

This interview is a recording with Mike Hoyer, a Quayside resident and volunteer at the Fraser River Discovery Centre. The major themes discussed in this interview are the Fraser River, in particular the river's history, community, the environment, and the decline of fish stocks.

Interview Date: February 25, 2014

Interviewer: Bailey Garden

Date Range: 1800s - 2014

Sound Recording Length: 39:17

The interview was conducted as part of the Oral History Practicum course, History 461, at Simon Fraser University.

Mike Hoyer is a retired educator from Prince George who moved to New Westminster in 2004. He is an active citizen of New Westminster, serving as an interpretive program and walking tour volunteer at the Fraser River Discovery Centre, and as a graffiti control volunteer for the New Westminster's Police Department. He also volunteers at events in the city and participates in the Block Watch program in the Quayside neighbourhood. He has an avid interest in the history of the Fraser River and New Westminster. Throughout the interview Hoyer references the history of the Fraser River especially with regard to the environment and to overfishing.

Section: 0:00 – 5:08

In this section of the interview Hoyer describes how he became involved as an interpretive program and walking tour volunteer with the Fraser River Discovery Centre. He primarily volunteers when there are school groups that are in need of someone to do an interpretive program. The programs that he has done have been on the history of the Fraser River, salmon, and pollution. He recounts the wildlife and recreational fishing he has seen on the river. He reports that his favourite part of being a volunteer is telling people a few facts about the Fraser River and having fun with the students that he gets to work with.

Section 5:09 – 9:43

In this section of the interview Hoyer describes his decision to live in New Westminster. He was enamoured with the view of the Fraser River from his suite, the sense of community in New Westminster, and how he is always learning more about the Fraser River. He believes that the biggest change that has occurred on the Fraser River waterfront is the residential and commercial development, stating that 150 to 200 years ago only trees and some First Nations peoples existed along the water's edge. He believes that the shipping industry on the Fraser River is a contentious issue and is especially concerned about a proposed coal terminal at Fraser Surrey Docks. He misstates that coal dust from this *proposed* terminal is the source of *current* black soot on his balcony.

Section 9:44 – 14:05

In this section of the interview Hoyer describes the various community events in New Westminster such as PechaKucha. He also explains why he and his wife made their decision to live without a car: their location near a Skytrain station makes being car-less feasible and they save money using public transit. He describes the demographic of people of who he thinks comprises the New Westminster's population, namely young middle-class citizens and retirees.

Section 14:06 – 25:46

In this section of the interview Hoyer talks about the students from Douglas College who also volunteer at the Fraser River Discovery Centre, his experiences taking school children on walking tours, and his participation in various community events. He also discusses once again his perception of the demographics of New Westminster, this time stating that the population is largely Anglo Saxon Protestants, whereas in Queensborough there is more of a Sikh community. He states that New Westminster community celebrations are not based around ethnicity but rather geographical locations in the city such as the 12th Street Music Festival. He mentions that a lot of people in the city know him as the "graffiti man" because he is a graffiti control volunteer for the New Westminster Police Department. In this role looks for and photographs graffiti and tells the business owners that a city bylaw requires them to remove that graffiti from their property. He also briefly mentions the dredging of the Fraser River.

Section 25:46 – 32:55

In this section of the interview Hoyer discusses the demographic of the volunteers at the Discovery Centre of who mostly retired educators like himself and young adults. He mentions once again that he has an avid interest in learning about the Fraser River and New Westminster and has read most of the books on these topics in the city's library. He believes the biggest event that occurred on the Fraser River was the gold rush in the 1800s because it spurred rapid population growth.

Section 32:56 – 39:09

In this section of the interview Hoyer discusses the Jane's Walks in New Westminster, which he participates in, the history of commercial fishing of the Fraser River, particularly the overfishing of salmon and sturgeon.