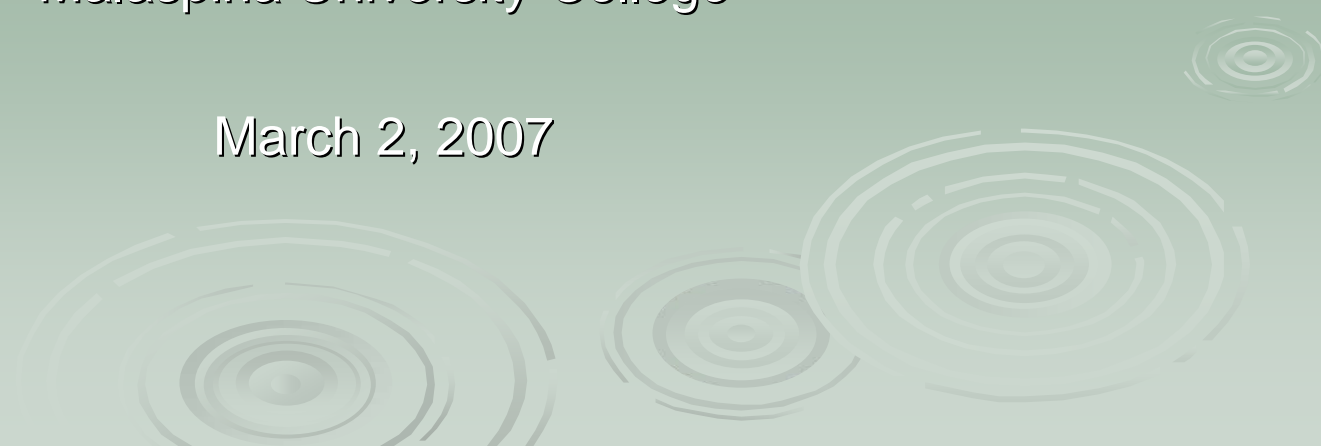


In the Shadow of the Past: Two Realities

Imogene L. Lim, PhD

Malaspina University-College

March 2, 2007

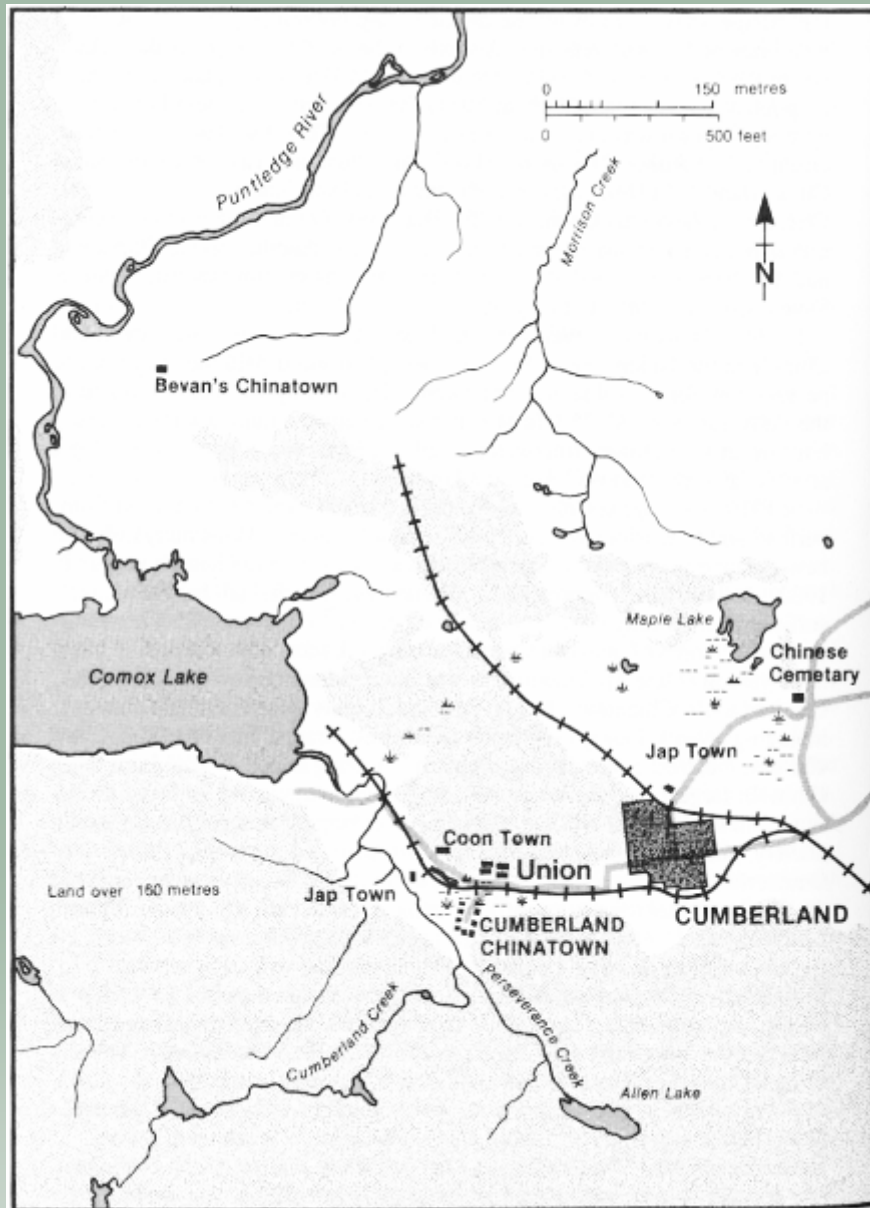




(CMA 040-001)

Philip CP Low (1993:3):

. . . those were the “good old day,” . . . I now look back fondly to the days when I was living in Cumberland Chinatown. It was paradise on earth!



(Lai 1988:11)

Cumberland and Environs, 1900s

Incorporated in 1898 as the smallest and westernmost city in Canada. (Cumberland 2003:6)

When coal was king . . .



(CMA 160-001)

British and European workers were paid \$3.30 to \$5.00 a day. The equally diligent and hard-working Chinese and Japanese miners were paid considerably less at \$1.40 to \$1.65 a day. (Cumberland 2003:8)




(CMA 160-038)

