

Maple Ridge & Pitt Meadows

A HISTORY IN PHOTOGRAPHS



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Donald E. Waite

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Foreword to the Second Edition

IT IS A PRIVILEGE to write a foreword to Don's second printing of *Maple Ridge & Pitt Meadows: A History in Photographs*, an incredible collection of photos and stories that highlight our past. Understanding our past—how and why we got to this point—is an important foundation from where we can look forward with excitement and anticipation to the future.

As a “local” boy looking at the photos and reading the accounts, a rich flood of memories come rushing back. Through these photos, the past comes alive again...visiting Santa at Fuller Watson, buying a suit at Mowatt’s Mens Wear, the first “store-bought” haircut by Frank Taverna, or walking up to the window of the original Dairy Queen and having a Bill Henderson Burger with the secret sauce.

I know Don worked hard to put together this written and pictorial history of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows. He interviewed many long-time residents for the written sections, and he worked with the Maple Ridge Museum as well to provide the readers with a rich variety of photographs that brings our history to life.

I have known Don Waite for 40 years... since his arrival in the 1970s. Don has a love and passion for Maple Ridge and I appreciate and thank him for the care he took in putting together this publication. It’s a true labour of love.

Whether you are a long-time resident or new to Maple Ridge, I know that you will enjoy the story of Maple Ridge presented in words and pictures. Whether you value it as a personal keepsake or pass it on as a gift to a family member or friend, I hope that it brings enjoyment for years to come.

Congratulations, Don, on a great job, and I pass on my best wishes as your Mayor.



**Ernest S. Daykin,
Mayor of the District of Maple Ridge
from 2009**



Opposite
CPR Station Agent Frank Pelkey built the Ruskin General Store in the 1920s. Mrs. Pelkey and their daughter Mrs. Hyacinth Milliken managed the store. Eva and William Friedel later owned it. Dorothy and John Hildebrand purchased the store in 1978 but sold to the Department of Highways for demolition purposes in 1981.



I AM VERY HONOURED to have been asked by Don Waite to write a foreword to his most recent publication. It is fitting, as we celebrate the 150th birthday of the formation of the Province of British Columbia, to take time and look back on our history. It was only 200 years ago that Simon Fraser met with the Katzie in their riverside village at what is now Hammond. A lot has happened since then. This book tells the history of Ridge Meadows primarily in photographs and as such is not only a fine gift for those who remember, but it will also give future students of history in our community an invaluable asset in their understanding of the settlement of Ridge Meadows.

I have known Don since he was posted to Haney Detachment (now Ridge Meadows) as a young RCMP officer in the early seventies. He has since developed an incredible talent for his camera work. He has a province-wide reputation for the quality of his bird and aerial photography. His recent work in restoring pictures from the past for this book will delight all the citizens of Ridge Meadows and provide fond recollections for those of us who remember Haney fifty years ago.

Working closely with the Maple Ridge Museum, Don has selected photos that bring back to life people and places of earlier times: Foggo's Furniture Store, Harkness Pharmacy, Mowatt's Mens Wear, Wanstell's TV Repair, Clarke's Clip Joint, and Frank Taverna's Barber Shop will flood into readers' minds when looking at Don's work.

For me, one of the pictures in particular brought back the memory of when my father told me about the apartment where he and Mom stayed in 1946 when he became the Manager of B&K Feed Store, which was located in what is now the Zeller's parking lot.

Don's passion is a blessing to our community, and I hope that as a result of this book Don will be flooded with so many more excellent photographs of our past that he will be forced to publish more books.

It is my pleasure and, as the 33rd Mayor of our community, my privilege to wholeheartedly endorse Don Waite's work.



**Gordon W. Robson,
Mayor of the District of Maple Ridge,
2005 – 2008**

Opposite
Originally the Bank of Montreal, this building was Maple Ridge's first bank. It was erected in 1912 with prefabricated lumber that came from the Hastings Saw Mill in Vancouver. It was converted to the Billy Miner Pub by longtime residents Bernice & Don Gehring in 1975.

