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When Ghosts Hovered: Community and Crisis in a Company Town, Britannia Beach, British Columbia, 1957-1965

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When Ghosts Hovered: Community and Crisis in a Company Town, Britannia Beach, British Columbia, 1957–1965

Katharine Rollwagen

Abstract

This article compares two shutdowns in the copper-mining town of Britannia Beach, British Columbia. It explores the extent to which community was a "sufficiently empowering myth" to unite residents against their employers' respective closure attempts. During a 1958 shutdown triggered by plummeting copper prices, divisive notions of community, coupled with loyalty to long-time employer Britannia Mining and Smelting Company, produced despair rather than resistance among residents. Most left Britannia to find other work, and few returned when the mine reopened ten months later. Conversely, when the town's future was again at risk during a labour dispute in 1964, workers reacted with stiff resistance. When the new owner, the Anaconda Company, threatened to close the mine, striking employees mounted a united campaign and called for support from across Canada to keep the mine open. When the dispute was settled seven months later, the union claimed victory over an American corporate giant. This commuter workforce with loose social ties had successfully used notions of local and national community to foster militancy against their employer. The case of Britannia demonstrates how community can both restrain and rouse workers and town residents, shaping their diverse reactions to deindustrialization.

Résumé

Le présent article met en comparaison deux fermetures qui ont eu lieu dans la ville minière de Britannia Beach en Colombie-Britannique. Il explore dans quelle mesure la notion de communauté a été un « mythe suffisamment fort » pour unir les résidents contre les tentatives de fermeture de leurs employeurs. Durant l'arrêt de 1958 précipité par une chute des cours du cuivre, des notions opposées de communauté de concert avec des élans de loyauté envers l'employeur de longue date, la Britannia Mining and Smelting Company, ont suscité des sentiments de désespoir plutôt que de résistance chez les résidents. La plupart ont quitté Britannia pour se trouver du travail ailleurs, et peu sont revenus quand la mine a rouvert ses portes dix mois plus tard. En revanche, quand l'avenir de la ville a de nouveau été mis en doute lors d'un conflit de travail en 1964, les ouvriers ont réagi fermement. Lorsque le nouveau propriétaire, l'Anaconda Company, a menacé de fermer la mine, les grévistes ont organisé un front uni et fait appel à des confrères de partout au Canada pour garder la mine en opération. Une fois le différend réglé sept mois plus tard, le syndicat a crié victoire contre un conglomérat américain. Une main-d'œuvre migrante, malgré ses faibles liens sociaux, avait invoqué des notions de communauté locale et nationale afin de rallier le groupe à la cause qui l'opposait à l'employeur. Le cas de Britannia montre comment la notion de communauté peut à la fois atténuer et exacerber la réaction des ouvriers et des résidents, influençant ainsi leur façon de vivre la désindustrialisation.

Britannia Beach is not a ghost town today, but between 1957 and 1965 residents and employees of the former company-owned copper mining town, located forty-eight kilometres north of Vancouver, had good reasons to believe it would become one. The town faced two major crises in less than a decade, triggering mine shutdowns that threw the future of the town into question. Plummeting copper prices led to a ten-month closure in 1958 that divided the town and left many employees and residents feeling helpless. Ultimately, workers were unable to resist the shutdown, and many left to find work elsewhere. The second shutdown, triggered by a labour dispute in 1964, escalated when the company threatened to close the mine. This time, workers came together to fight for their jobs. How did two shutdowns within a decade and affecting the same company town prompt such different reactions? This article explores the extent to which employees' notions of community were, in Steven High's words, a "sufficiently empowering myth," capable of mobilizing Britannia's workforce to resist the mine closures when ghosts hovered over the town.[1] While economic conditions were certainly a factor, dampening already low spirits in 1958 and encouraging optimism in 1964, employees' sense of community contributed significantly to these events. In 1958, employee loyalty to the company and divisive notions of community based primarily on marital status helped prevent opposition to the closure. In 1964, social interaction and rhetorical appeals to local and national communities fostered solidarity and garnered support to sustain the workers' campaign against the company.

Faced with job loss and dislocation, Britannia's employees evoked varied, often-conflicting notions of community in order to make sense of and resist change. While historians have often assumed that readers know what community means, or limited its scope to "the ideas of a shared place and a static, self-contained entity,"[2] this study defines community in two interconnecting ways. Community is seen as both a continuous process of constructing and sustaining social bonds, as well as a rhetorical tool that joins people imaginatively. Britannia's workers and residents developed their sense of community working and playing together, and also by emphasizing the common identities—such as miner or housewife—that they believed they shared. As historian Thomas Bender argues, community is defined better as "an experience than as a place"; it is something understood through relationships with others.[3] As relationships and power relations shift, so do a community's boundaries, including some people while necessarily excluding others. In Britannia's case, employees in 1958 were more likely to include the company in their definition of community than those in 1964, when most viewed the company as an outsider. During the earlier shutdown, workers' notions of community impeded worker

solidarity, while in the latter, they facilitated it. This approach recognizes that community is never solely a positive force; it simultaneously divides and unites.

Community is also a cultural construct. Benedict Anderson's notion of "imagined communities" has demonstrated that language can create feelings of commonality among people who will never meet, cultivating regional and national identities.[4] Britannia's managers often tried to conjure this type of community in their publicity, and the union similarly appealed to imagined local and national solidarities. In this study, community is examined as both a discursive construct and a social process, which was continuously formed and imagined in Britannia's mines, homes, and social clubs. Britannia's workers and residents challenged and appealed to these varied notions of community during times of crisis.

The 1958 shutdown ended a period of relative stability at the formerly prosperous mine, altering the company-owned town irrevocably. The Britannia Mining & Smelting Company, Limited (hereafter BM&S) began mining on the property in 1905. Britannia was a low-grade copper mine, meaning that large amounts of ore had to be taken from the ground, and the copper carefully extracted from the rock using mechanical and chemical processes. It began as a small operation, made up of several isolated mining camps scattered high in the mountains. By the Second World War, the operation had grown to include hundreds of employees and two company-built towns.[5] Britannia Beach itself, on the shores of Howe Sound, housed primarily company officials and mill workers. Many of the underground workers lived near the mine in the mountains above in an area known both as the Townsite and Mount Sheer. These were quintessential company towns, completely owned and operated by one employer, and—until the late 1950s—accessible from Vancouver only by boat. For more than thirty years, Britannia's employees and their families lived in company housing, shopped at the company stores, and participated actively in recreation programs organized with the company's blessing. Even after BM&S closed the Townsite and declared bankruptcy in 1958, and the mine was sold to the Anaconda Company in 1962, Britannia Beach remained an unincorporated entity under corporate control. Although critics, particularly in the labour movement, protested the company's continuous and extensive control of daily life in its townsites, journalists and industry supporters often portrayed Britannia as a picturesque, close-knit, and well-serviced community.[6] Many observers reacted to news of the possible closures in 1958 and 1964 with shock and concern, fearing that this "ideal community . . . far from the rush and congestion of the big city" would become another of British Columbia's many ghost towns.[7]

The sorry fate of many of the province's other resource-based communities made it seem likely that Britannia was destined to disappear. British Columbia is dotted with the ghostly relics of former mining and forestry towns, often described by scholars as the victims of a boom-and-bust economy.[8] While many scholars have commented on these communities' economic dependence on a single resource, fewer have examined the process of deindustrialization in these places.[9] As John Bradbury and Isabelle St-Martin argue, the existing literature on single-industry towns focuses on the birth, youth, and maturity, as opposed to the death, of such communities.[10] In his comprehensive study of Canadian resource towns, Rex Lucas suggests community development occurred in stages, from construction to maturity.[11] Bradbury and St-Martin have extended Lucas's typology to include the "winding down" and "closure" stages of resource town experience. This life cycle metaphor is both helpful and dangerous. While it has facilitated the study and comparison of varied resource communities, it is less useful for historical analysis for two reasons. First, it removes resource towns from their varied contexts, suggesting that towns followed a typical development pattern regardless of time or place. Furthermore, although Lucas, Bradbury, and St-Martin insist community development is a non-linear process, the life cycle framework implies that deindustrialization—like death—is an inevitable part of resource community existence.[12]

This article builds on the work of recent deindustrialization scholars, many of whom no longer assume that plant closures are inevitable or uniformly destructive occurrences. As Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott have argued, deindustrialization is better conceived of as a non-linear process that changes—for good or ill—the social fabric of the affected community.[13] Indeed, when ghosts hovered over Britannia, the copper mine's fate was anything but sealed. The shutdowns did not destroy an ideal community, but refashioned it (traumatically, for many) in the eyes of its workers and residents. While the 1958 shutdown divided the workforce and scattered a Britannia community that had catered to married workers and encouraged loyalty to the company, it did not prevent new expressions of community from emerging later on. By 1964, Britannia's physical and social geographies had changed; many workers commuted, and the 1958 shutdown had curtailed many of the social and institutional structures that had previously fostered interaction and common identity. Nevertheless, a strike against their new employer brought workers together in solidarity and spawned rhetorical appeals to local and national community that bolstered their campaign.

