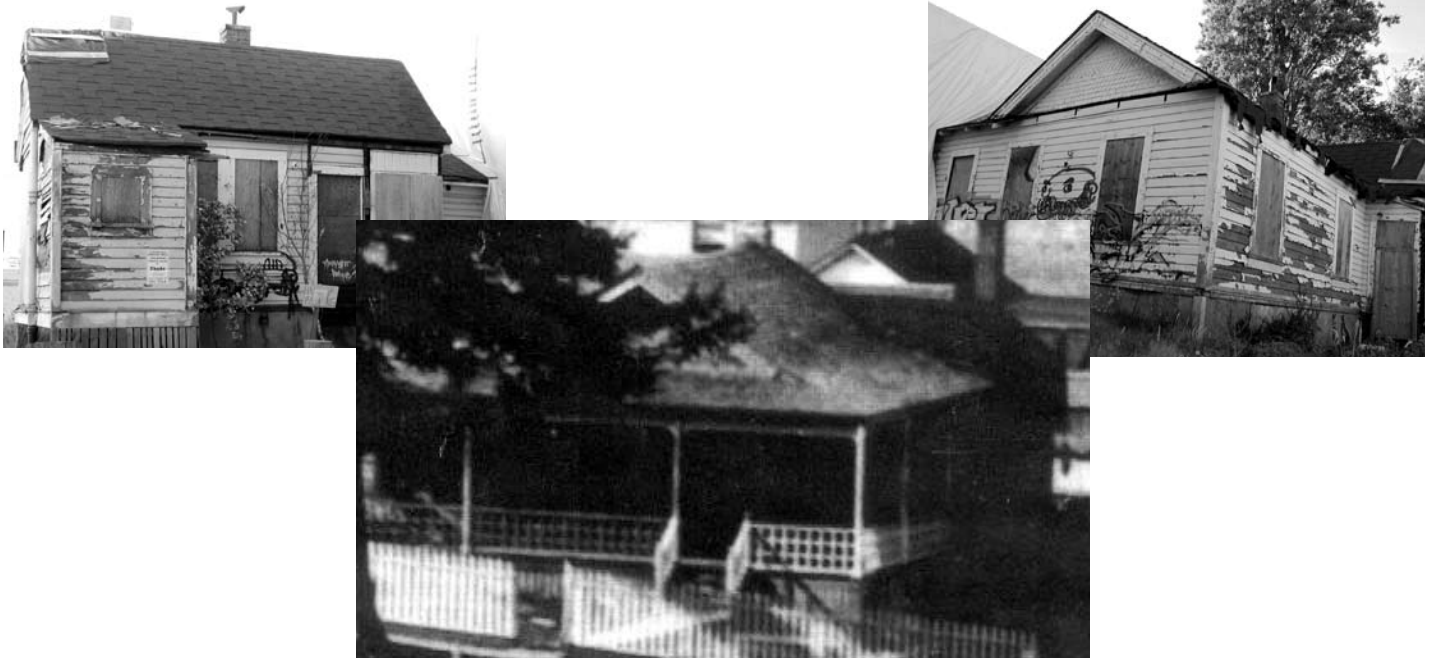


HERITAGE

Vancouver

Newsletter



THE REVIVAL OF THE CLARK HOUSE

by Maida Price

The little yellow cottage at 243 East 5th has been there forever, by Vancouver standards. The homesite was carved out of the wilderness before 1888, the year Mount Pleasant became Vancouver's first suburb, and assessment records of that year indicate the home was one of only a few existing south of False Creek.

Homeowner Thomas Clark was a merchant, his wife Mary a milliner. She may have worked at home, but he certainly would have commuted to do business in Vancouver. This must have been a challenge, for False Creek in its original state ran up today's Clark Drive (named after a different family) and it had to be skirted or crossed to reach the city. The first Granville Bridge wasn't opened until 1889 (and it tended to be under water at high tide) so perhaps he rowed across. This may have been a reason the Clarks moved after a year, leaving the house to other occupants.

It's falling apart now, but the Clark House still has a certain dollhouse charm, tiny, with vestiges of decorative shingles and trim. It's possible to imagine unhinging the front and swinging it open to see an interior of flowered wallpaper, quilted beds and miniature piecrust tables. The latticework still hanging off the eaves was part of the decorative work on the wraparound veranda; the veranda and stair railings were an enlarged version of the same pattern. A huge tree, perhaps from the original forest, shaded the front right side. It once had a white picket fence.

