lower section of the grounds. A steep set of stairs leads from the upper level where the present school buildings are, to the bottom where there is a large empty playing field.

My dad remembers long ago in the 1940s that there was a schoolhouse on the lower fields.

I checked out the Vancouver School Board website (www.blogs.vsb.bc.ca/heritage) where there are many old photos of Vancouver schools, but none of Connaught School. This was the name of the first school at that location.

I recalled that I had seen a photo of Rupert School in the Vancouver Archives. Could this be Connaught School? By patiently searching in the BC Directories, and by looking at Rupert street from 1913 onwards, I verified that Rupert School was located near Price street on Rupert.

The school appears in two photos under the name “Bayley’s Claim”. I assume this is referring to Charles W. Bayley who lived at #650 Rupert, and his house is in the photos next to Rupert School.



1910s, Bayley’s Claim from Vancouver Archives. Rupert School on the right, #650 Rupert on the left, facing Rupert street, near Price street.



1910s, another view of #650 Rupert street, Bayley's claim, with Rupert school on the right facing Rupert street, near Price street. Vancouver Archives.

Connaught School was named for the Duke of Connaught, Prince Arthur William Patrick Albert (1850-1942), Governor General of Canada and brother of King Edward VII.

The 1913 BC Directory states that Euphemia C Jones was the principal. In 1913 she lived at 1848 7th Avenue. Besides studying the streets in the directories, you can also look up names of people and see their occupations next to their address and name. Euphemia Jones was only 21 years old in 1913.

I looked up the Jones family on Ancestry, a genealogical web site. On the 1911 Canadian census, I found Euphemia living with her parents in Vancouver at age 19. She was a teacher earning \$860 per year. Euphemia married in 1915, and most likely that was the end of her teaching career.

Back to Bayley's claim. After studying old Vancouver maps, I examined the Goads Fire Insurance map from 1912. Zooming in closely I noticed something surprising; a building marked "school"!



(snip from 1912 Goads Fire Insurance map)

The school is on the lower grounds facing Rupert, formerly called Collingwood road, with Charles Bayley's house to the right of it. I think that Connaught School photos haven't been found until now because they are named incorrectly in the archives.

The houses on Rupert street were renumbered in 1930. By closely matching the names of the occupants with the old and new set of numbers, I noticed that #650 changed to 4530 Rupert street, which was vacant in 1930, and gone in 1931. Could this be the year that the second school building on the upper ground was built, and renamed John Norquay Annex?

When you go past the corner of Price and Rupert, maybe you can imagine it in your mind's eye, and hear Miss Euphemia Jones ringing the school bell, and wonder why Charles Bayley purchased a claim at that corner.

Joyce BCER Station

The BCER line (British Columbia Electric Railway) was built in 1891. Currently the Expo Skytrain line runs along the same path.

Many things have changed since the long-ago days when the BCER first ran a track through the Collingwood neighbourhood in 1891, traveling from New Westminster through to downtown Vancouver. Collingwood was built up along the track for homeowners who worked downtown. Thanks to the new railway, they could commute quickly to work, while living in a lower-priced and quiet area.

There were originally two stations in Collingwood. Collingwood West at the corner of Rupert Street and Vanness, with two stops high up on top of the overpass which crossed Rupert, and Collingwood East which was located near the Joyce Station at Vanness and Joyce with two stops on either side of Joyce.

To read more about the BCER and interurban history, please visit this Translink post online: <http://buzzer.translink.ca/2009/03/a-short-history-of-interurbans-in-the-lower-mainland/>



Collingwood East station at Vanness and Joyce, SW side, 1930s.
Vancouver Archives CVA 655-386



Another view of Collingwood East Station, showing both small stops across from each other, at Joyce and Vanness, facing West. Phillip Timms photo, Vancouver Archives, 1930s.

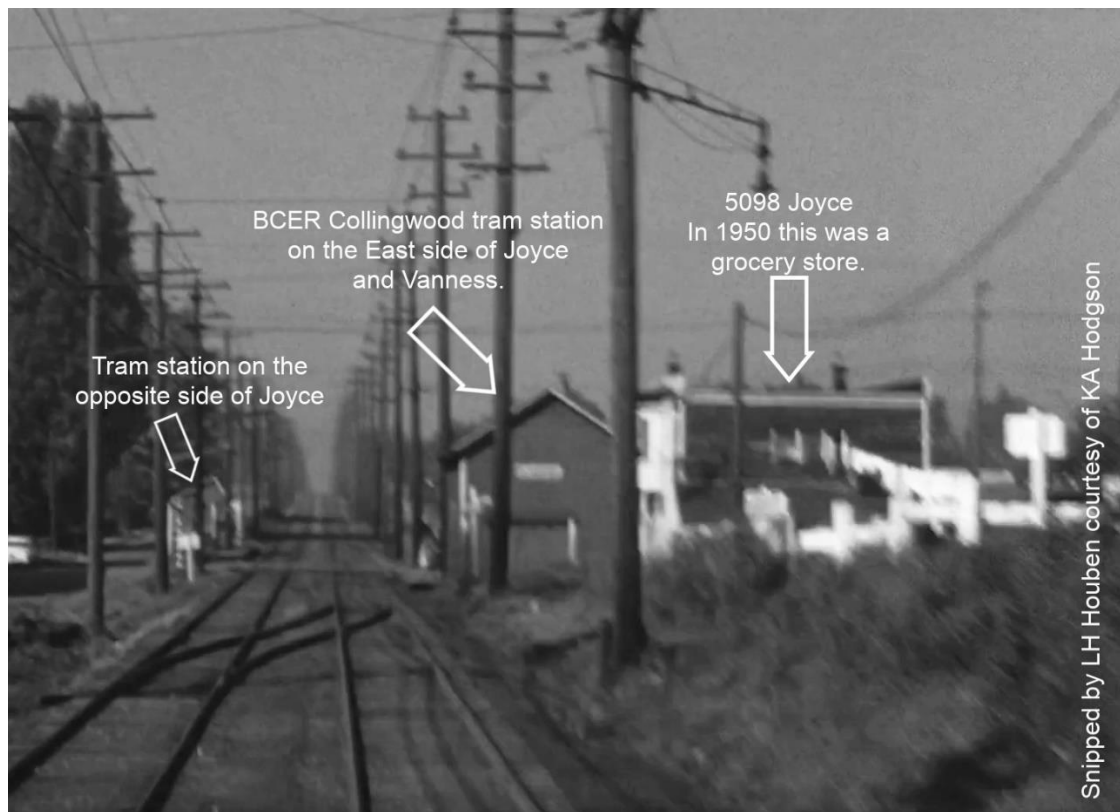
The east BCER station at Joyce and Vanness

For years I've searched for a photo of the British Columbia Electric Railway (BCER) station on the east side of Joyce Street and Vanness Avenue. There are a few photos of the next BCER station near Rupert and Vanness in the archives, known as Collingwood West, but not this particular station known as Collingwood East, on the east side of Joyce. There were stops on either side for convenience.

Finally, while searching the Vancouver archives online, I discovered a clear movie clip by Kenneth A. Hodgson, filmed in 1950, which was uploaded in 2017.

The old film shows a BCER tram leaving the New Westminster tram barn, heading through Burnaby and through the Central Park area, past Royal Oak, Patterson and on until it reaches and passes Joyce. I stopped the film and took some snips, and I was thrilled to see these images, as they are the only ones I've discovered to date.

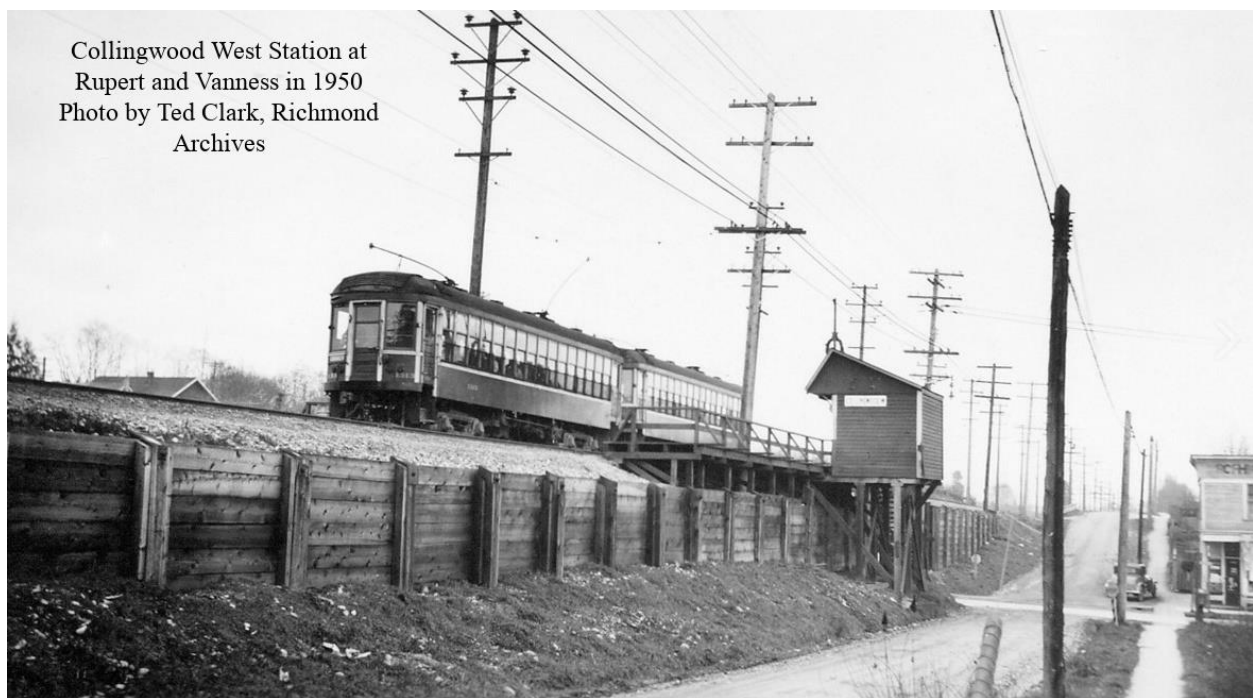
Wouldn't you say there's quite a difference between then and now?



In the snip above, looking west along the BCER track, you can see the little tram stop on the east side of Joyce. There is a large building to the right of it, with clothes hung out on the line. This is 5098 Joyce, which in 1950 was a grocery store, formerly Fraser Brothers Grocers.

There's also a tram stop on the opposite side of Joyce, for the tram coming from downtown Vancouver and heading to New Westminster.

The tram stations were a dark red colour, and the older buildings had two interesting wooden decorations on top of the roof, one at each end. These can be seen in the early photos from the 1930s.



