

SITUATION BRIEFS: INTERIM REPORT ON OBSERVATIONS



The following “Observations” have been compiled from the series of [Situation Briefs](#), a collection of papers investigating the current state of heritage in Victoria.. This is intended as a working paper. It provides a baseline for further discussion on the feasibility of moving forward on a UNESCO World Heritage Site Nomination for Victoria. These “Observations” express the opinions of heritage experts in the Victoria community. Together they provide a snapshot of the state of heritage in Greater Victoria including conservation of the resources themselves, the relative robustness of protective regimes, and the degree to which they are known and appreciated by the wider community.

In short they reveal both best practice and point to issues and areas where more work is needed.

BRIEF 1

Victoria’s Heritage: An Opportunity for the Development of Geolocational Digital Tour Guides

Darren Delichte, Ken Johnson, M. Segger

OBSERVATIONS

- The nature of this proposal implies a consortium of local stakeholders need to be engaged: First Nations political and cultural entities, municipalities, local heritage foundations and historical agencies, educational institutions – both K-12, and post-secondary.
- The ideal is timely in that numerous federal and provincial digitization initiatives, aimed particularly those undertaken by the cultural sector, are in play.
- Readers of this Technical [Briefing](#) who might be interested in developing digital media-based heritage interpretation programs should contact the UNESCO Victoria World Heritage Project Group.

BRIEF 3

Analysis of the UNESCO and Canadian Criteria for Historic Site Commemorations

C. Cameron, M. Segger

OBSERVATIONS

- Should Victoria move forward towards compiling a nomination for listing, these criteria will form the basis for development of the proposal by the community nominating committee.
- The category and criteria for “Cultural Landscape” are a relatively new and evolving area for consideration by the World Heritage Committee. Attention will need to be paid to up-coming additions to list over the next seven years in order to track refinements in the adjudication criteria.
- As the first level of screening for Canadian nominations is undertaken by at the federal and provincial government levels, criteria articulated in the new Parks Canada Framework for Commemoration essentially sets the goal posts for Victoria’s proposal.

BRIEF 5

Terms of Reference for a Review of City of Victoria’s Heritage Management Policies and Programs

S. Barber, M. Segger

OBSERVATIONS

- A similar review will need to be commissioned for Saanich and Esquimalt as they host other parts of the core area site designation. Included also would be a review of satellite sites such as First Nations villages in Oak Bay, Hatley Park in Colwood, and historic Garry Oak ecosystems elsewhere. Collaboration, funding and consultant management will be required of local governments involved.
- Consultation and sign-off by local First Nations including Songhees, Esquimalt, WSANEC and Metis should be part of the consultant’s remit.

BRIEF 6

Historical Habitats of the Victoria Region

H. Roemer, D. Green, J. Sirois, A. Sesca, O. Sesca, P. Lambert, B. Peart, M. Segger

OBSERVATIONS

- Previous efforts to include Victoria within a World Heritage Biosphere should be taken into account in any further developments of the nomination of Victoria for World Heritage Listing.
- Recently excellent natural history interpretive signage programs undertaken by Saanich and more recently Victoria, which include references to First Nations traditional resource uses, should be encouraged and expanded. Online reference maps featuring this material, and the research behind their creation, would be an added educational tool.

BRIEF 7

First Nations Land Uses and Knowledge Systems Underpinning the Development of the Victoria Landscape

N. Turner, R. Turner, M. Segger, C. Elliott, G. Keddy, M. Layland R. Linzey, J. Lutz, C. Gower, B. Simonsen, F. Verspoore

OBSERVATIONS

- The speculative nature of this paper underscores the need for a serious program of urban archaeology. Such a program would seek to reveal a stratigraphy of evolving land-uses and the role of early First Nations in that history. Sporadic post-contact archaeological work in the past has not always been followed up with the publication of results.
- In a similar vein, much work needs to be done in the field of oral history research with First Nations elders and knowledge keepers, in particular regarding the post-contact period of Victoria’s history. This would assist in revealing the on-going role of Indigenous people as they engaged with settler society as tradesmen, artisans, farmers, artists, religious adherents, military services, or social engagements such as the Masonic societies, amateur sports organization, etc.

- Recent initiatives such as Oak Bay’s installation of cairns commemorating Lekwungen coastal village sites and Victoria’s spindle-whorl sculptures marking culturally significant sites to the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations need further elaboration throughout the Greater Victoria area.

BRIEF 8

Metis Heritage in the Victoria Region

F. Perkins, M. Segger

OBSERVATIONS

- While mention of some of the founding Metis families occurs in natural history interpretive signage in the region, identification with Metis Nation culture is most often overlooked. Metis history needs to constitute a part of any review of existing signage and plans for new plaques.
- The Metis Nation is pursuing NHSMBC designation of Isabella Ross as a person of National Historical Significance. Other aspects of Metis history and cultural could be commemorated this way.
- The Metis Nation maintains a rich spiritual and artistic culture: songs, dance, textile design, stories, and also contemporary artistic expressions. Metis culture, like local Indigenous culture, is undergoing a “recovery”. Educational space (schools, colleges and universities) along with opportunity (targeting funding support and public media time) should be provided to encourage this process.

BRIEF 9

A Black History of Victoria

M. Segger, P. Sachter, M. Q. Wong

OBSERVATIONS

- While the American black migrants from California occupy a place in the generally known narrative of Victoria’s settlement history, the significance of their contribution to the early life of the City is much underappreciated. Indeed, their role as farmers in particular rivaled that of the Hudson’s Bay Company’s inhouse efforts to develop local agriculture. In addition, little attention has been paid to their cultural contributions.
- As the settlement of the “black pioneers” is treated as a distinct event, almost a one-off, amid the on-going arrivals of migrants from other, particularly European nations, the notion of an ongoing Black ongoing presence in Victoria has also been overlooked.
- The Douglas invitation to American Blacks has assumed symbolic significance, particularly in on-going comparisons of Canadian “tolerance” versus the American history of racial discrimination, but it has no doubt prompted a general avoidance of the fact of ongoing prejudice faced by the original settlers which continued into modern times.
- Today’s Black population is multi-national and multi-cultural. It is not clear how they may see themselves in relation to this part of the Victoria settlement story, whether it is meaningful at all, or even if it should be. In any event a more recent Black history has yet to be compiled.

