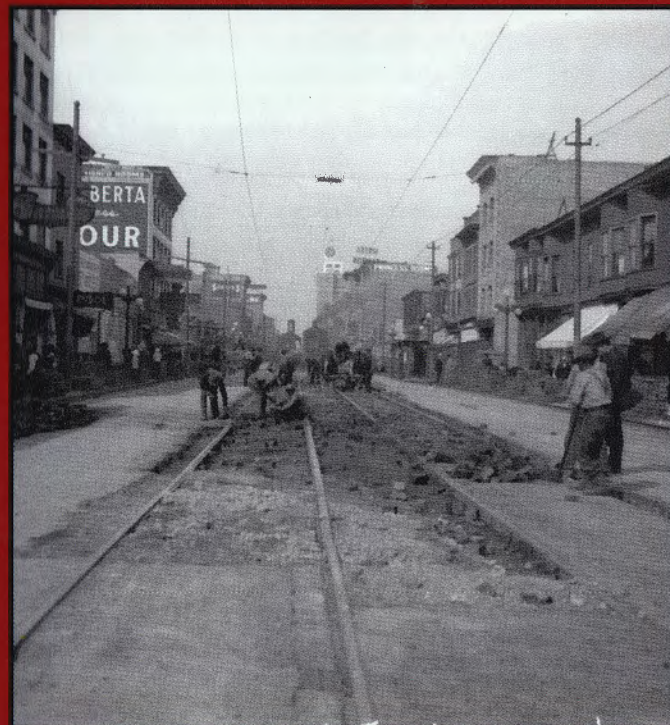


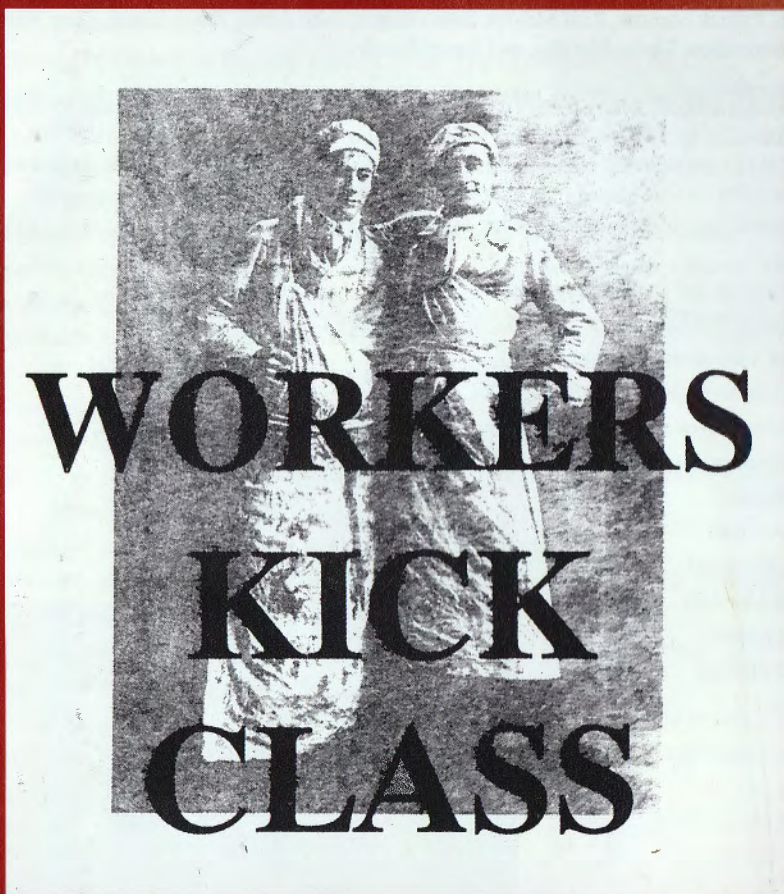


Details of a mural in the BCGEU auditorium. Painted by local artists Nora Patrich and Juan Manuel Sanchez.

LABOUR, WORK, AND WORKING PEOPLE



A WORKING CLASS AND LABOUR
HISTORY WALKING TOUR,
VANCOUVER, BC



Poster created by Vancouver artists Teresa Marshall and Joe Sarahan to promote the 1994 MayWorks Festival film and video program.



PRINTED BY LOCAL 3338

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY INITIATIVE FOR LABOUR EDUCATION
PACIFIC NORTHWEST LABOUR HISTORY ASSOCIATION
VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL
BC HERITAGE TRUST

THE WALKING TOUR

The Working Class and Labour History Walking Tour commemorates the contribution of working people to the history and development of the city of Vancouver and the province of British Columbia. It reveals little known information about people, places, and events that influenced today's society. Use this brochure to conduct your own self-guided walking tour.

The tour consists of two sub-tours:

The Downtown Tour begins near the Burrard Street Skytrain station. It takes visitors through a segment of downtown Vancouver and takes 1 1/2 - 2 hours to walk.

The Eastside Tour begins near the Stadium Skytrain station and directs visitors through part of East Vancouver. It also takes 1 1/2 - 2 hours to walk.

Please contact **TRANSLINK** at 521-0400 for information on public transportation.

Labour history enthusiasts from the Vancouver and District Labour Council and the Pacific Northwest Labour History Association also offer a guided walking tour upon request. If your group would like a guided tour, please contact:

Vancouver and District Labour Council

#140 - 111 Victoria Drive
Vancouver, BC
V5L 4C4
(604) 254-0703
vdlc@axion.net

Pacific Northwest Labour History Association

#2402 - 6888 Station Hill Drive
Burnaby, BC
V3N 4X5
(604) 540-0245
pnlha@home.com

The BC Heritage Trust has provided financial assistance to this project to support conservation of our heritage resources, gain further knowledge, and increase public understanding of the complete history of British Columbia.

Other financial donors include:

*BC and Yukon Territory Building and Construction Trades Council
Campbell River, Courtenay, and District Labour Council
Canadian Labour Congress
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 258
International Longshore & Warehouse Union, Canada*

*Cover photo credit - CVA: SGN 1069.07

Men laying streetcar tracks at Granville and Davie Streets for reconstruction of Granville Street line c. 1912.

INTRODUCTION

The producers of this walking tour invite local residents and visitors to learn, explore, and celebrate the contribution and history of the working people of Vancouver. British Columbia, one of the most highly unionized jurisdictions in North America, owes its development to the efforts of working people and their advocates. Workers and labour activists concerned with a wide range of social, economic, and political issues have attempted to address the rights, needs, and desires of the working class.

As the largest urban centre of BC, downtown and eastside Vancouver has a long and rich labour history, which led to improved standards of living and work in Vancouver and beyond. Today, union contracts govern the workplaces of 35% of BC workers. The families of these unionized workers also benefit from union contracts, as do non-union workers whose employers offer union wages and benefits to discourage unionization.

Canadian workers have much to celebrate when they consider the benefits gained by the early actions of labour and the working class: universal health care, education, and suffrage as well as the rights to organize and bargain collectively. Unemployment and disability insurance, old age pensions, job security, sick leave, safe workplaces, paid vacations, the 8-hour day and 40-hour week, and legislation prohibiting child labour are other examples of our inheritance from the working class struggle.

Urbanism and industrialization staked their official claim on the coastline of the Canadian Pacific Northwest in 1886 with the incorporation of the City of Vancouver. Modernity and capitalism, introduced to the Lower Mainland in the late 19th century, shaped the social relations and way of life of Vancouver's aboriginal peoples, colonial settlers, and post-colonial immigrants. The new wage-based economy forever altered the physical and human landscape of the city. Around BC, working people resisted oppressions, hardships, and divisions imposed by new work processes, bosses, management, and legislation. Although craft, industry, gender, race, age, and culture often divided working people, many moments of solidarity occurred within the labour movement and wider community.

The working people of BC did not actively unionize until shortly after Confederation (1867), when waged labour was commonplace in mills, mines, canneries, factories, and service industries. BC joined Confederation in 1871. When federal legislation decriminalized union activity in 1872, workers began to establish formal, permanent organizations to further their collective demands for acceptable wages and workloads. The new unions hoped that collective resistance would ensure that industries and employers could not misuse, abuse, overwork, underpay, or endanger their employees.