1950 Collingwood West Station at Rupert and Vanness.
 Photo courtesy of Richmond Archives, by Ted Clark

5098 Joyce Street
Courtesy Vancouver Archives,
1978
CVA 78698.08



5098 Joyce street; Fraser Brothers Grocers

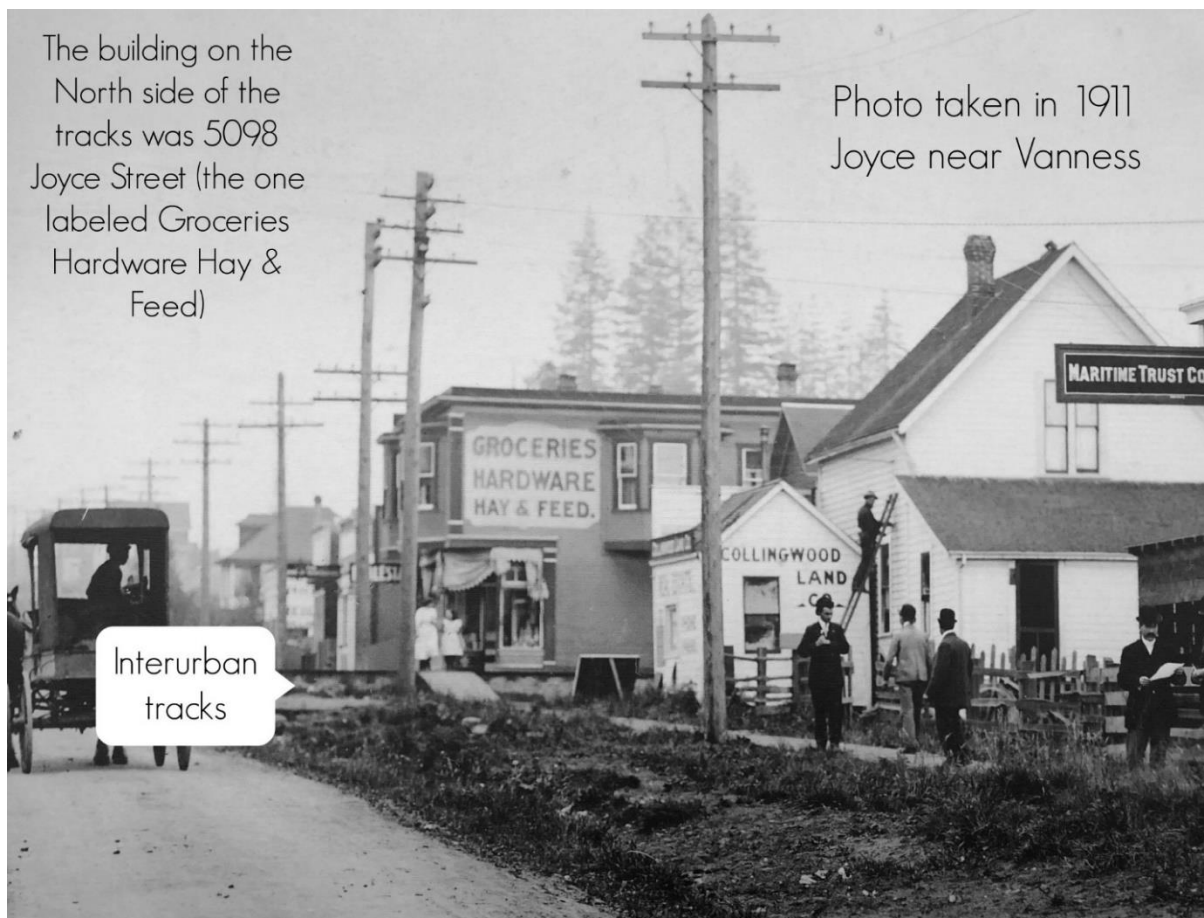
Photo courtesy of Vancouver Archives, 1978, CVA 78698.08

In the 1960s my mom, pushing a stroller with my baby sister, myself trotting along beside it, would often walk from Monmouth avenue all the way up Wellington street, turning right onto Joyce and on up the hill to Kingsway to do shopping. Joyce street had quite a few older-style houses then, and two-story apartment buildings. Before the Skytrain was built in 1985, I remember crossing the train tracks, and I remember some of those old homes built in the 1910 era. I was astonished recently to discover a photo of an old house, which was once situated at 5098 Joyce, at the corner of Joyce and Vanness on the East side. I had forgotten about this house. It was torn down in the 1980s, and the property was used as a laneway until 2018, when the west side of Joyce Collingwood station was rebuilt and expanded. There is now a road used by busses where the old house once was.

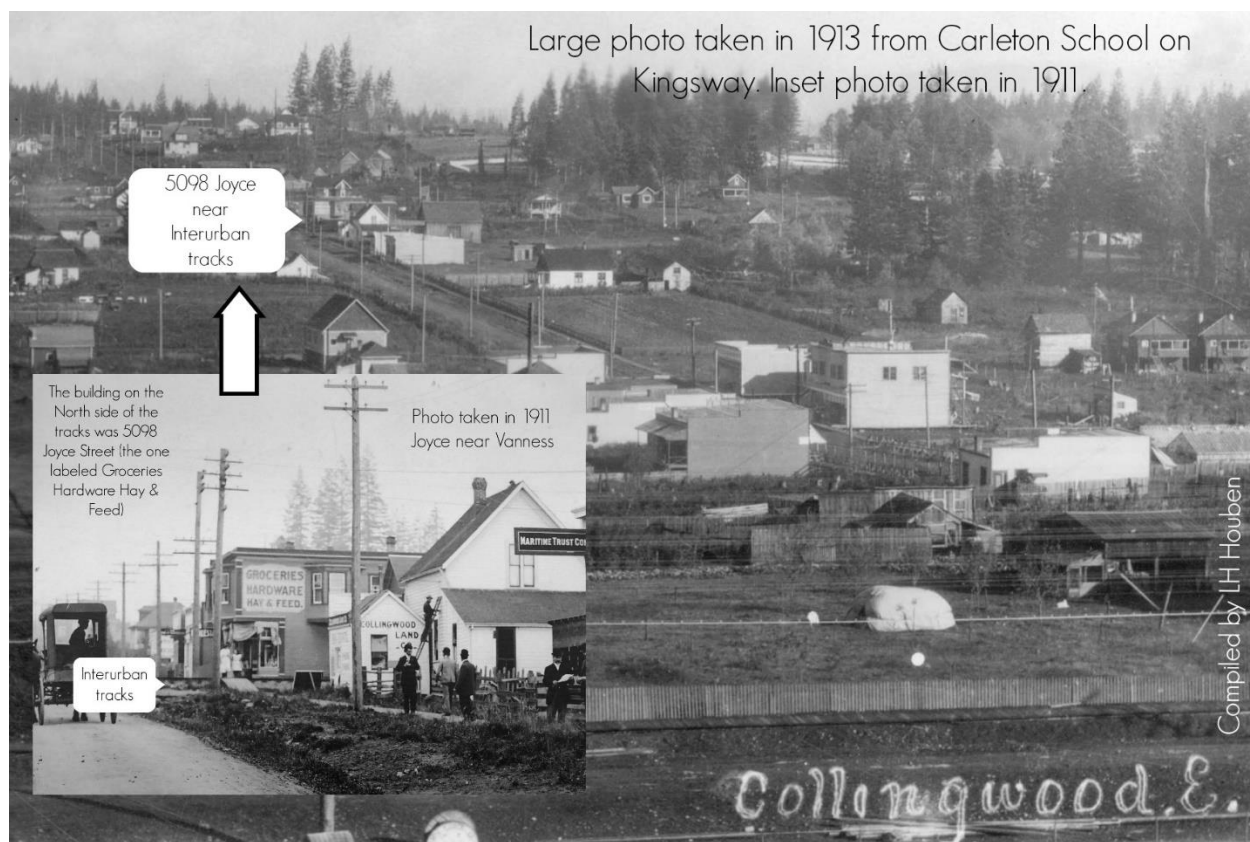
In the early 1910s, the old house was known as Fraser Brothers Grocers.

There are many photos in the Vancouver Archives online website that have fascinated me since I began research of the Collingwood area. Images dated 1913, taken from the Carleton School grounds on Kingsway facing north and including Joyce Street, have intrigued me for a long time. For years I couldn't place exactly where the interurban track was located as it was so far in the distance. The mystery was solved when I happened across a large wall image in an apartment building on Vanness avenue. I took a photo of it and compared it to photos I had saved on my computer over the years from the archives. I recognized one of the buildings on Joyce and Vanness. In the larger wall image it was unmistakable.

In the BC Directories for the early 1910s the building was known as Fraser Brothers Grocers, numbered 402 Joyce and later changed in 1930 to 5098 Joyce. I was thrilled to discover that the interurban track ran beside it. On December 11, 1985, the Skytrain began its service to the city, using the old interurban right of way in the same location.



Fraser Brothers Grocers on Joyce and Vanness, just past the interurban tracks.



The large photo in the background is from 1913, Vancouver Archives. It was taken from the top of Carleton School at Kingsway and Joyce. In the far distance you can see 5098 Joyce street, near the interurban tracks.

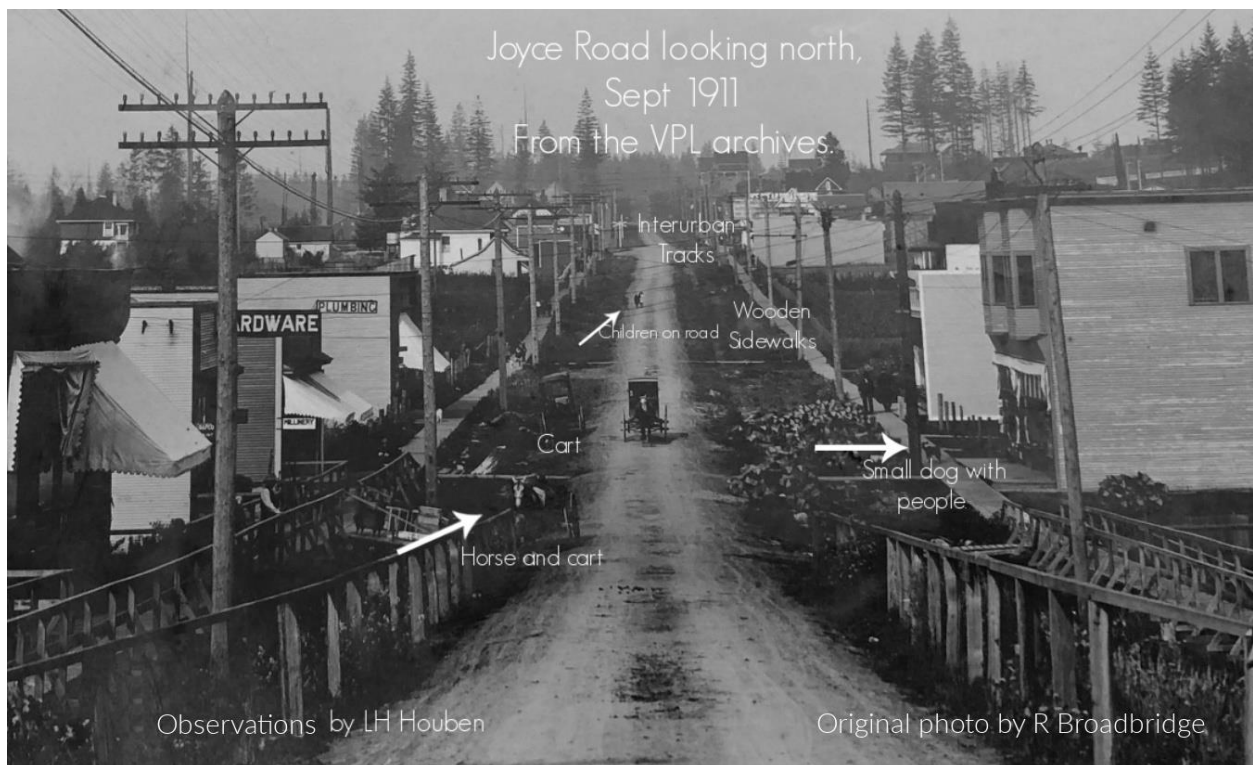
The inset photo is a close up taken in 1911. Many businesses sprung up along Joyce Street when the interurban line was put through in 1891. Do you recognize any old buildings which are still standing on Joyce Street today?