Toward an Overall Interpretation Program for Camosack/Victoria as a World Heritage Cultural Landscape

D. Mason, J. Hoffman, D. Franklin, S. Barber, K. Black

OBSERVATIONS

- To connect or coordinate these sites, an historic trail program taking a lesson from Saanich's Gorge-side linear park with serial thematically linked interpretive signage would be helpful. Again, digital technology, can also play an important role.
- The big take-away however, is Victoria's failure to lever its heritage assets by not sufficiently developing the means to engage both local residents and visitors in an intangible heritage that is the *raison d'être* of its physical assets.
- To ensure minority voices are recognized in the identification and interpretation of local heritage buildings and sites municipal advisory committees need to ensure their composition is reflective of the local community, with a particular priority given to First Nations on whose lands these resources are situated.
- With the distinct possibility of the Royal British Columbia Museum being closed for renewal sometime within the next decade the opportunity to focus on Old Town as a major visitor attraction stands in the offing. A coalition of interests including the City, First Nations, Destination Victoria, the Harbour Authority, local heritage Trusts and Foundations along with museums should reach out to engage local historians, knowledge keepers, and heritage enthusiasts to recreate Old Town and Harbour as a heritage destination.

Toward an Intangible Heritage Inventory of Victoria

M. Segger, C. Gower, J. Hoffman, D. Franklin

OBSERVATIONS

- Municipalities should incorporate intangible heritage in their commemoration, interpretation and conservation programs. A good start would be by designating events, personalities, cultural expressions of historical significance to the life of the community.
- Coast Salish oral histories and spiritual traditions, often imbedded in the features of local landscape, need to be respected and marked.
- Local heritage foundations and trusts could animate public recognition of local intangible heritage by conducting surveys and compiling inventories of examples: aspects of culinary arts, settler folk traditions and music, Indigenous arts and ceremonies, sporting celebrations, surviving traditions skills and trades, friendly societies.
- Arts and culture grants programs such as the CRD Arts and Culture fund could identify a category of funding for support for historic/traditional expression in the arts.

Exploring the Heritage of Victoria's Maritime Connections Through a Public Exhibition Programme

R. Turner, M. Segger

OBSERVATIONS

- We need to define what is meant/is included by Indo-Pacific in the context of the proposal. According to Google, it seems to focus mostly on the Indian Ocean and the western Pacific: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indo-Pacific>. Important links to South Asia, China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam and other countries and regions need to be fitted in with that term and the connections clarified.
- Before the CPR was opened in 1886, Victoria was a key entry point for immigration, governance and trade with Europe, via either Cape Horn or Panama (via the pre-canal railway or roadway after the early 1850s), and the Canal after 1869, also via San Francisco. Victoria as a focal point is broader than trans-Pacific or Pacific Coastal connections. We want to be inclusive of peoples, cultures and their origins, as it all connects with the UNESCO region. Many voices could and should tell these stories most effectively and appropriately in exhibits or orientation interpretation panels at various historic sites of the region.
- The foregoing presumes a new series of major research initiatives to fill in the missing narratives of region as remembered and told in the voices of First Nations.

Case Study 1: Ruins Of The Wharf Street Hudsons Bay Company Warehouse: An Interpretation and Conservation Opportunity

M. Segger, C. Gower, K. Johnson

OBSERVATIONS

- It is probably an oversight that the wall (and footprint of the building) is not designated under the municipal act. It should be.
- While secure for now, the wall should be investigated for seismic resilience.
- As a matter of urgency, the foundations footprint of the building should be subject to an archaeological investigation. Should the foundation footings be discovered intact in the parking lot, they should be revealed.
- The Victoria Harbour Authority and the City could collaborate on producing interpretive signage for the site.
- The proposal to commemorating both the site and the historic wall as part of a permanent structure merits further investigation.

Victoria's Military Heritage: An Overview and Inventory Of Commemorative Monuments

D. Lovell, M. Segger, M. Heppell, P. Crober, J. Boutillier, C. MacLock

OBSERVATIONS

- The military history of Victoria is one of the most powerful threads in Victoria heritage landscape. The Victoria World Heritage project has made a masterful start at cataloging the tangible aspect but more needs to be done.
- Interpretation both by way of events and personalities selected for honouring favours both a colonial bias and to some degree glorification over a more nuanced approach investigating the roles of minorities and lessons to preference ploughshares over guns.
- A comprehensive guide to the regions military heritage is sorely needed to bring the many threads together

Economics of Heritage Conservation: Victoria's Historic Urban Core

M. Segger, C. Umland, R. McLeod, D. Chard

OBSERVATIONS

- Sustainability of the public investment in the restoration of heritage buildings, and its impact, may well be challenged as construction costs rise to accommodate upcoming building code changes to meet upgraded life safety (seismic), health and energy efficiency standards. Increases in the level of grants by the Victoria Heritage Foundation and the Victoria Civic Heritage Trust should be anticipated.
- At the current pace of development public and private investment in Victoria's historic urban core, we can look forward to the addition of about 40 residential units per year.
- A series of recent public announcements point to a resurgence of hotel construction. Two pending proposals involve the rejuvenation and restoration of historic buildings in the Victoria's historic urban core.
- The Vancouver Island South Film Commission is working with Camosun College to develop a film production studio to share for educational and training purposes, and commercial productions. If successful this would significantly expand the City's attraction value for film production to include and sound and stage set capabilities.
- In order to measure the impact of moving Victoria up the quality scale of heritage destinations, both for local residents and visitors, a more fine-grained analysis of cultural heritage participation should be undertaken. International experience suggests UNESCO World Heritage status does not markedly increase tourist visitation, although there is some indication it moves the market in favour of improved quality of the visit and visitor (i.e. high education and income, staying longer).
- Old Town is walkable. If it was to improve the public profile of its storied past by upgrading its street interpretation, the narratives in its public museums and visitor attractions, and co-ordinate this with regional heritage sites from Craigdarroch Castle to Hatley Park, Beacon Hill Park to Fort Rodd Hill, the planned Songhees Marine Tours or sites and cultural landscape of the

Gorge Waterway, the profile and marketability of the region’s heritage could be greatly enhanced.

