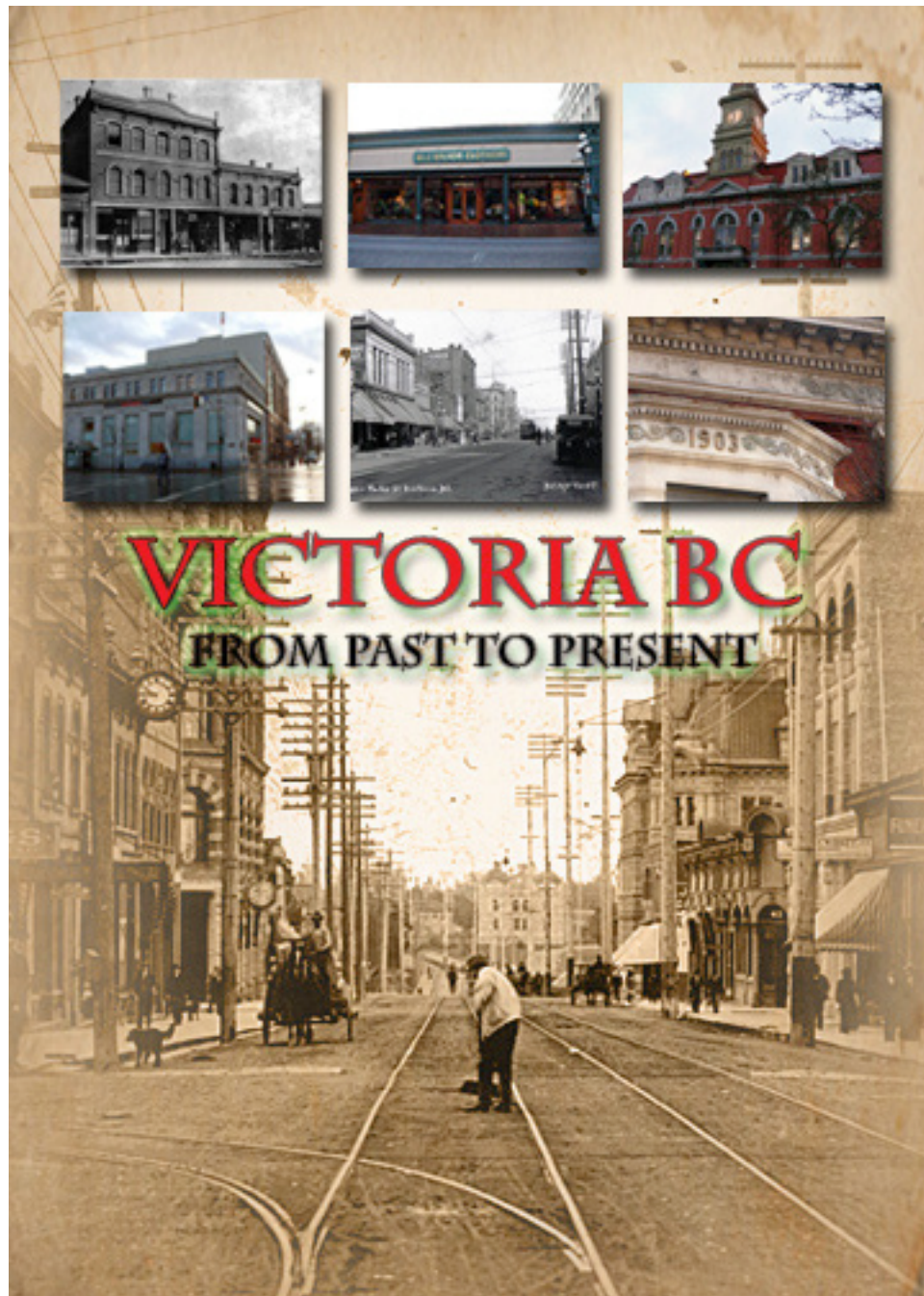


# William Harbeck 1907 video of Victoria Teacher Resource Guide



Presented by Hallmark Society  
18 Centennial Square Victoria, BC V8W 1P7  
[www.hallmarksociety.ca](http://www.hallmarksociety.ca)

