

## Stories from the Archives — The Property on Indian Arm known as ‘Valer Park’

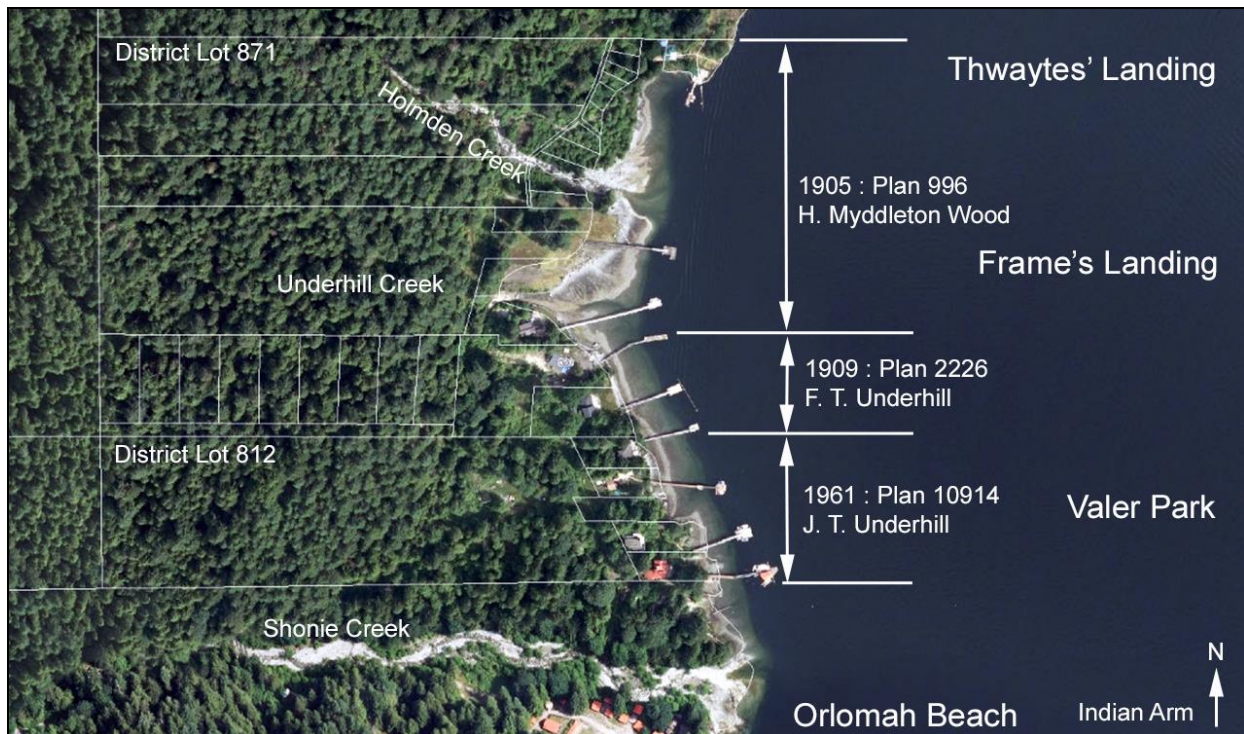
Researched and written by Ralph Drew, Belcarra, BC, July 2017.

In 1886, Captain John Rainey (1828–1903) pre-empted 245 acres (District Lot 812) after retiring from the military, and settled the property which included both ‘Brighton Beach’ and ‘Orlomag Beach’. Rainey built a house on the south 100 acres of the property, which he named ‘Brighton Beach’, planted a garden, and mined gold and silver on the property. <sup>(1)(2)</sup>

Following Rainey’s death in 1903, District Lot 812 was inherited by Rainey’s son Edwin, who subsequently sold the southern 100 acres (40.5 ha) in 1907 to Joseph Richard Seymour (1858–1933) *et al.*, who planned to create a summer resort at ‘Brighton Beach’. <sup>(2)</sup>

Also in 1907, Edwin sold 125 acres (50.6 ha) of the northern portion of District Lot 812 to John Joseph Banfield (1855–1934) who named it ‘Orlomag Beach’ — a composite name of his family members: ‘OR’ for his son Orsen, ‘LO’ for his daughter Lois, ‘MA’ for his daughter Mae, and ‘H’ for his wife Harriet. It was Banfield who built a cottage around 1915 which became the future location of ‘Camp Jubilee’. <sup>(2)</sup>

Around 1900, Dr. Frederick T. Underhill (1859–1936), for many years the Medical Health Officer for the ‘City of Vancouver’, acquired the lot in the centre of the bay known as ‘Frame’s Landing’ (District Lot 871). Underhill built a two-story house as a summer home for his large family, immediately north of ‘Rainey’s Ranch’ (District Lot 812). <sup>(3)</sup>



Source: District of North Vancouver, GIS Website; annotated by Ralph Drew.

