

Bunkhouse and Home:
Company, Community, and Crisis in Britannia Beach, British Columbia

by

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Abstract

Canada's company towns have traditionally been seen as temporary settlements: remote, unstable places shaped by authoritarian employers. Despite these stereotypes, daily life in single industry communities was quite complex, shaped by residents, employees, and company officials alike. This thesis revisits one twentieth-century company town to examine the varied functions and meanings of community in a one-industry setting. In the copper-mining town of Britannia Beach, British Columbia, community was both a cultural construct and a social process. While the Britannia Mining & Smelting Company, Limited used the idea of community to inspire cohesion and loyalty in its largely transient workforce, employees and residents were rarely united. Instead, they used notions of marital status, respectability, gender, class, and ethnicity to establish and contest community boundaries. Furthermore, when the company ceased operations for two periods in 1958 and 1964, notions of community both shaped and limited residents' responses to the shutdowns.

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Chapter 1

Community in Context: An Introduction

“Shutdown Threatens Britannia,” the *Vancouver Sun* announced in July 1957. The newspaper claimed falling world copper prices were forcing the Britannia Mining and Smelting Company, Limited, to curtail mining operations at its Howe Sound property thirty miles north of Vancouver. Approximately 800 jobs in the company town of Britannia were on the line if the workers’ union didn’t agree to a 15 per cent pay cut. When the union refused to accept wage concessions, the *Sun* concluded that this “ideal community ... far from the rush and congestion of the big city” was about to become British Columbia’s newest ghost town.¹

“Ideal community” seems an unusual description for a company-operated town. Company towns were built throughout the twentieth century to ensure a steady supply of labour for companies extracting timber and mineral resources from Canada’s more remote regions. These isolated settlements were often uniform in appearance and populated by young and mobile residents. When companies built communities, they decided what services to provide, and what rent to charge; company officials were often the highest authority in the workplace – and the town. Because of this level of control, popular images of company towns are often negative, associated with oppressive company policies, labour unrest, exploitative commodity prices, and limited personal freedoms. As extensions of the company, these communities appeared to be short-term, static entities, which lasted only as long as company operations remained viable, and then disappeared.

¹ “Shutdown Threatens Britannia,” *Vancouver Sun*, 11 July 1957, 1; “\$15,000 Homes to Make B.C.’s New Ghost Town,” *Vancouver Sun* 22 July 1957, 3.

Britannia was a company town in the strictest sense of the term. Thousands of people lived, worked, and played in the towns erected by the Britannia Mining and Smelting Company, Limited (hereafter BM&S) between 1904 and 1974. By the late 1920s, the mill employees and much of the administrative staff were housed at sea level, in Britannia Beach, while the mine workers and mining engineers lived six miles east and 1,900 feet above sea level in an area known first as the Townsite, and later, after a post office was established, as Mount Sheer. Married employees and their families lived in company houses and shopped in company stores. Single workers stayed in company bunkhouses and ate company food. The company built recreation facilities for the workers, and provided teachers for the children. Until the 1950s, Britannia could be reached only by boat, and peddlers, canvassers, and entertainers had to obtain company permission before soliciting residents. One of the company's first general managers, John Dunbar Moodie, was notoriously authoritarian. Refusing to tolerate alcohol, sexual promiscuity, or union activity on company property, Moodie reportedly fired many malcontents and offenders simply by telling them to "pack up and get back to town."² Britannia was an isolated place, where the company's word was law.

Yet Britannia is also remembered as a place with a thriving community spirit. In oral interviews, many former residents remember the Beach and Townsite as close-knit places, where residents were "one big family."³ Local newsletters are replete with announcements of athletic events, lists of recent visitors, and reports of social gatherings. The company's annual reports mention well-attended dances, first-aid competitions, and Dominion Day celebrations. Many of the town's residents saw Britannia as more than a

² Bruce Ramsey, *Britannia: The Story of a Mine* (Britannia: Britannia Beach Community Club, 1967), 37.

³ University of British Columbia Archives (hereafter UBCAR), Britannia Mines Oral History Project (hereafter BMOHP), 1878-19, Interview with Alice Graney.

company-controlled copper mine; it was the place where they lived and worked and raised their children. It was their home. Hundreds of people attended Britannia Employee Reunions held in the 1950s, eager to mingle and reminisce. Former residents have returned for more recent reunions as well.

What was this community? Who defined its physical and social boundaries? Was it formed in opposition to, or in accordance with, the company's wishes? And, crucially, when Britannia was threatened, as company towns often were, by declining resources and departing capital, did this community spirit unite residents, motivating them to defend their town? The following chapters will explore these questions, analysing the historical function and meaning of community in the context of one of British Columbia's longest operating company towns.

Historians have given the concept of community little consideration in their examinations of company towns, preferring to focus almost exclusively on company control and its effects on local residents. Earlier twentieth century interpretations emphasized the company's complete control, either for oppressive or more benevolent, paternalistic ends. Many contemporary observers argued company towns oppressed and exploited working people. In the United States, government bodies established commissions to study what civil servants called the "feudal relationship" between company town employers and employees.⁴ In British Columbia, the Powell River Pulp and Paper Company's refusal to allow its workers to unionize in the early 1920s prompted the labour press to declare Powell River and other company towns "slave

⁴ Crandall Shifflett, *Life, Work, and Culture in Company Towns of Southern Appalachia, 1880-1960* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 146.

encampments.”⁵ Shortly afterwards, independent member of Parliament A.W. Neill claimed companies controlled “everyone who lives and speaks or even thinks” in company towns.⁶ Sociologist Edmund Bradwin painted a similarly bleak picture of conditions in isolated railroad camps in his 1928 study, *The Bunkhouse Man*.⁷ Workers were poorly paid, and spent months in dirty, ill-equipped camps. Bradwin concluded camp conditions were “tantamount to lesser forms of serfdom.”⁸ The dire pictures of squalor and oppression painted by Bradwin and union supporters reflect the negative image of company towns held by scholars and the public in the first half of the twentieth century.

This image did not alter significantly as the century progressed. Scholars Gilbert Stelter and Alan Artibise emphasized the effect of town planning on company town life in their article, “Canadian Resource Towns in Historical Perspective, 1867-1978.”⁹ Planning was a way to control the development of a company town – both physically and socially. Whereas “recently built resource towns tend to resemble the new suburbs of large cities, older towns are generally ramshackle communities whose townscape is dominated by the mine or mill.”¹⁰ Stelter and Artibise argued government intervention and regulation had improved company town life since the early days, when houses

⁵ Jean Barman, “The Dynamics of Control in a Model Company Town: Powell River, Canada, 1910-1955,” unpublished paper presented at the American Historical Association, 28 December 1988, 2.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁷ Edmund Bradwin, 1928, *The Bunkhouse Man: A Study of Work and Pay in the Camps of Canada, 1903-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972).

⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁹ Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F. J. Artibise, “Canadian Resource Towns in Historical Perspective.” In *Little Communities and Big Industries: Studies in the Social Impact of Canadian Resource Extraction*, ed. Roy T. Bowles (Toronto: Butterworth & Co., 1982), 47-60. L.D. McCann places a similar emphasis on the influence of planning principles on resource communities. See McCann, “Canadian Resource Towns: A Heartland-Hinterland Perspective,” in *Essays on Canadian Urban Process and Forms II*, eds. Richard Preston, and Lorne Russwurm (Waterloo: University of Waterloo, Department of Geography, Faculty of Environmental Studies, 1977), 215.

¹⁰ Stelter and Artibise, “Canadian Resource Towns,” 49.

appeared “as something of an afterthought,” and companies created class and ethnic divisions by assigning houses based on occupation and refusing “less acceptable” groups space in company housing.¹¹ They claimed towns built in the years following the Second World War benefited from government funds and advanced planning techniques, making an obvious effort to distance these resource communities from their company town predecessors.

Stelter and Artibise were not the only ones avoiding the company town label at this time. British Columbia’s provincial government wanted to encourage further resource exploitation, but it also wanted to avoid creating potentially politically unpopular company towns. To that end, in 1965 it amended the Municipal Act to allow the speedy incorporation of municipalities in conjunction with the development of natural resources.¹² Planners intended these “instant towns,” developed co-operatively by government and private business, to become permanent settlements, with minimal company influence and self-government through municipal councils.¹³ Between 1965 and 1972, eight instant towns were built across British Columbia.¹⁴

However, geographer J.H. Bradbury argued this legislation failed to give autonomy to company town residents. His 1978 study of instant towns found that company control remained a pervasive force in these communities. Although private business was welcomed and workers were encouraged to purchase their houses, company officials dominated municipal councils. The company remained the largest taxpayer in

¹¹ Ibid., 53.

¹² The new regulations for incorporating resource communities were enshrined in Section 10A of the Municipal Act Amendment Act (13-14 Eliz. 2, ch. 28). J. D. Porteous, “Gold River: An Instant Town in British Columbia,” *Geography* 55 (July 1970): 318.

¹³ Ibid., 318; J.H. Bradbury, “Class Structure and Class Conflicts in ‘Instant’ Resource Towns in British Columbia – 1965-1972,” *BC Studies* 37 (1978): 3-18.

¹⁴ Ibid., 7.

town, and continued to subsidize local amenities and leisure facilities. The company could still threaten residents' jobs by shutting down its operations.¹⁵ Bradbury demonstrated how disputes over wages, working conditions, and benefits continued, despite supposed increases in workers' quality of life. Instant town residents remained at the mercy of their employers, Bradbury concluded; the company town had not been replaced, merely renamed.¹⁶

More recently, historians have posited a more complex power relationship between employers and employees in single industry towns, arguing that both residents and company officials shaped day-to-day experiences. Historians Mark Rosenfeld, John Hinde, and Jean Barman have all employed this approach by including gender relations and family structure in their analyses of company town culture. These scholars examine relations between workers and their employers, and between women and men, to demonstrate how power was exercised in different contexts.¹⁷ Although the employer remained the ultimate authority in a company town, this approach reveals the many and changing ways employees and their families accommodated, resisted, and negotiated the company's will. Company towns were not bastions of corporate control, as previous

¹⁵ Bradbury found that 53 per cent of mayors and councillors in instant towns were either company officials or employees. *Ibid.*, 11-12.

¹⁶ For other studies examining resource towns constructed after the 1965 legislation, please see John Phillip Moore, "Residents' Perceptions of the Quality of Life in Vanderhoof and Mackenzie, Two British Columbia Resource Communities" (MBA Thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1976); Susan Esther Langin, "Resource Development and New Towns: A Women's Perspective" (MA Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1981); J.A. Riffel, *Quality of Life in Resource Towns* (Winnipeg: Centre for Settlement Studies, University of Manitoba, 1975).

¹⁷ For other works using a similar approach, see for example Meg Luxton, *More than a Labour of Love: three generations of women's work in the home* (Toronto: Women's Educational Press, 1980); Jeremy Mouat, *Roaring Days: Rossland's Mines and the History of British Columbia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1995); Steven Penfold, "'Have You No Manhood In You?': Gender and Class in Cape Breton Coal Towns, 1920-1926," *Acadiensis* XXIII, 2 (Spring 1994): 21-44; Joy Parr, *The Gender of Breadwinners: Women, Men, and Change in Two Industrial Towns, 1880-1950* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).

scholars had suggested; like other Canadian places, both urban and rural, they were spaces where various groups negotiated control and contested power.

John Hinde's study explores how notions of gender both mediated and reinforced company control in the coal-mining town of Ladysmith on Vancouver Island. Hinde focuses on the violent and prolonged strike of 1912 to 1914. This was not merely a dispute between employer and employee; as Hinde demonstrates, it "involved the entire community."¹⁸ Women, in particular, challenged gender norms by participating actively in the strike. Women composed 42 per cent of Ladysmith's population – many of them married to coal miners.¹⁹ Although largely confined to unwaged, domestic labour, Hinde argues married women exerted a limited influence over their situation by participating in service clubs and supporting their husbands and sons during strikes. They also "took to the streets," parading, breaking windows in strikebreakers' homes, and hurling insults – actions that challenged prevailing notions of feminine behaviour.²⁰ However, their actions also reinforced gendered roles, as women's demands for a living wage and safer working conditions were made in the interest of preserving the household economy. While many workers appreciated their wives' support, they also saw women's independent actions as a threat to their patriarchal role as breadwinners.²¹ Hinde's research reveals how women worked within gendered limits to oppose the employer, and demonstrates how the company tried to control women's behaviour by reinforcing gender roles.

¹⁸ John Hinde, *When Coal Was King: Ladysmith and the Coal-Mining Industry on Vancouver Island* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003), 211.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 53.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 199-200.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 204.

Similarly, Rosenfeld's work examines the way families in the railroad town of Allendale, Ontario, adapted and responded to the "constraints created by the gender division of wage work, railway labour rhythms, the prevailing conditions of reproductive labour, and the ideology of patriarchy."²² Railroad workers' irregular and lengthy shifts dictated family rhythms in Allendale. Most women remained housewives, and their work schedule revolved around the railroad timetable; they prepared meals at odd hours, had irregular sleep patterns, dealt with spouses' work frustrations, and stretched husbands' paycheques.²³ Both material conditions and prevailing notions of masculinity and femininity shaped family life. Domestic labour was considered feminine, and few male workers participated in household chores even when work schedules permitted.²⁴ Accepted notions of masculinity shaped male identity; railroad workers' pride as family wage earners, and their shared occupational culture, influenced their relations with family and each other.²⁵ People acted within ideological assumptions about men and women's gender roles, as well as within the company's rules. However, Rosenfeld argues women and men resisted and negotiated these limitations. For example, some wives used their knowledge of the company's seniority system to demand more regular work for their husbands. Others refused to move when their husbands were transferred.²⁶ Their position as wives gave them limited control over the household. Similarly, many male workers maintained a code of silence while working, protecting each other from company authority when a mistake was made on the job.²⁷ Both Hinde and Rosenfeld demonstrate

²² Mark Rosenfeld, "'It Was a Hard Life': Class and Gender in the Work and Family Rhythms of a Railway Town, 1920-1950," *Historical Papers/Communications Historiques* (1988): 237.

²³ *Ibid.*, 252-253.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 259.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 262-263.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 257.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 266.

that the residents of company towns were not simply victims of unmediated company power; class and gender norms, as well as the material realities of resource town life, also shaped their experiences.

Historian Jean Barman argues there was “a correspondence of interests” between the company and the residents of Powell River, a pulp and paper town on British Columbia’s coast, which ensured that “the dynamics of control were fashioned and maintained as much by residents as by the company.”²⁸ Many employees appreciated the company’s paternalistic policies. Discontent was largely tempered by the benefits of living in a town with so many amenities. Barman argues the interests of employer and employee were parallel; the company secured a stable workforce by providing schools, hospitals, and recreation, and residents received promises of long-term economic security, an environment conducive to raising children, and employment for their sons when they came of age.²⁹ Furthermore, the values of the majority Anglo-Saxon residents often coincided with those of company officials. Class and ethnic divisions within the community were not imposed from above, but rather accepted and enforced by many residents; workers who performed similar jobs often socialized together, and residents supported the company’s policy of ethnic segregation.³⁰ Thus, company control was hegemonic; the employer convinced residents it was acting in their interest, securing their loyalty and obedience. Residents policed their own behaviour, Barman claims, censoring any discontent “in the interests of continued employment combined with the concern ...

²⁸ Barman, “The Dynamics of Control,” 4.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 12.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 18.

to maintain what was a very comfortable social status quo,” at least for some of Powell River’s inhabitants.³¹

Historians have aptly demonstrated how both residents and company officials shaped company town life. Yet, while the word community is often mentioned in their analyses, the concept is largely unexplored and vaguely defined. John Walsh and Steven High argue historians have tended to adopt a common sense approach to community, one that emphasizes “the ideas of a shared place and a static, self-contained entity.”³² When writing about company towns, some historians describe community as a desire to belong, a pride in one’s town and its accomplishments, and a concern for its future.³³ Others claim community resulted from collective experience, as a sense of commonality among people who live or work under similar conditions.³⁴ Local histories offer the sheer number of sports teams, social clubs, and informal gatherings as proof that residents identified in some unspecified way with *their* town.³⁵ Scholars note the number of recreation facilities and opportunities for interaction available in company towns, claiming they were sites of thriving and sustained community spirit. However, they have not asked of what this spirit consisted, how it changed over time, or how it was related to the power relations between employers and their employees. Their common sense approach fails to address questions about the function and meaning of community in company towns.

³¹ Indeed, a weakness of Barman’s argument is that she does not discuss the experiences of those residents who did not share the majority’s Anglo-Saxon values. *Ibid.*, 22.

³² John C. Walsh and Steven High, “Rethinking the Concept of Community,” *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 32:64 (1999): 256.

³³ Langrin, “Resource Development and New Towns,” 65.

³⁴ Shifflett, *Life, Work, and Culture*, xiv; Rick J. Clyne, *Coal People: Life in Southern Colorado’s Company Towns, 1890-1930* (Denver: Colorado Historical Society, 1999), 51.

³⁵ Linda Carlson, *Company Towns of the Pacific Northwest* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), 79.

Many historians attribute community spirit to the specific nature of company towns. These towns were isolated, they argue, and this “remoteness created a sense of community.”³⁶ Since the residents had nowhere else to go, they turned to each other for companionship. Historians perceive the arrival of greater communication and transportation links with other population centres as a negative development, which decreased community spirit. For example, Bruce Ramsey notes that when the highway was built through Britannia Beach in 1953, “the almost 100 percent support for local affairs ended with many preferring a beer in Squamish to a [local] party.”³⁷ Others attribute community spirit to the homogeneous, family-oriented populations of company towns. Historian Rick Clyne argues community did not arise in the coal towns of southern Colorado until married miners and their families arrived.³⁸ Jean Barman claims the ethnic homogeneity of Powell River’s population strengthened residents’ sense of belonging and shared values, resulting in a strong community.³⁹ Company control is also credited with fostering community in company towns. For example, historian Linda Carlson notes that the company’s provision of recreation facilities and subsidies in several northwestern American resource towns helped sustain residents’ participation in clubs and community events.⁴⁰ Paternalism facilitated the establishment of formal community structures. Conversely, Clyne argues community was formed in opposition to the company, because “the dangers of coal mining and the whims of coal-town management required that miners and their families develop a support system independent of the company.” A sense of community, Clyne asserts, “was one of the few

³⁶ Ibid., 49.

³⁷ Ramsey, *Britannia*, 154.

³⁸ Clyne, *Coal People*, 43.

³⁹ Barman, “The Dynamics of Control,” 18-9.

⁴⁰ Carlson, *Company Towns*, 100.

elements of camp life that the residents themselves could control.”⁴¹ Whether a company was oppressive or benevolent, historians have generally assumed the innate qualities of company towns – their isolation, population composition, and company control – fostered a strong sense of community.

The sense of community scholars have attributed to company towns was by no means unique. Historians such as Paul Voisey and Lynne Marks have demonstrated that a strong sense of group identity and high levels of associational participation existed in towns not dominated by one industry or employer. Marks reveals that the “religious and leisure activities of smaller communities in late-nineteenth-century Ontario were both complex and diverse,” while Voisey argues organizations in the frontier town of Vulcan, Alberta were highly institutionalized and well patronized.⁴² However, Canada’s remote and resource towns have rarely been examined in comparative contexts. For example, historians have yet to compare company and non-company towns to see how different factors contributed to community development. Scholars seem more surprised to find evidence of a community identity in company towns, long assumed to be influenced by paternalism and instability. My research and reading lead me to believe that company towns shared many characteristics with other small towns in Canada, and developed along similar lines. However, this hypothesis must remain untested, as a comprehensive comparison of community in company and non-company towns is beyond the scope of this thesis. In examining community in a company town, I do not argue that people in these places had any stronger sense of community than people elsewhere. Instead, I

⁴¹ Clyne, *Coal People*, 43.

⁴² Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure and Identity in Late-Nineteenth-Century Southern Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 208; Paul Voisey, *Vulcan: The Making of a Prairie Community* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 167.

intend to examine and challenge historians' current approaches to the question of community in company towns. These approaches are problematic for several reasons.

To begin with, high rates of labour turnover in company towns contradict historians' images of company towns as static, insular communities. Both Crandall Shifflett and Rick Clyne demonstrate the high degree of mobility among coal miners; Clyne even argues that the large number of coal mines in southern Colorado allowed miners to move between towns until they found a satisfying situation.⁴³ During the 1940s, Washington state timber companies reported that a quarter of the workers hired at some company towns stayed only two weeks.⁴⁴ Canadian sociologist Alex Himelfarb argues this kind of transience threatens a community's stability and development.⁴⁵ How can a town exhibit cohesiveness and a common identity when it cannot retain long-term residents? While scholars generally acknowledge that resource companies began providing housing and other amenities in an effort to decrease worker transience, historians have yet to provide any quantitative evidence to demonstrate how long families remained in company towns, or measure labour turnover rates at times when community participation appeared to be high. The current approach to community exposes this contradiction without exploring it.

Arguments linking a town's sense of community to a company town's inherent characteristics are also essentialist. This interpretation assumes residents interacted and joined clubs because there was nothing else to do in isolated towns. When historians claim certain events "brought communities together," they seem to suggest an invisible

⁴³ Shifflett, *Life, Work, and Culture*, xv; Clyne, *Coal People*, 30.

⁴⁴ Carlson, *Company Towns*, 49.

⁴⁵ Alex Himelfarb, "The Social Characteristics of One-Industry Towns in Canada," in *Little Communities and Big Industries*, ed. Roy T. Bowles (Toronto: Butterworth & Co., 1982), 17.

force was at work.⁴⁶ This approach gives insufficient attention to the agency of residents, failing to examine how social relations and norms determined who was permitted to join, and who was excluded. If isolation affected everyone, why – as Jean Barman demonstrates – were some people excluded from community events? When historians assume a community's isolation, population composition, or level of company control determined levels of community involvement, they reduce community to a static entity that relied on certain conditions to exist. And when these factors changed – when roads were built or the population diversified – they assume the sense of community disappeared.

Historians' current approach posits community as a uniformly positive aspect of daily life in company towns. Under the banner of community, historians emphasize the fun activities residents enjoyed – the sports teams, dances, parades, and holiday picnics.⁴⁷ Participation in these events is considered evidence of a stable, contented populace. However, this interpretation ignores those excluded from these activities.⁴⁸ For example, how did Italian immigrants in Powell River interpret their exclusion from many town events? While certain activities are credited for building community, others – such as drinking and gambling, for example – are largely ignored, or seen as negative influences.⁴⁹ Every community has boundaries. By focusing solely on the positive aspects of community life, historians have failed to explore those boundaries, and neglected to question what the boundaries say about the values of company town residents.

⁴⁶ Carlson, *Company Towns*, 91.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 79-100.

⁴⁸ Iris Young notes that "Any move to define an identity, a closed totality, always depends on excluding some elements, separating the pure from the impure," in "The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference," *Social Theory and Practice* 12:1 (Spring 1986): 3.

⁴⁹ Mouat, *Roaring Days*, 126.

Finally, historians lack a clear definition of community. They have ignored sociologists' attempts to create a definition that reflects people's lived experiences. They have assumed their readers understand the concept of community, and have defined it simply as a static place or a desire to belong, or a shared identity. However, their common sense approach conflicts with some of their own assertions about the myriad forces that shaped residents' sense of self and limited their actions. Rosenfeld, Hinde, and others have demonstrated the influence of gender and class on social relations in single-industry towns. Men and women could be workers, parents, caregivers, and strikers. How can historians rectify these multiple identities with a definition of community that emphasizes common identity?

In order to examine the function and meaning of community in the company town of Britannia we must reject these essentialist and static approaches to community. We need to understand the concept in a way that better reflects the complexity of social interactions and identities in these places. In Britannia, community was not an abstract, uncontrollable force fostered by the town's isolated location or homogeneous population. It was not always a positive aspect of daily life,⁵⁰ nor was it a static idea that was always defined the same way.

This study defines community in two, interconnecting ways. The first posits community as a cultural construct, or discursive category of meaning. Benedict Anderson argues that all communities are imagined, a way in which people arrange their world and

⁵⁰ By "daily life" I mean the social encounters, networks, and events that occur specifically outside of regulated structures such as the workplace. This differs from Tamara Hareven's definition of "daily life," which focuses on the rhythms, patterns, and schedules the workplace imposes on daily existence. See Tamara Hareven, *Family time and industrial time: The relationship between the family and work in a New England industrial community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

determine their position within that world.⁵¹ This does not mean communities do not exist; imagining cannot be equated with fabrication or falsity in this case.⁵² We should not question a community's authenticity, but inquire how and why it was imagined in a certain way. In this approach, Britannia was a physical site where the imagined realities of residents and company officials intersected and conflicted. The company wanted their town sites to be stable, family-oriented places that would attract loyal workers. In its publicity and employee policies, BM&S imagined Britannia as a cohesive community, or family, of dedicated workers. While some residents shared this image, others saw Britannia differently. Bunkhouse residents, for example, were physically isolated from family housing, their needs and desires somewhat ignored in the planning of community events. They imagined their own community, shaped by work rhythms and a masculine, mining culture – one that clashed with their employer's community vision when workers broached the subject of unionization. By approaching community as a cultural construct, we can deconstruct the concept to reveal how it might have been used to bolster, or undermine, company hegemony in a single-industry town.

The second approach used in this study defines community as a process, a phenomenon predicated on social relations and “susceptible to change over time.”⁵³ A notion first explored by sociologists in the 1970s, historians have largely overlooked this approach.⁵⁴ It rejects the notion that the isolated, homogeneous, and controlled nature of company towns created a sense of community; instead, it argues community was made

⁵¹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Editions, 1983), 15.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 15.

⁵³ Walsh and High, “Rethinking the Concept of Community,” 261.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 258-259.

“in the social spaces of everyday interactions and exchanges.”⁵⁵ Community “can be defined better as an experience than as a place,” as something understood through relationships with others.⁵⁶ This approach allows historians to acknowledge what sociologists have argued for years: that people can belong to multiple communities simultaneously; that the ways in which people experience community changes over time; and that community, like the concepts of nation and family, involves relations of power.⁵⁷ Using this approach, Britannia’s sense of community is revealed as a product of residents’ relationships. Shaped by notions of gender, class, marital status, and race, it changed as people entered and left town, and time passed. Community was, as philosopher Mark Kingwell notes, a continuous conversation between individuals negotiating their identities and seeking their place in the world.⁵⁸

Finding evidence of this complicated, imagined, relational community in the historical sources can be difficult. Company records, replete with purchase orders for drill bits, meeting minutes, and daily production reports, offer less insight into the daily lives of employees and their families. However, as a company in charge of a community, the Britannia Mining and Smelting Company’s records contain files not usually found in corporate collections: notices to residents; lists of visitors to the property; reports of athletic events; blueprints for a new schoolhouse; and grocery store inventories. These documents hint at the company’s employee policies and community concerns. Monthly

⁵⁵ Ibid., 260.