The case of Britannia also challenges current hypotheses about when and how deindustrialization began. While Steven High pinpoints the 1970s as the beginning of deindustrialization in the North American manufacturing sector, evidence from Britannia suggests it may have begun sooner in Canada's primary resource sectors, and that appeals to economic nationalism were heard in the mines and mills before they were voiced in the factories.[14] In 1958, and more successfully in 1964, the union representing Britannia workers warned about American control of Canadian mining resources, concerned that the mobile capital of mining companies paid little heed to the needs of local workers. Britannia's workers were witnessing and resisting a shift in business practices and labour relations, as increasingly global companies adopted more flexible profit-making strate-

gies, invested less in local infrastructure, and were less willing to compromise with unions.[15] The crises in Britannia counter a popular belief that the postwar era was one of uniform working-class prosperity and stable labour relations.[16]

Rumblings of the first shutdown began in early 1957, when declining world copper prices created a "serious economic situation" for the mine's owner, BM&S.[17] In 1958, the North American economy was in recession. The London price of copper had fallen more than 50 per cent since 1956, from £435 to £160.[18] In July, general manager George Lipsey announced the mine would close unless employees were willing to accept a 15 per cent pay cut.[19] The company told newspapers it was losing $65,000 per month.[20] The workers, represented by local 663 of the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers (hereafter Mine Mill), refused to take a reduction in wages, but offered to work longer hours and sacrifice other benefits to keep the mine operating. The company accepted, and operations continued on a regular basis for several months.

In October, the situation became "more precarious" and company President E. C. Roper told Lipsey that "efforts to maintain some semblance of an operation are in jeopardy."[21] In early December, the federal and provincial governments agreed to provide a subsidy to help keep the mine open. Despite the financial assistance, on 17 December the company announced it would limit operations and reduce staff to remain afloat. By the end of the month, 40 per cent of underground workers, 59 per cent of mill workers, and 12 per cent of salaried employees had lost their jobs.[22] There were more layoffs in subsequent months, as mining continued on a more limited basis. Now-vacant houses at the Townsite were boarded up, and the local Royal Bank branch closed.[23]

On 27 February the company announced that economic conditions had made it "impractical to prolong operations even with the assistance which has been received."[24] The mine was shut down completely; some residents began leaving immediately. Six months later, BM&S was placed in "voluntary liquidation," and its parent, Howe Sound Company, took charge of the Britannia property.[25] By December 1958 copper prices had risen, and the new managers resumed limited operations in the mine and mill in 1959. To save money, the company moved all operations to the Beach and closed the Townsite, burning many of its buildings.[26] The shutdown, which many had believed permanent, lasted ten months.[27]

While world commodity prices were the main cause of the 1958 shutdown, employer–employee relations played a prominent role in the 1964 crisis. It began as a dispute between the Mine Mill union and the mine's new owner, the Anaconda Company, over annual contract negotiations. The union's demands included a forty-hour workweek with no loss in take-home pay, extra pay for weekend work, a raise of twenty cents per hour, and more control of job classification.[28] Talks were lengthy, and the company called on a conciliation board to help the two sides reach an agreement. However, in July, Britannia's 350 workers rejected the conciliation board's report and voted 97.3 per cent in favour of a strike. The strike began 11 August 1964.

The company hinted almost immediately that it would close the mine if the strike persisted.[29] Negotiations continued sporadically through August and September.[30] The company tabled an offer on 21 September, but three days later, before union members had voted on the proposal, the company announced it was closing the mine.[31] Union President Ken Smith believed the announcement was intended to frighten workers into accepting the company's offer, but Anaconda Manager Barney Greenlee claimed the expense of the strike had precipitated the closure announcement.[32] Strikers at Britannia immediately mounted a picket line to prevent the company from removing mine equipment, and over the following months held rallies and petitioned government officials to oppose Anaconda's closure efforts.[33] When Anaconda claimed ownership of the union hall, located on company property, union members staged a sit-in and took the company to court to regain their right to use the hall.[34] After a court injunction prevented strikers from blocking entrances or picketing in the industrial areas of the property, company managers began dismantling and removing equipment themselves, and the *Province* newspaper reported that Britannia "would be a ghost mine in every sense of the word by mid-February."[35]

Despite these predictions, British Columbia's Minister of Mines Donald Brothers was able to coax both parties back to the bargaining table in early March 1965.[36] The company and the union reached an agreement, accepted by 92 per cent of the striking workers, and the strike ended on 5 March.[37] Four days later, twenty-five employees were restoring equipment to the mine, while others anticipated their return to work.[38] It took several months for the mine to resume full operations.

Given the different economic and labour-relations climate during the two shutdowns, the differing responses of workers may at first seem unsurprising. It makes sense that employees would be resigned to losing their jobs during an economic recession such as in 1958 and angry with a company that would rather close the mine than bargain with them in 1964. However, when we consider workers' differing notions of community, their responses to the shutdowns appear contradictory. In 1958, one might expect employees who had lived in Britannia for many years, raised their families, and formed social bonds in the community to fiercely resist the closure of their workplace and town. Yet, during the 1958 shutdown there was little collective action to protest the company's decision. Social divisions between married and single employees, coupled with loyalty toward the company, meant that no coherent opposition to the shutdown emerged. Community hindered militancy. Ironically, in 1964, workers mounted an effective campaign against their employer, despite the fact that many of the social structures that had promoted cohesion had disappeared and many employees now commuted to the mine from nearby towns. The strike fostered an animosity toward Anaconda that helped workers present a more united front to preserve their jobs. Community became both a rallying cry for strikers and a rhetorical strategy to garner wider

support for Britannia based on economic nationalism. In both cases, workers' reactions to the mine closures do not immediately square with their shifting notions of community.