## **Index**

How to Use the Resource Guide.....	1
The Story Behind the Production of the website and DVD .....	2
Description of the video.....	4
Details of the video and promotional material.....	5
Suggestion for Class Discussions.....	6
Student Assignments: Victoria in 1907.....	8

## How to Use the Resource Guide

We recognize that teachers will have different expectations for using these materials. Some will have a limited time to devote to the film and discussions, and others will have more time. This guide is designed to permit flexibility in its use and to allow many different uses.

The DVD includes the 8-minute silent film William Harbeck shot from the front of a streetcar in 1907, interspersed with modern footage of the same area to give a sense of perspective. The original silent film is shown in its entirety on the website at <http://hallmarksociety.ca/Harbeck/index.html>.

We suggest that students view the original film first. Provide the students with a checklist of questions on what to look for in the film. (See the sample questions we have provided). Tell the students they will be seeing the earliest known film of Victoria, filmed from the front of a streetcar. Ask why a streetcar platform was a good location for filming. (It was a very sturdy platform for a hand-cranked camera. See also the history of cinematography for more information).

The next activity would be the showing of the historic film interspersed with the modern footage. Engage the class in a discussion of the dramatic changes in Victoria over a century. Suggested topics include fashion, transportation, industry, utilities, construction, architecture, and culture.

Study the old fire insurance map with the streetcar line on it. What is the same today and what is different? What is special about the street names? Encourage students to draw maps of their own neighbourhoods and to research transportation corridors and street names there.

Encourage students to explore the old Victoria newspapers online at <http://www.britishcolonist.ca/> Find examples of advertising and compare it to today's examples. How was the news reported in the early twentieth century? How is it different today? Give examples of industries that no longer exist. Find examples of types of merchandise that is no longer produced.

## The Story Behind the Production of the website and DVD

The Hallmark Society was founded in 1973 in response to the wholesale demolition of heritage buildings in the region. From Day One, the focus has been on educating the public on the value of heritage and why it should be conserved.

About 10 years ago we became aware of the 1907 video of downtown Victoria in the Australian National Film and Sound Archives (since repatriated to the National Archives of Canada). We said “somebody should do something about this.” In 2007 we worked with Dr. John Lutz of the University of Victoria History Department on a project that saw part of the video put online with commentary and links to other photographs (see <http://web.uvic.ca/lancenrd/AViewofVictoria/welcomepage/welcomepage.php> for details). However we felt the entire eight-minute video should be presented with additional historical material.

As a non-profit society, we require grant money to undertake any research projects, so began the process of applying for funds. In May 2008 we received \$1,000.00 from the Hudson’s Bay History Foundation and, in December 2008, \$16,200.00 from the BC150-Heritage Legacy Fund of BC. Under the terms of the latter special fund, we had to have the project completed by March 31, 2009, so we had to move quickly. We began intensive research immediately and also started planning the website. To our delight, we found that on detailed examination of the video, there were more buildings filmed in 1907 that were still standing in 2009 than we had previously thought. In the end we researched almost 70 buildings and sites and prepared short essays on each one. Current photographs and the new video were next. All material was added to the website; the site went live at the end of March.

The overall goal of the project was to present a glimpse of Victoria’s history to a worldwide audience with links to current and historic photos and information. It is a perfect fit for our education program and the resulting website should be of interest to a wide audience – not just heritage building advocates. This video is of great significance as it showcases a pivotal year in the history and development of Victoria as the capital of British Columbia.