⁵⁶ Thomas Bender, *Community and Social Change in America* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1978), 6.

⁵⁷ George S. Wood, Jr. and Juan C. Judikis, *Conversations on Community Theory* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2002), 8-12, 168-169.

⁵⁸ Mark Kingwell, *The World We Want: Virtue, Vice, and the Good Citizen* (Toronto: Penguin Books, 2000), 22.

newsletters, published by the employees' social clubs, also reveal more about residents' interests and involvement in community activities.

In addition to written sources, my research includes 32 oral interviews with former Britannia residents. I conducted five of these interviews myself; the balance comes from the Britannia Mines Oral History Project, supervised by Dianne Newell of the University of British Columbia. Dr. Newell's undergraduate history students interviewed 65 former Britannia residents in 1987 and 1988. I listened to these interviews and used 27 of them extensively. Although Dr. Newell's students were asked to focus their questions, many of the interviews were open-ended, and the subjects reflected freely on their experiences. I followed the same open-ended format in my interviewing, allowing the interviewee to guide the discussion as much as possible. Those interviewed represent Britannia's diverse inhabitants; as residents, their occupations, ages, and experiences varied. However, these interviews were conducted voluntarily, and former residents with painful memories of Britannia are less likely to be represented in this sample. Also, few former bunkhouse dwellers were interviewed, meaning the voices of married employees are heard more than single, more transient workers.⁵⁹

Historians have often questioned the use of personal interviews as historical sources. Memory is fallible and changing. A story retold is "a memory of the past read through the present"⁶⁰; the storyteller omits details, edits content, and reorders her narrative with each telling. Yet, by diminishing the value of oral history for its possible inaccuracy, scholars overlook the valuable contribution personal narratives can make to

⁵⁹ For a full list of interview subjects, their occupations, marital status, and period of habitation at Britannia, please see Appendix A. I have also included my interview questions.

⁶⁰ Leslie Robertson, *Imagining Difference: Legend, Curse and Spectacle in a Canadian Mining Town* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 39.

the historical record. As historian John Tosh argues, a “direct encounter with the past,” either through written or oral sources, is impossible.⁶¹ All historical sources are subjective and contextual. Oral accounts offer us “versions of the past,” versions often not found in official and written records.⁶² When I conducted my interviews, accuracy was not my primary goal. Instead, I sought personal accounts, in which I hoped “error, inventions, and myth [would] lead us through and beyond facts to their meanings.”⁶³ I wanted to know how people remembered the town, and understand their relationships with other residents. Thus, while many former Britannia residents were unavoidably nostalgic about their lives at the Beach or Townsite, most sincerely tried to remember their day-to-day experiences and attitudes, and many refused to answer questions if they did not feel qualified to comment. What they emphasized helps reveal, not only Britannia’s social dynamics and networks, but also what the concept of community meant to residents of a company town.

I have organized my research into three chapters. The first explores the policies and publicity of the Britannia Mining & Smelting Company, and argues the company used the notion of community as a tool to encourage loyalty and stability in its workforce. In its approach to employee initiatives, unionization, housing, and recreation, BM&S imagined the Beach and Townsite as cohesive communities. Despite these efforts, labour turnover rates were consistently high. My second chapter examines how the residents of Britannia complicated the company’s imaginings with their own. Marital status, and to a

⁶¹ John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of Modern History* (New York, Longman, 1991), 303.

⁶² Alessandro Portelli, *The Battle of Valle Giulia: Oral History and the Art of Dialogue* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), 57.

⁶³ Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and other stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 2.

lesser extent, gender, occupation, and ethnicity, set the boundaries of the community and influenced the residents' participation in associations, clubs, and events. While Britannia was home for many residents, for others it was no more than a bunkhouse to rest one's head. Community gave some residents a measure of autonomy in the face of company control, but it divided and silenced others. These divisions deepened when the company threatened to shut down operations in Britannia. My third chapter compares two such shutdown periods, in 1958 and 1964, to determine whether community was, as Steven High puts it, "a significantly empowering myth" to unite residents against the closure of the mine and the destruction of their homes.⁶⁴ While in 1958 residents grudgingly accepted the mine's temporary closure, in 1964 residents rallied to oppose the company's plans to close the mine. Between 1958 and 1964 residents' understanding of their community had changed, and this chapter will explore these changes and their meanings.

Scholars of various disciplines have examined Canada's company towns. However, the community-focused approach I have outlined more fully exposes the concept's diverse functions and meanings in the context of a company town. Britannia's story, previously and partially told, deserves a deeper exploration.

⁶⁴ Steven High, *Industrial Sunset: The Making of the North American Rust Belt, 1969-1984* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 9.

Chapter 2

“That Touch of Paternalism”: The Company Imagines Britannia

In 1925, BM&S's general manager, Carleton Perkins Browning, wrote a report for the Department of Overseas Trade in Ottawa, detailing the living conditions in the company's Howe Sound communities. Browning's letter described the Beach and Townsite as bustling, contented places. Both towns were equipped with gymnasiums, reading rooms, and dance floors, he boasted; there was a well-equipped hospital where most services were free, and a co-operative store, where residents received dividends based on their purchases. Workers lived in well-appointed cottages, played basketball and baseball, and enjoyed educational lectures and safety displays. “It is the desire and policy of this Company,” Browning emphasized, “to foster general community spirit, and welfare work, without that touch of paternalism which is detrimental to the general success of such movements.”¹

Ironically, that touch of paternalism Browning sought to avoid was often present in relations between the company and the communities. Browning's letter demonstrates two important aspects of the Britannia Mining & Smelting Company, Limited, both of which will be explored in this chapter. First, his letter is an example of company publicity, which typically highlighted the communities' many amenities and the residents' harmonious associations. More crucially, Browning's statement also illustrates the company's approach to employer-employee relations. A graduate of the Columbia School of Mines, Browning was a student of management theory, influenced by both

¹ British Columbia Archives (hereafter BCARS), Britannia Mining & Smelting Company, Limited (hereafter BM&S), MS1221, Box 20, File 57, Letter from Browning to Department of Overseas Trade, May 1925.

ideas of corporate welfare and notions of engineered efficiency.² His tenure as Britannia's general manager marked a change in company-community relations. While his predecessor had strictly enforced a litany of company rules, Browning recognized that a heavy-handed management style would fuel workers' discontent. He encouraged more equitable relations between company officials, workers, and residents. From Browning's appointment in 1922 until the company's dissolution in the early 1960s, management strove to make their town sites stable, cohesive communities without seeming to interfere with residents' autonomy.³ Company publicity, such as Browning's 1925 letter, painted an idyllic picture of Britannia as the company imagined it – picturesque town sites populated by industrious, loyal workers and their families, all dedicated to the business of extracting and processing copper ore. Publicly, they avoided mentioning their financial and moral role in community development. However, company officials were not always able to avoid paternalism. Britannia's policies regarding employee benefits, unionization, the company store, housing, and recreation reflected the kind of community the company hoped to foster. These policies favoured married workers, encouraged families to settle in the town sites, and promoted unity among residents. This chapter will examine these policies and demonstrate how BM&S tried to balance residents' autonomy with "that touch of paternalism" to foster a stable and cohesive community in Britannia.

The company saw stability and cohesion as desirable characteristics for its communities because Britannia's workforce was decidedly unstable. The majority of its

² Logan Hovis, "Technological Change and Mining Labour: Copper Mining and Milling Operations at the Britannia Mines, British Columbia, 1898-1937" (MA Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1986), 94.

³ At the same time, other resource companies were also beginning to use physical and social planning techniques in their communities. Larry McCann specifically mentions Kipawa Fibre Company, which built Temiskaming, Quebec, as a "model industrial community that would attract and hold the best class of men." See McCann, "Canadian Resource Towns," 236.

employees were mobile labourers, unmarried men who moved between resource sector jobs. As a result, the company's payroll fluctuated constantly. Between 1940 and 1956, for example, labour turnover rates averaged 64 to 145 per cent of the total workforce, the equivalent of replacing the entire workforce in some years.⁴ The company often had to hire hundreds of workers annually to maintain production levels.

Turnover rates were not always high, but fluctuated with labour conditions. For example, in 1947 the company predicted that a recent scarcity of jobs in Vancouver would be "reflected in the attitude of the men drifting around from one job to another."⁵ When fewer jobs were available in Vancouver, company officials expected transience to decrease. Conversely, when labour was in demand, as it was during the Second World War, the company was more likely to lose workers who anticipated higher wages elsewhere.⁶ Turnover rates also changed with the seasons. Many men worked at Britannia during the winter seasons, and spent the summers fishing or logging. As a result, turnover was particularly high in the spring and fall months, as employees left for seasonal jobs and then returned when the weather turned colder. The company's 1949 Annual Report demonstrates this trend. During the winter months, the "payroll was kept up to strength," it noted, but "in April, the usual spring exodus commenced and continued until June." The summer months were quiet, the report continued, "until October, when substantial increases were recorded each month to the year-end."⁷ Not all workers hired were new employees; 66 per cent of workers hired in the fall of 1948, and half of those hired in

⁴ Compiled from BM&S Annual Reports. BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Boxes 4-6, Annual Reports, 1940-1956.

⁵ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 5, File 2, 1947 Annual Report.

⁶ See Annual Reports, particularly 1941 and 1942. BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 3, Files 3 and 7.

⁷ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 5, File 9, 1949 Annual Report, 35.

1949 had worked at Britannia before.⁸ Indeed, many worked at Britannia repeatedly. A survey of 384 employees reveals that 29 per cent worked at Britannia for at least two different periods. Some returned five or six times in different capacities, working as muckers underground, or as general labourers in the mill.⁹ Thus, the community's population was never stable. People were constantly leaving and arriving in – or returning to – Britannia.

The company disliked high turnover because it was costly, time-consuming, and inefficient. New employees had to be deemed physically fit by the company doctor, given a tour of the property, and trained, all of which cost staff members time and money. Britannia was a low-grade copper mine that used non-selective techniques to remove large amounts of ore, and employed technological methods to process the ore. To remain profitable, the company had to extract as much copper from the ore as efficiently as possible. To achieve this efficiency, employees worked in teams under the supervision of foremen, who were directed by one of the company's many engineers.¹⁰ The majority of workers in the operation were not skilled miners, but non- and semi-skilled workers employed as muckers, hoistmen, timbermen, and trammers. Unlike the miners of previous generations who had learned about all aspects of the mining process, these men were only trained for specific tasks. They were "machine tender[s] concerned more with the quantity rather than the quality of production."¹¹ While they were not as skilled as miners, they were considered "more obedient and industrious," and when part of a larger

⁸ 1948 Annual Report, pg.49, BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 5, File 5 and 9, 1948 Annual Report, 49; 1949 Annual Report.

⁹ This was a small sample of the employment cards from the 1950s. University of British Columbia Special Collections (hereafter UBC SpColl), Howe Sound Company Records, Tray 9, Employment Cards.

¹⁰ Hovis, "Technological Change and Mining Labour," 28.

¹¹ Logan Hovis and Jeremy Mouat, "Miners, Engineers, and the Transformation of Work in the Western Mining Industry, 1880-1930," *Technology and Culture* (1996): 434, 455.

operating system, cheaper to employ.¹² However, when turnover rates were high, mining teams staffed by inexperienced employees worked more slowly, were more likely to have accidents, and were therefore less likely to achieve the efficiency the company desired.

Employing a large number of single, transient men benefited the company when copper prices were low, because management could shrink its payroll simply by not hiring new employees to replace those who left. A large transient element added desirable flexibility to an operation exposed to the whims of world commodity prices. For this reason, management did not want to eliminate labour turnover completely – nor did it believe it could. Employing a group of transient single men allowed the company to control the size of the payroll without laying off its more experienced employees. While a certain amount of labour turnover was desirable, most of the time the company saw transience as an expensive and “pressing problem” – one it hoped to fix by fostering stable communities at the Beach and Townsite.¹³

The company instituted several employee benefit schemes in an attempt to lower labour turnover. To encourage stability, these benefits were contingent on employee loyalty. For example, the company carried a Group Life Insurance Plan, as reported in one trade magazine, “at no expense to the employee.”¹⁴ However, only employees with at least three years of continuous employment were eligible for the 1,500-dollar coverage.¹⁵ The plan rewarded dedicated employees, and encouraged transient and seasonal workers to consider remaining in Britannia permanently. The copper bonus was another company

¹² From the definition of “Miner” included in the *Engineering and Mining Journal*, 1913. Quoted in Hovis, “Technological Change and Mining Labour,” 25.

¹³ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 74, File 52, Letter to G.C. Lipsey from George Hurley, 20 March 1956.

¹⁴ “A Visit to Britannia” *Western Miner* (December 1948): 76.

¹⁵ The Group Life Insurance Plan was instituted in 1926. BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 3, File 1, 1925 Annual Report, 15; “A Visit to Britannia,” 76.

incentive system. Initiated in 1929, the copper bonus tied workers' wages to the selling price of copper. When copper prices increased by a pre-determined amount in any six-month period, employees earned an additional 25 cents per shift. Conversely, when prices fell, bonuses were rescinded, and daily earnings decreased until they reached a base rate.¹⁶ Since both salaried and waged employees lost their bonuses when prices fell, the company believed the copper bonus would encourage feelings of unity and shared purpose to mute occupational differences. Bonuses affected the mine superintendent and engineer as much as the timberman and mucker; there was no deferential treatment of managers to spark resentment among mine and mill workers. By exposing employees to the variability of the world market, workers "assumed a portion of the entrepreneurial risk, tying their fortunes to those of their employer."¹⁷ Employees could watch the price rise and fall, taking a personal interest in the company's development and success. The bonus also eliminated the need for unpopular wage reductions when markets were poor. "Should copper prices again fall," company president H.H. Sharp wrote Browning in 1937, "...reductions in wages will come automatically."¹⁸ The company could not control world prices, so it believed it could not be blamed for decreased earnings.¹⁹ Similarly, because of the bonus, employees would know when prices were low, and might be less likely to demand higher pay. In 1937, company vice president J. Quigly cited years of strike- and union-free operations at Britannia as proof that the copper bonus had successfully "obviate[ed] any dissatisfaction among employees."²⁰ Using incentives like

¹⁶ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 71, File 1.

¹⁷ Hovis and Mouat, "Miners, Engineers, and the Transformation of Work," 452.

¹⁸ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 71, File 1.

¹⁹ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 71, File 1, Letter from vice president W.J. Quigly to C.P. Browning, 12 March 1937.

²⁰ Ibid.

life insurance and wage bonuses, BM&S hoped to attract long-term workers, decrease transience, and cultivate satisfaction and cohesion among employees. While labour turnover rates did decrease after the implementation of these policies, the collapse of the job market with the onset of the Great Depression likely affected workers' movements more than company benefit schemes.

The company's ardent anti-union policy also reflected the company's vision of harmonious employer-employee relations in its communities. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, there was no place for worker solidarity in management's imagined, stable community of loyal employees. The company believed a union would only organize waged workers against their employer, dividing the community. It resisted all unionization attempts. The International Workers of the World (Wobblies) made an unsuccessful attempt to organize Britannia's workforce in 1913, as did the Western Federation of Miners in 1906 and 1917. Then-manager John Moodie had only to fire the organizers and order them off the property to quell any union drive.²¹ Although the company opposed unionization, it did not turn a completely deaf ear to workers' grievances. When most of the underground crews walked off the job in March 1920 to protest low wages and poor living conditions, Browning acknowledged their complaints. The workers received a fifty-cent raise, and bunkhouse and cookhouse conditions were improved.²² However, Browning refused to re-hire the walkout participants, preferring to operate short-handed for a few months "in order to keep out undesirables."²³ Again, in 1939, employees circulating a petition to create a union were fired or marked for

²¹ Ramsey, *Britannia*, 97-98.

²² Town, *Lively Ghost*, 59-60.

²³ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 1, File 7, 1920 Annual Report, 16-17.

dismissal at the earliest opportunity.²⁴ The company viewed outspoken employees as dangerous agitators who lacked the loyalty and unity management was trying to promote. They did not believe protestors represented the majority of the workforce.

However, the company was soon forced to modify its strict anti-union position. In August 1943, Harvey Murphy of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers convinced fifty-one percent of Britannia's employees to sign union cards. Browning reportedly responded magnanimously, claiming the union was now "one of the family of Britannia."²⁵ Browning's acceptance of the union may appear unusual at first. However, wartime labour conditions and changes in labour legislation help to explain the company's abrupt policy change. It was the Second World War, and the company was suffering chronic labour shortages.²⁶ High-paying jobs in wartime industries had lured skilled workers away from Britannia, and management was more likely to co-operate with workers' demands in these circumstances. At the same time, Mackenzie King's government was reconsidering its labour policy. Previously, the government had allowed employers to decide when – and if – they would recognize and negotiate with their workers' unions. This changed in February 1944, when King's Liberal government instituted Privy Council Order 1003, which recognized employees' right to elect representatives and bargain with employers.²⁷ However, far from heralding a breakthrough for the trade union movement, historian Bryan Palmer argues PC 1003 simply made unionization more palatable to employers, and, in fact, severely limited the

²⁴ Ramsey, *Britannia*, 98.

²⁵ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 4, File 11, 1943 Annual Report; Browning quoted in Ramsey, *Britannia*, 103.

²⁶ See Annual Reports, particularly 1941 and 1942. BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 3, Files 3 and 7.

²⁷ Bryan Palmer, *Working-Class Experience: rethinking the history of Canadian labour, 1800-1991* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992), 279-280.

ways in which workers could voice their grievances. For example, it made strikes legal only under specific circumstances, and stipulated that employers and employees make every effort to reach a collective agreement.²⁸ The new regulations suited the company just fine. In its 1944 Annual Report, the company applauded the regulations that “made it an offence to strike or have a lockout until fourteen days after a conciliation board had reported on the dispute.”²⁹ With this legislation in place, a unionized workforce became a less threatening prospect for Britannia’s management.

Despite accepting the union’s formation, the company still did not believe the union would encourage stability and cohesion at the Beach and Townsite communities. Management continued to approach the union as an outside body that did not have the best interests of Britannia residents at heart. If, before 1943, the company had encouraged residents to be united without the union, it now promoted cohesion despite the union. This attitude was evident during the union’s first strike in 1946. Shortly before the strike began, Browning personally appealed to workers in a posted notice to all residents. He called the strike illegal, and appealed nostalgically to the imagined employer-employee harmony of the pre-union era. The strike would jeopardize “the labor traditions of this property built up over many years,” he argued, “with resulting misunderstandings and unhappiness for all that would take years to erase.”³⁰ Leaders of the international union, he asserted, could not be familiar with the favourable living conditions the company offered at Britannia. The company branded union leaders outsiders, encouraging residents to reject union arguments and band together to exclude the union from the community.

²⁸ Ibid., 280.

²⁹ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 4, File 14, 1944 Annual Report, 30.

³⁰ British Columbia Mining Museum (hereafter BCMM), Archie Smith Papers (hereafter ASP), 2687, Notice to all Britannia employees from C.P. Browning, 27 June 1946.

After the strike began, another notice was posted. In it, Browning implied that most workers were against the strike, and implored them to register their “real attitude” to the bargaining committee. He accused the union of engineering the strike, and called for co-operation. “Only by such cooperation [sic] in contrast to disunity can this property operate successfully,” he argued. “Why not try to make it work now as it has in the past?”³¹ The company was trying to convince residents that the union had unnecessarily soured labour relations. It appealed to community unity and loyalty to end the strike. Throughout the post-war years management continued, as assistant manager Tim Waterland wrote to general manager George Lipsey in a 1956 letter, to try to “break down the anti-company policy of the Union.”³² It used the union’s activities to encourage loyalty and cohesion among residents, claiming that the union’s demands were dividing a united community.

While the company’s employee benefit schemes encouraged workers to stay on the job, its store, housing, and recreation policies tried to persuade employees to settle permanently in the Beach or Townsite. For company officials, family was synonymous with stability, and if more married workers could be convinced to bring their wives and children to Britannia, management believed labour turnover rates would decrease. “A married man cannot move around as easily as a single man,” Secretary-Treasurer J.E. Nelson noted, and other staff members agreed.³³ Hotel Supervisor T.D. McClellan observed that “the married man who has his family here seems to be more content, works

³¹ BCMM, ASP, 2687, Bulletin to all employees from C.P. Browning, 2 October 1946.

³² BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 74, File 52, Letter to G.C. Lipsey from T.M. Waterland, 29 March 1956.

³³ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 74, File 52, Letter to G.C. Lipsey from J.E. Nelson, 17 March 1956.

more steadily and on the whole is a more desirable citizen.”³⁴ This was the kind of worker the company wanted: a family man, devoted to his work and employer, and less likely to find grievance with the company or seek employment elsewhere. Company records reveal that, indeed, single employees were more transient than their married co-workers. Between 1924 and 1942, an average of only 40 per cent of the more transient, waged mine and mill workers were married. Often the percentage was much lower.³⁵ In contrast, an average of 67 per cent of the salaried office workers, foremen, engineers, and managers were married during the same period (see Figure 1).³⁶ These employees were much more likely to remain in Britannia for many years. It is likely their salaries, as well as their marital status, affected their decision to stay at the mine. Yet marriage exerted its own palpable influence; even among the unsalaried mine and mill workers, data calculated from a 1951 report reveals that married employees had been working for the company an average of one-third longer than unmarried employees.³⁷ Married workers were indeed more stable, and company officials believed that “any consideration which can be given to increasing the proportion of suitably housed married employees will be consideration [sic] towards decreasing the rate of turnover.”³⁸ To that end, management tried to make its policies family-friendly to attract more married workers, while avoiding paternalistic practices that might breed discontent.

BM&S’s company store policy also demonstrates management’s desire to make Britannia a stable, family-oriented place without appearing to assert excessive influence

³⁴ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 74, File 52, Letter to G.C. Lipsey from T.D. McClelland, 21 March 1956.

³⁵ Marital status data taken from reports on employee earnings, BCARS, BM&S, MS1221 Box 7, Files 4-8.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Compiled from data in company report. BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 72, File 4, Mining and Milling Employee Information, 1951.

³⁸ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 74, File 52, Letter to G.C. Lipsey from L. Allan, 17 March 1956.

over its employees. Historically, the company store has been a potent symbol of employer control in company towns. Memoirs, novels, films, and songs have often claimed miners “owed their souls to the company store.” Indeed, in many remote resource towns, the local store offered little selection and high prices. For example, the store in the lumber town of Mowich, Oregon, rarely carried more than kerosene, coffee, canned goods, and soap.³⁹ Companies deducted purchases from workers’ paycheques, and, more commonly in American company towns, employers paid workers in their own currency, or scrip, which could be used only at the company store.⁴⁰ In Port Gamble, Washington, the paymaster’s office was located in the store; consequently, very little company money ever left the building.⁴¹ Although some scholars have argued that relatively few miners were in debt at company stores, and that stores’ monopolies were limited, the company store continues to be a symbol of oppressive employer policies.⁴²

Britannia’s management tried to avoid the negative image of the company store. In response to residents’ complaints about store prices, stock, and management, the company in 1922 announced it would convert its two stores into consumer co-operatives. Co-operatives are collectively owned organizations in which any profit earned is divided among its members according to their patronage of the co-op. Quite common across Canada by the 1920s, co-operatives were often formed in response to traditional capitalism; as economically democratic organizations, they rejected the privilege of

³⁹ Carlson, *Company Towns*, 104.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 101.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 105.

⁴² See, for example, Price V. Fishback, “Did Coal Miners ‘Owe Their Souls to the Company Store’? Theory and Evidence from the Early 1900s,” *Journal of Economic History* 46:4 (December 1986), 1011-1029.

invested capital, allowing each member a single, and equal, vote at annual general meetings.⁴³ It appeared the company was giving residents control of store management.

However, while Britannia's stores became co-operatives in name, strictly speaking they were not co-operatives. Store ownership remained in the hands of the company, and store managers were still company employees – accountable to management, not residents. Instead of handing store ownership to employees, the company created two Stores Committees, each comprised of four elected representatives from the Beach and Townsite. These representatives met regularly with store managers “for the purpose of making suggestions for the betterment of service and to present complaints.”⁴⁴ The company also instituted a dividend, returning the store's profits to residents. The more employees bought, the greater their bi-annual dividend.⁴⁵ The dividend effectively curbed residents' complaints about store prices; from management's perspective, residents could not accuse the company of gouging them because employees and their families received store surpluses. Those who disliked the merchandise could have their say by running for the Stores Committee. Company officials liked the plan because, as management told the *Mining and Engineering Record* in 1923, it would “enlist the interest of the employees in the operation of the store,” and promised “to work out to the benefit and mutual satisfaction of all parties concerned.”⁴⁶ Residents' grievances were addressed, and the company maintained ultimate control of the stores – management believed everyone was happy.

⁴³ Ian MacPherson, *Each for All: A History of the Co-operative Movement in English Canada, 1900-1945* (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada, 1979), 2.

⁴⁴ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 64, File 20, “Britannia Stores – Rules for Operation Under Co-operative Plan.”

⁴⁵ Town, *The Lively Ghost*, 69.

⁴⁶ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 120, File 41, *Mining and Engineering Record* (February 1923).

The scheme was also beneficial for the company's image. Nearly every article published about Britannia in newspapers, magazines, and trade journals mentioned the co-operative store and the company's magnanimous dividend program, considered "much more fairer and satisfactory" than the traditional company store.⁴⁷ Articles usually also mentioned the extent to which residents had benefited from the scheme; one 1948 article noted that "rebates have totalled over half a million dollars since the inauguration of the plan."⁴⁸ The article did not indicate how much an average family could expect to receive each year. The figure was meant to impress readers – how could any employer so generous ever treat its employees unfairly? Company officials wanted potential article readers to envision Britannia as a desirable place to work and live, a place where the employer treated residents equitably by seemingly giving them control of an important community institution. The co-operative stores were part of this image.

Beyond placating current residents and attracting new ones, the co-operative stores' policy also allowed the company to reward certain employees for their loyalty and service. The stores' "Rules for Operation Under Co-operative Plan" stipulated that only those continuously employed for three months prior to the rebate would receive a dividend. In addition, the rules declared that workers employed only sporadically during a six-month period would only be rebated for purchases made during the most recent period of employment. Thus, seasonal and transient employees were less likely to benefit from the co-operative stores scheme than their more stable, usually married co-workers. Like the Group Insurance Plan, the dividend was an incentive to settle more permanently in Britannia. The company also limited membership on the Stores Committee to married

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ "A Visit to Britannia," 76.

employees with resident families, because they were more likely to be permanently settled residents able to serve on the committee for a full term.⁴⁹ Thus, only those the company identified as stable and dedicated employees were given a voice in store management. While the company gave residents more control of community institutions such as the store, this was done in a way that encouraged the stability and loyalty the company desired.