These tour sites portray significant events and commemorate the working people who lived, worked, played, and protested in and around the oldest urban neighbourhoods in Vancouver. Some sites commemorate strikes won and lost by labour. The sites of successful and failed protests and demonstrations also figure prominently in the brochure. Other sites bear testimony to the violence, exploitation, and poverty inflicted on working people by low wages, inhumane working conditions, indifferent and pro-business government legislation, biased police forces, scab workers, vigilante mobs, racism, and sexism. The remaining sites pertain to the domestic, political, and recreational spaces of Vancouver's working people.

Labour history is more than a record of strikes and job action. It is also a celebration of life, work, family, and community. Labour and working people proudly display and celebrate their working class culture, heritage, and history. Social gatherings, literature, and art express feelings about work and community. Parades, festivals, games, dances, sports, poetry, songs, paintings, posters, murals, newspapers, film, and storytelling also allow historians and artists to celebrate working class struggles and gains.

At the turn of the 21st century, this tour offers insight into the continued struggle by labour to democratize the workplace and the world. Please walk the tour and meet the working people who built the city of Vancouver.

DOWNTOWN TOUR

1. Marine Building

355 Burrard Street

Constructed by skilled union workers in 1929-30, the Marine Building, then the tallest building in Vancouver, cost \$2.5 million to build. The City of Vancouver refused to buy the building for \$1 million after the 1929 stock market crash bankrupted the developers, who hoped the city would use it as city hall. In 1933, the Guinness family (of whisky and beer fame) purchased the building for \$800,000. Restored in 1991, admirers claim that the Marine building is one of Canada's finest architectural masterpieces. Contemporary critics described the Marine Building as futuristic because it was one of the first Canadian buildings to use Art Deco reliefs rather than Classical or Gothic decoration. Step inside to view the lobby and elevators.

Union workers in the building and construction trades were also involved in the construction of the Bentall Centre three blocks to the south (1965 through the 1970s). No fall protection was provided for the workers and four men fell to their deaths during construction. The deaths forced the WCB to develop new regulations relating to construction practices. See plaque in garden near Burrard Skytrain Station.

2. Old Post Office / now Sinclair Centre

701 West Hastings Street

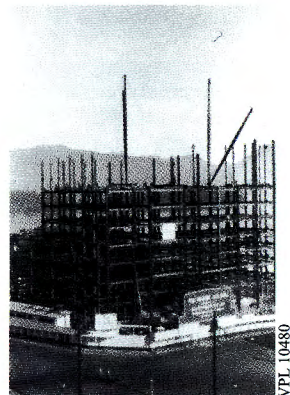
Opened in 1910, this was the main post office until 1958. Converted into the posh Sinclair Centre, the building now caters to high-end consumers.

When the relief camps closed in 1937, thousands of hungry, homeless, and unemployed single men landed in Vancouver.

To publicize and emphasize the need for relief, work, and decent wages, the Communist Party organized the "sit down" occupation of three city buildings on May 20, 1938. The men targeted the post office owned by the provincial and federal governments, the Vancouver Art Gallery of the municipal government, and the Hotel Georgia of private industry. After 10 days they accepted \$600 to vacate the hotel premises. Over 1200 men occupied the post office for one month. Protestors also occupied the Art Gallery for one month.

Although the men had always insisted they would submit peacefully to arrest, the police said they were not ordered to arrest anyone. They arrived with an eviction notice, tear gas, billy clubs, and wire whips on June 18. The eviction, called "Bloody Sunday," saw 100 injured, 38 hospitalized, and 23 arrested. Trapped in a narrow corridor, protesters could not escape the clubs and whips of the police as they attempted to leave the building.

A spontaneous demonstration against the police violence developed outside the post office. Another 2000 protested outside the city jail while 10,000 gathered at the Powell Street grounds. These groups denounced "police terrorism" and demanded the resignation of Premier Patullo. A defense campaign freed most of the protest organizers but others went to prison. The public support forced the governments of BC and Ottawa to participate in an emergency relief scheme, the first welfare program implemented by these governments.



Marine building under construction in 1929.

VPL 10480



Occupation of old post office in 1938.

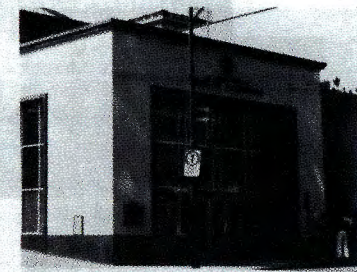
VPL 13338

3. Bank of Commerce / Milborne Real Estate

300 West Hastings Street

The issue of involuntary and unpaid overtime work provoked six women from this branch to initiate a major drive to organize BC bank workers in 1976. They founded a local of the United Bank Workers and successfully certified 24 BC banks under the Service, Office, and Retail Workers' Union of Canada (SORWUC), which was founded in 1972 by women who wanted a union based on feminist and democratic principles. At that time, 80% of working women were not unionized, largely because sexist attitudes claimed that women's incomes were just "pin money" and women's real "careers" were as wives, mothers, and homemakers.

Unable to gain the financial and moral support of the broader labour movement, the organizing effort stalled. Much of the mainstream labour movement felt that women workers were unreliable and poor labour leaders so it did not support SORWUC. With the unionized bank workers on the verge of striking during contract negotiations in 1978, the union withdrew and declared bankruptcy. The women bank employees failed to unionize Canada's chartered banks but their effort inspired employees at a number of smaller banks and credit unions across Canada to unionize.



CIBC at time of union certification in 1976.

SORWUC photo - courtesy Jean Randis

4. The Cenotaph

Hastings Street between Cambie and Hamilton Streets

Maple trees planted on this site in 1892 have survived urbanization. The site originally housed Vancouver's first courthouse, demolished in 1912, and the land became a site for revival meetings and a WWI recruitment centre. To honour the soldiers that fought and died in WWI, the municipal and provincial governments and the Canadian Club cooperated to build the cenotaph in 1924.

Young men had eagerly enlisted for the war, enticed by the promise of three square meals a day. However, most veterans faced unemployment when they returned home and employers discriminated against vets disabled by war-time injuries.

A dramatic demonstration against poverty and unemployment occurred here on April 23, 1935. Mayor Gerry McGeer read the Riot Act as a mass rally of unemployed men and their supporters demanded city relief vouchers. The mayor called the rally a prelude to "a revolution to bring about a soviet government in Canada." Many witnesses noted the poignant fact that many of the demonstrators had fought for Canada in WWI.



Mayor McGeer reading Riot Act to unemployed gathered at Cenotaph in 1935.

CVA: ADD MSS 54 VOL9

5. The Vancouver Province / Victory Square Law 198 West Hastings Street

During 1945 contract negotiations, the Southam-owned newspaper chain attempted to force the International Typographical Union to drop their "General Laws," which set national standards for printers across Canada. Printers in Winnipeg, Hamilton, Ottawa, and Edmonton coordinated a walkout and Vancouver printers at the *Province* newspaper joined the strike against Southam in June of 1945.

The strike was lost in eastern cities when Southam's rivals, in a campaign to break the strike, agreed to publish joint editions and refused to accept Southam's exclusive clients. In Vancouver, the *Sun* and *News Herald* refused to cooperate with Southam. Without skilled printers, the *Province* could not publish for six weeks until scabs from across Canada got out the paper from behind picket lines. Southam applied for and received one of the most sweeping injunctions ever issued in BC and then launched a \$250,000 lawsuit against the union and its leaders.

The union retaliated by launching a successful subscriber boycott, which sent *Province* sales into a tailspin. In some towns, circulation dropped from 600 to 0. With two competing publications, the labour movement, and the public united against it, the *Province* eventually conceded to the ITU demands on most major issues, including the General Laws, in 1948. The 40-month strike cost the *Province* its position as the best selling newspaper in Vancouver as many former subscribers refused to return to a newspaper that proved to be so anti-union. The newspaper lost money in seven of the next ten years and never recovered its position as the number one major daily. Southam-owned Pacific Press bought the *Province* and the *Sun* and moved both

papers into a new building at Granville and 7th Ave. in 1957.