Shot by Seattle-based filmmaker William Harbeck on May 4, 1907, the film is a remarkable window into the past. With a hand-cranked camera mounted on the front of a B.C. Electric Railway streetcar, Harbeck recorded an early 20th century Victoria, in which, remarkably, many of the buildings and sites remain intact today, a century later. The street scenes feature horse-drawn wagons, streetcars, bicycles, the odd automobile, and pedestrians. There is a view of the world-famous Empress Hotel under construction and Rattenbury’s recently-completed Legislative Buildings. In addition to the street scenes, there is also a segment shot from the front of a boat travelling up the Gorge Waterway - the waters teeming with boats including the sealing fleet - and under the Tillicum Bridge. On the return trip, the boat passes under the Johnson Street Bridge and makes its way back to the Inner

Harbour, passing the industrial area on Laurel Point, the Legislative Buildings and the Dominion Customs House. The second part of the film reinforces the importance of the water and the waterfront in Victoria's history and development – the harbour was the reason that Sir James Douglas selected Victoria as the site for the Hudson Bay Company's presence north of the 49th parallel.

This project allows viewers to learn about three phases of Victoria's history: 1858, 1907, and 2008. Through the interactive website, visitors are able to view the digitized video and are able to link to information and photographs of the sites and buildings along the route of the video – from all three eras, wherever possible. We also researched and present a short biography of Harbeck who lost his life while sailing on the ill-fated Titanic. This was a rare opportunity to present the video to the public in celebration of Victoria's heritage and to enhance the viewer experience with the addition of textual and visual material.

We officially launched the website and DVD at an Open House at our storefront office in Centennial Square in Victoria, BC in conjunction with the 36th anniversary of the founding of the Hallmark Society. At the event were Jeff Bell - reporter for the Times Colonist newspaper; MP Denise Savoie; Pam Copley from the BC Heritage Branch and Oak Bay Council; Bill Turner, Ian Fawcett and Helen Edwards from the Heritage Legacy Fund Board of Directors; Hallmark Society members past and present (including 2 of the 4 original founding members still alive) and members of the general public who had heard about the launch and were interested in history.

The project has produced a website that showcases the 1907 video as well as an educational DVD that contains even more information. While we were completing the research process, we discovered that a lot of the published material on the buildings shown on the original video was incorrect. Our website has the most up-to-date, accurate information available.

This project has brought together a very talented team who are committed to the end result. In the process of developing content, we were able to draw upon the resources of the Downtown Victoria Business Association members who have been most generous with their support of the project. B. C. Transit provided some information; we interviewed Mr. Thompson from W. & J. Wilson Clothiers who told of the early days of that business, and several seniors who remembered the early twentieth century; staff at Rogers Chocolates, the Empress Hotel and the Parliament Buildings have been most generous with permission to photograph their sites and to provide archival information. Everyone who heard about the project was immediately captivated by it and expressed interest in helping, often for no financial gain. One person was so entranced by the work that he broadcast it to 1,000 of his "closest friends" on Facebook and Twitter.

This is the true legacy of this work – we have harnessed the energy of the larger community - beyond the heritage activists - and in the process, may gain an increased public awareness of heritage in the Capital Region and beyond.

## **Description of the video (from the National Archives)**

Title: ..... Vancouver and Victoria Street and Harbour Scenes  
Date: ..... May 1907  
Producer: ..... Selig Polyscope Company  
Distributor: ..... Hale's Tours and Scenes of the World Print Source  
Photographer: ..... William H. Harbeck  
Language: ..... Silent without intertitles  
Collection: ..... Australia National Film and Sound Archive 1994-0215  
Copyright: ..... Copyright expired

Description: A Panorama or Panoramic rather than a documentary, a very popular attraction in Nickleodeons in the early days of film exhibition, in which scenes were filmed from the front of a moving vehicle, often a railway train.

The film comprises street scenes filmed from the front of moving street cars and harbour scenes filmed from moving water craft. It is in three distinct parts: the streets of Victoria, Victoria Harbour, and the streets of Vancouver. Streets travelled in Victoria include Douglas Street, Yates Street, and Government Street. Seen are the Empress Hotel, where construction is nearing completion, the Parliament Buildings, the CPR piers and sheds, and Laurel Point. A few automobiles, numerous pedestrians, horse-drawn vehicles, and other streetcars are in evidence.