Joyce road in 1911

There are only a few photographs taken of the Collingwood area in the early 1910s which include Joyce road, so I have a profound fascination with finding larger copies and looking at them blown up in my photograph program. The photo shown below is from September 1911 and is courtesy of the Vancouver Library Collection.

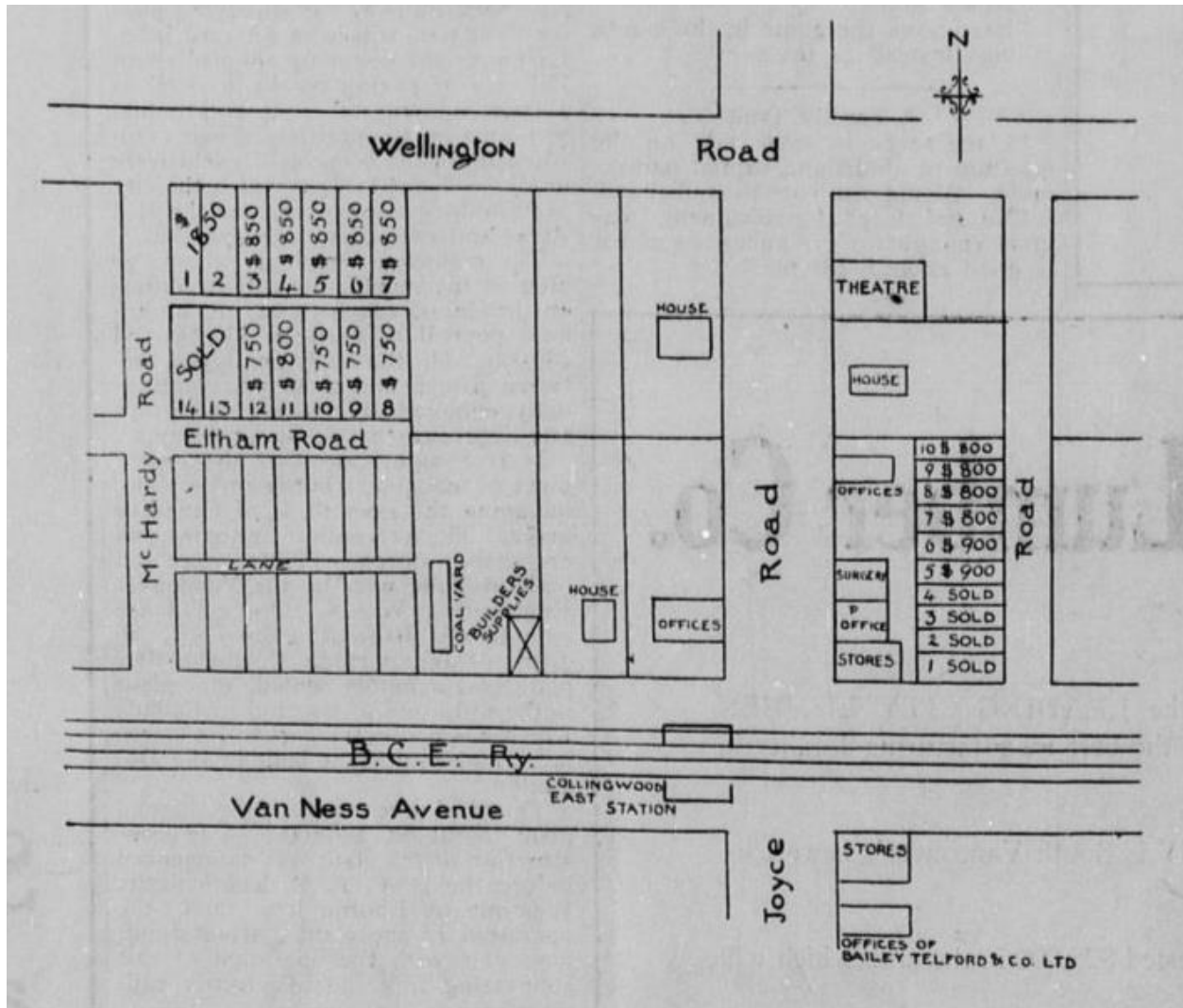
The original photo is quite small, due to being scanned in at low resolution years ago. I took a photocopy of it and visited the central library branch downtown Vancouver in January 2023. The librarian who assisted me on the 7th floor was very helpful. She located a print of the scanned photo, not the original as that was in a bad shape, and she allowed me to look at it closely with a magnifying glass, and also allowed me to take a picture of it with my mobile phone.

I saved the copy to my computer and tweaked it by making it black and white as the original print was sepia. I zoomed in a bit and noticed a few details which I couldn't see at all on the small online photo. I've labeled them so you can see them too. Isn't this a fascinating view of Joyce looking north down the hill from Kingsway? I was surprised at how much I learned from this experience. The Vancouver Public Library is a helpful place to hunt for clues. How many changes can you spot compared to today on Joyce?



4926 Joyce Street; Collingwood Theatre

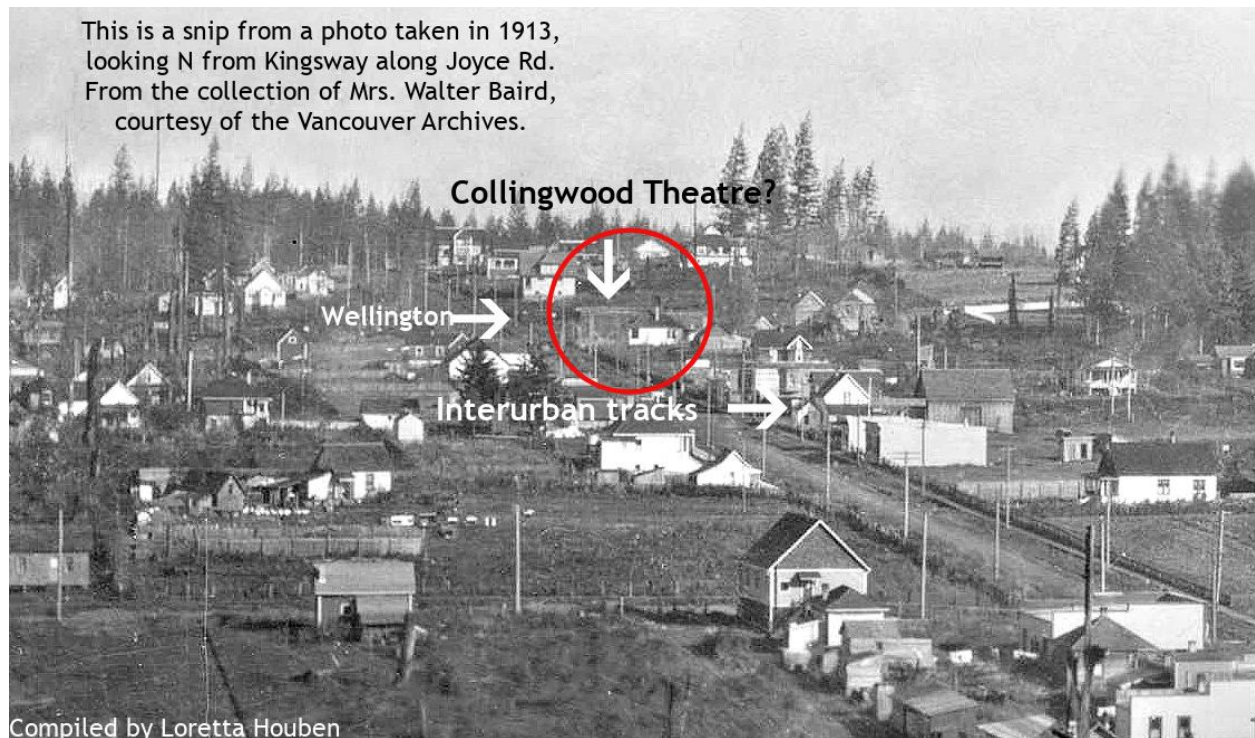
Did you know that a theatre was located at 4926 Joyce Street from 1914 to 1934, according to the BC Directories? I've been researching this mystery for a while and recently located a few clues. One of them was discovered in the Greater Vancouver Chinook newspaper, courtesy of the UBC Archives online.



Courtesy of UBC Archives, Vancouver Chinook dated May 18, 1912

Between Wellington road and Vanness avenue on Joyce road, you can see a hand drawn building marked "theatre". Next to it is a house, offices, and stores. Across Joyce is one house and an office building, with a coal yard located behind the offices near the BCER railway tracks. McHardy road has been named but not the road to the east of Joyce (now Payne). These are the only clues we have from long

ago. The prices of the lots on Wellington road are also listed; an astonishing \$750 - \$800 each!



The second clue was discovered when I placed a photo from the Vancouver Archives in my photo editor and enlarged and clarified it, discovering a building which I believe to be the Collingwood Theatre (please see photo above). You can't see it until you zoom in, and I was startled to find it when I'd never noticed it before.

The theatre was near Wellington avenue and Joyce road, and by looking at another image, I have deduced that this picture shows a view of Wellington and Joyce which was taken in 1913 and is from the collection of Mrs. Walter S. Baird, courtesy of the Vancouver Archives. If it weren't for Mrs. Baird, we wouldn't have any scenes of Joyce road from the 1910 era. You can see a house on the left side of the photo which stood beside the theatre. I assume it was built in 1913 as it appears in the 1913 photo, and it appears in the directories the following year.

