



Bella Coola pioneers, 1897

INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES

A presentation for Sunshine Coast ElderU
Capilano University, March-April 2016

What is an “intentional community”?

- One created with deliberate intent, ie not accidental or haphazard
- One with a common purpose of some kind
- One created as an alternative to the dominant society
- Often called an alternative or experimental or **utopian** community
- Some other names: commune, collective, co-operative, colony, cult

Intentional or utopian community origins

- Plato's *The Republic* (4th cent BC)
rigid caste system, ruled by philosopher kings, selective breeding
- Essenes (1st cent BC)
ascetic Jewish Dead Sea sect
shared agricultural production, etc
Did Jesus grow up in Essene sect?
- Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516)
outopos nowhere/*eutopos* good pl,
fictional travel acct to communistic
island, religious freedom, equal rts,
satire on English laws & conditions



Thomas More, by Hans Holbein the Younger

On the literary landscape, *Utopia* unwittingly opened a floodgate in the human imagination

City of the Sun, Tomasso Campanella, 1602

Christianopolis, Johann Andreae, 1619

The New Atlantis, Francis Bacon, 1627

Gulliver's Travels, Jonathan Swift, 1726

Candide, Voltaire, 1758

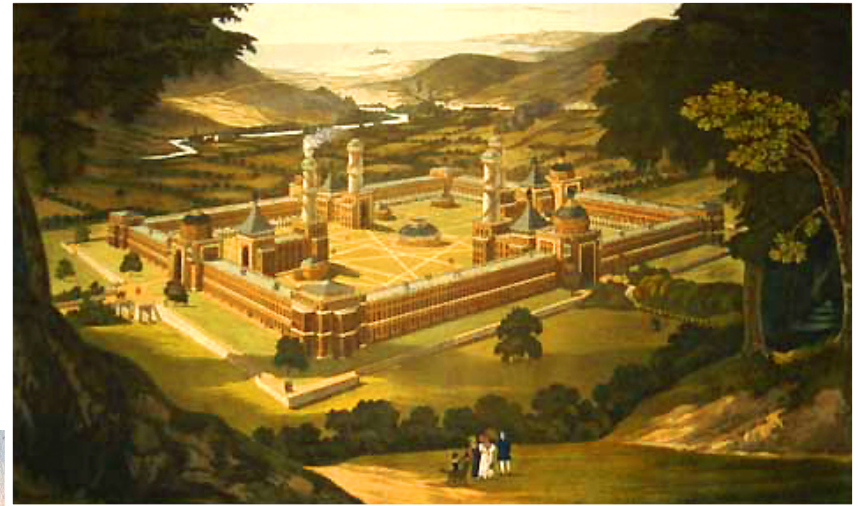
In the 19th century, in the eastern US, life began to imitate art, with a flurry of communal experiments, some of which became very famous.



Jonathan Swift

Utopian communities in eastern US

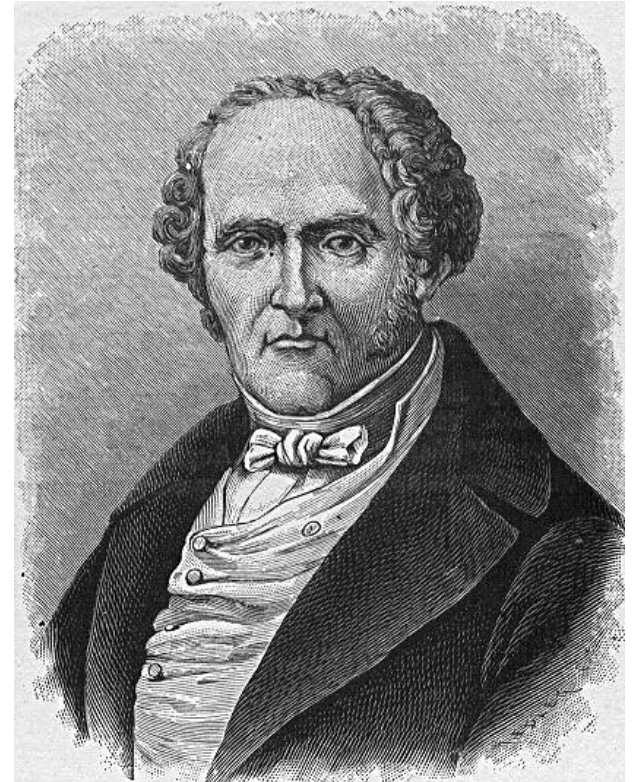
- New Harmony, 1825
- Icaria, 1848
- Nashoba, 1825
- Brook Farm, 1841
- Amana villages, 1856
- Shakers, 1787
- Hopedale, 1842
- Oneida, 1848



Above: New Harmony, as envisioned by Robert Owen.
Left: Oneida Community.

