

## DISCOVERING MUSEUM SECRETS

Sometimes it's the little things, the less-than-grand items that fascinate us and transport our imagination back to former times.

It could be the bright yellow Velveeta cheese box in Joe Kempe's store display or the "Texada Daze" souvenir sailor caps in the historic uniform area. Perhaps it's the "ping, ping, ping" sound in the Little Billy Mine. Or Simon, the cat, curled up snugly on the crocheted bedspread in our new teacherage display.

No matter how many previous visits to the museum one may still discover an overlooked item that sparks a new interest and, perhaps, raises questions. For example, the 1900 photograph of Emily Raper on a rustic staircase. Where at Turtle Lake was this cabin situated? Who is that gentleman accompanying her?

The ledger book of Blubber Bay quarry workers (1902) shows the discrepancy in wages and working conditions between Chinese workers and others. What were the lives of these men like as a minority in a foreign land?

The Little Billy exhibit raises other questions. Why are the drill holes in a specific pattern for blasting? What were signal codes? What is a honey bucket?

We wonder at the skill of the cooper who made the wooden barrel with hand-planed staves and fitted metal hoops - an art lost to this century.

The blacksmith's forge, the livery stable. We see the tools and products of the past and marvel at the lost skills of the tradesmen. The plows and scythes remind us of how hard the work was for farmers before mechanization just as the springboard and 2-man crosscut saw speak of the challenges faced by early loggers.



Whose little fingers played the "Ring-Round-a-Rosy" toy piano? Which family gathered in the parlour to listen to the "Victor Talking Machine"? When were cigarettes 50 cents a pack? How many kids were excited to sample ice cream made in the hand-cranked "Frost King Ice Cream Freezer"? Who sat in the flip-seat desks in the one-room school display? Whose patient fingers wove the traditional designs seen in the First Nations baskets?

The museum is chockfull of fascinating stories of the past evoked by some of the often-overlooked items. Visit this summer and discover something new yourself!

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