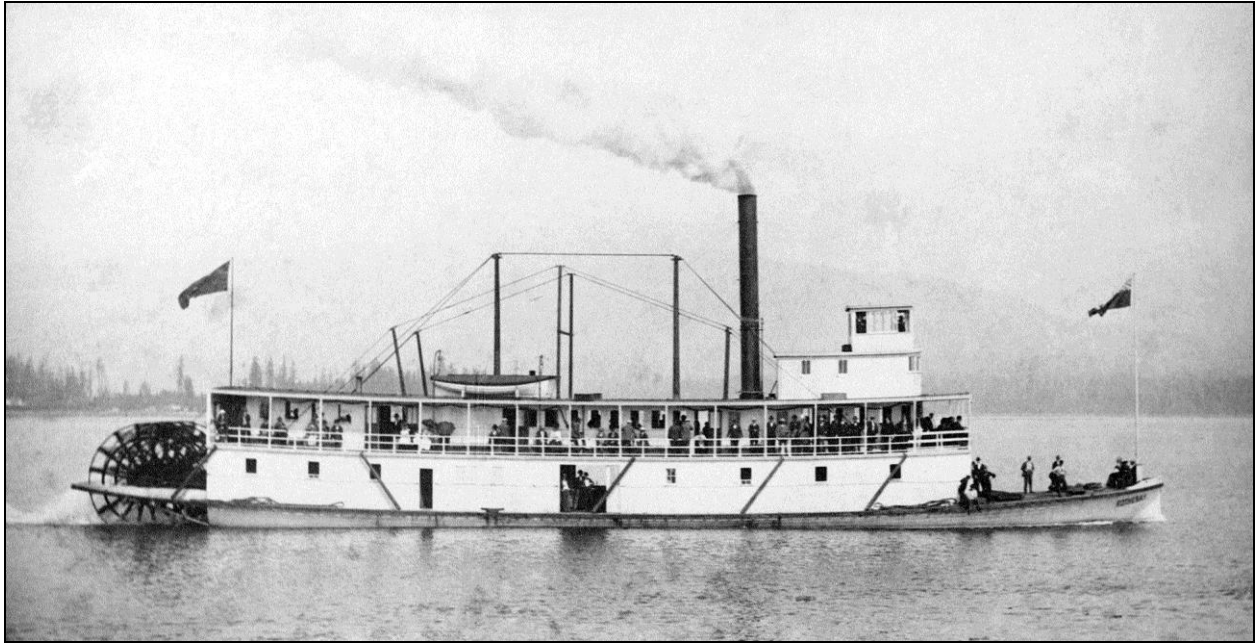


Stories from the Archives —
A Brief History of the ‘S.S. Rothesay’ on Indian Arm

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The sternwheel steamer ‘S.S. Rothesay’ was built at New Westminster in 1898 by ‘B.C. Iron Works’, and was 144 feet long and 30 feet wide. ⁽¹⁾ The wooden vessel was built for the ‘Rothesay Shipping Company’ for service on the Stikine River, but she never left Burrard Inlet other than for short excursion trips out into English Bay. ⁽²⁾⁽³⁾



City of Vancouver Archives (CVA LP 303).

**Sternwheel Steamer ‘Rothesay’ in Vancouver Harbour, circa 1898 —
the wooden freight and passenger vessel was built in 1898 at
New Westminster, and was 144 feet long, 30 feet wide. ⁽¹⁾**

In July 1898, the ‘Union Steamship Company’ advertised the sternwheeler ‘Rothesay’ as “open to charter for excursions or freighting”. ⁽⁴⁾

Also in July 1898, excursion trips on the ‘Rothesay’ were being advertised:

“The sternwheeler ‘Rothesay’ will sail on Sunday at 2 p.m. for Bedwell Bay [Indian Arm], stopping there for two hours to allow passengers to visit Lake Beautiful [aka ‘Buntzen Lake’].” ⁽⁵⁾⁽⁶⁾

In July 1899, excursion trips on the ‘Rothesay’ were again being advertised:

“The attraction for the 26th inst. [July 26th] is to be the street railwaymen’s picnic at Judge Bole’s Ranch [aka ‘Belcarra’] at the head of the Inlet, near Port Moody. The steamer ‘Rothesay’ has been chartered to run three trips during the day...” ⁽⁷⁾

"Blackberry picnic to the old Quarry [aka 'Granite Falls'], North Arm [Indian Arm] of Burrard Inlet, leaving Union [Steamship] Company's wharf by the S.W. [Sternwheeler] 'Rothesay' on Saturday 11 a.m., returning at 6 p.m. Fares: Adults 50 cents, children 25 cents, under five years, 15 cents." ⁽⁸⁾

"Another of the popular basket picnics by the steamer 'Rothesay', Thursday next 28th July. Leave Union Wharf at 11:30 a.m. for Rainey's Cove [aka 'New Brighton'], North Arm [Indian Arm] ..." ⁽⁹⁾

From 1901 through 1907, the sternwheeler 'Rothesay' rested on blocks above high-water level on the South Shore of Burrard Inlet. In the Spring of 1907, her owner, Mr. G. T. Legg, considered re-commissioning the vessel. Her boilers and machinery were apparently in good condition, but her hull needed caulking and other defects caused by the sun needed to be repaired. However, the vessel was not re-commissioned, and the intention deferred until the next year. ⁽¹⁰⁾

In early 1908, it was reported that a group of promoters were considering the feasibility of chartering the steamer 'Rothesay' and towing it to the mouth of the Indian River for use as a marine hotel for summer boarders. However, due to the vessel's owner being out of the country on other business, nothing was done to get the sternwheeler ready for business during the summer of 1908. ⁽¹⁰⁾

In July 1909, it was reported that the sternwheeler 'Rothesay' was lying on the beach on the South Shore just east of the 'B.C. Sugar Refinery', and was to be broken-up. ⁽¹¹⁾

References:

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- (2) Murray Lundberg, "Roster of Yukon & Alaska Sternwheelers", 2016:
<http://www.explorenorth.com/library/ships/sternwheelers.html>
- (3) Edward L. Affleck, "Navigation on the Stikine River 1862–1969", British Columbia Historical News, Vol. 28, No. 1, Winter 1994-95, page 18.
- (4) "Sternwheeler 'S.S. Rothesay' – For Excursions or Freighting", Vancouver Daily World, Wednesday, July 6th, 1898, page 7.
- (5) "Sternwheeler 'S.S. Rothesay' – Will Sail For Bedwell Bay", Vancouver Daily World, Friday, July 15th, 1898, page 8.
- (6) "Sternwheeler 'S.S. Rothesay' – Will Sail For Bedwell Bay", Vancouver Daily World, Saturday, July 16th, 1898, page 8.
- (7) "Sternwheeler 'S.S. Rothesay' – Picnic at Judge Bole's Ranch", Vancouver Daily World, Tuesday, July 11th, 1899, page 4.
- (8) "Sternwheeler 'S.S. Rothesay' – Picnic at Granite Falls", Vancouver Daily Province, Friday, July 22nd, 1898.
- (9) "Sternwheeler 'S.S. Rothesay' – Picnic at Rainey's Cove", Vancouver Daily Province, Monday, July 25th, 1898.
- (10) "Sternwheeler 'S.S. Rothesay' – Proposed use as a Marine Hotel", Vancouver Daily World, Friday, February 21st, 1908, page 1.
- (11) "Sternwheeler 'S.S. Rothesay' – Lying on the Beach", Vancouver Daily World, Thursday, June 17th, 1909, page 5.