Seen from the water are Victoria's inner harbour with the ships of the sealing fleet tied side by side, the Point Ellice Bridge, the Gorge, and the Tillicum Bridge over the "Reversing Falls" with a prominent view of a rock which has since been blasted away, Selkirk Water and Halkett Island (also known as the Island of the Dead), the Johnson Street Bridge with a steam hauled passenger train of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway crossing it, the factories of the British America Paint Company and the B.C. Soap Works at Laurel Point, the Pendray House, CPR ferries, and more view of the Parliament Buildings, the Empress Hotel, and the Customs House.

Among the streets travelled in Vancouver are Granville Street with a glimpse of the old CPR station, West Hastings Street, Carrall Street, West Cordova Street, Cambie Street, Robson Street, and Davie Street.

## Details of the video and promotional material

Saturday, May 4, 1907 was a special day in the history of Victoria. That was the day that William Harbeck produced a cinematograph of downtown Victoria. Using a streetcar loaned by the British Columbia Electric Railway Company, he travelled down the streets, turning the hand crank of a camera fixed to the front of the car. He began at City Hall, travelled down Douglas Street, turned right onto Yates, then continued on to Government where he turned right and travelled the street until he concluded his journey at the Post Office. He was so taken with the view of the Empress Hotel being built on the former mudflats that he took a panoramic view of the harbour, including the Empress Hotel site, the Legislative Buildings, and the CPR terminal.

In the afternoon, he travelled by sea to the Point Ellice Bridge where he photographed the harbour and the sealing fleet. He then transferred to an electric launch and traveled up the Gorge Waterway as far as the Gorge Bridge. On the return trip he captured the Isle of the Dead and the sawmills, conveniently in full operation. He also passed the industrial area at Laurel Point, ending his journey at the Customs House. The entire story made the first page of the newspaper.

What is interesting about the video is the number of buildings that are shown along the route that remain today, a century later. There are over 70 structures that were located along the route in 2009 – and remain today. We see a very busy Victoria with bustling streets – and nary a car in sight. Traffic seems to have been regulated much differently in those days – with pedestrians and horse-drawn carriages competing for space with streetcars. As the streetcar traveled down the streets, we catch glimpses of other streets and their remarkable buildings – many of which are still there today. We have included articles on these streets as well to present more complete picture of 1907 Victoria.

Among the more recognizable buildings on the video are St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, the Oriental Hotel, the Weiler Building, the Empress Hotel (under construction), and the Legislative Buildings.

The Hallmark Society is proud to present the Victoria section of the Harbeck video and the resource guide to enable teachers and students to explore the differences and similarities between 1907 and today. We hope that you enjoy the journey and learn something in the process.

If you have any comments, or suggestions for additional activities, please let us know.

Hallmark Society  
18 Centennial Square  
Victoria, BC V8W 1P7  
office@hallmarksociety.ca

# Suggestions for Class Discussions

## A. Class discussion: the 1907 film

1. How did the “gold old days” differ from “today?”
2. What similarities and there between life in 1907 and life today? What are the main differences?
3. What did you like about life in Victoria in 1907? What did you dislike?
4. What aspects of society had the greatest impact on people living in Victoria in 1907? On people living today?
5. The 1907 film shows us what life was like on three Victoria streets and the major waterways in 1907. What aspects of Victoria life are not shown in the film?
6. What were the major problems facing people in Victoria in 1907? What are the major problems facing people in Victoria today?
7. Why do you think we see no automobiles in the 1907 video?

## B. Class discussion: the 1907 film with commentary

1. How old was Victoria when the film was shot? (45 years old: Victoria was incorporated in 1862.)
2. What is the major intersection where the streetcar film begins? (Douglas and Pandora) What building is still there? (Victoria City Hall)
3. Today we are concerned about global warming and various kinds of pollution. What kind of pollution was on the streets in 1907? (horse manure)
4. Was cycling a popular way of getting around at the time? (It certainly was)
5. Why is traffic in the film moving on the “wrong side of the street” in the film? (BC didn’t change over until 1922; it adopted the British model of driving on the left hand side of the street first)
6. The streetcar passes a big department store on Government Street. What was it called then and what is now in the building?