In 1958, social divisions among workers help explain residents' failure to resist the shutdown. These divisions, based primarily on marital status, played a central role in defining community membership in Britannia in the years following the Second World War. While married employees considered themselves respectable, stable community members, they characterized many of the single workers as rough transients and often treated them as outsiders. Single employees came to Britannia from across the province and country looking for work. At the mine, they lived in bunkhouses, separated by a creek at both the Beach and Townsite from the houses inhabited by married residents. The creeks served as physical barriers between rough and respectable activity.[39] Socially, single men were largely excluded from local organizations. BM&S sought to attract stable family men to its mine and made families and children a priority when planning recreational events, creating playgrounds, and sponsoring picnics and sporting events. These events held little appeal for most bunkhouse dwellers.[40] Evidence also shows that single men were more likely than their married counterparts to be employed intermittently or seasonally, and were thus less able to commit to local organizations. A study of Britannia workers and residents mentioned in the town newspaper, the *Townsite Reporter*, between 1949 and 1955, reveals that married employees and their families were much more involved in local activities; bunkhouse dwellers were rarely mentioned in the newspaper because few attended social club meetings or held leadership positions in local organizations.[41] Since single workers were less likely to participate in events or volunteer for committees, few married residents considered them equal community members. Although married workers constituted a minority of Britannia employees, they enforced a code of respectability that largely excluded the more numerous bunkhouse inhabitants.[42]

The social divisions between workers helped prevent the emergence of a collective opposition to the 1958 mine closure. Because of their exclusion, few single employees developed the same kind of devotion to Britannia as their married co-workers, many of whom had made the Beach or Townsite their permanent homes. When the mine closed, they had few reasons to stay in Britannia and saw little point in opposing the shutdown. While they may have felt sadness at the closing or frustration at losing their jobs, they would likely not have considered allying in opposition to the shutdown with the married residents who had persistently, if subtly, excluded them. As the *Province* reported, "Single miners had no illusions. They began packing at once and headed for the PGE trains."[43] The day after the company announced the shutdown, recalled miner Al McNair, bunkhouse occupants began "leaving like a bunch of flies."[44] With a large portion of workers gone, it would have been difficult for the remaining employees and their families to muster the critical mass needed to mount an effective opposition campaign. Ultimately, married residents' close-knit sense of community speeded the town sites' dissolution.

However, even married residents failed to maintain a sense of unity or cohesion during the long shutdown process. The many months of uncertainty that preceded the mine closure did not bring residents closer together. Indeed, as *Province* columnist Jean Howarth observed two months before the shutdown, Britannia was "a town torn by internal strife, totally without security, disturbed by a steady stream of rumours."[45] The December layoffs created further instability for residents. No one knew whose job would be cut, or when. National unemployment figures were approaching those last seen during the 1930s, and few Britannia residents could have been enthusiastic about the idea of finding a new job during a recession.[46] Furthermore, because the town sites were small and many married residents formed a close-knit community, friendships were unavoidably severed when supervisors and managers had to fire their neighbours.[47] Some families moved away, and the busy routine of meetings and events was disrupted. Resentment grew when the company transferred employees from the Townsite to replace terminated workers at the Beach, and vice-versa. Miner's son Jim Walton claimed that "the uncertainty of the mine closing caused a lot of heartache, a lot of tragedy in terms of personal suffering." His parents relied on their creditors' kindness to stretch their limited income, and several other families were in similarly stressful financial situations.[48] Columnist Jean Howarth wrote that shortly after the layoffs, people were "withdrawing into themselves, avoiding even their friends."[49] Residents were "caught in the frightening wave of fear and insecurity" that made them less likely to trust their co-workers.[50] This attitude made any cohesive reaction to the mine's closure difficult.

Furthermore, some residents were so weary from constant uncertainty that when the mine closed they reacted with relief as well as sadness. For example, Mrs. Simpson, a foundry worker's wife, told reporters her family was "in a rut, and maybe it would be good for us to move."[51] Others hastened to pull up roots as tension between residents mounted. Columnist Jean Howarth found that, after several months of uncertainty, "the most prevalent attitude is one of 'I-don't-give-a-damn.'"[52] Employee and long-time resident George Hurley demonstrated this attitude when he demanded to withdraw "every cent" of his money from the now-struggling Britannia Credit Union three weeks after the shutdown began. It was an impossible request to make of an organzsation whose entire membership was now unemployed. Indeed, many credit union members feared their savings would be lost if they did not withdraw their deposits immediately.[53] In a letter to the provincial Credit Union inspector, Hurley threatened to create "adverse publicity" if his demand was not met.[54] This was a pivotal moment for British Columbia's growing credit union movement. The crisis in Britannia resulted in the creation of the Credit Union Reserve Board, charged with providing financial assistance to credit unions "unavoidably in difficulty."[55] By securing funds from other credit unions, the Britannia organization was soon able to allow residents to withdraw money.[56] While credit unions were rallying to support an organization in trouble, there was little equivalent sense of solidarity among Britannia's married residents, who had previously considered themselves

dedicated, respectable community members. Gone were the group activities and meetings they had claimed made them a unified group. Many seemed eager to move on. Only a handful of families remained during the shutdown, either because they were hopeful the mine would eventually reopen, or because they saw few job prospects elsewhere.[57] The apparent "death" of the town evoked mostly sadness, blunting any attempts at organized opposition to the mine's closure.

Between 1958 and 1964 the town's physical and social shape altered considerably. Physically, the community was smaller; with the Townsite in the mountains closed, all residents lived at the Beach. Anaconda also employed fewer workers than BM&S.[58] Thanks to the recently completed highway linking Britannia Beach to Vancouver and Squamish, workers did not need to live at the mine site. Several employees now commuted to work from Squamish, Horseshoe Bay, and North Vancouver.[59] These changes affected the way remaining residents and new employees defined themselves as a community. Britannia was no longer a remote town where residents believed people had to "make their own entertainment and fun."[60] While organizations such as the church and Ladies' Auxiliary remained active, and the Britannia Beach Community Club continued to hold dances and baseball games, residents could now easily drive to Squamish or Vancouver for an evening's entertainment.[61] After the road went through, "the people went their own way," remembered miner's wife Betty Manson: "the closeness wasn't there."[62] Cohesiveness, stability, and active local participation—characteristics that had shaped married residents' understanding of community before the 1958 shutdown—were less evident in the early 1960s. Residents who had previously relied on these characteristics to identify themselves as community members were left feeling that Britannia Beach was no longer a community.

Even though some residents believed Britannia's community spirit had waned after the 1958 shutdown, the 1964 strike and shutdown fostered a renewed sense of unity in the face of instability. The strike acted as a catalyst, exposing employees' shared vulnerability at the hands of a large company, and providing some of Britannia's workers with a renewed sense of community that motivated them to act collectively. "The solidarity of the working people is tremendous," miner's wife and *Squamish Times* correspondent Betty McNair reported in the second month of the strike.[63] While the strike's duration caused financial hardship and uncertainty about the future, the sense of fear and weariness that plagued residents during 1957 and 1958 was not as evident in 1964. Some worried, as did resident Freda Arsenault, that "it will take us years to catch up with everything we've lost" during the strike. However, the fact that help was being given to those struggling to make ends meet heartened others. The *Vancouver Times* reported that two supermarkets in Squamish and North Vancouver were offering free groceries to striking families, while union officials promised to contact workers' creditors in an attempt to have monthly bills suspended for the duration of the strike.[64] Workers also received strike pay from the union.[65] Mine Mill leaders held frequent meetings with strikers, and formed committees to organize social events and fundraisers, and to publish strike bulletins.[66] This kind of assistance brought employees, some of whom lived in different towns, in close and regular contact with each other. It also helped striking workers focus on walking picket lines and opposing the company's threatened closure, keeping feelings of uncertainty partially at bay.

The union also provided a common program around which employees could rally. Workers and residents were working toward a common goal, and assisting each other. The result was a noted "return of community interest which had not been in evidence for some years."[67] "It's almost as if the strike has brought us all closer together," one woman told a Squamish reporter.[68] Betty McNair believed the picket lines and the efforts of the strike committees had prompted "more visiting and togetherness" than "since before the road opened."[69] The strike provided a rallying point for many employees, creating a level of social interaction not seen since before 1958. While exclusive notions of community divided residents in 1958, the sense of community precipitated by the 1964 strike helped to unite and sustain workers during the period of uncertainty.

The union's ability to foster a renewed sense of community at Britannia was particularly significant given the circumstances Mine Mill faced as a known "Red" union during the Cold War. Since the late 1940s, the union had faced continuous red-baiting, and resisted attempts—both from inside and outside the labour movement—to purge its leadership of Communist Party members and sympathizers.[70] As a "centre of communist strength," Mine Mill was particularly susceptible; its members were harassed and its delegates prevented from attending union conventions south of the border.[71] Between 1949 and 1965 the union also faced a series of certification challenges from the competing Steelworkers' Union. The tense atmosphere may account for the union's seemingly quiescent reaction to the 1958 shutdown. In 1955, Mine Mill's international leadership granted autonomy to its Canadian locals, but the red-baiting continued.[72] During the 1964 strike, several journalists accused Mine Mill of making Britannia "an issue they can sink their pink teeth into."[73] Britannia was a "fertile field for reds," according to the *Province*'s editor, who claimed the workers' protest was a futile "red-led furor."[74] Despite the attacks, union leadership was able to rally Britannia's workers and residents against their employer.