- Positioning Victoria as a UNESCO World Heritage Site on the Indo-Pacific Rim points to the importance expanding and developing the Maritime Museum of British Columbia. Considerations should include repositioning it as THE local Civic Museum with a core mission of interpreting Victoria’s history as an historic port, naval depot, and trading entrepot.

BRIEF 17

World Heritage Criteria: Victoria and Canadian Precedents

M. Segger

OBSERVATIONS

- While a more in-depth study of the comparatives above might reveal higher qualitative aspects of UNESCO’s inscription criteria than this summary analysis indicates, Victoria exhibits a rich heritage of scientific and cultural components that would justify and nomination attempt.
- The normal “stove-pipe” approach to the husbanding, management, and public awareness of this Victoria’s richly woven fabric of interlinked heritage assets has mitigated against it being assembled into a comprehensive narrative, particularly in support of any civic identity of place. This needs to change and one unifying baseline could be the underappreciated First Nations regional heritage.
- The national comparatives presented here indicate the extensive work needed at the popular and educational levels, as well as in the spheres of political support, urban planning, and academic investigations to develop a comprehensive heritage narrative. In short, Victoria needs an identity/image/branding make-over.

BRIEF 18A

Retaining The Heritage Character Of Old Town: The Old Town Design Guidelines

C. Gower

OBSERVATIONS

- The themed historic areas of Old Town, as already demonstrated in Chinatown, need a visual street level interpretive programme of commemorative plaques, markers, and directional signage to tie the City’s intangible heritage (periodization themes, historical personalities and events, parades, public art) to the overall narrative of historic Victoria.
- Subset areas, the manufacturing district, a cluster of blocks in the vicinity Rock Bay, but focusing on Store Street, Herald, Pembroke and Discovery Streets, should be identified, themed and interpreted in a similar fashion, and the Inner Harbour area (or Institutional Portal to the City) focused on Belleville, Government, and Douglas, should be similarly treated.
- There is a need for pedestrian linkages which tie Old Town to its historic roots in its history as a port and trading hub point. The very highest priority is the completion of harbor-front walkway through to Rock Bay and ultimately linking to Gorge Waterway linear parks and Galloping Goose Trail.

Protecting The Urban Form and Setting Of Old Town

C. Gower, M. Segger

OBSERVATIONS

- The low-rise harbour front is under intense pressure to break through height restrictions. Recent private-sector redevelopment solutions to the high costs of restoration is to increase density and thus heights. Unfortunately, precedents have already been established with the recent Wharf Street Gold Rush Warehouses project which added extra stories to two of the City's oldest masonry structures.
- New policies and programs at both the federal and provincial levels are pushing for urban densification as a solution to the national housing shortage. In Victoria this is reflected in the race upwards as developers exploit the City's cross-town densification plan to maximise heights without reference to the plan's call for modulation of the skyline. In addition boundary creep is gaining ground threatening low-scale heritage neighbourhoods such as Fernwood, James Bay and Fairfield.
- Examples of proposals needing to be brought into conformance with wise urban design planning for Victoria: the two Starline projects along Yates Street seek a concentration of new inner-city housing on those sites, but their extreme narrow heights severely conflict with the evolving surrounding, moderate profile Harris Green context. Similarly, a currently proposed narrow point tower addition above the old BC Power Commission Building does not provide for the steppedform, and side-wings massing that is a characteristic of the Art Moderne idiom at its base. Proposals for high-rise towers next to Capital Iron would confound the essential concept of a low-scale urban 'basin' set over the harbour and its adjacent historic precincts, and do not promise to reinforce the qualities of a long-time urban industrial area, as so successfully evoked in the recent, carefully scaled Ironworks project.
- Urban Capital, a prominent journal of city business, identifies that the most successful economies are in lower scale towns, and asserts: "It's generally accepted that mid-rise development creates friendlier cities".
- It is intemperate high-profit drivers that propel the form of extremely vertical towers. Legitimately, these various projects are proposed for areas due increased density — but could each be adjusted readily, by removing the top third of proposed high-rise and point-tower heights, instead arraying expanded adjacent lower floor areas — creating lower podiums, and stepped building forms, with a mid-rise emphasis — while still achieving intended unit counts. All could be reasonable revisions to achieve sympathetic buildings, to complement Victoria as a unique place, rather than a counterfeit understudy to high-rise cities like Calgary and Vancouver.

Toward A Heritage Youth Engagement Program

J. Iredale, L. Hung, N. Cordonier Gehring, B. Zuk

OBSERVATIONS

- The South Vancouver Island Regional Heritage Youth Fair could form the organizational nexus for launching a palette of local heritage youth engagement programs as described above.
- An outstanding example of Youth engagement is programs offered by the Saanich Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary. This could provide a model for other site intensive programs, for instance Victoria's Old Town and Chinatown.
- The leadership of a Victoria Heritage Youth Council, embracing both human and natural history, could be embedded in one of the local high schools. An opportunity could arise with the reopening of the (now under restoration) Victoria High School.

Geological and Climate Risks to Victoria's Heritage Infrastructure

D. Chard, C. Gower, M. Segger, H. Yeganeh

OBSERVATIONS

- A brief assessment of structural seismic and climate "risk" should form part of Statements of Significance for designated historic buildings within the CRD.
- While the Parliament Buildings might be considered a poster-child both for its historical significance, iconic monument status, and multiplicity of threats, other major heritage monuments at extreme risk would include the Empress Hotel and historic churches that define the historic core of Downtown Victoria.
- To the need for risk assessments for vulnerable historic buildings we need to add risk-prone natural habitats, especially as they often encompass sites of significance to local First Nations.
- A close review of the B.C. Step Code performance requirements needs to be undertaken, first in order to protect the historical integrity of heritage buildings, and secondly to document successful case studies of restoration work which satisfies the new codes.
- Standards "equivalencies" written into the current building code are undoubtedly valuable but also signal a need for the development of the further methods and technologies that consider can be applied to address the specific conditions of historic structures.
- The continual upgrades to building performance requirements in the Codes, particularly with respect to seismic standards indicates higher economic public subsidy levels, either in cash or density/height allowances, might be required for the ongoing conservation of Victoria's heritage buildings.

