A Coal Miner’s History: Mapping Digitized Audio Interviews

Daniel Sifton - Vancouver Island University
Coal Tyee History Project

Digital files of sound recordings and transcripts recorded for the Coal Tyee History Project of the Coal Tyee Society

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Recent Submissions

Interview with Jim Galloway
Galloway, Jim (Electronic version published by Vancouver Island University, 1979)

Interview with Dave MacDonald
MacDonald, Dave (Electronic version published by Vancouver Island University, 1979)

A second interview with Harry Dawes
Dawes, Harry (Electronic version published by Vancouver Island University, 1979)

Interview with Bill Cottle
Cottle, Bill (Electronic version published by Vancouver Island University, 1979)

Interview with Ann Bryant
Bryant, Ann (Electronic version published by Vancouver Island University, 1979)

Interview with Wilf Broderick
Broderick, Wilf (Electronic version published by Vancouver Island University, 1979)
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You're supposed to be fourteen before you can drive a horse in the city. Forget it, he says, I'll keep my eye on him.

It was City Police.

What happened the day they burned some houses at Extension?

Well they brought that was when they brought the military in -- Bowers's Seventy Twa. They come with shot and shell, to blow us all the way to hell.

They sang that all the time wherever they went.

That was the worst riot at Extension. The houses went on fire, the shingles was comin' down there, pret'near a whole right through the wasteland (?) shingle, burn' on fire, when they get up in the air they fly for miles. The whole family was out all night, watchin' the hay didn't catch fire.

How many houses do you think they burned? Oh, about a dozen, I guess. The burnin' houses was all scabs. They didn't burn any union houses. They cleaned out lots o' stuff up there before they burned 'em. --What did they do with it? --They put it in their houses. The union men got brains, you know, they know what they're doin'.
Interview with Malcolm Odgers

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dc.contributor.author: Odgers, Malcolm
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There is the seam of like Number One Mine. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/121/CoalTyeeBlackstaffScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

The only place I saw horses used were in Number 1. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/179/CoalTyeeTickleScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

They had Number One slope and Number Two. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/144/CoalTyeeCraigScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

Three of us worked in No. 1. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/173/CoalTyeeTickleScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

Was that in Number one mine? <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/77/CoalTyeeCottieScript1.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

Down near the No. 1 mine. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/91/CoalTyeeJohnsonScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

He was at that time working as a mining engineer, it was at the time of the development of Number One. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/36/CoalTyeeHallScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

When they started to sink Number One mine he contracted sinking the shaft. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/132/CoalTyeeBrodickScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

This No. 1 was this an extension from the the No. 1 downtown? <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/82/CoalTyeeFreemanScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

All that coal from there was hauled to Number 1. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/145/CoalTyeeCormanscript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

It was in Number 1, level left. And that was right under the bay. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/153/CoalTyeeDonScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

Every time they got to Number 1 pithead on the top. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/167/CoalTyeeSandlandScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

When you went down at 10 years old can you remember how you felt? No, not very well, that was in Number One mine. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/122/CoalTyeeBellsScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

Would you say that Number 1 was better working conditions? <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/94/CoalTyeeKrahlMScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

That was in the low workings. That was in Number one mine <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/51/CoalTyeeAitkenScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

There was an explosion at Number One mine. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/120/CoalTyeeAckisonScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

Conversation This is Number 1. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/57/CoalTyeeEdwardsWhiteScript1983.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

This was aPerson washing their clothes around Number One you had to watch which way the wind was blowing. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/179/CoalTyeeBattisonScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

Number Protection and Brechen <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/179/CoalTyeeBattisonScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

It was all the Number One. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/88/CoalTyeeHuntScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

Working in the mines on contract. In Number 1 mine. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/138/CoalTyeeCarruthersint1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

The Western Fuel was Number One Mine, in there. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/171/CoalTyeeThatcherScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

Number One was right by the water front, so probably they just dumped it right into scows. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/127/CoalTyeeArmstrongScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

Could you describe Number 1? Oh, it was a big, big mine. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/150/CoalTyeeDeanSScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