The union solidarity that fed opposition to the company in 1964 contrasted sharply with the company loyalty prevalent six years earlier. How residents viewed the company within or without the community influenced their divergent reactions to the shutdown and strike. Loyalty to the company among married employees, especially, helped to inhibit collective opposition to the mine's closure in 1958. To many, the company was a valued member of their community. After all, BM&S had built the townsites and operated the mine for five decades. More so than single employees, married residents approved of the company's efforts to build infrastructure, such as the community church, and to provide benefits for stable workers.[75] Married workers were more

likely to benefit from employee incentives—such as life insurance and company store dividends—because they stayed at the mine longer on average than their unmarried co-workers, and because the company favoured benefit schemes tied to employee loyalty and stability.[76] They also benefited from the company's low-rent housing, recreation facilities, hospitals, and schools. They were encouraged to raise their children at Britannia and make it their home. Several long-time residents remembered how the company tried to help employees during the lean 1930s, extending store credit, stockpiling copper, and retaining as many married workers as possible on a reduced work schedule.[77] The goodwill generated by the company's acts made it more difficult for residents to blame BM&S for the shutdown. Since the 1920s BM&S had engaged in a form of civic capitalism that, while it did not avert employer–employee conflict, in Philip Scranton's words, it "bounded and channelled it, humanized it, and obstructed that abstraction and generalization from experience that could constitute class consciousness."[78] Thus, although residents remembered the shutdown as "devastating," and "quite a shock," they believed the company had always been, in the words of one resident, "on guard for the welfare of the community," and hesitated to blame BM&S for the mine's closure.[79] Some residents appeared unable to imagine Britannia without the company.

Conversely, in 1964 many employees believed the company was treating them unfairly. This belief was due in part to the high price of copper at the time the company was pleading poverty. During the strike the price per ton continued to rise, from £209 in March 1964 to £245 six months later.[80] In this favourable economic climate, strike supporters saw the company's threat to close the mine as a mere "bargaining weapon," a way to force the workers to accept the company's contract offer.[81] Union president and former Britannia employee Ken Smith called it an empty threat: "All along they have said they'd close if we didn't accept their proposals," he told reporters. "I won't believe it 'till they move out the track and hoisting equipment."[82] In 1958 many residents believed the company had tried to avoid the shutdown until it had no other choice, but during the 1964 strike few believed the company was considering workers' interests. Some claimed the mine closure was "a deliberate attempt to jack-up the market price of copper" by limiting supply.[83] Many remembered the sacrifices the union had made to help the mine reopen. In 1959, the union had agreed to a forty-four-hour workweek and surrendered some of its benefits, and Ken Smith argued that, despite the mine's changed ownership, workers rightfully "expect some reciprocation now copper prices are up."[84] Strikers found the company's threats more reprehensible because they believed their demands were reasonable. "We believe the men are entitled to a 40-hour week," miner's wife Sylvia Hoeflitch told the *Squamish Times*. "Practically everyone else has it."[85] Smith claimed that, even if the company agreed to all the union's demands, conditions in Britannia would still not achieve parity with those at other British Columbia mines.[86] With copper prices high, many in Britannia believed the company was able to meet union demands, and felt mistreated when the company refused to compromise and threatened to close the mine permanently.

Employees also did not have the same sense of loyalty to the Anaconda Company that previous employees had shown BM&S. While BM&S had tried to foster loyalty and unity through welfare schemes, the Anaconda Company did little to establish such a social contract with its employees.[87] By the 1960s, the tenets of civic capitalism that BM&S had sustained since the 1920s were being replaced by ideas of global capitalism, in which shareholders' interests were paramount.[88] Although BM&S was owned by an American parent company that operated three other mines, Britannia was always managed locally. The managers' longevity, autonomy, and paternalistic approach gave the mine a family-owned feel.[89] Anaconda, on the other hand, was an American corporate "empire" of mining, transportation, lumber, and real estate companies. It owned subsidiaries in four countries and had a reputation for using "coercion and persuasion to maintain control" over its employees.[90] Anaconda showed less consideration for Britannia's workers and residents than did BM&S. Miner's wife and long-time resident Olive Baxter noticed the difference between the companies' approaches. Under BM&S management, she remembered, "it was more like a big family. But when the Anaconda come [sic], they were more into industry . . . and it was more business."[91] Her feelings for BM&S were fond enough that she considered the company akin to a relative or friend, not a corporate entity. Baxter and her fellow residents felt less connected to the new mine-owners, who had only been operating the mine for two years. They did not believe they owed Anaconda anything, and consequently it was easier to label the company an "outsider" and portray it as the enemy. The strike helped workers to redefine community in opposition to the company.

In 1958, the sustained co-operation between BM&S and the union during the months of uncertainty preceding the shutdown gave residents further proof that the company was concerned about their welfare. Initially, BM&S and Mine Mill disagreed over the best way to respond to falling copper prices. Each group used its own rhetoric to promote its preferred solution to the crisis. The company asked its employees to take a pay cut, calling for local unity and sacrifice to help keep the mine open. Management expected workers to share "the company's hardship through an emergency."[92] On the other hand, the union refused to take a pay cut, believing to do so would be to "break faith" with the broader community of base-metal workers across Canada.[93] Though there was sympathy for the company, worker solidarity was paramount. Despite their diverging notions of community, company officials and union leaders did not disagree for long. Together, they reached several agreements that allowed the mine to continue operating. In late August, they rearranged work schedules to reduce labour costs.[94] In October, workers gave up a five-cent per hour wage increase promised in their two-year contract, and agreed to work four additional hours per week.[95] The company's willingness to negotiate and compromise with the union further convinced some residents that BM&S was trying to act in their interest and keep the mine open.

Residents' loyalty, coupled with the sustained co-operation of union and company officials to prevent the closure, helps to explain why there was little public opposition when BM&S announced in February 1958 that it would have to close Britannia until base metal prices improved.[96] Because of the union and company's extended efforts to keep the mine open, many residents believed that "everything possible had been done," and the closure was unavoidable.[97] "You can't do anything once the copper prices are down," former resident Will Trythall claimed.[98] Miner John Dickinson did not blame the company either; business was bad, and BM&S "just couldn't make a go of it, that's all."[99] Rex Lucas argues this attitude is common among employees of Canada's post–WWII single-industry communities. These workers recognize the many uncontrollable factors affecting resource industries, and consequently believe power and authority are diffuse. They have little focus for their hostility, believing, especially in a time of recession, that company officials cannot control the laws of supply and demand or the whims of shareholders. This belief, Lucas notes, inhibits action because "it is difficult to direct intense conflict against an enemy you cannot find."[100] Lucas's theory applies to Britannia's workers in 1958, many of whom believed their town was the victim of economic laws, laws that, according to a *Victoria Times* editorial, "no Canadian government, no government in the world" could circumvent.[101] While some grumbled that the company surely owed them something for all the concessions they had made, ultimately no collective opposition to the shutdown emerged because many believed there was nothing they could do. Anger did not translate into action.

This sense of helplessness and pessimism is evident in the language residents and observers used to describe the mine's closure. Their words often evoked images of death. Resident Elsie Hamelin called the drop in copper prices Britannia's "death knell," while Mrs. Robinson, the postmaster's wife, claimed that watching the mine close was like "sitting by the deathbed of an old friend."[102] Vancouver's newspapers announced the town's unfortunate fate: "Britannia Dies," one headline read, while another article claimed, "the life-blood is draining from Britannia."[103] Reporters claimed there was an "eerie silence" in the quickly emptying town, and described the shutdown as a "tragedy."[104] These images reinforced the presumed finality of the closure and underlined the futility of disputing the company's actions. Death, it seemed, was inevitable. Britannia's ghost town status was all but assured.