We're all fascinated with the size and opulence of expensive one-of-a-kind structures and it's easy to justify these as a part of our heritage. However, this modest home with its reminders of the everyday life of working people is also a part of our heritage—a large part. In any city there are always many more working class homes than mansions and that's something we should remember.

see page three **Clark House**

Walking Tour of Mount Pleasant
Sunday, August 25 at 1:00 PM
Kingsway and Main

Bruce Macdonald, author of *Vancouver: A Visual History*, will once again lead this popular walking tour of Mount Pleasant – Vancouver’s first neighbourhood outside of the downtown core. Dating from the 1880s, and arising from the intersection of Brewery Creek, Kingsway (1861), Main Street and Broadway, Mount Pleasant has not yet seen the extensive redevelopment that has modernized most of the neighbourhoods surrounding False Creek. This tour will include a special treat: John Davis will lead a personal tour of the wonderful Davis family group of heritage houses in the 100 block West 10th Avenue. Beginning in the 1970s, the Davis family has been totally dedicated to the rescue, meticulous restoration and daily maintenance of these half-dozen houses from the 1890s and early 1900s. For many heritage house lovers, they have provided the initial example and inspiration for the restoration of numerous other heritage buildings. We will also visit the future location of the Clark House. Members \$5.00, non-members \$10.00 Come and celebrate the unique history and heritage of Mount Pleasant!

Stroll through Strathcona,
Sunday, September 8, 10 AM
Strathcona Community Centre,
Keefer Street entrance

Spend a Sunday morning in Vancouver’s oldest neighbourhood: Strathcona. with John Atkin. Tour streets of turn-of-the 19th century homes and catch up on the numerous restorations taking place in this fascinating neighbourhood. Rain or Shine. \$5 for members, \$10 for non-members

continued on back page



Photo: Robert Moffatt 2001

Taylor house, 909 Jackson Crescent

Modern Living in the Royal City

by *Robert Moffatt*

New Westminster’s Massey Heights neighbourhood took shape in the 1950s, an upscale pocket of West Coast suburban living overlooking the city from a hillside to the northeast. The neighbourhood today remains a near-perfect period piece, the low-slung split-level and ranch houses surrounded by mature trees and manicured lawns.

Several Massey Heights residents commissioned architect-designed houses, often by young architects building their practices locally in New Westminster and the Fraser Valley. An immaculately well-preserved example is the Taylor house at 909 Jackson Crescent, designed in 1962 by G. Douglas Wylie. The U-shaped post-and-beam house is set on a slight rise, surrounded by well-tended native plantings and patios of stone and concrete. Japanese design influences include sliding Shoji screens dividing the open-plan interior and Shoji-inspired screens shielding the front entry. The house retains its effective original colour scheme of dark-stained vertical siding offset by orange wall panels and white trim.

At 822 Jackson Crescent is the J. B. McCurrach house, built in 1957 on a wedge-shaped property at the edge of a steep drop-off. Chilliwack

architect Albert Anderson turned the house sideways on the site, orienting the main living spaces to maximize views stretching from Queen’s Park to Mount Baker. High-mounted windows inset under the low peaked roof ensure privacy to the street while still providing natural illumination. Walls of concrete blocks of varying depths create interesting shadow patterns and integrate the house with the concrete-block garden walls and planters.

Constructed in 1958, the Dr. E.M. Wilder house at 822 York Street was designed by James Carlberg and Donald Jackson of the fledgling New Westminster firm Carlberg Jackson & Associates. Urbane and elegantly restrained, the house turns a windowless front wall to the street for privacy, the entrance set well back under the double carport. Inside, the living and dining areas are oriented toward the sun and views at the rear through a 30-foot window-wall and a broad deck. Tucked into a walled court off the master bedroom suite is an intimate Japanese-style garden with a reflecting pool. The Wilder house won the Gold Merit Award in *Western Homes & Living* magazine’s 1960 Western Homes Award program.



Photo: Don Luxton

BURRARD BRIDGE ALERT

Despite the lobbying efforts of local, national and international heritage groups to preserve the Burrard Bridge, the City of Vancouver is still considering the feasibility of hanging pedestrian *outriggers* on this historic civic landmark. Several options have now been developed that would involve, to varying degrees, the removal of some of the bridge's original heritage fabric, or attaching new material to the bridge, all of which will be highly visible and have a serious and detrimental impact on the bridge's heritage character. After months of ongoing discussions with city staff, attending public meetings, making presentations to council, and proposing alternative solutions, we have not to date seen any proposals that do not seriously impact the Bridge's historic structural integrity. The Vancouver Heritage Commission and the Canadian Art Deco Society have also rejected all proposals. We will continue to be involved in the process as one of the stakeholder groups and will work toward finding a solution. There does not however, appear to be a feasible way to increase pedestrian and cyclist capacity at the bridge deck level, while still maintaining six lanes of traffic — without devastating the bridge's heritage integrity.

Our position on the Burrard Bridge has not changed; it is Vancouver's **Number One** endangered heritage structure; it is a civic landmark whose unique heritage character should be restored and celebrated rather than altered and diminished.

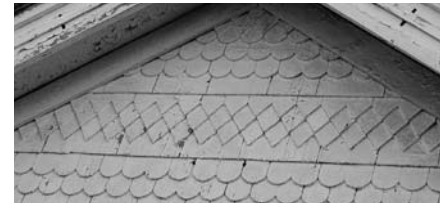
Please check our website, heritagevancouver.org for further details about this project. The threats to the Burrard Bridge were recently featured in Heritage Canada's *Heritage* magazine, a copy of which may be found online at <http://www.heritagecanada.org/eng/featured/risk.html#deco>.

