

DISTRICT OF NORTH VANCOUVER
SOCIO-HISTORICAL SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE

CHAPTER 9

PART 4

**DNV HISTORY FOUND IN THE GVRD ADMINISTERED
LYNN HEADWATERS REGIONAL PARK**

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SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE
LOGGING IN LYNN VALLEY
Researcher: Roy J.V. Pallant

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LYNN HEADWATERS REGIONAL PARK

Lynn Headwaters Regional Park is a rugged, 4,685 hectare mountain park located in the District of North Vancouver, between the Capilano and Seymour watersheds. It is reached from the Second Narrows Bridge or the Lions Gate Bridge by taking the Trans Canada Highway (Highway 1) to Lynn Valley Road (Exit 19) in North Vancouver and following Lynn Valley Road for 4 kilometres eastward and on beyond the end of Lynn Valley Road to the Park Entrance.¹

In the mid-1860's trees were harvested in Lynn Valley and taken by greased skid road and hauled by oxen and later horse teams down to Moody's Mill located on the site of the present grain elevators on the north side of Burrard Inlet.

After selective logging for beams used in construction had been completed, there remained a demand in the 1880's for tall spars for sailing vessels for the British Admiralty and for vessels of the type regularly calling in at Moodyville (Moody's Mill) and Stamps Mill at the foot of Dunlevy Street, Vancouver.

Thereafter there was a demand for cedar shakes and shingles for roof and wall cladding of most houses in the Vancouver region and beyond.

Major lumber companies such as the Moodyville operation had no interest in supplying shingle bolts or cutting shingles from them. The land for which they had timber rights were leased to smaller companies such as H.H. Spicer, who built nine miles of flumes using water from Rice Lake to transport the shingle bolts to tidewater at a pond located at Kennard and Main in what is now Lynnmour. Their work was taken over by the McNair Brothers² of Hastings Shingle and Manufacturing Company and later Lynn Valley Lumber Company, together with Cedars Mill. There can be seen signs of these activities throughout the park including remnant sections of corduroy (skid and ponchon) roads, enormous stumps, many examples of spring board notches, abandoned work-camps and rusting machinery.

¹ The Researcher, Roy J.V. Pallant is Contract Historian for the District of North Vancouver and President of the North Shore Historical Society.

² See Chapter 8, Part 8, Transportation and Industry in this same work, by Roy J.V. Pallant.

The first trees to be harvested here were either chopped down or blasted using dynamite, inserted some six to eight feet from the ground. Available saws could not be successfully used until feather teeth were incorporated in the early cross cut saws around 1880.

There are also remnants of lead and copper mines in operation during the 1914-1918 World War I years. Access to mines was mainly by way of the Lillooet Road running parallel and just a short distance east of the Headwaters Trail.

At the northern end of the park is the Hanes Trail, named for George Hanes, who was, Engineer, Mayor and MLA for North Vancouver. He was much involved in water supply for the City among many other major projects and so took an active interest in the available water sources.

Lynn Creek supplied the City of North Vancouver drinking water from the 1920s to 1983 when violent storms and flooding damaged the water intakes and the City then joined the Greater Vancouver Water District system. As a direct result of this, the watershed was opened to the public. Just inside the park road entrance is the trail bridge over Lynn Creek from which the original water intake filter gallery and retention dam can be seen. In that area, hidden in the undergrowth are several examples of cedar stave, wire-bound water pipes used in the system.

The 1908 B.C. Mills Pre-Fab Heritage Building

On the right as the Lynn Headwaters Park is entered by road, is the 1908 B.C. Mills prefabricated house which was originally erected by the spectacular Captain Henry Pybus at 147 East First Street in the City of North Vancouver. In 1992, the City made a request to GVRD with the citizens majority consent to move the house from downtown North Vancouver to the present site. The house was occupied at that time by "Richard the Troll", Leader of the Rhinoceros Party. The cottage and land was owned by Lonsdale Enterprises. The land was being planned for development* in 1990 onwards and the cottage had to be rescued as Prime Heritage building or demolished as the land was cleared.³

It is interesting, that because of the stagnant real estate business up to 1990, this cottage had survived within a block of the City's old commercial centre for more than eight decades.

