

**THE PRINCE GEORGE PLACES
OF
BRIDGET MORAN**

As described in her autobiography
“A Little Rebellion”
together with some historical context

Presented at
The Little Rebellion Conference - Prince George - March 2002
by J. Kent Sedgwick

INTRODUCTION to BUS TOUR

at Books & Co.

1685 3rd Ave.

Art Space upstairs

Vivien Lougheed has asked me to do a bus tour for the participants in the writing workshop of the places where Bridget worked and played, and to provide some historical context to Prince George. The intent is to give you some background material for your writing assignment.

Given the conference focus is Bridget's book, *A Little Rebellion*, I began with a careful reading of the book to identify places that we could visit. When I compiled a chronology of her time in Prince George, 45 years (1954 to 1999), I recognized that she was here during the time when the city underwent a transformation from a sleepy frontier town to an industrialized city - BC's Northern Capital.

That meant that much of the urban fabric she first saw, coming here in 1954, had vanished - demolished for renewal, especially during the 1960s. So the first difficulty was to find a way to convey to you what she first experienced. That I have tried to do with some slides following this introduction, and photos that you will see in the tour booklet which we will hand out on the bus.

The second difficulty related to her close affinity with the First Nations people of the region - especially those living west of Prince George which was her social work district. We couldn't visit those on a bus tour. But in *Stoney Creek Woman* , there is a passage where Mary John describes a trip she made as a teenager about 1927 to the Shelley reserve north of Prince George. She poignantly describes the sale of the Fort George reserve that led to the displacement of the Lheidli T'enneh to Shelley.

That story offered the opportunity for our bus tour to visit the site of the Fort George native village, to describe the circumstances of the relocation of the village, and to provide some historical context to the founding of the City of Prince George.

Some of you may not be aware that Bridget was a member of the Prince George Historical Society. In fact, it was through a mutual interest in local history that I was acquainted with her, not as a social worker. In the late 1950s, only a couple of years after she arrived here, she taped stories from a number of the town's pioneers, old-timers that often were part of her case load. Nothing much happened with those tapes until, in the mid 1990s, she compiled them into a self-published booklet called *Prince George Remembered* . So I think this historic tour of her places would be in the spirit of her interest in local history.

BRIDGET MORAN MAP LOCATIONS

1. Suspension letter handed out in 1964 in the Provincial Government building, 1600 3rd Ave., now the Native Friendship Centre -still existing.
2. PG welfare office at 1954 arrival was in the government building (former Alexander Hotel) SW corner 3rd/Brunswick - description in book, photo available. The site has been redeveloped. In 2003, a sculpture of Bridget was located on the NE corner of 3rd/Quebec, a block from her former office.
- 3&5. Judy's home then was at 1230 4th Ave. – redeveloped new building. The liquor store was at 1188 6th Ave. In 2002, it was converted to a homeless residence and shelter - still existing. Later it was named Bridget Moran Place.
4. The 1988 book launch was at Mosquito Books on the SW corner of 5th/Dominion -still existing.
6. The Connaught Hotel where she met Pat Moran was at 1043 2nd Ave where the courthouse now stands.
7. They married in 1955 and lived in old army building at 960 3rd Ave. - description in book – vacant lot now.
8. In 1981, Bridget moved into Queensway Towers (since renamed), 9th floor - still existing. It was the site of the Connaught (Millar Addition) School. She lived here until her death in 1999.
9. The historic Millar Addition neighbourhood.

