

certainly time to come to grips with a continuing and important element of our urban experience.

University of British Columbia

ALAN F. J. ARTIBISE

The Gumboot Navy: Memories of the Fishermen's Reserve, by Carol Popp. Lantzville, B.C.: Oolichan Books, 1988. Pp. 160; illus. \$24.95.

While Carol Popp exaggerates by suggesting the Fishermen's Reserve was the "main sea going defence" (p. 11) of Canada's Pacific coast during World War II, she has performed a useful service in collecting the memories of the men who served in this unique branch of the Royal Canadian Navy. Most of the men who served in the Fishermen's Reserve were peace time fishermen, were familiar with the fishing craft that had been turned into patrol vessels, and knew the straits, narrows, and bays of coastal British Columbia. They were an independent lot and unaccustomed to naval discipline, but that was a problem mainly for the parade ground of the training camp. Retrospectively, the fishermen were amused by inexperienced officers of the Royal Canadian Navy Volunteer Reserve who got seasick or who, unaware of local tidal conditions, told them to take up the slack in tie lines. The fishermen wisely ignored such orders. It was with resentment, however, that fishermen recalled a skipper who was so intent on obeying orders that he refused to go off course to try to rescue some downed fliers.

On naval duty the fishermen encountered the same dangers — heavy seas, thick fogs, difficult radio communications, and inadequate charts — they knew in peace time. As naval personnel they faced the additional hazard of a daily rum ration, but despite many tales of drunken escapades and embarrassments, liquor never seems to have interfered with duty! The Fishermen's Reserve was chiefly engaged in coast guard work such as search and rescue, the transport of military personnel and supplies into remote bases, patrols and mine sweeping, and the examination of passing ships. Members of the Fishermen's Reserve never positively sighted an enemy vessel; had they done so they would have had little chance. As one man reported:

All we had on board were three Enfield rifles and a stripped Lewis gun, and they had the goddamn nerve to send us out there to investigate submarine scares. They didn't even know if we could get away or would have been blown up. I guess they figured we were expendable. (p. 62)

The closest the Fishermen's Reserve got to an "enemy" was in December 1941, when they helped round up the Japanese fishing fleet. Ms. Popp correctly describes the Japanese fishermen as "so-called 'enemy aliens'" but does not explain that only British subjects by birth or naturalization could get fishing licences. Moreover, she repeats the common error of referring to the removal of the Japanese from the coast as internment. In fact, only about 800 Japanese were formally interned or incarcerated for specific causes. Nevertheless, the extracts from interviews on the Japanese reveal the dichotomy of feeling in British Columbia after Pearl Harbor. As one informant remembered:

Now these dear old Japanese people . . . there was no way that they would do any harm to anybody. They were the salt of the earth those old people. But there was an element . . . some of the sons and grandsons . . . who went to Japan and took training, came back here, and even had the gall to wear their little navy hats on their boat while they were fishing. Those were the ones that the authorities were frantically afraid of, so in the panic of it all they took everybody and sent them away. (p. 70)

In the brief introduction to this volume Ms. Popp explains that it is "not . . . a book of history but a collection of memories" (p. 10). She lightly sketches the history of the Fishermen's Reserve but does not go beyond the account in G. N. Tucker's official history, *The Naval Service of Canada*. Her research consisted chiefly of interviewing an unspecified number of men who served with the Fishermen's Reserve, transcribing her tape recordings, and assembling segments (usually about a paragraph in length) under a variety of headings such as "Duty and Patrol," "Combined Operations," and "Yarns from Here and There." The rationale for including snippets under one heading or another is not always clear. One incident about an accident in which a man lost an eye appears with only minor variations in two different sections. The short introductions accompanying a few chapters are too brief to be very informative. For example, in the introduction to "Combined Operations" she provides no real explanation for the formation of this commando training programme or for its disbandment.

Ms. Popp has rescued the story of The Gumboot Navy — so called because of its footwear, which was more practical on small boats than standard naval boots — but it is regrettable that she did not expand her archival research beyond some sample patrol reports and accounts of some of the vessels used by the Fishermen's Reserve fleet. Her book would also be more useful if she had provided a list of the men she interviewed. While *The Gumboot Navy* will disappoint professional historians, Ms. Popp

should be complimented for preserving these stories and presenting them for the enjoyment of the men of the Fishermen's Reserve, their families and friends, and those who like seafaring yarns.

University of Victoria

PATRICIA E. ROY

Researcher's Guide to British Columbia: Nineteenth Century Directories, A Bibliography & Index, edited by John S. Lutz, compiled by George Young. Victoria: Public History Group, University of Victoria, 1988.

The editors of *Researcher's Guide to British Columbia* open the introduction with a quote from Charles Lamb, who in 1833 said directories were in the "catalogue of books which are no books," (p. 1) and thus were impossible to read. Initially I empathized; of the 162 pages in this "directory to directories" (p. 2) only 27 are text. The index consumes the rest. Yet this guide is not only a useful research tool but also an interesting book.

The *Researcher's Guide* is the first publication of the University of Victoria's Public History Group. The guide's purpose is to make more accessible nineteenth-century directories — those lists of "residents, their occupations and addresses, and classified lists of businesses, trades and professions. . . ." (p. 1) In the introductory first part, Lutz and Young argue that directories "are one of the richest and most accessible sources of historical information and yet one of the least used" (p. 1).

As "the handbooks of merchant capital" (p. 3), the directories had as their main purpose the making of money for their publishers (from sales, rentals and advertising). Yet a directory also served as a "valuable advertising medium" (p. 4) for a community. The publisher of Victoria's first directory in 1860 concluded that the appearance of his work was a mark of Victoria's "sufficient importance" (p. 4). For historians, directories help reveal "changing market structures and commercial connections" (p. 3). For example, the *Guide's* editors note that "five of the first of the first six directories listed" (p. 3) were printed in San Francisco, and most of the advertising in them was American. While the correct number seems to be four (p. 17), the point is that directories reflected British Columbia's initial trade ties with California. A Canadian national directory did not list B.C. until the 1890s. The editors conclude that for the early years of British Columbia, directories "provide the best available indices of economic growth and diversification up to the Canada Census of 1881" (p. 9).

As for the reliability of directories, they accept the conventional wisdom that those "continuously published by larger companies tend to be the