We urge you to fill out one of the cards on the website and mail it to the City of Vancouver to express your concern

from cover **Clark House**

Against all odds, the Clark House has survived and is now the oldest home in Vancouver.

Now, this building will not only be saved, it will become famous—in a way, if things go as planned. Jonathan Brownlee, an actor and producer with an interest in renovating old houses, is working with the City of Vancouver on a deal to move the Clark House and restore it. The restoration work will be filmed step-by-step as one of the main elements of a televised home renovation series that Brownlee's company will produce.



Clark House decorative shingles

Moving the house will be a challenge because it is so old and fragile. After it is taken apart on site and transported it will be reassembled at the rear of a property at 130 West 10th, behind a 1901 house already on the lot and also slated for restoration. We will have the opportunity to visit it's new home during our walking tour of Mount Pleasant on Aug. 25.

As far as possible, the Clark House exterior will be restored to its original state with the use of antique lumber and building techniques. Inside, a home suited to contemporary living will be created using new techniques and materials—no Victorian wallpaper here. The deal being worked out includes permission for an addition equivalent to 20% of the original square footage; this addition will not be visible from the street and the house should look as it did in 1888. While moving a building from its original site is not the first choice in heritage preservation, here it is the right choice. The Clark House will remain the oldest home in the city.

Heritage Vancouver
PO Box 3336, Main Post Office
Vancouver BC V6B 3Y3
604.254.9411

www.heritagevancouver.org

WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

THE CELEBRATION OF A PARTNERSHIP

The Chinatown Millennium Gate



HV President Janet Leduc
BC Minister George Abbott
Prime Minister Jean Chretien

Dear Members,

August 1, 2002, marked the opening of the Chinatown Millennium Gate, a landmark structure that majestically spans Pender St. and announces the entrance to Vancouver's historic Chinatown. It was a momentous occasion for all Vancouverites who have worked tirelessly to create this marker to celebrate the history of our Chinese Canadian community.

For Heritage Vancouver, there are many reasons to celebrate. Heritage Vancouver Society and the Chinatown Millennium Society have worked in partnership over the past two years to see the realization of a common dream, the construction of the Chinatown Millennium Gate. Two years ago, I became a member of the Board and the Executive Committee of the Chinatown Millennium Society and have worked with an amazing group of people to make sure *our gate* was built. At the official opening, I celebrated with the new friends I have made and I celebrated all of the new alliances we have formed.

I shared the platform with dignitaries including, Prime Minister Jean Chretien, Steven Owen, Minister of State for Western Economic Development, George Abbott, BC's Minister of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services, Mayor Phillip Owen City of Vancouver, the Consul General of China, Tong Yuet and Kelly Ip, President and Vice President of the Vancouver Chinatown Millennium Society. Heritage Vancouver was mentioned and thanked throughout the ceremony and our society is immortalized on the plaques of the Millennium Gate. If you have not already done so, I invite you to take a look at *your gate* and read the plaques. This is an occasion for all of us to celebrate an incredible partnership!

Janet Leduc
President, Heritage Vancouver

HERITAGE VANCOUVER PRESENTS

What's ahead in Gastown?
Post Heritage Management Plan
Wednesday, September 18, 7:30 PM
Water Street Café, 300 Water St.

On Aug. 1, Vancouver City Council gave final approval to the long awaited Gastown Heritage Management Plan. Over the past two years staff, consultants and the community have been actively working on a program to facilitate the conservation of heritage resources and economic revitalization. The plan outlines a vision for heritage management in Gastown and provides incentives such as bonus density, property tax relief and façade improvement grants to encourage owners to restore heritage buildings. Marco D'Agostini, City of Vancouver and Jon Stovell, President of the Gastown Business Improvement Association will let us in on what they hope to see in Gastown. In addition, Jon will give us the BIA's perspective on the future of the Woodward's building. Join us and be part of the *buzz* in Gastown. Free for members, \$5.00 for non-members

Walking Tour of Grandview
Sunday, September 22 at 1:00 PM
1730 William Street

Bruce Macdonald, author of *Vancouver: A Visual History*, will lead this walking tour of the neighbourhood he has lived in for the last 15 years. Originally touted to the wealthy in the West End as *The* premiere location to relocate, Grandview was soon eclipsed by the CPR's big new real estate development, Shaughnessy, and subsequently developed into a more middle class neighbourhood. Today, the Drive (Commercial Drive) has more diversity — architecturally and socially — than any other part of the city. This walking tour will feature a tiny home from the 1890s that was built before there were any roads in Grandview, as well as mansions from the early 1900s, and everything in between.

Come and partake in this rare chance to learn about this interesting and unique Vancouver neighbourhood, favoured as a home and hangout by many movie industry workers, artists and professionals. \$5.00 members, \$10.00 non-members.