The Collingwood Theatre is mentioned rarely in newspapers of the time. It was managed by Cecil R. Hall, who lived on Aberdeen street in the 1930 directory. In 1932 the theatre is not operating according to the directory. Cecil Hall moved to North Vancouver and was the operator for the Lonsdale Theatre.

1913 A part of Joyce Road
Donated from the collection of Mrs. Walter S Baird
CVA 371-2251

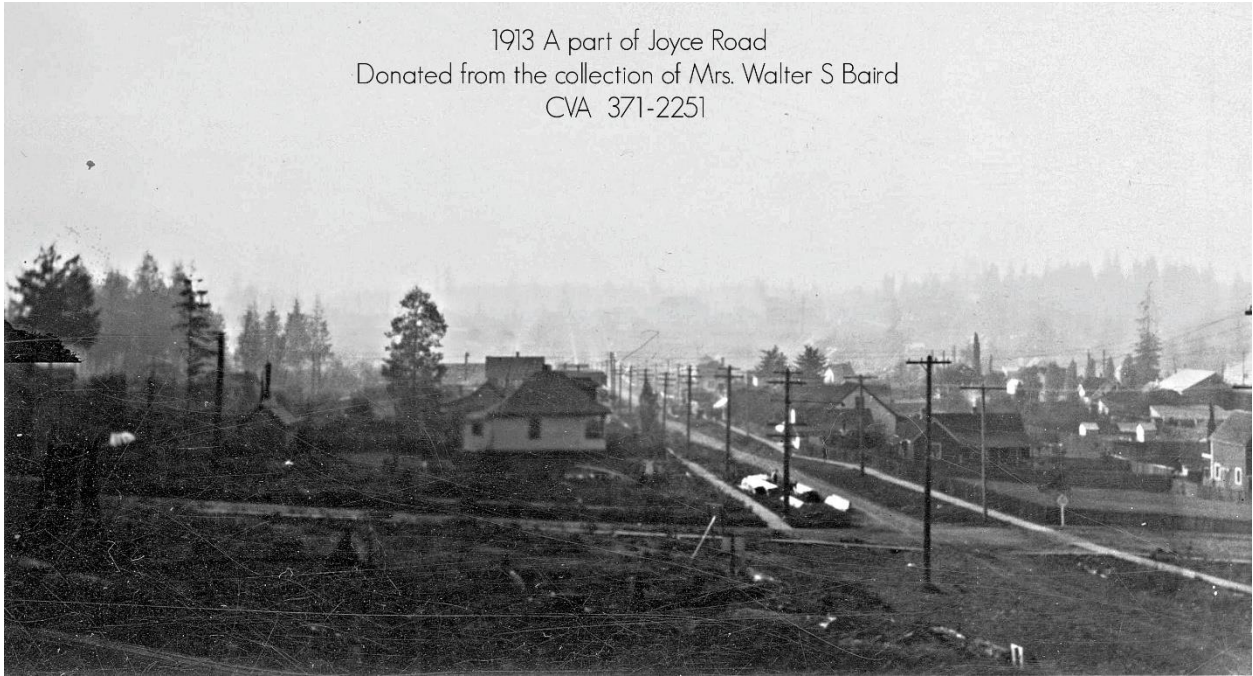
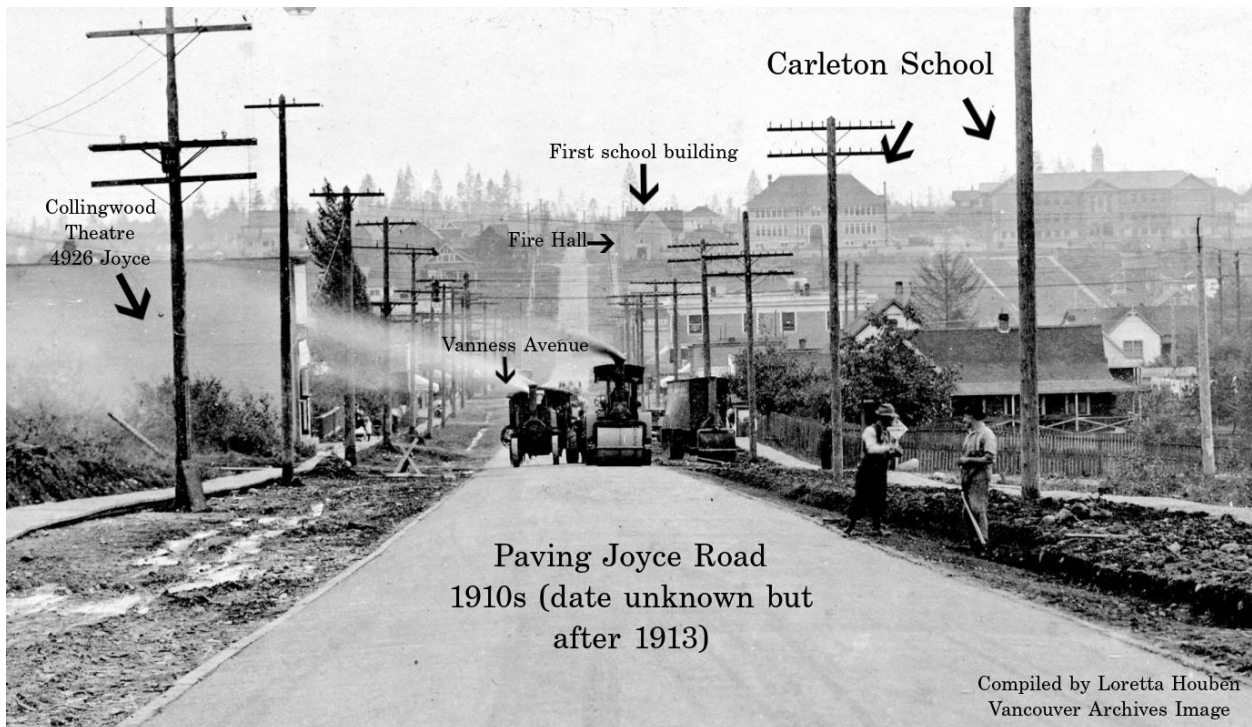
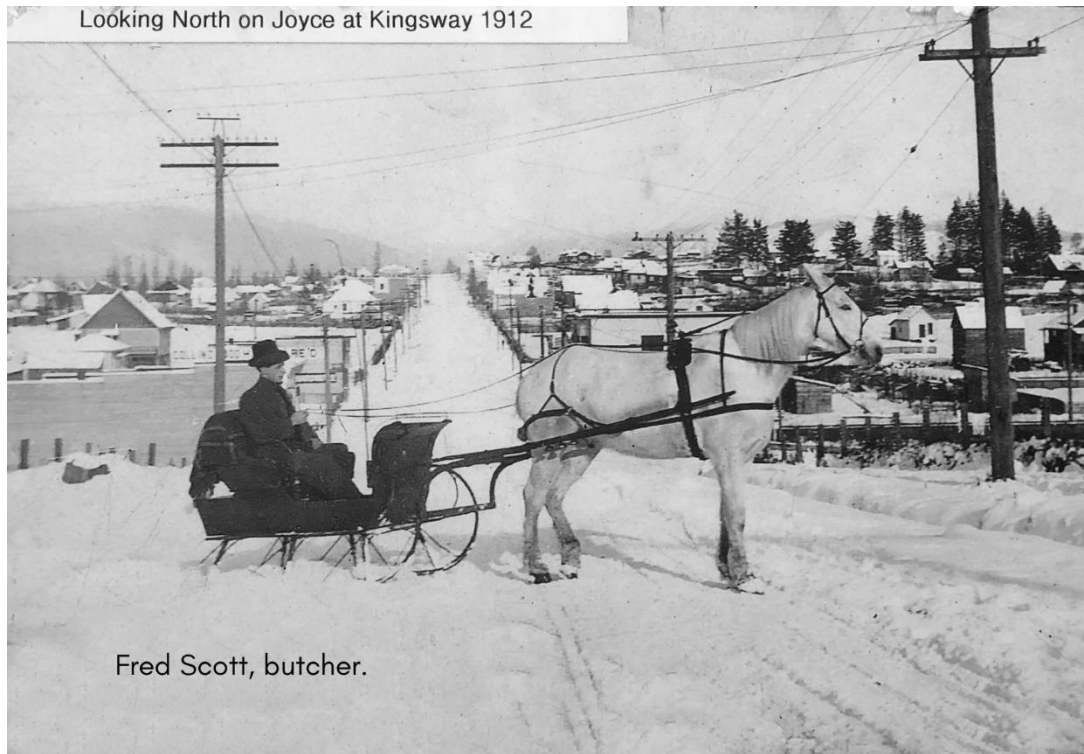


Photo above looking south along Joyce at Wellington, 1913.
Notice the little house on the left on Joyce, with a pile of lumber on the curb. This might be for the new theatre, built to the right of the little house. Photo courtesy of the Vancouver Archives, donated from the collection of Mrs. Walter S. Baird.
Photo below taken after 1913, from Vancouver Archives. Notice the Collingwood Theatre on the left. This is the best photo I've found to date. (2023)



Fred Scott, butcher in Collingwood



Fred Scott sitting in his buggy at the top of Joyce road, looking North down the hill from Kingsway on a cold winter day. His butcher shop is on the left side of Joyce, where the current BC Hydro substation is now located.

Photo courtesy of a print hanging on the wall of the Collingwood Neighbourhood House, and also on the fence of Carleton School.

The Economy Market

Nothing gives better satisfaction to the members of a family than meat which is fresh, tender, and bought at prices which are right. Our meats are specially selected to meet all these requirements.

Saturday Specials

Choice Pot Roast, by the piece12½c per lb.
Round Steak2 lb. for 35c
Boiling Beef8c and 10c a lb.
Wilson's Royal Ham and Bacon20c a lb.