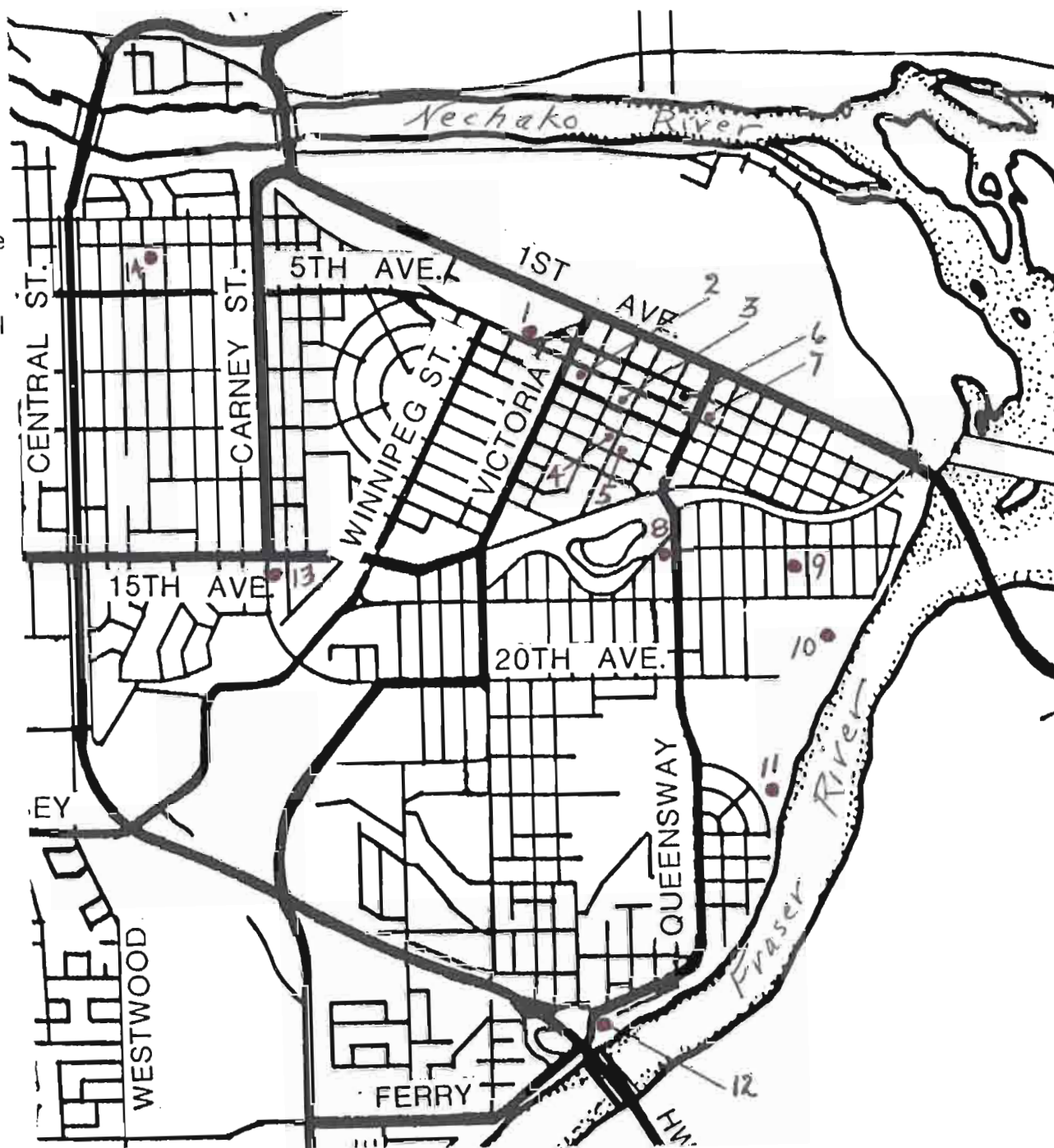
10. Fort George Park, the historic site of the Lheidli T'enneh village which was relocated to Shelley, and the cemetery - still existing.
11. In 1957, Pat purchased Moran's Trailer Court on Farrell Ave. in South Fort George and they lived there until 1965. - description in book - still existing.
12. They moved in 1965 to the historic Close & Brown house on the hill at 3067 Queensway overlooking South Fort George - description in book, photo available - nothing now, .
13. Bridget returned from Vanc. in 1975. She lived in house (owned by ex Pat Moran) at 1526 Carney St. - description in book - still existing.
14. In 1977, Bridget began social work for School District 57. She worked out of the annex on 6th Ave. - gone now - adjacent to Duchess school. She was, for at time, in the new addition of Central Fort George school. The old school was demolished in 2004. She also worked at Quinson school - still existing (but off the tour map).

BRIDGET MORAN BIOGRAPHICAL DATES

- 1923 - born Bridget Drugan; Northern Ireland
- 1924 - family moved to Success, Saskatchewan
- 1937 - father died
- 1942 - country school teacher in Saskatchewan
- 1944 - 2 years in Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service
- 1947 - undergrad: Philosophy, English, History at U of Toronto
- 1950 - graduated with gold medal, enrolled in grad school at U of Toronto
- 1951 - to Vancouver, hired as social worker by province
- 1954 - transferred to Prince George as social worker
- 1955 - married Pat Moran, 2 daughters, 2 sons
- 1969 - divorced
- 1971 - to Vancouver
- 1972 - Provincial Legislature protest
- 1975 - mother died; returned to Prince George
- 1977 - hired as social worker by school district
- 1989 - retired
- 1995 - Honourary Doctor of Law - U of Northern BC
- 1996 - Honourary Law degree - U of Victoria
- 1999 - died, age 76