Strikers burning newspapers and car in front of the *Province* building in 1946.

In 1986, the Centennial Labour Committee placed a plaque dedicated to Mayor McGeer's 1935 reading of the Riot Act on this building.

Jack Lindsay photo - CVA 1184-2559

6. Trocadero Grill / Rodeo Convenience Store 156 West Hastings Street

This eatery was struck during the "restaurant organizing" era of the 1930s. On September 4, 1936, employees walked off the job demanding that their wages be increased. Management hired strikebreakers but patrons refused to cross the picket lines. After one week, management met the workers' demands but only rehired four of the strikers. These four eventually organized the women who had worked as strikebreakers into the union.



Trocadero Grill in 1914.

BC Electric Railway photo - CVA: LGN1271

7. Lumber Workers Industrial Union / Ralph Block Building 130 West Hastings Street

Aboriginal workers from North Vancouver formed Local 526 of the IWW in 1906. Soon nicknamed the Bows and Arrows, it was the first union on the Burrard docks. The LWIU also emerged from early Wobbly organizing (see site #10). It won the eight-hour workday for its members, removed tiered-bunks in logging camps, and forced companies to supply bedding.



Unemployed workers gathered at Stanley Park c. 1930.

VPL 8826

The union joined the One Big Union in 1919 and withdrew in 1921, taking approximately 25% of the OBU membership with it and sealing the fate of the OBU. The LWIU folded in 1926, but some of its members joined the Workers' Unity League of the Red International of Labor Unions in 1930. Members of the LWIU also helped to found the BC arm of the International Woodworkers of America (IWA) in 1936. By 1950, the IWA was the largest union in the province.

8. Socialist Party of Canada / Access Collateral Pawn Brokers 159 West Hastings Street

The Socialist Party of BC emerged in Vancouver in 1901. Socialists in Manitoba and Ontario formed their own provincial organizations in 1904. Their common cause led these groups to form the Socialist Party of Canada, with its national headquarters in Vancouver. Members of the SPC believed that political action was the means to transform the economic conditions of the masses. Socialists who favoured unions over political organizations as the vehicle for social change did not join the SPC. Many soon left the SPC to join the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW or Wobblies) (see site #10), which attracted migrant workers and others who despised parliamentary politics.



Vancouver socialists gathered at local beach in 1911.

SPC Photo - courtesy John Ahrens

The SPC printed its newspaper *The Western Clarion* in the basement of this building during the 1920s.

9. The Stag and Pheasant / Gastown Parkades

160 Water Street

This hotel opened in 1886. In May 1887, the Typographical Union met here for the inaugural meeting of Local 226. It was the first international craft union organized in the city. As the city had few meeting halls, hotel parlours served as warm and convenient meeting places for workers. In 1896 and 1906-7, the hotel acted as a Salvation Army hostel for workers.

In 1889, Vancouver city council heard complaints of "crimping" laid against local saloon owners. For \$10 a head, saloon proprietors would deliver drunken customers to shipmasters. These men would wake up at sea and be pressed into service as seamen. Logging and mining companies also used saloons like this one as recruiting centres.



Stag and Pheasant Hotel c. 1887.

VPL 818

10. Wobbly Hall / Inform Interiors

112 Abbott Street

In a time of trade-based unions, the IWW (see sites #7 and #8) organized labourers "regardless of colour, creed, sex or kind." The Wobblies dreamed a world free of unemployment, bosses, poverty, and war. They held branch meetings at various locations from 1906 until the 1920s. Other meeting places included 61 West Cordova and 232 East Pender.

The Wobblies organized longshore workers, lumber handlers, teamsters, general labourers, miners, and railway workers. They had organized nine locals in BC by 1913 and led six strikes involving some 10,000 workers. Listings for the IWW disappeared from the Vancouver directories in 1912 after police and government harassment began in earnest in response to the IWW role in the 1912 campaign for free speech and their attempts to organize transient, forestry, and railway workers.

Vancouver Wobblies recently received a charter for a General Membership Branch. In January 2000, 10 members in good standing petitioned IWW headquarters, as required, and were granted their charter.



Arrests during 1912 free speech demonstration at Oppenheimer Park.

BCARS: D-06368

11. Grand Hotel / BC Gift

24 Water Street

Built after the Great Fire of 1886 and originally called the Granville Hotel, the Grand Hotel was a haven for loggers between months of isolation, 60-hour work weeks, living in bedbug-infested camps, and risking death and permanent injury in the coastal forest. Loggers returned to various "skid row" hotels to enjoy their leisure time and spend their hard-earned money.

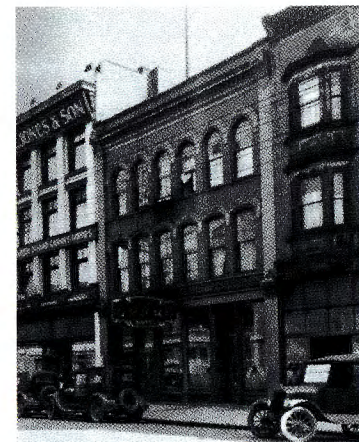
Upon arriving at this hotel, a logger would give his money to Tommy Roberts, the owner from around 1890 until his murder in 1918. Roberts deducted charges for the logger's bed, drinks, and meals. He also bought the logger's return passage to camp before the roll of bills completely disappeared. Although Roberts did not steal or cheat, he ensured that all of their money was spent in his establishment. An excerpt from a folk song titled the "The Grand Hotel" reveals his role in the loggers' experiences:

"There's a place in Vancouver you all know so well, / It's a place where they keep rot-gut whiskey to sell.

They also keep boarders, they keep them like hell, / And the name of that place is the Grand Hotel.

In the Grand Hotel when the loggers come in, / It's amusing to see the proprietor grin.

He knows they've got money, he'll soon have it all; / "Come on, boys, have a drink!" you will hear Tommy call."



Grand Hotel in 1928.

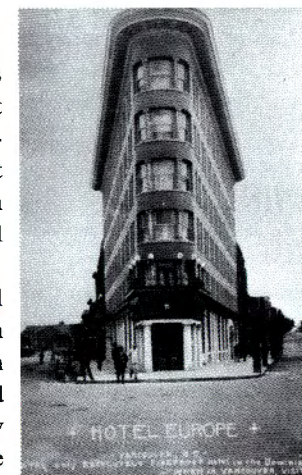
VPL 8966

12. Hotel Europe

43 Powell Street

Constructed in 1908-09, the union-built Hotel Europe was the first reinforced concrete structure in the city and the first fireproof hotel in the Canadian west. Large hotels were union-built for the next sixty years. The Sandman Inn at 185 West Georgia, built in 1970, was the first multi-story hotel in Vancouver constructed by non-union labour and is still boycotted by unionists.

In 1982, the staff of the decrepit and ill-maintained Hotel Europe failed to discover the body of a tenant that lay in an upstairs room for five days. Management responded to criticism by stating, "Who cares? A dead bum's a dead bum." Drugs and violence also plagued the downstairs tavern. The public outcry against the hotel's indifference to human life forced the government to revoke the hotel's rooming, restaurant, and liquor licences. Saved from demolition in 1983, restoration saw its rooms converted into social housing units.



Hotel Europe in 1912.

VPL 13104

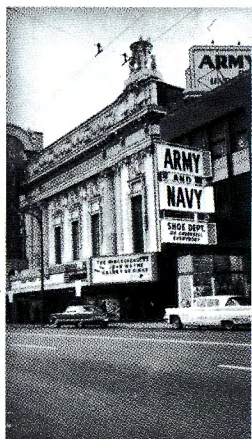
13. Army and Navy Department Store

27 West Hastings Street

Female employees launched an equal pay fight at this store in 1980. Despite the 1958 passage of provincial legislation ordering equal pay for equal work, men working here received higher wages for performing the same jobs as women. Although the employees were not unionized, they won their campaign with the help of the labour movement and women's groups.