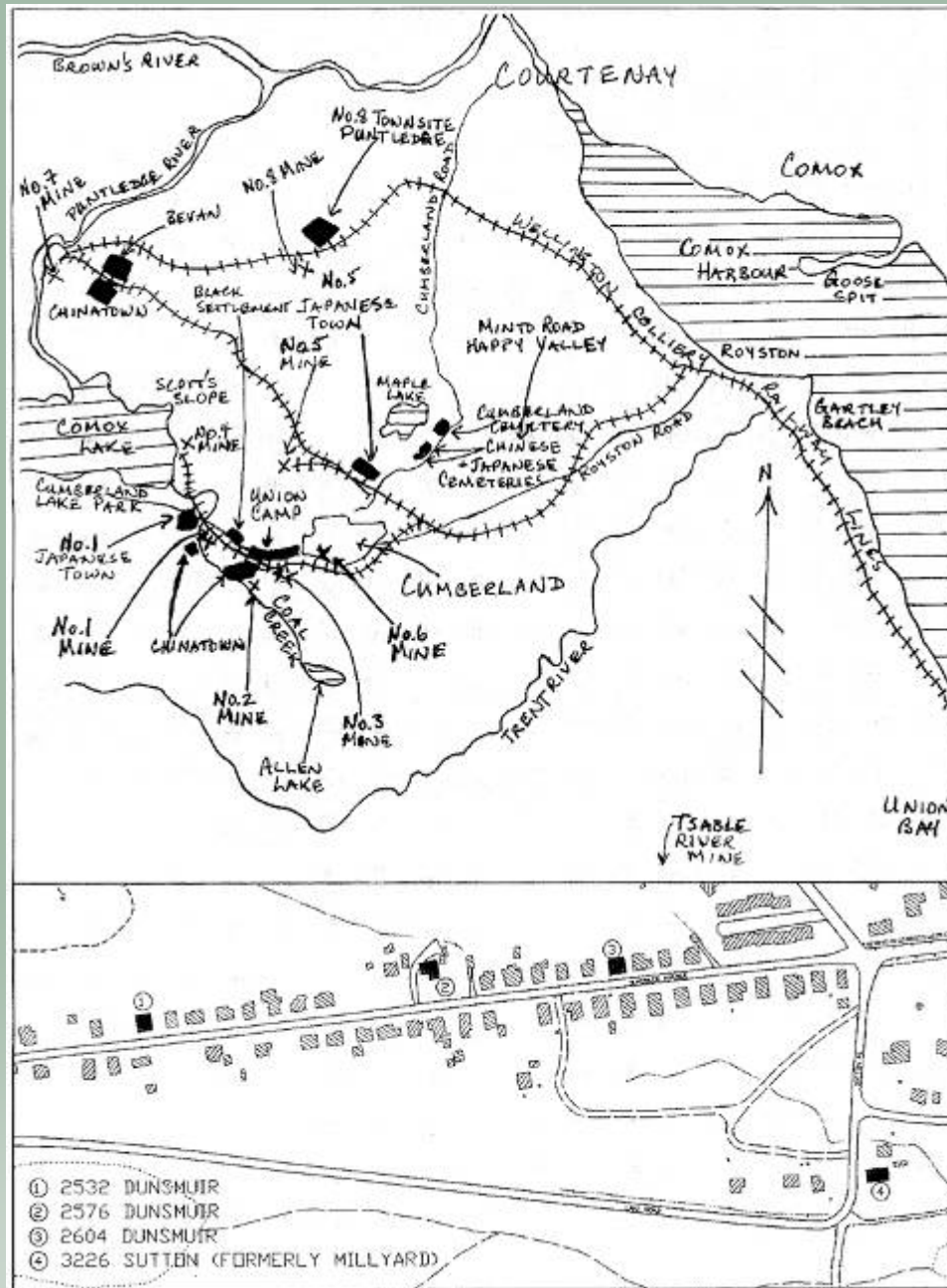
Robert Dunsmuir to Sir Joseph Trutch

February 22, 1889

Because the superintendent sent six Chinamen down one of the mines to run out some boxes every man quit work and at present everything is at an stand-up there, and will be until I get other men, as not one of the old hands will earn another dollar at any of my works. (Cumberland 2003:2)

