

This recording is an interview with New Westminster residents Doug and Helga Leaney, owners of the Paddlewheeler Tours. Doug captains the *MV Native*, while Helga runs catering downstairs. Initial interviews with both Doug and Helga were conducted on the *MV Native* on September 21, 2013; this interview is a follow-up. The major themes discussed are development, marketing, and support for tourism in the city of New Westminster, and the waterfront.

Interviewer: Andrea Walisser

Date: September 28, 2013

Date range: 1989-2013

Sound Recording Length: 29:40

From 1989 to 1998 Doug Leaney reports that popularity of the boardwalk brought excellent walk-on business for the Paddlewheeler Tours. In 1998, however, "everything changed" with the opening of the riverboat casino; which never generated the economic development that was hyped. Initially, too, the casino was meant to operate as a tour boat, which may have drawn tourists away from the Paddlewheeler Tours. The subsequent closure of the casino boat, however, meant a very quiet waterfront as people either patronized the larger casino in Queensborough or did not find much reason to come to the waterfront (The RiverMarket had not yet reopened). The Leaneys are concerned about the positioning their business as tourist attraction versus local attraction; the economic climate; the political climate in New Westminster; and how the future development -- or underdevelopment -- of the waterfront will affect their business in the coming years.

Section 0:00 - 4:54

- In this portion of the recording Doug and Helga discuss the establishment of the casino at the New Westminster waterfront and the effect it had on local businesses, including the closure of the well-known Fins restaurant. Soon the casino boat closed down and the waterfront became very quiet, with no businesses on the waterfront to bring attention to the Leaney's Paddlewheeler Tours.

Section 4:55 - 10:08

- The Leaneys discuss the construction of the RiverMarket and how, the current businesses (grocery, circus school) there do not attract tourists. They discuss the struggling tourism industry in New Westminster with specific reference to their business. They suggest that municipal efforts at international tourism promotion are ineffective because the attractions in the city are not urban and sophisticated.

Section 10:08 - 14:30

- In this section the Leaneys describe complaints from quayside residents, particularly about music at night and the effect these had on their business.

Section 14:31 – 23:00

- Doug and Helga discuss marketing possibilities for their business including partnerships with Fraser River Discovery Centre and Irving House. School groups used to visit, but do not anymore as many fieldtrips have been curtailed by

funding issues. The Leaneys view their prices as affordable, yet they struggle to attract business. They speculate why this may be. Catherine (mentioned) is Catherine Ouellet-Martin, director of the Fraser River Discovery Centre. Archie (mentioned) is local historian Archie Miller, the former manager of the NWMA

Section 23:01 - 29:40

- The Leaneys discuss support for their venue among local politicians, particularly the mayor (Wayne Wright), and the potential for future development of the waterfront with the current city council. Opposition to commercial and tourism development of the waterfront within city council seems a concern for the Leaneys. They feel New Westminster will have a bright future, but do not know if they will continue in business long enough to take advantage of it. The interview concludes with general observations about the beauty of the river and interesting sights. Doug mentions recent sightings of multiple sturgeon.