Housing was another area where the company cautiously used its authority to influence community development. As historian Eileen Goltz argues in her examination of Copper Cliff, a mining town outside of Sudbury, Ontario, “house rentals [and] land leases ... provided the company with powerful weapons of social control over the workforce.”⁵⁰ Companies used these “weapons” differently. For example, before the Second World War in Copper Cliff, the company only allowed Anglo-Saxons to rent houses, and gave preference to skilled workers, professional, and managerial staff.⁵¹ Conversely, sociologist Rex Lucas found that in several post-war resource communities, companies based housing allocations on family size rather than class or racial distinctions.⁵² In Britannia, the company considered both the worker’s occupation and family size when allocating housing. Although the general manager and superintendents lived in larger residences, the majority of employees were assigned houses based on family size. Single workers and employees without resident families lived in the

⁴⁹ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 64, File 20, “Britannia Stores – Rules for Operation Under Co-operative Plan.”

⁵⁰ Eileen Goltz, “The Image and the Reality of Life in a Northern Ontario Company-Owned Town,” in *At the End of the Shift: Mines and Single-Industry Towns in Northern Ontario*, eds. Matt Bray and Ashley Thomson (Toronto: Dundurn Press Limited, 1992), 65. McCann also argues that the “residential pattern of the modern resource town is differentiated principally by social class.” See McCann, “Canadian Resource Towns,” 252.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 68.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 85; Lucas, *Minetown, Milltown, Railtown*, 63.

company's bunkhouses. Bunkhouses and family homes were built at opposite ends of the town sites, separating married and unmarried employees. Housing policies, like employee incentives and the co-operative stores scheme, favoured married workers. The housing policy allowed the company to control the size and population composition of the Beach and Townsite. It also acted as a check on residents' behaviour. Former resident Kay Pickard remembered a particular family that was asked to leave because of their daughter's alleged promiscuity.⁵³ By maintaining ownership of all houses, the company was in a better position to shape the communities – both physically and morally.

The company also used its low-rental houses to attract employees. While Lucas and others have argued officials in many company towns began divesting themselves of the costly responsibility of housing workers as soon as enough employees were recruited, there is no evidence to indicate BM&S wanted to sell its houses to employees.⁵⁴ Instead, it continued to rent houses for one dollar per room per month throughout the post-war years – a rate significantly cheaper than the cost of similar lodgings in nearby Vancouver.⁵⁵ While the company earned consistent, if modest, profits from their houses and bunkhouses during the 1920s and 1930s, their expenses rose sharply in the 1940s and 1950s as older buildings needed repair and new buildings had to be constructed. Though the company spent nearly half a million dollars between 1941 and 1956, it did not raise rental prices.⁵⁶ Low rents acted as an incentive, discouraging workers already living in

⁵³ Interview with Kay Pickard, 24 September 2004.

⁵⁴ See Lucas, *Minetown, Milltown, Railtown*, 72; Stelter and Artibise, "Canadian Resource Towns," 52. Similarly, Robert Robson argues company involvement in the community of Flin Flon was directly related to labour supply; when a stable group of employees was achieved, it began withdrawing from community affairs. See Robson, "Flin Flon: A Study of Company-Community Relations in a Single-Enterprise Community," *Urban History Review* 7:3 (February 1984): 29.

⁵⁵ Similar sized homes in Vancouver during the 1940s and 50s rented for between 40 and 140 dollars per month. *Province*, February 1945 – January 1957.

⁵⁶ From Annual Reports, 1941-1956. BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Boxes 3-6.

company houses from seeking employment elsewhere, and encouraging bunkhouse men with wives and children in Vancouver to continue working at Britannia in the hopes of soon receiving houses for their families. Several employees, including miner Al McNair, waited more than six months to be assigned a house.⁵⁷ After the Second World War, a housing shortage at the Beach and Townsite meant there were more married men living in the bunkhouses. The company knew these workers were less likely to remain in Britannia for long, and began constructing several new apartment blocks to house their families. “Married men find it very onerous to live [in the bunkhouses] and support a family in Vancouver or district,” assistant mine superintendent A.T. Smith noted. These men stayed only until “they can get something better – which usually means a job in Vancouver.”⁵⁸ Management recognized that insufficient housing was one of the main causes of labour turnover, and was willing to incur some financial loss in order to secure a more loyal and long-term workforce of married men. Although many workers would probably have liked to own their own home, a low-rent, maintenance-free company house was an attractive alternative. “A reasonably good house at a low rent is a great boon to any married man,” company doctor J.H. Lindsay told general manager Lipsey in 1956. He believed “more houses will mean more contented employees.”⁵⁹ While resource companies increasingly sold their houses to employees in the post-war years, to save the money and time needed to manage company housing, BM&S remained the sole property owner in Britannia. It managed and maintained all houses despite its desire to avoid paternalism. Allowing workers to own their homes might have encouraged greater stability by creating a more permanent community where workers could continue living

⁵⁷ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-29, Interview with Al McNair.

⁵⁸ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 74, File 52, Letter from A.T. Smith to G.C. Lipsey, 20 March 1956.

⁵⁹ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 74, File 52, Letter from J.H. Lindsay to G.C. Lipsey, 1 June 1956.

after retirement and their children could build homes nearby. However, the company's housing policy demonstrates that BM&S wanted to retain control to ensure only loyal, married employees received houses, and to attract more married workers with low rents.

The company's approach to its employee's leisure time demonstrates the same cautious fostering of stability and cohesion as its housing and company store policies. Historically, recreation programmes have often been "legitimizing instruments," used to instil specific values in, or convey certain messages to, the populace.⁶⁰ Indeed, BM&S management believed recreational facilities and social activities would keep workers occupied and content, less likely to complain about their work or look for jobs elsewhere.⁶¹ The company believed recreation programmes could help "regulate popular values" in the town sites.⁶² At the same time, they wanted to avoid making extensive financial investments or provoking complaints of company interference from town residents. A 1948 article in the *Western Miner* magazine reveals the image the company hoped to convey about its involvement in community life. Describing the Beach and Townsite to readers, its author lists a number of local organizations, from the Legion to the Ladies' Aid.⁶³ Most of the associations included were branches of well-known national organizations, or variations on the community groups that existed in many small Canadian towns. The list demonstrated the diversity of activities available to Britannia residents, while the article emphasized local organizations' independence from the

⁶⁰ See, for example, historian Shirley Tillotson's examination of public recreation programmes in post-war Ontario. Tillotson, *The Public at Play: Gender and the Politics of Recreation in Post-War Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 4.

⁶¹ Robert Robson argues this was a common approach among resource companies during the twentieth century. Robson, "Idle Hands on the Resource Frontier," *Journal of American Culture* 14:4 (1991), 11.

⁶² Tillotson, *Public at Play*, 15.

⁶³ See Appendix B for full list of organizations and associations active at the Beach and Townsite, as mentioned in Annual Reports and community newspapers. "A Visit to Britannia," 78.

company. Company officials, who wrote the article themselves, did not want to be perceived as being in control of their employees' leisure pursuits.

However, the company was more involved in fostering recreation than *Western Miner* readers were led to believe, and in several ways. To begin with, Britannia's associations had to meet with company approval. Management was not officially involved in running these organizations, but it maintained the right to decide which clubs and groups would be allowed to form. In 1927, a member of the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes wrote to general manager Browning requesting permission to open a lodge at Britannia for the approximately one hundred workers who belonged to the order.⁶⁴ Browning denied the appeal, claiming the company had "had similar requests from one or two other contemporary organisations, and in each case we have had to advise them that we could not grant this privilege." The company disapproved of secret fraternities like the Buffaloes because they excluded certain members of the community and did not foster the cohesiveness and unity of purpose the company desired. Browning told the Buffaloes that if the members wished, they could host a dance in town. The company approved of "such an affair" because in the past "it has been the custom for all of the community to attend."⁶⁵

While it discouraged exclusive associations, the company eagerly supported sports leagues and team competition. Teams of engineers, miners, office staff, and mill workers frequently vied for bragging rights on the baseball field and basketball court. Several historians have demonstrated that companies often used sports competition to

⁶⁴ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 26, File 14, Letter from F. Richards to C.P. Browning, 3 November 1927.

⁶⁵ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 26, File 14, Letter from C.P. Browning to F. Richards, 19 November 1927.

alleviate tensions between workers and management and turn employees' attention away from the workplace.⁶⁶ Though there is no concrete evidence to suggest BM&S consciously promoted sports for these reasons, it is clear the company wanted to encourage organizations and activities that included all residents – those that would promote a “common identity of participant to replace divisive ones of status.”⁶⁷

Furthermore, company officials often used their own moral judgment to influence recreation and social events, and encouraged family-oriented leisure activities. In 1925, the Canadian National Theatre Company wrote to Browning, requesting permission to perform *The Rose of the Camerons* in town. Browning solicited information about the play from BM&S's lawyer, D.N. Hossie. Hossie responded that he personally believed the show “would not be very attractive” and claimed the script had “little if any merit.”⁶⁸ Based on this judgment, Browning refused the company permission to perform. Management took an equally cautious attitude when hiring recreational directors, requesting that applicants recommended by the Young Men's Christian Association be young, single individuals “whose morals are sound.”⁶⁹ When members of the Britannia Mines Social Club proposed opening a beer parlour at the Townsite in 1951, the company only agreed on the condition that no women be allowed, and that several staff members be given permanent places on the parlour's organizing committee.⁷⁰ Company officials believed it was their job to protect residents by ensuring their entertainment, and those who provided it, met certain standards.

⁶⁶ See, for example, Lisa M. Fine, “‘Our Big Factory Family’: Masculinity and Paternalism at the Reo Motor Car Company of Lansing, Michigan,” *Labor History* 34:2-3 (1993), 274-291; Mercier, *Anaconda*, 20.

⁶⁷ Tillotson, *Public at Play*, 82.

⁶⁸ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 14, File 56, Letter from D.H. Hossie to C.P. Browning, 9 March 1925.

⁶⁹ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 14, File 56, Letter from mine superintendent to YMCA General Secretary, 6 May 1925.

⁷⁰ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 53, File 57, Notice, May 10, 1951.

Management also made families and children a priority when planning recreational events. If Britannia was seen as a good place to raise children, company officials believed more workers would make the Beach or Townsite their permanent home. The company donated money to the Boy Scouts and built playgrounds for resident children.⁷¹ The annual Victoria Day and Dominion Day celebrations were clearly planned with families in mind; they were alcohol-free events, characterized by children's races and baseball games. The highlight of the Victoria Day holiday was the crowning of the Copper Queen, a resident adolescent girl chosen by her classmates. After an elaborate pageant, in which many local children acted as princesses and pageboys to the incumbent queen, the girl was "fittingly crowned" with a copper tiara.⁷² This ceremony not only visually reminded residents of the metal (and the company) to which they owed their livelihood, but also demonstrated the company's pride in its families by parading the community's children in a public ceremony. Children were a symbol of the stable community the company imagined – physical proof of a permanent and dedicated workforce. Halloween and Christmas parties were similarly organized with children in mind. Although all employees were invited to these events, fewer single men attended, likely preferring a card game with friends to an egg-toss with a ten-year-old.

The company also consistently invested money in recreation and social facilities at both the Beach and Townsite. The company built two gymnasiums in 1925 at a cost of more than 10,000 dollars.⁷³ The following year it built a bowling alley at the remote

⁷¹ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Boxes 1-6, Analysis of Employee Welfare Spending, Annual Reports, 1924-1956.

⁷² BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 1, File 10, 1926 Annual Report, 143.

⁷³ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 1, File 7, 1925 Annual Report, 8.

Victoria Camp.⁷⁴ Between 1924 and 1956, the company contributed an average of 1,700 dollars annually to maintain and expand the gymnasiums and clubrooms, pay for a recreation director, and provide a movie hall.⁷⁵ While this was a small portion of the company's overall operating budget – usually amounting to a cost of 10 cents per ton of ore milled – it demonstrates management's continuous commitment to fostering recreation and social interaction at Britannia.⁷⁶ When Browning's successor, E.C. Roper, suggested the company save money by discontinuing the annual distribution of a free Christmas turkey to each resident family, company president H.H. Sharp disagreed: "while [it] is a lot of money to us now," he told Roper, "we should probably lose more in good will than we could save if we do not make the distribution."⁷⁷ BM&S recognized social activities as "factor[s] for good in the communities," and thus wanted to encourage them as much as possible within the company's financial means.⁷⁸

Finally, the company created two social clubs – the Britannia Beach Community Club and the Britannia Mines Social Club – to avoid accusations of interference in workers' leisure activities. Employees elected by their peers ran these organizations. All employees contributed to the social clubs through a monthly sum deducted from their paycheques. In turn, the clubs organized dances, card games, and beer nights, published the community newsletter, and sponsored sports events and theatrical performances. Like the co-operative stores, the social clubs separated the company from direct control of, and responsibility for, entertainment and leisure activities in Britannia. While salaried

⁷⁴ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 1, File 10, 1926 Annual Report, 127.

⁷⁵ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Boxes 1-6, Analysis of Employee Welfare Spending, Annual Reports, 1924-1956.

⁷⁶ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Boxes 1-6, Analysis of Employee Welfare Spending, Annual Reports, 1924-1956.

⁷⁷ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 64, File 18, Letter from H.H. Sharp to E.C. Roper, 30 November 1954.

⁷⁸ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 1, File 10, 1926 Annual Report, 8.

employees and office workers who lived in town often held positions on the social clubs' executives, the company was not officially involved in social club activities beyond maintaining and repairing the clubrooms, and ensuring club events met its moral standards. In an effort to balance paternalism with employee autonomy, the company left the planning of community events and activities to the residents.

The company's policies and actions reveal how it made the fostering of social activities a priority. Management believed that planned activities would engage residents' "interests and energies in constructive rather than destructive channels," and wanted to encourage family-oriented, acceptable entertainment without spending too much.⁷⁹ However, BM&S was less willing to get involved in the affairs of the community's schools and churches. On the one hand, as historian Linda Carlson argues, these institutions helped to attract stable workers and their families.⁸⁰ On the other hand, Britannia's management did not want to appear to be influencing its employees' religious views or educational choices. This kind of interference could produce discontent among community residents. As such, the company maintained an arms-length policy towards these institutions. Although originally the company hired all schoolteachers, by the late 1920s Britannia's schools belonged to the Britannia School District, part of the provincial education system, and school operations were left to the school board. This did not mean the company had no influence in school matters; indeed, general manager Browning was a member of the school board for many years.⁸¹ However, it did mean that the company saved money; a school tax, levied on householders, paid school expenses. It also meant that complaints about school buildings, teachers, or curriculum were directed towards the

⁷⁹ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 5, File 2, 1947 Annual Report, 30.

⁸⁰ Carlson, *Company Towns of the Pacific Northwest*, 56, 70.

⁸¹ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 27, File 28.

board instead of the company. Company officials avoided doling out funding or setting school curriculum – potentially sensitive issues that might interfere with their primary task of operating a profitable copper mine.

Elected boards also managed Britannia's churches. The Beach and Townsite each had one church building, shared by United Church and Catholic congregations. Each denomination had its sanctuary on a separate floor. While the company contributed to maintaining and repairing the church buildings, it played no part in hiring ministers or directing services. When a new church building was constructed in 1952, the cost was shared: the company gave 5,500 dollars; the Catholic congregation gave 5,300 dollars; and the United Church congregation gave 5,700 dollars. The company wanted residents to be responsible for the church's construction, and was pleased when "the community responded admirably in both volunteer labour and financial aid."⁸² In matters of education and religion, the company was willing to let residents take greater initiative. It did not want to control these institutions, but ensured that churches and schools were maintained to help attract families to the community.

In addition to implementing family-friendly policies at Britannia, the company used publications and guided tours of the property to project a stable, cohesive image to the public. Articles in trade publications lingered on the community's more appealing attributes – its scenic views, "neat and roomy" homes "nestled in [the] valley," its "up-to-date" amenities, and the "close knit camaraderie" of its residents.⁸³ In these articles, management downplayed the transient nature of the majority unmarried workers. Indeed, in one *Western Miner* article the company did not even mention the bunkhouses, which

⁸² MS1221, Box 6, File 1, 1952 Annual Report, 45.

⁸³ "A Visit to Britannia," 76, 78; Florida Gray, "This is Britannia," *Vancouver Sun* (Magazine Supplement), 13 August 1951, 13; "Millions Being Spent at Britannia," *Telephone Talk* 4:3 (1914), 6-12.

housed and fed a large portion of the workforce.⁸⁴ Bunkhouses were symbols of impermanence the company did not want to associate with Britannia. By omitting them, the company created the impression that the community was composed mainly of settled families, perhaps making it more attractive to married men considering applying for a job. Most British Columbians never visited Britannia; they received their information about the community from newspaper and magazine articles. By writing its own publicity pieces, the company tried to ensure that these articles reflected positively on the mine and its town sites, cultivating an image of an established and harmonious Britannia for outsiders.

BM&S also used guided tours to project its desired image to the public. These tours were the most common way in which people not affiliated with the company became familiar with its operations and town sites. Company officials strictly controlled access to the property, usually requiring individuals to obtain written permission to visit before their arrival. While government officials, industry leaders, and engineering students were always welcome, solicitors, canvassers, and entertainers were often refused entrance on the grounds that, while their intentions might be good, the company had to guard against parties who, as Browning told one petitioner, “might give very little consideration to the interests of our employees.”⁸⁵ Just as the company paternalistically tried to protect residents from sales people and travelling performers, it also shielded visitors, using the guided tours to influence what guests saw and learned about the property and its residents. One of the company’s articles was written as a tour of the property, beginning with the “beautiful scenic thirty-mile boat trip from the evergreen

⁸⁴ “A Visit to Britannia,” 78.

⁸⁵ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 26, File 14, Letter from C.P. Browning to the Tulameen Placer Mining Company, 23 September 1927.

city of Vancouver to Britannia Beach,” and ending when the visitors boarded the afternoon steamer the following day.⁸⁶ Entitled “A Visit To Britannia,” the 1948 article demonstrates how every part of a visit was planned – from the moment guests stepped off the steamship until the moment of their departure. Company officials accompanied visitors every step of the way, showing them the co-operative store and the hospital, pointing out the swimming pool and tennis courts, walking them through the most productive areas of the mine and mill.⁸⁷ This level of control ensured that guests saw the elements of the property the company wanted them to see – those that indicated stability and cohesion.

Plagued by persistent high rates of labour turnover and transience, the Britannia Mining & Smelting Company used its publicity and policies to inspire stability and loyalty in its employees and community residents. The promise of benefit schemes, co-operative store dividends, and a place in family housing was meant to entice transient workers and encourage them to remain at the mine. The provision of low-rent housing, schools, churches, and recreational facilities was designed to persuade married workers to settle permanently at the Beach and Townsite. Copper bonuses and anti-union policies were initiated to encourage unity between waged and salaried employees, and promote company loyalty. These policies affected the daily lives of Britannia residents, determining where people lived, limiting their self-expression, and shaping their leisure hours. Yet the company did not want to appear oppressive, either to its residents or to the general public. Officials balanced paternalism with initiatives like the company store and social clubs, which allowed residents to contribute to decision-making and community

⁸⁶ “A Visit to Britannia,” 76.

⁸⁷ “A Visit to Britannia,” 76-80.

affairs. They also fostered a public image of Britannia that highlighted the community's permanence and unity, and overlooked the company's more intrusive policies. Both publicity and policy underlined the company's notion of community as a stable and cohesive entity characterized by families and harmonious employer-employee relations.

However, questions remain: were the policies and publicity effective? Was the company able to cultivate stability and cohesion at Britannia Beach and the Townsite? While annual labour turnover rates decreased slightly in the post-war years, they remained high (see Figure 2). In 1956, company officials were still debating new strategies to attract more stable workers. Furthermore, employees' decision to join the union indicates they did not always support their employers' welfare schemes. By these measures, BM&S's policies do not seem to have been effective. Transience was as much a problem in the 1950s as it had been in the 1920s. However, even if the company's policies did not lower turnover, they had a discernable effect on Britannia's residents. The workers and families that lived at the Beach and Townsite did not passively accept the company's attempts to foster a stable and cohesive community. Residents responded to the company's imagined Britannia, fashioning their own notions of community in the process. The next chapter will examine Britannia's residents more closely, exposing the complex social relations that shaped daily life in the company town.

Chapter 3

Beyond the Bridge: Marital Status, Respectability, and Community in the Post-WWII Years

In the years following the Second World War, Britannia's residents had their own definitions of community, their own ways of ordering their space and determining their place within it. Most residents shared the company's static notion of community, believing that community membership was contingent on residence at the Beach or Townsite. However, the similarities ended there. In his work, sociologist Rex Lucas argues occupation and work patterns determined social status in Canada's post-war resource towns; the company hierarchy shaped the community.¹ In Britannia, however, the company's role in shaping residents' identities and defining community was not as strong as Lucas suggests. Certainly, the company determined where people lived, influenced many aspects of daily life, and was ultimately responsible for the community's existence. However, they had much less authority over daily social interaction at the Beach and Townsite. BM&S may have imagined Britannia as a stable and cohesive community of dedicated, productive employees, but Beach and Townsite residents of the post-war years did not use adherence or opposition to company control to determine who belonged to the community and who did not.

Instead, many residents employed notions of marital status and respectability when defining their community. A respectable community member was someone who donated time and energy to local causes, who wanted to make the Beach and Townsite attractive, neighbourly places. Respectability was not a static concept, but a "fluid

¹ Lucas, *Minetown, Milltown, Railtown*, 150-151.

process of creating pride in one's self and one's family" that varied with time and place.² Both hegemonic values of family, self-sufficiency, and Christianity, as well as the daily material realities of company town life, shaped residents' understanding of respectability in Britannia. Although behaviour influenced respectability, married residents were considered inherently more respectable than the unmarried bunkhouse inhabitants, being more able to act in ways acceptable to their peers. Class, gender, and ethnicity to a lesser extent also influenced who was considered respectable and who was not. This was the dominant, but not sole way residents defined community in the post-war years. Indeed, married residents' position as the social nucleus of the community did not go unchallenged; some residents organized Britannia along lines of occupation and gender, crossing boundaries to participate in multiple communities. This chapter will first examine how several company policies did not, in fact, foster the cohesion the company desired. Residents' attitudes towards the company in general reveal that the experiences of married and unmarried residents often differed. I will examine this difference, demonstrating how marital status, ethnicity, occupation, and gender shaped membership in the central community of respectable individuals. Finally, this chapter will explore some alternative visions of community that created tension among Britannia's residents in the post-war years.

BM&S pursued policies it hoped would create a community defined by stability and cohesion, where employer and employee were united in the common goal of efficient production and increased profits. However, residents' attitudes towards company

² Joan Sangster, *Earning Respect: The Lives of Working Women in Small-Town Ontario, 1920-1960* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1995), 111-112. Lynne Marks also demonstrates how both material and cultural factors influenced who was considered respectable in late-nineteenth-century small town Ontario. Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 12-13.

initiatives, such as the co-operative store and recreation policies, reveal that the company was often unable to foster this sense of community. While the company believed its co-operative store scheme would quell employee complaints, encourage interest in store operations, and generate good will through dividends, in reality few residents, when asked, remembered the stores as being co-operatives. While mechanical foreman John Dickinson said some people appreciated receiving store dividends, claiming “everybody always looked for the rebate cheque every year,” other residents considered the store a company store because purchases were always deducted from workers’ paycheques.³ Some were suspicious of the rebate. “You thought you were really getting something back,” said Betty Manson, wife of a surface worker at the Beach, “but in the long run... [prices] were a lot more expensive than in Vancouver.”⁴ Others claimed that while the stores were adequate for “everyday things,” they ordered most food and clothing items from catalogues.⁵ “My mom and dad used to put in a big order to Woodward’s...and order all kinds of groceries,” Astrid Korwatski, the daughter of a shift boss, remembered: “I suppose it was cheaper.”⁶ While few complained outright about store prices or selection, the number of outside orders and the indifferent attitude towards store dividends suggests residents were not particularly grateful to the company for converting the stores into so-called co-operatives. Residents did not see the store as a means to a cohesive community, but as a part of the company infrastructure.

³ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-14, Interview with John Dickinson; 1878-56, Interview with Betty Manson; Interview with Elsie Anderson, 23 September 2004.

⁴ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-56, Interview with Betty Manson.

⁵ Interview with Will Trythall, 23 September 2004.

⁶ Interview with Astrid Korwatski, 23 September 2004. Astrid’s maiden name was Mullins. She married Mike Korwatski, a miner, and continued to live in Britannia until 1966.

The company's recreation policy received similarly mixed reactions. BM&S wanted to ensure its employees spent their leisure hours in pleasant activity without the company becoming too involved in organizing social events. To that end, they invested money in recreation facilities, and initiated social clubs to encourage residents to plan their own activities. However, the company may have succeeded too well in convincing residents of its hands-off approach. Most of the former residents interviewed emphasized that recreation at the Beach and Townsite was a do-it-yourself affair. "You had to do your own thing," bookkeeper's daughter Claire Bennet said when asked how people spent their leisure hours.⁷ While this attitude ensured the company was not accused of interfering in community events, it also led some to comment that the company did not do enough to foster recreation at Britannia. "They could have had a curling rink and things like that, but they didn't," complained Astrid Wolthers, a miner's daughter: "You had to make your own fun."⁸ Former bunkhouse residents were more likely than house occupants to complain about the company's approach to recreation. Miner Jack Ross said "there was not too much for the single men to do." In contrast, he believed "the married people really had a good time up there."⁹ The company's focus on family-oriented activities left some unmarried employees feeling left out. Ross claimed many of the single employees went to Vancouver rather than stay in town during special events like the Victoria Day celebration, because "it usually meant an extra day off."¹⁰ Instead of promoting stability and cohesion, the company's recreation policy alienated bunkhouse dwellers and left married residents fending for themselves.

⁷ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-4, Interview with Claire Bennet.

⁸ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-45, Interview with Astrid Wolthers.

⁹ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-37, Interview with John (Jack) Ross.

¹⁰ Ibid.

