

A PRINCESS BURIED ON TEXADA

Who would suspect that beneath the rock and log cribbing of the Mouat Bay log dump breakwater lies the body of a princess - the remains of the 1903 Canadian Pacific wooden steamship *Princess Beatrice*.

Named for Queen Victoria's last surviving child, the 197-foot *Beatrice* was the first CP ship built at Esquimalt and initiated their Victoria-Seattle steamship route in 1904, in style!

Later, servicing the central coast, the *Beatrice* was involved in a few marine mishaps. In October, 1911, she was discovered beached on a rocky islet north of Port Hardy. The 200 passengers (mainly cannery workers) awaited rescue while the crew lit signal bonfires on the shore. In 1923 she collided with the Union Steamship *Camosun*.

The Princess redeemed her "reputation" in 1927 when she helped rescue passengers aboard CN's *Prince Rupert* which ran aground on Ripple Rock.

The once-luxurious *Princess Beatrice*, with 40 staterooms, white tablecloths and silverware service in the dining room, was eventually towed to the west coast of Vancouver Island in 1928 to become a floating cannery.

Ultimately sold for scrap, the hulk was bought by Klein Logging of Pender Harbour to serve as the anchor for their Mouat Bay log dump breakwater on Texada.

Charlie Klein was a legendary horse-logger, six feet tall and powerfully-built. His Clydesdales were equally famous, one weighing in at 2400 pounds! The Kleins had been logging the south Gillies Bay area since the 1920's and saw value in the old steamship hulk. (photo)

Klein sunk the ship and bulked it up with an old log barge, a sailboat and log cribbing - all under tons of rock. When Oke Nyvall and partners bought the Klein operations in 1944 more rock was added but winter storms and gravity combined to cause continued slumping. In the 1990's Carl Hagman reinforced the breakwater with larger material.

Today the log dump is in full operation and no trace of the *Princess Beatrice* can be seen. However, for many years, her protruding rudder occasionally snagged the edge of log booms as they were towed out to sea, reminding us that "her royal highness" is still there.