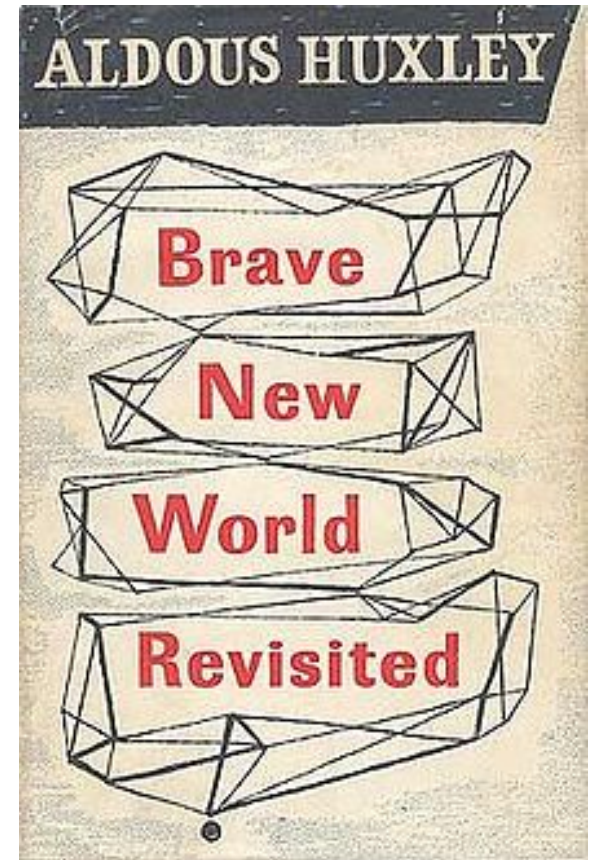
Charles Fourier (1772-1837)

- ideas certainly known to the Finnish settlers of BC's Malcolm Island
- French philosopher and early socialist thinker
- Inspired six or more utopian communities in the US, including Brook Farm
- believed that concern and co-operation were the secrets of social and economic success
- people to live in “phalanxes” composed of different character types with different jobs
- jobs assigned based on individual desires and interests
- less appealing jobs received higher pay
- strong supporter of women's rights, supposedly invented the term “feminism”



Best-sellers continue to fuel the movement

- *Erewhon*, Samuel Butler, 1872
- *Looking Backward*, Edward Bellamy, 1888
- *News from Nowhere*, William Morris, 1891
- *A Modern Utopia*, H G Wells, 1905
- *Brave New World*, Aldous Huxley, 1932
- *Walden Two*, B F Skinner, 1948
- *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, George Orwell, 1949
- *Island*, Aldous Huxley, 1962
- *The Handmaid's Tale*, Margaret Atwood, 1985



Not all Canadian intentional communities started in BC

- Mennonite and Amish groups started emigrating to Ontario in 1786
(These Protestant sects, born of the 16th-century Anabaptist movement along with the Hutterites, were systematically harassed for their beliefs, which were based on early Christian teachings.)
- Nearly 40,000 Mennonites moved to the prairies in 1870s and 1920s
- Large numbers of Hutterites arrived in Canada in 1918 from the US. (The Hutterites, with 350 colonies in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, are the only sect still maintaining a communal lifestyle.)
- New Iceland in Manitoba dates from 1876
- New Jerusalem and New Hungary were founded in Saskatchewan in the 1880s
- The first Mormon settlers established Cardston in Alberta in 1887



William Duncan at 40; village of Metlakatla in the 1880s.
—the industrial buildings are on stilts over the beach
—the mission house is at the far right, next to the church
—the residents' homes are at upper left





Brass band in front of the original church in Old Metlakatla (BC)