Introduction

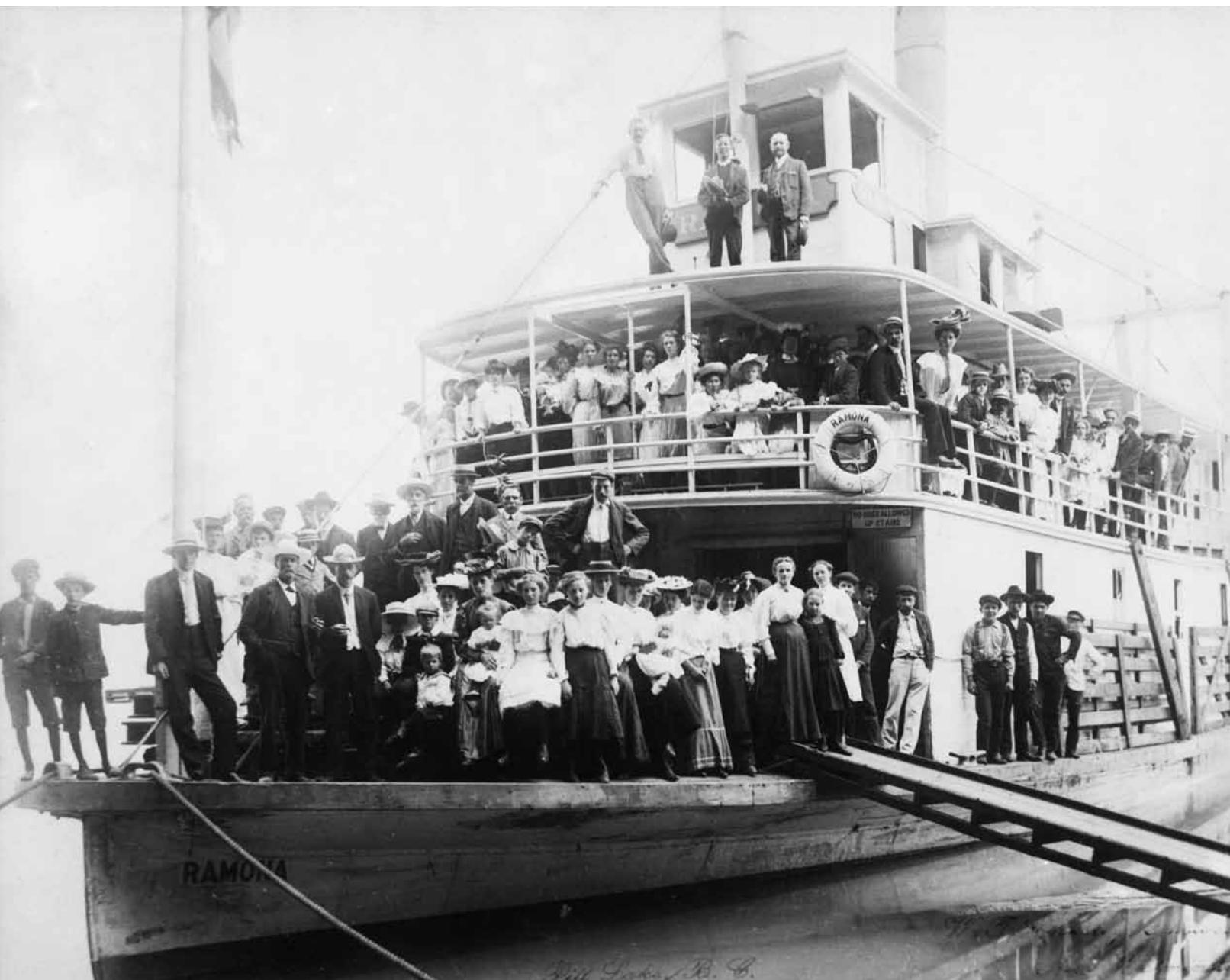
A PICTURE SAYS MORE THAN a thousand words—many of us have heard this truism at one time or another. Whether it is a landscape, an old farm building, a group of people, or whatever else—a visual image reveals in an instant a multitude of details, which to describe would require scores of words, and even with those the picture we form in our minds is far from accurate or complete. That's why historical photographs are so important.

Fortunately, numerous photographs from the early days of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows have been preserved. Many are still in the possession of families, but even more have reached various archives, including the Maple Ridge Museum, where they will be kept and professionally cared for for years to come. A number of these old images are well known—they've been published in the local newspapers and other places for the public to see. But there are many that are less well known, among them some striking images portraying the past life in our communities.

A “history in photographs” of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows can never be complete. On the one hand, there are too many images to choose from, many depicting the same subjects, and on the other hand, there are gaps. So rather than trying to produce a photographic record that couldn't be complete, I have selected images according to the following criteria: first, I feel the photos should be visually rewarding; second, I chose images that have previously not been widely distributed; and third, my priority lay with pictures that are interesting in the sense that they have a story to tell. The result is doubtless a very personal selection, but one I hope will be appreciated by the public.

Going through various archives to select the photos and subsequently restoring them to a quality worthy of this book was arduous work, which, however, I enjoyed tremendously and from which I have learned a lot.