Butter, Eggs and Fresh Vegetables

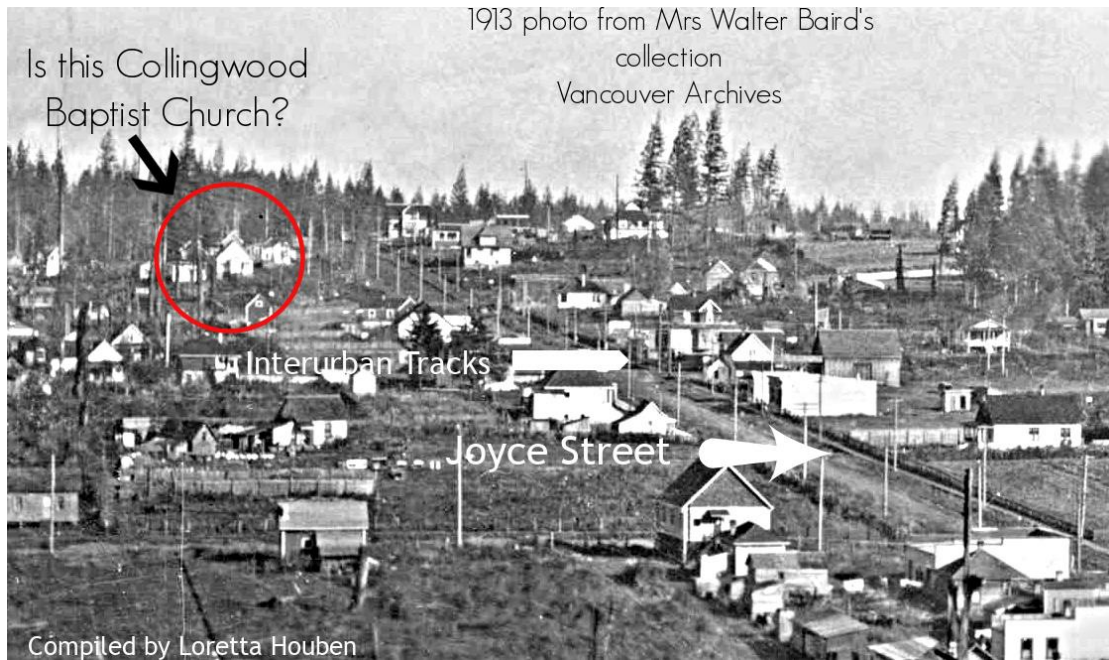
Fred Scott

Joyce Street

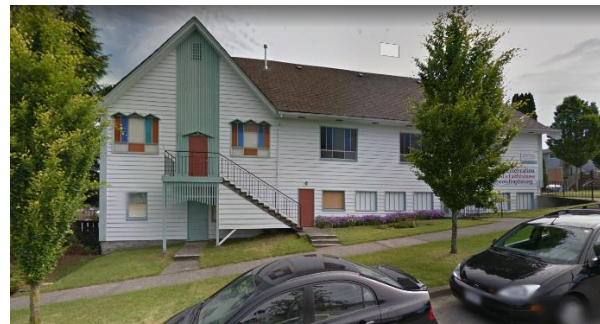
COLLINGWOOD EAST Phone : Collingwood 61

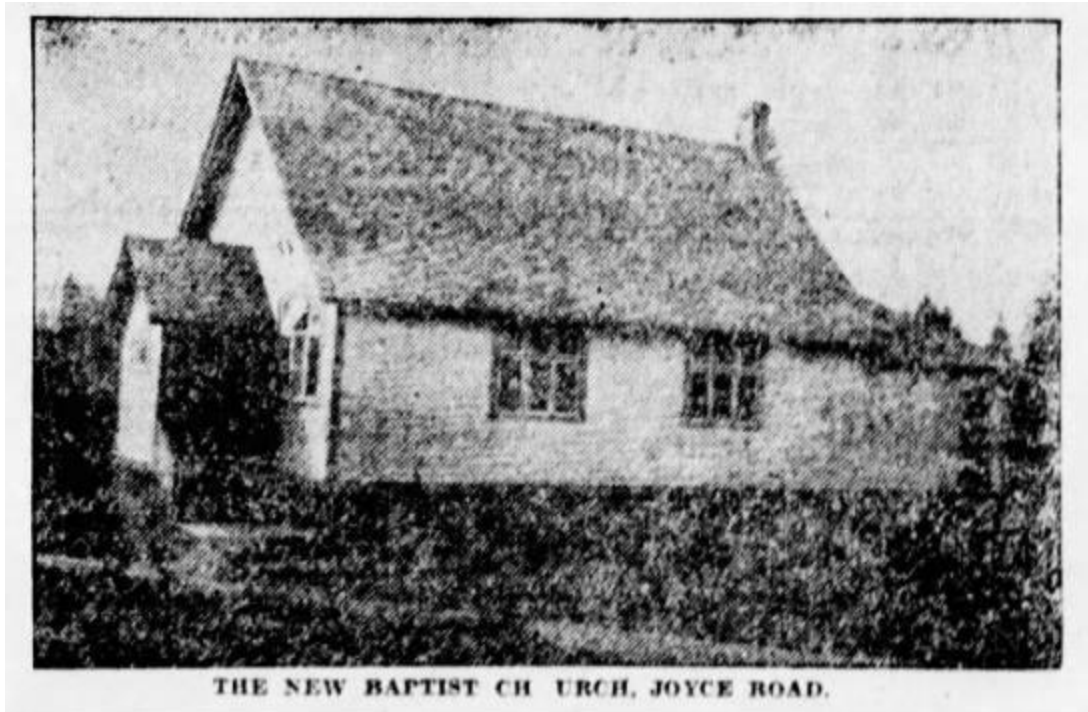
1912 ad from the Greater Vancouver Chinook Newspaper, courtesy of UBC Library Archives.

Collingwood Baptist Church on Joyce and Monmouth



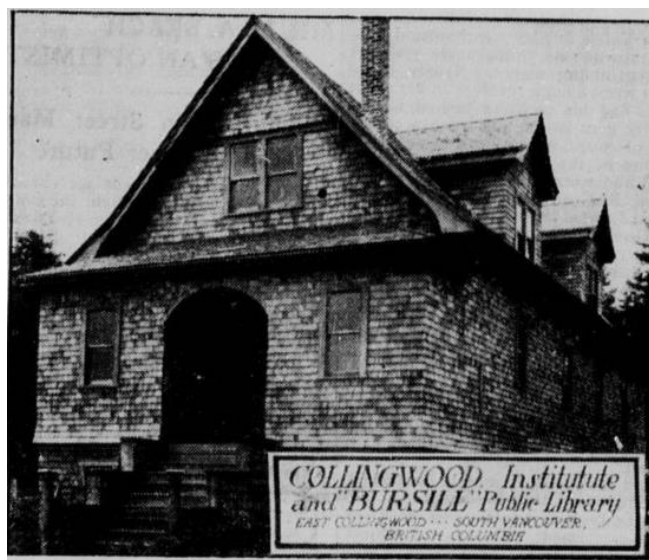
The answer to my question in the above reprint of a photo taken in 1913, courtesy of Mrs. Walter Baird's collection at the Vancouver Archives, is a resounding yes! I've always been fascinated with the handful of photos showing early Collingwood scenes. This is a zoomed in look at Joyce and Vanness area, with the interurban tracks and the next block near Wellington, then Monmouth. Collingwood Baptist Church was built in 1911, and has been there ever since, with a succession of pastors, and a thriving congregation. The building you see in the photo was added on in later years, but you can still make out the original building in the images from Google below.





September 1911 courtesy of Vancouver Daily World Newspaper
Collingwood Baptist Church, dedicated July 9, 1911

The Collingwood Institute and Bursill Public Library
5127 Ruby street, opened June 23, 1911



I've lived in the Collingwood area nearly 60 years. By chance I discovered that Collingwood's first library was located on Ruby street and opened in 1911. I began researching and looking for old photos of the building, and one thing led to another. I began writing the Collingwood Corner articles for the Renfrew Collingwood Community newspaper a few years ago because of research on the library.



Photo courtesy of the Vancouver Archives

John Francis Bursill, a writer from England, believed that the working-class population needed a library, and so he built one on Ruby street (at that time Rogers street) and filled it with 2,500 books from his private collection. His pen name was Felix Penne, and he was quite a character. In the January 30, 1915 Daily Newspaper, an article called for help in paying the loan owing on the building. The

library by that time had a piano, a stereopticon lantern with 1000 slides, and cutlery for social gatherings. The public rallied and the loan was paid off. The library closed on June 29, 1954. It was open for 43 years. The books were donated to South Burnaby library. A new library that is still in use in 2023, was opened at the corner of Kingsway and Rupert in 1951. Maybe you have visited it many times as I once did as a young girl. John Francis Bursill has a street named after him, one block west of this library. I'm very grateful to him and his vision.



Vancouver Public Library Collingwood Branch, 2985 Kingsway
Opened July 4, 1951
Photo courtesy Vancouver Archives

Fire Hall Station No. 1

Vintage photos from the Vancouver Archives of Collingwood fascinate me because images of this area are scarce. Collingwood grew rapidly after the BCER line was built from New Westminster to Cedar Cottage in 1891. The area became quite populated from 1908 onwards, as land was much cheaper than downtown Vancouver.

Firehall No. 1 located on Carleton
School grounds. It's the white
building in the middle of the photo on
the corner of Kingsway and Joyce.
Vancouver Archives, CVA371-2265
Dated 1911.
(Photo looking NE.)



Photo from Vancouver Archives, dated 1911.

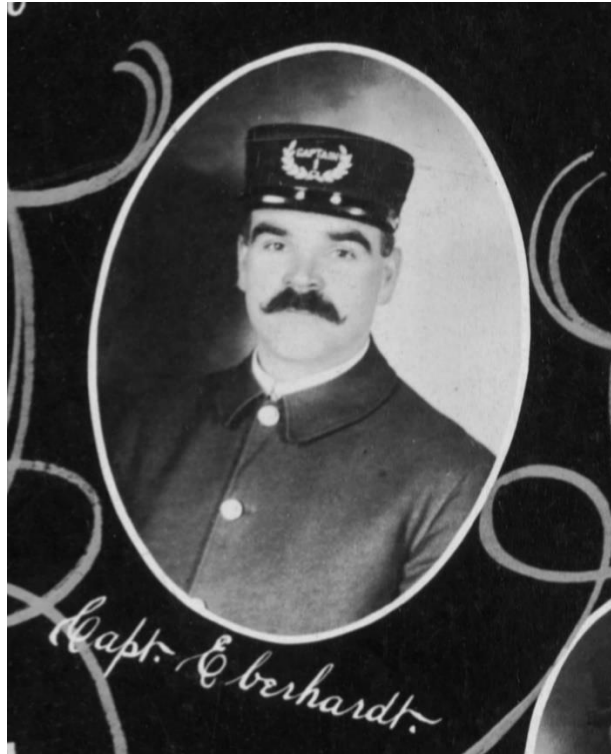
You can see the fire hall (white building) in the middle of the photo, on the corner of Kingsway and Joyce, located on Carleton School grounds.

Fire protection was needed as the population increased, and fire hall station number one was built in the 1911 on the NW corner of Carleton School grounds, near Joyce and Kingsway. In 1909 water main installation was begun but was still incomplete in 1911. Hydrants had not been installed, and water pressure was very low and quite inadequate for fire purposes.

Chemical apparatus was the solution, with a 100-gallon, two-wheel hand chemical engine and hose. In August 1911, five of these chemical engines were bought and

formed the nucleus of South Vancouver's first fire department. Five small stations were erected and about one thousand feet of hose purchased.

A fire chief was engaged and given one man for each station. Volunteer fire brigades were formed, and only called out for fires and paid by the hour while at work.



