



Preserving the History of Mining: Exploring its Future – The Britannia Story



In 2010, visitors to Vancouver may wish to visit a national historic site – the B.C. Museum of Mining at Britannia Beach, located 45 minutes north of Vancouver on the Sea-to-Sky Highway.

The presence of copper was discovered in the mountains behind Britannia Beach in 1888 and, in 1904, the Britannia Mine shipped out the first ore.

By 1915, two town sites had been established, and by 1929, the mine was renowned as one of the largest producers of copper in the Commonwealth. More than 60 000 workers would eventually be employed directly or indirectly at the site.

In 1975, the B.C. Museum of Mining was established to preserve the mine’s history and help educate the public about mining. In 1987, it was declared a Canadian National Historic Site.

In 2006, Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) recognized the opportunity to support a vision for an expanded education-based tourist attraction at the site. Named “The Britannia Project,” this initiative has received important NRCan funding in many key areas, including:

- design and planning for the new visitor’s centre complex
- restoration of up to five historic buildings at the site
- restoration and refurbishment of the historic Administration Building, built in 1914
- expanded education-based tours and interpretive experiences for schools and families

The planned exhibitions will not only show the mine’s history but also demonstrate how modern society depends on mining. The exhibits will show how mining practices of the past have evolved with a new emphasis on sustainability and environmental awareness.

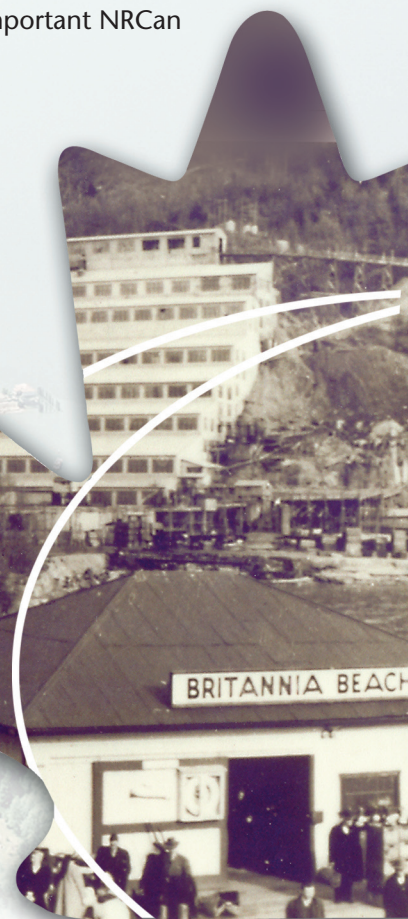
The first stage of the improvements will open for the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, with others to follow for the summer season.

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