In general, residents' attitudes towards the company were positive; however, once again, bunkhouse inhabitants were more likely to find fault with the company than house occupants. Most former married residents interviewed emphasized that, although the company's influence was palpable, their lives at Britannia were satisfactory enough to counter any negative feelings toward their employer. Kay Pickard, whose husband was a miner and later a surface worker, complained that "the wages were not good – never were." But, she added, "there were so many other things that compensated for that," including low rent, scenic surroundings, and social events.¹¹ Miner Al McNair had a similarly practical approach to his experience. "I never got rich," he said, "but I educated my family and we've never gone hungry."¹²

However, some families did not feel they had the luxury of criticizing the company. Astrid Korwatski believed few people complained, "because you had a job...people accepted what they had to do, and [that] was make a living."¹³ Employees with families were more willing to live within the company's rules because they believed the mine was a secure place to work and raise their families. When a married worker brings his family to the mine, Al McNair emphasized, "he marries the job.... You've got to take a bit of flack, because you can't just say 'I quit!' There's your family – you don't know what to do with them."¹⁴ As historian Jean Barman argues in the case of Powell River, married residents seeking economic stability and a place to raise their children were willing to tolerate a certain level of company control.¹⁵

¹¹ Interview with Kay Pickard, 24 September 2004.

¹² UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-29, Interview with Al McNair.

¹³ Interview with Astrid Korwatski, 23 September 2004.

¹⁴ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-29, Interview with Al McNair.

¹⁵ Barman, "The Dynamics of Control."

Conversely, former single employees claimed “management pretty well ran the show as they wanted to.”¹⁶ Former miner Thomas Howard called BM&S “muck hungry,” a derisive term that implied the company would do anything – including endanger its workers – in order to make a profit.¹⁷ Bunkhouse inhabitants were less likely to benefit from the company’s welfare schemes, and were thus more likely to harbour resentment toward their employer. These “tramp miners,” as McNair called them, could afford to express their opinions because they could easily find work elsewhere: “The boss looks at him the wrong way, he says ‘kiss my ass, I’m gone,’ and he’s gone.”¹⁸ Unmarried workers were more critical of the company, likely because they had cause and freedom to express themselves.

Residents’ attitudes towards the company in general, and the company store and recreation policies in particular, demonstrate that residents did not accept the company’s vision of Britannia as a stable, cohesive entity. They were often quite satisfied with the services the company provided, but they did not use loyalty to define their individual or group identities. Historian John Hinde argues that “in small, close-knit communities, social status... was determined less by a priori conceptions, such as family or economic position, than by standing derived from public service and commitment to the community.”¹⁹ This was the case in Britannia, where respectable behaviour – behaviour which promoted pride of place – influenced community membership. Notions of class, race, and gender were at play in this company town, however, not to the extent suggested

¹⁶ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-27, Interview with John (Jack) Ross.

¹⁷ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-22, Interview with Thomas Howard.

¹⁸ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-29, Interview with Al McNair.

¹⁹ Hinde, *When Coal Was King*, 48.

by scholars such as Rex Lucas, Eileen Goltz, and Meg Luxton.²⁰ Marital status acted most potently to divide the Beach and Townsite physically and socially. Interviews and local newspapers demonstrate that married residents enforced a code of respectability that largely excluded the more numerous bunkhouse inhabitants.

Britannia's local newspapers provide considerable evidence for these arguments, and thus a brief introduction to them is useful here. While some company town newsletters, such as the Powell River *Digester*, were written and published by the company, Britannia's *Townsite Reporter* and *Beachcomber* were not company mouthpieces.²¹ They were monthly publications financed and produced by the Britannia Mines Social Club and Britannia Beach Community Club respectively. The *Townsite Reporter* appeared between 1949 and 1956, while the *Beachcomber* was published from 1950 to 1954. These newspapers focused on residents' activities, rarely reporting any event that occurred outside Britannia unless the story involved a former resident. Anyone could contribute, and editors often encouraged residents to write short pieces about recent events and leave them at the Club offices. There was almost no advertising in the non-profit publications. Although the company certainly approved of the newspapers, believing they would help foster desired social cohesion by "creating greater interest in community activities, as well as advising everyone of the welfare of his fellow man," it was not involved in writing or printing the *Reporter* or *Beachcomber*.²² As a result, these

²⁰ Lucas (among others) argues Canada's single industry towns are stratified by occupation; Goltz suggests ethnic background divided Copper Cliff, Ontario; and Luxton argues the strict sexual division of labour shaped social interaction in Flin Flon, Manitoba. Lucas, *Minetown, Milltown, Railtown*; Goltz, "The Image and the Reality"; Luxton, *More Than a Labour of Love*.

²¹ Barman, "The Dynamics of Control," 9.

²² BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 52, File 79, Letter from E.C. Roper to Mr. R. Lester, 28 April 1949.

publications both reflected and reinforced readers' beliefs and values.²³ They provide a valuable source for understanding how Britannia's residents ordered their surroundings.

In Britannia, respectability was measured in part by community participation. Involvement in organized groups, formal associations, and social clubs was condoned as behaviour that would help residents "develop a healthy, constructive community spirit."²⁴ In the *Townsite Reporter*, various groups continuously encouraged residents to attend their meetings and patronize their events. By getting involved in these activities, the *Reporter* claimed residents would be helping to make the Townsite a better place to live. "Any community that is organized can do anything its people put their hands to," the *Reporter's* editor argued in 1950.²⁵ Organizations like the Canadian Girls in Training, Boy Scouts, and Ladies' Aid were considered "strong force[s] for good in your community."²⁶ Similarly, the Ladies' Auxiliary claimed it was pledged "to actively further the good interest of the whole community."²⁷ If organizations gained respectability by encouraging participation and pride in the community, then individuals gained respectability by joining these organizations. Residents active in several local groups were often lauded in the papers, and mourned if they were retiring or moving away. "Sure sorry to see you go, Gerry and Al," the *Reporter* wrote in January 1956 when residents Gerry and Al Killin moved to Vancouver: "What will happen to the church quartette [sic]?"²⁸ When several families left in June of that year, the *Reporter* stressed that the Townsite was losing respectable residents, who "have been in the

²³ Paul Voisey, *High River and the 'Times': An Alberta Community and Its Weekly Newspaper, 1905-1960* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2004), xxiv.

²⁴ BCARS, LS856-536, *Townsite Reporter* 3:2 (February 1951), 1.

²⁵ BCARS, LS856-536, *Townsite Reporter* 2:6 (June 1950), 1.

²⁶ BCARS, LS856-474, *Townsite Reporter* 6:4 (May 1954), 3.

²⁷ BCARS, LS856-474, *Townsite Reporter* 5:1 (January 1953), 7.

²⁸ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 121, File 49, *Townsite Reporter* 9:10 (January 1956).

community for many years and have all taken an active part in various activities.”²⁹

Those who gave their time and energy to local endeavours were respected and accepted.

Being respectable also meant taking the initiative in local affairs and behaving in a neighbourly way. Community members were not supposed to rely on others – including the company – to get things done. The *Reporter* encouraged residents not to depend on the company for entertainment, but to organize their own events. “Self improvement begins at home,” the editor claimed: “it’s a poor man who can’t or won’t help himself.”³⁰ It was the people that made the Beach and Townsite pleasant places to live, the newspaper stressed. “Neither the Club nor any other organization can make a success of the activities at the Townsite,” the *Reporter* argued, “it’s up to the people that live here.”³¹ Britannia’s status as a company town was unimportant to residents who believed that “it doesn’t make much difference where we live if we have good neighbors [sic] and take full advantage of our opportunities.”³² The *Reporter*’s writers – residents themselves – believed participation in organized activities would help residents better themselves and their community.

Other activities – particularly drinking – were considered rough, anti-social behaviours. The company store did not sell alcohol, but the company did not prevent employees and residents from ordering it from Vancouver or making their own. The fact that no alcohol was available commercially on the property certainly did not make the Beach or Townsite “dry” towns. Resident Kay Pickard claimed “there was a lot of liquor” at the Townsite, and Will Trythall, son of a mine worker, agreed. “My parents made

²⁹ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 121, File 49, *Townsite Reporter* 10:5 (June 1956).

³⁰ BCARS, LS856-474, *Townsite Reporter* 5:6 (November 1953).

³¹ BCARS, LS856-536, *Townsite Reporter* 1:8 (September 1949).

³² BCARS, LS856-536, *Townsite Reporter* 2:8 (August 1950).

home brew, and I think everyone else in the Townsite did [too],” he remembered.³³ Miner’s wife Olive Baxter said that at the Beach, “everyone took their own bottle.... we used to stash them all over the place and hope they’d be safe!”³⁴ Neither the *Reporter* nor the *Beachcomber* mentioned these less respectable activities; dances that former residents remembered as “rowdy” were simply “well-attended” in the community newspapers. As a result, evidence of rough behaviour is more difficult to find than demonstrations of respectable activities. Residents did not discuss drinking or gambling in the newspapers, so their opinions are not blatantly obvious. However, married residents’ attitude towards drinking was made more clear when, in 1951, a few members of the Britannia Mines Social Club asked the company’s permission to open a beer parlour. General manager Browning asked the Protestant minister, Reverend Bob Henderson, to submit a report summarizing residents’ reactions to the proposal. Henderson’s report claimed that, while the beer parlour’s anticipated revenue for the Social Club would be welcomed, “good community spirit, expressed in athletics, card parties, dances, library, and reading room, is not likely to be fostered by public drinking.”³⁵ The beer parlour would undermine the respectable community married residents wanted; with a beer parlour the Townsite would be like other mining camps, where alcohol tended to increase the “general restlessness and dissatisfaction” of residents.³⁶ The proposed beer parlour would be located in the gymnasium building where, according to Henderson, it might have an “undesirable influence” on the Townsite’s children.³⁷ Married residents disliked the proposal because

³³ Interview with Kay Pickard, 24 September 2004; Interview with Will Trythall, 23 September 2004.

³⁴ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-3, Interview with Olive Baxter.

³⁵ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 53, File 57, Brief filed by R.W. Henderson in opposition to proposed beer hall, 17 May 1951.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

it threatened to bring rough behaviour into the “wholesome environment” they were trying to create.³⁸ Both residents’ reactions to the beer parlour proposal and the newspapers’ sustained silence regarding alcohol indicate that drinking was not publicly condoned as a respectable activity.

However, achieving respectability and becoming a community member was not as easy as joining the church board and avoiding alcohol. Marital status largely determined one’s ability to achieve respectability and community membership. Married and unmarried residents were divided both geographically and socially. Physically, the Townsite was separated into two areas. Family houses were located in the northern end of town, closer to the beach. Bunkhouses were located on the opposite end of town, near the machine shops, offices, and mine workings. In between lay the store, school, church, and clubhouse buildings (see Figure 3). A creek, crossed by a small bridge, ran between these buildings and the bunkhouses, separating the two sides of town. For married residents, this bridge was a physical barrier between rough activity and respectable community. Married employees automatically achieved the social status conferred by living in a house. Single workers, on the other hand, were immediately suspected of roughness simply because they lived in the bunkhouses. Children were told not to cross the bridge. Elsie Anderson remembered waiting there for her father to come home from work. He would tell her explicitly to “wait at this side of the bridge,” she said, “because there were three bunkhouses, and you had about six hundred men there, you know.”³⁹ The very presence of so many single men threatened the smaller group of married residents, who believed these transients would be a bad influence on their children. At the Beach, the

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Interview with Elsie Anderson, 23 September 2004.

division between bunkhouse and home was equally marked; the bunkhouses were located near the concentrator building where the ore was crushed and sorted, while family houses were built in ascending rows on the hill across Britannia Creek (see Figure 4). The company was responsible for the original layout of the town sites, and likely segregated married and unmarried workers to promote their own goal of a stable workforce.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, married residents clearly adopted and reinforced these divisions, claiming the bunkhouses were the sites of rough behaviour. Marital status not only determined where employees lived, but also influenced residents' geography, assigning assumptions about respectability to different areas of the town sites.

Transience also affected residents' notions of respectability. While the company concerned itself with the economic consequences of labour turnover, married residents equated transience with instability and anti-social behaviour. The word "transient" implied a rootless wandering that many believed irresponsible.⁴¹ Dedicating time and energy to local associations and improvement projects required a certain level of stability, as employees had to remain in Britannia long enough to participate in community events. High rates of labour turnover made it hard to organize activities for single workers. For example, in June 1950 the Secretary of the Social Club reported that, "due to the spring exodus ... trouble is being experienced in getting a soft-ball league going."⁴² Many of the transient and seasonal workers in the bunkhouses did not stay at Britannia long enough to

⁴⁰ Kathryn Oberbeck argues companies segregated family housing when building towns in order to "obscure and allay" the class divisions of urban and industrial areas. See Oberbeck, "Class, Place, and Gender: Contested Industrial and Domestic Space in Kohler, Wisconsin, USA, 1920-1960," *Gender & History* 13:1 (April 2001): 98.

⁴¹ Historians have demonstrated that, contrary to the assumptions of social stigma, mobility was often motivated by the job market and by kinship networks. See A. Gordon Darroch, "Migrants in the Nineteenth Century: Fugitives or Families in Motion?" *Journal of Family History* 6:3 (1981): 257-277; Michael Katz, Michael J. Doucet, and Mark J. Stern, *The Social Organization of Early Industrial Capitalism* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1982), 102-130.

⁴² BCARS, LS856-536, *Townsite Reporter* 2:6 (June 1950), 2.

get involved, and were thus unable to convince married residents that they were committed to acting like respectable community members.

Bunkhouse conditions also made it more difficult for single workers to participate in community life. In his house, a married worker ideally enjoyed home-cooked food, the company of his loved ones, and a quiet night's sleep. Thus, married men were more likely to have the financial and mental resources to donate time and energy to attending meetings and organizing events. Many of them also had children, whose need for supervision encouraged parents to volunteer. Conversely, many single workers complained of mundane, repetitive meals, cramped quarters, and messy roommates.⁴³ Bunkhouse occupants with wives and children living in Vancouver also spent much of their free time and money visiting their families. Because their families were not physically present in Britannia, these men were treated the same as single men even though they were married. Single workers dissatisfied with their living conditions were unlikely to spend more time at the Beach or Townsite than necessary. If a noisy roommate or card game kept them up late, fewer would have the energy for long meetings or league sports the following evening.

Two poems written by Britannia residents aptly contrast the disparate conditions of house and bunkhouse inhabitants. Elsie Hamelin, the wife of a miner, wrote several poems about the Townsite. Her poem entitled "Mount Sheer" (the Townsite's official name) emphasized the town's "duplicate cottages" and well-tended gardens. In the poem, visitors come and go, and residents seem to live a life of ease and comfort: "For the casual life is the miner's way / No sweat, no airs, no fuss."⁴⁴ In contrast, a poem by

⁴³ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 74, File 52, Letter to G.C. Lipsey from George Hurley, 20 March 1956.

⁴⁴ UBCAR, BMOHP, Box 3, File 4.

unmarried waged worker Roy McLaren portrays a much wilder place. Roy writes of the “muckstick cross” he bears all week, claiming on Fridays he has to “stock up for my weekend bender” to “drown the thought of cookhouse grub.” He encouraged his fellow workers to drink up and enjoy their weekend, because “[n]ext week we’ll all be underground!”⁴⁵ While Elsie’s poem demonstrated her sense of belonging at the Townsite, showing how she has made Britannia her home, Roy expressed nothing but bitterness about his living conditions. He could not wait to escape to Vancouver every weekend, and obviously did not consider the bunkhouse his permanent home. In these conditions, single men were less likely to engage in the respectable activities married residents condoned.

A survey of the *Townsite Reporter* confirms that married people indeed dominated the social scene. Between 1949 and 1955, more than three quarters of the residents mentioned in the *Reporter* were married employees or family members (see Figure 5).⁴⁶ The executives of the church board, Ladies’ Aid, Parent-Teacher Association, and Legion were almost exclusively married residents, as were the Boy Scout, Cub, and Canadian Girls in Training (hereafter CGIT) leaders. While some individuals were more involved than others, and some participated in several organisations simultaneously, most married residents belonged to at least one local group or club. When single workers were mentioned, it was usually as members of a sports team or winners of a first-aid competition.⁴⁷ This indicates that bunkhouse inhabitants participated in some local activities, but rarely joined the committees that organized such

⁴⁵ McLaren’s poem was entitled “Rang-utang Tear.” BCMM, ASP, 2687, *Beachcomber* 1:8 (July 1951).

⁴⁶ BCARS, LS856-536 and LS856-474, *Townsite Reporter* 1949-1955.

⁴⁷ See, for example, a list of the top batters in the Townsite softball league, which included several single men. BCARS, LS856-536, *Townsite Reporter* 1:6 (August 1949), 6.

events. The situation was similar at the Beach. After the election of the Beach Club executives in October 1951, the editor of the *Beachcomber* mentioned that even though the “bunkhouse dwellers” comprised 65 per cent of the club membership, only 25 single men had attended the meeting, and only one had run for an executive position.⁴⁸

Bunkhouse residents comprised the majority of Britannia’s residents, but were largely absent from the respectable social scene.⁴⁹ Evidence from the newspapers supports what former residents’ remember: that single men “didn’t really mix” with married residents.⁵⁰ When referring to one single worker with whom she was familiar, Elsie Anderson explained, “he was well known in town. I don’t think he was a married man, but he was well known in town.”⁵¹ Her comment implies that it was unusual for married residents to be familiar with single men. Married residents were at the centre of the community described in the newspapers and in interviews with former Britannia inhabitants.

The Beach and Townsite churches were also sites of respectable activity, much of it secular rather than sacred in nature. Both church buildings combined Protestant and Catholic faiths under one roof, and they were busy places. The CGIT, Explorers, and Ladies’ Aid were all well patronized church-based organisations. More than as centres of prayer, residents remember the churches as social centres that “pulled people together,” where people got involved regardless of their personal views on spirituality.⁵² Elsie Anderson sang in the choir and taught Sunday school at the Townsite church; “[e]ven

⁴⁸ BCMM, ASP, 2687, *Beachcomber*, 1:9 (October 1951).

⁴⁹ The company did not keep exact population statistics; however, in 1957 Coast-Capilano MP James Sinclair told the House of Commons the mine employed approximately 800 people, and the town housed 312 families. Since most families contained one employee, we can assume there were no more than 325 married employees, and the remainder were bunkhouse inhabitants. Debates, House of Commons, Canada. Session 1957-1958, Volume 2, 1114.

⁵⁰ Interview with Kay Pickard, 24 September 2004.

⁵¹ Interview with Elsie Anderson, 23 September 2004.

⁵² Interview with Elsie Anderson, 23 September 2004.

though my parents weren't believers ... we spent a lot of time in the church," she remembered.⁵³ She also recalled that several Catholic girls joined the Protestant-based CGIT.⁵⁴ Religious differences were often overlooked to allow more members of the community to participate. According to several former residents, single men did not normally join church-based groups or attend services. However, for married residents the churches provided both spiritual guidance and social interaction in a respectable setting.

Not all married residents acted respectably all of the time. However, married residents were more able to engage in so-called rough behaviours without being criticized by their fellow community members. Drinking and gambling were not confined to the bunkhouses, but they were more likely to be accepted when they happened in people's homes. While married residents disapproved of single men who gambled away their paycheques, the *Reporter* and *Beachcomber* regularly included the names of cash prizewinners at bridge parties held in married people's homes.⁵⁵ Tom Waterland, the mine superintendent's son, remembered a weekly "church meeting" his father hosted that was actually a poker game.⁵⁶ Playing cards for money was tolerated in the homes of salaried employees, but in the bunkhouses it was deemed rough behaviour. Similarly, drinking in private was more accepted than public drinking. There was opposition to the proposed beer parlour, yet several married employees brewed their own beer and wine for private use. Single men were more likely to be drinking outside or in common areas because they did not have much privacy in the bunkhouses, and were therefore more

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ For example, S. Leret won the bridge prize in December 1953, and R. Bryleson won in March 1952. Both were married men. BCARS, LS856-536, *Townsite Reporter* 5:10 (December 1953); *Townsite Reporter* 4:3 (March 1952).

⁵⁶ UBCAR, BMOHP, Box 3, File 22, Notes from Interview with Tom Waterland.

exposed to married residents' criticism. Kay Pickard remembered that during dances, "the bunkhouse guys would get liquored up, and then they'd walk into somebody's house, lie down, and go to sleep!"⁵⁷ Will Trythall claimed that when the bunkhouse men got drunk, "they wrecked the place."⁵⁸ Single men's drinking was considered unacceptable because it was visible and potentially dangerous, often invading the respectable space on the north side of the bridge. On the other hand, married residents could drink, and gamble, without fear of criticism because these rough activities occurred less visibly in private homes.

Class, gender, and ethnicity played lesser, but nonetheless discernable, roles in determining who was a respectable community member and who was a rough transient worker. There is little information about residents' ethnic background during the years following the Second World War because the company stopped compiling employee nationalities in its Annual Reports in 1950. The data available indicates that Britannia's population was composed mainly of Canadian, British, and Northern European nationals (see Figure 6).⁵⁹ Canadians constituted the largest group. Central and Southern Europeans usually comprised 10 to 15 per cent of employees. There were also a small number of Japanese and Chinese workers, although after the internment of all Japanese nationals in 1942, only a small number of Chinese men remained.

Ethnic identity played a very subtle role in daily life at the Beach and Townsite. Because of the company's policy against fraternal lodges and exclusive associations,

⁵⁷ Interview with Kay Pickard, 24 September 2004.

⁵⁸ Interview with Will Trythall, 23 September 2004.

⁵⁹ I am using the company's categories for describing employees' nationalities. British included Scottish, Irish, New Zealander, South African, Australian; Northern European included Danish, Finnish, Norwegian, Russian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Swedish, and Icelandic; Central European included Austrian, Dutch, French, German, Polish, and Belgian; Southern European included Spanish, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Yugoslavian, Montenegrin, Romanian, Serbian, Swiss, and Ukrainian; and Orientals included Japanese and Chinese. From BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 5, File 5, 1948 Annual Report.

discussed in the previous chapter, there were few visible signs of ethnic identity, such as Sons of Norway or Orange Lodges. Community activities were ostensibly open to everyone. However, a greater number of recent European immigrants lived in the bunkhouses, because they had left their families temporarily behind when they immigrated to Canada.⁶⁰ The Chinese workers, most of whom were cooks, also lived in the bunkhouses. Thus, no apparent strong ethnic hierarchy developed at Britannia because the spatial and social division of married and unmarried residents minimized interaction between married residents and the more ethnically diverse bunkhouse inhabitants. The European heritage of many bunkhouse men became another reason to suspect their behaviour and further exclude them from the community. Some residents claimed that as immigrants, these men were more likely to be disreputable because, as accountant's wife Muriel Green believed, "they weren't real Canadians" like the majority of married employees.⁶¹ While ethnicity had little overt effect on the Beach or Townsite in the post-war years, it did reinforce married residents' notions of respectability.

Class, or occupational status, also influenced married residents' notions of respectability, affecting who was considered a member of the community as they defined it. Single men were most aware of occupational differences and the privileges accorded to employees in salaried positions. "There was quite a class distinction," recalled bunkhouse resident James Petrie. "The office staff – those in positions, as you might call it – had most of their amusements and clubs."⁶² During her interview, former resident Donnie Waterland erroneously insisted that occupation, not marital status, divided the Townsite

⁶⁰ Lucas Edwin, the Royal Bank's representative in Britannia, remembered the large number of single men who sent money orders to families in Europe once a month. UBCAR, BMOHP, Box 3, File 8, Report on Interview with Lucas Edwin.

⁶¹ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-20, Interview with Muriel Green.

⁶² UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-34, Interview with James Petrie.

geographically, claiming all day-rate workers lived in the bunkhouses and only salaried employees lived in the houses.⁶³ However, her statement was not entirely incorrect. While marital status ultimately determined who lived in company houses, a larger number of salaried employees were married, and thus a greater percentage of them lived in houses. A company memo from 1947 reveals that approximately 20 per cent of underground workers and 64 per cent of surface workers lived in company houses. In contrast, approximately three quarters of office staff and engineers lived in houses.⁶⁴ Salaried employees were indeed more likely than waged workers to live in single-family dwellings, and therefore more likely to achieve the respectability that accompanied a place in the more settled part of the Townsite.

Occupational differences were more muted among house occupants. Former resident Jim Walton, whose father was a miner, lived right in front of the general manager's house at the Beach. Class "didn't seem to matter," he said, "although [the Browning's] were the hobnobs of the community. Everybody knew them, and it wasn't so flaunted."⁶⁵ Townsite resident Muriel Green claimed that people did not distinguish between waged and salaried employees: "No one said, 'well that there's labour and the others are office' ... because we mixed together in everything."⁶⁶ Indeed, both waged and salaried house occupants were elected to social club executive positions, joined the Townsite Players drama club, and attended card parties. For example, in 1951 three members of the Britannia Beach Community Club executive were salaried and the

⁶³ UBCAR, BMOHP, File 23, Notes from Interview with Donnie Stewart Waterland.

⁶⁴ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 51, File 83, Interoffice memo on the housing situation as of December 31, 1947.

⁶⁵ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-43, Interview with Jim Walton.

⁶⁶ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-20, Interview with Muriel Green.

remaining seven were not.⁶⁷ Similarly, in 1949, the members of the Townsite Players included a surveyor, a store employee, and a miner, among others.⁶⁸ Among married residents, occupation mattered less than participation in the community. For example, Kay Pickard spoke highly of Townsite residents Archie and Mary Smith. “She was a great contributor to social life and church life, and so was he,” she said, adding that “he had a title – whatever it was, I don’t know.”⁶⁹ It mattered little that Archie Smith was the Chief Mine Engineer and Pickard’s husband was a surface worker; Smith’s dedication to the community distinguished him just as much as his occupation.

Notions of gender also shaped social interaction at the Beach and Townsite. Like other mining towns, Britannia was a very gendered place where men were breadwinners and women were housekeepers. Men who did not work could not remain on company property, while most female residents were unwaged wives and mothers. These rigid gender roles left the small number of single female employees, who worked mainly as waitresses and cleaners in the bunkhouses, in a precarious social position.⁷⁰ Married residents largely excluded these women; being both unmarried and female, their respectability was suspect.

Married residents associated single women with the rough behaviour of the bunkhouses where many of them worked. Even though they were housed separately from the single men, married residents did not trust single women to behave chastely, and

⁶⁷ BCMM, ASP, 2687, *Beachcomber* 1:9 (October 1951).

⁶⁸ BCARS, LS856-536, *Townsite Reporter* 1:1 (April 1949).

⁶⁹ Interview with Kay Pickard, 24 September 2004.

