

## NANAIMO CHRONICLES 1774–2000

*Timeline courtesy of Jan Peterson "A Place in Time – Nanaimo Chronicles".  
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**1774:** Juan Josef Perez Hernandez makes the first mapping trip from San Blas in Mexico to what is now known as the west coast of British Columbia.

**1790:** Spain and Britain sign the first Nootka Convention on October 28, which gives both parties the right to trade in the areas of the Pacific Northwest so far unoccupied, with Nootka Sound remaining open to both.

**1791:** Commodore Alejandro Malaspina, an Italian explorer in the service of Spain, leads an expedition to the Pacific Coast. Francisco de Eliza and Jose Maria Narvaez explore the Strait of Juan de Fuca as far north as present day Comox. de Eliza charts the entries to Nanaimo's harbour, calling the area Winthuysen Inlet, after a Spanish Rear-Admiral. de Eliza's men suffer from scurvy, and the survey is abandoned.

**1792:** Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra, Spain's maritime commander on the west coast, becomes Governor of the Spanish settlement at Nootka. Dionsio Galiano and Cayetano Valdez sail from Nootka in the *Sutil* and the *Mexicana* to finish Eliza's survey. They meet with Captain George Vancouver at Spanish Banks off Point Grey, then continue North. On June 15<sup>th</sup>, they anchor for three days in the sheltered lee of Gabriola Island and explore the harbour area.

**1793:** The Spanish and the English sign the second Nootka Convention.

**1835:** Coal was discovered on the northeastern tip of Vancouver Island at the new Hudson's Bay Company post named Fort Rupert, at nearby Beaver Harbour.

**1846:** The steam sloop HMS *Cormorant* took the first shipment of coal from Beaver Harbour to San Francisco for testing.

**1849, January 13:** Queen Victoria granted a ten-year exclusive trading licence to the Hudson's Bay Company of "Vancouver's Island" on the condition it develop and settle the island. **May 31:** Scottish Ayrshire miners were enlisted in the company's service and brought to Fort Victoria aboard the first HBC immigrant ship, the *Harpooner*. They included the John Muir and John McGregor families. They were transported to Fort Rupert to begin the mining operation there. **December:** Coal Tyee revealed the abundance of black stones in the Nanaimo area.

**1850, March 24:** Another eighty immigrant miners and their families arrived on the *Norman Morison* and were dispatched to Fort Rupert. **May:** Joseph William McKay began searching for coal in Nanaimo and found what became known as the Douglas vein, where Coal Tyee had taken his samples. Joseph D. Pemberton and his assistant Benjamin William Pearse began surveying the Nanaimo district.

**1851, May:** Still more miners arrived on the *Tory*. On board were 125 labourers and their families,

plus eighteen recruits from the Orkney Islands, Scotland. **June 29:** The Dunsmuir, Dick, and Gilmour families arrived on the *Pekin*, at Fort Vancouver, on the Columbia River in what is now Washington State. This was the largest of the HBC forts in the west. The passengers transferred to the *Mary Dare* for the trip to Fort Rupert.

**1852, August:** Governor James Douglas personally made a canoe trip from Fort Victoria to Nanaimo accompanied by Joseph Pemberton, John Muir Sr. and Douglas's secretary, Richard Golledge. The expedition explored the Cowichan River and the Chemainus River before proceeding to the coalfield in Nanaimo. **August 24:** Joseph William McKay was appointed as the HBC officer in charge. He arrived in Nanaimo with written instructions from Douglas to take charge of the coal beds and to sell the coal to any vessel calling, for a royalty of two shillings and six pence a ton. McKay started building the first cabin. **September 3:** The miners were brought from Fort Rupert to mine the Nanaimo coal. The first to arrive aboard the *Cadboro* were the Muirs, McGregors and a blacksmith, Camille Raymond. Their first order of business was to make a pigsty then land four pigs and one sheep from the ship. Cows came later. **September 9:** The *Cadboro* left Nanaimo with the first 480 barrels of coal. The Snuneymuxw had mined and loaded the coal—twenty barrels for a two-and-a-half point HBC blanket and other goods. **September 30:** The *Recovery* sailed for Victoria with 1391 barrels of coal. **November 8:** Food supplies were restocked: two hundred bins of potatoes were traded from the Chemainus tribe, thirteen deer from the Sheshalls, and three hundred salmon from the Snuneymuxw. **December 9:** Two large canoes manned by twelve Kwakiutl brought another ten miners to Nanaimo. The same day, the *Beaver* also brought the Boyd Gilmour and Robert Dunsmuir families, plus three other miners. William Isbister began building his Stone House.

**1853, January 17:** Two young Snuneymuxw men were tried and found guilty of the murder of Peter Brown, an HBC shepherd, at Christmas Hill, near Victoria. They were hanged at Gallows Point on the south end of Protection Island. **February 3:** Joseph W. McKay recorded in his journal that Versailles and Robillard had began squaring wood to build the Bastion. **July 17:** Joan Dunsmuir gave birth to son Alexander, the first white boy born in Nanaimo. **September 12:** François Côté was hired to build houses. **Also this year:** Charles Alfred Bayley arrived to teach the miners's children in Nanaimo. Governor James Douglas enumerated the Snuneymuxw. He recorded 159 "men with beards," 160 women, 300 boys, and 324 girls, giving a total population of 943.

**1854, March 16:** Mary McGregor gave birth to Margaret, the first white girl born in Nanaimo. **August 11:** Joseph McKay received a directive from Governor Douglas that there should be no gift or sale of alcohol to Natives. **September:** Oxen were brought to Nanaimo for use in the logging operations. **November 27:** The *Princess Royal* miners and their families, from Staffordshire, England, came ashore at Pioneer Rock, near Cameron Island. Their well-documented journey to Nanaimo took six months. The Scottish miners and Joseph McKay welcomed them ashore. **December 23:** Governor James Douglas signed a treaty with the Snuneymuxw that essentially extinguished any claim to the coal district. **December:** Governor Douglas ordered the first census of the colony. It recorded the white population to be 774, of which 151 lived in Nanaimo and 232 lived in Victoria.

**1855, May 7:** The HBC secured the land to the Nanaimo coal operation by purchasing 6,193 acres of Crown land including Cameron, Newcastle and Protection islands. Another 1,074 acres were reserved: 724 for public use, 100 for roads and 250 for the benefit of the Snuneymuxw. **July 6:**

Captain Charles Edward Stuart succeeded Joseph McKay as the HBC officer in charge. **October:** Robert Dunsmuir and Edward Walker were granted the first free miner's licences issued by the HBC. **October 9:** A northern tribe massacred the whole Nanoose tribe. **November 5:** The anniversary of Guy Fawkes, or the Gunpowder Treason caper, was celebrated with bonfires, firing guns, etc. The carpenter Nelson was burned severely during a state of intoxication. **November 30:** The *Beaver* arrived from the north with a valuable cargo of furs. **Also this year:** For a short time Catholic Bishop Modeste Demers began proselytizing in Nanaimo.

**1856, January 2:** The HBC journal recorded that the Nanaimo Harbour was rapidly clearing of ice and the snow was disappearing. Governor James Douglas was ordered by Great Britain to introduce an elected assembly at Vancouver Island. **May 10:** Adam Grant Horne left Nanaimo on his first expedition across the Island, via Qualicum to Alberni, to open trade for furs and establish friendly relations with the Nuu-chah-nulth tribes of the west coast. He made another trip in September over the same route, today called the Horne Lake Trail. **May 24:** Only a few miners and labourers worked today as it was the birthday of Queen Victoria. Cornelius Bryant replaced Charles Bailey as teacher. There were thirty-four pupils in town; parents supplied books and materials. **August 12:** The first House of Assembly of Vancouver Island met for the first time in Victoria. **August 22:** Mysterious streaks of light appeared in the north sky over Nanaimo, travelling westward at an altitude of thirty-five degrees perpendicular to the horizon.

**1857, February 1:** Mark Bate arrived in Nanaimo to begin work as a clerk for the HBC. The *Recovery* left Victoria on January 31, stopped over at Salt Spring Island for the night, then sailed the next morning. On reaching Dodd Narrows, the ship was driven against the rocks and damaged, making it necessary to stay over in Nanaimo for repairs. The ship anchored near the entrance to Commercial Inlet. His uncle George Robinson and his sister Elizabeth and the pioneer families welcomed all the newcomers ashore. **December 17:** Dr. Alfred Benson arrived as surgeon for the Vancouver Coal Company.

**1858, April 25:** The discovery of gold on the bars of the Fraser River attracted hundreds of prospectors. **August 2:** This discovery prompted Great Britain to establish a new colony on the mainland named British Columbia. The HBC retained territorial rights but lost its exclusive trading licence to Vancouver Island. **November 19:** At Fort Langley, the HBC Red Ensign came down, and the British flag was raised signifying the formal inauguration of the new Crown Colony of British Columbia. James Douglas, already governor of the Vancouver Island colony, was sworn in as governor of the new colony.

**1859:** The last HBC officer in charge at Nanaimo, Captain Charles Edward Stuart, was discharged for drunkenness. A year later Stuart moved to Ucluelet, on Vancouver Island's west coast, where he established his own trading post. Mine manager George Robinson returned to England. Charles S. Nicol was appointed general manager. **February 14:** Queensborough is proclaimed as the site of the new capital of British Columbia. The name was changed in July to New Westminster. **February 17:** The Methodists established a presence in Nanaimo with Reverend Arthur Browning. The Anglican mission was established under the Reverend T.L. Lowe. **May 24:** The community celebrated Queen Victoria's birthday with a sports day. **July 11:** Surveyor B.W. Pearse reported that Nanaimo had 200 inhabitants and noted how friendly the Snuneymuxw were. **Also this year:** The *Alpha*, a fifty-eight-ton schooner, was launched from the mouth of Millstone River. Captain Richards and the officers of HMS *Plumper*, a surveying ship, spent a week on top of Mount Benson making astronomical observations. Richards is reported to have

said that the view of the sunrise was unsurpassed in its gorgeous splendour by anything on the Pacific Coast.

**1860, August:** Maps and charts prior to this year showed Colvilletown, even though the name Nanaimo had been adopted and used earlier by McKay and Douglas. The old name was removed from the maps and the town officially became Nanaimo. **September 7:** Sir George Simpson, Governor of the HBC territory, died in office. Alexander Grant Dallas succeeded him. **Also this year:** Gold fever drew miners to the Cariboo country in the interior of B.C.

**1861:** The HBC began dismantling its holdings on Vancouver Island and negotiated the sale of its Nanaimo operation to the Vancouver Coal Mining and Land Company for 25,000 pounds sterling plus a mortgage for 15,000 pounds. Charles S. Nicol, the resident general manager negotiated the deal. **Also this year:** The Reverend John Booth Good took over the Anglican mission in Nanaimo.