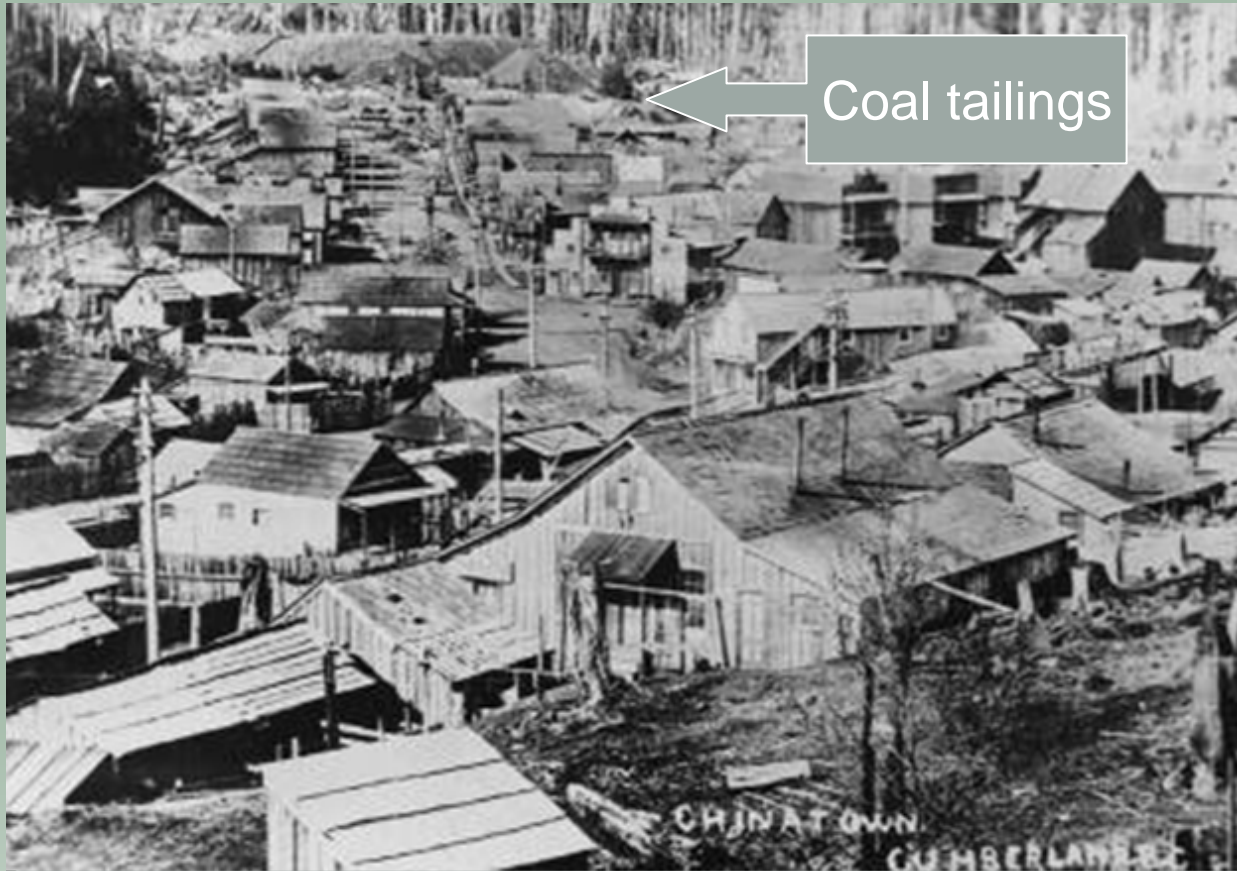


Union Colliery Company of Cumberland



Ethnic settlements were associated with their own mine sites. Even today the former Japanese settlements are known as No. 1 Japanese Town and No. 5 Japanese Town.

No. 2 Mine in your backyard



(CMA 040-001)

Shared experience: Cumberland Public School



(CMA 240-022c)

... no Caucasian children came to Chinatown, perhaps ... the obstacle in language ... different racial origins