⁷⁰ The company did not employ many women. Between 1946 and 1956, women made up 15 per cent of the workforce on average (calculated from Annual Reports). This number was only slightly lower than the percentage of women employed in other Canadian mining towns like Timmins, Ontario, and Trail, British Columbia, but it was significantly lower than the percentage in cities like Vancouver, where 32 per cent of women earned wages in 1951. Taken from Ninth Census of Canada (1951). Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Volume 5: Labour Force – Earnings and Employment* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1953), table 3.

watched them closely. One former waitress, Marie McMath, remembered that a married woman acted as chaperone to all the single employees, imposing a curfew and ensuring that no guests lingered after 11 o'clock at night.⁷¹ It is not clear if this chaperone was a company employee or a volunteer. Either way, the chaperone's presence did little to change the community's assumptions about single women's respectability. Several married residents claimed single women "had a reputation for being on the loose side."⁷² Former resident Elsie Anderson remembered one bunkhouse worker in particular – a woman with "quite a reputation," nicknamed Bluebird because of a tattoo she had.⁷³ For Anderson, Bluebird symbolized all the female cookhouse workers – rough in appearance, sexually suspect, and physically part of the world beyond the bridge, which, as a respectable young woman, she was not allowed to enter. It is likely that not all single female employees fit Bluebird's description; nevertheless, single women's potential for promiscuity and association with the rough activities of bunkhouse life made their behaviour suspect and their position in the community precarious.

Their dubious behaviour excluded many single women from participating in the dominant community of married residents. Although Marie McMath recalled attending dances and movies, she was not part of organizing these events.⁷⁴ Indeed, a survey of the *Townsite Reporter* uncovers few single women. While they may have attended Ladies' Aid meetings or helped gather goods for a charity drive, single women did not join committees or hold executive positions in local organizations. Of course, there were exceptions. Single women employed as teachers, nurses, and office clerks were more

⁷¹ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-27, interview with Marie McMath.

⁷² Interview with Elsie Anderson, 23 September 2004.

⁷³ Interview with Elsie Anderson, 23 September 2004.

⁷⁴ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-27, Interview with Marie McMath.

likely to become involved in local affairs. In September 1952 the paper reported that unmarried teacher M. Splett was elected vice president of the Parent-Teacher Association. In 1949, the “Britannia Beach News” column of the *Squamish Review* mentioned a farewell party given by “a few ladies of the Beach” for nurse Jeanette Andrews. After card games and snacks, Andrews was presented with a silver plate.⁷⁵ These examples indicate that it was possible for single women to be accepted by the dominant, married community if their occupation was considered more respectable than cookhouse work. Waitresses and bunkhouse cleaners, however, were largely left out.

Even within the union, to which all surface mineworkers belonged, single women were marginalized. While the union represented their grievances to management, union functions were often male-oriented events. For example, the union held “smokers,” parties where members drank beer and played cards. All union members were invited, but it was not considered respectable for a single woman to drink with men.⁷⁶ The gendered assumptions of union leaders often restricted women’s participation in the union.⁷⁷ Neither were they welcome in the Ladies’ Auxiliary, an organization for workers’ wives whose fundraising efforts supported union activities. Single women could attend movies or play basketball in the gym, but there was no formal community organisation that catered to their needs. Although Marie McMath described waitresses and cleaners as being “like one big happy family”⁷⁸ with each other, they were excluded from the community of married residents because they did not fit within the prescribed gender roles.

⁷⁵ “Britannia Beach News,” *Squamish Review*, 15 March 1949, 2.

⁷⁶ Well into the 1950s across Canada, women frequenting drinking establishments un-chaperoned were assumed to be prostitutes. See Tillotson, *Public at Play*, 30.

⁷⁷ Sangster, *Earning Respect*, 218.

⁷⁸ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-27, Interview with Marie McMath.

While class, race, and gender influenced social relations at the Beach and Townsite, marital status was the strongest factor shaping respectability and affecting membership in the community. This division likely did not occur when the town was built, but happened slowly. As more married residents arrived in Britannia in the 1920s, they began forming associations and participating in the social clubs. The more they participated and took leadership roles, the more married residents were able to cater local organizations and events to their own needs, forming scouting troops for their children, and starting an amateur theatre, a Parent-Teacher Association, and a community church. As Britannia's visible social life increasingly evolved around its married residents, the supposedly rougher leisure pursuits of single workers were relegated to the bunkhouses.⁷⁹ Finding no place for themselves at Britannia, unmarried workers were more likely to leave when given the opportunity, thus perpetuating married residents' assumption that single men and women were unstable transients, not respectable community members. This cycle culminated in the 1950s, when, as demonstrated above, the Beach and Townsite were divided physically and socially between married and unmarried people.

Although married residents acted as the "central arbiters of respectable behaviour" in Britannia, tensions within the dominant community were also evident in the years following the Second World War.⁸⁰ Not all married residents believed their participation in local events defined them as community members. Union members, for example, were encouraged to identify with their fellow wage earners. Also, married women were using their prominent position in the community to subtly challenge

⁷⁹ Nancy Forestell posits a similar transition from homo-social to hetero-social culture, beginning in the 1920s, in the mining town of Timmins, Ontario. See "'All that Glitters is Not Gold:' The Gendered Dimensions of Work, Family, and Community Life in the Northern Ontario Goldmining Town of Timmins, 1909-1950" (PhD Dissertation, University of Toronto, 1993), 292-295.

⁸⁰ Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks*, 117.

accepted gender roles. These alternative communities threatened to divide married residents at a time when volunteerism among community members was waning.

The union, for example, presented many residents with another view of how life at the Beach and Townsite should be organized. Marital status made little difference to union organizers; occupation alone determined membership. Former miner Ernie Malm claimed the union was welcomed because it improved working conditions. "It gave people a better feeling about their job," he said, "you weren't picked on because [the boss] didn't like your looks or something."⁸¹ The union also presented all wage earners' concerns to the Social Club executive, ensuring, for example, that the bunkhouse pool tables and card tables were maintained.⁸² Union leaders gave single men a voice in community affairs. Many of the union's activities mirrored well-known community activities; picnics, dances, card parties, and children's events were frequently held. However, the union also held smokers, which attracted more single men, sponsored educational activities such as guest speakers, and encouraged class consciousness and solidarity among wage earners to secure better conditions from the company and its salaried managers. Within the union, class replaced marital status as the defining characteristic of belonging.

Several former residents believed the union also threatened to divide married workers. Lucille Gillingham, wife of an accountant, claimed that before the union formed "everybody was the same. Everybody in the town – the workers and the staff, and all – were very congenial, one with another."⁸³ Resident Mary Smith agreed that there was little tension between staff and waged workers until "they formed a union and started

⁸¹ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-24, Interview with Ernie Malm.

⁸² UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-39, Interview with Archie Smith.

⁸³ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-18, Interview with Lucille Gillingham.

striking – well, then there was tension.”⁸⁴ According to these residents, the union “put people against one another,” disrupting Britannia’s peaceful social relations.⁸⁵ Union and Auxiliary meetings were considered exclusive because only union members and their wives could attend. Some residents accused union wives of “dropping out” of the more inclusive Ladies’ Aid to take up Auxiliary activities.⁸⁶ The union did not cause these tensions, but only made them visible, forcing married residents to realize how both class and marital status could shape identity and community.

Married women’s participation in local associations and events also caused tension within the dominant community. Resident Alice Graney described Britannia’s married women as “close-knit.”⁸⁷ Many of them spent their days engaged in similar activities: shopping at the store, raising children, and housekeeping. They drank coffee and played tennis together. As housewives, they shared their domestic knowledge and experience with each other. As a new bride, resident Betty Manson remembered, “if I didn’t know how to do something I’d just go and ask” a neighbour, all of whom were married women.⁸⁸ At the Beach, women shared a crib, passing it from family to family as it was needed.⁸⁹ They also helped each other with daily tasks. Alice Graney remembered preparing lunch for women whose husbands were sleeping after a night shift.⁹⁰ Married women formed a support network to help each other cope with day-to-day worries, limited company store stocks, and the town’s long, cold winters.

⁸⁴ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-40, Interview with Mary Smith.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-20, Interview with Muriel Green.

⁸⁷ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-19, Interview with Alice Graney.

⁸⁸ UBCAR, BMOHP, Box 3, File 11, Notes on Interview with Betty Manson.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-19, Interview with Alice Graney.

This closeness allowed the women to unite and collectively voice their concerns. For example, in July 1951, the *Beachcomber* reported “a delegation of ladies called at the office of Mr. Roper (the general manager) in regard to having the Doctor spend more time at the Beach.”⁹¹ Most married women maintained busy social schedules. While this made them respectable community members, it also took them away from their domestic duties. “I used to be quite busy up there,” Olive Baxter remembered: “I think my husband sometimes wondered if he had a wife!”⁹² Most of their activities, such as serving food at Club events and volunteering at the hospital, were within the realm of “wifely work.”⁹³ However, many women assumed leadership roles in local organizations, and some travelled further a field. For example, in May 1950, Grace Anderson attended a Peace Conference as a representative of the Ladies’ Auxiliary.⁹⁴ According to Kay Pickard, participation in the community gave women “something different to think about,” allowing them a temporary respite from their domestic roles.⁹⁵

The nature of women’s activities suggests they were not directly challenging the social primacy of Britannia’s married residents. They were, after all, married residents themselves, and many of them enjoyed the privileges this position afforded. While articles appeared occasionally in the *Reporter* instructing female readers on “How to Cook a Husband,” and listing men’s less desirable traits, these were more casual jest than resentment of their social position.⁹⁶ Many of Britannia’s married women did not view their busy social schedules as an abandonment of their domestic duties. Nevertheless, not

⁹¹ BCMM, ASP, 2687, *Beachcomber* 1:8 (July 1951).

⁹² UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-3, Interview with Olive Baxter.

⁹³ This was not atypical; Shirley Tillotson found that most women who volunteered for recreation programmes in post-war Ontario usually performed specifically “feminine” tasks that resembled mother’s work and domestic labour. Tillotson, *Public at Play*, 129-131.

⁹⁴ BCARS, LS856-536, *Townsite Reporter* 2:5 (May 1950).

⁹⁵ Interview with Kay Pickard, 24 September 2004.

⁹⁶ BCARS, LS856-536, *Townsite Reporter* 2:3 (March 1950), 8; 2:4 (April 1950).

everyone believed married women's participation was positive, because it removed these wives and mothers from the domestic sphere. An item entitled "The Man's Opinion" in the *Reporter* criticized mothers who treated the Social Club rooms like "a play-ground, a place to send their children during the holidays and weekends."⁹⁷ Married women, the notice implied, would be better occupied caring for their children at home. While many of their activities mirrored their domestic tasks, some local associations allowed married women to assert their identity as women over their roles as wives and mothers, seeming to threaten the dominant community that relied on female domestic labour.

A seeming decline in voluntary participation was also threatening the dominant community in the years following the Second World War. Although the company's 1951 annual report claimed there were so many community events that "there were very few days in the year a meeting or meetings were not being held," during the 1950s the *Reporter* and *Beachcomber* repeatedly mentioned the difficulty some organizations were having finding volunteers.⁹⁸ Several times between 1950 and 1954, the *Beachcomber's* editor noted that "not enough members of this Community are shouldering their load in Club activities." "It is the duty of every Club member," he wrote in March 1953, "to take an active part and relieve those who work faithfully year after year to give pleasure to Club members and their families."⁹⁹ Similarly, after a poor turnout for a Social Club annual meeting in 1954, the *Reporter's* editor wrote that it seemed "the majority of residents just don't give a tinker's dam for the club. And yet," he added, "plenty of grouching is heard from the very people who can't be bothered to vote or stand for election

⁹⁷ BCARS, LS856-474, *Townsite Reporter* 7:1 (February 1955), 4.

⁹⁸ BCARS, BM&S, MS1221, Box 5, File 17, 1951 Annual Report, 41.

⁹⁹ BCMM, ASP, 2687, *Beachcomber* 3:3 (March 1953), 1.

if there are not enough dances or Bingo Games during the winter months!”¹⁰⁰ This lack of participation was a recent development. In an editorial entitled “The Good Old Days,” the *Reporter*’s editor claimed it was “easily within the memory of a lot of us when Club elections were a Big Thing in the Townsite.”¹⁰¹ The Social Club executive recognized the problem; even though they endeavoured “to put on entertainment that should appeal to the majority,” few single men were patronizing their events or volunteering for the Club executive.¹⁰² The married residents, while very active, were still only a minority at the Townsite. While many of them participated in several organizations, they could not do everything. Married residents’ desire to make Britannia a “live wire settlement where something is happening every hour” meant that the community’s many clubs and associations needed to continue operating.¹⁰³ These organisations filled “a very necessary place in our community,” the *Reporter* argued, adding that “only time can tell” what would happen to the community if they disappeared.¹⁰⁴ Without its respectable organizations, married residents believed Britannia would be nothing more than a rough mining camp – not a community.

In order to keep Britannia’s social activities running smoothly, married residents occasionally appealed to bunkhouse inhabitants to participate more fully in community activities. Married residents’ attitudes were somewhat flexible; they were willing to accept single men into their community if the men could engage in respectable activities. Married residents still considered bunkhouse workers to be “aggressive young men,” a description that implied their rough, potentially destructive behaviour. But they also

¹⁰⁰ BCARS, LS856-474, *Townsite Reporter* 6:6 (November 1954), 1.

¹⁰¹ BCARS, LS856-536, *Townsite Reporter* 5:2 (February 1953).

¹⁰² BCARS, LS856-474, *Townsite Reporter* 3:9 (November 1951), 4.

¹⁰³ BCARS, LS856-536, *Townsite Reporter* 1:2 (May 1949), 2.

¹⁰⁴ BCARS, LS856-474, *Townsite Reporter* 5:2 (November 1953).

possessed “an excellent spirit of good fellowship,” the *Reporter* noted, which, when channelled through organized sports and activities, was “helping to make the Townsite a pleasant place to live in [sic].”¹⁰⁵ Single men were subtly encouraged to abandon their rougher pastimes and join in more respectable activities. For example, after a group of bunkhouse dwellers attended a Ladies’ Aid card party in February 1951, the *Beachcomber* expressed its hope “that now that the ice has been broken, you boys will continue to patronize all the bridge and whist games.”¹⁰⁶ Miner Jack Ross remembered that occasionally a family would “adopt” individual men, inviting them across the bridge for supper and taking them on family outings, exposing them to more respectable leisure pursuits.¹⁰⁷ Married residents were willing to accept single men as community members to preserve what they felt was a respectable way of life. However, if you were going to cross the bridge, it had to be on married residents’ terms.

When single men did not respond to these invitations to join the respectable community, married residents voiced their frustration in the *Reporter* and *Beachcomber*. They believed their organizations and clubs “provide varied enough facilities to reach every member of the Community,”¹⁰⁸ and thus did not understand why single men would not want to participate. The *Beachcomber* recognized that bunkhouse men enjoyed their weekends in Vancouver, but argued “the Club functions 7 days every week, and there is a great deal you could do during the time you are here.”¹⁰⁹ The editor also criticized single men for their lack of interest in Community Club elections, telling them to “stop beating your gums and complaining. Remember, you had a vote; if it wasn’t used that is your

¹⁰⁵ BCARS, LS856-536, *Townsite Reporter* 1:6 (August 1949), 4.

¹⁰⁶ BCMM, ASP, 2687, *Beachcomber* 1:4 (March 1951).

¹⁰⁷ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-37, Interview with John (Jack) Ross.

¹⁰⁸ BCARS, LS856-536, *Townsite Reporter* 1:1 (May 1949), 2.

¹⁰⁹ BCMM, ASP, 2687, *Beachcomber* 1:9 (October 1951).

fault.”¹¹⁰ Single men who wanted to voice their opinions had to participate in the Club apparatus, even if they felt it did not represent their needs. The married residents believed those who complained without getting involved did not have legitimate grievances, and could be ignored; those who wanted to be taken seriously should act respectably and participate in the community. Married residents made little effort to cater social events to single men’s needs. Although in 1955 several Club members accused married residents of dominating the Social Club, which was supposed to cater to all employees regardless of marital status, no serious action was taken to find out what kinds of activities single men enjoyed.¹¹¹ While married residents wanted bunkhouse inhabitants to participate so that their image of a respectable community could be maintained, they insisted that single men adopt respectable behaviour, and criticized them when they did not.

Evidence from the local newspapers and testimony from former residents reveals that, in the years following the Second World War, BM&S did not realize its desire to create a community based on stability, unity of purpose, and loyalty to the company. Residents did not see themselves only in terms of their relationship to the company. Although some appreciated company initiatives, others were indifferent. Residents did not accept the image of a cohesive community that company policies sought to create. In reality, residents were not united; marital status, class, gender, and ethnicity all influenced social relations at the Beach and Townsite. The relative stability of married employees meant that their understanding of community – based on local involvement and respectable behaviour – had the greatest influence on the way Britannia’s residents interacted with each other. Among married residents, commitment to associational life

¹¹⁰ BCMM, ASP, 2687, *Beachcomber* 1:5 (April 1951).

¹¹¹ BCARS, LS856-474, *Townsite Reporter* 7:2 (March 1955).

and improvement projects was a more important determinant of community membership than occupational status or ethnic background. However, this notion of community excluded the single bunkhouse dwellers, who, in addition to being unmarried, were also more likely to be waged workers and recent immigrants. The bridge that separated bunkhouse from home symbolized residents' division, separating married and unmarried, respectable and rough. Yet alternative imaginings of community were also possible, as the actions of union members and married women demonstrated. Residents had multiple identities, which one narrow understanding of community did not allow them to express. Ultimately, married residents discovered that they might have to include single men in their community if they wanted to maintain the level of participation and interest in local affairs they had come to expect from fellow community members.

However, married residents had little opportunity to change their attitude towards Britannia's single inhabitants; a prolonged mine shutdown in 1958, followed by BM&S's dissolution and the closure of the Townsite by the company's restructuring parent corporation, gave Britannia's remaining residents little time to worry about the behaviour of unmarried employees. By 1962 there was a new employer and a new dynamic. This was a period of crisis and change that challenged residents' notions of community. The next chapter will contrast the shutdowns of 1958 and 1964 to explore how residents' understandings of community shaped their responses in times of crisis.

Chapter 4

When Ghosts Hover: Community in Times of Crisis

The immediate post-war years were ones of relative stability at the Britannia mine. At the Beach and Townsite, residents worked and played without undue interruption. Their myriad activities and complex notions of community made Britannia seem a lot like many other small towns across the country. Yet one factor always distinguished the company town: the community's complete economic dependence on the company. As sociologist Patricia Marchak notes, these communities "exist and are stable to the extent that the resource they produce is in demand on markets over which they have no control and to the extent that companies consider the investment in the particular plant profitable."¹ Resource depletion, competition, and rising costs may also adversely affect company towns.² Ultimately, Britannia's stability depended on its owner's profit margin and on world copper prices, which, between 1957 and 1965, were far from stable. During this time, Beach and Townsite residents experienced two prolonged periods of crisis, when the future of mining operations was uncertain, and many people questioned Britannia's continued existence. These crises altered the community irrevocably, ending the post-war stability many of the mine's employees had enjoyed. In both instances, observers feared Britannia would become another of British Columbia's many ghost towns.

Despite the gloomy rhetoric, this is not a story of community lost. Too often historians have adopted a romanticized notion of community, portraying people of the past as enjoying an idyllic, orderly society eventually, and inevitably, destroyed by

¹ Patricia Marchak, *Green Gold: The Forest Industry in British Columbia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1983), 304.

² L.D. McCann, "Canadian Resource Towns," 226.

creeping external forces.³ Britannia was certainly at the mercy of world commodity markets, and, with the completion of the Seaview Highway in 1958, the town was increasingly seen as a Vancouver suburb rather than an isolated outpost. However, to argue these factors destroyed the community would be to espouse an anti-modern “rhetoric of declension and breakdown” that obscures residents’ complex and changing notions of community, and denies their role in shaping the future of their town.⁴ This static approach cannot be applied successfully to Britannia, where, as the two preceding chapters demonstrate, residents and company officials articulated varied notions of community. These notions influenced how residents reacted when shutdowns in 1958 and 1964 threatened the town’s economic livelihood. This chapter will examine their response, and explore what new notions of community emerged during the crises. Comparing the two periods reveals how residents’ understanding of community shaped their words and actions – or inaction – when ghosts hovered over Britannia.

Rumblings about the first shutdown began in early 1957, when declining world copper prices created a “serious economic situation” for BM&S.⁵ The North American economy was in recession; between 1956 and 1958, the London copper price per ton fell from 435 pounds to 160 pounds.⁶ In July, general manager George Lipsey announced the

³ Harry Stout accuses American historians of such romanticism. See Kathleen Conzen, Harry Stout, E. Brooks Holifield, and Michael Zuckerman, “Forum: The Place of Religion in Urban and Community Studies,” *Religion and American Culture* 6 (Summer 1996): 116. Thomas Bender also criticizes the traditional-modern dichotomy, which posits changes in communities as unilinear and unidirectional. See Bender, *Community and Social Change*, 28-32.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 117. Historian Bruce Ramsey adopts such an approach in his history of Britannia, claiming the town’s sense of community depended on its isolation. Ramsey, *Britannia*, 154.

⁵ UBC SpColl, Howe Sound Company (Britannia Division) Records, Box 83b, File 24, “Progress Report – November 1st to 15th, Inclusive.”

⁶ Palmer, *Working Class Experience*, 338. Ferdinand E Banks, *The World Copper Market: An Economic Analysis* (Cambridge, Mass: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1974), 10.

mine would close unless employees were willing to accept a 15 per cent pay cut.⁷ The company claimed it was losing 65,000 dollars per month.⁸ The workers, represented by local 663 of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, refused to take a reduction in wages, but offered to work longer hours and sacrifice other benefits to keep the mine operating. The company accepted, and operations continued on a regular basis for several months. In October the situation became “more precarious,” and company President E.C. Roper told Lipsey that “efforts to maintain some semblance of an operation are in jeopardy.”⁹ In early December the federal and provincial governments agreed to provide a subsidy to help keep the mine open. Despite this financial assistance, on December 17 the company announced it would have to limit operations and reduce staff to remain afloat. By the end of the month, 40 per cent of underground workers, 59 per cent of mill workers, and 12 per cent of salaried employees had lost their jobs.¹⁰ There were more layoffs in subsequent months, as mining continued on a more limited basis. Now-vacant houses at the Townsite were boarded up, and the Royal Bank branch closed.¹¹ On February 27, the company announced that economic conditions had made it “impractical to prolong operations even with the assistance which has been received.”¹² The mine was shut down completely; some residents began leaving immediately. Six months later, the Britannia Mining & Smelting Company was placed in “voluntary

⁷ “Shutdown Threatens Britannia,” *Vancouver Sun*, 11 July 1957, 1.

⁸ By November 1957, the price of copper had dropped further, and the company stated it was losing 80,000 dollars per month. UBC SpColl, IUMMSW Fonds, box 115, file 11; International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers (Western District), “Submission to Select Standing Committee on Labour of the B.C. Government, Re: Closing of Britannia Mine,” 11 March 1958, 4-5.

⁹ UBC SpColl, Howe Sounds Company (Britannia Division) Records, Box 54, File 34. Letter to G.C. Lipsey from E.C. Roper, 16 October 1957.

¹⁰ The total workforce was reduced by 32 per cent. UBC SpColl, Howe Sound Company (Britannia Division) Records, Box 63, File 14. “Analysis of Labor at November 20, 1957,” “Summary of Labor at December 31, 1957.”

¹¹ BCARS, MS1221, Box 57, File 55, Letter from Royal Bank to J.E. Nelson, 31 January 1958.

¹² BCARS, MS1221, Box 74, File 1, Telegram from E.C. Roper to J.S. Roper, 27 February 1958.

liquidation,” and its parent, Howe Sound Company, took charge of the Britannia property.¹³ By December 1958 copper prices had risen, and the new managers resumed limited operations in the mine and mill in 1959. To save money, the company moved all operations to the Beach, and closed the Townsite, burning many of its buildings.¹⁴ The shutdown, which many had believed permanent, lasted 10 months.¹⁵

While world commodity prices were the main cause of the 1958 shutdown, employer-employee relations played a prominent role in the 1964 crisis. It began as a dispute between the union and the mine’s new owner, the Anaconda Company, over annual contract negotiations. The union’s demands included a 40-hour workweek with no loss in take-home pay, extra pay for weekend work, a 20-cent per hour raise, and more control of job classification.¹⁶ Talks were lengthy, and the company called on a conciliation board to help the two sides reach an agreement. However, in July, Britannia’s workers rejected the conciliation board’s report, and voted 97.3 per cent in favour of a strike. The strike began August 11, 1964. Almost immediately, the company hinted that it might close the mine if the strike continued.¹⁷ Negotiations continued sporadically through August and September.¹⁸ The company tabled an offer on September 21, but three days later, before the union members had voted on the proposal, the company announced it was closing the mine.¹⁹ Union president Ken Smith believed the announcement was intended to frighten workers into accepting the company’s offer,

¹³ Minister of Mines, Province of British Columbia, *Annual Report 1958* (Victoria: Don McDiarmid, Printer to the Queen’s Most Excellent Majesty, 1959), 56.

¹⁴ Interview with Al McNair, 22 September 2004.

¹⁵ Interview with Kay Pickard, 24 September 2004.

¹⁶ UBC SpColl, GP, “Bargaining Demands,” *Mine-Mill Herald*, February/March 1964.

¹⁷ UBC SpColl, Greenlee Papers (hereafter GP), “Britannia Miners Spurn Wage Report,” *Vancouver Sun*, 24 July 1964; “Britannia faces ‘indefinite shutdown,’” *Squamish Times*, 13 August 1964.

¹⁸ UBC SpColl, GP, “Britannia wage talks to start again today,” *Province*, 11 September 1964.

¹⁹ UBC SpColl, GP, “Britannia Strikers Lose Jobs As Mine Company Pulls Out,” *Sunday Sun*, 26 September 1964.

but Anaconda manager Barney Greenlee claimed the expense of the strike had precipitated the closure announcement.²⁰ Strikers at Britannia immediately mounted a picket line to prevent the company from removing mine equipment, and over the following months, held rallies and petitioned government officials to oppose Anaconda's closure efforts.²¹ When Anaconda claimed ownership of the union hall, located on company property, union members staged a sit-in and took the company to court to regain their right to use the hall.²² After a court injunction prevented strikers from blocking entrances or picketing in the industrial areas of the property, company managers began dismantling and removing equipment themselves, and the *Province* newspaper reported that Britannia "would be a ghost mine in every sense of the word by mid-February."²³ Despite these predictions, Provincial Minister of Mines Donald Brothers was able to coax both parties back to the bargaining table in early March 1965.²⁴ The company and the union reached an agreement, accepted by 92 per cent of the striking workers, and the strike ended on March 5.²⁵ Four days later, 25 workers were already restoring equipment to the mine, while others anticipated their return to work.²⁶ It took several months for the mine to resume full operations.

While the economic situation and state of employer-employee relations differed in 1958 and 1964, both were periods of instability in Britannia, when neither residents nor company officials knew what would happen next. Yet residents' reactions to this

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ "Women Join Line at Britannia Gate," *Vancouver Sun*, 29 September 1964, 1; "200 Autos Join Miners' Motorcade," *Vancouver Sun*, 31 October 1964, 29.