While the 1958 shutdown was portrayed as the slow death of a town, Anaconda's actions in 1964 were seen as the unprovoked "murder of a community."[105] Union leaders, strikers, and supporters were not despondent, but positive, insisting after several weeks on the picket line that the strike "remains solid" and "morale is high."[106] Their rhetoric, instead of embracing death, evoked images of local and national community to garner wider support for their cause.

On one hand, strikers and supporters described Britannia as a close-knit community threatened by a heartless corporation. Union bulletins and newspaper reports employed what anthropologist Elizabeth Furniss has called the "politics of victimization."[107] This does not imply that the union's claims about the company were unfounded or fabricated, but they were worded to emphasize Britannia's small size and the hardworking nature of its residents in order to highlight the "discrepancies of power" between the company and the community. The technique transformed Britannia's seeming powerlessness into a moral authority that could be used to justify the union's actions.[108] This was a David versus Goliath struggle. Union bulletins often described the strikers as "little local 663," while the company was termed "the Anaconda giant" or the "giant metal monopoly."[109] Union leaders reminded strikers and supporters that the company was a "billion dollar" enterprise, the "world's largest copper producer."[110] By reinforcing the disparities of resources and power between Anaconda and its employees, the strikers were trying to demonstrate the integrity of their cause. The company was a bully, they claimed, whose "every Scrooge tactic . . . only serves to stiffen the resistance of the workers."[111] The workers were the "good and faithful long-service employees," the "miners and their families who over the years have produced [the mine's] wealth."[112] The union's rhetoric described Britannia's workers as united small-town folks, an image that excluded the approximately 20 per cent of employees who did not participate in the strike.[113] Britannia's embodiment of small-town values made it worth saving, supporters argued, even if, in reality, many of the mine's employees now lived in other towns and commuted to work. Those opposed to the mine's closure appealed to the image of a close-knit community standing up to a corporate giant to help convince the general public that theirs was a just cause.

On the other hand, the strike's rhetoric also situated Britannia within a national community in order to solicit support from across the country. The union especially appealed to a growing sense of economic nationalism, claiming all Canadian workers and citizens should be concerned about an American corporation's efforts to close Britannia mine. Union leaders had tried this tactic in 1958 without much success. Two weeks after BM&S closed the mine on 27 February 1958 the union submitted a paper to the provincial government's Select Standing Committee on Labour, accusing the company of "callous and precipitate action" and asking the government to take the mine away from "foreign interests" and operate it itself.[114] The report claimed that the unused mine would deteriorate, making it nearly impossible to reopen should copper prices rise. It argued that the decision to close Britannia was made "4,000 miles away, by citizens of another country, and evidently without concern for the people of British Columbia."[115] The union tried to solicit government intervention by insisting the mine closure affected not only Britannia's citizens, but also the inhabitants of the entire province. A *Vancouver Sun* editorial agreed that the company "surely owes this province something more than a series of vague disaster warnings, followed by an abrupt shutdown with no explanation at all."[116] However, the provincial and federal governments did not act. The appeals came too late in 1958; the mine was closed, and many employees had already left.

However, by 1964 feelings of economic nationalism had become more prevalent in Canada. Historian Steven High argues that "by the mid-1960s, a growing number of English-speaking Canadians believed that their country was in imminent danger of becoming an American colony."[117] While some lamented the invasion of American culture in magazines and television programs, others pointed to high levels of foreign investment as proof of the United States' imperialist intentions. Indeed, by 1960, 47.4 per cent of capital invested in Canada came from the United States.[118] Canada faced a choice, according to former federal minister of finance Walter L. Gordon, between independence and colonial status.[119] This new nationalism became, in Steven High's words, "a powerful rhetorical weapon in the hands of working people to be used against companies that closed plants."[120] High insists this nationalist feeling was strongest in Ontario's manufacturing sector in the early 1970s.[121] However, Britannia's employees were using the rhetoric of economic nationalism years earlier. After all, foreign investment was not limited to the manufacturing sector of Canada's economy. Between 1926 and 1963, foreign investment in Canada's mining and smelting sector rose from 38 to 59 per cent.[122] In 1964, the union was able to play more successfully on nationalist fears, placing Anaconda's threat to close the mine within an emerging discourse criticizing American influence in the Canadian economy. In an effort to save their jobs and town, residents and employees began imagining community on a larger scale than they had in 1958.

Strikers used nationalist rhetoric in two ways. First, they described themselves as part of a national community of workers that needed to defend itself against American corporations. Union leaders argued all Canadian workers should be concerned about the attempt to close Britannia mine, because a victory against Anaconda would "benefit workers everywhere."[123] Union President Ken Smith offered the attempted closure as evidence that "absentee landlords (particularly U.S.) have nothing but disdain for the Canadian worker."[124] Workers across Canada were encouraged to support the Britannia strikers because, with increased American ownership in Canada, they could soon be facing a similar situation. Strong opposition and legislation would ensure, as union representatives told federal Minister of Labour Leslie Peterson, that foreign companies could not "enter our country for the purpose of exploitation without regard to the welfare of the workers and the community as a whole."[125]

Union leaders and strike supporters also claimed that all Canadians had an interest in keeping the mine in operation, and implored their fellow citizens not to "let the Yanks rule Britannia."[126] In a letter to the *Northern Miner*, Mine Mill president Ken Smith argued that Canadian taxpayers, who had been willing to provide a subsidy to keep the mine operating in 1958, should expect the company to "reciprocate when times are good for them."[127] A petition circulated at a union rally in October 1964 asserted that the decision to close the mine was made "without regard for the welfare of the Canadian people," and accused Anaconda of trying to destroy "millions of tons of valuable ore" that could have been contributing to the Canadian economy.[128] This ore, union leaders insisted, was "an asset belonging to the people and should not be abandoned."[129] In this context, the strike became more than a struggle to keep the mine open and secure improved working conditions for employees. It was, according to the union, a struggle to "re-establish the rights of the people of this Province and our sovereign government" against foreign resource-extraction companies.[130] To this end, Mine Mill asked the provincial government to enact legislation to ensure that mining properties, claims, grants, and leases abandoned by corporate interests became the property of the Crown.[131] The union wanted the mine "put to use for the benefit of Canadians," not, as one Mine Mill bulletin put it, left in the hands of an "arrogant American monopoly."[132]

Unlike in 1958, many people responded favourably to the strikers' nationalist appeals. They agreed that, as Canadians, they were part of a community that needed to rally to help their fellow citizens. In a display of worker solidarity, locals from forty-two unions across Canada pledged money and support for Britannia's strikers, many requesting copies of strike bulletins so they could "follow the developments of your fight."[133] Several politicians reacted with concern. In a letter to the *Vancouver Times*, Arthur Turner, New Democratic Party MLA, said Anaconda's attempt to close the mine should "shock and startle Canadians into action." Turner claimed he was not as concerned about the dispute between the company and the union as he was about "the fact that Canadian wealth—known and potential—can be wilfully destroyed" by "a large corporation with headquarters in the United States."[134] Charles Caron, chairman of the North Vancouver Committee of the Communist Party of Canada, wrote to Jack Davis, Coast-Capilano Liberal Party MP, asking the federal government to "nationalize this enterprise so that it may be operated in the interests of Canadians."[135] Provincial New Democratic Party leader and MLA R. M. Strachan told Mine Mill representative Harvey Murphy he was concerned about Anaconda's actions, and intended "to pursue this matter further."[136] Private citizens also used nationalist sentiments to voice their dismay at the mine closure. "The obvious solution," one writer to the *Province* suggested, "is expropriation and operation of the mine by the B.C. government."[137] The union's nationalist rhetoric clearly struck a chord, emphasizing all Canadians' vulnerability at the hands of American corporations.

