



The beautifully restored Steam Ship Sicamous once graced the waters of Okanagan Lake taking passengers and cargo to communities all over the valley. Now it rests on the waterfront in Penticton as a Heritage Museum.

PENTICTON'S LAKESHORE MINE

Discovered by Arthur Day in 1886, the Lakeshore Mine was originally known as the Torpedo claim with sizeable copper and gold deposits.

Soon after its discovery, a syndicate of investors that included Captain Thomas Short, the first steamboat captain on Okanagan Lake, and cattle baron Thomas Ellis, Penticton's largest land owner, purchased the mine. The syndicate spent \$4,000 on the development of the mine to dig a 30-foot shaft and a 90-foot tunnel. The Kettle Valley Railway was not built at the time the mine was started and all the equipment had to be brought down Okanagan Lake from Okanagan Landing (Vernon) by the Canadian Pacific Railway freight boat 'York'.



Brass was the most common material for a spittoon—a receptacle made for spitting into, especially by users of chewing and dripping tobacco. Such containers were used on the steamships that plied Okanagan Lake.

COURTESY NARAMATA MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

In 1889 the Vancouver and Boundary Diking and Mining Company took over operations and built a wharf, bunkhouse, engine house and installed a steam plant. This company sank another tunnel in the mine reaching over 100-feet below the lake. After all this work the low quality of the ore and the small size of the vein made the mine unable to support the high costs of extraction. It soon closed down.

In 1934 the mine was sold to the Riverside Mining Company. The company found an ounce of gold daily, worth about \$15, that during the middle of the Great Depression was not bad pay.

In 1952 the mine changed hands again. W.J. Armstrong, K. Armstrong and J. Trombley dewatered the shaft and cleaned the workings and started operating the mine again. The ore was yielding between \$18 and \$24 a ton in gold, silver and copper. Because of the low yield, they needed a cheap freight system but the CPR would not grant them a railway spur so they quit operating. The following appeared in the 1952 Report of the Minister of Mines: "This mine is on the east shore of Okanagan Lake, approximately one mile northeast of Penticton city hall. It is an old property, including the Okanagan-granted claim, on which work has been done intermittently for about fifty years. The workings consist of an adit driven eastward about 90-feet from the lake-shore and a shaft 100-feet deep sunk from the adit level. On the 100-foot level, workings extend east and west. In the summer of 1952 W.J. Armstrong, K. Armstrong and J. Trombley unwatered the shaft and cleaned out the workings. Six tons of ore was mined from the lower level and shipped to the Trail smelter."

Like many early mines there was more investment went into this mine than ever came out of it!



This ore car, on display in front of the S.S. Sicamous, came from the Okanagan Lakeshore Mine. It was donated by the Trombley family.