**1862:** A smallpox epidemic hit the Native population on Vancouver Island. Between 1862 and 1864, an estimated 20,000 Natives perished from the disease. In mid-June, about 300 Haidas left Victoria in canoes for the Queen Charlotte Islands. A gunboat accompanied them as far as Nanaimo to prevent their enemies ambushing them along the way. They were forbidden to land in Nanaimo. The grim armada continued its way up the coast carrying the dreaded disease. **November 25:** St. Paul's Literary Institute and Society was founded. **Also this year:** The *Princess Royal* returned to Vancouver Island bringing more Nanaimo settlers: They included Miss Robinson, Miss Bate, William Cartwright, Joseph Bate and William Biggs. A rifle group was formed this year.

**1863, March:** Thomas Crosby began teaching the Snuneymuxw children. He learned their language and created a small dictionary. He taught by example by cultivating a small garden in front of his mission and inspiring the Snuneymuxw to plant fruit trees and grow vegetables. **Also this year:** The Pioneer Store, or "Red House," operated by Alexander Mayer opened for business at the corner of Bastion and Commercial Street. John Hirst built a stone warehouse that is still in use today as the Port Authority offices on Front Street. Roads linking Nanaimo with Comox and Victoria were completed.

**1864, February 13:** The first concert was held in the Literary Institute hall. **August 6:** The Vancouver Island Exploring Expedition (VIEE) on a geological survey of the island, led by Dr. Robert Brown, arrived in Nanaimo and camped at Millstone River. **November 15:** The new Governor of Vancouver Island Colony, Arthur Edward Kennedy, laid the cornerstone for the Literary Institute Hall. The building was used for many years for gatherings, theatrical and social events; later it became City Hall. The Snuneymuxw appealed to Queen Victoria for help as their population declined and the coal resources were exploited. **Also this year:** The Bank of British Columbia, the first bank to be established in Nanaimo, opened in the Old Stone House. The Nanaimo Cricket Club was formed this year. Miners formed a philharmonic orchestra.

**1865:** This year 32,818 tons of coal were exported to California. **July 10:** Joseph McClure published the first newspaper in Nanaimo, the *Gazette*, from his Front Street office. **August 6:** The Bishop of Vancouver Island, assisted by Reverend Charles Seghers, blessed St. Peter's Roman Catholic wooden chapel. **November 26:** The Rev. Robert Jamieson conducted the first Presbyterian service in Nanaimo.

**1866, January:** This winter the harbour froze. The steamer *Sir James Douglas* arrived from Victoria; the next morning it was surrounded by ice. The ferry served Victoria, Nanaimo, Comox and the Gulf Islands. **March 29:** The first attempt to incorporate the City of Nanaimo was introduced in the House of Assembly. **April 10:** A petition from Nanaimo asked the council not to pass the incorporation bill. **May 28:** The bill to incorporate failed as the executive council indefinitely postponed the bill's second reading. **November 19:** Queen Victoria gave royal assent to the British Columbia Act that united the two colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia as the Colony of British Columbia.

**1867, March 29:** Queen Victoria signed the British North America Act and proclaimed it on July 1. The first Prime Minister of the Dominion of Canada, John A. Macdonald, was sworn in. **March 31:** The Gordon Wharf opened. **Also this year:** Chinese entered the mining industry in Nanaimo. The *Gazette* changed its name and owner to become the *Tribune*. It ceased publication the first year.

**1868, May 25:** Victoria became the capital of British Columbia. **Also this year:** Jesse Sage and son-in-law Edward Walker began working the Newcastle Mine. They built wharves and a steam winch to wind the coal to the adit.

**1869, March 10:** Peter Kanaka, a Hawaiian, found guilty of multiple murders on Newcastle Island, was hanged at the Bastion. **October:** Robert Dunsmuir discovered coal at Diver Lake in the Wellington District, north of Nanaimo. He formed a company with his sons Alex and James, and investor Lieutenant Waldham N. Diggle. Dunsmuir, Diggle & Company began exporting coal from Departure Bay wharf. The town of Wellington was developed. **Also this year:** A new Education Act passed, abolishing free schools. School districts and school boards were elected. Nanaimo School Board was established with members Robert Dunsmuir, Pat Faith and Thomas James. **Thomas Crosby left Nanaimo to begin a new mission at Chilliwack.**

**1870, October 3:** The first strike in Nanaimo coalfields started on this date, precipitated by management cutting by "one bit" (twelve-and-a-half cents) the price per ton they paid the miners. The miners went on strike, and on the fifth the men who loaded the coal at the wharves joined them. That same day things turned ugly when a crude homemade bomb was hurled through a window of the house where one of the non-striking engineers lived. The strike dragged on for seven months. After the stores cut off all credit, the strikers nearly starved. **Also this year:** The first sailing schooner loaded sandstone at Newcastle Island quarry for construction of the San Francisco mint.

**1871, July 19–20:** At midnight, the Province of British Columbia became part of Canada. In the first general election held in Nanaimo, ninety votes were cast, fifty-seven for John Robson and thirty-three for Joseph Westrop Carey. **August 14:** The new province issued the first marriage licence, to Bruno Mellado and Mary Ann Thompson of Nanaimo. **November 14:** Premier John Foster McCreight formed the first provincial government.

**1872:** The Nanaimo Junior Brass Band was founded with conductor Reverend James Reynard, rector of St. Paul's Anglican Church, a musician and former choirmaster of Yorkminster Cathedral, in England. Musical instruments were purchased from Georgetown Military Band. **Also this year:** The Fitzwilliam Mine opened.

**1873, May 24:** The Nanaimo Brass Band gave its first public performance on the occasion of the Queen's birthday. **October 15:** The cornerstone was laid for the Grand Lodge of British Columbia, the first Masonic Temple in the province. A year later it was consecrated. **Also this year:** The first Nanaimo Public School was constructed on Crace Street at a cost of \$2,500. Joseph Phrys Planta was appointed the first principal. Previously he had been vice-principal of Victoria College, in Victoria.

**1874, winter:** The newly organized Nanaimo Curling Club played on a frozen swamp just outside the city. The skips for this impromptu curling match were James Harvey and James Hamilton. The final score was Harvey 37, Hamilton 17. **April 15:** George Norris published the first edition of the *Nanaimo Free Press*. A subscription was four dollars per year, or fifty cents a month. Norris never missed a city council meeting and played a large part in preserving the city's history through special editions of the newspaper. **June 15:** The *Prince Alfred*, carrying coal out of Departure Bay, was lost in dense fog with all hands. **December 24:** The City of Nanaimo was incorporated. **Also this year:** The aerial tramway from the Harewood Mine was completed. The Nanaimo Operatic Society was formed. Emily Stark, the first Afro-American teacher in the province, began teaching in the new Cedar School south of Nanaimo. The Nanaimo Operatic Society formed.

**1875, January 18:** Mark Bate was elected the first mayor of the new City of Nanaimo. **January 22:** The first council meeting was held in the old Courthouse on Front Street. The first councillors were John Bryden, Richard Nightingale, Richard Brinn, John Pawson, William Raybould, John Hirst and John Dick. **February 1:** Charles Newton Young was hired as city clerk at \$87.50 per month. **March 25:** Entrance Island lighthouse station was completed. A cattle trail opened between Cowichan and Nanaimo giving farmers access to the Victoria market. **September 25:** The Quickstep Nine, from Wellington, and Nanaimo's Birdcatcher Nine played the first recorded baseball game. **Also this year:** The first Bastion Street Bridge was built over the ravine, and the Long Bridge, or Commercial Street Bridge, that spanned the Ravine from Commercial Street to Victoria Crescent, was rebuilt. The city's first hospital opened on Chapel Street by combining two log cabins owned by John Biggs. John Hirst built his warehouse on Front Street using Newcastle Island stone. The date 1875 was cut in relief on the front gable.

**1876:** The Nanaimo Harbour froze over on one of the coldest winters recorded to date. It froze all the way from Protection Island through to Departure Bay. Coal sleighs were running on Departure Bay. **May:** Principal Joseph P. Planta organized the first May Day celebration. The pupils from Crace Street School paraded to the Green where Eliza Randle was crowned Queen of the May. **August 24:** Governor General Lord Dufferin visited Nanaimo. He expressed the hope that an agreement to construct a railway to the Pacific Ocean would soon be realized.

**1877:** The Miners Mutual Protective Association was established. Later the Miners and Mine Labourers Protective Association with unions for coal trimmers, carpenters, engineers and tailors formed one of the earliest labour councils in the province. **Also this year:** Hotels and merchants initiated a night watchman position.

**1878:** Pauline Haarer, fifteen years old, began teaching in the Girl's School that opened this year under Principal Margaret Planta. Pauline's salary for the first month was a \$50 gold piece. **April 20:** Fire destroyed the lower part of Commercial Street. **Also this year:** William Wall was the first in the province to install a telephone service when he strung a fourteen-gauge wire between

Robert Dunsmuir's office in Wellington and the loading docks at Departure Bay. The first fire brigade was formed this year; it replaced the bucket brigade where Native women had served with distinction.

**1879, January 21:** Fire Hall No. 1 was built on Commercial Street. The Black Diamond Fire Engine Company was formed. **May:** A telegraph line was completed between Victoria and Nanaimo. The line was strung on oak brackets nailed to trees. **Also this year:** The special police constable took on extra duties as night watchman and lamplighter. Street lighting was inaugurated when coal oil lamps were installed. His salary was partially paid by local businesses and the Vancouver Coal Company. The city was divided into three wards, North, Middle and South.

**1880, July 19:** Samuel Gough was hired as city clerk at \$400 per year plus ten percent on all collectable taxes, plus another \$5 per month for lighting and cleaning the council chambers.

**1881, May 24:** Nanaimo officially celebrated Queen Victoria's 62nd birthday. Several sporting events were organized including two boat and three canoe races, and foot races. **May:** The Nanaimo Hospital Association was organized; the first president was Robert Dunsmuir. **November 5:** The new hospital on Franklyn Street opened. **Also this year:** Josiah Walter Stirtan made the first attempt to provide a regular supply of water for the town when he laid a system of wooden mains. Before this water was obtained from natural springs that bubbled out under the rocks around the ravine. The Vancouver Coal Company opened the Esplanade mines No. 1 and No. 2.

**1882, September:** The barque *Nanaimo*, built by Chauncey Carpenter, owner of the Nanaimo Sawmill, was launched into the harbour from Dobeson Foundry. The following year Chauncey was hounded by creditors, including his workers who were owed back wages. All his possessions were sold, including the Nanaimo Sawmill. The Royal City Planing Mill Co. of New Westminster purchased his milling machinery and announced its intention to build a first-class sawmill. **Also this year:** Robert Dunsmuir contributed towards the cost of lumber to repair the Millstone Bridge near the present Pearson Bridge. John Spadget Stannard opened a store selling dry goods and furnishings. Pimbury's Drug Store opened for business on Commercial Street. Dunsmuir opened the Alexandria Mine.

**1883, June 1:** Waldham N. Diggle, of Dunsmuir, Diggle & Company, sold out his interest in the company to Robert Dunsmuir for \$700,000. **August 28:** Robert Dunsmuir and four American railway tycoons signed a contract with the Dominion Government to build the Esquimalt and Nanaimo (E & N) Railway. **Also this year:** The Franklyn Street Hospital was constructed for \$3,000, leaving a debt of \$900 on the books. A small canal named Biggs Portage was made through "The Gap" at the present location of Duke Point ferry terminal to provide a shorter and safer distance to Gabriola Island. The HBC fleet joined the Pioneer Line to form the Canadian Pacific Navigation Ltd.