Agitation by women's groups eventually forced most provinces and the federal government to pass "pay-equity" legislation for work of equal value. Most legislation only applies to public sector workers and BC has yet to adopt "pay-equity" legislation. The historical labour-market discrimination that pushed women into low-wage ghettos throughout the twentieth century has not ended. The average female employee in Canada earned only 70% of the average male wage in the 1990s.

The first nationwide strike and a genuinely international strike occurred in 1883 when Canadian and American telegraphers struck over the issue of equal pay for men and women.



Army and Navy Department store in 1964.

CVA: CVA 447-350

14. The Creche / Parking Lot

Southeast Corner of Pender and Cambie Streets

A creche (crib) childcare centre operated at this location in the 1930s and 1940s. It served both as an employment bureau for working women and as a day care centre which allowed mothers to seek, obtain, and hold jobs.

The first creche opened in Vancouver in 1912, offering care for 35 children. Operated by the Associated Charities and the City, mothers paid ten cents a day for the service. Philanthropic women's organizations usually established and operated creche centres. Vancouver was the first city in Canada to provide government funding for childcare.



Children and staff of the city Creche in the old hospital building c. 1935.

CVA: BU N633 P48

The children ate all of their meals here as mothers typically worked 12 hours each day, usually as poorly paid and overworked (and sometimes misused) domestic servants. Creche centres accepted children between two months and six years of age and offered minimal emotional and physical care and served no educational purpose. The site is now a parking lot.

Women who worked in retail, laundry, clothing, and fishing industries lost their jobs during the Depression of the 1930s. And more women had to find work as their brothers, fathers, sons, and husbands lost theirs. As had been the pattern in the past, women had to turn to domestic work. While unemployed single men were sent to relief camps, women were registered by the YWCA and City Relief Office. Relief was \$2.80 per week. For that they were sent out to work as a maid, cook, or governess in someone else's home. By 1937, the Domestic Service Union had signed up 400 of Vancouver's 1500 domestic workers. They organized for a minimum wage, health and safety standards, a union hiring hall, and direct relief for young women instead of forced domestic work.

15. Labor's Headquarters / Parkade

529 Beatty Street

In 1929, the Vancouver Trades and Labor Council formed the Labor's Headquarters Company and purchased the Chinese Methodist Mission to replace the Labor Temple on Dunsmuir Street that was lost in 1920 to financial difficulties that had begun in the pre-war depression (see site #21). The new temple housed the VTLC throughout the Great Depression and WWII. The VTLC sold the temple in 1949 and built a new temple at 307 West Broadway. The VTLC soon changed its name to the Vancouver and District Labour Council and in 1971 purchased and remodeled McKee's Bakery at 2806 Kingsway for a new hall. The VDLC now has its home at 111 Victoria Drive.

Pender Auditorium at 339 West Pender Street

(near site #20) also served the labour community. This union hall, owned by the Marine Workers and Boilermakers Industrial Union since the early 1940s, was one of the busiest social centres in the city. Saturday night dances on the spring floor, organizing of BC Lions football, religious meetings, and conventions - all were held here for reasonable rents. After great debate, the union sold the hall in 1969.

A large mural of industrial Vancouver, painted in this hall by union activist Fraser Wilson, was moved to the Maritime Labour Centre at 1880 Triumph in 1986 with help from a City of Vancouver grant.



Labor's Headquarters Company building in 1929.

VPL 11721

16. Cambie Street Grounds / Parking Lot

Southeast Corner of Cambie and Dunsmuir Streets

Also known as Larwell Park, this became the unofficial "people's park" in 1886 when the city rented the land from the Canadian Pacific Railway. As an accessible, free, and functional space, the park played host to celebrations, ceremonies, circuses, carnivals, cricket matches, lacrosse games, baseball contests, parades, and rallies. The Vancouver Trades and Labor Council had repeatedly called for the creation of public parks so that working people would have access to pleasant and healthful surroundings in their limited leisure hours. Recognizing the social and cultural significance of the site, the Parks Board purchased the Cambie Street grounds in 1902 and the city centre finally housed an official park.

The 1904 "Labor Carnival" held here helped to create a sense of community in the neighbourhood. Demonstrations and mass May Day marches rallied here during the 1930s and the community used the site for regular Wednesday soccer matches. A parking lot now occupies the former green space that once filled the recreational needs of the working class.



Demonstration at Cambie Street Grounds c. 1935.

VPL 8111

17. Solidarity March / Queen Elizabeth Theatre Plaza *Hamilton at Georgia Street*

This location was the assembly point for most marches in the 1970s. On October 14, 1976, a general strike against federal wage controls rallied at this location. One million other workers across Canada also participated in the Day of Protest organized by the Canadian Labour Congress.

One of several Solidarity Coalition marches rallied at BC Place Stadium and marched here in 1983. Unions and community groups had organized under the Solidarity banner in response to the BC Socred government's assault on basic rights and legal protections. Labour carried the Operation Solidarity banner and invited social activists to join them under the Solidarity Coalition banner.

Over 50,000 unionists and other citizens rallied to protest after the provincial government introduced 27 bills to the legislature. The bills attacked many human rights, labour, education, and social programs.

Operation Solidarity stopped the passage of the "most obnoxious" pieces of labour legislation when the Kelowna Accord was signed, averting a provincial general strike. The conclusion to the Solidarity movement damaged links between labour and community groups, which had always been precarious. This setback has since been overcome through new organizing. Coalition work on the peace movement, protecting the environment, and campaigns to raise labour standards in sweatshops around the world are some examples. There is also broad based international organizing for "fair trade" instead of free trade liberalization, as evidenced by the protests against the 1999 World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in Seattle and the April 2001 Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) negotiations in Quebec City.

18. Post Office *349 West Georgia Street*

In 1965 members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) and the Letter Carriers engaged in an illegal strike to gain better wages and working conditions. This national strike resulted in federal public service workers gaining the legal right to strike. The post office has served as a battleground for workers resisting the unequal treatment of part-time workers, technological change, surveillance, lay-offs, and poor wages.

Members of CUPW and the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) work here today (CUPW and the Letter Carriers were rolled into CUPW in 1980). In 1981, CUPW won full maternity benefits for its members, setting a national standard for working women. PSAC's equity victory in 2000 was the culmination of a decades-long struggle for equality.



Unemployed protest march following the 1958 opening of the new post office.

19. Del Mar Hotel / Del Mar Inn *553 Hamilton Street*

This building survived the demolitions that occurred as Vancouver prepared for Expo '86 and the building of the new BC Hydro headquarters. Unlike his neighbours, owner George Riste would neither sell his property to make room for the expansion of Hydro nor participate in the mass evictions of the poor and elderly to take advantage of tourists visiting the World's Fair.

The hotel provides shelter for the economically disadvantaged and continuously served local artists from 1971 to 2001 as the home of the Contemporary Art Gallery (now at 555 Nelson Street).

An art installation over the door sums up the owner's position: "UNLIMITED GROWTH INCREASES THE DIVIDE." A hand-lettered sign on the window repeats his refusal to sell: "This property, lands & building not for sale. This building will not be demolished."



1980s construction of BC Hydro office building overshadows the Del Mar Hotel.