As these examples illustrate, other unions, politicians, and private citizens shared the union's fears about increasing American control of Canadian industries. Many believed the union's assertions that, as members of the same country, they belonged to the same community of interest as the Britannia strikers, and therefore should send the miners assistance and support. Although neither the federal nor provincial government introduced legislation or took steps to nationalize the mine, many people saw the strike in Britannia as an attempt to stand up to foreign companies. This was a community, whether imagined locally or nationally, defending its interests. The financial and moral support strikers received as a result of their nationalist ap-

peals sustained their campaign for eight months—long enough to convince both union and company officials to return to the bargaining table. Whereas in 1958 many observers had only pity for Britannia's "tragic" and scattered residents, in 1964 observers were invited to become part of the strikers' community. This ensured at least some opposition to the shutdown came from across the country, not only from local residents.

During both crises, workers' diverse notions of community played an influential role in their response. The rapid changes affecting Britannia during these years did not destroy the community, but forced employees to re-examine their understandings of what connected them to each other. In 1958, notions of community obstructed collective action, dividing workers and diffusing blame. Residents who had used marital status to define community membership were unwilling or unable to express any effective or united opposition when the mine suddenly closed. However, in 1964 community was a "sufficiently empowering myth," motivating many workers to act collectively.[138] Striking employees believed the shutdown gave them a common purpose and a common opponent in the company. They were able to embrace notions of local and national community that broadened their struggle and garnered support from outside Britannia's boundaries.

Employees' experiences during these crises underline the often sporadic and inconsistent nature of deindustrialization. They remind us that resource-town closures cannot be characterized as inevitable or tragic; these are dynamic periods of intense change, shaped by both material realities, such as income and commodity prices, and discursive factors, such as loyalty and community, that deserve more focused historical attention. Other townsites and abandoned industrial relics likely hold similarly complex stories, most still awaiting scholarly exploration. Not only do Britannia's shutdowns reveal how community identity shaped workers' responses to deindustrialization in unexpected ways, they also help debunk the notion that the postwar era was a time of labour stability and worker prosperity.[139] Shutdowns that occurred in this period reinforce the idea that, historically, deindustrialization has been a process, in Cowie and Heathcott's words, "pockmarked with explosions, relocations, desertions, and competitive struggles."[140] People in Britannia characterized deindustrialization as a drawn-out, traumatic, and dislocating experience, as well as a renewing, unifying, and strengthening one for their community. No single metaphor suffices to explain the diverse reactions of residents when ghosts hovered over the future of the town.

Today, Britannia Beach lives off the memory of its mining days. When Anaconda ceased operations for good in 1974, residents were ready with a museum plan that saw the copper concentrator and other historic buildings preserved as part of the British Columbia Mining Museum. In the face of mounting pressure from developers to take advantage of the site's breathtaking mountain views and convenient proximity to Vancouver, residents and former employees again united to assert their town's mining identity. Today, as commuters and tourists whiz by on the Sea-to-Sky highway, the concentrator stands in quiet testament, its rusting hulk and broken windows one of the only material reminders that this was a place where people worked hard, raised families, and endured repeated crises that threatened their livelihood and refashioned their community—while always keeping the ghosts at bay.

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Notes

1. Steven High, *Industrial Sunset: The Making of North America's Rust Belt, 1969–1984* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 9.
2. John C. Walsh and Steven High, "Rethinking the Concept of Community," *Histoire Sociale / Social History* 32, no. 64 (1999): 255.Thomas Bender similarly criticized American historians for their stilted approach to community, in *Community and Social Change in America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1978).
3. Bender, *Community and Social Change in America*, 6.
4. *Imagined communities* does not imply that community does not exist; the interesting question asks not about a community's authenticity, but how and why it was imagined in a certain way. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Editions, 1983), 15.
5. The exact number employed at Britannia varied continuously, but averaged 600 to 800 workers during the 1950s. In the 1960s, the workforce was much reduced, averaging closer to 350 employees at the mine.
6. Politicians sympathetic to labour repeatedly called for company towns to be "opened up" and claimed company authority violated workers' rights. For examples see "Company Towns Are Discussed," *Victoria Daily Times*, 11 March 1919, 4; "Company Towns," *Vancouver Sun*, 13 February 1934, 16; "Company Town Bill Stirs Row," *Province*, 11 February 1942, 6; "Opening of Company Towns Aim of C.C.F," *Province*, 25 February, 1944; "Alleged Dictatorship in Company Towns," *Victoria Daily Times*, 29 February 1944, 8; "House May Debate B.C. Company Towns," *Victoria Daily Times*, 26 February 1944, 5.
7. "Shutdown Threatens Britannia," *Vancouver Sun*, 11 July 1957, 1; "$15,000 Homes to Make B.C.'s New Ghost Town," *Vancouver Sun*, 22 July 1957, 3.
8. Doug Ward, "Ghost Towns Dot the B.C. Landscape," *Vancouver Sun,* 18 October 1997, C4.
9. See, for example, Patricia Marchak, *Green Gold: The Forest Industry in British Columbia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1983).
10. John H. Bradbury and Isabelle St-Martin, "Winding Down in a Quebec Mining Town," *Canadian Geographer* 27, no. 2 (1983): 133.
11. Rex A. Lucas, *Minetown, Milltown, Railtown: Life in Canadian Communities of Single Industry* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971).
12. Many local histories of company towns adopt a similar approach. See, for example, Bruce Ramsey's history of Britannia, *Britannia: The Story of a Mine* (Britannia Beach: Britannia Beach Community Club, 1967); and Charlie Angus's "King of the Shield," *Beaver* (April/May 1999): 30–36.
13. Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott, "The Meanings of De-industrialization," in *Beyond the Ruins: The Meanings of De-industrialization*, ed. Jefferson

Cowie and Joseph Heathcott (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 5–6.

