

the summer of 1888. There was a reported uprising by Indians near Hazelton on the Skeena River. Under command of Lt.-Col. Holmes, a task force sailed from Victoria on July 16 aboard HMS Caroline to the mouth of the Skeena River.

Their families were surely the first ever on Victoria's waterfront waving goodbye to their loved ones departing on active duty. And its reality was probably well understood by the families, for most of the men in 'C' Battery had served in the 1885 North-West Rebellion. (The Skeena affair was resolved peacefully within a month, after the troops had deployed.)

The first 10 Work Point buildings were completed by a local contractor and occupied by the end of 1890. From then, through the period of British tenure and until recent times, Work Point Army Barracks provided quarters, fortress headquarters, an artillery school and logistical support for military units in peace and war. The Officers' Mess and Quarters was home to all the generals and senior-officers commanding on the West Coast, including the joint headquarters for the army, navy and air force defending the West Coast in the early part of the Second World War.

The Venture Naval Officer Training

Centre moved into Work Point Barracks in 1994 and a major building program is now underway.

The Work Point Officers' Mess and Quarters building has been declared surplus to DND needs and although of significant heritage value to Canada, may be demolished in the near future.

The Work Point Arts Project Society headed by Colin MacLock, 388-4090, wants to save the 1890 Officers' Mess and Quarters (Building 1027) and precinct as a national historic site, under Parks Canada. Being structurally sound, the building could serve as a viable regional visual arts centre and museum of Canadian security and coastal defence history on our Pacific Coast. A simple "yes" from the minister of National Defence would do it.

The alternative could well be two or three high-rise leaky condos on the last remaining point of waterfront at the entrance of Victoria Harbour.

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## WORKPOINT BARRACKS 1889 ESQUIMALT

### BRITISH COLUMBIA