were living in isolated areas ... The Cumberland Public School brought them together. (Low 1993:51)



(CMA 240-012)

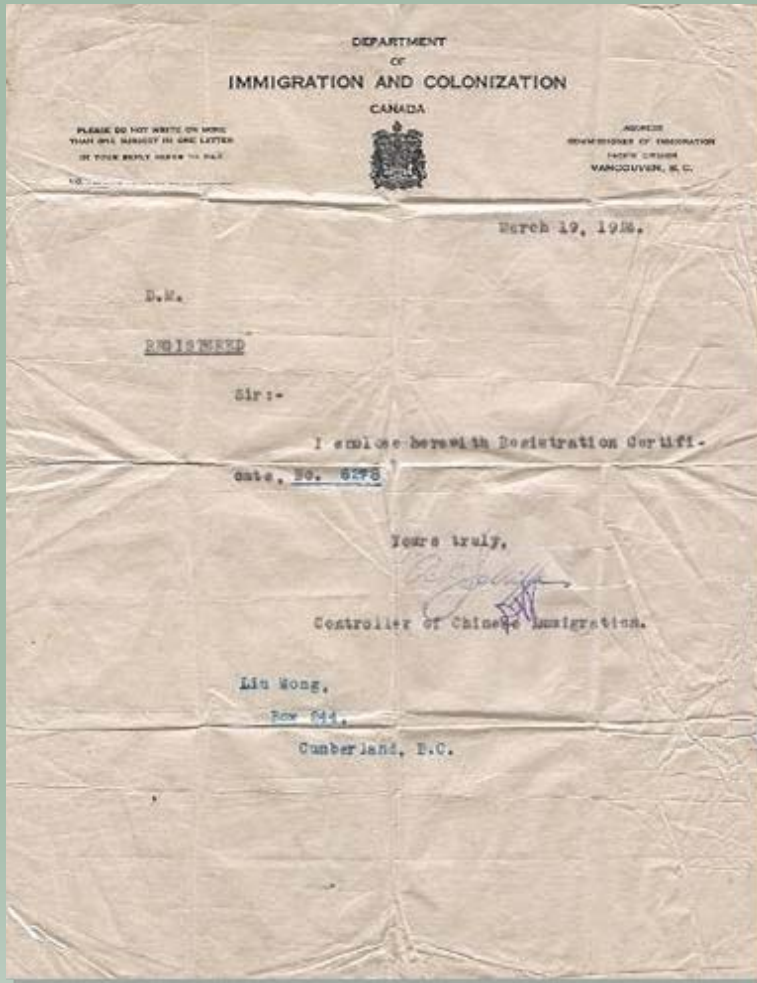
Private Realities

Philip CP Low (1993:18):

In the early days of Cumberland Chinatown, there was hardly any participation in the activities of the occidental community. This sad situation was partly due to language barrier and mainly because of the anti-Chinese feelings of the white people, during that time.