14. High, *Industrial Sunset.*
15. David Harvey describes this as the change from a Fordist regime of accumulation to a post-Fordist regime of flexible accumulation, characterized by high levels of structural unemployment, rapid destruction and reconstruction of skills, and modest gains in real wages. David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Causes of Cultural Change* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), 147.
16. According to Bryan Palmer, the 1950s and 1960s are often erroneously portrayed as an "end of ideology," a time of unprecedented co-operation between unions and employers. Bryan Palmer, *Working-class Experience: Rethinking the History of Canadian Labour, 1800–1991* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992), 298.
17. "Progress Report—November 1st to 15th, Inclusive," Howe Sound Company (Britannia Division) Records, box 83b, file 24, UBC Special Collections (hereafter UBC SpColl), Vancouver, BC.
18. Palmer, *Working-class Experience*, 338; Ferdinand E. Banks, *The World Copper Market: An Economic Analysis* (Cambridge, MA: Ballinger, 1974), 10.
19. "Shutdown Threatens Britannia," *Vancouver Sun*, 11 July 1957, 1. Given that the average weekly metal mining wage in 1957 was $81.68, this amounted to a net loss of approximately $12.25 per week. "Averages of Weekly Wages of Hourly Rated Wage Earners, Select Industry Groups, Canada, 1945–1970," *Historical Statistics of Canada*, ed. H. Leacy, E78–85, http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/11-516-XIE/ sectione/sectione.htm#Employ%20Earn (accessed 21 April 2006).
20. This is approximately $485,000 in 2006 dollars. By November 1957, the price of copper had dropped further, and the company stated it was losing $80,000 per month ($595,000 in 2006 dollars). "Inflation Calculator," http://banqueducanada.ca/en/rates/inflation_calc.html (accessed 21 April 2006). International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers (Western District), "Submission to Select Standing Committee on Labour of the B.C. Government, Re: Closing of Britannia Mine," 11 March 1958, 4–5, IUMMSW Fonds, box 115, file 11, UBC SpColl, Vancouver BC.
21. E. C. Roper to G. C. Lipsey, 16 October 1957, Howe Sounds Company (Britannia Division) Records, box 54, file 34, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.
22. The total workforce was reduced by 32 per cent. "Analysis of Labor at November 20, 1957," and "Summary of Labor at December 31, 1957," Howe Sound Company (Britannia Division) Records, box 63, file 14, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.
23. Royal Bank of Canada to J. E. Nelson, 31 January 1958, Britannia Mining and Smelting Company, Limited, MS1221, box 57, file 55, British Columbia Archives (hereafter BCARS), Victoria, BC.
24. E. C. Roper to J. S. Roper, 27 February 1958, MS1221, box 74, file 1, BCARS, Victoria, BC.
25. Minister of Mines, Province of British Columbia, *Annual Report 1958* (Victoria: Don McDiarmid, Printer to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, 1959), 56.
26. Al McNair, in discussion with the author, 22 September 2004, Britannia Beach, BC.
27. Kay Pickard, in discussion with the author, 24 September 2004, Squamish, BC.
28. "Bargaining Demands," *Mine-Mill Herald*, February/March 1964, Greenlee Papers (hereafter GP), UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.
29. "Britannia Miners Spurn Wage Report," *Vancouver Sun*, 24 July 1964; "Britannia Faces 'Indefinite Shutdown,'" *Squamish Times*, 13 August 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.
30. "Britannia Wage Talks to Start Again Today," *Province*, 11 September 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.
31. "Britannia Strikers Lose Jobs as Mine Company Pulls Out," *Sunday Sun*, 26 September 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.
32. Ibid.
33. "Women Join Line at Britannia Gate," *Vancouver Sun*, 29 September 1964, 1; "200 Autos Join Miners' Motorcade," *Vancouver Sun*, 31 October 1964, 29.
34. "Union Men Stay in 'Padlocked' Hall," *Vancouver Sun*, 3 November 1964, 23.
35. "'Border' Maps Ready for Britannia Pickets," *Province,* 3 October 1964, 29; "Ghost Mine Spectre Looms at Britannia," *Province*, 26 November 1964, 20.
36. "Talks Bring New Hope in Britannia Mine Strike," *Province*, 2 March 1965, 9.
37. "Long Strike Ends," *Vancouver Sun*, 5 March 1965, 1.
38. "Britannia Bustles Again," *Vancouver Sun*, 9 March 1965, 13.
39. Katharine Rollwagen, "Bunkhouse and Home: Company, Community, and Crisis in Britannia Beach, British Columbia" (MA thesis, University of Victoria, 2005), 58–60.
40. These men were not necessarily all unmarried; a housing shortage in the 1950s made it necessary for some married men to live in the bunkhouses and house their families in Vancouver. Ibid., 39–42.
41. Approximately 75 per cent of those named in the *Reporter* were married employees or family members. *Townsite Reporter* 1:1—9:8, LS856-536 and LS856-474, BCARS, Victoria, BC. After one social club meeting in 1951, the Beach newspaper, *Beachcomber,* mentioned that even though the bunkhouse-dwellers comprised 65 per cent of the club membership, only 25 single men had attended the meeting, and only one had run for an executive position. *Beachcomber* 1, no. 9 (October 1951), n.p., Archie Smith Papers (hereafter ASP), 2687, British Columbia Mining Museum (hereafter BCMM), Britannia Beach, BC.
42. The company did not keep exact population statistics; however, in 1957 Coast-Capilano MP James Sinclair told the House of Commons the mine employed approximately 800 people, and the town housed 312 families. Since all families contained at least one employee (only employees and their families could live in Britannia), we can estimate there were no more than 325 married employees, and the remainder were bunkhouse inhabitants. Canada, *House of Commons Debates* (14 November 1957), p. 1114.
43. "For Mr. Gaglardi—A Message: You Still Can Save Britannia's Life," *Province*, 3 March 1958, 17; "Britannia Folk Wait and Wonder," *Vancouver Sun*, 3 March 1958, 2.
44. Al McNair, in discussion with John Pennant, 1 February 1987, Britannia Mines Oral History Project (hereafter BMOHP), 1878-29, University of British Columbia Archives (hereafter UBCAR), Vancouver, BC.
45. Jean Howarth, "Britannia Very Unhappy Town," *Province*, 7 January 1958.
46. Unemployment levels varied between 2.5 and 5 per cent in the early 1950s, but rose as high as 10 per cent between 1956 and 1959. Between 500,000 and 750,000 people were unemployed across the country at this time. Palmer, *Working-class Experience,* 271.
47. Howarth, "Britannia Very Unhappy Town."
48. Jim Walton in discussion with Mike Ewert, 15 February, 1987, BMOHP, 1878-42, UBCAR, Vancouver, BC.
49. Jean Howarth, "Britannia a Divided Town," *Province*, 9 January 1958, 20.
50. Ibid.
51. "For Mr. Gaglardi—A Message," 17.
52. Jean Howarth, "It Is Hard: Pulling up Roots," *Province*, 8 January 1958.
53. Ian MacPherson, *Co-operation, Conflict and Consensus* (Vancouver: BC Central Credit Union, 1995), 121.
54. Letter from George Hurley, 24 March 1958, file 34, Credit Union Inspector's Records, B262, BCARS.