Captain John Eberhardt, Vancouver Archives, dated 1915.

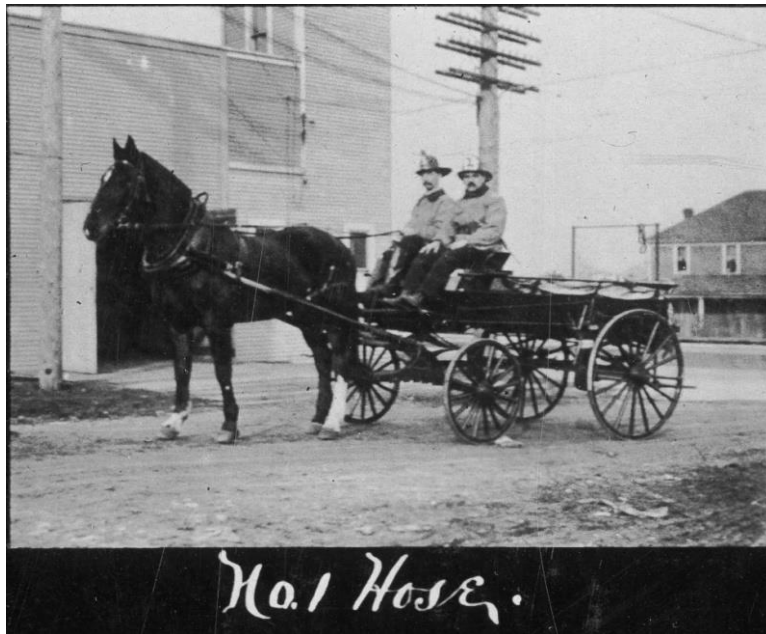
Fortunately no very serious fires occurred. In February 1913, Chief Lester was engaged and given charge of the department. Captain Eberhardt and C.E. Mitchell were in charge of No. 1 fire hall at Joyce and Kingsway. The hall was equipped with a one-horse wagon and one-hand chemical engine.

My information was derived from an article in the Vancouver World newspaper, dated 17 July 1915. By checking the BC Directories, I noted that fire hall station No. 1 lasted from 1911 until 1920, when it was closed. Captain Eberhardt served from 1913 until 1919.

Fire Brigade beside the No. 1 fire hall station, Dec 1911.
Vancouver Archives, AM54-S4-LP293
Located on the Carleton School grounds at Joyce and Kingsway.



The volunteer fire brigade beside the No. 1 fire hall on the SW corner of the Carleton school grounds at Joyce and Kingsway, dated Dec 1911, courtesy of Vancouver Archives.



Fire Hall Station No. 1 horse and cart and hose, dated 1915.
Photo below shows the fire hall from another angle, also 1915.
Both photos from Vancouver Archives.



Wharff's Nursery at Archimedes and Joyce 1916 – 1938

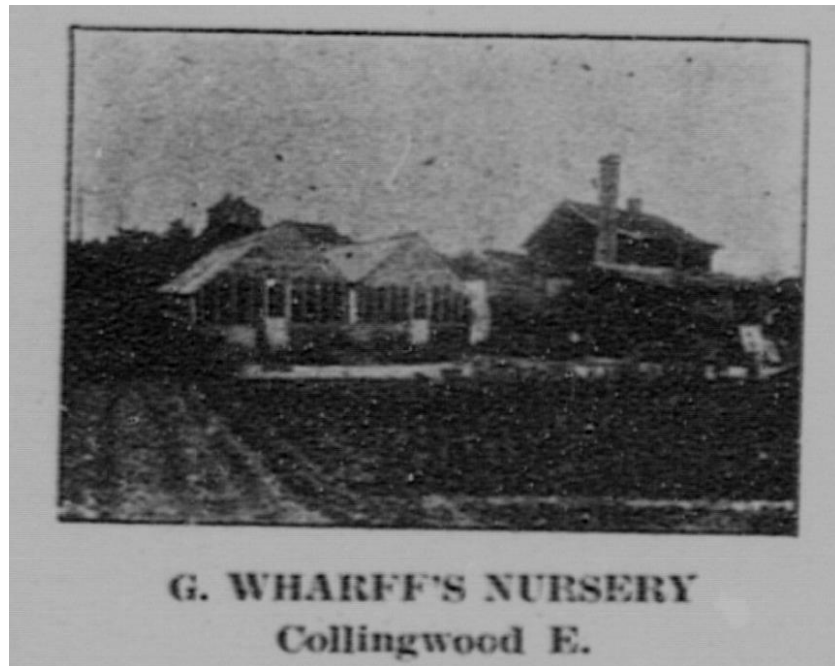


Photo from a 1920 booklet of Collingwood businesses in the Vancouver Public library.

While digging about in the many books located on the 7th floor at the Central Library Branch downtown Vancouver one day in 2022, I discovered a small paperback 1920 edition of Collingwood businesses. Along with many old photos and descriptions I noticed one about a nursery on Archimedes and Joyce. I'd heard of a nursery at this spot but to date hadn't found any evidence about it except in the BC Directories. It opened in 1916 and was known as the Collingwood Nursery. In 1919, George Wharff from England took over the management until he died in November 1938. He was a professional gardener and fruit grower, and his nursery was the largest in the area. After traveling extensively and learning the various methods in cultivating fruits and flowers, he decided to settle in Collingwood, investing in the nursery which was renamed after him. According to the article, the area exceeded his and his wife's expectations.

The Collingwood Inn, corner of Kingsway and Stamford, 1890s

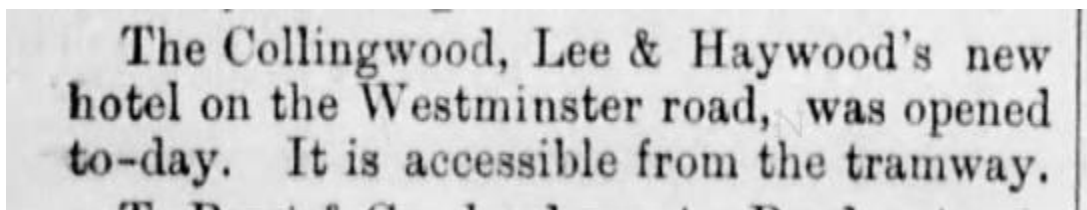
Long ago, in the days when Kingsway was known as Wagon road, and later Westminster road, there were four roadhouses situated along the route which led from New Westminster BC to False Creek. The original use for the False Creek Trail (another early name) was that it permitted sailors from British warships that anchored in English Bay, to reach New Westminster on horseback. New Westminster was the capital of BC from 1859 to 1866, when Victoria, BC took the honour.

The road, a former First Nations trail, and also an animal trail, was widened and built in 1861 by Colonel Richard Moody's Royal Engineers.

Early stagecoach drivers with their teams of horses needed a place to rest, water their horses, have a drink and tell the news. The journey took nearly a whole day to complete. It was twelve miles long. The roadhouses were also used by travellers driving buggies or wagons. There were no houses along the way, only thick forest.

One of those roadhouses was located in Collingwood, at the corner of present-day Kingsway and Stamford. The photo below is dated 1960 and shows the old roadhouse or inn. Courtesy of Vancouver Archives.

Another name for the Collingwood Inn was the Pig and Whistle. No one knows where this name came from.





The Collingwood, the new hotel on Westminster road was opened on February 25, 1892. From the Vancouver Daily World newspaper, courtesy of Newspapers.com.

The other roadhouses were the Junction Inn, at North Arm road (now Fraser Street) and Kingsway; Gladstone Inn at Gladstone and NE corner of Kingsway; and Royal Oak Inn at NE corner of Kingsway and Royal Oak.

In the Vancouver Daily World newspaper dated March 26, 1898, the Collingwood Hotel was listed for sale at \$3,500. The property had cost the owner \$7,000 but he needed a quick sale. The hotel, or inn, was known as the finest chicken ranch in the country!

The inn became a private property by 1960, according to notes with the photo in the Vancouver Archives. The notes also state that the old inn once faced Kingsway but was moved and turned to face Stamford street. In the September 15, 1884 edition of the Daily New Advertiser newspaper there is a long article about a murder which took place near the inn, but that's a story for another day.

The Dexter and Hemlock Exchange

Everyone uses the telephone, although in 2023 phones are vastly different from one hundred years ago, or even thirty years ago. Now nearly everyone has a mobile/cell phone and many no longer have a land line phone based in the home, connected by a cord to the wall.

Telus was originally named the BC Telephone Company and its first office in Collingwood was located on Vanness near Joyce, before moving to Kingsway near Boundary on the SW corner. I've always been interested in this plain looking building with its oddly shaped tower, which is still standing, so I did a bit of research.

From the Vancouver Chinook newspaper, May 18, 1912, courtesy of UBC Library online: "The BC Telephone Company have just completed the purchase of a lot and residence on Joyce street, with a view to coping with the increasing demands of the district by putting in a larger exchange. It is proposed to remodel the building and install a switchboard capable of dealing with 1,600 subscribers. The present exchange provides for only 100 subscribers, and it is proposed the new building will supply not only Collingwood, but its adjacent districts."

However, the 1915 BC Directories shows the BC Telephone Company at 2574 Vanness on the south side, not on Joyce. The office remained there until 1924. Nothing is listed after this date until 1927, when the address for BC Telephone Co is at 3056 Kingsway. This was the Dexter manual exchange building for many years, where switch board operators would handle all phone calls.

After researching Newspapers.com I discovered that a contract for a new building was underway in 1955 for the changeover to an automatic system. This was completed March 7, 1958. Now everyone was able to place their own local and long-distance calls, using the new Hemlock exchange. A new telephone directory was announced in 1957 and was BC's first metropolitan telephone directory.

My mom, Susan Williams, recalls using the manual exchange, and remembers the switch to the new way of dialing using automatic. She preferred the Dexter way over the Hemlock way, because she enjoyed hearing a voice on the other end when she picked up the receiver. With the new Hemlock exchange, she had to do all the work of dialing herself.



1959 SW corner of Kingsway at Boundary road. The new Hemlock (automatic) telephone exchange and old Dexter (manual) exchange. Courtesy of Burnaby Archives, William Brothers Photographers.



The Dexter telephone exchange building can be seen in the distance in this 1930s photo, looking down Kingsway from Smith avenue in Burnaby.
(Vancouver Archives)

Robertson's Bakeries LTD 1921 - 1946

Thanks to the wonderful photo collection online at Vancouver City archives, I discovered that Robertson's Bakeries LTD was at 3665 Kingsway in 1936. I researched a bit in the BC Directories and in Newspapers.com which are both amazing resources for those of a curious nature. The BC Directories is provided free from Vancouver Public Library and dates from 1860 – 1955.

Robertson's Bakeries LTD was in business from 1921 until 1946, when General Bakeries from Toronto ON purchased it. I'm unsure how long General Bakeries occupied the building on Kingsway, but it was still there in the 1955 BC Directories.

