

LYTTON MUSEUM

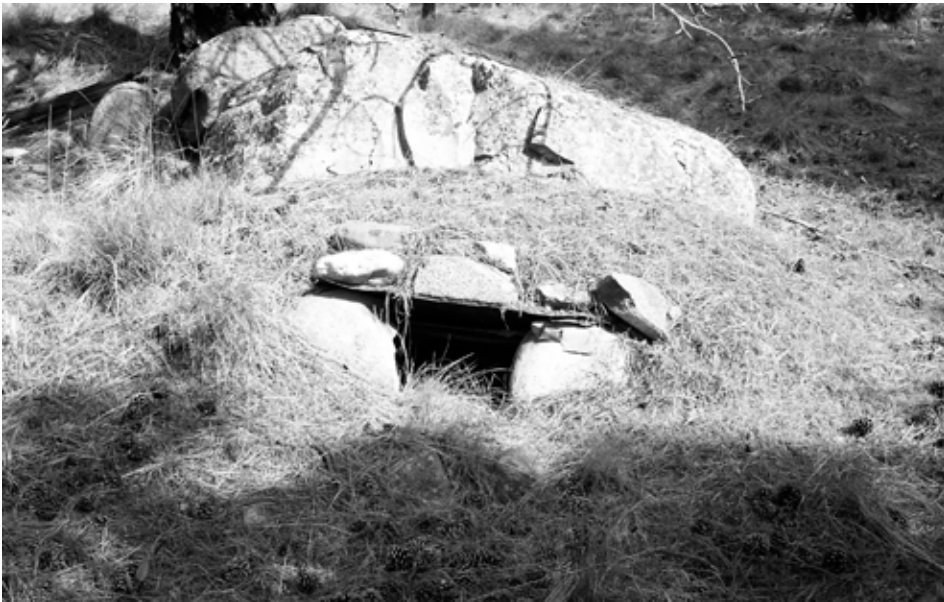
and ARCHIVES

November 2008

420 Fraser Street, Lytton, B.C.

Issue 9 Number 2

CHINESE OVENS ARE EVERYWHERE



Stone oven on Pudney Flats, near the CNR tracks.

Photo by Peter McArthur

Article by Peter McArthur

Lytton has had many Chinese people living and working in the area. They took part in the gold rushes, built railways, and operated stores. However they left few culturally identifiable artifacts (everyone used the same oxen shoes) and not a lot of their history was recorded.

Lily Chow, who is writing a book about the Chinese people and their contributions to the development of early British Columbia, visited Lytton last spring. At that time it occurred to me how few artifacts we have, yet Lytton had a large Chinese population.

One of the few Chinese artifacts in the area was a stone oven near Jackass Mountain, and although the museum has a photo of it, the exact location is unknown. Other local artifacts include the rock walls on the west side of the Fraser, a few pottery pieces, a list of wholesale groceries from the wall of the recently demolished freight shed, one coin, and some boar bones.

Because Lily had spiked my interest I talked to several people about the stone oven, and in a general discussion I was advised that there is another possible stone oven on Pudney Flats. I went to see it. This rock structure, three feet high and five feet in diameter, with

a ground level door about 18 inches tall clearly looked like an oven. A few days after this, Don Burkhardt told me of another stone oven on the West of the Thompson River towards Spences Bridge. These ovens were breeding like rabbits!

I could find no information about Chinese ovens in the museum, so I researched them on the Internet. I found a few references of people finding Chinese ovens in various locations around the province. While researching I found that not everyone agreed they were ovens, other suggestions for these stone structures were: a black powder magazine, an opium den or a brothel, a Joss house, a food storage cache and a "Hobbit House"; but no Hobbits are known in the area

At last I found a web site that convinced me I was wrong. Stone Ovens yes, Chinese no. It appears that these were bread ovens, built by various people including

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Greek, Italian, and other Europeans. Often wherever railroads are built.

Although they are not Chinese they are important local historical artifacts. They give us a glimpse at how our prior generations lived and the importance of keeping records of every day items and how they were used.

The CNR was built around 1911 so the ovens may be built that early or they could be much newer. If you know the history of these ovens please let us include the knowledge in our archives.