BRIDGET MORAN PUBLICATIONS

- Stoney Creek Woman (1988)
- Judgement at Stoney Creek (1990)
- A Little Rebellion (1992)
- Justa: A First Nations Leader (1994)
- Prince George Remembered (1996)



THE TOUR

“I do not remember a time in my life when I did not believe that poverty and war and discrimination of every kind were the three greatest evils in the world.” [Rebellion, p.10]

1. 1964 - The Suspension

Letter from Deputy Minister, Department of Social Welfare:

“It is with regret that I find it necessary to advise you that you have been suspended, pending further investigation, from your duties as a social worker attached to the Department of Social Welfare, Prince George, effective immediately.” [Rebellion, p.103]

2. 1954 - First Impressions

“Our office...in Prince George...was an abandoned jail, in the basement of the old government building...The prisoners were moved out, a few partitions were switched around, a coat of paint was slapped on, and these dingy quarters became our offices.” [Rebellion, p.117]



THE TOUR

3.&5. 1964 - Aftershock

“Finally the chill in the street outside the government building penetrated our collective state of shock. A move of some kind became imperative. Deciding that courage of the liquid sort was required, we picked up bottles of benedictine and brandy at the local liquor store and repaired to Judy Kennedy’s home.” [Rebellion, p.105]



4. 1988 - Publication of first book "Stoney Creek Woman"

“Bridget and Mary John launched "Stoney Creek Woman" at Mosquito Books in the early Fall of 1988. At that time, I knew Bridget only slightly and had never met Mary before, so I was curious what the flavour of the relationship was between these women of such different backgrounds. Mary arrived fifteen minutes early. We made her a cup of tea and chatted away till Bridget arrived, fifteen minutes late. "Hi Bridget," said Mary in that lovely soft voice she has, "So are you keeping Indian time?" The two of them laughed like sisters and tucked into the business of signing books.”
[Booksigning at Mosquito Books as recalled by owner, George Sipos.]



THE TOUR

6. 1955 - First Sighting - Connaught Hotel

“A few months after my arrival in Prince George, I met a handsome charming Irishman named Pat Moran. I had first seen Pat in his uncle’s hotel...Pat was leaning on a counter and, with his back towards us, he was watching me in a large wall mirror when our eyes met.” [Rebellion, p.28]



7. 1955 - First Married Home - 960 3rd Ave.

“Housing of any kind in Prince George was in short supply and we considered ourselves lucky to be able to move into an old army building at the end of the business section on Third Avenue, one of the two main streets in Prince George.” [Rebellion, p.45]

8. 1981 - Home - Queensway Towers [formerly, Millar Addition school]

Bridget lived here from 1981 to her death in 1999



THE TOUR

9. 1915 - Millar Addition - The Stork Derby

“...At the expiration of ten years from my death [1926] give [my money]...to the Mother who has since my death given birth in Toronto to the greatest number of children...”[Mark Orkin, The Great Stork Derby]

10. 1958 - Fort George Park - Historic Roots

“That the graveyard situate on the Reserve hereby surrendered shall be allowed to remain undisturbed.”[Condition of Surrender of Reserve, 1911]



THE TOUR

11. 1957 - Cannery Row, South Fort George

“On the first day of May in 1957, after looking at hundreds of houses and businesses, we moved to a property our friends facetiously called Cannery Row, and which we eventually named Moran’s Trailer Court, set on the banks of the Fraser River.” [Rebellion, p.53]



12. 1955 - Close & Brown house, South Fort George

“In February of 1965, we finally left the trailer court and moved into a lovely old house overlooking the Fraser River on the hill leading out of South Fort George.” [Rebellion, p.123]



THE CITIZEN, Prince George — Thursday, December 8, 1977

THE TOUR

13. 1975 - Carney Street house, Central Fort George

“That same year, 1975, we returned to Prince George. We moved into a house owned by my ex-husband Pat - he proved to be a generous landlord - and picked up the pieces of my life where I had dropped them four years earlier. [Rebellion, p.138]

14. 1955 - Central Fort George school

“For the first time in thirteen years I had work which included a caseload and a full paycheque - I was hired as a social worker by the Prince George School District.” [Rebellion, p.138]



College of New Caledonia History Series

© J. Kent Sedgwick 2009

All rights reserved

Printed in Canada

ISBN 978-0-921087-48-9

Additional copies available from
CNC Press

College of New Caledonia Library

3330 – 22nd Ave.

Prince George, B.C.

Canada V2N 1P8

Telephone: 250-561-5811

Fax: 250-561-5845

E-mail: cnclibrary@cnc.bc.ca

Web: http://www.cnc.bc.ca/Visiting/CNC_Press.htm