Village of Cumberland (2003:13):

***we became** a village characterized by what some called a “Dodge City” mentality, often falsely but at times with some justification ... who made sport of beating miners and sympathizers during the Great Strike ...*



Section 18, Chinese Immigration Act 1923



Registration Certificate #6278

DOMINION OF CANADA
DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION AND COLONIZATION
CHINESE IMMIGRATION SERVICE

No. **6278**

C. I.
45

This is to certify that LIM WONG,


whose photograph is attached hereto, has registered as required by Section 18 of the Chinese Immigration Act, Chapter 38, 13-14 George V.

Dated at Vancouver, B.C.

this 17th day of March, 1924.

A. L. J. [Signature]
Controller of Chinese Immigration.

This certificate does not establish legal status in Canada.

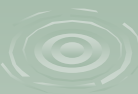


Chinese heritage, economic ties . . .

China's interest in the Comox Valley has plenty of history, since Chinese laborers helped extract coal from the Cumberland coal mines earlier last century. Mayor Bates' major interest in the Asian excursion was to explore ways to strengthen the town's ties with China and perhaps investigate future tourism opportunities that celebrate Cumberland's Chinese heritage.

"Cumberland has a great deal of history with the Chinese people, and it's a great story to tell ... I believe this trip helped give us some ideas that we can bring back to our citizens for consideration.

"There were some significant leads for Cumberland/Comox Valley ... Including the offer to sign a memorandum of understanding between Putien, Fujian province and the Comox Valley to further our economic and cultural ties" (MacDonald 2006)