Excerpts from the following web site:

Note: These excerpts are quoted - spelling and punctuation errors are original.

http://cprrr.org/CPRR_Discussion_Group/2005/09/cprrr-workers-hut.html

From: "Priscilla Wegars" pwegars@uidaho.edu

Subject: Rock ovens

Haven't looked at everything yet but wanted to respond about the "hut." ... I did indeed write that article. They are rock ovens for baking bread, and were built by Italian or possibly Greek, RR workers. The library at the University of Montana has a photo of a group of Caucasian men standing around one of them, holding a small sign. A blowup of the sign shows that it is in Italian, and reads, "This is our oven," with a date (1906 I think). They are often called, erroneously, "Chinese ovens."

From: "Chris Graves" caliron@cwnet.com

Priscilla Wegars, of the University of Idaho's Asian American Comparative Collection, has kindly forwarded to me a copy of an article she authored for the magazine "Historical Archaeology", Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 37-65, 1991, an article in which she discusses at length "small, domed rock structures

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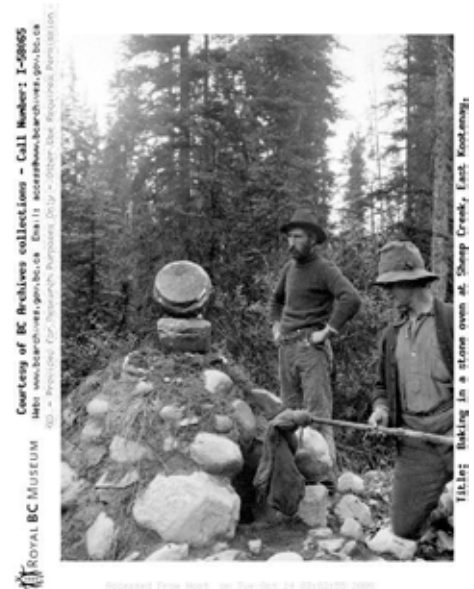


One of the many stone ovens to be found along the KVR trail, Naramata, BC, Canada. These were built by the railroad workers building the railway that would later become a popular hiking/biking trail in the Okanagan Valley

Photo from www.flickr.com/photos/annewalk/258022823

(that) are found throughout western North America. Pictured are structures identical to the rock "hut" that can be found at the East end of the Secret Town Trestle, this structure was discussed at length on the CPRRR Discussion Site late last year. The photos that Mrs. Wegars has illustrated her work with also show workmen of Italian and Greek descent in front of these structures, with the structures being used as ovens. Among the ovens noted are the following, all along railroad grades: Garfield, Colo., at a railroad camp at Kremmling; Gunnison, Colo., along the Denver & Rio Grande, Lake City Branch, built by Italians. Boundary County, Idaho, along the grade of the Spokane International, built by Italians Lincoln County, Montana, along the grade of the Great Northern, built by Greek/SE Europeans, Italians

Oregon, Southern Pacific Natron Cutoff, 1909-1910, Greek, with a photo captioned "Baking bread at Greek's Camp. "Should you wish further information regarding these stone ovens, Mrs.



Baking in a stone oven at Sheep creek, East Kootenay

Photo courtesy BC Archives

Wegars can be reached at pwegars@uidaho.edu. She has satisfied this Pilgrim's curiosity, Thanks, Mrs. Wegars. —gj



Thrills of a Novice Gold Panner

After reading books at the Museum about Lytton's gold rush history, I decided to give gold panning a try last spring.

I went to the hardware store in Lillooet and bought a gold pan with riffles, and a handy book on the "How to" of panning.

So down to the river I went. Well, where do you find good gold bearing material?

I tried a couple of spots and didn't find anything. Feeling a little foolish I went back home. I spent some more time reading and watching Bill Barlee on television and looking for more information.

Then I ran across a couple of individuals who didn't mind talking about how to pan for gold, and places around here to go. So, armed with better information, away I went.

I panned more sand and got a gold shimmer in the pan and that was all. I figured that there must be something more nearby, so I kept at it for a while before returning home.

A few days later I went back down with a local character who swore he knew where to find a good place to try, not too far from where I had been before.

We started by digging down into the sand to bedrock, or false bedrock, where the dirt was a dark colour and was composed of a magnetic material (Magnetite).