In Newspapers.com there is a Robertson's Bakeries ad for Stanley's NRG (energy) bread in 1938. It was low in starch, and a new way to get slim due to a high content of Vitamin B. The phone number listed for the bakery is Carleton 6. In the 1940s the phone number was DE-1212.

In 1942 during WWII, home delivery of Robertson's Purity bread was halted and sold in local stores due to a rubber tire shortage.

Currently Starbucks and small businesses occupy this space at the corner on Kingsway near Boundary Rd.



Robertson's Bakeries at the corner of Kingsway and Boundary Road in 1936. Source: Vancouver Archives CVA-99-4928

The Birds' Paradise, an aviary at 5207 Hoy street.



Copy of old postcard purchased on eBay; The Birds' Paradise.

In 2019, thanks to Allen Doolan, a subscriber and moderator on one of the Nostalgic Vancouver Facebook groups, I discovered that a bird aviary was once in the Collingwood area at 5207 Hoy street. It was quite well known and was even mentioned in a letter to the editors in the February 24, 1941 edition of Life Magazine. The owner was Charles Edward Jones.

I can't find out much about Charles Jones, but he certainly loved birds. If you visit the Vancouver Archives online, you will be able to see many postcards of the birds. Some of them will make you smile! In 2022 I purchased two vintage postcards from eBay, made in Canada by Gowen, Sutton Co LTD. The old house on Hoy Street whose garden once contained these delightful creatures was torn down in 2022. It was built in 1910, and still had its original charm with a lovely garden. I've often been drawn to this house while walking in the neighbourhood, and now I know why. I'm sorry to see it gone, but I'm thrilled to have discovered its past history.

According to the BC Directories online, “Birds’ Paradise” was listed along with Charles Jones name in the 1939 edition. I think it may have been a lucrative or at least a most interesting pastime for him.

In the letter to the Editor of the Life Magazine in 1941 from Clyde Ragsdale, it states that Charles Jones “revived a childhood dream when he created this sanctuary, where thousands of birds, wild and domestic, representing some 35 species, from Chinese nightingales and Indian bulbuls to South American finches, have found haven.”

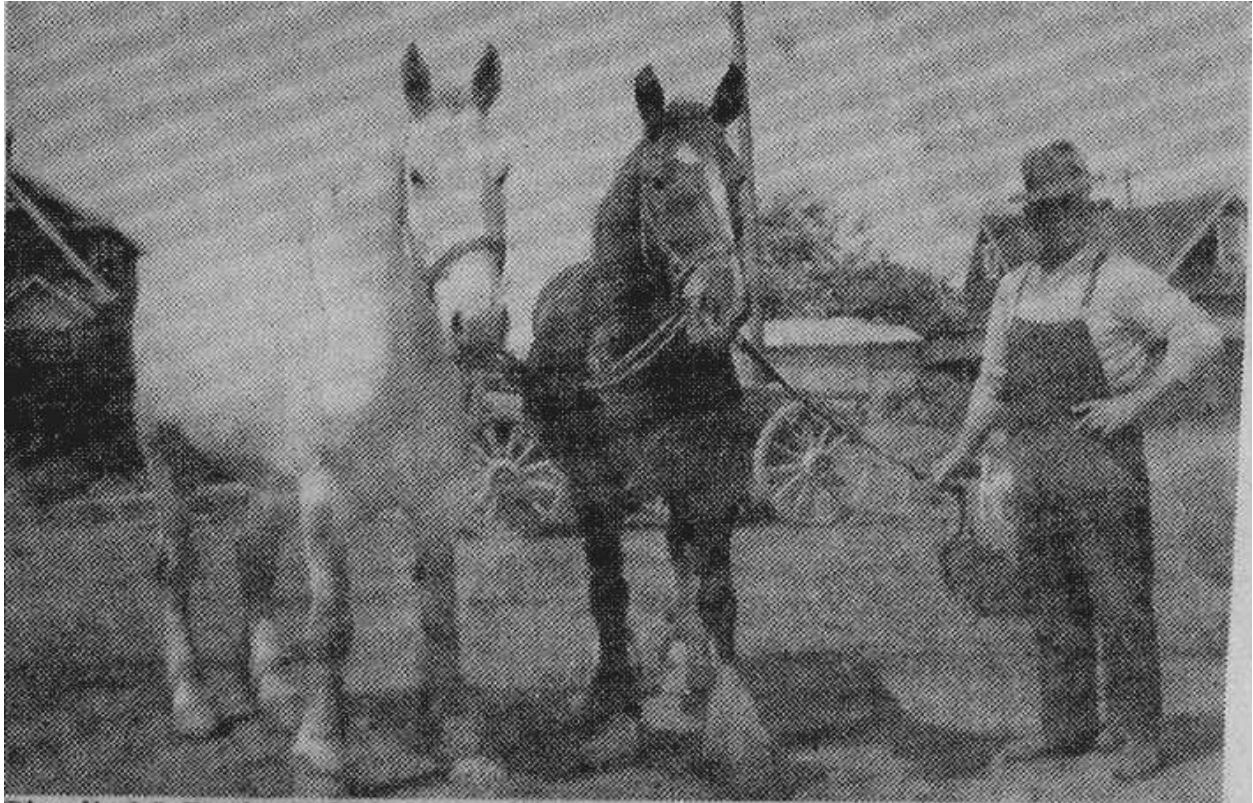
According to a December 6, 1935 Vancouver Sun article, the Parks Board built four large wire cages at 5207 Hoy street in 1932, but the Jones family paid for the upkeep. It was Charles Jones’ dream to open a bird sanctuary in Stanley Park to relocate his birds, as his aviary was getting overcrowded. But due to funding costs the plan was declined by City Hall. His dream of many people enjoying the tame birds didn’t come true, and he died on October 31, 1939, age 61. All the birds were sold.



THE BIRDS' PARADISE, VANCOUVER, B.C. (Chas. E. Jones, 5207 Hoy St.)

Copy of old postcard purchased on eBay; The Birds’ Paradise, Charles E Jones, owner. (1930s)

Photos from past decades in Collingwood.



Charlie McDade and his team of horses were a familiar sight on South Vancouver streets in the 1920s, as they regularly made their way from the McDade household on Toderick Street to the blacksmith's shop at Tyne and Kingsway. The McDade house and barn lot is now the site of MacCorkindale Elementary School, 6100 Battison.

1920s: the McDade farm located at 6100 Battison, now the site of MacCorkindale Elementary School.

This old clipping of Charlie McDade and his team of horses was provided by Lloyd Kennedy, Charlie's grandson. Yes, horses were still a common sight in the 1920s in Collingwood. The area was very rural, with large lots and farms. There were a few blacksmith shops in Collingwood to attend to the horses.



A lost neighbourhood from 1945.
Photo courtesy of Morene O'Donaughy

The only glimpses we have into Collingwood's past is through memories and old photos saved by the families who once lived here. A great resource for this is nostalgic Facebook groups.

Morene O'Donaughy posted a photo from 1945 on the "If You Grew Up in East Vancouver" Facebook page. Her brother Barrie is the youngster wearing the feathered hat, with Bobby Simpson on his left.

This was taken on Boundary road near Rae avenue. The old building behind them on the Burnaby side of Boundary road was the Bogunovich house which burned down in 1967 or 1968. Courtyard Terrace Seniors Community centre is now located there.

3595 Kingsway, Collingwood Autoworkers circa 1942

Photos courtesy of Bill Steffensen from the Nostalgic/Sentimental Vancouver Facebook group. His great grandmother and his mother (the little girl) are standing on the sidewalk at 3595 Kingsway, which is the shop just behind them on the left. In the distance is the intersection of Kingsway and Boundary. On the right you can see a tall brick building which is the BC Telephone Dexter Exchange. The white building next to it is the Central Park Funeral Home, later the Technocracy Building and now a Buddhist temple.

Bill's grandfather, Lesley Trotter, owned the Collingwood Autoworkers shop, and his grandmother ran a beauty salon in the same building. His great uncle Hilton Trotter is in the second photo. He was in the RCAF at the time. Bill's mother, Doreen Trotter, is the little girl in both photos.

Just past the autoworkers shop is the Central Park Sash and Door, and near the corner is Robertson's Bakeries at 3665 Kingsway. These photos are over 80 years old, and it's interesting to see how the area has changed in that time.



Doreen Trotter with her grandmother, circa 1942. Courtesy of Bill Steffenson.



Hilton Trotter, RCAF officer, with Doreen Trotter, circa 1942. Courtesy of Bill Stefenson.
Collingwood Autoworkers Shop in the background, 3595 Kingsway.

1942 BC Directories snip showing the Collingwood Auto Workers shop on Kingsway:

Aberdeen ends	
3540	*Connor W—DE-1947-L
3545	*Cleathero E A A— DE-1094-R
3578	Martens A W
3588	Jean's Beauty Shoppe— DE-0200
3588	Reed T gro—DE-0200
3595	Collingwood Auto Wrks
3595	Trotter L—DE-0797-R
Lincoln intersects	
3603	*Riggall D
3616	Vacant
3618	Spider Looms weaver—DE-0905
3642	*Central Pk Funeral Home— DE-1207
3643	*Central Pk Sash & Door— DE-0931
3643	*Poole H—DE-0931
Ormidale intersects	
3646	*B C Tel—DE-0306
3665	*Robertson's Hkries—DE-1212
Boundary intersects	



5305 Joyce road in 1952

Joyce Road Auto Wreckers and Garage, owned by Frank Montaine

Photo courtesy of Carole Kurylowich, Frank's daughter.

Joyce road has always had many businesses helpful to the community. Frank Montaine, a Collingwood resident, owned an auto wreckers shop and a gas station at the corner of Joyce and Euclid. Do any of you remember it?

I found the business listed in the 1952 BC directories. The photos included are from 1952, and you can see the old St. Mary's school across the street in one of them. Janice K Bondi, Frank's granddaughter, shared them on the Nostalgic/Sentimental Vancouver Facebook page.

From researching the directories, I discovered that Mr. Montaine operated his business from 1948 to 1952. The garage changed hands many times in the 1930s and 1940s, until it was eventually torn down, and offices took its place.

Stories shared by current Collingwood residents.

My memories of Supervalu at Kingsway and Joyce

By Leona Partington

Supervalu, a grocery store, was brand new and on the left side there were two little doors that were only four feet high for the shopping carts to be pushed into the store. I loved to go into the store through those doors, as they were just the size for me.

There was a cookie club for children. I could choose a cookie every week and get my cookie card punched. My sister and I would choose a different cookie each time, so we could eventually taste every cookie in the bakery. One week we choose 'meringue' even though our mother warned us. After one bite those cookies laid lonely in the fridge for months, never finished.

While my mother chose her veggies I would rush to the fish display, grab a piece of ice and hurry to the plant section where I would hold the ice over the cactus letting the water drops fall. I was dismayed that they were so dry.