The uniforms became fancier after the move to Annette Island, Alaska



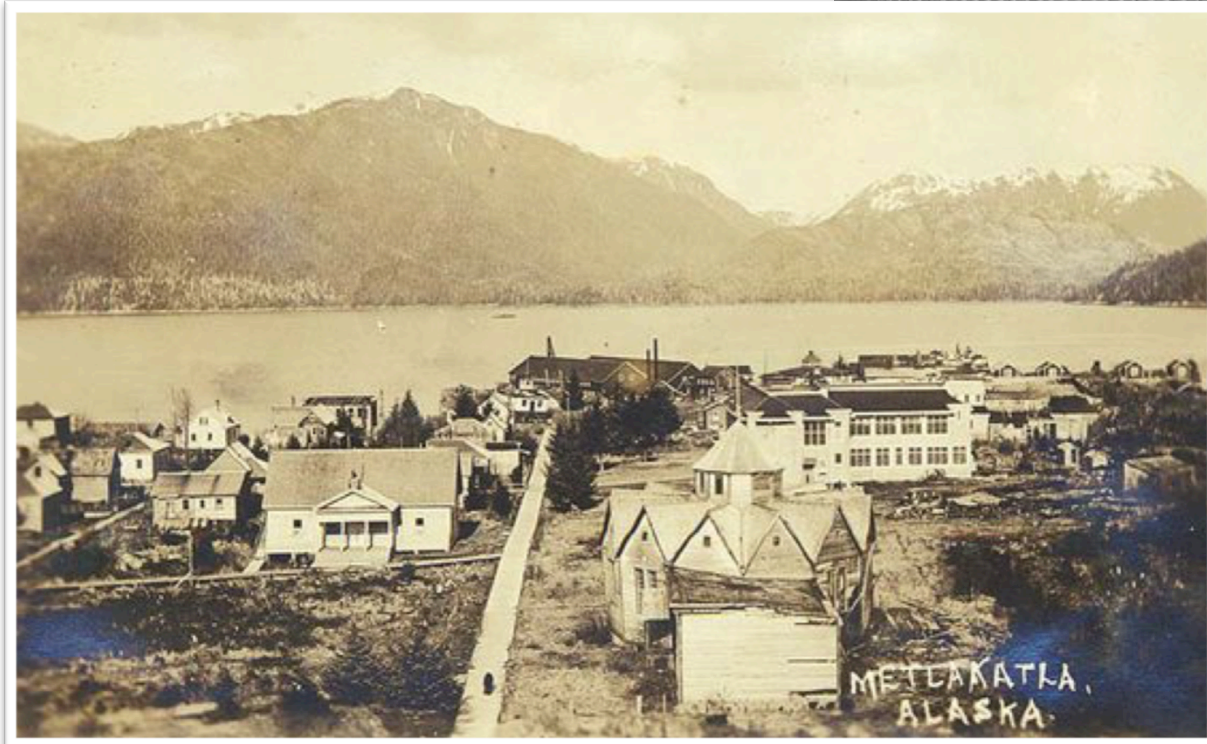
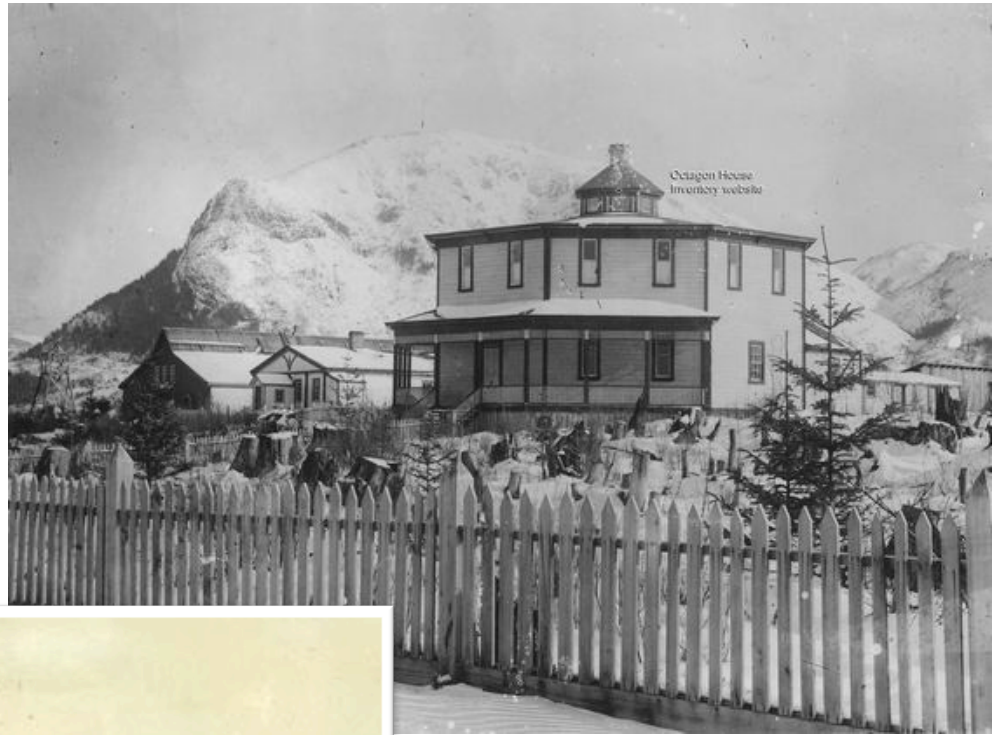