Of course, in my first pan I found fine gold powder, and a tiny flake! After a couple of pans I was sure I saw a gleam of gold leaving my pan and dropping into the river.

A common mistake is to not swirl things in the pan often enough to let the gold move to the pan bottom. So with more

practice I was starting to find more and bigger flakes in the pan.

This was exciting — to actually find flakes of gold, free from some source up the river. After a week or two of panning I had found some nice sized ones along with a lot of small specks.

Then the river rose with the run off from the snows and the end of panning for the season.

While kneeling down, swishing dirt and rocks around the pan, you hear rocks rolling down the slope behind you and you want to check to see what might be there.

The ache in the legs and back from the motions involved in working the pan gave me an idea of what it was like for those early miners and a little glimpse of the past.

It is easy to understand the draw of finding nuggets that made a few rich and a lot of dreamers poor!

Thomas Peglow

Museum Member and Amateur Gold Panner



The Lytton Museum and Archives has had its web site at www.lyttonmuseum.ca for several years.

It is presently being updated, but the first addition is available at www.lyttonmuseum.ca/archives.

It is a searchable collection of pictures from our Archives. Presently we have about sixty-five pictures in the online archive, but are working on another hundred or so.

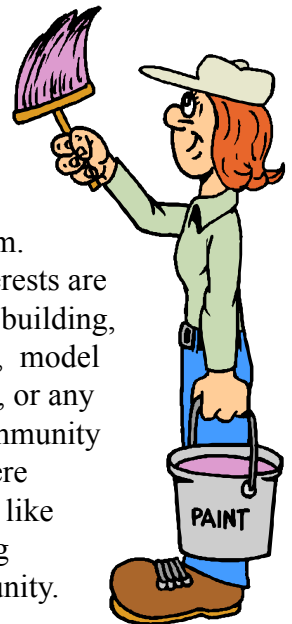
Any comments are welcome at newsletter@lyttonmuseum.ca.



VOLUNTEER!

Lytton has many volunteer groups, including the Museum.

If your interests are gardening, building, collections, model railroading, or any type of community service, there are people like you helping our community.



JOIN THEM TODAY!

Around Town

The Village of Lytton has put out a Request For Bids to have the Museum building re-sided. A contractor will be decided upon in November and the work will be completed before the next tourist season.

The Museum Commission's Annual General Meeting, with elections for executive positions, will be held on November 25, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in the Museum.

On December 10, 2008 the Museum Commission and the St. Bartholomew's Hospital Auxiliary will host their Annual Christmas Luncheon and Bake Sale, 11:00 am to 2:30 p.m. at the Parish Hall.



RAILWAY-CONSTRUCTION

The following article was taken from the NEW BRITISH COLUMBIA Official Bulletin No 22 of 1912 and was indicating the railway construction both underway and proposed at that date.

Note the starting point of the British Columbia and Alaska Railway. Too bad it was never built!

The Grand Trunk Pacific Railway is now running trains from Prince Rupert to Skeena Crossing, and work is in progress from the latter point to Aldermere. Construction is also being pushed from Tete Jauue Cache westward, so that it is hoped the main line will be completed by the end of 1913.

The Canadian Northern Pacific is building its transcontinental main line by way of Yellowhead Pass, following the Thompson River Valley to Kamloops; thence down the Fraser River to a point at or near Vancouver, and on Vancouver Island from Victoria to Alberni. The company is under contract to complete the road by 1914. This railway will give access to the large expanse of country watered by the Upper Fraser and the North and South Thompson Rivers, in which extensive reserves have been made for pre-emptors.

The Pacific Great Eastern, which will run from Vancouver to Fort George, is letting contracts for the first sections of the road. The road will follow the shore of Howe Sound and the Squamish River to Lillooet; thence along the bank of the Fraser River to connect with the Grand Trunk Pacific at or near Fort George.

The Portland Canal Short Line Railway Company is building from Stewart, at the head of Portland Canal, along the Bear River for thirty miles, and also proposes to build up the American Creek for ten miles. This railway is

intended to facilitate mining-work. There is practically no farming land in its territory, but it is proposed to extend the road easterly so as to serve the rich grazing and agricultural lands of the Upper Naas River Valley.