Geological History Of The Victoria Region

G. Keddie, M. Segger, B. Simonsen

OBSERVATIONS

- The history of Victoria’s unique geoscape is generally underappreciated and little known. Although it can be easily read from the region’s landscape public interpretive signage largely omits references to it.
- An opportunity is provided for general education on the nature of the seismic risks which have in recent years prompted extensive public expenditure on everything from public safety protocols to upgraded building codes.
- Victoria is noted as an international laboratory for seismic research. The University of Victoria is the hub for an array of ocean-bed sensor which monitor the major seabed faults for seismic activity. A proposal for a public interpretation centre for the data accumulating under this project was mooted several years ago. The feasibility of this proposal should be re-examined either as a standalone facility or incorporated into a revitalized maritime museum or the planned exhibits renewal of the Royal British Columbia Museum.

Concept For A Film Project: Camosack/Victoria as a World Heritage Cultural Landscape

D. Franklin, C. Brown, L. Hung, M. Segger

OBSERVATIONS

- The three audiences listed [the Parks Canada/UNESCO selection committees, the general public and students/general education] have vastly different demographics, expectations, attention spans, levels of familiarity with the subject. Some analysis will be required to understand and focus on the selected audience.
- If we are to advocate for Victoria as a World Heritage Site, the argument should not be that Victoria is a unified beacon of cultural heritage. The Empress Hotel and Parliament Buildings, while beautiful and representative of a certain group of people’s endeavors, are a shiny exterior to a much more difficult, complicated, and problematic history. Victoria was and is a place of conflict, a place where many diverse peoples sought a home and only a few were permitted.
- It is this struggle - the dark past and a present reclaiming and reframing of a land, that makes Victoria interesting. Our history is so tightly interwoven and connected. Every place in Downtown seems to have countless stories that are connected to another place and time. Perhaps it is the compactness, and relative isolation of Victoria peninsular location and population size – that presents the face of a history is so tightly interwoven and connected.
- An example of conflicted narratives is Victoria/Esquimalt’s role as a garrison town, a British naval base. Its gunboats were used to threaten and pacify the rebellious Indigenous nations. Later, the Royal Navy was replaced by the courts and the police. Looking back, there is little that is admirable about the cruelty, dishonesty, and gradual displacement of Indigenous families and communities by agents of the British Empire and later by colonial, municipal, provincial, and

Canadian governments. Similar conflicting view-points come into play regarding Chinese, Japanese, East Indian, even German and Italian (WWI and II) settlement stories.

- The project could spin off multiple formats: full scale documentaries, serial documentaries, broadcast TV shorts, vignettes (i.e. Knowledge Network fillers), YouTube and online videos.

BRIEF 24

A Jewel In The Crown: The Gorge Water Way As A Cultural Heritage

M. Segger

OBSERVATIONS

- A primary recommendation of the UNESCO Victoria Heritage Project should be to treat Old Town, the Victoria Harbour and the Gorge Waterway as a single cultural landscape and core component of the World Heritage Site Listing.
- District of Saanich interpretive signage programs on the Gorge should be extended to encompass the harbourside shore access points in both Victoria and Esquimalt.
- The rich intangible heritage of the Gorge/Harbour should be remembered and commemorated through a public education program focusing on Esquimalt and Songhees sacred sites and traditional uses such as canoe races, water sports, and community festivals.

BRIEF 25

Victoria's Performing Arts Heritage

J. Hoffman, M. K. Humble, M. Segger

OBSERVATIONS:

- Victoria boasts a rich performing arts tradition. Local venues and performance entities should be encouraged to build the memory of that tradition into their own institutions. Historical vignettes in programme notes, reviving past performances in the manner of their original presentation, commissioning plays based on Victoria's history (both the brighter and darker side) would build a wider popular appreciation this tradition.
- A First Nations Cultural Centre that includes a performance space (similar to the First Peoples House at UVic) could provide an appropriate setting for demonstration performances.
- The City of Victoria could to redouble its efforts, bonus density agreements for instance, to reinsert small performance venues throughout the City core. CRD arts programming funds could support "small-venue buskers" during the tourist season. In recent years the "gentrification" of Old Town has meant a drastic reduction in affordable spaces for artist studios, music rehearsal spaces, dance and yoga studios.
- Public spaces in local performing arts facilities (such as the Royal, the McPherson and the Belfry) could host permanent display on Victoria's theatre history, and the particular histories of those venues.
- A major performing arts loss was the disappearance of Chinatown's Chinese opera house. Along with the proposed Chinatown Museum perhaps this could be recreated as a real or virtual visitor experience.

Case Study 2: Victoria’s Rock Bay Remnants Of Industry

C. Segger, M. Segger, C. Gower, M. Q. Wong

OBSERVATIONS

- Significant investments of capital and effort have been applied to recent development in this historic industrial zone adjacent to Old Town/Chinatown in particular to reference its traditional uses also its economic and social history. This urgently needs to be matched by public investment in interpretive signage and other forms of historical/environmental explication in order to bring forward the colourful narrative “industrial Victoria” and its role as a first “safe harbour” for the City’s early East Asian communities.
- The recent Reliance Properties proposal for the redevelopment of two Rock Bay urban form as proposed by Reliance blocks bounded by the waterfront, Chatham and Pembroke picks up on some brown-site themes: retention of heritage buildings (Capital Iron) connection to waterfront, “fine arts” facilities (Art Gallery), live/work artist housing, greening, limited retention of light marine industrial. No doubt further refinement of density distribution over the site, height and location of connectors through the site as well convenience of parking to Store Street retail and industrial, lower income accommodation and facilities. However, as ever, the devil will be in the details. As yet there has been no mention of design as design vocabulary as per the established industrial aesthetic already in place for the region: materials palette, iconic building forms, street frontage massing rhythms etc. Without this the development would compromise the mnemonic references and disrupt the carefully crafted continuity of character.
- The idea of creating an “Arts and Innovation” district builds on earlier notions which sought to rebrand the North end of the City as the “Design District”. The two themes could come together as a “Creative Commons”. This would ensure the idea of “art” is broadened to a multi-disciplinary inclusion of various popular arts including craft studios, boutique theatrical and music performance spaces, teaching/workshop spaces, design and small manufacturing ateliers, architectural offices, small-business incubators and the like.
- A current proposal to relocate the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria to Store Street would insert a major arts generator into Down Town and anchor the proposed “Arts and Innovation” district. Also, adjacent to Chinatown and in an area of historic significance to the Japanese and Sikh communities, it would be a fitting location to permanently feature the AGGV’s renowned Asian Art collections.
- Large-scale redevelopment on the northern edge of Old Town opens up the opportunity to follow up on an earlier proposal by the late Dr. David Lai to memorialize the Asian heritage of this area by incorporating an inner-block traditional Oriental garden.