**1884, August:** Nanaimo officially became a Port of Entry. **September:** Work began on building the E & N Railway. **Also this year:** The Dominion Post Office was built on Front Street. Previously William Earl's store had served as a post office. Samuel Robins took over as manager of the Vancouver Coal Company. The Vancouver Coal Company purchased the Harewood Estates from the HBC. The estate lay between Nanaimo and the foot of Mount Benson.

**1885:** The Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration reported that in Nanaimo there were sixty-four Chinese miners and cooks, eighteen servants and cooks, six store employees, six merchants, thirteen farm labourers, eight washermen, and four barbers. Another 727 worked in the mines in Wellington. There were only four married Chinese women in both communities. This same year, most Chinese businesses and residents had moved to south Nanaimo's Chinatown.

**1886, January 13:** Nanaimo council voted to extend the city limits to bring Chinatown under its jurisdiction. **August 13:** Sir John A. Macdonald hammered in the last spike, made of gold, of the E & N Railway at Cliffside Station, at Shawnigan Lake. He and Robert Dunsmuir celebrated the accomplishment with a wee dram o' whisky below ground at the Esplanade No. 1 Mine. A civic reception was held in the Royal Hotel on Wharf Street. **September 24:** The first E & N Railway passenger train arrived at Nanaimo. Daily service to Victoria began six days later, but the train did not enter Victoria proper until a swing bridge across the harbour was completed in March 29, 1888. **December 3:** Shopkeeper William Raybould fractured his skull and died after a fall at the rear of his shop. **Also this year:** The Vancouver Coal Company opened the Chase River No. 3 pit. Samuel Robins planted Lombardy poplars along Esplanade and Wakesiah Avenue, the boundaries of the company farm.

**1887, May 3:** The worst mining accident in British Columbia history happened on this day when an explosion rocked the Esplanade No. 1 Mine killing 148 men. The jury blamed the explosion on the firing of an unprepared and badly planted charge that ignited accumulated gas fuelled by coal dust. No criminal negligence was attributed to anyone. **Also this year,** the E & N Railway was extended into Wellington.

**1888, January 24:** Seventy-seven miners were killed in an explosion in the Wellington Colliery, the No. 5 pit, on Diver Lake. **May 20:** The Salvation Army was organized in the city. **August 16:** The City of Nanaimo workers went on strike because of uncomplimentary remarks made about them at a city council meeting. **October 6:** The Nanaimo Hornets rugby team began the year as the Rovers. The team changed its name in 1890. The first game was played against Victoria. A return game was played on Bevan's Swamp, part of Wakesiah Farm. The Hornets won the provincial championships for the next four years. **Also this year:** Alexander Shaw built Nanaimo's first Edison electric light system.

**1889, March 16:** The Nanaimo Opera House opened on Church Street. **March 20:** The Nanaimo Board of Trade was established with Andrew Haslam as chairman. **April 12:** Robert Dunsmuir died in Victoria. His funeral was held on April 16. All the mines at Wellington and Nanaimo stopped work and closed for the funeral. Hundreds of men and women took advantage of free passes on the E & N Railway to take them to the funeral. **July 18:** The First Baptist Church of Nanaimo was organized. **August 13:** Eli Harrison became the first resident County Court Judge in Nanaimo. **September 13:** Nanaimo Athletic Association Football club was formed with William McGregor as president. **November 5:** Governor General Stanley visited. **Also this year:** The Nanaimo Telephone Company began operations in George Cavalsky's store on Bastion Street. The Nanaimo Lawn Tennis Club was established.

**1890, June 30:** Nanaimo received its first electrical power from the Nanaimo Power Company. **July 30:** Hamilton Powder Co. built a plant at Northfield. **August:** Construction began on Fire Hall No. 2 on a narrow strip of land between Nicol Street and Victoria Road. **September 20:** Nanaimo celebrated the first Labour Day. **November 8:** The Nanaimo Football Club, formerly the



Rangers, played their first game. They won the B.C. Championship in 1893 and 1895. **Also this year:** The Bastion Street Bridge was replaced. The newly formed Baseball Club played in the B.C. Provincial League. Adam H. Horne took over as postmaster. Nanaimo Telephone Company incorporated.

**1891, January 9:** The Vancouver Coal Company expanded about two miles under the harbour from the No. 1 shaft to the south side of Protection Island. Contracts for the sinking of the shaft were let in the spring of 1891 and finished the following January. **January 21:** The Union Brewing Company was incorporated in Nanaimo, and within five years was producing more than 15,000 barrels of beer a year. Prohibition caused its collapse, and its equipment was sold to Japan in 1923. **September 18:** Andrew Haslam launched his tug *Estelle* used to carry supplies for logging camps up and down the coast. **November 23:** The streets of Nanaimo were lit by electricity for the first time. **Also this year:** The Nanaimo Labour Council was established. The first Lacrosse Club formed.

**1892:** The Harewood Estate site was cleared and sub-divided into five-acre lots that were leased or sold to miners for a nominal payment. The road was completed halfway up Mount Benson. **May 20:** The Nanaimo Brewery and the Union Brewery amalgamated. **November 12:** The *Joan* and the *Cutch* collided in the harbour as they raced for the south channel en route to Vancouver. **December:** Jerome Wilson and George Leask purchased the town's oldest bakery, the Scotch Bakery, from the Evans Brothers and moved it to Victoria Crescent from the "Westward Ho" building. **Also this year:** City Council discussed filling in Commercial Inlet, otherwise known as "the Ravine." Hamilton Powder Co. built a plant at Departure Bay. Andrew Haslam purchased the Nanaimo Sawmill. A gun club was formed.

**1893, January 14:** The Nanaimo Hornet Rugby Club formed with J. Dixon as captain and J. Neen as vice-captain. **January 18:** Sawmill owner George Bird, of Port Alberni, set a record when he made the first bicycle trip from Alberni to Nanaimo in 13.75 hours. **February 8:** Fifty-two-and-a-half inches of snow fell between January 28 and February 8. **March 10:** Nanaimo Brewery sold for \$10,000. **July 18:** The cornerstone of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church was laid. Construction was completed on February 11 the following year. Architect Warren H. Hayes of New York designed the church. **Also this year:** Andrew Haslam built a mansion at the corner of Wallace Street and Comox Road at a cost of \$6,000. George Fletcher opened Fletcher Brothers Store, selling sewing machines, musical instruments, sheet music and gramophones.

**1894, January 1:** The Nanaimo Board of Police Commissioners met for the first time. Joseph Planta was sworn in as police magistrate. **February 4:** An explosion aboard the tug *Estelle* in the Campbell River area destroyed the vessel, which was owned by Andrew Haslam. **September 28:** Fire destroyed the old No. 1 Fire Hall and the Royal Hotel on Wharf Street. One man lost his life in the blaze. **October 6:** The Nanaimo Dairy Agricultural and Horticultural Society held the first fall fair in a log building near the present-day Bowen Park complex. **November 9:** Governor General Lord Aberdeen and Lady Aberdeen visited the city. **December:** The city erected street signs for the first time. **Also this year:** The Vancouver Coal Company closed all its mines with the exception of the Esplanade No. 1, Protection and the No. 5 shafts. All others had been worked out and flooded. The No. 2 Fire Hall on Nicol Street became the main fire station.

**1895, January 4:** General W. Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, visited the city. **March 30:** R. Dunsmuir and Sons purchased East Wellington Mines. **August:** Ralph Smith, who came to

Nanaimo in 1892, was appointed general secretary and agent for the Nanaimo Miner's Union. He later became MLA for Nanaimo City, then MP for the Vancouver Island constituency. **Also this year:** A permanent roadway replaced the old wooden Commercial Street Bridge. The Japanese were disenfranchised.

**1896, February 29:** Nanaimo Courthouse, designed by architect Francis M. Rattenbury, opened on Front Street. **April 7:** Central School opened. **August 24:** The city regulated the use of bicycles by passing a bylaw that restricted when or where they could be used. Pedestrians were not to be inconvenienced and there must be no riding on sidewalks. All bicycles had to have a lit lantern attached when riding within the city limits from sunset to sunrise.

**1897, April 30:** The Nanaimo Yacht Club formed with Captain Locke as the first commodore. **July 27:** Fifty Nanaimo coal miners left on the *Islander* for the Klondike gold rush. The mayor and two aldermen also joined the exodus. **August 26:** Letter to A.R. Johnston from J.C. McGregor advised that all the Nanaimo Klondiker boys were well and they had reached the summit of Dyes Pass with 1800 pounds of stuff.

**1898, January 26:** Wellington was recognized as the terminus of the E & N Railway. **February 9:** The Merchants Bank of Halifax opened a Nanaimo Branch on the first floor of the old Doon Hotel in the Gibson Building on Commercial Street. **July 9:** James Dunsmuir was elected as MLA for Comox. **August 19:** As the result of the draining of Diver Lake, banks broke away and large fissures appeared in the soil. A cow was reported to have fallen in and sunk out of sight. **November 12:** A Vancouver Coal Company No. 1 Mine explosion killed seven men, including William McGregor, son of pioneer John McGregor. **Also this year:** The Labour Regulation Act of 1898 excluded Japanese and Chinese from working in the mines.

**1899, April 16:** The Fraternal Order of Eagles was established in Nanaimo. **July 23:** The Cricket Club formed; the first official game was against Vancouver. **August 3:** The *Nanaimo Herald* reported that coal production passed the million-ton mark. **August 9:** Explorer and storekeeper Adam Grant Horne passed away. **Also this year:** The *Nanaimo Herald* weekly newspaper was founded with editor Edward T. Searle.

**1900, January 29:** The Women's Auxiliary to Nanaimo Hospital formed. **January 31:** Alexander Dunsmuir, the first white boy born in Nanaimo, died in San Francisco. **February 15:** The Native Sons of Nanaimo, Post No. 3 was formed. **June 15:** James Dunsmuir was elected premier of the province. **Also this year:** The Felice Cavalotti Lodge was formed in Extension to provide welfare and death benefits for Italian miners. A bylaw was passed in Nanaimo giving the mayor \$300 and aldermen \$120 per year. Until this time the mayor and aldermen had served without remuneration. A Snuneymuxw runner, William Good, competed in the 400-metre race at the San Francisco World Fair. He was the world's fastest sprinter but never received his medal because he was Native.

**1901, January 2:** The Merchants Bank of Halifax changed its name to the Royal Bank of Canada. **January 22:** Queen Victoria died at age eighty-two. Nanaimo observed an official day of mourning. **June 19:** A deal was finalized to sell the Nanaimo Water Works Company to the city for \$104,000. **November 4:** The Black Diamond Fire Engine Company officially became the Nanaimo Fire Department. **December 6:** The first of the Nanaimo Finns left for Malcolm Island where they hoped to develop a Finn colony. **December 12:** Mayor William Manson made

Nanaimo's first long distance telephone call to Victoria's Mayor Hayward. **Also this year:** The city purchased and installed two public urinals. The Nanaimo population was recorded at 6,000.