Although the photographs on one level speak for themselves, I felt that some readers would like to know the related stories in words as well. And here I chose the same approach that I used for the pictures: I am not trying to present a new complete history of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows, but rather I selected stories, like cameos, that go with the photographs and that I found interesting. Wherever



SS Ramona. Perhaps a picnic excursion up to Pitt Lake, 1 July, 1901



In 1858, Sir James Douglas, the first Governor of British Columbia, while on a reconnaissance trip up the lower Pitt River saw the sun reflecting golden on the snow encrusted peaks and he immediately dubbed them the Golden Ears Mountains.

Mount Blanshard and Blanshard Needle were named in honour of Sir Richard Blanshard, the province's second governor.

Samuel Edge, an early Maple Ridge pioneer, was the first white settler to climb these mountains in 1876; Edge Mountain is named in his honour.

Alouette Lake and River were originally referred to as Lillooet, but because they were confused with the Lillooet of the interior, the name was changed for a "lark" by a Frenchman.

Alouette Mountain, commonly referred to as Battery Mountain, was named because of its proximity to the lake and rivers by the same name.

Legend

- 1 Mount Blanshard
- 2 South Ear
- 3 North Ear
- 4 Edge Mountain
- 5 Blanshard Needle
- 6 Alouette Mountain

possible I included personal accounts, as they, like the photographs, create the most lively images in the reader's mind.

I have been interested in the history of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows for 40 years—ever since I was posted here as an RCMP constable in 1967.

History doesn't end with, say, the advent of colour photography, or even digital photography. The history of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows blends into what our communities are today, and our present is the history of tomorrow. Being an aerial photographer myself, I couldn't resist including several current bird's eye images—they provide both backdrop and orientation.

In trying to be able to sell the book at a price that will make it affordable, I chose to include paid advertisements. These colourful ads represent today's merchants and as such have their firm place in this pictorial book of the history of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows.

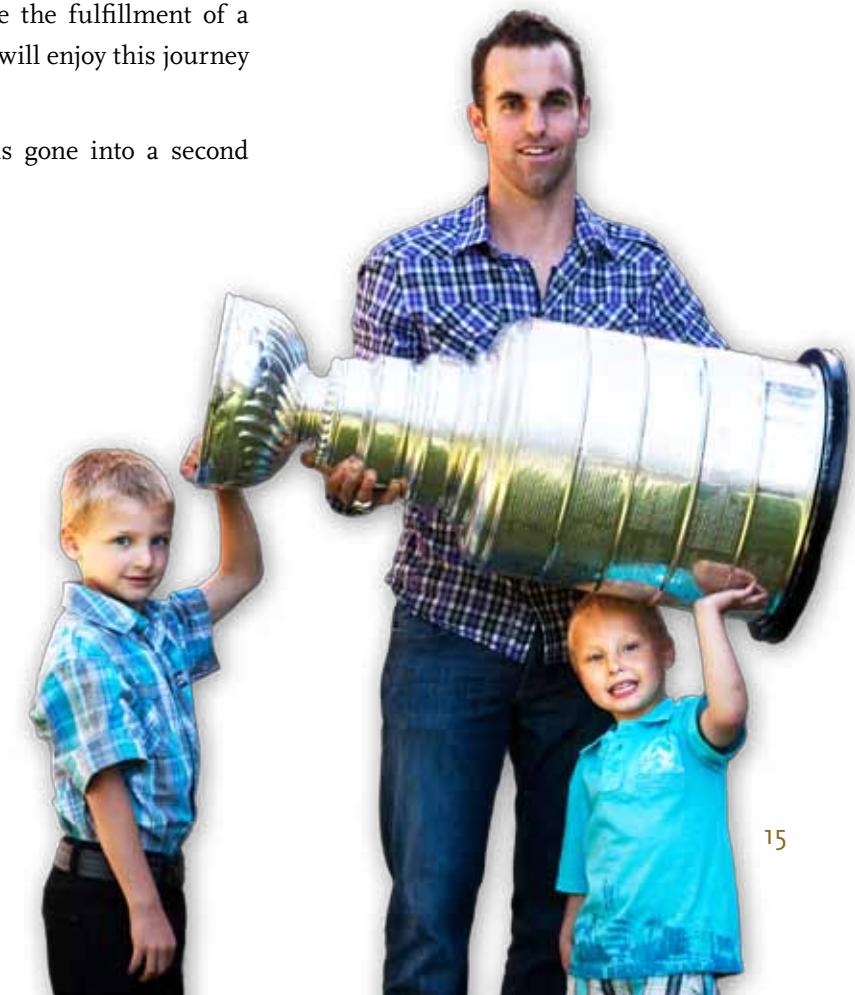
The book is broken up into chapters, which are presented, as much as possible, in chronological order, starting with the Katzie First Nation and Pitt Meadows. However, in some instances it seemed to make more sense to group together images covering a certain area or topic, such as the logging industry or the history of the Japanese settlers.