²² "Union Men Stay in 'Padlocked' Hall," *Vancouver Sun*, 3 November 1964, 23.

²³ "'Border' maps ready for Britannia pickets," *Province*, 3 October 1964, 29; "Ghost mine spectre looms at Britannia," *Province*, 26 November 1964, 20.

²⁴ "Talks bring new hope in Britannia mine strike," *Province*, 2 March 1965, 9.

²⁵ "Long Strike Ends," *Vancouver Sun*, 5 March 1965, 1.

²⁶ "Britannia Bustles Again," *Vancouver Sun*, 9 March 1965, 13.

instability differed greatly. In 1958, residents responded with quiet resignation to the mine closure. No coherent opposition to the shutdown emerged. Certainly, many residents were surprised, disappointed, and saddened, but there was little collective action to protest the company's decision. Conversely, in 1964 residents mounted an effective campaign against their employer. Strikers organized to voice their anger on the picket lines and at rallies. Improved economic conditions and the mine's changed ownership provide some explanation. Residents' changing notions of community also shed light on their divergent reactions to the two shutdowns. In 1958, residents' understanding of community included the company, even though it often excluded the large number of single employees at the mine. As a result, when the shutdown occurred, inhabitants were divided and did not know whom to blame for their situation. On the other hand, in 1964, residents defined community in opposition to the company. Strikers were united by a sense of injustice, and used local and national understandings of community to garner support for their cause. In both instances, how residents defined, used, and understood community shaped the outcome of the crisis.

To account for residents' somewhat staid reaction to the 1958 shutdown we must recall the central role of marital status in defining community membership at the Beach and Townsite in the years following the Second World War. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, married employees were considered respectable, stable community members, while single workers were judged rough transients, and treated as outsiders. This limited understanding of community divided the town's inhabitants, helping to prevent the emergence of a collective opposition to the 1958 mine closure. Although the majority of the workforce lived in the bunkhouses, these single men were largely

excluded from local organisations and activities. Evidence shows many were employed intermittently or seasonally. As a result, few single employees developed the same kind of devotion to Britannia as their married co-workers who had made the Beach or Townsite their permanent homes. When the mine closed, they felt less emotionally attached to Britannia, and consequently saw little point in opposing the shutdown. While they may have felt sadness at the closing or frustration at losing their jobs, they would likely not have considered allying in opposition to the shutdown with the married residents who had excluded them. As the *Province* reported, “Single miners had no illusions. They began packing at once and headed for the PGE trains.”²⁷ The day after the company announced the shutdown, recalled miner Al McNair, bunkhouse occupants began “leaving like a bunch of flies.”²⁸ Indeed, the majority of Britannia’s employees left almost immediately to find work elsewhere.²⁹ With a large portion of inhabitants gone, it would have been difficult for the remaining residents to muster the critical mass needed to mount an effective opposition campaign. Ultimately, the residents’ own understanding of community, which divided Britannia’s occupants between married and unmarried employees, speeded the town sites’ dissolution.

However, even married residents failed to maintain a sense of unity or cohesion during the long shutdown process. The many months of uncertainty that preceded the mine closure did not bring residents closer together. Indeed, as *Province* columnist Jean Howarth observed two months before the shutdown, Britannia was “a town torn by internal strife, totally without security, disturbed by a steady stream of rumours.”³⁰ The

²⁷ “For Mr. Gaglardi – A Message: You still can save Britannia’s life,” *Province*, 3 March 1958, 17.

²⁸ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-29, Interview with Al McNair.

²⁹ “Britannia Folk Wait and Wonder,” *Vancouver Sun*, 3 March 1958, 2.

³⁰ Jean Howarth, “Britannia very unhappy town,” *Province*, 7 January 1958.

December layoffs created further instability for residents. No one knew whose job would be cut, or when. The number of unemployed nationally was approaching figures last seen during the 1930s, and few were enthusiastic about the idea of finding a new job during a recession.³¹ Furthermore, because the town sites were small and many married residents formed a close-knit community, friendships were unavoidably severed when supervisors and managers had to fire their neighbours.³² Some families moved away, and the busy routine of meetings and events was disrupted. Resentment grew when the company transferred employees from the Townsite to replace terminated workers at the Beach, and vice-versa. Miner's son Jim Walton claimed "the uncertainty of the mine closing caused a lot of heartache, a lot of tragedy in terms of personal suffering." His parents relied on their creditors' kindness to stretch their limited income, and several other families were in similarly stressful financial situations.³³ Jean Howarth noted that shortly after the layoffs, people were "withdrawing into themselves, avoiding even their friends."³⁴ Residents were "caught in the frightening wave of fear and insecurity" that made them less likely to trust their co-workers.³⁵ This attitude made any collective reaction to the mine's closure difficult.

Furthermore, some residents were so weary from constant uncertainty that when the mine closed they reacted with relief as well as sadness. For example, Mrs. Simpson, a foundry worker's wife, told reporters her family was "in a rut, and maybe it would be

³¹ Unemployment levels varied between 2.5 and 5 per cent in the early 1950s, but rose as high as 10 per cent between 1956 and 1959. Between 500,000 and 750,000 people were unemployed across the country at this time. Palmer, *Working-Class Experience*, 271.

³² Jean Howarth, "Britannia very unhappy town," *Province*, 7 January 1958.

³³ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-43, Interview with Jim Walton.

³⁴ Jean Howarth, "Britannia a divided town," *Province*, 9 January 1958, 20.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

good for us to move.”³⁶ Others hastened to pull up roots as tension between residents mounted. Columnist Jean Howarth found that, after several months of uncertainty “the most prevalent attitude is one of ‘I-don’t-give-a-damn.’”³⁷ Employee and long-time resident George Hurley demanded to withdraw “every cent” of his money from the now-struggling Britannia Credit Union, an impossible request to make of an organisation whose entire membership was now unemployed. Indeed, many credit union members feared their savings would be lost if they did not withdraw their deposits immediately.³⁸ In a letter to the provincial Credit Union Inspector, Hurley threatened to create “adverse publicity” if his demand was not met.³⁹ This was a pivotal moment for British Columbia’s growing credit union movement. The crisis in Britannia resulted in the creation of the Credit Union Reserve Board, charged with providing financial assistance to credit unions “unavoidably in difficulty.”⁴⁰ By securing funds from other credit unions, the Britannia organization was soon able to allow residents to withdraw money.⁴¹ While credit unions were rallying to support an organization in trouble, there was little equivalent sense of solidarity among Britannia’s married residents, who had previously considered themselves dedicated, respectable community members. Gone were the group activities and meetings that had unified many of Britannia’s married residents. Many

³⁶ “For Mr. Gaglardi – A Message: You still can save Britannia’s life,” *Province*, 3 March 1958, 17.

³⁷ Jean Howarth, “It is hard – pulling up roots,” *Province*, 8 January 1958.

³⁸ Ian MacPherson, *Co-operation, Conflict and Consensus* (Vancouver: B.C. Central Credit Union, 1995), 121.

³⁹ BCARS, B262, Credit Union Inspector’s Records, File 34, Letter from George Hurley, 24 March 1958.

⁴⁰ MacPherson, *Co-operation, Conflict and Consensus*, 122.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 121.

seemed eager to move on. Only a handful of families remained during the shutdown, hopeful the mine would eventually reopen.⁴²

In 1964, however, Britannia's residents displayed greater unity in the face of instability. Between 1958 and 1964, the town's identity and its residents' sense of community changed. Physically, the community was smaller; with the Townsite closed, all residents lived at the Beach. Anaconda also employed fewer workers than BM&S. Thanks to the recently completed highway linking Britannia Beach to Vancouver and Squamish, these workers did not need to live at the mine site.⁴³ Several employees now commuted to work from Squamish, Horseshoe Bay, and North Vancouver.⁴⁴ This meant Britannia was no longer a remote town where people had to "make their own entertainment and fun."⁴⁵ While organisations like the church and Ladies' Auxiliary remained active, and the Britannia Beach Community Club continued to hold dances and baseball games, residents could now easily drive to Squamish or Vancouver for an evening's entertainment.⁴⁶ After the road went through, "the people went their own way," remembered miner's wife Betty Manson. "The closeness wasn't there."⁴⁷ Cohesiveness and active local participation – characteristics that had shaped married residents' understanding of community before the 1958 shutdown – were less evident in the early

⁴² The exact number is unknown; however in 1964, only five per cent of the then-striking employees had been working at Britannia prior to the 1958 shutdown, suggesting few remained or returned when the mine reopened. UBC SpColl, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 120, File 14.

⁴³ BM&S employed approximately 800 people before the layoffs of December 1957 and the 1958 shutdown. Anaconda employed approximately 400 people at the time of the 1964 strike. See House of Commons Debates, 14 November 1957, 1117; "Miners Strike At Britannia," *Vancouver Sun*, 11 August 1964, 7.

⁴⁴ Employee addresses noted on strike registration forms. See UBC SpColl, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 120, File 14.

⁴⁵ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-20, interview with Muriel Green.

⁴⁶ Interview with Kay Pickard, 24 September 2004; UBCARS, Britannia Mine Oral History Collection, 1878-40, interview with Mary Smith.

⁴⁷ UBCAR, Britannia Mine Oral History Collection, Box 3, File 11, Transcript from interview with Betty Manson.

1960s. Residents who had previously relied on these characteristics to identify themselves as community members were left feeling that Britannia Beach was no longer a community.

However, despite what many considered waning community spirit after the 1958 shutdown, there were other factors that unified residents in 1964. The strike acted as a catalyst, exposing employees' shared vulnerability at the hands of a large American company, providing some of Britannia's residents with a renewed sense of community. Residents were united by a sense of purpose, and unlike in 1958, were motivated to act together when facing job loss and instability. "The solidarity of the working people is tremendous," miner's wife and *Squamish Times* correspondent Betty McNair reported in the second month of the strike.⁴⁸ While the strike's duration caused financial hardship and uncertainty about the future, the sense of fear and weariness that plagued residents during 1957 and 1958 was not as evident in 1964. Some worried, like resident Freda Arsenault, that "it will take us years to catch up with everything we've lost" during the strike, but others were heartened by the help given those struggling to make ends meet. The *Vancouver Times* reported that two supermarkets in Squamish and North Vancouver were offering free groceries to striking families, while union officials promised to contact residents' creditors and try to have monthly bills and payments suspended for the duration of the strike.⁴⁹ In 1958, employees received no income during the shutdown, but in 1964, workers received strike pay from the union. Union leaders also held frequent meetings with strikers, and formed committees to organize social events and fundraisers,

⁴⁸ Betty McNair, "Britannia a Troubled Town," *Squamish Times*, 8 October 1964.

⁴⁹ UBC SpColl, GP, "Many Britannia Miners dig in – ready to live in jobless town," *Vancouver Times*, 7 October 1964; "Britannia faces 'indefinite shutdown'," *Squamish Times*, 13 August 1964.

and publish strike bulletins.⁵⁰ This kind of assistance brought employees, some of whom lived in different towns, in closer contact with each other. It also helped striking residents focus on walking picket lines and opposing the company's threatened closure, keeping feelings of uncertainty partially, if not completely, at bay.

Britannia's female residents played an important role in the strike, walking picket lines and providing employees with coffee and snacks. The employees' wives formed a separate Ladies' Strike Committee, which pledged to "do whatever is possible to assist the strike action."⁵¹ Although their tasks were largely limited to the "wifely work" that mirrored their domestic duties, their support helped to motivate strikers and keep them focused on their goal. Historian Bryan Palmer has demonstrated wives' potentially pivotal role in workers' strikes. He compares the 1958 and 1978 INCO strikes in Sudbury, Ontario. In 1958, company officials appealed to women's feminine "protective instincts," asking wives to defend their families from economic uncertainty by encouraging their husbands to return to work. The women's opposition to the strike further divided an already fractured working class, bringing a premature end to the struggle. On the other hand, in 1978 women formed the Wives Supporting the Strike group, which "overcame the insularity of the family" by forming babysitting co-operatives and carpools, and holding mass dinners and informational meetings. The wives' involvement resulted in a longer confrontation with a more satisfactory conclusion for the workers.⁵² By joining the picket lines in Britannia, workers' wives demonstrated the strike's widespread support, and confirmed that women were willing to work together and endure short-term hardship to achieve long-term improvements for their husbands.

⁵⁰ UBC SpColl, B.B. GP, "Local 663 – Strike Bulletin," 1:5 (2 September 1964).

⁵¹ Betty McNair, "Strikes and Pickets," *Squamish Times*, 27 August 1964.

⁵² Palmer, *Working-Class Experience*, 330-332.

The union provided resources and organized residents so that they were working toward a common goal, and assisting each other. The result was a noted “return of community interest which had not been in evidence for some years.”⁵³ “It’s almost as if the strike has brought us all closer together,” one woman told a Squamish reporter.⁵⁴ Betty McNair believed the picket lines and the efforts of the strike committees had prompted “more visiting and togetherness” than “since before the road opened.”⁵⁵ The strike provided a rallying point for many Britannia residents, creating a sense of cohesiveness not seen since before 1958. While exclusive notions of community divided residents in 1958, the sense of community precipitated by the 1964 strike helped to unite and sustain residents during the period of uncertainty.⁵⁶

Loyalty to the company also affected how residents understood community and influenced their diverging reactions to the shutdown and strike. In 1958, married residents’ loyalty helped to inhibit collective opposition to the mine’s closure. To many the company was a valued member of their community. After all, BM&S had built the town sites and operated the mine for five decades. More so than single employees, married residents approved of the company’s efforts to build infrastructure, such as the community church, and provide benefits for stable workers. Several long-time residents remembered how the company tried to help employees during the lean 1930s, extending store credit, stockpiling copper, and retaining as many married workers as possible on a

⁵³ “Britannia bitter for wives,” *Province*, 2 October 1964, 1; UBC SpColl, GP, “Britannia people hope mine will re-open soon,” *Squamish Times*, 26 November 1964.

⁵⁴ UBC SpColl, GP, “Britannia people hope mine will re-open soon,” *Squamish Times*, 26 November 1964.

⁵⁵ “Betty McNair, “Strikes and Pickets,” *Squamish Times*, 8 October 1964.

⁵⁶ Sociologists call this kind of group behaviour a “momentary community,” a community created by dramatic response to an emergency situation. These communities are no less important to their members because they are momentary, as the impact of a community cannot be determined by its duration. George Wood, Jr., and Juan Judikis, *Conversations on Community Theory* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2002), 22-23.

reduced work schedule.⁵⁷ The goodwill generated by the company's acts made it harder for residents to blame BM&S for the shutdown. BM&S had engaged in a form of civic capitalism that, while it did not avert employer-employee conflict, "bounded and channelled it, humanized it, and obstructed that abstraction and generalization from experience that could constitute class consciousness."⁵⁸ Thus, although residents remembered the shutdown as "devastating," and "quite a shock," they believed the company had always been "on guard for the welfare of the community," and hesitated to blame BM&S for the mine's closure.⁵⁹ Although company officials could not realize their imagined community of stable and united workers, as previous chapters of this thesis reveal, their policies did give some workers a sense of loyalty and gratitude that checked feelings of resentment and anger during the 1958 shutdown.

Conversely, in 1964 many residents believed the company was treating them unfairly. This belief was due in part to the high price of copper at the time the company was pleading poverty. During the strike the price per ton continued to rise, from 580 dollars in March to 680 dollars in September.⁶⁰ In this favourable economic climate, strike supporters saw the company's threat to close the mine as a mere "bargaining weapon," a way to force the workers to accept the company's contract offer.⁶¹ Union president Ken Smith called it an empty threat: "All along they have said they'd close if we didn't accept their proposals," he told reporters. "I won't believe it 'till they move out

⁵⁷ UBCAR, Britannia Oral History Project, 1878-18, interview with Lucille Gillingham.

⁵⁸ Philip Scranton, *Proprietary Capitalism: The Textile Manufacturer at Philadelphia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 418, quoted in Steven High, *Industrial Sunset: The Making of North America's Rust Belt, 1969-1984* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 89.

⁵⁹ Interview with Elsie Anderson, September 23, 2004; UBCARS, BMOHP, Box 2, File 15, Report on interview with Reg Eades, Jr; Box 3, File 11, Report on interview with Mrs. Betty Manson.

⁶⁰ "The Truth About Britannia Mine," *Vancouver Sun*, 9 September 1964, 9.

⁶¹ UBC SpColl, GP, Doug Collins, "Bob's Ghost," *Vancouver Times*, 3 October 1964.

the track and hoisting equipment.”⁶² In 1958 many residents believed the company had tried to avoid the shutdown until it had no other choice, but during the 1964 strike few believed the company was considering residents’ interests. Some claimed the mine closure was “a deliberate attempt to jack-up the market price of copper” by limiting supply.⁶³ Many remembered the sacrifices the union had made to help the mine reopen. In 1959, the union had agreed to a 44-hour workweek and surrendered some of its benefits, and Ken Smith argued workers “expect some reciprocation now copper prices are up.”⁶⁴ Strikers found the company’s threats more reprehensible because they believed their demands were reasonable. “We believe the men are entitled to a 40-hour week,” miner’s wife Sylvia Hoeflitch told the *Squamish Times*: “Practically everyone else has it.”⁶⁵ Smith pointed out that, even if the company agreed to all the union’s demands, conditions in Britannia would still not achieve parity with those at other British Columbia mines.⁶⁶ With copper prices high, many in Britannia believed the company was able to meet union demands, and felt mistreated when the company refused to compromise and threatened to close the mine permanently. In 1958, residents hesitated to blame BM&S for the shutdown; in contrast, in 1964 the company quickly became the focus of residents’ hostility.

Residents also did not have the same sense of loyalty to the Anaconda Company that previous employees had shown BM&S. While BM&S had tried to foster loyalty and

⁶² UBC SpColl, GP, “Mine will close,” *Province*, 26 September 1964; “Britannia to shut but vote goes on,” *Province*, 28 September 1964.

⁶³ Labour unrest in Rhodesia and the Congo during the same period was contributing to a world-wide drop in the copper supply and raising the metal’s price, fuelling the miners’ suspicions about the company’s intentions. UBC SpColl, GP, “Uneasy calm at Britannia,” *Province*, 29 September 1964; “Many Britannia Miners dig in – ready to live in jobless town,” *Vancouver Times*, 7 October 1964.

⁶⁴ UBC SpColl, GP, Doug Collins, “Bob’s Ghost,” *Vancouver Times*, 3 October 1964; “Mine will close,” *Province*, 26 September 1964..

⁶⁵ UBC SpColl, GP, “Britannia faces ‘indefinite shutdown’,” *Squamish Times*, 13 August 1964.

⁶⁶ UBC SpColl, GP, Doug Collins, “Bob’s Ghost,” *Vancouver Times*, 3 October 1964.

unity through welfare schemes, the Anaconda Company did little to establish such a relationship with its employees. By the 1960s, the tenets of civic capitalism that BM&S had adopted were being replaced by ideas of global capitalism, in which shareholders' interests were paramount.⁶⁷ Anaconda was an American corporate "empire" of mining, transportation, lumber, and real estate companies. It owned subsidiaries in four countries, and had a reputation for using "coercion and persuasion to maintain control" over its employees.⁶⁸ Anaconda showed less consideration for Britannia's residents than did BM&S. Miner's wife and long-time resident Olive Baxter noticed the difference between the companies' approaches. Under BM&S management, she remembered, "it was more like a big family. But when the Anaconda come [sic], they were more into industry...and it was more business."⁶⁹ Her feelings for BM&S were fond enough that she considered the company akin to a relative or friend, not a corporate entity. Clearly, Baxter and her fellow residents felt less connected to the new mine owners, who had only been operating the mine for two years. They did not believe they owed Anaconda anything, and consequently it was easier for striking employees and residents to label the company an "outsider" and portray them as the enemy. The strike helped residents to redefine community in opposition to the company.

In 1958, the sustained co-operation between the company and the union during the months of uncertainty preceding the shutdown gave residents further proof that the company was concerned about their welfare. Initially, the company and the union

⁶⁷ High, *Industrial Sunset*, 89.

⁶⁸ Norman Girvan, *Copper in Chile: A study in conflict between corporate and national economy* (Jamaica: Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of the West Indies, 1972), 37; Laurie Mercier, *Anaconda: Labour, Community, and Culture in Montana's Smelter City* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 20.

⁶⁹ UBCAR, BMOHP, 1878-3, interview with Olive Baxter.

disagreed over the best way to respond to falling copper prices. Each group used its understanding of community to promote its preferred solution to the crisis. The company asked its employees to take a pay cut, calling for local unity and sacrifice to help keep the mine open. Management expected residents to share “the company’s hardship through an emergency.”⁷⁰ On the other hand, the union refused to take a pay cut, believing to do so would be to “break faith” with the broader community of base-metal workers across Canada.⁷¹ Though there was sympathy for the company, worker solidarity was paramount. Despite their diverging notions of community, company officials and union leaders did not disagree for long. Together, they reached several agreements that allowed the mine to continue operating. In late August, they rearranged work schedules to reduce labour costs.⁷² In October, workers gave up a five-cent per hour wage increase promised in their two-year contract, and agreed to work four additional hours per week.⁷³ The company’s willingness to negotiate and compromise with the union further convinced some residents that BM&S was trying to act in their interest.

Residents’ loyalty, coupled with the sustained co-operation of union and company officials to prevent the closure, helps to explain why there was little outrage when BM&S announced in February 1958 that it would have to close Britannia until base metal prices improved.⁷⁴ Because of the union and company’s extended efforts to keep the mine open, many residents believed that “everything possible had been done,” and the closure was unavoidable.⁷⁵ “You can’t do anything once the copper prices are down,” former resident

⁷⁰ “\$15,000 Homes to Make B.C.’s New Ghost Town,” *Vancouver Sun*, 22 July 1957, 3.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² “Britannia Mine, Union Plan Economies to Keep Running,” *Vancouver Sun*, 23 August 1957, 16.

⁷³ House of Commons Debates, Tuesday November 14, 1957, 1115.

⁷⁴ “For Mr. Gaglardi – A Message: You still can save Britannia’s life,” *Province*, 3 March 1958, 17.

⁷⁵ UBC SpColl, GP, Doug Collins, “My MP,” *Vancouver Times*, 7 November 1964.

Will Trythall claimed.⁷⁶ Miner John Dickinson did not blame the company either; business was bad, and BM&S “just couldn’t make a go of it, that’s all.”⁷⁷ Rex Lucas argues this attitude is common among residents of Canada’s single-industry communities. These workers recognize the many uncontrollable factors affecting resource industries, and consequently believe power and authority are diffuse. They have little focus for their hostility, believing, especially in a time of recession, that company officials cannot control the laws of supply and demand or the whims of shareholders. This belief, Lucas notes, inhibits action because “it is difficult to direct intense conflict against an enemy you cannot find.”⁷⁸ Lucas’ theory applies to Britannia’s workers in 1958, many of whom believed their town was the victim of economic laws, laws that, according to a *Victoria Times* editorial, “no Canadian government, no government in the world” could circumvent.⁷⁹ While some grumbled that the company surely owed them something for all the concessions they had made, ultimately no collective opposition to the shutdown emerged because many believed there was nothing they could do. Anger did not translate into action.

This sense of helplessness and pessimism is evident in the language inhabitants and observers used to describe the mine’s closure. Their words often evoked images of death. Resident Elsie Hamelin called the drop in copper prices Britannia’s “death knell,” while Mrs. Robinson, the postmaster’s wife, claimed that watching the mine close was like “sitting by the deathbed of an old friend.”⁸⁰ Vancouver’s newspapers announced the

⁷⁶ Interview with Will Trythall, September 23, 2004.

⁷⁷ UBCAR, Britannia Oral History Project, 1878-14, interview with Elsie Hamelin.

⁷⁸ Lucas, *Minetown, Milltown, Railtown*, 334-339.

⁷⁹ “Who Pays the Shot?” *Victoria Times*, 4 September 1957.

⁸⁰ UBCAR, BMOHP, Box 3, File 4, Report from interview with Elsie Hamelin; “\$15,000 Homes to Make B.C.’s New Ghost Town,” *Vancouver Sun*, 22 July 1957, 3.

town's unfortunate fate; "Britannia Dies," one headline read, while another article claimed, "the life-blood is draining from Britannia."⁸¹ Reporters claimed there was an "eerie silence" in the quickly emptying town, and described the shutdown as a "tragedy."⁸² These images reinforced the presumed finality of the closure, and underlined the futility of disputing the company's action. Death, it seemed, was inevitable. Britannia's ghost town status was all but assured.

While the 1958 shutdown was portrayed as the slow death of a town, Anaconda's actions in 1964 were seen as the unprovoked "murder of a community."⁸³ Union leaders, strikers, and supporters were not despondent, but positive, insisting after several weeks on the picket line that the strike "remains solid" and "morale is high."⁸⁴ Their rhetoric, instead of embracing death, evoked images of local and national community to garner wider support for their cause.

On one hand, strikers and supporters described Britannia as a close-knit community threatened by a heartless corporation. Union bulletins and newspaper reports employed what anthropologist Elizabeth Furniss has called the "politics of victimization."⁸⁵ By emphasizing Britannia's small size and the hardworking nature of its residents, opponents of the mine closure highlighted the "discrepancies of power" between the company and the community, transforming Britannia's seeming powerlessness into a moral authority that could be used to justify the union's actions.⁸⁶

⁸¹ "Death of a Whole Town at Least Deserves an Inquest," *Vancouver Sun*, 11 March 1958, 4; "For Mr. Gaglardi – A Message: You still can save Britannia's life," *Province*, 3 March 1958, 17.

⁸² Jack Scott, "Our Town: Man With Ghost," *Vancouver Sun*, 26 May 1958, 21.

⁸³ "We Can't Allow Town's Murder," *Victoria Colonist*, 18 November 1965, 27.

⁸⁴ UBC SpColl, GP, "Local 663 Strike Bulletin" No. 5, Vol. 1, September 2, 1964.

⁸⁵ The term is often used to explore how rural settler communities oppose intrusion by urban governments and/or expanding resource industries. Elizabeth Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the frontier myth in a rural Canadian community* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999), 88-89.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 88.