**Location of ‘Valer Park’ in District Lot 812, North Vancouver.**

In 1910, William Frame (1865–1941) bought the lot south of Holmden Creek next to Underhill and built a cottage and wharf near the middle of the bay. (William Frame worked for 50 years as the store keeper at the ‘Hastings Mill Store’.) Because Frame’s dock was the first constructed in the bay, and was used as the local drop-off and pick-up point, the area north of ‘Orlomah Beach’ up to ‘Thwaytes’ Landing’ was referred to as ‘Frame’s Landing’. <sup>(4)</sup>

In 1908, Edwin Rainey sold the northern-most 20 acres of ‘Rainey’s Ranch’ (District Lot 812) to Captain J. A. (‘Jack’) Cates, owner of the ‘Terminal Steamship Company’. This property is located on the west shore directly opposite Buntzen Power House No. 2. <sup>(2)</sup>

Throughout the summer 1909, the ‘Terminal Steamship Company’ advertisements for excursion trips up Indian Arm on the vessels ‘Britannia’, <sup>(5)(6)</sup> ‘Belcarra’, <sup>(7)</sup> and ‘Baramba’ <sup>(8)</sup> referred to stops at ‘Valer Park’ with “no grounds charges” at the park. (Thus, the name ‘Valer Park’ can be attributed to Captain ‘Jack’ Cates.) Some of the company’s advertisements even referenced travel to ‘Valer Park’ at no ferry charge to the passenger. <sup>(8)</sup> These incentives appear to have been directed toward promotion of the ‘Valer Park’ location and sale of recreational properties, possibly in conjunction with Dr. F. T. Underhill who subdivided his property in 1909 (see graphic above). <sup>(9)(10)(11)</sup>

In February 1910, the ‘Terminal Steamship Company’ sold the 20-acre property to shipbuilder Captain William Turner (1867–1951) of ‘Turner Boat Works’, who intended to operate a line of motor boats during the summer months. <sup>(12)</sup> Turner built a cottage in the central part of ‘Frame’s Landing’ bay close to the Underhill house. <sup>(1)</sup>

### **References:**

- (1) Ralph Drew, 2015, “Ferries & Fjord: The History of Indian Arm”, Belcarra, B.C., page 155 (ISBN 978-0-9813113-19).
- (2) City of Vancouver Archives, John Rainey File, Ref AM54-S23-2, Box 505-B-3 Folder 9.
- (3) Vancouver Daily News-Advertiser, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 1910.
- (4) Eileen Johnson, “A burst of sunlight from a forgotten attic”, Vancouver Life, July 1967, page 19.
- (5) “S.S. Britannia – North Arm Route & Valer Park”, Vancouver Daily World, Friday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, 1909, page 19.
- (6) “S.S. Britannia – North Arm Route & Valer Park”, B.C. Saturday Sunset, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 1909.
- (7) “S.S. Belcarra – North Arm Route & Valer Park”, Vancouver Daily World, Saturday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1909, page 53.
- (8) “S.S. Baramba – Indian River Park, Granite Falls & Valer Park”, Vancouver Daily World, Friday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 1909, page 20.
- (9) “Advertisement – An Ideal Summer Retreat”, Vancouver Province, Saturday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1910, page 21.
- (10) “Summer Homes – Inkster, Ward & Co., Ltd.”, Vancouver Daily World, Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1911, page 14.
- (11) “North Arm Burrard Inlet Sun Homes – Inkster, Ward & Co., Ltd.”, Vancouver Daily World, Wednesday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 1911, page 30.
- (12) “Terminal Steamship Company & Valer Park Property”, B.C. Saturday Sunset, February 19<sup>th</sup>, 1910.