The following railways are projected, but actual construction-work has not been begun on any of them :

The British Columbia and Alaska Railway: From Lytton to Fort George; thence to Telegraph Creek and Teslin Lake to the northern boundary of the Province.

The British Columbia Central Railway: From Lillooet to Fort George.

The Cariboo, Barkerville, and Willow River Railway: From Eagle Lake to Barkerville.

The Pacific Railway : From the crossing of the Alaska boundary by the Salmon River to the source of the Salmon River.

The Prince Rupert and Port Simpson Railway: From Prince Rupert to Port Simpson.

The Queen Charlotte Railway: Skidegate Inlet to Stewart or Kundis Bay, Masset Inlet.

The Graham Island Railway: Lena Island, Skidegate Inlet, to Shields Island, Rennel Sound.

Submitted by Richard Forrest



J.A. RADFORD.

Lytton Has A New Cancel Stamp



Starting January 1, 2008, the Lytton Canada Post Office has been using a new Cancel Stamp.

This stamp was designed to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of Simon Fraser's voyage down the Fraser River.

When Fraser stopped at Lytton, where the two rivers meet, he named the Thompson River after his good friend David Thompson.

The Cancel Stamp was designed locally. Designs were submitted in response to a contest held by Canada Post. Entries were judged by the Lytton and District Chamber of Commerce and the winning design was manufactured into the Cancel Stamp.

The feathers represent the many First Nations peoples in the area and the center is the joining of the Fraser and Thompson Rivers, while the slogan "Meet Two Great Rivers" is displayed below the cancel date.

Wire Wound Wooden Pipe

It was a curiosity a few years ago when a section of wooden water pipe was dug up during the installation of water mains in Lytton.

Since then, we have become aware of a number of examples of the wooden pipe, including in an old ranch field.

It was interesting, therefore, to find an article in *Westward Ho! Magazine* - February 1908, that detailed the plant that may have made the pipe.

You can download the entire magazine at www.archive.org. Just search for "British Columbia Magazine". There are several volumes available — this is from Volume 2.

Wire Wound Wooden Pipe.

Among the many and varied industries of the Pacific Coast, none perhaps is more interesting than the manufacture of wooden pipes. Being cheaper, both in initial cost and in the transportation charges, and yet equally as strong and serviceable as iron pipes, they are rapidly coming to the forefront in the favour of the leading engineers of the continent.

The wood pipe industry has been in existence for the past twenty years in the United States, and for the past four years in Canada, the first Canadian factory being located in Vancouver, British Columbia.

The Dominion Wood Pipe Co. of New Westminster, B.C., controls a new patented process of winding the wire, their method being to use two independent strands of wire instead of one. This is said to give an added strength to the pipe, as, in the event of one of the wires breaking, the other wire will hold fast, which would still give it a factor of 2.5.

The plant of the Dominion Pipe Com-



Wire wound wood pipe, abandoned in a field near Lytton.

Photo courtesy R. Forrest



Pipes being wound with wire at the Dominion Wood Pipe Co. - 1908



Pipes ready for dipping at the Dominion Wood Pipe Co. - 1908

pany occupies an acre of ground in the City of New Westminster and consists of five buildings at present, the factory, the power house, the dry kiln, the warehouse and the office. The factory building is 68 feet by 138 feet. It contains a Berlin planer and moulder ; a winder, for putting the wire around the pipes ; a header, for trimming the ends of the pipes suitable for and adjusting the head or coupling ; a band re-saw, and a horizontal band cut-off saw. This

latter machine is of special construction and its purpose is to trim the ends of the pipe; also to cut couplings. Before they are cut apart, a series of couplings have the appearance of one solid pipe, with the wire wound around for a short distance and then cut off and re-started a little further on. When completely wirewound in this way the "pipe" is taken out of the winder, and transferred

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to the cut-off saw, where each section or coupling is cut apart. The factory also contains a large dipping vat wherein every pipe and coupling is dipped in asphaltum as a preservative.

The boiler and engine house is at one end of the factory. This is an iron sheeted structure, 28x32 feet. A horizontal boiler of 120 pounds pressure is used. The dry kiln is 24x70 feet, and has a capacity of \$65,000.