**1902, March 25:** The first concrete sidewalk was laid in front of the Bank of Commerce Building. **October 17:** James Dunsmuir bought out his partners for one million dollars to become the sole owner of the E & N Railway. **November 21:** Dunsmuir resigned as Premier of British Columbia. **Also this year:** Francis John Stannard's flour and grain store moved to the Hirst Warehouse on Front Street. Bryant's Harness Shop was established on Victoria Crescent. The unique harness and repair shop became a gathering place for visiting farmers who enjoyed sitting around the old coal-burning pot-bellied stove sharing stories and concerns.

**1903, February 11:** Western Fuel Company purchased the New Vancouver Coal Company. When the company manager Samuel Robins resigned, the city honoured him by holding a "Samuel Robins Day" on The Green prior to his leaving for England at the end of June. **May 20:** The Dominion Labour Commission chaired by Mackenzie King visited Nanaimo to investigate labour conditions in the mines. **August 21:** James H. Hawthornthwaite and Parker Williams were nominated for the next provincial election. **October 3:** Both were elected, and became the first two socialists ever to be elected in British Columbia. This was the first provincial election fought along organized federal party lines. **December 5:** Fire destroyed the Jervis fish curing plant. **Also this year:** The first annual driver's licence fee was set at \$36.

**1904, May 13:** Fire destroyed Andrew Haslam's Nanaimo Sawmill. **June 21:** Harewood Mine closed. **December 10:** A Mine Workers Union was organized in the city. **Also this year:** In an effort to control immigration, the Dominion Government instituted a \$500 head tax on all Chinese immigrants. The Native Sons of B.C. Post No. 3 purchased the Bastion from Western Fuel Company. Duke Point was named in honour of Algernon Percy, the fourth Duke of Northumberland and First Lord of the Admiralty. The point overlooks Northumberland Channel, also named after the Duke.

**1905, January 6:** The entire police force in Nanaimo resigned because of complaints and allegations about gambling and neglect of duty. The force was reinstated on February 17. **February 1:** Fire destroyed Japanese canneries at Departure Bay. **February 17:** The Nanaimo Telephone Company merged with what was then the British Columbia Telephone Company Limited, later called B.C. Telephone. **March 28:** A new customs house was completed as an addition to the Dominion Post Office building. **June 5:** James Dunsmuir sold the E & N Railway to the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) for \$2.33 million. Along with the purchase, the CPR acquired the E & N's steamships *Joan*, which operated between Nanaimo and Vancouver, and the *City of Nanaimo*, which was used along the east coast of the Island, as well as the tug *Czar*. **November 7:** John W. Coburn, president of Ladysmith Lumber Company, purchased Andrew Haslam's Nanaimo Sawmill. **Also this year:** The Nanaimo Fish and Game Club formed. Six companies employing 150 workers were engaged in the herring fishing industry in Nanaimo.

**1906, February 11:** The first service of Brechin Church, then Methodist, was held in Brechin Hall, which was owned by Brechin Mine. The church became United Church of Canada in 1925 at the time of church union. The hall was given to the church after the mine closed in 1913. **May 12:** The first automobile to visit Nanaimo came via the Malahat from Victoria. The vehicle was a 1906 single cylinder eight h.p. Oldsmobile. The trip took four hours and thirty minutes. **May 26:** James Dunsmuir was appointed Lieutenant Governor, the first British Columbian to hold this office.

**June 30:** Andrew Haslam's mansion on Wallace Street was sold by auction. **July 14:** Nanaimo recorded its highest temperature ever at ninety-two degrees Fahrenheit (thirty-four Celsius). **September 26:** Cornerstone of new St. Paul's church laid. **September 27:** Governor General Earl Grey and Lady Grey visited the city. Lieutenant Governor James Dunsmuir and his party arrived on the *Thistle* to join in the reception. **October 17:** Nanaimo Fisheries sold to Bell Irving Fisheries of Vancouver. **Also this year:** The Nanaimo General Hospital Training School for Nurses offered a three-year course in nursing.

**1907, November 8:** Page's Lagoon Whaling Station began operations. The Pacific Whaling Company processed three to five whales per day during the season. The plant would cease operations on January 25, 1908. The whale catcher, the *St. Lawrence*, which had been brought out from eastern Canada to serve the Nanaimo plant, was diverted to the Sechart station. **Also this year:** There were nineteen companies employing 500 workers in the Nanaimo herring fishing industry. The province registered 175 automobiles.

**1908, May 30:** Residents of Chinatown moved to land purchased from Western Fuel Company, located across the E & N Railway tracks, on both sides of Pine and Hecate streets. **October 26:** The steamer *Iroquois*, on the run between Sidney and Nanaimo, sank off Jack Point. Fifteen passengers were rescued by Peterson's launch and taken to Nanaimo. A large cargo of pigs and sheep being transported from Salt Spring farmers to butchers in Nanaimo were released as the ship listed before toppling into the cold water. **Also this year:** The Pacific Biological Station at Departure Bay opened in the spring, with Reverend George Taylor as curator. The Welsh Male Voice Choir of Nanaimo, which had formed in the 1880s, won the Canadian Championship.

**1909, January:** The newly formed Vancouver Island Development League promised that Vancouver Island advantages would be stated positively. "The vulgar rant of the blatant 'booster' would be avoided, as it was considered unwise and unnecessary." The following year, the league described Nanaimo as the "hub" of Vancouver Island. **October 5:** Thirty-two men were killed in the No. 2 West Mine at Extension.

**1910, March 4:** The CPR purchased Johnston's Wharf. **May 19:** Five men were killed in an explosion at Departure Bay Powder Works. **July 11:** Fire destroyed the Sisters of St. Ann convent and school. **July 21:** the Nanaimo Herring Packing & Canning Co. was destroyed by fire. **September 23:** Another four cannery buildings were burned, three owned by Japanese and one the North Pacific Fish Company. **November 9:** First train service to Cameron Lake was inaugurated. **Also this year:** The Western Fuel Company opened the Reserve Mine.

**1911, March 14:** The CPR's *Princess Mary* made its first trip on the Nanaimo-Comox-Vancouver service. **July 8:** Fire destroyed part of Ladysmith Lumber Company's sawmill. **October 9:** The *Charmer*, a CPR ferry, made the trip between Nanaimo and Vancouver in three hours. **November 2:** Miners with First Aid Certificates decided to affiliate with the St. John Ambulance Association and create a Nanaimo Branch. **December 22:** Another explosion at Departure Bay Powder Works killed three men. **Also this year:** Over 100 boys were enrolled in Nanaimo's three Boy Scout troops.

**1912, May 11:** The CPR's *Princess Patricia* made its inaugural trip between Nanaimo and Vancouver in two hours. **July 16:** Fire destroyed a Japanese cannery on Newcastle Island. **August 26, 1912:** Whaling station at Page's Lagoon sold. **September 16:** The beginning of labour unrest in

the Vancouver Island mines started in the Extension Mine. Miners who observed an unscheduled general holiday to protest improved safety and working conditions in the Canadian Collieries mines were locked out. The men wanted to unionize under the banner of the United Mine Workers of America. At that time four mining companies, employing over 3500 men, operated on the island: Canadian Collieries Company (Cumberland), Pacific Coast Coal (South Wellington), the Vancouver and Nanaimo Coal Company (East Wellington) and Western Fuel Company (Nanaimo). **September 20:** The Nanaimo Junior Red Cross Club formed. The Sprott-Shaw Business College was established in Nanaimo. **September 27:** The Duke and Duchess of Connaught visited the city. **December 20:** Morden Mine workers went on strike for \$4.50 per day.

**1913, January 1:** Joseph M. Brown, a watchmaker, set the Dominion Post Office clock in motion for the first time. The clock was nicknamed "Big Frank" in honour of Frank H. Shepherd, the Conservative MP who was first elected in 1911. During his first year in office he acquired the four-faced clock for the post office tower. **January 15:** The clock stopped at precisely at 1:55 p.m. On this wintry afternoon, off Protection Island, fire engulfed the eighty-two-foot SS *Oscar* carrying explosives from the Canadian Explosives Limited plant at Departure Bay to Vancouver. The massive explosion was heard and felt all over Nanaimo. **April 30:** Miners issued a general strike call. **May 2:** At a meeting in the Princess Theatre in Nanaimo, Western Fuel Co. miners voted overwhelmingly in favour of a strike, joining other miners from Canadian Collieries. The most bitter labour strike in the history of British Columbia began in earnest within a week. All other mines had joined the strike. **May 28:** The Royal Commission on Indian Affairs heard Snuneymuxw concerns about land and fishing rights. **June 16:** The world's largest underwater telephone cable was laid between Newcastle Island and Point Grey, providing long distance service to the mainland. **August 8:** Canadian Explosives Limited announced it was moving to James Island, Victoria. **August 14:** The militia arrived in Nanaimo to keep the peace with the striking miners. They stayed until the outbreak of the First World War. **August 19:** Over 100 striking miners were arrested. **August 28:** Henry Wagner, the notorious Flying Dutchman, was hanged at Nanaimo jail for a Union Bay murder.

**1914, February 4:** The Orpheum/Bijou Theatre opened. **July 14:** Fire destroyed the New Ladysmith Lumber Company mill. **August 4:** The miner's "Big Strike" ended just prior to the First World War being declared. Sam Guthrie, Ladysmith miner and labour union president, was arrested and imprisoned without bail. He elected for a speedy trial and received a two-year jail sentence. **August 7:** A Nanaimo Militia Unit left for Esquimalt. **September 20:** The Nanaimo Internment Camp opened in the Newcastle Townsite jail building on Stewart Avenue. It would close the following year on September 17 due to overcrowding. **September 25:** A striking miner, Joseph Mairs Jr., died in jail and was buried in Ladysmith. He was the only miner from the Big Strike to die in jail. Harewood School opened. **December 4:** Unemployed relief workers were paid \$3 per day.

**1915, February 8:** The Thirtieth Battalion left for the war in Europe. **February 9:** Twenty men drowned in South Wellington Colliery mine. **May 15:** Another twenty-five men died from a sulphur fume explosion in the Reserve Mine. **December 11:** Lieutenant Lionel Beevor-Potts of the South Wales Borderers received the Military Medal for valour. **Also this year:** The Dominion Theatre, later known as the Capital, opened on the corner of Bastion and Skinner streets. It was billed as one of the finest theatres in Nanaimo to date. First-run moving pictures were shown while an orchestra played musical selections to all the shows. Hundreds were turned away when the theatre featured Charlie Chaplin in *Shoulder Arms*. The picture show played to three capacity

houses.

**1916, January:** Raymond Collishaw qualified as a pilot in the Royal Naval Air Service and began patrolling the English Channel. In August he transferred to the No. 3 Wing of the naval unit "The Silent Service" whose job was long-range bombing. The following year he joined the Black Death Flight, scoring thirty-seven hits against enemy planes. Collishaw became Nanaimo's first war hero. **July 17:** Charles Herbert Beevor-Potts was appointed Nanaimo magistrate. **September 2:** Conscription was enforced in Nanaimo. **September 30:** Steel span bridge erected over Millstone River. **December 20:** The Nanaimo Forestry Battalion left for Europe.