A Climate History of the Victoria Region

M. Segger, K. Johnson, G. Keddie

OBSERVATIONS

- Given current general awareness of contemporary climate-change issues, here is an opportunity for plein-air lessons in climate/habitat literacy. Various interpretive programs from natural history signage to educational field schools could introduce the impacts on wild-life habitats and human culture to the dynamics of climate change over time.
- This history provides a backdrop and support for current initiatives such the achieving Federal Migratory Bird Sanctuary designation for Swan Lake Christmas Hill and the efforts seek UNESCO Urban Biosphere Designation for the region.
- Climate related adaptations of First Nations to Victoria's landscape could be better recognized and research is needed to understand their documentation of climate change impact in their stories, legends and other cultural practices.
- Appreciating the millennia-old tradition of Victoria as a nexus of transportation and trading links both on the West Coast of North America and the Indo-Pacific, more could be made of the importance of climate related phenomena such as ocean currents, trade-winds and seasonal weather patterns.
- Influences of climate and geography on Settler urban planning and building technologies could be referenced in Statements of Significance prepared for the designation of heritage buildings.

Victoria's Public Arts Heritage

M. Segger, J. Hoffman, G. W. Sneddon, N. Reddington, B. Zuk

OBSERVATIONS

- West Coast First Nations poles are customarily deemed to have a "natural life" after which they are returned to the earth. Mungo Martin's Beacon Hill Park "tallest" totem pole is a case in point despite a (2011) restoration. The Province and the City should open a conversation with Martin's descendants and local First Nations as to plans for its replacement, or not.
- The online CRD database should have an interactive feature encouraging the public to nominate additions to the list. The site is focused on outdoor public art and does not include indoor collections. It should. The CRD does not manage this inventory. It is up to the individual municipality to update it so it not always the most accurate site for assessing public art inventory. The City of Victoria uses its GIS map to manage the public art it is responsible for.
- Recent history has revealed the problematics that emerge over time in relation to the "celebration" of public leaders. One was the covering up of George Southwell's history murals in the Parliament Buildings, deemed offensive to local First Nations. In line with current calls to decolonize our history, we have learned a lesson to de-emphasis this type of commemorative memorializing in favour of art that addresses community narratives and values of our time.
- The intersection of art and community memory is important in the conservation of intangible heritage. Retelling of shared narratives, confirming community values and prompting public

dialogue on issues of general concern are the benefits of such initiatives. Tours, plien-air education opportunities for all ages, democratic commissioning, can all enhance the general appreciation, and support for, public art programs.

BRIEF 30

Proposal for a Public Collaborative to Create an Inclusive History and Community-Based Heritage for Victoria

M. Segger, B. Kilpatrick, R. Moran, B. Hall, C. Elliot

OBSERVATIONS

- Proposal: Create a collaborative that would position the First Nations voice at the core of reimagining an inclusive history of the region.
 - If undertaken with as suggested, how might it be organized?
 - What might be the multi-year costs of such an initiative?
 - What sources for financial support might be explored?
 - Is there capability or interest to engage other minority voices: Metis Nation, Black Awareness, Asian Migrants, etc.?
 - What steps and approvals are needed to engage in developing such a capability?

BRIEF 31

Authenticity, Identity, Heritage Values and Meaning in Victoria’s Community Narrative: An Evolution of International Charter Thinking

A. Kerr, M. Segger, C. Gower, H. Kalman

OBSERVATIONS

- Victoria needs to reach back into community for a fresh “peoples charter” to direct and empower those we trust with the management of our built and intangible heritage. Such an effort could be a mix of learning circles, meetings, forums, conferences, education courses, school curriculum adjustments, commissioned scientific and academic investigations. In all respects the challenge would be to develop a new inclusive narrative, an informed memory, to underpin the meaning of our shared community identity.
- The City and the surrounding Municipalities need to audit their heritage commemoration practices to ensure they are aligned with the interests of local stakeholders, particularly minority voices and overlooked demographics. This would include reviewing the make-up of Heritage Advisory Panels, screening existing interpretive signage for biases, ethnic, race or gender-based exclusions. Recent undertakings by Saanich and Oak Bay to collaborate with First Nations on numerous cultural and heritage issues including geographical naming, plaquing and heritage recognitions, along with Victoria’s more general collaborative protocols constitute important first steps in this direction.
- The economic underpinning of heritage conservation in Victoria has always been a collaboration of private initiative, civic society leadership and local government support. Heritage resources have played a significant role in enhancing urban development, developing specialized trades

and skills, and particularly driving tourist visitation. The delicate balancing act among these priorities is now threatened by pressures on the built environment from massive in-migration, the need for supportive amenities, requirements to meet new codes for carbon efficiency and disaster mitigation. In addition, development must accommodate huge lifts in land-values, construction costs, and also financial outlays to support preservation initiatives. Increasingly these values will be represented as conflicting with heritage conservation principles.