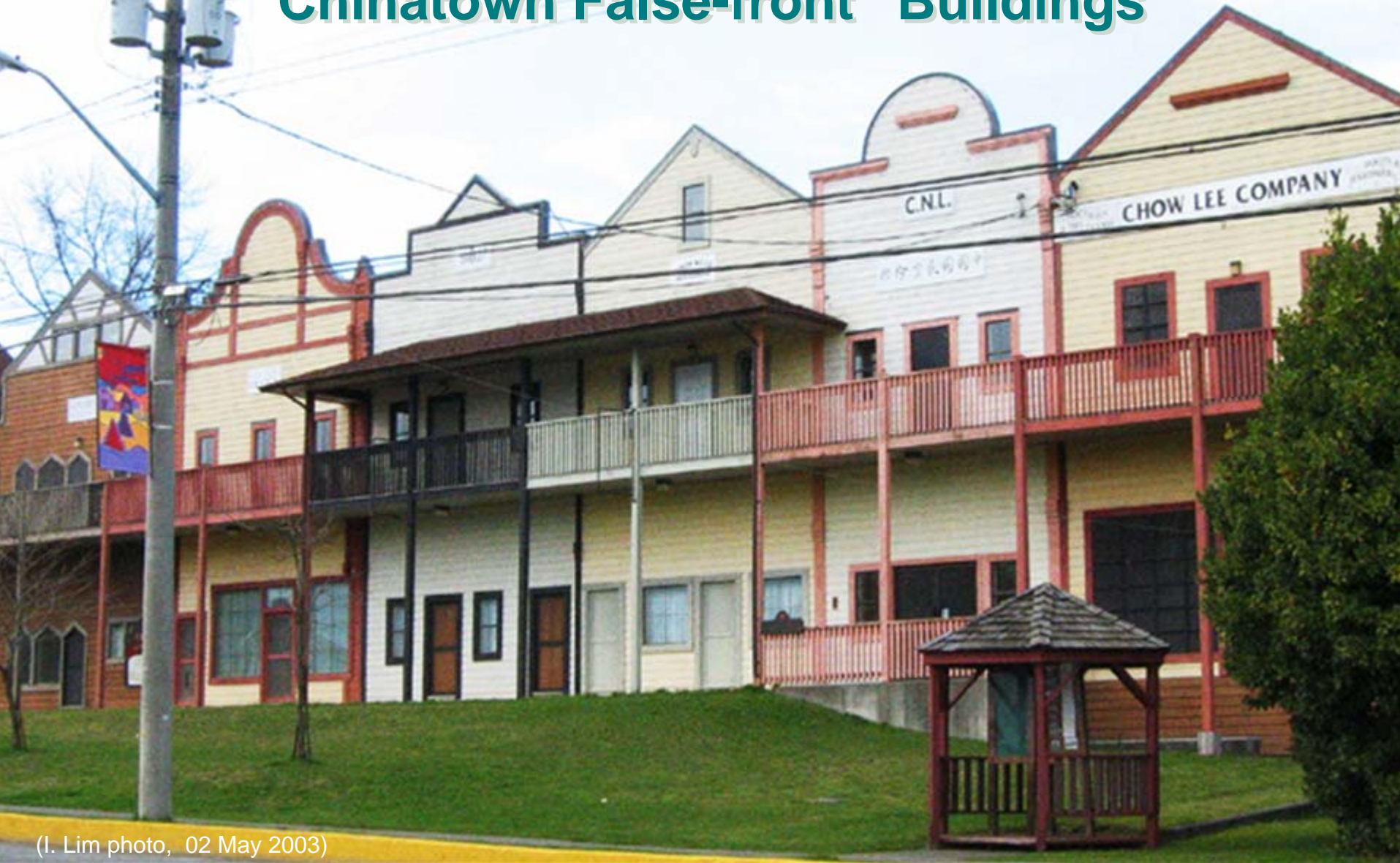


Dunsmuir Avenue “City Centre”



(I. Lim photo, 22 Mar 2003)

A Centennial Project Chinatown False-front “Buildings”

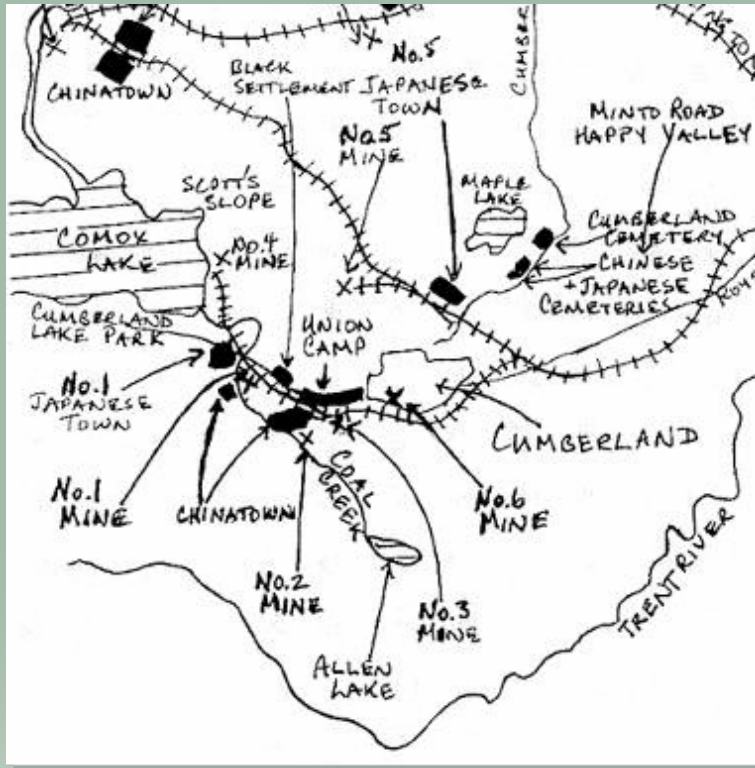


Perseverance Creek Heritage Site



(I. Lim photo, 14 Aug 2004)

What is in a name?



(Barr 2002: 10)

- ❖ Coal Creek
- ❖ Perseverance Creek

Chinatown Memories



Imogene Lim and Ken
Lowe at “entrance” to
Cumberland’s Chinatown

(A. Howe photo, 17 Sept 2005)

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