**1917, January 11:** Nanaimo voted for Wednesday business half-holidays. **February 12:** Former Nanaimo MLA Ralph Smith died in Victoria. **August 2:** Gordon Sloan enlisted in the Royal Flying Corps. **October 1:** The Prohibition Act came into force, and women were given the vote. **November 24:** The Governor General, the Duke of Devonshire, visited the city.

**1918, January 24:** Mary Ellen Smith became the first female MLA in B.C., and the first woman cabinet minister in the British Empire. Women voted for the first time in a provincial election. **March 11:** Mary Ellen Smith delivered her maiden speech. **September 10:** Sixteen miners died in the Protection Island mine when a cable broke on a cage, sending it crashing 150 feet below. **October 8:** All public gathering places were closed to prevent the spread of Spanish influenza. **October 17:** First death recorded from the flu epidemic. The disease spread so rapidly that by October 18 there were 135 cases in the city. Approximately 700 people were infected with the illness. Fifty-six people died during the seven-week duration of the epidemic. **October 29:** Four men from Nanaimo lost their lives when the naval patrol steamer HMCS *Galiano* sank. **November 11:** At 7:00 a.m., horns, whistles, and sirens spread the good news the First World War had ended. Stores closed, and horses, cars and other vehicles were decorated for the occasion. A public holiday was proclaimed throughout the province.

**1919, June 2:** A daily bus service was started between Nanaimo and Victoria. The vehicle was a seven-passenger Willys-Knight bus. **August 4:** The Pathfinder No. 5 airplane visited Nanaimo. **August 16:** The first airmail service to Vancouver was initiated. **September 19:** Nanaimo's most prominent landmark, the old HBC Bastion was in danger of being sold by the city for tax arrears, perhaps demolished. The Native Sons of B.C. Post No. 3 saved it for future generations. **September 26:** His Royal Highness Edward, Prince of Wales, visited the city. He arrived by train and received a formal reception in the courthouse. He thanked Nanaimo for its war effort and presented medals to war veterans. **October 6:** The Governor General Duke of Devonshire and Lady Dorothy Cavendish opened the Great War Veterans Association headquarters. **October 30:** George E. Norris, publisher of the *Nanaimo Free Press* died. **November 3:** Harold Hackwood, a war veteran, was appointed city clerk to replace Sam Gough who had held that position since 1880. **Also this year:** South Wellington School was built. Letter carrier service began in the city.

**1920, February 5:** Mayor Henry McKenzie opened the Nanaimo Public Library on the second floor of the Athletic Club on Chapel Street. **April 20:** A group of golfers established the Nanaimo Golf Links Limited. John Coburn served as first president. **May 14:** Following the death of Mayor McKenzie, Frederick A. Busby was elected mayor. **May 18:** Miss Lizzie Band was chosen May Queen.

**1921, February 15:** Citizens asked city council to do something about jazzing at local dances.

Council referred their request to the Police Commission. No action was taken. **March 20:** The Hemphill Auto and Tractor School auto mechanic school opened. The school taught how to repair tractors, trucks and automobiles. **October 17:** Elections were held for a Western Fuel Company mine doctor. There were thirty-three applications for the position. Dr. Oswald Grey Ingham won with ninety votes. **November 11:** An Armistice Day ceremony was held at the new cenotaph in Dallas Square for the first time. **December 1:** Canadian Pacific Railway statistics showed that from January 1 to August 31, 1921, 1,338 cars crossed by ferry from Vancouver to Nanaimo compared to 1,053 the previous year. **Also this year:** Lantzville School was built. John Shirras became Chief of Police following the death of Jacob Neen, who had served in that position since 1912.

**1922, January 1:** Traffic patterns changed in B.C. precisely at 6:00 a.m. when drivers switched from driving on the left to driving on the right. **Also this year:** The Nanaimo Board of School Trustees with community support built the Franklyn Street Gymnasium. The year began with an epidemic of scarlet fever, followed by a few cases of smallpox, then a severe epidemic of measles and diphtheria. During the year 462 patients required quarantine.

**1923:** Coal production in Nanaimo hit a record high of 1,298,445 tons, with 3,400 employees working in the mines. **July 1:** The \$500 Chinese head tax was removed and replaced with the Chinese Immigration Act, which virtually halted all emigration from China. **July 21:** The Nanaimo Lawn Bowling Club officially opened in Piper Park. **Also this year:** The city's two bathing beaches came under the management of the Rotary Club. Deverill Square was upgraded for games with a wire screen erected around the playing field. CFDC, the first radio station in Nanaimo, went on the air. The station was an experiment of Arthur "Sparks" Holstead and William Hanlon. The radio station was located behind Willard Service Station at Wallace and Fitzwilliam streets, today the location of the New York Pizza.

**1924, October 17:** Plans were unveiled for a new hospital. **Also this year:** The Central Sports Ground was officially opened with convenient stadium seating. This became the home for soccer, baseball, lacrosse, school sports and other community celebrations. The Nanaimo Detachment of the RCMP closed. The Nanaimo Library moved from the second floor of the Athletic Club to a former lumber store at Wallace and Fraser streets. The new library building was dubbed "the hold" or "the dungeon" because staff was forced to wear fur boots and coats in winter to keep warm and the roof leaked.

**1925, March 24:** The Board of Health advised of an epidemic of smallpox in Vancouver and the U.S. There was an embargo against anyone entering the U.S. from Vancouver without being vaccinated. It asked that all children be vaccinated. **May 18:** Parks and Recreation Board recommended that five band concerts be authorized at a rate of \$75 per concert during the season. The first concert was performed May 24, on the waterfront. **June 10:** The United Church of Canada was formed with the merger of the Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational churches. **August 20:** Lieutenant Governor W.C. Nicholson laid the cornerstone for the new hospital on Franklyn Street. **December 21:** The Nanaimo Board of Trade, which operated the Nanaimo Auto Camp Park (Bowen Park), reported that during the season 1,249 cars had used the Auto Park and were charged fifty cents per day.

**1926, January 9:** Veteran city clerk Sam Gough died. He had served the city since 1880. **Also this year:** B.C. Provincial Police took over from the municipal police force. Captain William (Bill) York

Higgs established the Gulf Islands Transportation Co. Ltd. Nanaimo Library reported there were 2,023 adult members, and 683 juvenile. The Snuneymuxw were paid \$100 for the city use of the south end bathing beach.

**1927, February 23:** Comox Road Park building, known as the Pavilion, was sold to Joseph Fort for \$75. **May 31:** The old Franklyn Street hospital closed despite the new one not being finished. Until it opened, patients were transferred to the Ladysmith and Victoria hospitals for treatment. **July 30:** The Hotel Malaspina, on Front Street, officially opened with a community banquet and dance. **August 27:** Nanaimo's first mayor, Mark Bate, died while on vacation in England. All flags in Nanaimo were lowered to half-mast. **Also this year:** The Fairview District west of Pine Street was brought into the city limits.

**1928, May:** The first Upper Island Musical Festival was held, with 150 entries. **October 10:** Lieutenant Governor Randolph Bruce opened the new Nanaimo Hospital on the same site as the old hospital. **October 27:** Vancouver Island Coach Lines was formed. The new bus line serviced Nanaimo, Port Alberni and Courtenay. **Also this year:** The first trial was held of Brother XII, Edward Arthur Wilson, the leader of a religious cult and founder of the Aquarian Foundation.

**1929, October 24:** The Wall Street stock market crashed in the U.S. This day is remembered as the beginning of the Great Depression. **Also this year:** The Extension mines closed as the coalfield approached exhaustion. Hundreds of men lost their jobs. Franklin (Frank) Harris Greenfield was appointed game warden in Nanaimo. He remained a dedicated conservationist until his retirement in 1967. He held the record until 1955 for catching the most poachers and pit-lampers in B.C. The Junior High School system was introduced.

**1930, June 27:** Saw the inaugural run of the SS *Princess Joan* operating between Nanaimo and Vancouver. **July 19:** Fire destroyed part of Nanaimo's business sector on Front, Chapel, Church, Commercial and Skinner streets and St. Paul's Anglican Church. Six business blocks and one residence were totally destroyed. **August 1:** Construction began on the South Fork Dam project. **Also this year:** The CPR purchased Vancouver Island Coach Lines. The city took over the garbage collection service operated by Mr. J. Griffiths. The city charged homeowners an annual \$4 fee. The Scout Hall was built in the Comox Road Park.

**1931, May 22:** Shelby M. Saunders opened his Pygmy Pavilion. The dance hall was designed similar to the famous Grand Palace Ballroom on Coney Island. **June 6:** The CPR purchased and developed Newcastle Island as a "pleasure resort." It included picnic grounds, a dance pavilion, a restaurant and floating ship accommodation. **June 19:** A group of boating enthusiasts formed the Nanaimo Yacht Club. Jack McGregor became the club's first commodore. **June 20:** Dr. George Hall officially opened the Newcastle Island Pleasure Resort. **July 1:** Nanaimo Yacht Club held its first regatta. **August 15:** Gabriola Island ferry service was inaugurated with the *Atrevida*, which could carry passengers and cars. **August 24:** The cornerstone was laid for the new St. Paul's Anglican Church. The first service was held January 3, 1932.

**1932, November 7:** Two hundred men in Nanaimo were employed under the Unemployment Relief Scheme. **Also this year:** The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) was formed, later becoming the New Democratic Party. In the midst of the Depression, British Columbia set up twenty-seven relief camps to accommodate 18,340 men. The Granby Mine at Cassidy closed. South Fork Dam project was completed, becoming the city's main water reserve. Ole Buck, the



first to introduce truck logging in the area, joined with William Turner and formed Buck & Turner Logging. Buck & Turner ridge was named for the company.

**1933, January 10:** Nanaimo City Council protested importing British coal. **August 3:** Native Sons of B.C. held a special meeting to deal with a letter from George S. Pearson, president of the Nanaimo Hospital, regarding the financial difficulties of the hospital.

**1934, July 27:** Frank Beban's new sawmill opened in Nanaimo using logs from Galiano and Gabriola islands. **December:** A windstorm that devastated Island forests brought the Comox Logging Company south to Ladysmith and Nanaimo to harvest the toppled giants.

**1935:** The harbour was dredged this year and construction began on the Assembly Wharf. St. Ann's Convent decided to open a three-year commercial high-school course to prepare students for a practical and purposeful career. **September 13:** Frank Greenfield, the game warden, ordered no shooting allowed on Newcastle Island.

**1936, January 6:** The City of Nanaimo City limit extension bylaw approved extending the city limits into the waters of Nanaimo Harbour. **April 23:** The Vancouver Island Union Library was inaugurated, serving a population of 21,000 in five municipalities and thirty-two rural school districts. **Also this year:** The Nanaimo Vocational School opened.