This was a David versus Goliath struggle. Union bulletins often described the strikers as “little local 663,” while the company was termed “the Anaconda giant” or the “giant metal monopoly.”⁸⁷ Union leaders also mentioned Anaconda’s worth, reminding strikers and supporters that the company was a “billion dollar” enterprise, the “world’s largest copper producer.”⁸⁸ By reinforcing the disparities of resources and power between Anaconda and Britannia residents, the strikers were trying to demonstrate the integrity of their cause. The company was a bully, they claimed, whose “every Scrooge tactic ... only serves to stiffen the resistance of the workers.”⁸⁹ The workers were the “good and faithful long-service employees,” the “miners and their families who over the years have produced [the mine’s] wealth.”⁹⁰ The union’s rhetoric described Britannia’s workers as united small-town folks, an image that excluded the small number of residents who opposed the strike.⁹¹ Britannia’s embodiment of small-town values made it worth saving, supporters argued, even if, in reality, many of the mine’s employees now lived in other towns and commuted to work. Those opposed to the mine’s closure appealed to the image of a close-knit community standing up to a corporate giant to help convince the general public that theirs was a just cause.

On the other hand, the strike’s rhetoric also situated Britannia within a national community in order to solicit support from across the country. The union especially

⁸⁷ UBC SpColl, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 120, File 12, “Local 663 – Strike Bulletin,” No. 1, Vol. 2, February 12, 1965; UBC SpColl, GP, Letter to “All Trade Unionists” from Ken Smith, 17 September 1964.

⁸⁸ UBC SpColl, GP, “Save Britannia: Cavalcade Sunday,” *Pacific Tribune*, October 30, 1964, “Historic Victory of Mine Miller’s at Britannia” – bulletin dated March 11, 1965.

⁸⁹ UBC SpColl, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 120, File 12, “Local 663 – Strike Bulletin,” No. 1, Vol. 2, February 12, 1965.

⁹⁰ UBC SpColl, GP, “Britannia,” editorial in *Western Miner* (October 1964); UBC Special Collections, GP, “Save Britannia: Cavalcade Sunday,” *Pacific Tribune*, October 30, 1964.

⁹¹ Although 97.3 per cent of the unionized employees voted in favour of the strike, only 268 out of the approximately 350 workers (77 per cent) completed Strike Registration Forms, which allowed them to volunteer for picket duty and receive strike pay. Of the remaining employees, it is possible they did not want to participate in the strike, or left Britannia for jobs elsewhere. See UBC SpColl, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 120, File 14.

appealed to a growing sense of economic nationalism, claiming all Canadian workers and citizens should be concerned about an American corporation's efforts to close Britannia mine. Union leaders had tried this tactic in 1958 without much success. Two weeks after BM&S closed the mine on February 27, the union submitted a paper to the provincial government's Select Standing Committee on Labour, accusing the company of "callous and precipitate action" and asking the government to take the mine away from "foreign interests" and operate it itself.⁹² The report claimed the unused mine would deteriorate, making it nearly impossible to reopen should copper prices rise. It argued the decision to close Britannia was made "4,000 miles away, by citizens of another country, and evidently without concern for the people of British Columbia."⁹³ The union tried to solicit government intervention by insisting the mine closure affected not only Britannia's citizens, but also the inhabitants of the entire province. A *Vancouver Sun* editorial agreed that the company "surely owes this province something more than a series of vague disaster warnings, followed by an abrupt shutdown with no explanation at all."⁹⁴ However, the provincial and federal governments did not accept the union's advice, reluctant to involve itself in the affairs of a private company. Their appeal came too late; the mine was closed, and many residents had already left for other jobs.

However, by 1964 feelings of economic nationalism had become more prevalent in Canada. Historian Steven High argues "by the mid-1960s, a growing number of English-speaking Canadians believed that their country was in imminent danger of

⁹² International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers (Western District), "Submission to Select Standing Committee on Labour of the B.C. Government, Re: Closing of Britannia Mine," 11 March 1958, 1. UBC SpColl, IUMMSW Fonds, box 115, file 11.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁹⁴ "Death of a Whole Town at Least Deserves an Inquest," *Vancouver Sun*, 11 March 1958, 4.

becoming an American colony.”⁹⁵ While some lamented the invasion of American culture in magazines and television programmes, others pointed to high levels of foreign investment as proof of the United States’ imperialist intentions. Indeed, by 1960, 47.4 per cent of capital invested in Canada came from the United States.⁹⁶ Canada faced a choice, according to former federal Minister of Finance Walter L. Gordon, between independence or colonial status.⁹⁷ This new nationalism became, in Steven High’s words, “a powerful rhetorical weapon in the hands of working people to be used against companies that closed plants.”⁹⁸ High insists this nationalist feeling was strongest in Ontario’s manufacturing sector in the early 1970s.⁹⁹ However, evidence from the 1964 Britannia strike clearly demonstrates that employees of British Columbia’s mining industry were using economic nationalist rhetoric years earlier. After all, foreign investment was not limited to the manufacturing sector of Canada’s economy. Between 1926 and 1963, foreign investment in Canada’s mining and smelting sector rose from 38 to 59 per cent.¹⁰⁰ In 1964, the union was able to play more successfully on nationalist fears, placing Anaconda’s threat to close the mine within an emerging discourse criticizing American influence in the Canadian economy. In an effort to save their town, residents began imagining community on a larger scale than they had in 1958.

Strikers used nationalist rhetoric in two ways. First, they described themselves as part of a national community of workers that needed to defend itself against American corporations. Union leaders argued all Canadian workers should be concerned about the

⁹⁵ High, *Industrial Sunset*, 168.

⁹⁶ Herb Gray, *Foreign Direct Investment in Canada* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1972), 15.

⁹⁷ High, *Industrial Sunset*, 168.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 169.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 250, n7.

¹⁰⁰ Jennifer Ann Howard, “The Impact of Foreign Investment on the Canadian Economy” (MA Thesis, University of Victoria, 1979), 21.

attempt to close Britannia mine, because a victory against Anaconda would “benefit workers everywhere.”¹⁰¹ The attempted closure was offered as evidence that “absentee landlords (particularly U.S.) have nothing but disdain for the Canadian worker.”¹⁰²

Workers across Canada were encouraged to support the Britannia strikers because, with increased American ownership in Canada, they could soon be facing a similar situation. Strong opposition and legislation would ensure, as union representatives told federal Minister of Labour Leslie Peterson, that foreign companies could not “enter our country for the purpose of exploitation without regard to [sic] the welfare of the workers and the community as a whole.”¹⁰³

Union leaders and strike supporters also claimed all Canadians had an interest in keeping the mine in operation, and implored their fellow citizens not to “let the Yanks rule Britannia.”¹⁰⁴ In a letter to the *Northern Miner*, union president Ken Smith argued that Canada’s taxpayers, who had been willing to provide a subsidy to keep the mine operating in 1958, should expect the company to “reciprocate when times are good for them.”¹⁰⁵ The petition circulated at the union’s October rally asserted that the decision to close the mine was made “without regard for the welfare of the Canadian people,” and accused Anaconda of trying to destroy “millions of tons of valuable ore” that could have been contributing to the Canadian economy.¹⁰⁶ This ore, union leaders insisted, was “an asset belonging to the people and should not be abandoned.”¹⁰⁷ In this context, the strike

¹⁰¹ UBC SpColl, GP, Letter to “All Trade Unionists” from K.A. Smith, 17 September 1964.

¹⁰² UBC SpColl, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 118, File 3, Letter from W.A. Booth, president of Local 651 (Kimberley), 11 August 1964.

¹⁰³ UBC SpColl, GP, “Local 663 Strike Bulletin,” Vol. 1, No. 4, n.d.

¹⁰⁴ UBC SpColl, GP, “Britannia miners stage big rally on Sunday,” *Squamish Times*, 5 November 1964.

¹⁰⁵ UBC SpColl, GP, “Union Takes Exception to Britannia Editorial,” *Northern Miner*, 5 November 1964.

¹⁰⁶ UBC SpColl, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 118, File 3, petition from rally.

¹⁰⁷ UBC SpColl, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 118, File 3, paper presented to the members of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, 26 January 1965, 3.

became more than a struggle to keep the mine open and secure improved working conditions for Britannia's residents. It was a struggle to "re-establish the rights of the people of this Province and our sovereign government" against foreign resource extraction companies.¹⁰⁸ To this end, the union asked the provincial government to enact legislation to ensure that mining properties, claims, grants, and leases abandoned by corporate interests became the property of the Crown.¹⁰⁹ The union wanted the mine "put to use for the benefit of Canadians," not, as one union bulletin put it, left in the hands of an "arrogant American monopoly."¹¹⁰

Unlike in 1958, many people responded favourably to the strikers' nationalist appeals. They agreed that, as Canadians, they were part of a community that needed to rally to help their fellow citizens. In a display of worker solidarity, locals from 42 unions across Canada pledged money and support for Britannia's strikers, many requesting copies of strike bulletins so they could "follow the developments of your fight."¹¹¹ Several politicians reacted with concern. In a letter to the *Vancouver Times*, provincial New Democratic Party MLA Arthur Turner said Anaconda's attempt to close the mine should "shock and startle Canadians into action." Turner claimed he was not as concerned about the dispute between the company and the union as he was about "the fact that Canadian wealth – known and potential – can be wilfully destroyed" by "a large corporation with headquarters in the United States."¹¹² Charles Caron, Chairman of the North Vancouver Committee of the Communist Party of Canada, wrote to Coast-

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 4.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 4.

¹¹⁰ UBC SpColl, GP, "Save Britannia: Cavalcade Sunday," *Pacific Tribune*, 30 October 1964.; IUMMSW Fonds, Box 120, File 11, "Historic Victory of Mine Miller's at Britannia" – bulletin dated 11 March 1965.

¹¹¹ See Appendix C for full list. UBC SpColl, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 120, File 12, various letters to local union staff; Letter from Leslie Farkas, 12 November 1964.

¹¹² UBC SpColl, GP, "Don't let foreigners destroy B.C. mine," *Vancouver Times*, 17 October 1964.

Capilano Liberal Party MP Jack Davis asking the federal government to “nationalize this enterprise so that it may be operated in the interests of Canadians.”¹¹³ Provincial New Democratic Party leader and MLA R.M. Strachan told union leader Harvey Murphy he was concerned about Anaconda’s actions, and intended “to pursue this matter further.”¹¹⁴ Private citizens also used nationalist sentiments to voice their dismay at the mine closure. “The obvious solution,” one writer to the *Province* suggested, “is expropriation and operation of the mine by the B.C. government.”¹¹⁵ The union’s nationalist rhetoric clearly struck a chord, emphasizing all Canadians’ vulnerability at the hands of American corporations.

As these examples illustrate, other unions, politicians, and private citizens shared the union’s fears about increasing American control of Canadian industries. Many believed the union’s assertions that, as members of the same country, they belonged to the same community of interest as the Britannia strikers, and therefore should send the miners assistance and support. Although neither the federal nor provincial government introduced legislation or took steps to nationalize the mine, clearly many people saw the strike in Britannia as an attempt to stand up to foreign companies. This was a community, whether imagined locally or nationally, defending its interests. The financial and moral support strikers received as a result of their nationalist appeals sustained their campaign for eight months – long enough to convince both union and company officials to return to

¹¹³ UBC SpColl, GP, Letter to J. Davis, M.P (Coast-Capilano), from Charles Caron, Chairman or North Vancouver Committee of Communist Party of Canada, 30 September 1964.

¹¹⁴ UBC SpColl, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 62, File 19, Letter to Harvey Murphy from R.M. Strachan, M.L.A. and Leader of the Opposition, 10 December 1964.

¹¹⁵ UBC SpColl, GP, “Take over mine,” *Province*, 17 November 1964. Premier W.A.C. Bennett’s 1961 “provincialization” of the B.C. Electric Company set a precedent for government expropriation of private companies that had not existed in 1958, perhaps making it a more viable option for Britannia in some British Columbians’ minds. Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia*, revised edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 285.

the bargaining table. Whereas in 1958 many observers had only pity for Britannia's "tragic" and scattered residents, in 1964 observers were invited to become part of the strikers' community. This ensured opposition to the shutdown came from across the country, not only from a divided group of local residents.

During both crises, residents' diverse notions of community played an influential role in their response. Economic conditions also contributed to the outcomes. The rapid changes affecting Britannia during these years did not destroy the community, as some would argue; however, they did require residents to re-examine their understandings of what connected them to each other. In 1958, notions of community obstructed collective action, dividing residents and obscuring blame. Residents who had used marital status to define community membership had little to unite them when the mine suddenly closed. In 1964, community was a "significantly empowering myth," motivating many residents to act collectively.¹¹⁶ Striking workers believed the strike gave them a common purpose and a common opponent in the company. They were able to embrace notions of local and national community that broadened their struggle and garnered support from outside Britannia's boundaries. In both cases work resumed at the mine within a year of the crisis. Britannia was able to keep the ghosts at bay, in one case at least partly because of residents' understanding of community – in the other, partly in spite of it.

¹¹⁶ High, *Industrial Sunset*, 9.

Conclusion

Company Town: Shack Town, New Town, or Hometown?

Once resolved, the 1964 strike faded quickly from the media spotlight. The provincial government was busy implementing its newly amended Municipal Act, designed to give government officials a role in resource town development and allow new towns to be immediately incorporated, ostensibly giving residents more control over local affairs through taxation and municipal councils.¹ The government intended to prevent company towns like Britannia from being built by legislating a new model for resource town development. In September 1965, seven short months after Britannia's employees returned to work, government ministers, professional planners, labour leaders, and resource company officials met at the B.C. Natural Resources Conference in Prince George to discuss the Act's implications. Conference delegates imagined a bright future, in which resource towns would guarantee a stable labour supply for companies and a secure, enjoyable lifestyle for employees. They contrasted this future with the stereotypical "shack towns of the past," and offered the newly completed town of Kitimat as an example of what was possible.² G.W. Whitehead was the manager of the property department for the Aluminum Company of Canada, owner of the Kitimat smelter and the hydroelectric project in neighbouring Kemano. At the conference he claimed that the "unprecedented low rate of one per cent labour turnover per year for the past six years proves beyond a doubt that long-range planning of an industrial town complete with all amenities pays."³ W.B. Scott, the engineer hired to develop the pulp-and-paper town of

¹ Bradbury, "Class Structure and Class Conflicts," 3-18.

² "Making new towns hometowns," *Vancouver Sun*, 11 September 1965, 23.

³ *Ibid.*

Gold River on Vancouver Island, believed people would no longer “tolerate company towns where their lives are dominated by the employer.” He insisted “good schools, homes, shopping centres, recreational and cultural facilities” were needed to make these new towns “hometowns.”⁴ Delegates stressed the need to reduce “unnecessary antagonisms” between labour and management. They believed resource extraction should benefit resource communities, arguing that “where the use of a natural resource does not lead to a good community life, perhaps the resource should not be developed at all.”⁵

These were admirable statements. Certainly, British Columbia’s working people deserved to live in stable, well-appointed, incorporated communities. However, these were not revolutionary ideas; Britannia’s residents would certainly have found several of the delegates’ announcements familiar, and perhaps ironic. Their own experiences suggested the delegates’ plans and recommendations would do little to change company town life. For one thing, the Beach and Townsite had always had many of the amenities professional planners were now advocating. Those amenities had not significantly lowered labour turnover rates, nor had they prevented the company from shutting down the mine in 1958 and closing the Townsite permanently. Moreover, far from being an “unnecessary antagonism,” conflict between employer and employees had recently brought Britannia residents closer together, creating a sense of community and purpose that helped them fight for their jobs and homes. It is clear that the experts’ advice did not apply to Britannia, which was, for many, already a hometown. Had the conference delegates asked, Britannia’s residents would have told them that while plans are important, social interaction cannot easily be laid out in blueprints and policies. But

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

newspaper reports of the conference did not list company town residents as being among conference participants. The delegates painted the same bleak and simplistic image of company town life, one that did not reflect the varied experiences of the many people that had passed through Britannia over the years.

This thesis has demonstrated that daily life in the company town of Britannia was actually much more complex. Company officials, employees, and residents imagined their community in different ways at different times, and for varying reasons. While BM&S was the ultimate authority at the Beach and Townsite, company managers did not impose their arbitrary will over employees. Instead, the company's policies and publicity used a cautious paternalism to more subtly shape its settlements, imagining Britannia as a stable, contented community of hard-working, loyal employees. Yet few inhabitants saw themselves as company peons. Marital status, gender, class, and ethnicity shaped their identities and influenced community membership. These notions of community affected residents' reactions to two prolonged shutdowns, influencing their apathy in 1958 and their resistance in 1964.

Married and unmarried inhabitants had very different experiences in Britannia. While the physical distance between bunkhouse and home was not far, socially it was not easily bridged. Bunkhouse residents were more likely to be single, transient workers. The company saw them as a labour turnover problem to be solved, and offered incentives like life insurance to encourage them to settle more permanently at the mine. However, many of the company's other welfare schemes were geared towards families, and held little appeal for the bunkhouse dwellers. In interviews, few bunkhouse residents believed the company had their interests at heart. Married residents, who conceived of Britannia as a

family-centred community, also excluded single employees. They considered them rough transients who threatened to disturb their respectable activities. Class and ethnicity reinforced marital status divisions in this case; a greater percentage of bunkhouse dwellers were waged workers and recent immigrants. Only the union, which appealed to working people regardless of marital status, voiced the concerns of bunkhouse dwellers. Ignored by company policy, and physically and socially excluded by married co-workers, few single employees developed an attachment to Britannia. The mine offered them a job, but not a home. Consequently, these inhabitants were the first to leave when the mine shutdown in 1958. They had little reason to join with married residents in opposing the mine's closure.

On the other hand, married residents formed the social nucleus of the community. The company saw them as desirable citizens, stable employees that would help decrease turnover and thus lower labour costs. Married workers were more likely to benefit from employee incentives because they stayed at the mine longer on average than their unmarried co-workers. They also benefited from the company's low-rent housing, recreation facilities, hospitals, and schools. They were encouraged to raise their children at Britannia. Unlike the bunkhouse inhabitants, they were able to make Britannia their home. They created a close-knit community based on respectable behaviour and local participation, and valued commitment to associational life above occupational status. They were a cohesive group that enjoyed their bridge games, Auxiliary meetings, and church bazaars. However, their sense of community was not strong enough to unite them in opposition during the 1958 shutdown. By excluding single workers from community life, married residents alienated many inhabitants and divided the workforce. Their

loyalty to the company, as well as the ongoing economic recession, contributed to their conservative response to the mine's closure. Their much-lauded community spirit ultimately could not prevent the destruction of their homes.

Evidence presented in the preceding chapters reveals how community in Britannia was both a cultural construct and a social process. Notions of community both bolstered and undermined company control. For several decades, the company used community to foster loyalty, discourage dissent, and project a positive public image. Conversely, during the 1964 strike residents argued for community solidarity in opposition to their employer, rallying to protect their interests against a perceived foreign threat. While community was a rhetorical tool, it was also a fluid process. Community bonds were defined and redefined in everyday interactions, at meetings, parties, and softball games, in church and around the card table. Married residents held leadership positions in most local organizations, and, therefore, exercised a degree of power over other community members. However, union members and married women also formed bonds based on shared experiences and daily interaction, sometimes challenging the hetero-social values espoused by the dominant group. Social interaction also helped revive residents' collective identity during the 1964 strike, when picket lines, rallies, and fundraising events brought Britannia's now-scattered employees into closer daily contact. Community was clearly not a static entity, nor was it a product of isolation or uniform population composition, as scholars such as Linda Carlson, Jean Barman, and Bruce Ramsey have suggested.

My approach explores the varied functions and meanings of community, and expands the often-limited perspective Canadian historians have used to examine social

interaction and identities in company towns. It shifts the focus away from manifestations of company control, instead looking at the ways in which both residents and company officials shaped social dynamics in places such as Britannia. Company town life was neither a uniformly negative nor positive experience. Similarly, a community's influence cannot be judged only by its continuous physical existence. Towns that no longer exist should not be deemed "failures" or ignored. A complex approach will help historians avoid nostalgic narratives of idyllic, static communities destroyed by change. The Townsite may have closed after the 1958 shutdown, but many former residents still have fond memories of their time there, and few interviewed regret having lived there. Furthermore, the Townsite's closure did not prevent Britannia's residents from redefining their community in the following years, nor did it stop them from defending their community against the company in 1964. Historians need to avoid using Canada's current ghost towns as evidence of failed community, and pay more attention to the varied ways in which residents and company officials defined and used community in their daily lives.

This research also points to directions for further study. I have suggested that life in company towns was in some ways unexceptional. Gender, class, and ethnicity were at work in Britannia just as they were in other places. However, as yet there is no comprehensive study comparing single industry towns with those of more diverse economies. Such a project would certainly reveal many similarities and differences, helping scholars to better situate the company town within the broader context of Canada's settlement and economic development. Further research exploring and comparing British Columbia's company towns is also needed. For example, historians

have rarely examined the many resource communities developed after the 1960s.⁶ Are there particular issues affecting company town's in Canada's westernmost province? How have notions of community changed as markets became increasingly globalized and issues like sustainability came to the fore? These questions are vital, given British Columbia's continued economic reliance on natural resources and the continued instability, despite the provincial government's legislative attempts to ensure stability, of life in single-industry communities such as Gold River, Tumbler Ridge, and Port Alice.

Certainly, life in Britannia Beach continued to be uncertain even after Anaconda closed the copper mine for good in 1974. Since then, the Britannia property has belonged to a series of developers. It has been plagued by water and soil contamination, the destructive legacy of decades of invasive mining. To this day it remains an unincorporated village with no local representation or taxation. The residents continue to live under corporate control. Nevertheless, they have continued to assert their own identity, maintaining their community association and volunteer fire-fighting unit.⁷ They have frequently insisted on having their say when the landowners plan new housing and commercial developments in *their* neighbourhood. Like the many residents who preceded them, Britannia's inhabitants have continued to imagine community in varied ways. Historians need to recognize the influence these imaginings have on the everyday experiences of people in Canada's company towns. By including community in their analyses of social dynamics in these places, historians will be more likely to bring the divisions between bunkhouse and home – and their consequences – to light.

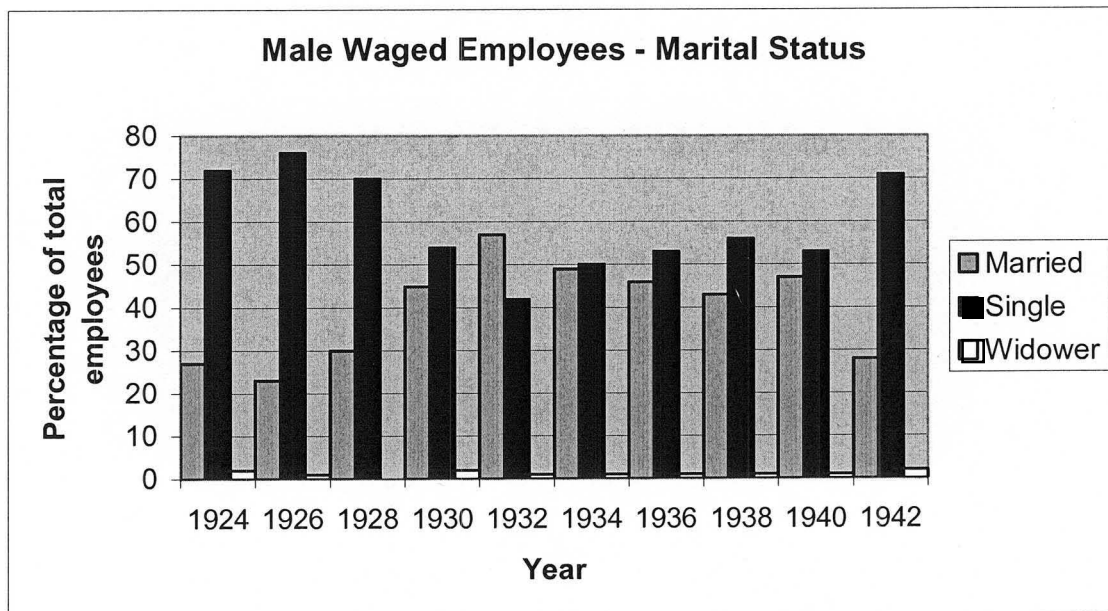
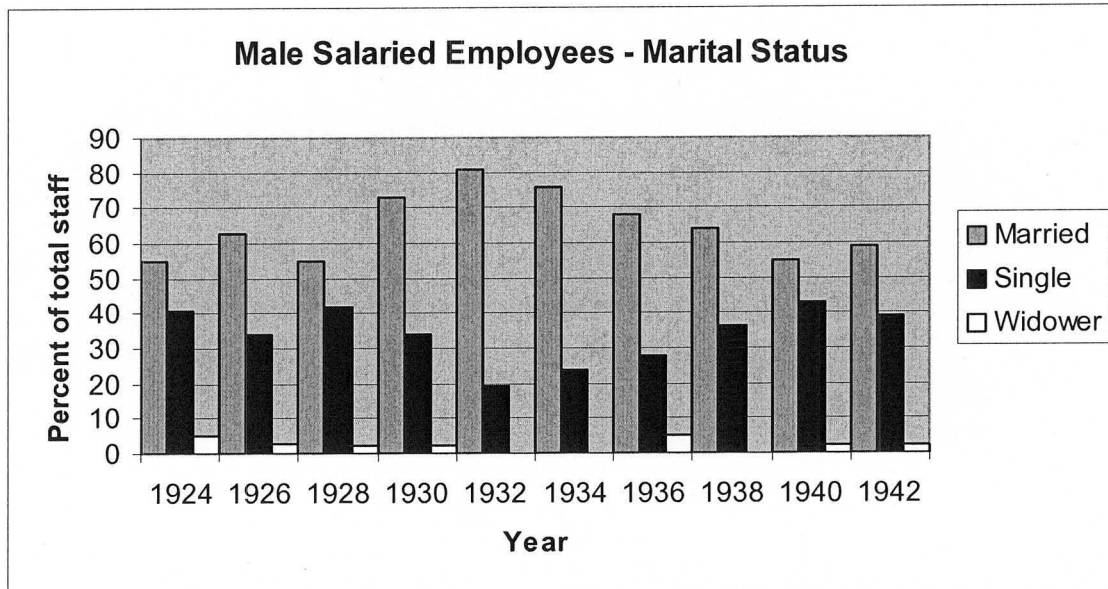
⁶ One exception is Greg Halseth and Lana Sullivan's social geography of Mackenzie and Tumbler Ridge. Greg Halseth and Lana Sullivan, *Building Community in an Instant Town* (Prince George: UNBC Press, 2002).

⁷ See *Britannia: A Company Town*, National Film Board of Canada and Screen Siren Productions, Inc., 2000.