- Appointments to municipal cultural and heritage advisory committees, heritage foundations, and public art juries, for instance, should seek genuine community diversity: First Nations, ethnic and cultural minorities, and gender balance.
- All levels of government should review their approaches to the articulation and identification of community heritage, starting with the procedures for developing Statements of Significance for both tangible and intangible heritage, and where SOS's do not exist to put the highest priority on producing them.
- Victoria needs to undertake an in-depth review of its application of the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (2003/2010), to make sure they align with local community expectations, identity, memory and sense of place. This might include: rebuilding of lost building fronts to achieve authentic sets of contiguous blocks of historic street frontage, the reconstruction of lost building elements such as side-walk verandahs/galleries or roof-top decorative elements, and also requiring historic building additions to better express traditional forms, materials and details even in contemporary design expressions.
- A discussion might also be had with the professional design community regarding a revival of Victoria's traditional building design vocabulary in new projects accompanied by a revival of technical crafts and uses of materials.
- As has already become the standard practice by municipalities with respect to natural landscape interpretation, efforts need to be redoubled in working with First Nations and other minorities to develop comprehensive and representative interpretation programs. This starts with articulating general themes, identifying sites of significance, and includes plaque and marker texts.

BRIEF 32

UNESCO World Heritage Site Inscription Nomination Form

M. Segger

OBSERVATIONS

- Completing the UNESCO World Heritage Site Inscription Nomination Form, with accompanying supportive documentation, is the essential end-task of the Local Community Nominating Committee.

The Significance Of Victoria’s Chinatown As A Cultural Heritage Landscape And A Site Of Conscience

T. Mills, M. Segger, J. Adams, D. Mason, M. Q. Wong, G. W. Sneddon

OBSERVATIONS

- Chinatown, as a place of contested memory, could be registered with the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience. This global network of historic sites, museums and memory initiatives connects past struggles to today’s movements for human rights. As such, Chinatown’s presence in Victoria’s Old Town, and its interpretation, could promote reconciliation after deeply divided events by “turning the page”. Erasing the past can prevent new generations from learning critical lessons. It can also compromise opportunities to build a peaceful future.
- The unique architecture of Chinatown could be further restored to better reflect its authentic origins. This particularly includes the multi-storey galleries that were a notable feature of the commercial and tenement building street frontages. One of the most elaborate was the original Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Society building at 554-562 Fisgard Street.
- The eight city blocks of Chinatown are still just as much Chinatown as are the remaining blocks of Old Town, even though original populations have been replaced by different ones. The original demographic has changed but the historic connections with buildings, businesses, activities, etc. remain. Apart from Centennial Square, Chinatown is remarkably intact compared to Chinatowns in San Francisco, Sacramento, Portland, Chicago and New York that have seen massive demolitions
- Three buildings in particular draw attention to the significant contributions of early Chinese immigrants, all involving the Lim Dat (a.k.a Lim Dor Chor or Lim Dat) family. In 1898, Lim Dat and Wong Soon Lim, a business partner, bought a site on the corner of Fisgard and Store Streets and hired Thomas Hooper (Hooper and Watkins) to design the distinctive building which still stands at 1617-1623 Store Street. In 1909, Lim Dat again hired Hooper to design the building taking up a whole block of Government Street (1802-1826), considered an architectural marvel at the time. Both Lim Dat buildings have been registered as National Heritage Sites. The third edifice was built by son Lim Bang in 1911, at the southwest corner of Pandora and Douglas Streets, directly across the street from Victoria’s City Hall.
- A link could be made to Judge Matthew Bailey Begbie (1889-1894 - See the NHSBC Plaque in Bastion Square) who over the course of his 36 years on the Bench struck down both municipal and provincial attempts at anti-Chinese discriminatory legislation.
- Numerous Chinese Canadian examples of intangible heritage should be noted: Chinese New Year’s Day celebrations, the Lion Dance, the Moon/Lantern Festival, the Lotus Dance troupe, even the popular Dragon Boat Races on the Gorge Waterway.

BRIEF 42

A Multifaith Heritage

M. Segger

OBSERVATIONS

- While the region’s rich heritage of ecclesiastical architecture is well maintained, and widely appreciated, modern secularism has been expressed by a substantial and ongoing decline in attendance making church redundancy a constant threat and fact. Recent actual (Fairfield United) and threatened (Oak Bay United) demolitions spotlight the need for innovative initiatives to find new community uses, and life, for these landscape and cultural landmarks.
- An emerging, and compounding threat to the major ecclesiastical monuments is the ongoing tightening of the national/provincial building code, particularly as it applies to seismic resilience and carbon efficiency. Creative approaches to planning tools such as density transfers, adjacent redevelopment, but also changes in use, may be critical in future preservation efforts.
- Reference points for First Nations spiritual heritage are embedded in the natural heritage and topography of region. This is increasingly threatened by urban densification and land-use changes as infrastructure. High-rise development obscures views capes and obliterates natural landscape features. These need to be inventoried and protected by expanding park reserves and natural habitat conservation initiatives, along with public interpretation.

BRIEF 43

A Lost Minority: Hawaiians In Victoria

M. Halleran, M. Segger, M. Elliot

OBSERVATIONS

- A rich body of academic research has resulted in little formal recognition of the critical role Hawaiians. Links to Victoria’s current vigorous Filipino and South Pacific communities might be encouraged to explore this heritage in concert with local First Nations.
- A public interpretive plaque on Humboldt Street, adjacent to the site of ‘Kanaka’ row would be an appropriate location to tell the story of early Hawaiian settlers in Victoria.
- Research and publication of family histories of South Pacific Islander pioneers needs to be encouraged and facilitated.

BRIEF 45

The Natural Environment Of The Victoria Region Supports Consideration For United Nations Biosphere Reserve Status

J. Sirois

OBSERVATIONS

- Recent attempts to secure U.N. Biosphere designation failed. A demanding and complicated conversation among several important, indispensable parties (e.g. First Nations, universities, the

Capital Regional District, various municipalities) never materialized. A determined champion never emerged.