Contemporary Art Gallery photo - courtesy Keith Wallace

20. Universal Knitting / Pappas Furs *303 West Hastings Street*

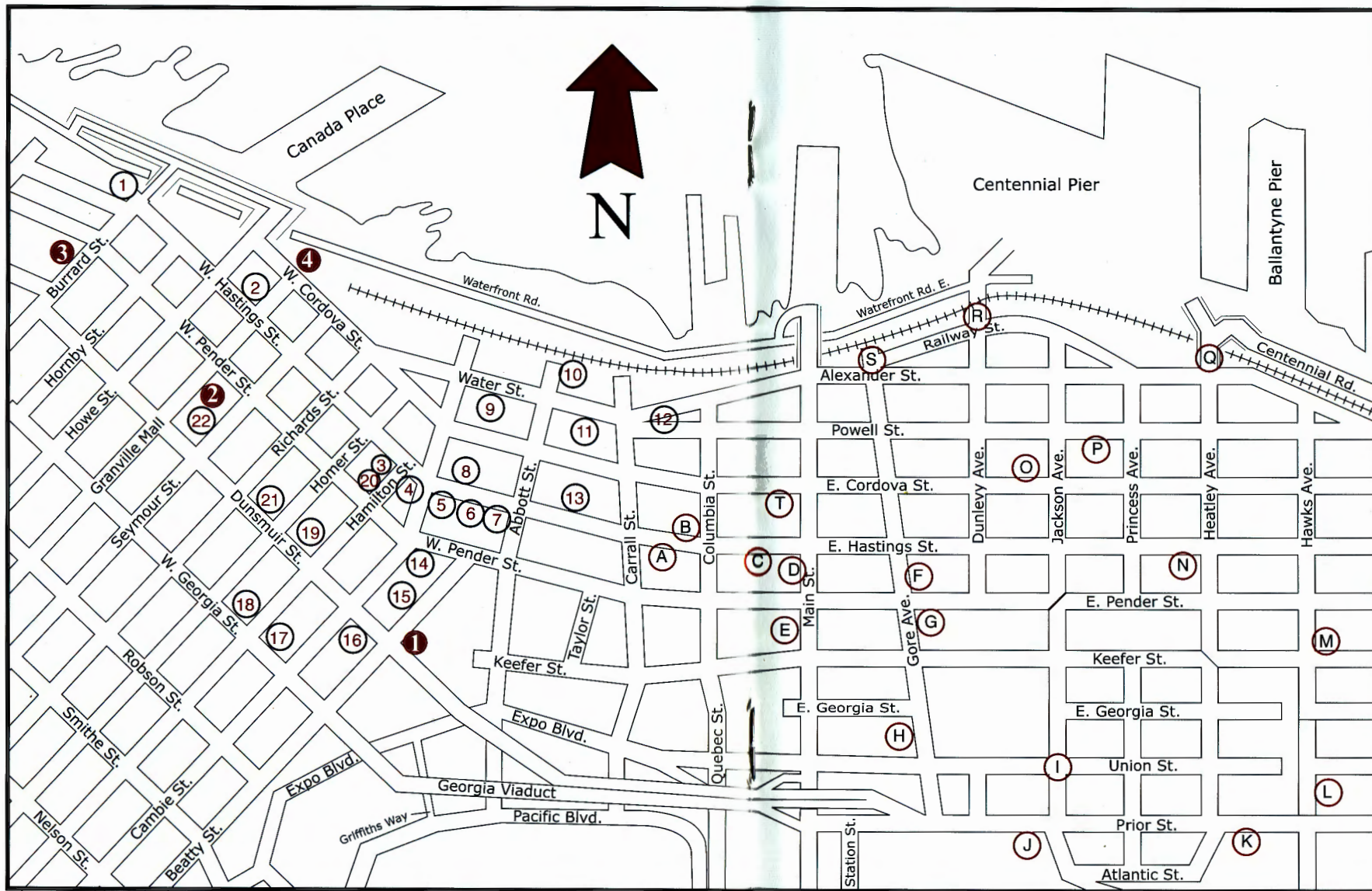
Workers in Vancouver's garment industry were being organized by the Journeymen Tailors' Union by 1893. Universal Knitting opened in 1914 and became a union shop in 1935. Many well-known and long-established manufacturers in the Vancouver garment industry unionized or paid their employees the equivalent of union wages and benefits. However, hidden behind grimy curtains and hand-written signs on darkened doors were unheated and poorly lit "sweatshops." These shops usually underpaid and often cheated their workers out of wages. Because owners often paid their workers "under the table," many workers were not eligible for Employment Insurance, Workers' Compensation, or Canada Pension Plan benefits. Many of the factories closed during the 1980s and the industry now pays many home-based workers piece rates.

From the turn of the century to the 1960s, most garment industry workers were European women. Today, they are almost exclusively Asian women. The industry traditionally employs new immigrants who need wages to survive. They often lack the language skills and awareness of Canadian law and culture to protest their exploitation by small shop owners who flout labour laws. The International Ladies' Garment Workers Union began to organize the isolated, poorly paid home workers of the garment industry in the late twentieth century.



Finishing room at Universal Knitting in 1922.

VPL 21388



**TRANSIT
KEY**

- ① Stadium Skytrain Station**
- ② Granville Skytrain Station**

- ③ Burrard Skytrain Station**
- ④ Waterfront Station (Skytrain and Seabus)**

Eastside Tour

- (A) Only Cafe
20 East Hastings Street
- (B) White Lunch / Impark Parking Lot
65 East Hastings Street
- (C) Regent Hotel (Fishermen's Union)
160 East Hastings Street
- (D) Carnegie Public Library / Carnegie Centre
401 Main Street
- (E) Chinese Benevolent Association Building
108 East Pender Street
- (F) First United Church Offices
424 Gore Street
- (G) Tenant Evictions / Christ Church of China
Northeast Corner of Pender and Gore Streets
- (H) Chinese Fisheries Workers' Association / Clothing Store
737 Gore Street
- (I) Boarding and Row Houses
700 and 800 Blocks of Jackson Avenue
- (J) Slade and Stewart / Asian Foods
400 Block of Prior Street
- (K) False Creek Flats / Firehall #1
South Foot of Heatly Street
- (L) Row Houses
800 Block Hawks Avenue
- (M) Ukrainian Labor Temple/ Ukrainian Cultural Centre
805 East Pender Street
- (N) Longshore Workers' Hall / Shamrock Laundry
633 East Hastings Street
- (O) Powell Street Grounds / Oppenheimer Park
Between Dunlevy and Jackson on Powell Street
- (P) Japanese Camp and Mill Workers' Union / Imagination Market Parking
544 Powell Street
- (Q) Ballantyne Pier
North Foot of Heatly Street
- (R) On-To-Ottawa Trek
North Foot of Dunlevy Street
- (S) Frank Rogers Shooting
North Foot of Gore Avenue
- (T) Fishermen's Hall / Gastown Actors' Studio
138 East Cordova Street

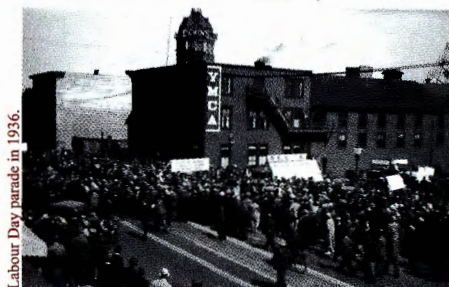
DOWNTOWN TOUR

- ① Marine Building
355 Burrard Street
- ② Old Post Office / Sinclair Centre (today)
701 West Hastings Street
- ③ Bank of Commerce / Milborne Real Estate
300 West Hastings Street
- ④ The Cenotaph
Hastings Street between Cambie and Hamilton Streets
- ⑤ Province Strike / Victory Square Law
198 West Hastings Street
- ⑥ Trocadero Grill / Rodeo Convenience Store
156 West Hastings Street
- ⑦ Lumber Workers Industrial Union / Ralph Block Building
130 West Hastings Street
- ⑧ Socialist Party of Canada / Access Collateral Pawn Brokers
159 West Hastings Street
- ⑨ The Stag and Pheasant / Gastown Parkades
160 Water Street
- ⑩ Wobbly Hall / Inform Interiors
112 Abbott Street
- ⑪ Grand Hotel / BC Gift
24 Water Street
- ⑫ Hotel Europe
43 Powell Street
- ⑬ Army and Navy
27 West Hastings Street
- ⑭ The Creche / Parking Lot
Southeast Corner of Pender and Cambie Streets
- ⑮ Labor's Headquarters / Parkade
529 Beatty Street
- ⑯ Cambie Street Grounds / Parking Lot
Southeast Corner of Cambie and Dunsmuir Streets
- ⑰ Solidarity March / Queen Elizabeth Theatre Plaza
Hamilton at Georgia Street
- ⑱ Post Office
349 West Georgia Street
- ⑲ Del Mar Hotel / Del Mar Inn
553 Hamilton Street
- ⑳ Universal Knitting / Pappas Furs
303 West Hastings Street
- ㉑ Labor Temple / 411 Seniors' Centre
411 Dunsmuir Street
- ㉒ Seymour Telephone Exchange / BCIT
555 Seymour Street

Social housing unit at 380 Main Street in 2001, named for Bruce Erickson, the first president of the Downtown Eastside Residents' Association and member of the Canadian Seamen's Union (which had called a worldwide deep-sea strike in 1949).