The system was installed by the North Coast Dry Kiln Company of Seattle,

Wash. The dry kiln is a special feature of the Dominion Company's equipment, and they are thus assured always of having perfectly dry lumber for use. The storage shed is 36x68 feet, with a railway spur line immediately alongside. The company can manufacture pipe of all sizes from 2 inch up to 24 inch. The daily capacity of the plant is about 2,000 feet of 6 inch pipe and 750 couplings, about twenty men being employed.

Submitted by Richard Forrest



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Transportation
Victoria
Village Councils
Weddings

And we have many other binders relating to specific subjects.

We're sure you'll find something of interest to look at.

You may even be able to provide missing dates or names for our records.

Do plan a return visit.

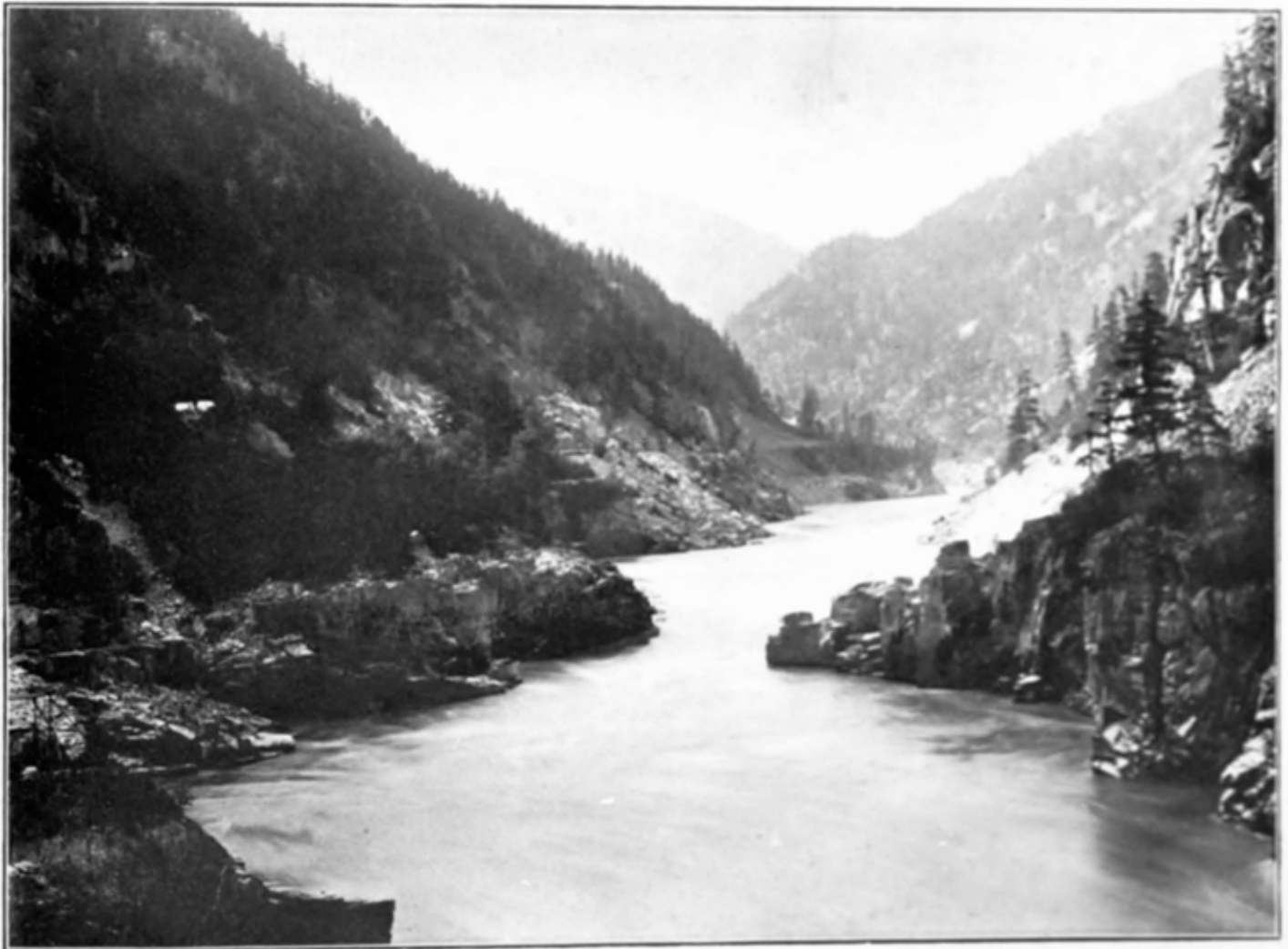
Submitted by Marie Heaster



Cariboo Road Bridge, Fraser Canon

Canadian Pacific Railway

An early photograph of Alexandra Bridge from "Picturesque British Columbia", published by W. G. MacFARLANE, SATURDAY NIGHT BUILDING. TORONTO. No date.