Putting this book together has been for me the fulfillment of a long cherished dream, and I hope the reader will enjoy this journey through our community's past.

It pleases me very much that this book has gone into a second printing.

Donald E. Waite
Maple Ridge, August 2010

Andrew Ladd, a National Hockey League player with the Chicago Blackhawks and one of Maple Ridge's favourite sons, assists the author's grandsons Liam and Brett Wocknitz hold up the most sought after and prestigious hockey prize in North America—Lord Stanley's Cup. It was Ladd's second appearance in Maple Ridge with the coveted prize. Ladd, 24, had won the cup in 2006 while playing with the Carolina Hurricanes.



Acknowledgements

IT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME 40-odd years ago that the people I interviewed about the early history of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows when I was a rookie policeman stationed at the Haney Detachment would ever be acknowledged in a book. Although these people were thought to be ancient by my young partners, to me they were young at heart and had fascinating stories to tell. I still find it hard to believe that the “white” history of the two municipalities is so recent and that I actually talked with Ann and Thomas Haney’s daughter, Mrs. Hawley. She was the one who told me about pranksters leaving a skull on the mantle piece at the St. John the Divine Anglican Church at Derby. I also talked with Mrs. John A. McIver, the daughter-in-law of John McIver, the first settler in Maple Ridge. She told me many interesting stories. There was also Mrs. Mildred Howe from Pitt Meadows who told me how Mrs. Harris had told her about her husband’s friendship as a youth with an old explorer by the name of Simon Fraser.

I remember driving the police cruiser out to Albion to visit with Louella and Ed Villiers. Ed was the municipalities unofficial history and he and I were constantly sharing stories about the pioneers.

It is to all these people, some of whom are no longer alive, that I first and foremost want to extend my heartfelt thanks—in sharing their information they have helped to preserve important historical information that otherwise would be lost.

I remember as if it were yesterday the exciting boat ride that I had up Pitt Lake with Chief Joachim Pierre to see the pictographs. He told me that if I was a good person that the red ochre paintings would reveal themselves. They did, and I photographed them. I was truly amazed to scan the 40-year old transparencies and have the images come out as pristine as the day they were taken. Joe and his wife Agnes gave me much of the history on the First Nations people.

Jackie Keats gave me material for “A Japanese Love Story,” while Eli Male wrote to me back in the late 1960s and early 1970s about the Finns of Webster’s Corners. She has been helping me to get the text correct right up until this project is going to the printers.

I must thank old-time friends Maureen and Sieb Swierstra for helping with the editing of the Pitt Polder story. Sieb suggested that I take aerial photographs and tell the story with my camera. The “story” began to make complete sense to me after photographing the Deep Slough at the south end of Pitt Lake.

More recently I have to give my utmost thanks to Val Patenaude, Jordana Feist and Rob Evanson from the Maple Ridge Museum & Archives and Leslie Norman from the Pitt Meadows Museum & Archives. They all bent over backwards and helped so much in ensuring that I sourced out original old photographs. I was able to

look at the 8,500+ photographs in the Maple Ridge Archives alone.

Dick Sutcliffe, with the Dewdney-Alouette Railway Society, helped to map out the routes of the Abernathy and Lougheed Logging Company.

My search didn’t stop with the local museums. I visited Victoria and Vancouver and came back with treasures from both cities—my thanks to helpful staff in those facilities as well.

I also collected images from the families of the local pioneers. I was able to go into their homes with a laptop and scanner and scan photographs, negatives, or transparencies. Their treasured images never had to leave their homes. I much appreciate it that in almost every case the families gave me not only permission to use any of the images in a book but also to pass on the files to the respective museum and archives.

In putting the book together, I had the support, guidance, and help from a number of people without whom the end product would not have been what it is. I want to thank former Mayor Gordy Robson and current Mayor Ernie Daykin for writing the enthusiastic two forewords, Helmi Braches for thoughtful editing, Fred Braches for advice on a number of issues and topics, and above all, Johannes Schut for the final design. Johannes and I spent many hours together working on the book, placing the photographs, moving the text about, and making decisions on how the final product was going to look. Needless to say, I accept full responsibility for any errors that may still be in the book.

And last but not least I thank my wife Tina for her unwavering and loving support during all this time and the whole process. Although I’d been interested in the history of the two municipalities since 1967, the ‘book’ project came together in just eight months.

Donald E. Waite
Maple Ridge, June 2010