Van Herman photo



Labour Day parade in 1936.

VPL 13320



May Day parade in 1935.

VPL 8787



Solidarity demonstration in 1983.

Craig Berggold photo - courtesy photographer

EASTSIDE TOUR

A. Only Café

20 East Hastings Street

The Only Café (originally called Only Fish and Chips) has served customers at this location since 1924. The Hotel and Restaurant Employees' Union successfully organized staff during the 1930s. In 1935, workers struck for one day when management fired all union workers and withheld \$800 in wages.



John Pritchard silk screen "The Only" (1999).

Courtesy artist



Only Café in 2001.

Van Herman photo

A later organizational drive in the 1970s failed to make the Only Café a union shop again.

B. White Lunch / Impark Parking Lot

65 East Hastings Street

A number of White Lunch restaurants operated in the city. Other locations included 865 Granville, 737 West Pender, and 714 West Pender. The White Lunch name reflected a policy of serving and hiring only white people. The civic government of the 1930s reinforced racism in the culinary industry by passing a 1937 ordinance that prohibited white women from working in Chinatown. Whites believed they had a properly appointed place in the Darwinist order and needed to protect white women from "lascivious Orientals." A delegation of 16 waitresses from 3 restaurants marched to City Hall on September 24, 1937 to protest the ordinance but the mayor refused them a hearing. Restaurant proprietors had their licenses revoked if they failed to observe the civic ruling. In 1939, white women were allowed to work in Chinese-owned restaurants that served only "English meals to English customers." When Vancouver's white society recognized China as an enemy and victim of the aggressor and an ally of democracy in WWII, racism against Chinese residents began to dissipate.

Workers struck at all White Lunch locations on April 27, 1937, demanding higher wages and better working conditions. They won their strike when customers refused to cross the picket line. Despite the victory, union employees continued to suffer harassment from management. In response to the intense victimization, the Hotel and Restaurant Employees' Union placed the restaurant chain on its respected "unfair to labour" list. A high-turnover rate and fierce "union-busting" saw the workers fighting for a new contract within six months.



May Day parade in 1937.

VPL 8806

C. Regent Hotel (Fishermen's Union) 160 East Hastings Street

Before acquiring the Fishermen's Hall at 138 East Cordova, fishing industry unions had their office at this hotel.

The BC Fishermen's Union formed in 1900 to combat the price fixing arrangements of local canneries. It replaced the Fraser River Fishermen's Protective and Benevolent Association (1893-1896), which denied membership to the more than 1000 Japanese fishermen on the Fraser River. The Fishermen's Union led the 1900 Fraser River strike, the first major strike in BC outside of the mining industry. The 2-month strike was led by 2 prominent socialists and union activists: Will McCain, a machinist at the Canadian Pacific Railway, who was fired for his role in the strike, and fisherman and longshore worker Frank Rogers. Rogers was jailed for his role in a second Fraser River strike in 1901 (see site S).

Although white, Japanese, and First Nations fishermen united to force the cannery owners to raise the price paid for fish, racial antagonism prevented true solidarity in the 1900 strike and many later disputes. The union's leaders called for enrollment on a class rather than ethnic basis but white and Japanese fishermen were not co-operative. White racism discouraged non-whites from joining. Some Aboriginal fishers did join the Fishermen's Union but the Japanese decided to form their own Independent Japanese Fishermen's Union (see sites H and T).

Today, the United Fishermen and Allied Workers' Union, part of the CAW, organizes all fishermen and fishplant workers in a single industrial union.

D. Carnegie Public Library / Carnegie Centre 401 Main Street

This building was constructed as a library in 1902. Its name comes from the steel magnate Andrew Carnegie who donated money to establish this and other public libraries across North America.

A significant protest occurred at this site in April 1935 when relief camp workers occupied the museum on the top floor for 8 hours. They accepted the city's offer of 6 days worth of food vouchers in return for a peaceful evacuation of the building.

The Downtown Eastside Residents' Association (DERA) successfully lobbied the government to convert the building into a city-run community centre after the main library moved to a new location. DERA eventually convinced the government that the community should have access to and use of the building. The Carnegie Centre has offered childcare, library services, drug and alcohol counseling, educational upgrading, and nutritious meals to community residents since 1980.



Regent Hotel in 1936.

VPL 11475



Carnegie Public Library next to City Hall in 1908.

VPL 3425

E. Chinese Benevolent Association Building 108 East Pender Street

The CBA established a branch in Vancouver in 1899 to support destitute railway workers. Chinese workers organized in response to racial discrimination by the Canadian legal and political establishment, the labour movement, and the public. These groups promoted racial hatred, claiming that the Chinese were "inferior, threatening and foreign." The use of Chinese workers to break strikes deepened the conflict. By pitting working people against one another, employers protected their profits against effective organization. A few white industrial union leaders and socialists understood the effectiveness of the strategy and argued unsuccessfully for the inclusion of Asian workers into the trade union movement.

The Chinese, like other Asian workers, had to defend themselves against exploitative wages and racial violence. The Asiatic Exclusion League emerged during the 1907 economic depression and anti-Oriental riots erupted downtown, resulting in widespread destruction of Asian property.

During the Depression, the CBA lobbied the government to provide relief to Chinese workers. The Oriental Missions, operated by the Church of England, was contracted to open a soup kitchen at 143 West Pender Street. The two daily meals of thin rice soup staved off mass starvation within the Chinese community but 175 unemployed Chinese workers still starved to death. The Chinese community also formed the Chinese Workers' Protective Association during the Depression to fight for jobs and economic security.



Unemployed marchers protesting Chinese starvation on May Day c. 1935.

VPL 8799

F. First United Church Offices 424 Gore Avenue

The First United Church opened a food distribution centre on this site to feed the hungry during the Great Depression. In the winter of 1931, the church fed 800-1200 men daily. The church opened a soup kitchen for longshoremen during their prolonged strike in 1935. It also supplied food and clothing to the sit-down strikers who occupied the old post office in 1938 (see site #2). Tens of thousands received material assistance, counseling, and work opportunities from this site in the 1930s.

The economic recession of the 1980s created a new generation of hungry and the church reopened its soup kitchen. Some survivors of the Depression joined others waiting in line when the Grace United Church at 803 East 16th Avenue began operating Vancouver's first food bank in 1982. Intended as a temporary measure, many Vancouver citizens continue to rely on the food bank.



Reverend Andrew Roddan with unemployed at 1931 United Church soup kitchen.

VPL 12749

G. Tenant Evictions / Christ Church of China

Northeast Corner of Pender and Gore Streets

During the Depression, many families receiving relief (welfare) faced starvation and eviction because the government payments did not meet their basic needs. Groups such as the Workers' Unity League, Women's Labour League, and Housewives' League helped these families in their

eviction struggles. In 1986, George North told the Centennial Labour Committee how local citizens attempted to prevent the eviction of a Chinese family at this location in the 1930s: "The Chen family were evicted in spite of large-scale protest picketing. The sheriff and his crew attacked pickets when they attempted to move furniture back into the house, successfully at first."

A local resident, Barbara Stewart, also remembered the 1930s: "Terrible things were happening. People were being evicted on the sidewalk, children and all. The whole gang of us would go and march everything back into the house. The sheriff would be there. It was bad enough with no food, let alone with no shelter."

Vancouver rooming house operators seeking higher rents attempted to evict 300 tenants on one day alone in April of 1933. The Lodging and Restaurant Keepers' Association also supported two general evictions of 150 families in 1933.



Housing at NE corner of Pender and Gore Streets in 1929.

CVA: CVA 447-297

H. Chinese Canadian Fisheries Workers' Association / Clothing Store

737 Gore Avenue

Many Chinese men worked in the first canneries, producing cans and processing fish. The labour of Chinese immigrants was crucial to the establishment of BC's economic base in the 19th century as white labour was in short supply and most production work was labour-intensive. Chinese were paid one half to two thirds of the wages of white workers. An 1887 race riot saw the homes of 90 Chinese burnt or damaged.