**1937, January 10:** A fire in the commercial district injured three firemen, and resulted in the death of long-time fire chief John Parkin, who developed pneumonia and died February 25. **April 30:** Mayor John Barsby opened the new Bastion Street Bridge built by Dominion Construction Company Ltd. **May 12:** Nanaimo celebrated the coronation of their Majesties King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. Four hundred people attended a coronation service in the Capitol Theatre, where they listened to a radio message from King George. Later a coronation ball attracted 800 people to the event. **October 1:** President Roosevelt was warmly welcomed in Victoria by Lieutenant Governor Eric W. Hamber. This was the first time in B.C. history that a U.S. president was entertained at Government House. **November 27:** The new modern David Spencer Ltd. store opened on Victoria Crescent replacing the old one that had been there since 1890. **November 30:** John Colwell was awarded the Bronze Cross by the Boy Scouts Association, its highest award for bravery. He tried to save the life of George Frost, who had fallen into the Nanaimo River falls and was carried away by a strong current. **Also this year:** The National Assembly Wharf was completed. The Kinsmen Club of Nanaimo was established with Wilf Cain as charter president.

**1938, December:** Audrey Alexandra Brown, a former pupil of St. Ann's Convent, was recognized as an outstanding Canadian poet. **Also this year:** A successful funding plebiscite was held to build the Civic Arena. The No. 1 Mine on Protection Island closed.

**1939, May 30:** With the world close to war, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth visited Canada and made a stop in Victoria. The royal couple arrived in the B.C. capital city aboard the SS *Princess Marguerite*, escorted by four Royal Canadian Navy destroyers. **September 4:** Beginning of the Second World War. The Reserve Mine closed. **October:** Adam Henry Horne, former postmaster of Nanaimo, died at age 72.

**1940, May 15:** The Honourable A. Wells Gray, Minister of Lands, opened the Civic Arena. According to newspaper reporter Stu Keate: "It was a spectacular affair — quite a party." **May 29:**

Prime Minister Mackenzie King announced that a training centre for the fighting forces would be located in Nanaimo. It would be named Camp Nanaimo.

**1941, March 24:** The City of Nanaimo entered into an agreement with Veterans Sightseeing and Transportation Company Limited to provide passenger service within the municipality. There were three routes: Southend, Townsite and Fairview, and Harewood. A one-way ticket within the city was eight cents and return fare was sixteen cents. **May 9:** A local landmark, the Bay Saloon/Hotel, built seventy years before, was demolished. **November 12:** City had no objection to the removal of Ripple Rock if it was considered necessary in the interest of National Defence. **December 7:** Pacific War started after Japanese bombed Pearl Harbour in Hawaii. The United States declared war on Japan the following day. **Also this year:** In the winter of 1941–42, the Rotary Club sponsored the formation of the Nanaimo Figure Skating Club.

**1942, January 13:** All enemy aliens were ordered removed from B.C. Japanese fishing boats were impounded. **February:** The Nanaimo Figure Skating Club held its first Ice Carnival, sponsored by the Rotary Club with assistance from the Vancouver Figure Skating Club. **April 21:** Japanese living on the island were transported to Vancouver and held in Hastings Park. **Also this year:** The federal government ordered chlorination of the city's water supply as a war measure act. Newcastle Shipbuilding Co. Ltd., began building minesweepers and auxiliary vessels. Comox Logging expanded into the Nanaimo Lakes area.

**1943, March 19:** The city advised that a corvette would be named HMCS *Nanaimo*. **August 11:** The B.C. Police moved into its new headquarters building at Fitzwilliam Street at Richards, a building formerly occupied by Macdonald's Consolidated Ltd. **Also this year:** The Central Vancouver Island Health Unit was formed to serve Central Island communities.

**1944, May 26:** For the first time homing pigeons were used to carry messages. The pigeons were used to send information to and from the crash site of an RCAF plane on Mount Whympet, twenty miles southwest of Nanaimo. **May 24:** The first minesweeper, HMCS *St. Joseph*, was launched at the shipyards. **July 20:** Louis Armstrong and his orchestra gave a concert in the Pygmy Pavilion before an audience of 1,000 fans.

**1945, February 1:** The Nanaimo and District Credit Union was officially incorporated. **May 7:** Peace in Europe was declared as German forces surrendered in Italy. **June 15:** Major General George Pearkes was elected to represent Nanaimo federally. **August 15:** Japan surrendered after the U.S. atomic bombs destroyed the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Nanaimo celebrated by burning the pithead of the old mine on Protection Island. The fire burned for weeks. **September 12:** Gyro Club held a Victory Day celebration for children in the Gyro playground (Deverill Square) on Haliburton Street. **Also this year:** Chief Justice Gordon Sloan began an inquiry into the forest industry. His report resulted in the establishment of Tree Farm Licences. Lionel Beevor-Potts was appointed Nanaimo magistrate, taking over the position from his father Charles.

**1946, June 23:** Residents were shaken by a 7.3-magnitude earthquake that rocked Vancouver Island. Little damage resulted in Nanaimo. Courtenay and the Albernis had the heaviest damage. **Also this year:** The area known as the south end was incorporated into the city limits. The International Woodworkers of America (IWA) held its convention in Nanaimo. The Nanaimo Flying Club was created.

**1947, February 13:** Paul Robeson performed in the Army Drill Hall. The Upper Vancouver Island Concert Association sponsored his visit. Two buses full of music lovers came from Port Alberni to attend the show. **Also this year:** The Nanaimo Curling Club held its first bonspiel in the Civic Arena. Curling on a regular basis, on one sheet of ice, started in 1949. Canadian Pacific Airlines began a scheduled passenger flight from Nanaimo Airport. A Parks Board was appointed to administer the parks, playgrounds and boulevards of the city. Sam Madill purchased the Newcastle Shipyard building and property on the waterfront, to manufacture and repair logging, fishing and mining equipment, and for blacksmithing. The Nanaimo Art Group was formed.

**1948, July 12:** The Gene Autry show appeared at the Civic Arena. **August:** Petroglyph Park became the newest provincial park. **Also this year:** Construction began on the MacMillan Export Company Harmac Pulp Mill. The Pauline Haarer School was built on the site of the old North Ward School on Campbell Street. This was the first new school to be built in Nanaimo since 1914.

**1949, May 18:** The CPR Ferry Terminal officially opened. During the year lumber shipments through Nanaimo port averaged over four million feet per month. **May 24:** Radio station CHUB 1570 officially went on the air from its headquarters in the Hotel Malaspina. Premier Byron I. Johnson declared the station open. The Standard Broadcasting Company Limited owned the station. **June 15:** Natives and Japanese were given voting rights. **August 22:** The city was advised it would get a new federal building to replace the old post office on Front Street. **Also this year:** The Wilkes James Totem Pole was moved from Bates Square to Georgia Park. Street lamp flower baskets were hung in the city for the first time. V.G. Meakin had promoted the idea. The program was similar to that of Victoria which had hung baskets since 1939.

**1950, March 1:** The pithead, or No. 1 tipple, of the old Canadian Collieries mine was razed. The structure took over two months to build and took two-and-a-half seconds to pull down. This was the last visible evidence of coal mining in Nanaimo. **June:** The Harmac pulp mill officially opened, employing 200 workers on three shifts, seven days a week. The first bale of unbleached pulp was produced on June 10. The cost of construction had spiralled upward from the projected \$12 million to more than \$19 million. No sooner had it opened than Nanaimo residents rose up in indignation with howls of outrage at the smell. **August 15:** The RCMP returned to police the city, taking over from the B.C. Provincial Police whose staff was absorbed into the RCMP ranks.

**1951, February 17:** The new Nanaimo City Hall was opened by Lieutenant Governor Clarence Wallace. **April 16:** Hundreds turned out for the opening of the new Nanaimo Curling Club rink. **September 2:** The Lord Mayor of London, Sir Denys Colquhoun Flowerdew Lowson, visited the city and was given the Freedom of the City award. **September 23:** The Nanaimo coat of arms received official authorization of its use. **October 17:** A Queen Charlotte Airline plane crash on Mount Benson killed twenty passengers and a crew of three. **October 26:** Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip visited the city on a trans-Canada tour. The May Queen, Penny Pederson, was given the honour of presenting a gift to the royal couple for their children from the children of Nanaimo.

**1952, August 30:** A time plebiscite favoured Pacific Standard Time and Pacific Daylight Saving Time. **Also this year:** The new Nanaimo District Senior High School was built on Wakesiah Avenue, on the former Camp Nanaimo grounds. The school opened with 475 pupils and 25 teachers. The area known as Brechin and Acacia District was incorporated into the city limits, almost doubling the size of the city. The Nanaimo Golf Club was established.

**1953, May:** The City of Nanaimo purchased the Beban estate for \$50,000. **June:** The Black Ball Ferry Line inaugurated a ferry service between Departure Bay and Horseshoe Bay, on the mainland, providing stiff competition for the Canadian Pacific Steamship Service. **June 20:** A group of local people interested in preserving the city's history formed a Nanaimo section of the B.C. Historical Association. **June 22:** The Bastion's centenary was celebrated. This day was also the seventy-eighth birthday of the Keeper of the Bastion, Joseph E.L. Muir, the nephew of pioneer John Muir. **August 31:** The old Dominion Post Office on Front Street was closed to the public for the first time in sixty-nine years. The Pygmy Pavilion served as the new post office headquarters until a new government building was built. **Also this year:** Canadian Collieries moved its headquarters to Union Bay, ending its coal-mining operations in Nanaimo. The city's first female councillor, Gertrude Hall, was elected. White Rapids, the last Nanaimo area mine, closed.

**1954:** The first Town Planning Commission was formed. **August 11:** "Flying Phil," the flamboyant MLA Phil A. Gaglardi, Minister of Public Works, officially opened the George S. Pearson Bridge. **November 27:** Descendants of the *Princess Royal* pioneers celebrated the centennial of their arrival in B.C.

**1955, July 7:** A referendum to purchase Newcastle Island from the CPR passed, ensuring the city would have direct control and the island would be preserved for the future enjoyment of city residents. **Also this year:** Nanaimo Hospital Board began discussions to build a new general hospital to replace the old outdated one. B.C. Telephone introduced the busy signal in Nanaimo. Fire caused extensive damage to St. Ann's Convent on Wallace Street. A new library was built on Strickland Street.

**1956, February 28:** The new federal government building on Front Street opened for business. **August 1:** A new Nanaimo City Police Building was opened on Prideaux Street. **Also this year:** The Vancouver Island Gas Company Ltd. formed and began underground gas service. The City of Nanaimo purchased the former 173-acre Beban ranch, on Bowen Road. George Dorman, owner of G.W. Dorman Pulp Chip Co. mill, began business on Stewart Avenue. Dorman took over the sawmill from Ches Swanson. Harry Wipper coached the Nanaimo IWA Timbermen to the Mann Cup national Lacrosse championship.

**1957, November:** Terminal Park Plaza opened for business. It was built by Mladen Zorkin and was the first shopping centre on Vancouver Island. **Also this year:** B.C. Telephone initiated the direct dialling service. The old Agricultural Hall at Wentworth and Machleary streets was demolished to make way for a Gyro playground.