Then we went down to No. 1 and worked, down in No. 1 driving a horse. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/108/CoalTyeeLawScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

What you call the old mitimanawa number One. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/156/CoalTyeeGilchristScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

And which mine was that? Number one. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/90/CoalTyeeIrvinScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

Yes. I started there first. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/109/CoalTyeeMenziesScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>


A second into All the coal from Protection Mine come up Number One. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/185/CoalTyeeDawScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

I worked on the pan walls in Number One mine. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/160/CoalTyeePleasScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

Mordon was probably the most modern mine that had the in the area? No, I think No. 1 was a <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/166/CoalTyeeRobertsonScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

We connected up here from Reserve mine to Number 1 mine. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/162/CoalTyeeReinischScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

So he got a job at Number One and he left Jingle Pot. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/155/CoalTyeeEllisScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>

There was Number 3 slope and Number 1. <a href="https://viuspace.viu.ca/bitstream/handle/10613/168/CoalTyeeSteeleScript1979.pdf?sequence=4#nameddest=N1" title="Details" target="_blank">More</a>
Coal Tyee History Project

This term students will have a unique opportunity to contribute to an ongoing project through the VIU library. Currently the library is building an interactive map that links information, images, and oral history transcripts and audio clips about Nanaimo’s coal mines. When completed, users will be able to browse and search a key aspect of Nanaimo’s working history.

The project has identified more than 30 different mine sites around Nanaimo. Each of these sites needs a brief caption – no more than 200 words – that describes the site to users. Historical photographs of these sites are also needed. This is where you come in! Working in partners, you will research the mine sites and write the captions. You will search for photographs. Together, your finished work will not only be evaluated by me, but will become part of the site (and you will be credited for your work). Daniel Sifton will be visiting our class early in the term to introduce you to the project.
Nanaimo Coal Mines

This map illustrates historic mines and shafts discussed in the MUSpace collection: Coal Tyee History Project. The project consists of digitized audio recordings and transcripts of interviews with miners and their families in the years 1979 - 1994.

The interviews were conducted by Myrie Bergey, William Shamarshough, Bernard McNicholl, Lynne Bowen, Barbara Graves, Barry Hardcastle, Jay Leach, Dave Lovick, Shirley Ramsey, Larry Thomas, Dean Nelson, and Ruth Tickie.

Nanaimo, 1958 - Coal discovered locally in 1948, established Nanaimo as centre for coal mining on the pacific coast. By 1958, the town of Nanaimo had between 50 and 80 buildings.

For more detailed information on coal mining in Nanaimo, and on the sites themselves see: List of coal mines and landmarks in the Nanaimo area.
Number One Mine

Site of the largest mining accident in British Columbia's history, in which 156 people died. Number One was operated by the Vancouver Coal Company, the Number One mine opened in 1864 at the foot of Milton Street in Nanaimo. Its shafts and tunnels extended under the harbour to Protection Island, Newcastle Island, and the Nanaimo River. After the explosion, the mine was closed and produced 18 million tons of coal before permanently closing in 1938 - 1867 Nanaimo Mine Explosion - Wikipedia

Appears in:
Interview with Scotty Gilchrist | description | .pdf | audio
Interviewer: Shirley Ramsay

"What you call the old magnificent Number One? [11]
Number One, they had the finest shaft in the world. [16]
Uh, Number One had a big whistle you could hear. [21]

Appears in:
Interview with Alex Dac | description | .pdf | audio
Interviewer: Myrtle Burguen

"Yeah, worked in Number One for 18 years as a coal digger. [1]
No, not very well, that was in Number One mine. [2]
Bob Law was my father's boss in Number One. [3]...

Appears in:
Talk about my early days in Nanaimo | description | .pdf | audio
Interviewer: Unknown

"There is the seam of like Number One Mine. [8]
Between Protection Island & Number One, there's a fault. [11]
There is the seam of like Number One Mine. [8]

Appears in:
“Who’s that guy?”

“That's Tron. He fights for the Users.”

“. . . by creating new and meaningful ways to access, contextualize, and interact with existing digitized content.”