Racist policies also prevented Chinese entrepreneurs from participating fully in the fish market. For example, the city did not allow Chinese fish dealers to lease stalls in the local market until 1943. The Chinese community established this association in 1978 to support its workers in the fish industry and moved to this location in 1985.



Asian workers at Steveston International Cannery c. 1900.

VPL 13270

I. Boarding and Row Houses

700 and 800 Blocks of Jackson Avenue

Constructed in 1907, these buildings housed working men and women. Early in the city's history, speculators kept large tracts of land off the market to keep prices high. By 1911, house prices were 60-150% higher than homes in Winnipeg and Toronto. Rents were 30-70% higher.

Private ownership of utilities in Vancouver also meant that a weekly family budget for food, fuel, and lighting in 1912 was more expensive than any other city in Canada. Residents preferred to call BC Electric Co. "Collectric."

The 1918 Vancouver Directory lists a BC Telephone Co. service operator as the resident of 602 Jackson Avenue. It also lists the residents of the Parkdale Apartments at 27 Jackson Avenue as a CPR cook, a labourer, a widow, and "foreigners." The Strathcona neighbourhood was 48% Chinese by 1959. Chinese homeowners formed the Chinatown Property Owners Association (CPOA) when they discovered that a proposed redevelopment project meant the demolition of their homes and relocation to high-density public housing. Despite their resistance, the government bought and expropriated land and displaced residents. The CPOA allied with the Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association and in 1969 were able to prevent the destruction of their neighbourhood (see site L). The growing public concern for preservation of Vancouver's heritage also led to the establishment of the Chinatown Historic Area District in 1974.



Strathcona tenement housing in the 1940s.

Jack Lindsay photo - CVA: CVA 1184-2615

J. Slade and Stewart / Asian Foods

400 Block of Prior Street

A union operation for over 50 years, this produce distributor locked out workers during contract negotiations with the Retail-Wholesale Union in May of 1984. One employee had worked for the company for more than 30 years. Permitted under the labour code of the day, the company hired scabs to deliver Slade and Stewart goods to restaurants and stores. Although union

supporters organized "sip-ins" as means to occupy restaurants and the boycott of stores that bought from the company, the lockout dragged on. One picketer was stabbed to death but the incident was never tied to the dispute. The union eventually lost the strike as the government introduced legislation that banned secondary picketing.

The Starvation Army Band memorialized the dispute:

"Sunshine, Standby and Snowboy too / are brands that we avoid

They come from Slade and Stewart, Oh boy / locked their workers out the door

Herding scabs to run the store / Sunshine, Standby and Snowboy too / are brands that we avoid."



Picketing at Slade & Stewart in 1953.

VPL 28954

K. False Creek Flats / Firehall #1

South Foot of Heatley Street to Burlington Northern Railway Tracks

This area was the site of mud flats and the first city dump. During the Great Depression, hundreds of unemployed, homeless men lived here in lean-to shacks or "unemployed jungles." As the warmest place in Canada, Vancouver attracted many unemployed. Every freight train brought shipments of "human misery." As many as 250



Distribution of food by United Church at city dump in 1931.

men could be found riding below the rail cars in what was called "riding the rods." The First United Church distributed food to the men in the "jungles" and offered them warm meals at the soup kitchen at their church (see site F).

Reclamation of False Creek began in 1936. Firehall #1 now stands over the former dump. Nearby, the Strathcona Community Gardens benefit from the heavily composted soil created by early dumping.

L. Row Houses

800 Block Hawks Avenue

The Croatian Hall was located in #5A of the row houses. One of the parades of protesters involved in the 1938 sit-in at the post office began their march at this location (see site #2). Mary Trocell Velijacic, the daughter of Croatian immigrants, proudly recalled her childhood in the multi-ethnic and community-minded neighbourhood for local historians Daphne Marlatt and Carole Itter in 1979: "If anyone needed any kind of help or anything... And if anyone was sick, they thought nothing of coming over and we thought nothing of going right into the house and getting to work... We were just like all one family." Myer Freedman also shared his memories of the neighbourhood: "...people had trust and there was honesty all around us. We were poor as hell but we enjoyed life."

In 1968, the city planned to bulldoze this neighbourhood for the valuable land situated close to the waterfront and downtown. Residents of the community, mostly first and second-generation immigrants, formed the Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants' Association and prevented the razing of their homes. It was the first Canadian citizens' committee to participate as equal partners with three levels of government in developing a renewal plan for their community. The Strathcona Rehabilitation Project stopped the bulldozers but the "beautification" of the quaint neighbourhood drew the attention of real estate developers and a new class of residents. Many working class and low income residents were soon evicted to make way for the new urban gentry.



Renovated row housing seen from Prior Street in 2001.

M. Ukrainian Labor Temple / Ukrainian Cultural Centre

805 East Pender Street

Built in 1928, this hall opened its doors in support of many progressive causes. The Ukrainian Labor Temple did not just focus its activities around dances, festivities, and feasts that celebrated ethnic nationalism. Organizations from the wider community were invited to hold benefits, memorials, and rallies at the temple. The hall served as a community kitchen during the 1935 longshoremen's strike (see site Q) and the 1938 post office sit-in. It also served as an infirmary for the unemployed protestors who fell to tear gas and beatings as the police evicted them from their occupation of the old post office (see site #2).

Because the hall belonged to Communist sympathizers, the government confiscated it from the Ukrainian Farm Labor Temple Association at the start of WWII. The congregation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church bought the hall and used it for church services and as a community centre. When the Soviet Union joined the Allies during the war and fear of the "Reds" and other leftist groups diminished, the government allowed the Temple group to reclaim the hall. As a landmark hall for progressive causes, the Ukrainian Labor Temple served the peace movement, the Communist Party, Solidarity events, and May Day events, and continues to serve the community as the Ukrainian Cultural Centre of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians



Ukrainian Cultural Centre in 2001.

Van Heman photo

N. Longshore Workers' Hall / Shamrock Laundry

633 East Hastings Street

Longshoremen established their first union in 1888 and were the second group of workers to organize in Vancouver (see site #9).

On June 8, 1935, striking longshoremen began a march to Ballantyne Pier from this hall (see site Q). Locked out on June 4 for refusing to handle "hot cargo," the men marched to publicize work, safety, and organizational issues. Their protest was also against the Shipping Federation's attempt to break the union by establishing the company-controlled Canada West Waterfront Workers' Association.



Unemployed marching in May Day parade in 1937.

VPL 8803

Over 1,000 demonstrators gathered and proceeded in an orderly fashion to Alexander Street. When they arrived at the first set of railway tracks at the bottom of Heatley Street, they met a force of 125 city police and RCMP officers who were armed with regulation guns as well as two Lewis machine guns borrowed from the Provincial Armory. The day of violence, later called "Bloody Sunday," saw 128 people injured. By the end of the year, the strike and union were both crushed.

O. Powell Street Grounds / Oppenheimer Park

Between Dunlevy and Jackson on Powell Street

One of the earliest playing fields in Vancouver, the city officially dedicated this meeting ground, and popular spot to gather and hear speakers, as Oppenheimer Park in 1902, naming it after Vancouver's second mayor.

A highly controversial free speech demonstration took place at this site in 1912. RP Pettipiece, first secretary of the BC Federation of Labour, reported his unsuccessful attempt to get relief for the unemployed to an assembled crowd on January 20. The city arrested Pettipiece and imposed a ban on all public meetings. In response, the Wobblies (Industrial Workers of the World) and the Socialist Party formed a committee to fight for free speech and an end to unemployment (see site #10).