ANNETTE ISLAND

- on the Alaska Panhandle
- 110 km north of old Metlakatla
- population today: about 1,800
- originally known as New Metlakatla
- today simply called Metlakatla



Above: early construction crew



Some of the structures that went up at New Metlakatla were quite unusual. The octagonal building above was the community guesthouse, while the dodecagonal (12-sided) building in the foreground of the postcard at left was the community hall. Unfortunately, neither building exists today.



Duncan died in 1918 and is buried behind his church on Annette Is. His cottage and clinic, carefully preserved, are now a museum. Bottles still line the medicine cabinet; hats and suits hang on the wall above a narrow bed, while Duncan's old Bible sits on the table.



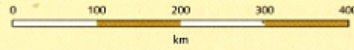


Above: Metlakatla today.



Right: The Metlakatla brass band at Prince Rupert in 1912 to celebrate Dominion Day.

BRITISH COLUMBIA



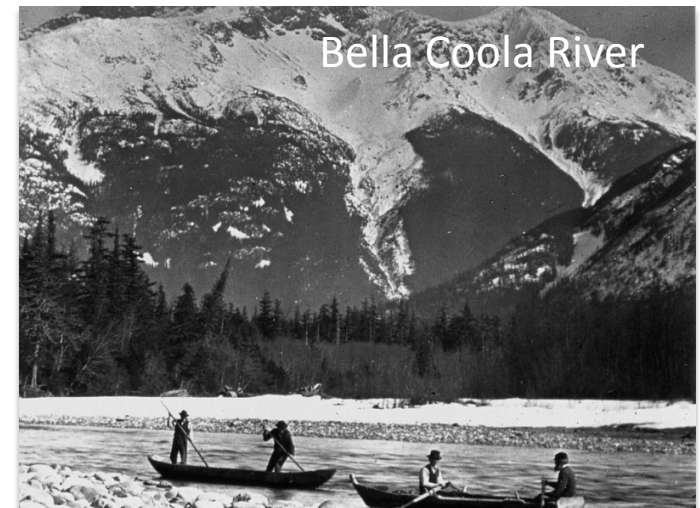
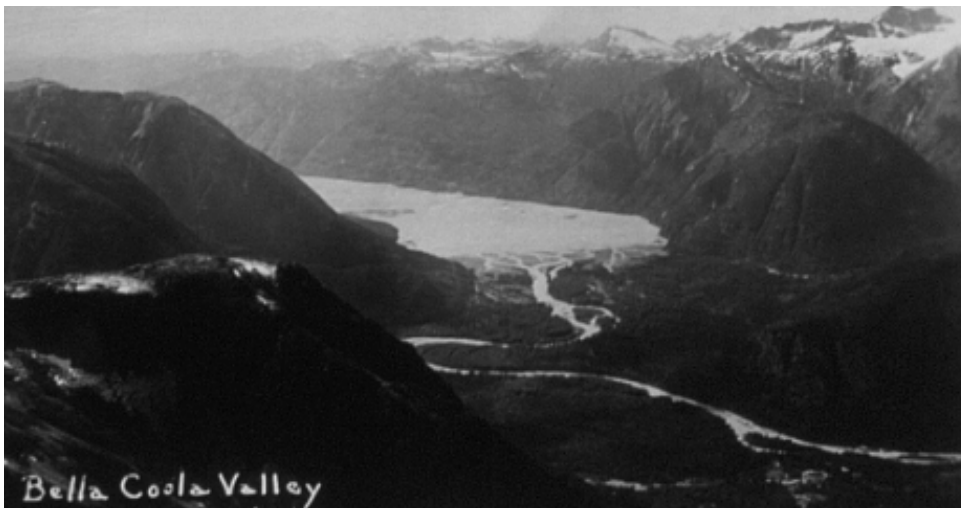
KEY TO COMMUNITY SIZE

- Victoria ■ metropolis
- Kelowna ● over 50,000
- Prince Rupert ● 10,000-50,000
- Pender Harbour ● 1,000-10,000
- Hastley ● Under 1,000



Scandinavian
immigration to
North America
by 1900:

From Sweden
635,000;
Norway 367,000;
Denmark
172,000;
Finland 85,000







Saugstad family members in 1896, Rev Saugstad with beard.