- The establishment of the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve in 2004, protecting the ecosystems of 16 islands, 30 islets, reefs and surrounding waters, in the Salish Sea adjacent to Saanich Peninsula, provides a modern-day context for the national significance of Greater Victoria’s coastal conservation programmes.
- The sheer volume and intensity of volunteer efforts contributed annually to habitat restoration activities such as day-lighting creeks, invasive species removal and water-way cleanup is prodigious. It warrants on-going support and publicity.
- New high-quality signage, supporting recent on-site interpretive programs by the four core municipalities, Victoria, Oak Bay, Saanich and Esquimalt has invigorated education in public ecological literacy. Along with similar work by the Capital Regional District
- The dissolution of the Capital Provincial Commission in 2014 was a great blow to Greater Victoria. We no longer have a regional organization with a cohesive, socio-cultural “vision” of what our heritage is and what should be celebrated and highlighted. We need a PCC. Many of our great, special stories usually unknown and untold at this point need public “skylighting”.

BRIEF 47

A Sketch Of Victoria’s Harbour Heritage

D. Pendergast

OBSERVATIONS

- The Greater Victoria Harbour Authority’s program of interpretive signage placed along the harbour walkway needs to be extended throughout the harbour lands as an educational tool in daylighting the many fascinating stories imbedded in the thousand-year history of the harbour.
- While the Songhees people are long gone from their harbour-side village site their important contribution to history of the harbour needs to be explained and celebrated.
- Interpretive programs which bring to life the human history of Old Town should tie their social and cultural themes to the harbour industries.
- The commemorative bronze plaques along the street-level balustrade of the causeway tell the story of the harbour through the vessels and personalities that called it home. They would provide an excellent opportunity for a geolocational digital interpretive program.
- The intangible heritage of the harbour expressed in on-going industries such as ship building, events such as celebratory arrivals and boat races, wildlife habitat such as that preserved in the migratory bird sanctuaries is as important as the tangible heritage of building and monuments observable today

Victoria's Residential Architectural Heritage

H. Edwards

OBSERVATIONS

- The two-hundred-year stylistic legacy of Victoria now defines its neighbourhoods. Efforts could be made to encourage continued innovative application of these styles in new construction as a means of respecting and preserving the historic fabric the streetscapes.
- Local literacy in Victoria's stylistic vocabulary could be improved by an ongoing program of exhibitions, expanded programs of awards for preservation, and neighbourhood interpretive signage.
- Period residential architecture could be enhanced by the recreation of historic landscape and garden designs and planting regimes. Courses in period gardening could be offered by the Horticultural Centre of the Pacific, the Victoria Horticultural Society, and local gardening clubs.
- A significant recent loss has been the Province's failure to maintain the recreated H.B.C. farm garden and orchard at Craigflower Manor. It should be restored forthwith.

Blankets To Pigments And Pieces Victoria's Visual Arts Heritage

M. Segger with H. Cecil, C. Riedel, A. Ross, Jan Ross, C. Vance

OBSERVATIONS

- The role of the visual arts in telling the story of Victoria, and its relations to the world beyond its shores, has been sadly neglected. Galleries dedicated to this mission such as the Emily Carr Gallery on Wharf Street and the Provincial Archives Gallery have been defunded and closed. The solution is an expanded Art Gallery of Greater Victoria specifically tasked with telling this story, and in particular presenting the art of its most famous daughter, Emily Carr, in permanent galleries.
- The high art of the Lekwungen Peoples, the Coast Salish blanket and allied arts, has been ignored. This lacuna needs to be addressed, either through a separate institution addressing the life and cultural heritage of local First Nations, or a permanent exhibition in the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.
- The artistic heritage of Victoria, collected and stored in institutions such the Royal BC Museum, the Art Gallery of Victoria, the B.C. Provincial Archives, the Special Collections Division of the University of Victoria Libraries, the B. C. Provincial Art Collection remains for the most part hidden. Only the University of Victoria exhibits a substantial part of its Modern era art holdings on permanent exhibition in public spaces on campus. A massive effort consisting of loans to schools, temporary exhibitions in non-museum public spaces, and a collaborative pan-institutional data-base dedicated to Victoria's art history would start to address this issue.

Post Contact Historic Archaeology in Greater Victoria

Tom Bown

OBSERVATIONS

- The current review of the British Columbia Heritage Conservation Act provides an opportunity to address the lack of protection for post-contact local archaeological sites.
- Ways and means need to be found to permanently share the discoveries of local excavations with the community, artefacts and information.
- A local “archaeological discovery centre” perhaps along the lines of existing nature centres could unite pre and post contact archeological findings to tell the story of Victoria.
- Municipal level policies for the protection of historical archeological sites, and funding for professional help in excavation or salvage operations, is desperately needed.

The Status of Submerged Cultural Heritage in the Victoria Region

J. Marc

OBSERVATIONS

- The British Columbia Heritage Conservation Act should be amended to provide protection for submerged cultural resources that are not currently listed, such as locomotives, rail cars vehicles, wagons, mine sites etc.
- Parks Canada is the agency responsible for writing the WAHVA Section 131 regulation to protect and preserve heritage wrecks and issue permits for certain activities in Federal Waters. This work was started in 2019 but has not progressed. It should be finished in a timely manner.
- The UASBC has installed underwater interpretive plaques on several South Island shipwrecks but there are more to do. The UASBC also installed an underwater interpretive trail on the Barnard Castle wreck. The brochure is out of print and some of the plaques have deteriorated. The damaged plaques should be replaced, and the brochure reprinted with the new photogrammetry graphics.
- There is a definite need to raise awareness about the South Island submerged cultural heritage. A few ideas include:
 - Develop a museum exhibit to showcase the stories of local shipwrecks.
 - Include shipwreck sites on eco and whale watching tours.
 - Develop a school program for students on submerged cultural heritage.
 - Continue adding wreck sites to the UASBC wreck map.
 - Not discussed above, but much more research is required to fully understand how sea level changes have affected people, for example Esquimalt Harbour would have been dry land prior to 4500 years ago.

- There is a need for a regional archaeological facility to showcase recovered artifacts, provide some assistance to preserve items recovered from salt water and act as a repository for key artifacts.