Figures

Figure 1:

Marital Status of BM&S's Male Employees, 1924-1942

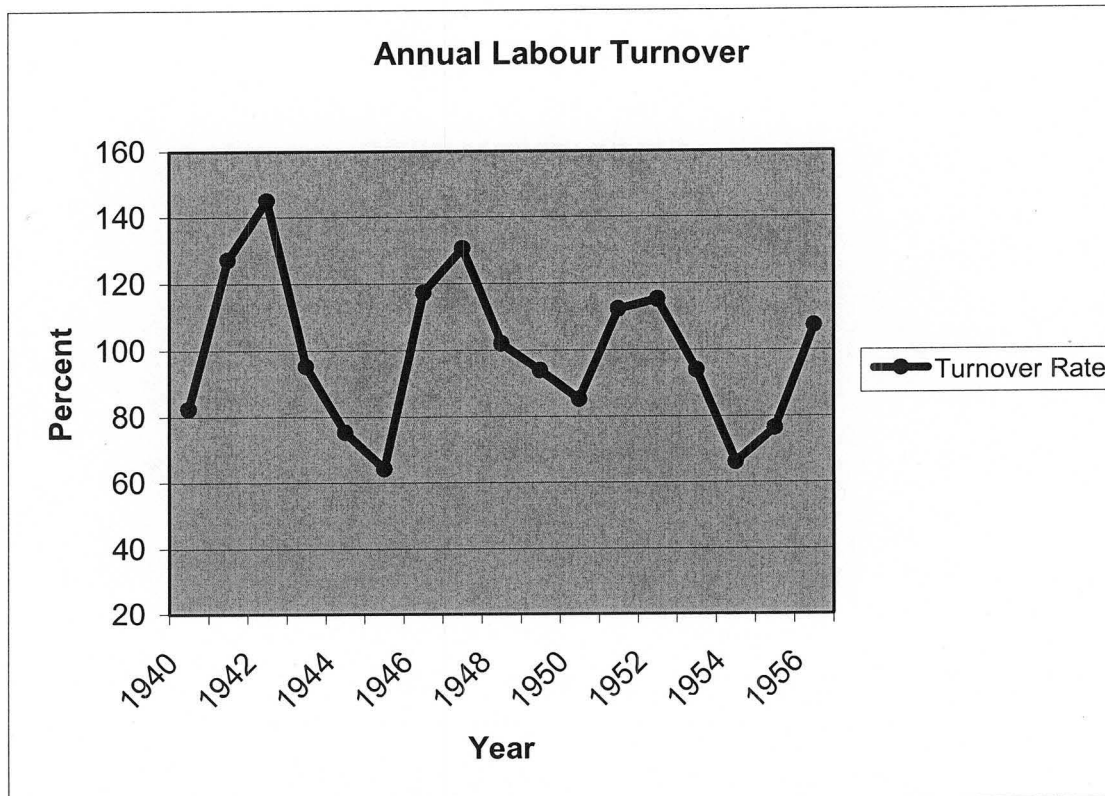


Marital status data taken from BM&S annual reports on employee earnings.

BC Archives, BM&S, MS1221, Box 7, Files 4-8.

Figure 2:

Annual Labour Turnover Rates, 1940-1956

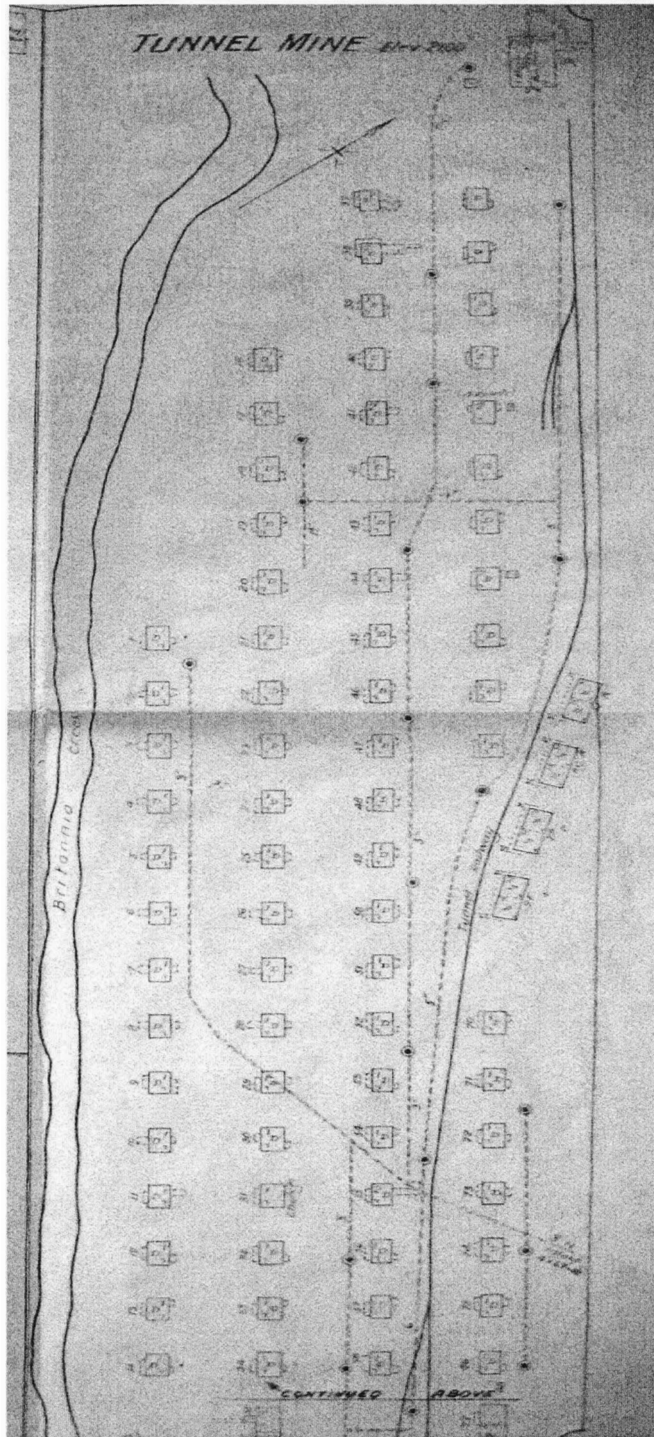


Annual labour turnover from BM&S annual reports, 1940-1956.

BC Archives, BM&S, MS1221, Boxes 3-6.

Figure 3:

Survey map of Townsite



Continued from above:

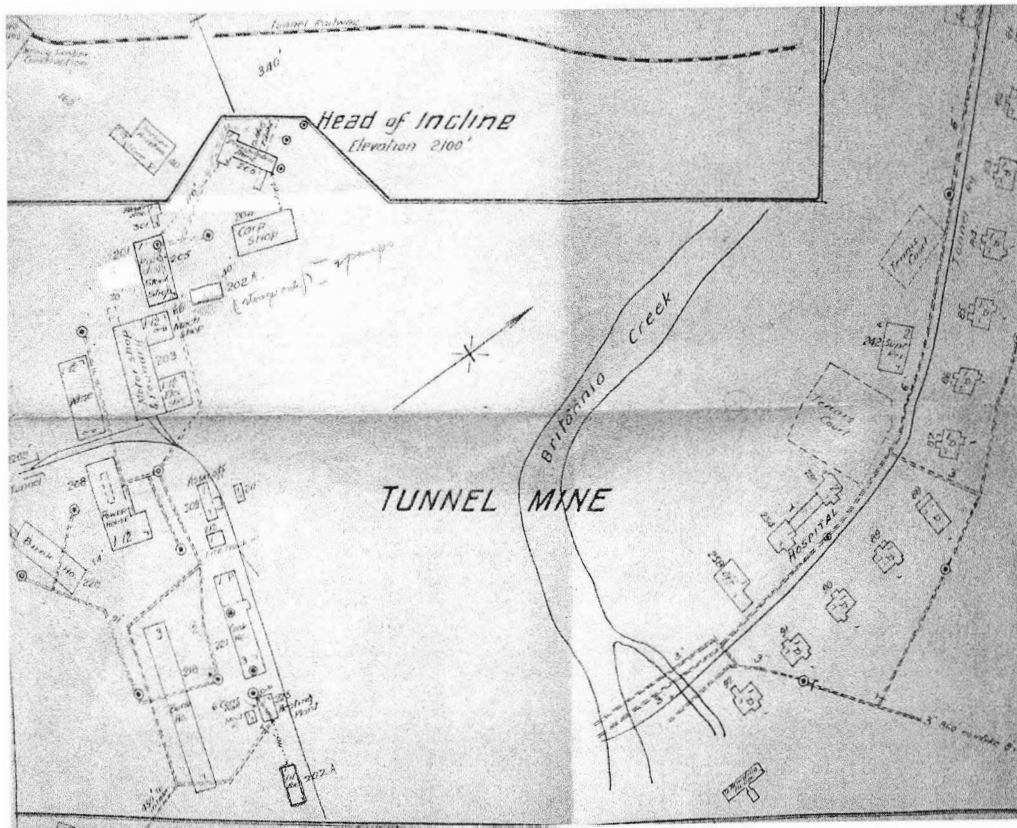
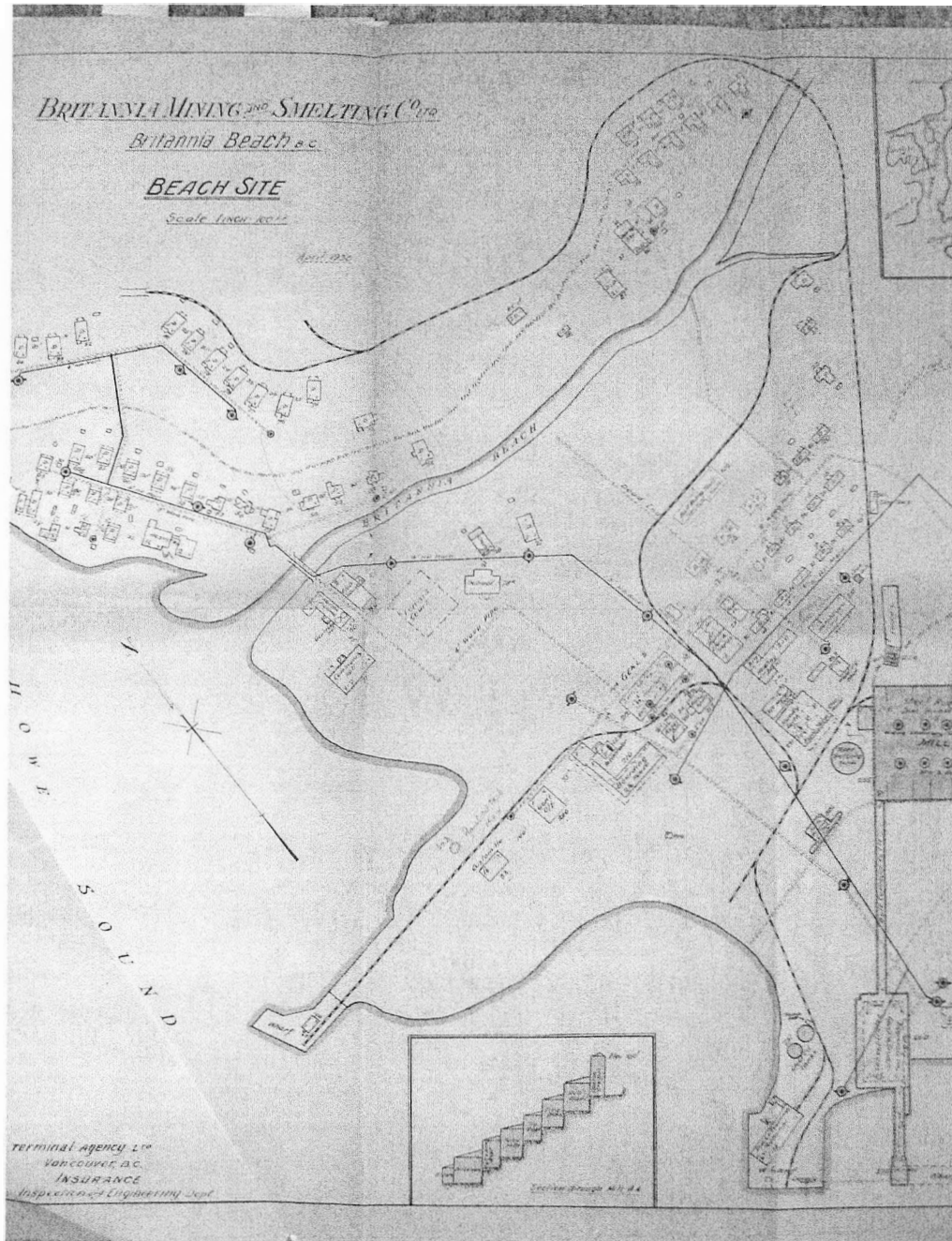


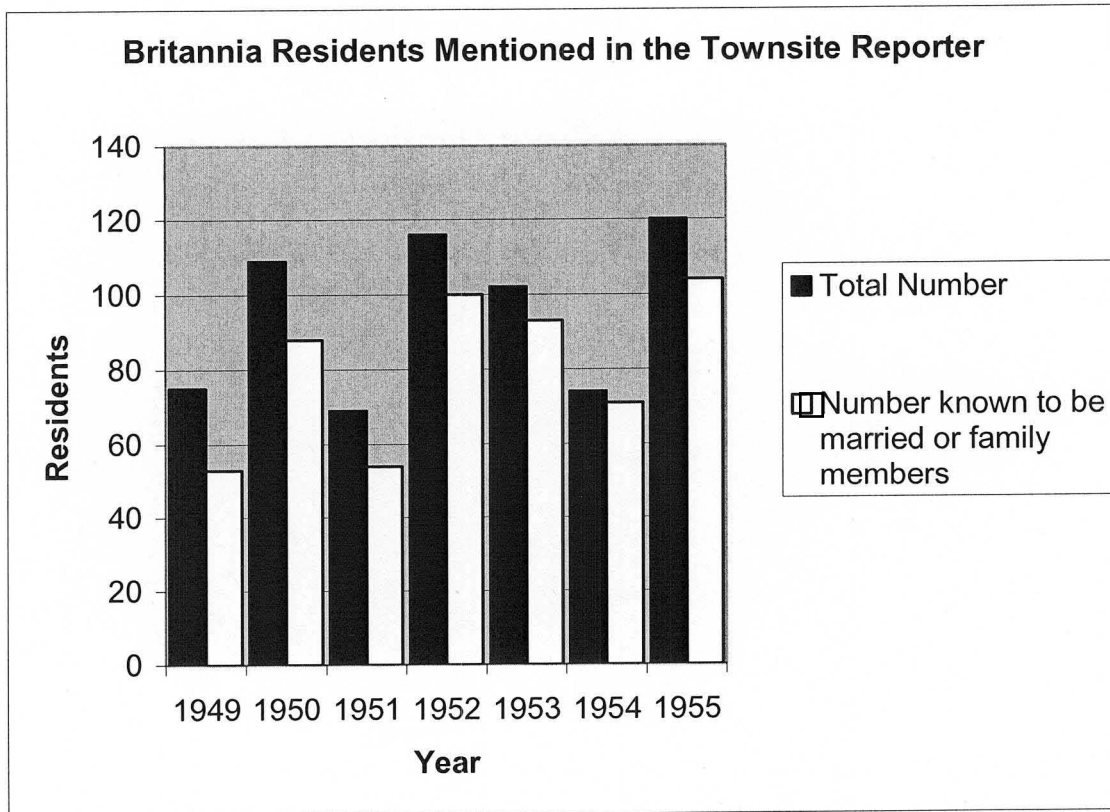
Figure 4:
Survey map of Britannia Beach



Drawings of Townsite and Beach by the Terminal Agency Ltd. for the Insurance Inspection and Engineering Report No. 6, 1930. UBC Special Collections, Howe Sound Company (Britannia Division), Box 59, File 12.

Figure 5:

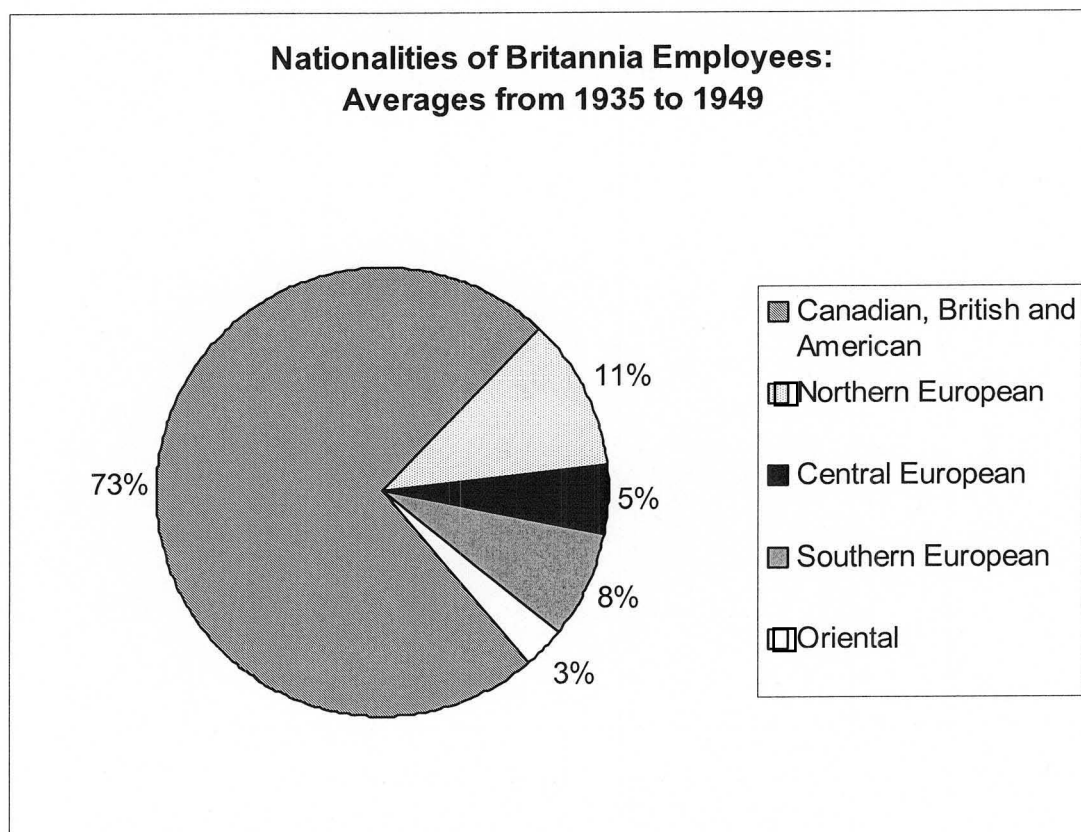
Britannia Residents Mentioned in the *Townsite Reporter*



Townsite Reporter, 1949-1955. BC Archives, LS856-536, LS856-474.

Figure 6:

Nationalities of Britannia Employees, Averages from 1935 to 1949



Nationalities of employees from BM&S annual reports.

BC Archives, BM&S, MS1221, Boxes 3-5.

Appendices

Appendix A

List of interview subjects:

Name	Occupation	Marital Status when resident	Time in Britannia
Anderson, Elsie **	Child	Single	1940-1957
Baxter, Olive	Homemaker, husband a miner	Married	1937-1962
Bennet, Claire	Child, father a bookkeeper	Child	1938-1942
Campbell, Robert	Mucker, timberman's helper, brakeman, motorman	Single	1937-1939
Charlton, Jack	Child, later a part-time work in time office	Child/Single	1916-1938
Dickinson, John	Mill foreman, machinist	Single/Married	1924-1974
Eades, Reg	Child, later miner, mucker, cage tender	Child/Single	1924-1926, 1939
Gillingham, Lucille	Homemaker, husband an accountant	Married	1921-1948
Graney, Alice	Homemaker, husband a miner, mucker, shift boss	Married	1943-1958, 1960-1972
Green, Muriel	Homemaker, husband an accountant	Married	1929-1945
Hamelin, Elsie	Homemaker, husband a miner, mucker, and hoistman	Married	1936-1955
Howard, Thomas	Miner	Single	????-????
Knudson, Raymond	Miner, heavy equipment operator	Single/Married	1949-1987*
Korwatski, Astrid **	Child, later a homemaker, husband a miner	Child/Married	1941-1966
Lucas, Edwin	Royal Bank representative	Unknown	1934-1935
Malm, Ernie	Child, later a miner	Child/Single/Married	1912-1987*
Manson, Betty	Homemaker, husband a transportation worker	Married	1946-1962
McMath, Marie	Cookhouse waitress	Single	1936-1941
McMath, Robert	Miner	Single	1937-1939
McNair, Al **	Miner and transport worker	Married	1956-present*
Petrie, James	Miner, motorman, ore hauler, hoistman, crusher	Married	1933-1940
Philip, Robert	Store clerk and manager	Married	1912-1958
Pickard, Kay **	Homemaker, teacher, husband and son miners	Married	1944-196?

Name	Occupation	Marital status when resident	Time in Britannia
Puckering, Eleanor	Child, father secretary-treasurer of company	Child	1912-1951
Ross, Jack	Mucker, miner, shift boss	Single	1935-1941
Smith, Archie	Mucker, sampler, chief mine engineer	Married	1936-1967
Smith, Mary	Homemaker, hospital attendant	Married	1936-1967
Trythall, Will **	Child, later a sampler	Child/Single	1946-1950, 1964
Walton, Jim	Child, father a miner	Child	1952-1961
Waterland, Donnie	Child, father a machinist	Child	1934-1952
Waterland, Tom	Child, mucker, survey assistant	Child/Single	1940-1955
Wolthers, Astrid	Child, father a hoistman	Child	1940-1949

* Indicates subject was still living in Britannia Beach at the time of the interview.

** Indicates subject interviewed by author in September 2004.

Interview Questions:

Background

1. When did you live in Britannia Beach?
2. How long did you reside there?
3. Why did you move to the community?
4. Why did you leave?

Community involvement

1. What was your position in Britannia Beach (miner, management, housewife, child, other)?
2. Were you involved in community groups?
 - a. If so, which ones?
 - b. What did your involvement entail?

- c. Why did you decide to join?
 - d. If not, why did you decide not to join?
3. How many people were involved in community groups and initiatives?
 4. Who was excluded from these groups? Why?

Social life

1. With whom did you spend most of your leisure time?
2. What did you do during leisure hours?
3. What kinds of events were organized to promote leisure?
4. Who organized them?
5. Who attended them?
6. Did you feel pressured by others to attend certain events in the community?

Attitudes toward company

1. Describe your feelings about the Britannia Mining and Smelting Company, Limited?
2. Would you describe Britannia as a company town? Why?
3. Can you describe the attitudes of your family and friends (also residents) towards the company?
4. Did your feelings change over time? How? Why?

Shutdown

1. How did you react to the company's plans to close the mines in 1958?
2. How did others around you react?
3. What actions did you take?
4. Was staying in Britannia Beach important to you? Why? Why not?
5. What does the term 'community' mean to you?
6. What did living in Britannia Beach mean to you (i.e. was it just a place to live, or did it have deeper significance)?

General

1. Do you have any mementos of your time in Britannia Beach (i.e. photographs, newspaper clippings, journals)?
2. May I see them?
3. What do they remind you of?
4. What is your most vivid memory of Britannia Beach?
5. Is there anything else you would like to share with me?

Appendix B

Local associations and organisations:

Bible Study

Boy Scouts and Cubs

Britannia Beach Community Club

Britannia Credit Union

Britannia Mine Social Club

Canadian Girls in Training

Community Church Sunday school

Explorers

International Union of Mine, Mill & Smelter Workers, Local 663

Ladies' Aid

Ladies' Auxiliary, Local 133

Ladies' Guild

Ladies' Sunshine Club

Parent-Teacher Association

Royal Canadian Legion, Mount Sheer Branch 186

Teen Town

Townsite Brass Band

Townsite Players Club

Viking Club

Youth Council

Appendix C

Unions supporting the 1964 strike (from IUMMSW records. See UBC Special Collections, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 120, File 12):

1. Shipwrights, Joiners & Wood Caulkers' Industrial Union, Local 9 (Victoria, BC)
2. Amalgamated Transit Union, Vancouver, ON
3. International Union of Operating Engineers, Vancouver
4. International Association of Machinists, Toronto and Niagara Falls
5. United Glass and Ceramic Workers of North America, Local 203 (Hamilton, ON)
6. International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, Blacksmiths, Forgers and Helpers, Toronto, ON
7. Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union, Burnaby, BC
8. United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, Local 504 (Hamilton, ON)
9. International Woodworkers of America, Local 1-85 (Port Alberni, BC)
10. Gypsum Workers Union, Local 578 (Burnaby, BC)
11. Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of Canada, Halifax, NS
12. International Brotherhood Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers of the United States and Canada, Nanaimo, Ocean Falls, Powell River, Port Mellon, and Port Alice, BC
13. United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW), Windsor, ON
14. Lumber and Sawmill Workers Union, Port Arthur, ON
15. Vancouver Civic Employees Union – Outside Workers
16. International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and Moving Picture Machine Operators, Saskatoon, SASK
17. Western District, Diamond Drillers' Union, Vancouver, BC
18. Canadian Ironworkers' Union, Local 1 (Vancouver, BC)
19. Canadian Brotherhood and Railway, Transport and General Workers, London, ON
20. United Mine Workers of America, Cumberland, BC
21. United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, Cornerbrook, NFLD

22. International Jewellery Workers' Union, Local 42 (Vancouver, BC)
23. Bricklayers, Marble Masons, Plasterers, Tile Layers, Terrazzo Workers, Local 2 (Alberta)
24. Office and Technical Employees' Union, Local 378 (Vancouver, BC)
25. Bakery and Confection Workers' of America, local 468 (Vancouver, BC)
26. Canadian Postal Employees Association, Vancouver Branch
27. Marine Workers' and Boilermakers' Industrial Union, Vancouver, BC
28. Varnish and Colour Workers, Local 908 (New Jersey)
29. United Packinghouse Food and Allied Workers, Winnipeg, MB, and Calgary, AB
30. Torrington Brass Workers Union, Local 423 (Connecticut)
31. United Fishermen and Allied Workers' Union, Locals 31 and 37 (Prince Rupert, BC), and 17 (Campbell River, BC)
32. International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, Vancouver, New Westminster, BC
33. Office Employees' International Union, Local 15 (Vancouver, BC)
34. International Hod Carriers' Building and Common Labourers' Union of America, Local 1059 (London, ON)
35. Barbers', Hairdressers', Cosmetologists' and Proprietors' International Union of America, Local 372 (Victoria, BC)
36. Amalgamated Lithographers of America, Vancouver, BC
37. United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada, Montreal, QC
38. International Association of Bridge, Structural and Ornamental Iron Workers, local 734 (St. Catherines, ON)
39. General Trust Drivers' Union, Local 879 (Hamilton, ON)
40. Pulp and Paper Workers of Canada, Prince Rupert
41. National Union of Public Employees, Local 8 (Calgary General Hospital Union)
42. Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Warehousemen and Helpers of America, Local 880 (Windsor, ON)

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