Andrew Svidahl, left, and Mathis Hammer, two of the original Norwegian settlers, squaring timber for construction.



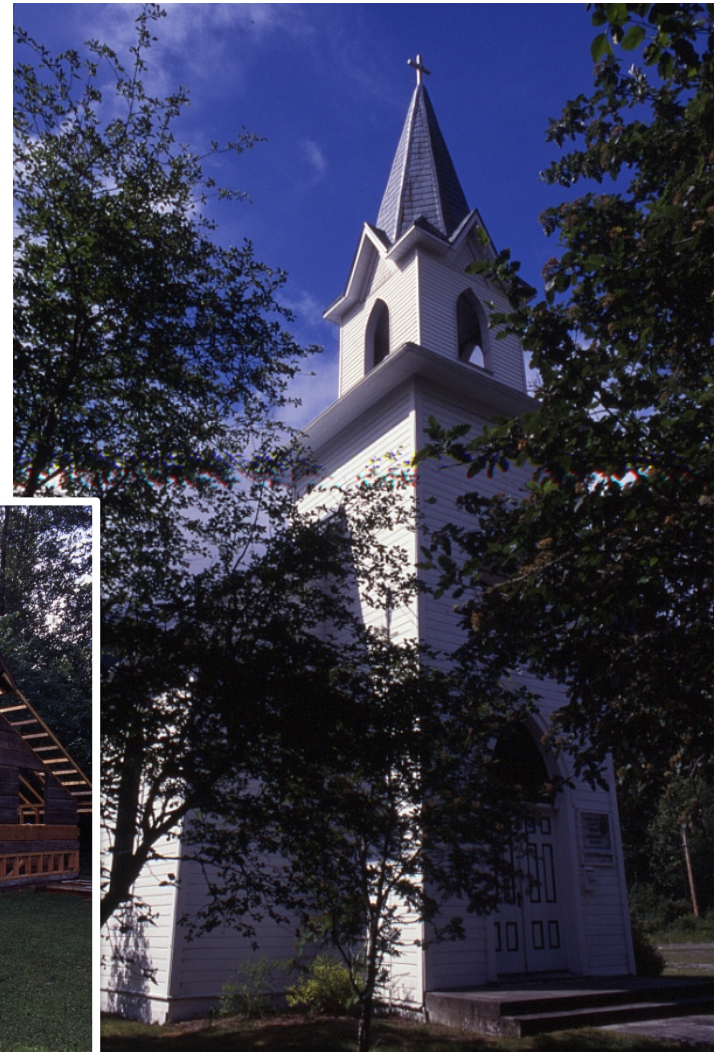
Social calls were an important form of pioneer entertainment. Here visitors converge on the cabin of Ivar Fougner, the colony's school teacher.



Reverend Saugstad's grave.

SCENE OF BELLA COOLA, B. C.





“Restoration Project
By Sons of Norway, Bella
Coola Branch, Heritage
House Society. House Built
in Early 1900’s. Typical of
Homes Built By Early
Norwegian Settlers.
Completion Date 1994.”

Quatsino on Vancouver Island



Quatsino settlers building a wagon road between Coal Harbour and Hardy Bay (1909)



Above: Quatsino picnic
(1909). Right: 100th
anniversary of
Quatsino elementary
school (2004)





Above: dyked fields in the early 1900s.
At right: the same fields today.





Haying at Cape Scott with a homemade cart. Note the solid wood wheels.



Lars and Hans Frederickson with a local tabby cat



Left:
home on
Hansen
Lagoon
Right:
Vick's
store at
Fisherman
Bay





Much of Sand Neck, an isthmus between Guise Bay and Experiment Bight, was reclaimed as grazing land by setting up driftwood fences (top left) and planting clover to stabilize the dunes.



Only lighthouse staff live at Cape Scott today, though a few ruined homes and plenty of old farming artifacts still litter the area.



Left: “The Sun went down while it was yet day.” 12-year-old William, an adopted son of the colony’s school teacher, Carl Christensen, died after his minor foot wound turned septic. The nearest hospital was at Alert Bay, 110 km away.



About 200 people attended the 1914 Fall Fair at Cape Scott.