Erected in 1908, the cottage is a prefabricated "Model J" from the British Columbia Mills Timber and Trading Company (BCMT&T), a kit, floated

³ Actual development taking place in early 1997 with the building of the condominiums.

across the Burrard Inlet from False Creek, Vancouver and erected on Pybus's lot presumably for speculation purposes.

Between 1904 and 1910, just six years, the BCMT&T marketed this patented system of prefabricated sectional buildings in Western Canada. Initially this system was devised as a means of supplying small inexpensive huts to incoming settlers in newly opened agricultural regions. Such structures were prefabricated, pre-painted and packaged and shipped by rail to local distributors in towns and villages throughout Canada. With a set of accompanying instructions, the purchaser could erect their dwelling in four to five days even without previous construction experience and with little equipment or assistance.

This sectional system was subsequently adapted to a variety of larger permanent homes and ultimately to institutional and commercial structures, such as schools, churches and banks, and for the Canadian Bank of Commerce that system achieved its greatest success as an enduring Western Canada landmark.

Edwin C. Mahoney was the inventor of the patented sectional wall system used by the B.C. Mills. Mahoney was also the manager of the Royal City Planing Mills, False Creek.

Mahoney's system is of particular interest for its close interrelationship with both the emerging west-coast lumber industry and with the railroad-oriented settlement patterns of the Canadian West. A case may also be made for suggesting that Mahoney's system represented a fascinating link in the evaluation of Western Canadian vernacular architecture.

This Design "J" house measures 21' 6" by 37' 0" and was designed for a 25' lot. Its features include a bellcase hip roof with a hipped front dormer and a full front verandah.

The B.C. Mill houses are readily identifiable by the vertical battens that hide the joints between the modular 4' 0" wide to 8' 5" high wall panels rather like the common board and batten architectural feature.

The wall panels are described as a sandwich construction of 3/4 x 5" interior horizontal lapped sheathing and 3/8 x 6" exterior horizontal planking finished with 3/4 x 2 1/2 bevelled siding. The interior and exterior planking is separated by 1 1/4" thick studs on the flat. The panels are bolted together along the vertical joint line which in turn is covered with a vertical wood strip. The chimney on this model was metal, brick chimneys were extra. Both the space heating, water heating and cooking was provided by a kitchen stove connected to the internal chimney. The 1905 B.C. Mills catalogue listed this house at \$500.00 FOB Vancouver.

Lynn Canyon - Cloudburst of November 14, 1919

To the south and downstream of the park is Lynn Canyon Park with its Suspension Bridge originally built ready for the first Lynn Valley Days in 1912, during the term of Reeve May and when John Farmer was Clerk of the Municipal Council. Lynn Canyon, especially the natural amphitheatre remaining adjacent to the "30 Foot Hole" was well used by the population at that time for playing baseball, soccer, foot races, scouting activities and even two lawn bowling greens were planned. But on November 14, 1919 the large flat area of flood plain with the creek passing through the centre and access by way of a path down the 200 feet drop from Crawford Road, changed dramatically. Heavy rain had been falling for three weeks resulting in water percolating the porous terrain that culminated in a major cloud burst.

The deluge, being localised, caused extensive damage to settlers' properties in Lynn Valley. Walter Draycott, local historian at that time, was marooned in his house on Draycott at Allan for three days. All streams became raging torrents. A small run off brook became clogged with wood and till debris and the water surged down to the clay level 50 feet below the floor of the "amphitheatre" of the canyon, then everything above that level began to move.

On the morning of November 14th the climax came. A great mass of land, acres in extent, and including the eastern end of Langworthy Road, slipped down into the well of the park grounds with a roar. In its surge downwards, went massive trees, ton-weight boulders, tree stumps of immense girth and thousands of tons of earth composed of pebbles, gravel and sand from the glacial outwash. All forms of the original canyon floor was swept away including the bandstand and caretaker's cottage.