The ban was broken in May when nearly 5000 people gathered at the park to listen to Salvation Army sermons and music. The Wobblies "soapboxed" in competition with the Salvation Army, using the gathered crowd as their own audience. They also sang parodies of hymns to mock the fruitless promises of the churches. Labour activists used songs to reach a popular, often illiterate, audience by writing political lyrics that they "zippered" into familiar hymns. Unionist Joe Hill rewrote the hymn "In the Sweet Bye n' Bye" as the "The Preacher and the Slave" in 1911:

*"And the starvation army they play / and they sing and they clap and they pray
'til they get all your coin on the drum/ then they tell you when you're on the bum
You will eat, by and by, in that glorious land in the sky (way up high)
Work and pray, live on hay, you'll get pie in the sky when you die (that's a lie!)."*

P. Japanese Camp and Mill Workers' Union / Imagination Market Parking

544 Powell Street

Formed in 1920, this socialist organization joined the ranks of a flourishing Japanese-Canadian union movement. By joining the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada in 1927, it became the first union of Asian workers granted an affiliation to a national labour centre. Although this union endorsed labour principles, the racism of the white majority kept it isolated within the Japanese community.

One of the early tenets of craft unions was Asiatic exclusion. Claiming that non-white and immigrant workers weakened labour's goals by accepting lower wages, lower standards of living, and less satisfactory working conditions, labour excluded them from union lists. During an economic depression in 1907, anti-Asiatic riots destroyed homes and businesses in nearby Chinatown and Japantown.



Unemployed protesters at Powell Street Grounds on May Day in 1935.

VPL 35736



Asian mill workers at Wood & English Ltd. in Englewood in 1926.

VPL 1629

Q. Ballantyne Pier

North Foot of Heatly Street

On June 8, 1935, during the "bloodiest hours in waterfront history," organized longshoremen participating in a peaceful protest march volleyed rocks in self-defense as city police fired on them (see site N). At least 128 people suffered injuries and one died as mounted and motorcycle police used tear gas and batons to disperse the crowd and then scoured the neighbourhood for those who escaped. Police even lobbed tear gas through the windows of the first aid station that the Women's Auxiliary of the Longshoremen's union had set up in their hall to treat the injured strikers.

Some of the longshoremen soon left to join the in-progress On-to-Ottawa Trek while others continued to fight the powerful Shipping Federation. Arrests, blacklisting, scabbing, and harassment ultimately broke the strike and union by December. Some strikers were sent to prison, sentenced to 3 years and 5 lashes. Many longshoremen later fought in the Spanish Civil War and a few of the men returned to the waterfront in later years. Despite early setbacks, the longshoremen's union was finally established as one of the strongest unions in BC.

R. On-to-Ottawa Trek

North Foot of Dunlevy Street

The communist-led Workers' Unity League established the Relief Camp Workers' Union and called a strike on April 4, 1935. Thousands of BC workers abandoned rural relief camps and went to Vancouver to demand relief, jobs, the right to vote, and the right to organize. After the Vancouver mayor read them the Riot Act, the decision was made to take their demands to Ottawa, Canada's capital. Almost 1000 striking relief camp workers, demanding a pay increase from 20 cents per day to 50 cents per hour, climbed atop freight trains at this site on June 3 - 4, 1935. The men had also failed in their bid to make gains from the city and provincial government through a "sit-in" at the museum in the public library. They decided to take their demand for "work and wages" to Prime Minister Bennett in Ottawa (see site D). Local supporters fed the trekkers at each stop and hundreds joined them on their journey.

The trek ended in Regina when the government stopped all eastbound freight movement but allowed a delegation to continue on to Ottawa. Bennett reacted with hostility when the delegates demanded that the camps should "be turned into work camps with wages and an eight hour day, and the workers of the camps should be given the right to vote in elections." According to one delegate, Bennett called trek leader Arthur "Slim" Evans "a criminal and a thief." Evans called Bennett a liar and was later charged with subversion and treason for his role in the Trek.

On July 1, the trekkers held a Dominion Day rally to gain public support in a market square in Regina. Police hiding in furniture moving vans attacked the crowd. One police officer was killed and many bystanders and demonstrators were severely beaten.



Police preparing to confront protesting longshoremen at Ballantyne Pier in 1935.

VPL 8829



Unemployed men boarding Vancouver freight cars bound for Ottawa in 1935.

Courtesy Julius Fisher

S. Frank Rogers Shooting

North Foot of Gore Avenue

A fisherman, seaman, and longshoreman, Rogers was a prominent socialist and union leader who also led the Fraser River salmon strike of 1900-1901 (see site C).

On April 13, 1903, two CPR strikebreakers fired on Rogers as he participated in support picketing for the striking United Brotherhood of Railway Engineers. Frank Rogers, age 35, died two days later. The CPR paid for the defense attorney hired by the two assassins. One assassin had charges dropped due to insufficient evidence and a judge acquitted the other of all charges in the unprovoked shooting. Workers rallied at city hall to protest Rogers's murder and the judge's decision. Labour paid for his funeral. He was buried at Mountain View cemetery in the Horne block near 33rd and Fraser.



Frank Rogers gravesite in 2000.

Jaanita Nolan photo

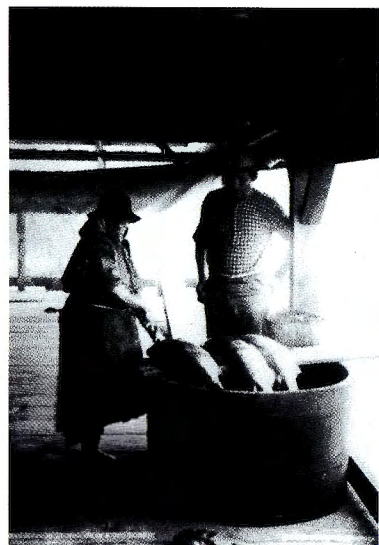
T. Fishermen's Hall / Gastown Actors Studio

138 East Cordova Street

The Fisherman's Union formed in 1900. Aboriginal fishermen were crucial to the fishing industry in the 19th century and many worked with their wives and children on company boats. During the 1900 Fraser River strike, Natives joined with white and Japanese fishermen to gain higher prices for their catch (see sites C and H).

The hall was constructed over a church bought by the Fisherman's Federal Union in the late 1930s. It served as union headquarters for nearly half a century, acting as the heart of the provincial organization, and a strike centre and meeting hall for many causes.

A mock mosaic mural painted on the walls by David Denbigh was dismantled when the union sold the building to the Salvation Army in 1985. Its new home is in the lobby of the Vancouver Maritime Labour Centre at 1880 Triumph. A cedar carving of a raven was also moved from the hall to the Maritime Labour Centre. It now hangs inside the auditorium above the entrance. Aboriginal "lifers" at the Agassiz prison facility presented the carving to past union president Homer Stevens, who had for a number of years supplied fish to the prison's annual potlatch.



New Westminster Ewen & Co. First Nations workers cleaning salmon in 1887.

VPL 1791

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City of Vancouver Archives (CVA)

BC Archives and Records Service (BCARS)

BC Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU)

Contemporary Art Gallery (Keith Wallace)

Jean Rands

John Ahrens

Craig Berggold

Teresa Marshall

Julius Fisher

John Pritchard

Inadequate safety conditions caused 4 accidents, which took 25 lives, during construction of the Second Narrows Bridge (1957 to 1960). On June 17, 1958, later called "Black Tuesday," the worst disaster since the Great Fire of 1886 struck when 19 men lost their lives during an industrial accident while constructing the bridge across the Burrard Inlet. Too weak to hold the weight of the heavy steel girders, temporary scaffolding erected to hold the outermost steel spans in place collapsed abruptly. The initial collapse caused a domino effect and sections of the bridge began to fall. Along with the steel girders, 51 men plummeted 212 feet into the frigid waters below. Many workers were fastened to the girders by safety belts, which contributed to drowning deaths. This industrial accident took the lives of 18 workers. One RCMP diver also died while attempting to recover the bodies. The bridge was eventually renamed the Ironworkers' Memorial Bridge, in honour of the workers who sacrificed their lives to the bridge project. Cairns at both ends of the bridge commemorate the lost workers. A wreath laying ceremony and RCMP piper contribute to an annual memorial service held at the bridge on the anniversary date of the accident. The accident made international headlines and three popular musicians paid tribute to the workers in song. Roger Whittaker and Jimmy Dean recorded songs titled "Steel Men" and Stompin' Tom Connors recorded "The Bridge Came Tumblin' Down."