**1958:** British Columbia Centennial year. Year-long celebrations were held around the province. **March 1:** The Nanaimo Symphony Orchestra performed with the 100-voice Centennial Choir. **April 5:** Ripple Rock, in Seymour Narrows, long a navigational hazard and threat to shipping, was destroyed. April was declared Miners Month in Nanaimo. **May 1:** A theatrical play about the No. 1 Mine disaster of 1887 was performed, followed by a memorial service. **May 3:** A lioness named "Fury" escaped from the Hertel Zoo, in north Nanaimo, and killed a young girl. The tragedy sparked one of the most dramatic hunts in the history of the Island. The animal was eventually located and destroyed. **June 6:** Princess Margaret cut the Mammoth Centennial Cake with a sword during her visit to the city as part of the celebrations. **June 7:** The Italian Fountain was unveiled. **August:** RCMP Musical Ride appeared at the Fall Fair. **October:** Harewood Mall

opened. **November 3:** The Mart Kenney Orchestra played for the Grand Centennial Ball. **Also this year:** The Mayo Lumber Company began construction of a new sawmill on the waterfront. The Grandview Bowl and the Centennial Building opened at Beban Park.

**1959, December 17:** Nanaimo voters favoured Newcastle Island being taken over by the Province for a provincial park. **Also this year:** Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip made a return visit to the city. Frank Ney's company, Nanaimo Realty, purchased Protection Island for \$130,000 and subdivided it into 344 lots.

**1960, April 1:** For one dollar, the province took possession of Newcastle Island. **May 1:** St. Peter's Catholic Church opened. **June 15:** B.C. Ferry Corporation ran its first ferry from Departure Bay to Horseshoe Bay, after taking over the fleet from Black Ball Ferries. **September 30:** Chinatown was destroyed by fire. Two hundred people were left homeless and the landscape of the city was changed forever. **Also this year:** The Nanaimo Harbour Commission was established under the authority of the Federal Harbour Commission Act that controlled all shipping and navigation in the harbour. The first three commissioners were George Muir, Max Blunt and John Thompson. Beach Acre Park was added to the city.

**1961, May 24:** The May Day parade and celebrations returned after a one-year break. **June 21:** Mayor Pete Maffeo opened the new municipal library building on Fitzwilliam Street. **September:** The Nanaimo Zoo closed its doors for the last time. The animals were sold to an Okanagan zoo. **Also this year:** Nanaimo Harbour Commission completed its first year in business. The reconstruction of the original berth of the assembly wharf was completed, and a new harbour patrol boat kept watch on all vessels using the harbour.

**1962, February 20:** At 6:45 a.m. Major John Glenn was launched into orbit around the earth. **May 15:** The new Nanaimo Golf Club opened with Elmer Bradshaw hitting the first ball off No. 1 tee. **Also this year:** The *Princess of Nanaimo* and the *Princess Elaine* were withdrawn from the Nanaimo-Vancouver route. The Rotary Club turned over their developed section of Bowen Park to the city.

**1963, January 6:** Nanaimo Regional Hospital officially opened, with 188 beds and a fully equipped operating room. The transfer of patients was made the following week. **January 28:** Green Mountain Ski Lodge officially opened. **March:** Hooker Chemical began construction of a plant to produce the bleaching agent for the Harmac pulp mill. The new plant employed 250 workers.

**1964:** Part of the waterfront inlet was filled in to build a causeway across the seaward end to link up with the two major downtown streets. The filled-in portion provided parking for 186 vehicles. Vancouver Island's tallest building, the "Seacrest" at the corner of Comox and Front streets, was built, attracting more people into the downtown area. A twenty-five-metre swimming pool opened at Bowen Park, a project of the Kinsmen Club.

**1965, April:** Air West Airlines began a float plane service from the harbour to Vancouver. **May 14:** A slice from a thousand-year-old northern Vancouver Island fir was presented to the citizens of Nanaimo from the citizens of Port McNeill. The giant fir slice was displayed on the waterfront. **Also this year:** Northbrook Mall opened.

**1966, June:** The *Nanaimo Times* closed. It had opened in 1911. **Also this year:** St. Ann's Convent closed. Its pupils were absorbed into the public school system.

**1967, February 8:** Bowen Park complex was opened by Laurie Wallace of the B.C. Centennial Commission. **April 27:** Harbour Park Mall opened. **November 27:** The Nanaimo Centennial Museum opened in Piper Park. **Also this year:** A new fire hall opened at the corner of Milton and Fitzwilliam streets. The NHC small-boat facility was completed after eighteen months of planning and construction. The Regional District of Nanaimo was established. It stretched from Nanaimo Airport in Cedar, to Deep Bay in the north, to Mount Arrowsmith on the west and to Gabriola Island off the east coast.

**1968, March:** Nanaimo MP Bus Matthews suggested Gabriola Island would be ideal as a much-needed giant airport site to replace Vancouver International. He said a tunnel could link traffic to the mainland. **April 15:** CHUB radio station moved from the Hotel Malaspina to its own building on Esplanade. **December 27:** There was a record turnout of 620 polar bear swimmers for the Nanaimo Realty's annual Boxing Day swim at Departure Bay beach. **Also this year:** The NHC purchased the old Hirst warehouse to use as its headquarters.

**1969, July 20:** While Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin made history by walking on the moon, the Nanaimo Bathtub race attracted 300 tubbers. Of these, 50 swamped in the harbour and 70 turned back due to heavy seas. The harbour was full of visiting cruisers, and eight Canadian and US Naval vessels and deep sea freighters. The winner was 14 year-old Glen Filippioni of Coquitlam, who made the crossing in two hours, nine minutes, and 21 seconds. The Nanaimo entry placed second. The Dorman Clipper bathtub was piloted by Brian Dorman. **September 8:** Malaspina College opened in the old hospital on Kennedy Street. **December:** Nanaimo Curling Club opened a new larger rink at the same location as the old one on Wall Street. **Also this year:** Construction began on the Georgia Park Promenade.

**1970, April 11:** Nineteen-year-olds were given the vote and allowed in beer parlours. **April 24:** The Regional District requested an amalgamation vote. **May 20:** The Province offered Nanaimo money to amalgamate. **May 28:** The Pacific Biological Station opened a new wing. **June 7:** A vote on amalgamation failed by thirty-one votes. **June 12:** Ninety-five Japanese industrialists toured the newly opened CIPA mill at the Assembly Wharf site. **August 3:** Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce protested a CPR application to abandon its E & N Railway Dayliner service. **August 5:** An auto cavalcade drove to Victoria to protest the "Great Train Robbery" — the proposed end of Dayliner service. **December 5:** Nanaimo MP Tommy Douglas celebrated thirty-five years in politics. Davenport Ice Cream plant burned. **December 23:** Nanaimo declared worst in B.C. for air pollution.

**1971, July 20:** This was the Centennial Anniversary of the entry of British Columbia into Canadian Confederation. **December:** Bastion Centennial Square was dedicated. **Also this year:** The Bastion was moved next to the Nanaimo Harbour Commission's headquarters.

**1972:** Three elections in one year. **August 30:** The NDP swept into power across the province. Locally Dave Stupich beat out Frank Ney as MLA. Ney had defeated him in the 1969 election. **October 30:** A federal election saw Tommy Douglas win with his largest margin of victory ever, and one of the largest in Canada. Other candidates were Bill Matthews, Stockwell Day and Ken Hasanen. **December 9:** All incumbents won in the municipal election, including Mayor Frank

Ney. **Also this year:** The Mechanics Literary Institute Building on Bastion Street, used for decades as City Hall, was demolished. The term “adult education” was dropped in favour of the new name “Continuing Education.”

**1973, April:** Air West Airlines, which had served the city with float planes since 1965, now began ten direct flights daily to Vancouver. **May 6:** The Nanaimo Yacht Club held its sail past. The fleet divided into two squadrons with motorboats headed by Rear Commodore Bill Hunter and sailboats headed by Vice Commodore Bob Smith. **November:** Newsprint from Ocean Falls now being shipped through the Port of Nanaimo. **Also this year:** Raymond Collishaw inducted into the Canada’s Aviation Hall of Fame.

**1974, July:** Bastion House replaced the Mechanics Literary Institute built in 1864. **July 12:** An Act introduced by Ernie Hall to recognize the pioneers of B.C. by declaring the first Monday of August to be a public holiday was passed by the provincial legislature. **November 2:** A vote to amalgamate Harewood, Departure Bay, Wellington, East Wellington, Northfield and Chase River with the City of Nanaimo passed by a narrow margin, slightly over fifty-two percent on an issue requiring an overall majority of fifty percent. Only Nanaimo and Harewood voted in favour, all other areas rejected the proposal by a substantial margin. Regardless of the vote in the various areas, the aldermen representing them accepted the restructure in the best interests of the new City. **Also this year:** The Nanaimo Heritage Advisory Committee was established. An arson fire at the Pacific Coastal Airlines hanger at the Nanaimo Airport destroyed three aircraft and two helicopters.

**1975, January 1:** The Corporation of the City of Nanaimo ceased to exist; the City of Nanaimo was established. The city boundary expanded to include the Improvement Districts of Harewood, Chase River, Northfield, Departure Bay, Wellington and Protection Island. The population increased from 14,950 in 1971 to 40,340 in 1976. **March:** The City of Nanaimo declared the Great National Land Building to be a heritage building. **August 27:** The Museum Train, or The Great Steam Exhibition of 1975, was on display. **Also this year:** Forestry workers throughout B.C. went out on strike.

**1976, July:** Nanaimo welcomed the cruise ship MV *Fairsea*. The ship was the former Cunard liner, *Saxonia*. The ship sailed every two weeks from San Francisco with calls at Vancouver, Nanaimo and Ketchikan, Alaska. **Also this year:** The Wong Brothers Enterprises of Nanaimo docked the ship *Prince George* at the old CPR Wharf. They planned to use the vessel as a restaurant and convention centre.

**1977, May 1:** The Malaspina College Gymnasium air-suspended roof was inflated. It was unique in North America. Unfortunately the inflated roof collapsed due to rain and snow when the generators failed. All this before its five-year warranty had expired. The company that manufactured the roof was no longer in business. College directors decided to replace the roof with a solid one. **September 7:** The Standard and Shell Oil plants on Stewart Avenue were destroyed by fire. One volunteer fireman died and three other men were injured when explosions and fire ripped through the two bulk oil plants on the waterfront. One of the three later died in hospital; he was charged with arson and manslaughter. The jury could not determine if he set it deliberately or accidentally. A broken padlock from a storage tank valve at the bulk oil plant had been found in his pocket. **December 24:** Haslam House was destroyed by fire only a few days before city council passed a resolution favouring its heritage designation.

**1978, December 2:** The James Dunsmuir mansion at Departure Bay was demolished. It was built in 1884 by Robert Dunsmuir for his son James. **Also this year:** Duke Point Development Corporation was formed. The B.C. Development Corporation owned the 345-acre industrial park. It was speculated that the fire that destroyed oil plants on Stewart Avenue hastened the development of Duke Point. Land in the industrial park had been set aside for oil tank farms.