BRIEF 53

History of Heritage Conservation In Victoria

D. Franklin, M. Segger

OBSERVATIONS

- The Victoria region, and Victoria in particular, boasts one of the most robust heritage conservation programs in Canada. The challenge is to keep it current. Current threats to the heritage fabric that need constant vigilance are seismic (building code updates) and flooding (climate change induced threats including changing weather patterns and rising sea-levels).
- A particular challenge in Victoria will be to manage Federal and Provincial Government pressures to densify. For instance, policies to address “the missing middle” by densifying historic neighbourhoods have yet to be assessed for conservation implications in historic areas. Creeping rezoning to accommodate highrise developments continues as a major risk.
- While protective legislation provides ample tools for managing the historic built fabric of the City, it is not always clear there is the political to use them. Watch-dog groups such as the Hallmark Society need to be particularly vigilant in this respect.
- Interventions in the fabric of historic buildings may need to become more dramatic to accommodate tightening seismic and public safety codes. The professional design community, heritage conservation professionals and heritage advocates in general need to engage in a serious debate regarding the principles and ethics of conservation: for instance approaches to conservation, repair, replication and reconstruction.
- The post-WWII building boom throughout British Columbia endowed Victoria with a rich Mid-Century Modern heritage. This has been largely ignored with only a few representative examples designated in Victoria and Saanich (including Saanich’s own Brutalist Municipal Hall) designated. The four core Municipalities should collaborate on undertaking a comprehensive inventory of built legacy of the period 1940-1980. The rapidly developing archival holdings of the University of Victoria Libraries (Special Collections: Architectural Archive of the Pacific Northwest) are an important resource.

BRIEF 55

Tell Me A Story

G. Miller, M. Segger

OBSERVATIONS

- The Victoria “story” needs regrounding:
 - Moving from “City of Gardens” to include our rich biodiversity of natural heritage.
 - Adopting the recommendations outlined in Honouring the Truth, Reconciling the Future, Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as a platform for including the

heritage of Indigenous peoples, but also as a model for other excluded minorities: race, gender, language, nationstate.

- Adjusting the geopolitical context for our history to include our Indo-Pacific connections and roots.
- Reaching beyond the Explorer, Settler, Boom-town, clichés of popular local history to embrace a more truthful and broader narrative of the accomplishments – but also the stresses, failures, mistakes (Settler – Indigenous relations, migrant political and cultural colonialism, economic privilege and privation, political and social evolution) which underpin the demographic development of the region.
- The UNESCO Victoria Heritage Project reveals a desperate need for an intensive community-wide process of discovery and dialogue to reveal a more balanced and inclusive understanding of our intangible heritage.
- Investigating the interlocking strands of community memory which comprise our unique sense of place requires the coordination of a network of local knowledge curators:
 - First Nations elders and families, keepers of lineage and territorial knowledge,
 - Settler associations and institutions that protect and maintain the heritage of minority populations,
 - Heritage repositories: museums, archives, art galleries, libraries that manage our cultural resources,
 - Educational and research institutions that advance and communicate our natural and human heritage, o Heritage management agencies that administer and protect our tangible heritage, from historic monuments to native habitats.
- A major community-wide effort could reinforce the well-springs of the Victoria story on the City's harbour where its wealth of tangible and intangible cultural assets are located.

BRIEF 56

The Heritage of School Architecture in Greater Victoria

D. Franklin

OBSERVATIONS

- The seismic upgrading of Victoria's historic red-brick schools represents one of the most significant investments in Victoria's legacy of architectural heritage. With the completion of the largest and most complex, Victoria High School, this story needs to be shared more widely. One tool would be a special series of historic site interpretive plaques linked to an informational website.
- The historic schools of Victoria provide a ready platform for class-room learning units which introduce the community values of our shared history and heritage.
- Local school architecture of the Modern period also provides outstanding examples of contemporary design. Further exploration and documentation of this heritage needs to be pursued and publicized.

Opportunities for Cultural Diplomacy

M. Segger

OBSERVATIONS

- Victoria's Cultural heritage influencers need to critically re-examine the popular community narrative of Victoria's settlement history with a view to bringing forward the memories of Indigenous and diaspora minorities and adjust the perceived legacy of the "road-to-Confederation" and related central Canadian political biases.
- Numerous local communities of interest could be brought together to chart a "world-stage" strategy for Victoria itself. Leadership roles could be assumed by local institutions such as the University of Victoria, the Royal BC Museum, the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria and civil society groups drawn from the military, home-land ethnic organizations, faith communities and others.
- Victoria is noted as refuge for Canada's retired diplomatic community. Engagement of this cohort could assist Victoria's attempt to build international connections.
- The Province of British Columbia hosts the Consular Corps of BC, an official body representing the regular and honorary consular official of some 80 countries resident in the Province. Here would be a starting point for official outreach by the City of Victoria, as the capital of the Province.

Guided By The Mountain

C. C. Wherry

OBSERVATIONS

- Indigenous artistic practices are both the carriers and transmitters of generations of cultural heritage. They constitute both tangible and intangible heritage. Today, in the hands of a new generation of artists, ancestral knowledge survives and is communicated to both its keepers, First Nations People, but also the Settler and visitor communities. Greater Victoria political and cultural institutions therefore need to encourage and support both traditional and emerging Indigenous artists.
- First Nations government needs to encourage and support the local studio/workshop system, particular to ensure the passing on of knowledge and skills across generations.
- The work of TEMOSENTET and his family provides an example for others in how artistic creative practices can conserve cultural heritage. Thought needs to be given as how this process can be preserved and presented to the general public. The region should consider examples such as Whistler, British Columbia, which has developed the First Nations "Lil'wat" cultural interpretive centre.

Victoria's Modernist Architectural Heritage

M. Segger, H. Yeganeh

OBSERVATIONS

- Victoria's Modernist architectural heritage, particularly that of rapid build-out years 1949-1969, has been under-appreciated. A heritage inventory update which included work of the Modernist movements was shelved by the City of Victoria in 2008. A full regional survey should be undertaken and significant buildings should be added to the heritage lists.
- Despite a rising contemporary general interest in Mid-Century Modern design and decorative arts the local building stock from the years 1920-1990 is under constant threat, and is being lost to new development. The critical 50-year use/renewal cycle of many buildings now constitutes a particular threat to buildings or their unique design elements from these years.
- An illustration of these pressures is the City of Victoria's plans to remove one of Victoria's iconic Modernist architectural design and public art monuments, the Centennial Fountain, anchoring the City's major urban public space of the same period.