My father asked one of the cleaners if we could have any candies he was sweeping up. He kindly said 'yes' so as soon as my sister and I arrived we ran to the candy boxes to check underneath. Not often, but some happy days we spotted one and took turns having an unexpected treat. My favorite was a multilayered white, light brown and dark brown coconut. If you're thinking of germs, they were individually wrapped.

One Christmas there were toys on shelves above the groceries. Our parents bought us each a soft plastic reindeer with a bell around their necks. These became our favorite toys. We ran around the hall past Joey the budgie, frozen in terror, jingling all the way to the music of Jingle Bells on our record player. For hours.

As a special treat our father would spend a dime on the ride-on horse. If you pulled the reins he would go slow and if you kicked his side, he'd speed up. My two sisters and I would be given a certain amount of time, then whisked off and replaced by the next sister. So much fun could be had in a grocery store in the 1960s.

I was there the day Supervalu closed in the 1980s. The clerks were crying as I paid for my cat Josephine's tins of food, and sadness filled my heart too.

The store is still there. It is now London Drugs.

My memories of the 2400 Court Motel by Mary B. Patterson

My family moved to Vancouver from Winnipeg in the summer of 1960. Five years old, I rode in the family car with my father and my older brother as we made the great journey West.

Our first home in Vancouver was at the 2400 Court Motel. When my father, brother and I arrived, we rented Unit #3, just left of the main entrance off Kingsway. We had a living room, kitchen, bathroom and two bedrooms. My mother and two younger sisters soon joined us by airplane.

I recall it wasn't a large unit, but there were a lot of windows and it felt spacious to me. It was summertime and the grounds were a great place to play – lots of lawn. There were a few other families with children staying there too. We'd play together.

The sign seemed enormous. It could be seen from blocks around, guiding us back home when we played further afield in the neighbourhood. We kids would slip outside in the evenings just to stare up at the gorgeous colourful sign. It made us realize we'd moved to a large, important city.

The television required coins to operate (a princely sum of 25 cents per half hour!) so our parents encouraged us to play outside in the motel grounds and the surrounding area. We would race each other to the motel office each day to pick up the mail and play with the air meter at the Texaco gas station, now the Church's Chicken.

We would also play in what was then an empty lot at the corner of Kingsway and Nanaimo. Across the street was the Eldorado Hotel, where my father would sometimes stop in for a cold beer and pick up another to bring home for my mother.

I like to think we were well-behaved children, but we weren't perfect. My brother, ever the mischief-maker, once released the brake on the family car and pushed it from its spot in the 2400 Court parking area almost onto 33rd Avenue. I ran to tell my father; we all got a good licking for that incident.

Vancouver was a very different city than we were used to. I remember accompanying my mother on grocery trips to the Dominion grocery store, which was near the current site of T&T Supermarket, and then having to trudge up the "big hill" back to the motel. We were from the prairies and not accustomed to climbing hills.

Nor were we used to the noise! Every evening rush hour, while the cars were bumper-to-bumper along Kingsway for an hour or two, we could hear the honking horns on Kingsway from inside Unit #3.

My siblings and I would wait excitedly for the delivery man for our order of Chinese food from the Lucky Dragon, which was where the Kwan Luck restaurant is now. My mother loved the sweet and sour pork and the chow mien. Mom said the thing she liked best about Vancouver was the Chinese food – so much better than on the prairies.

In early September of 1960, my parents bought a new house in west Richmond, not far from Steveston, but I never really said good-bye to the 2400 Court. Over the years, I've driven past the motel from time to time and have seen it featured in movies and television shows, such as the *X-Files*.

Five years ago, my husband, son, daughter, and I moved into the Cedar Cottage neighbourhood, only a couple of blocks from the 2400 Court. I see it now most days and always remember it as my first Vancouver home.

A little home on Euclid and Tyne
by Loretta Houben



In 1959, my parents, Jack and Susie Williams, purchased their second home at 3496 Euclid, for \$9,000. Across the street was an old orchard, filled with apple trees. Shortly afterwards, the trees were all removed, and a warehouse development was built which remained until the early 1990s. Gaston Park now fills this large area. If you look closely, there is a small orchard growing again at the corner of Euclid and Tyne. A stone plaque is set in the ground which states “Orchard commemorates the 25th anniversary of Collingwood Neighbourhood House and honours our supporters. September 2011”.

Early on the morning of April 30, 1961, my mom was deeply frightened by an explosion close by, and a huge fire which erupted. It happened at 3439 Euclid in the BC Clay Products plant. It took me years to track down details of the event, mentioned in the Province and Sun newspapers. My mom said she could feel the heat of the fire when she stood outside the house, watching the blaze. She was terrified it would spread, but the fire department got it under control. The fire was caused by a short circuit. No one was hurt but the fire took five hours to extinguish and destroyed \$100,000 worth of clay products. The plant produced red clay flowerpots and had been there since 1933. A house was on the NE corner of Joyce and Euclid, with the BC Clay Products building in behind. The house was saved. Shortly after, a warehouse development replaced it. Today the Collingwood Neighbourhood House is there, and the Collingwood Neighbourhood elementary school.

Our memories of the Metro Coffee Bar and Billiards – Vancouver gem for over 50
years

Special tribute to our dad
by the Ramos sisters

Our dad Peter Ramos owns this nostalgic gem in the Renfrew-Collingwood community, and it still operates as a pool hall. We are talking 50 years later as he bought the business in the early 1970s.

Are there any other single mom-and-pop businesses along Kingsway in the Renfrew-Collingwood neighbourhood that has been in business for 50 years? Metro Coffee Bar and Billiards deserves to be recognized for its outstanding longevity, the open doors thanks in part to our dad. He still owns the building and Joe Lazaro is the current owner of Metro Coffee Bar and Billiards.

Although its environment boasts a Portuguese flair, all people are welcome to enjoy the great atmosphere for watching soccer matches while still having the option to take in a game of pool. Offering European-style food and coffees, including some alcoholic beverages, Metro Coffee Bar and Billiards is open daily from 8 am to 11 pm. We suggest stopping by to savour an espresso or to try an authentic Portuguese dish for a personal experience.

Today you can find Peter on a golf course where he spends most of his days, rain, or shine. After 30-plus years with BC Ferries, he's living a carefree retirement life on Vancouver Island. Happily married in 1978 to the love of his life, Sabrina, together they raised three daughters who live in the Lower Mainland.

We hope this little piece puts a face behind the history of a quaint neighbourhood spot, as surely it will always remind us of our dad. We are full of pride to keep this legacy going for another 50 years.

The Ramos sisters are Julie, Lorie, and Robyn. You can find Metro Coffee Bar and Billiards on Facebook and tagged in photos on Instagram.

This article first appeared in the September 2022 issue of the *Renfrew-Collingwood Community News*.

The lost territory of Collingwood
by Peter Kwong

Today I am a resident of Killarney. However when I moved into my current home on Arlington street some thirty-seven years ago, the location of the property clearly fell within Collingwood boundary. Then some years later a triangular parcel of land north of 45th avenue, south of Kingsway and east of Earls, including where my simple abode lay, was taken away and no longer named Collingwood but reclassified as Killarney.

With such credentials, I figure I can retell stories I learned from my neighbours and through my personal experience. I learned that long before we had any district classification in Vancouver, South Vancouver at the turn of the last century was an undefined rural area with pristine forest sparsely dotted with a few farm settlements.

When WWII ended and a lot of veterans returned home, the city negotiated with the farm owners in East Vancouver and reassembled agricultural land as post war residential subdivisions and sold a serviced building lot at \$300 apiece. It was not uncommon for father and son to build their own home without a professional contractor. Hence many post war single detached homes in East Vancouver were built in various unique styles with character.

Developers churned out a subdivision with rows and rows of neatly uniform style homes. By the time my wife and I went home hunting some thirty years after the original subdivision was built, it was transformed into a well-established neighbourhood. We fell in love with the abundance of fruit trees and the tidy rows of uniform little houses with white picket fences. With the redevelopment that has been going on after we settled in, most of the big trees and small houses are gone now only to be replaced by big houses and small second growth trees.

Today in fact it happens our home is the last of the post war bungalows to remain on the block. There used to be a towering hazelnut tree on the left and another humongous walnut tree on the right side of my property. Both are gone now when two different builders came in telling me the same story- that the top part of the tree might have breached their property line. If we don't chop off the trees the roots will eventually break the drain tiles and ruin our house and as a good neighbour, they will remove our tree for free. Too late for me to question the validity of their statement. Over the past thirty years I also witnessed a major shift in the

demographics in my neighbourhood. Back in the eighties, my wife and I were the only non-white young Asian couple living on the block.

Also worthwhile to mention was in the past before Canada introduced gun control, I was flabbergasted to come across my veteran neighbors selling their government issued military grade weapons and ammo in a garage sale.

Summer Fun in 1969
by Loretta Houben



From left to right; Loretta, Leona, Marlene (sisters) with a neighbour friend in the background.
Photo courtesy of Susan Williams.

This photo shows my parent's back yard at 3382 Monmouth Ave in Vancouver BC. My dad built the garage. No garage was provided when my parents purchased the house in 1963 for \$14,500. He got the wood for free from the city dump on Kerr street. (now Everett Crowley Park) He built the wooden fence around the property, too, and planted a lawn from grass seed, leveling the bumpy dirt first. No

lush turf lawn was provided with the brand-new house.

Notice my Mom's large vegetable garden near the lane. Notice our swing set which we often played on. Notice we have the sprinkler going full blast in the middle of the day. (now banned in Vancouver) Notice the TV trays behind the swing set; we "baked" our doll's mud pies on those. We also "camped" with our dolls in that area. They ate grass salads too. Notice the swing on the side of the garage. My dad made that, and I'd swing on it then leap off, seeing how far I could land. The next year my Dad made us a sand box in front of the garage, and we played in it for hours. The lane wasn't paved until the 1980s, so each year a city truck came and put a coating of oil on the gravel, so it wasn't so dusty. Oh, the memories.

About the author.



Loretta Houben is a long time resident of the Collingwood area, having lived here nearly 60 years. She attended Sir Wilfred Grenfell School and graduated from Windermere Secondary. Somewhere along the way she developed an intense curiosity for old homes and buildings, and a fascination for events of the past decades.

As a child, Loretta remembers walking along the old interurban tracks with her dad. The tracks were later used for trains heading to the warehouse complex at Joyce and Vanness in the 1960s. She wondered what life was like in the “olden days”, and when she purchased a house in the area, and learned that the first library was on the same street, she began researching, and recently discovered articles online which brought the past to life.

One thing led to another, and the Collingwood Chronicles was written.

Loretta hopes it will inspire you to do your own research, and to make sure you record your daily life with picture taking and journals, so the present will be remembered for future generations.