**1979, January 29:** A reconstructed Bastion Street Bridge was officially opened by Mary H. Graham, 83, John Baloni, 92, a custodian at the old City Hall and retired miner, and Mayor Frank Ney. This was the third Bastion Bridge. The original wooden bridge was constructed in 1875. The second opened in 1937. **May:** The G.W. Dorman Pulp Chip Co. mill went up for auction. The mill, on Stewart Avenue, was built in 1956 and operated continuously for twenty-three years. **June:** Herb Doman built a sawmill at Duke Point.

**1980: January 25:** Mayo Forest Products mill on the Assembly Wharf was opened by Premier Bill Bennett. **February 18:** The miner's cottage located in Piper Park was designated a heritage building by the City of Nanaimo. **March 12:** Country Club Mall opened. **Also this year:** Rutherford Mall opened. The giant oilrig Ocean Bounty anchored in Nanoose Bay attracted attention during July as it underwent a mammoth refit. It towered 314 feet out of the water and was too big to get into Vancouver Harbour.

**1981. May:** The *Promoter* was the latest tugboat addition to the harbour. Built by Port Alberni Engineering and Shipyard, it was purchased by Hub Towing of Nanaimo. It joined the company's first tugboat the *Persuader*. **September 14:** Duke Point terminal was officially opened by Transport Minister Jean-Luc Pepin. **September 30:** Woodgrove Centre Mall opened. **December 1:** The first load of lumber from the new Doman Mill was shipped through Duke Point. **Also this year:** The former CN steamship *Prince George* that had languished unused at the old dock was given a white paint job and a complete overhaul, and she embarked on a new career as a coastal cruise ship for Canadian Cruise Lines. Former owners Chuck and Gunner Wong had hoped to have a floating restaurant, but civic approval was never given.

**1982, January:** B.C. Ferries's expansion of facilities at Departure Bay terminal neared completion. **March 5:** The Canadian Heavyweight Boxing Championship was held in the Frank Crane Arena before a packed house. Vancouver Island boxer Gordie Racette challenged Trevor Berbick in the title fight. Berbick took the title by a technical knockout in the eleventh round. **September 26:** McGregor Park cairn was unveiled in recognition of all Scottish people who had made Nanaimo their home since September 1852.

**1983, March 10:** Queen Elizabeth II Promenade on the waterfront was dedicated on the occasion of the visit of Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip aboard the Royal Yacht *Britannia*. **April:** A unique Lagoon Park was proposed for the waterfront. **September:** The NHC bought the Nanaimo Foundry. **October:** The Pacific Biological Station celebrated its seventy-fifth year with a three-day open house. **November 21:** A new Hovermarine ferry service operated by Seaspeed Transport Canada Ltd. began runs between Nanaimo and Vancouver. Two eighty-four-passenger vessels provided six trips a day with a crossing time of one hour.

**1984, April:** Premier Bill Bennett set a deadline for the end to a seven-week-long pulp mill dispute. Nanaimo felt the pinch as 1200 workers were idled. **May 25:** The newly restored



Newcastle Island pavilion was opened. **July:** The NHC announced it would introduce containerization to the new Duke Point Terminal. **August 28:** Swy-a-lana Lagoon Park opened on the waterfront. Architects and planners were Robert Boyle Associates. **Also this year:** Construction began on the Bastion Hotel at the corner of Bastion and Front streets.

**1985, July 30:** The Seaplane Terminal opened. On the same day, the five-ton stone carving by James Johnny, designed with figures from Native mythology, was unveiled at Swy-a-lana Park. **July 31:** The cruise ship *Columbia* made its first Nanaimo call. **August 16:** The revitalization of downtown Nanaimo that began in 1981 was completed this year at a cost of \$3 million. Special recognition was given to Mladen Giunio Zorkin for being the inspiration behind the project. **Also this year:** The old CPR terminal on Cameron Island was demolished.

**1986, May 1:** Prince Charles and Lady Diana made an official visit to Nanaimo prior to the opening of Expo '86 in Vancouver. **May 2:** Vancouver played host to the world as Expo '86 opened. **June 14:** The Public Market on Newcastle Channel opened. **October:** Coast Bastion Hotel opened at the corner of Bastion and Front streets. **Also this year:** The B.C. Ministry of Highways sold the Gabriola Island ferry the *Quinsam*, plus another twelve vessels, to the B.C. Ferry Corporation. The purchase and the transfer of 435 employees cost the Ferry Corporation \$55 million.

**1987, August 18:** Premier William Vander Zalm unveiled a plaque recognizing the Revitalization of Downtown Nanaimo project that started in 1981 and was completed in 1985. **Also this year:** Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and his family visited the city. Nanaimo's rich history was recreated this summer in a colourful ceremony sponsored by the NHC. A kilted bagpiper played a few tunes; then the cannons were fired signalling twelve noon. Meeker Log and Timber, who operated a cedar shake mill at Mission, B.C., moved onto the Duke Point site.

**1988, October 2:** The NHC opened the Harbourside Walkway, enabling pedestrians to walk from the inner harbour to Brechin Point. **Also this year:** The NHC purchased Cameron Island and the former Shell Oil property on Stewart Avenue. Coastland Wood Industries Ltd. opened a wood-processing plant in the south end of Nanaimo.

**1989, June:** A recovered anchor from the SS *Northland* was positioned at Anchor Park, courtesy of Nanaimo Commonwealth Holding Society. **July 7:** The Honourable Rita M. Johnston, Minister of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Culture, opened the Front Street Revitalization project. **August:** Swy-a-lana Lagoon Park was officially opened. **November:** Island Phoenix sawmill, the successor to the old Number 3 Woodroom at MacMillan Bloedel operations opened. **Also this year:** Doman built another value-added plant in town. Baxter Aviation was the newest tenant in the Seaplane Terminal. The Nanaimo Lions Club launched a fund-raising campaign to build a footbridge to link Maffeo Sutton Park to the remainder of the waterfront.

**1990, June 10:** About 500 boats from the commercial herring fleet moored this spring in the boat basin. The basin normally had about 180 commercial fishing vessels at its docks from September to June. **October 3:** Sod was turned on the new Fire Station No. 8 off Hammond Bay Road. **October:** Nanaimo Lions Club officially opened Lions Great Bridge built in cooperation with other community organizations.

**1991, April 6:** The port and city hosted a visit of the Spanish tall ship *Juan Sebastian De Elcano*, the

second-largest sailing ship in the world. The visit coincided with the bicentennial of the Spanish Expedition to Vancouver Island in 1791. The vessel's open house attracted over 8,000 visitors.

**Also this year:** The first Sea Lion Festival was held, with more than 6,000 people taking in tours during the three-day event. Almost 2,000 California and Stellar sea lions were reported in the area of the Harmac log booms. The census indicated the population of Nanaimo was 60,129.

**1992, January:** An Air Rainbow float plane exploded during takeoff from Departure Bay. Seven people were killed, two others escaped injury. The flight was bound for Port Mellon. **June:** Fire destroyed the Newcastle Hotel on Comox Road. **July 19:** The Nanaimo Express began service between the Inner Harbour and the Vancouver Sea Bus Terminal. **November 24:** Former Mayor Frank Ney died of a brain tumour at age 74. **Also this year:** Work began on the restoration of the Bastion which would become an integral part of the new 5.5-million-dollar Pioneer Waterfront Plaza. Two cruise line vessels paid regular visits to the city between June and October. They were the *Seaquest Explorer* and the *MV Malecite*.

**1993, June:** The *Orca Spirit*, or fast ferry, which offered downtown to downtown service between Nanaimo and Vancouver pulled the plug on operations. **October 30:** Gino Sedola, chairman of the NHC, and Mayor Joy Leach officially opened Pioneer Waterfront Plaza. Architect was Ian A. Niamath, and the contractor was Knappett Construction Ltd. The Cameron Island Visiting Pier also opened on this day. **Also this year:** The giant Costco warehouse store opened. Construction began on Dickenson Crossing, a retail development to house Canadian Tire and other stores.

**1994, May 29:** A Sailors Memorial bronze plaque dedicated to the men and women who lost their lives at sea was placed in a grove of trees at Maffeo Sutton Park. **July 23:** The Frank Ney sculpture created by sculptor Jack K. Harman was unveiled at Swy-a-lana Lagoon Park on the waterfront. **Also this year:** B.C. Ferries purchased land at Duke Point to begin construction of another ferry terminal.

**1995: January 2:** WAVE radio went on the air. The new station was the product of a merger between AM stations CKEG, CHUB and CHPQ in Parksville. **August:** Fletcher's Furniture closed its downtown business and moved to a new location on Wellington Road. **October 13:** NDP MLA and MP Dave Stupich became the target of an RCMP investigation. Stupich was alleged to have committed fraud and the theft of \$900,000 charity money. **Also this year:** Construction began on the Duke Point ferry terminal.

**1996:** Nanaimo Parkway neared completion. The project began in 1994 and employed 583 workers. The new highway bypassed the inner city. It was built to provide a safer and more efficient drive through Nanaimo.

**1997, May 10:** HMCS *Nanaimo* was commissioned in a ceremony at the Cameron Island Visiting Pier. **May 31:** Premier Glen Clark opened Nanaimo Parkway. **June 9:** Duke Point ferry terminal began operation. The new ferry route carried passenger and commercial ferry traffic to Tsawwassen, south of Vancouver. **June 14:** HMCS *Saskatchewan* was sunk off Snake Island to create an artificial reef for divers. This was a project of the Nanaimo Dive Association. **November 27:** The Nanaimo Historical Society unveiled a plaque recognizing the *Princess Royal* settlers recruited from Brierley Hill, England. **Also this year:** The Great National Land Building received a heritage award for outstanding restoration. "Nanaimo Remembers Diana" plaque was dedicated to the Princess of Wales, Lady Diana, who died in a car accident in Paris on August 31.

**1998, September 9:** The Port Theatre was officially opened. **September 18:** The Vancouver Island Symphony Orchestra and the Nylons gave the Port's first concert, with Dave Broadfoot as emcee.

**1999, January 1:** The Nanaimo Harbour Commission was officially renamed Nanaimo Port Authority. The new Canada Marine Act, approved in 1998, enabled ports to operate on a more commercial basis, eliminating the federal government from direct port operations and providing port users with more input in port activities. **June 19:** The first of the new B.C. Ferries Pacific Cat fleet made its debut appearance at the Visiting Vessel Pier. The public toured the new vessel before it went into regular service on the Departure Bay to Horseshoe Bay run. **Also this year:** The Nanaimo Airport honoured Second World War hero Raymond Collishaw by renaming its passenger terminal the Nanaimo-Collishaw Air Terminal. A tree was dedicated to the memory of Mark Bate, Nanaimo's first mayor who served sixteen terms.

**2000, June 29:** The Nanaimo Port Authority held its first annual public meeting. **December 5:** The 4.3 kilometre E & N Trail opened between Bowen Road and St. George Street. **Also this year:** A new 190-foot-tall container crane, with a forty-tonne capacity, began operating at Duke Point. It was the first of its kind on Vancouver Island. The West Coast RCMP Marine Detachment moved to Nanaimo to be centrally located in the mid-Island region.