55. MacPherson, *Co-operation, Conflict and Consensus*, 122.
56. Ibid., 121.
57. The exact number is unknown; however in 1964, only 5 per cent of the then-striking employees had been working at Britannia prior to the 1958 shutdown, suggesting that few remained or returned when the mine reopened.
58. BM&S employed approximately 800 people before the layoffs of December 1957 and the 1958 shutdown. Anaconda employed 350 people at the time of the 1964 strike. See Canada, *House of Commons Debates* (14 November 1957), p. 1117; "Miners Strike at Britannia," *Vancouver Sun*, 11 August 1964, 7.
59. Employee addresses noted on strike registration forms. See Strike Registration Forms, IUMMSW Fonds, box 120, file 14, UBC SpColl, Vancouver BC.
60. Muriel Green, in discussion with Lisa MacIntosh, BMOHP, 1878-20, UBCAR, Vancouver, BC.
61. Kay Pickard, 24 September 2004; interview with Mary Smith, in discussion with Karen Lessey, BMOHP, 1878-40, UBCAR, Vancouver, BC.
62. Andrea Peter, "A Life Like No Other: A War Bride Remembers Her Years at Minaty Bay, Britannia, 1942–1962," unpublished paper based on discussions with Betty Manson, BMOHP, box 3, file 11, UBCAR, Vancouver, BC.
63. Betty McNair, "Britannia a Troubled Town," *Squamish Times*, 8 October 1964.
64. "Many Britannia Miners Dig In: Ready to Live in Jobless Town," *Vancouver Times*, 7 October 1964; "Britannia Faces 'Indefinite Shutdown.'" *Squamish Times*, 13 August 1964.
65. In 1958, the shutdown was seen as permanent; workers were laid off according to union seniority, but did not receive any ongoing financial aid or compensation during the shutdown.
66. "Local 663—Strike Bulletin," 1, no. 5 (2 September 1964), GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.
67. "Britannia People Hope Mine Will Re-open Soon," *Squamish Times*, 26 November 1964.
68. Ibid.
69. Betty McNair, "Strikes and Pickets," *Squamish Times*, 8 October 1964.
70. The American Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 limited unions' right to strike and required union officials to sign anti-Communist affidavits. Although it was American law, it was also applied to the leadership of international unions active in Canada. For more on Taft-Hartley, see Robert H. Z. Zieger and Gilbert J. Gall, *American Workers, American Unions* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 152–153.
71. Ken Smith, Britannia employee and union delegate, was turned back at the border in 1948 and arrested in Seattle during a later attempt. See Mike Solski and John Smaller, *Mine Mill: The History of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers in Canada since 1895* (Ottawa: Steel Rail, 1984), 52–53. Quote is from Palmer, *Working-class Experience*, 293.
72. Solski and Smaller, *Mine Mill*, 130.
73. Ormond Turner, "Around Town," *Province*, 2 November 1964, 25.
74. "Britannia: Fertile Field for Reds," *Province*, 4 November 1964, 4.
75. Residents' varied reactions to company paternalism are detailed in Rollwagen, "Bunkhouse and Home," 49–53.
76. Ibid., 46.
77. Lucille Gillingham, in discussion with Beverly Petrenko, 18 February 1987, BMOHP, 1878-18, UBCAR, Vancouver, BC.
78. Philip Scranton, *Proprietary Capitalism: The Textile Manufacturer at Philadelphia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 418, quoted in High, *Industrial Sunset*, 89.
79. Elsie Anderson, in discussion with author, 23 September 2004; Doug Rogers, report on interview with Reg Eades, Jr., BMOHP, box 2, file 15; and Peter, "A Life Like No Other."
80. The company's actual financial situation is of little relevance here; the residents' belief that they were being cheated affected their actions, regardless of whether these beliefs can be substantiated. In dollars, the price of copper increased from $580 to $680 per ton. "The Truth about Britannia Mine," *Vancouver Sun*, 9 September 1964, 9.
81. Doug Collins, "Bob's Ghost," *Vancouver Times*, 3 October 1964.
82. "Mine Will Close," *Province*, 26 September 1964; "Britannia to Shut but Vote Goes On," *Province*, 28 September 1964.
83. Labour unrest in Rhodesia and Congo during the same period was contributing to a worldwide drop in the copper supply and raising the metal's price, fuelling the miners' suspicions about the company's intentions. "Uneasy Calm at Britannia," *Province*, 29 September 1964; "Many Britannia Miners Dig In."
84. Collins, "Bob's Ghost"; "Mine Will Close," *Province*, 26 September 1964.
85. "Britannia Faces 'Indefinite Shutdown.'"
86. Collins, "Bob's Ghost."
87. The term *social contract* is used to describe a relationship between employees and employers in which employers recognize the way their business affects individual workers, their families, and communities. See Steve May and Laura Morrison, "Making Sense of Restructuring," in *Beyond the Ruins*, ed. Cowie and Heathcott, 260.
88. High, *Industrial Sunset*, 89.
89. From 1922 until its bankruptcy, BM&S employed three general managers. One, C. P. Browning, held the position for twenty-five years. Each had worked for the company in various capacities before becoming general manager.
90. Norman Girvan, *Copper in Chile: A Study in Conflict between Corporate and National Economy* (Kingston, Jamaica: Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of the West Indies, 1972), 37; Laurie Mercier, *Anaconda: Labour, Community, and Culture in Montana's Smelter City* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 20.
91. Olive Baxter, in discussion with Sue Hall, 15 February, 1987, BMOHP, 1878-3, UBCAR, Vancouver, BC.
92. "$15,000 Homes to Make B.C.'s New Ghost Town," 3.
93. Ibid.
94. "Britannia Mine, Union Plan Economies to Keep Running," *Vancouver Sun*, 23 August 1957, 16.
95. Canada, *House of Commons Debates* (14 November 1957), p. 1115.
96. "For Mr. Gaglardi—A Message," 17.
97. Doug Collins, "My MP," *Vancouver Times*, 7 November 1964.
98. Will Trythall, in discussion with author, 23 September 2004.
99. Elsie Hamelin John Dickinson, in discussion with Janice Clark, February 1987, BMOHP, 1878-14, UBCAR, Vancouver, BC.
100. Lucas, *Minetown, Milltown, Railtown*, 334–339.
101. "Who Pays the Shot?" *Victoria Times*, 4 September 1957.
102. Katherine Decker, "Life at Britannia," unpublished paper based on discussions with Elsie Hamelin, BMOHP, box 3, file 4, UBCAR, Vancouver, BC; "$15,000 Homes to Make B.C.'s New Ghost Town," 3.
103. "Death of a Whole Town at Least Deserves an Inquest," *Vancouver Sun*, 11 March 1958, 4; "For Mr. Gaglardi," 17.
104. Jack Scott, "Our Town: Man with Ghost," *Vancouver Sun*, 26 May 1958, 21.
105. "We Can't Allow Town's Murder," *Victoria Colonist*, 18 November 1964, 27.
106. "Local 663 Strike Bulletin" No. 5, Vol. 1, 2 September 1964, GP, UBC SpColl,

Vancouver, B.C.

107. The term is often used to explore how rural settler communities oppose intrusion by urban governments and/or expanding resource industries. Elizabeth Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999), 88–89.

108. Ibid., 88.

109. *Local 663—Strike Bulletin* 2, no. 1 (12 February 1965), IUMMSW Fonds, box 120, file 12, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC; Ken Smith to "All Trade Unionists," 17 September 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.

110. "Save Britannia: Cavalcade Sunday," *Pacific Tribune*, 30 October 1964; "Historic Victory of Mine Miller's at Britannia," bulletin 11 March 1965, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.

111. *Local 663—Strike Bulletin* 2, no. 1.

112. "Britannia," *Western Miner* (October 1964); "Save Britannia: Cavalcade Sunday," *Pacific Tribune*, 30 October 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.

113. Although 97.3 per cent of the unionized employees voted in favour of the strike, only 268 out of the approximately 350 workers (77 per cent) completed Strike Registration Forms, which allowed them to volunteer for picket duty and receive strike pay. Of the remaining employees, it is possible they did not want to participate in the strike, or left Britannia for jobs elsewhere. See Strike Registration Forms, IUMMSW Fonds.

114. International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers (Western District), "Submission to Select Standing Committee on Labour of the B.C. Government, Re: Closing of Britannia Mine," 11 March 1958, 1, IUMMSW Fonds, box 115, file 11, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.

115. Ibid., 2.

116. "Death of a Whole Town at Least Deserves an Inquest," *Vancouver Sun*, 11 March 1958, 4.

117. High, *Industrial Sunset*, 168.

118. Herb Gray, *Foreign Direct Investment in Canada* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1972), 15.

119. High, *Industrial Sunset*, 168.

120. Ibid., 169.

121. Ibid., 250n7.

122. Jennifer Ann Howard, "The Impact of Foreign Investment on the Canadian Economy" (MA thesis, University of Victoria, 1979), 21.

123. Smith to "All Trade Unionists."

124. W.A. Booth, president of Local 651 (Kimberley), letter 11 August 1964, IUMMSW Fonds, box 118, file 3, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.

125. *Local 663 Strike Bulletin* 1, no. 4, n.d., GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.

126. "Britannia Miners Stage Big Rally on Sunday," *Squamish Times*, 5 November 1964.

127. "Union Takes Exception to Britannia Editorial," *Northern Miner*, 5 November 1964.

128. Petition from rally, IUMMSW Fonds, box 118, file 3, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.

129. Paper presented to the members of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, 26 January 1965, 3, IUMMSW Fonds, box 118, file 3, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.

130. Ibid., 4.

131. Ibid.

132. "Save Britannia: Cavalcade Sunday," *Pacific Tribune*, 30 October 1964; "Historic Victory of Mine Miller's at Britannia," 11 March 1965, IUMMSW Fonds, box 120, file 11, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.

133. Leslie Farkas to local union staff, 12 November 1964, IUMMSW Fonds, box 120, file 12, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.

134. "Don't Let Foreigners Destroy B.C. Mine," *Vancouver Times*, 17 October 1964.

135. Charles Caron to J. Davis, MP (Coast-Capilano), 30 September 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.

136. R.M. Strachan to Harvey Murphy, 10 December 1964, IUMMSW Fonds, box 62, file 19, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, BC.

137. "Take Over Mine," *Province*, 17 November 1964. Premier W.A.C. Bennett's 1961 "provincialization" of the BC Electric Company set a precedent for government expropriation of private companies that had not existed in 1958, perhaps making it a more "obvious solution" for Britannia in some British Columbians' minds. Jean Barman, *The West beyond the West: A History of British Columbia*, rev. ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 285.

138. High, *Industrial Sunset*, 9.

139. Cowie and Heathcott, "The Meanings of De-industrialization," 14.

140. Ibid., 14.