7. Why do you think that so many buildings that were visible in 1907 are still here? (Major industry moved to Vancouver and the lower mainland and there was less of a threat to the older building stock here)
8. Examine the site where the Empress Hotel is being built. How is this construction site different from what you see today? (Cranes are used today, less manual labour, more use of steel and glass)
9. Look carefully at the street scenes. What is very different from what we see today? (Examples are power poles with multiple lines, street clocks, large real estate signs, streetcar tracks, lack of traffic control with no traffic lights, etc.)
10. How are the harbour and inland waterways different from today? What other differences in transportation can you find? (Today we have float planes, train was a steam train, sealing fleet gone). What is the same? (still used for shipping, tourist transportation, recreation)

# Student Assignments: Victoria in 1907

## A. Displays and presentations:

Prepare a “then and now” collage, PowerPoint presentation, scrapbook, heritage fair display, bulletin board, display case, or skit using one or more of the following topics: population, fashions, industries, sports and entertainment, holidays and travel, politics, advertising, business, landmark buildings, major issues, etc.

## B. Newspaper assignments:

Old Victoria newspapers from the old Colonist newspaper up to 1909 have been digitized and are online in searchable form at <http://www.britishcolonist.ca> Other newspapers are available at the BC Archives and the Greater Victoria Public Library.

Here are a few suggested topics for student research:

1. What was the biggest local issue in 1907? What is the biggest issue today? How are they the same, and how different?
2. Read the entertainment section of the newspaper for a two-week period. What entertainment was offered then? How is this different from what is offered today?
3. Study the newspaper reports of crime and courtroom activity in Victoria for a two-week period in 1907. Using a current newspaper, research the same two-week period today. Discuss the similarities and differences.
4. Examine the shipping news in the 1907 newspapers. How does this compare with the shipping today?
5. Study the obituaries for a one-month period in 1907. Record the ages and causes of death. Confirm the deaths in the genealogy section of the BC Archives website (<http://search.bcarchives.gov.bc.ca>) Compare the results with what is reported in obituaries today.
6. Summarize the advertising in a weekend edition of the Colonist newspaper. Compare it with a weekend edition of the Times Colonist. Write a few paragraphs describing your findings.
7. Study the real estate offerings in 1907 and select 5 pieces of real estate that interest you. How do the ads compare to those of today? What is different?
8. Study the sports articles in a 1907 newspaper. What sports were popular then? Have the most popular sports changed from 1907 to now? Explain your conclusions.

9. Study the reporting style in the 1907 newspapers. How do the stories compare to those in today's newspapers?
10. Study the articles and advertisements for clothing in a 1907 newspaper. What would it cost for clothing then? How do the fashions then compare with today's fashions? What articles of clothing were worn in 1907 that are not common now?
11. What are the differences between the front pages of 1907 newspapers and today's? (Ads prominent on front page, short articles, no photographs then; now banner ads at bottom of page, longer articles, index, colour photographs)
12. Find advertisements for some of the businesses that the streetcar drove by in 1907. What do the ads tell you about life in 1907?

### **C. Essay topics:**

#### **Victoria in 1907:**

1. An Edwardian city
2. Seat of government
3. Gateway to the Pacific
4. How do the industries in Victoria in 1907 compare with today's industrial activities?
5. The importance of the harbour to Victoria
6. The influence of the Canadian Pacific Railway on the architecture and economy of Victoria
7. A tourist destination
8. Fashion in 1907
9. Architectural styles
10. Prominent citizens and families
11. The effect of gold rushes on the economy and growth of Victoria

#### **Victoria today:**

1. Tourist destination
2. Changes in architectural styles
3. Heritage preservation vs. new development
4. The "working" harbour: pros and cons
5. Neighbourhoods. How are they different from each other? Select any two and compare and contrast them.
6. The changing skyline of downtown Victoria
7. Changes in the economic climate
8. Downtown Victoria: how has it changed in the last century?
9. Fashion today
10. Prominent citizens and families
11. University town