Hell's Gate, Fraser Canon

Hell's Gate with the Canadian Pacific on the left, before the Canadian National was built. From "Picturesque British Columbia", published by W. G. MacFARLANE, SATURDAY NIGHT BUILDING. TORONTO. No date.

The photographs above and at left are from a book called Picturesque British Columbia", published by W. G. MacFARLANE, Saturday Night Building, Toronto.

This book has been released on the internet as part of a research library of over a million texts. Many have been scanned, mainly by Microsoft, and saved as pdf files, requiring only Acrobat Reader, a free download from Adobe, to view them.

The books, as well as other material, are available from www.archive.org, which stores a huge and growing collection of text, audio and video, all

considered non-copyrighted or now out of copyright.

If you remember "The Shadow" or "Who's On First?", or you are just curious, you can find the original recordings on this site.

There are over 50,000 live concert recordings and over 300,000 audio recordings, all free.

The search engine is a little awkward, and you sometimes have to dig to find what you are looking for, but I have found over a hundred out of print and hard to get historic reference books on British Columbia at the site.

While this seems like an advertisement, it is just meant to show what the internet has become, and highlights one of the best parts of it — huge amounts of quality reference material, free and at your fingertips.

Visit the site and browse around. You will be amazed at what is available!

How about a Librivox recording of Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, by Mark Twain and read by Annie Coleman for your MP3 player? Or, a reference book to identify Grandma's brooch? Or just a nice concert for an afternoon's listening?



Word Search Puzzle — LYTTON BIRTHS - 1870-1898

How many of these family names do you recognize? How many can you find in the puzzle block?

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| Armstrong | Kane |
| Bartrim | Lemand |
| Berry | Mara |
| Bine | McGillivray |
| Blackford | McKay |
| Blanchford | McKnight |
| Brophy | Mickelson |
| Buie | Negrean |
| Callero | Oppenheimer |
| Cornwall | Rebagliati |
| Corno | Roberts |
| Curnow | Scuitto |
| Currie | Seward |
| Cuvrean | Spears |
| Dickinson | Stevenson |
| Earl | Stokes |
| Good | Sutherland |
| Hance | Taverna |
| Hannah | Tinline |
| Hautier | Truran |
| Hodge | Venelle |
| Hosking | |



Submitted by Marie Heaster

SO I'VE BEEN TO THE MUSEUM AND LOOKED AT THE 'THINGS' WHY SHOULD I VISIT AGAIN?

We're glad you came to visit., but did you have time to look through the Browse Binders?

Browse Binders contain copies of all the photos held by the Lytton Museum, and then some! They are arranged in these categories:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Airport, Lytton | Earl's Court | Museum & Info Centre |
| Ashcroft | Ferries, Lytton | Native, Early People |
| Boston Bar | Fires, Lytton | Pinehurst Fur Farms |
| Botanie Lake Dam | Forest Fires, Lytton | Railroads |
| CNR Survey | Forestry Lookout, Botanie | Roads and Bridges |
| Cemeteries | Funerals | Rocky Mountain Rangers |
| Centennial Celebration | Girl Guides & Brownies | Rotary Lottery Barrel |
| Chinese | Gladwin Court | Royalty |
| Churches | Greyhound Bus Accident | St. George's School |
| Community Hall Demolition | Hautier Family | Salmon Run |
| | Heritage Park | Schools |
| | Hospitals | Siska |
| | Hotels | Spences Bridge |
| | Lytton Village | Sports |
| | Lytton Presentation Album | Stein Valley |
| | Legion | Teit |
| | Miscellaneous Mining | Television Site |
| | Mining, Chinese | |

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