

James Bay History in a Box

A walk to celebrate Jane's Walks 2020, presented by Walk On, Victoria

Victoria's James Bay neighbourhood is home to many historic buildings and a fine selection of late 19th century and early 20th century residences. Not all of the original buildings are still standing but many have been "preserved" in black and white wrap-around photographs on large utility boxes.

Join Walk On, Victoria by strolling through history on May 2nd or 3rd, or any time this spring or summer. Just look for the large utility boxes, remember to be mindful of other pedestrians and physical distancing, and enjoy your walk!

This walk covers approximately 5 kilometres and takes just over one hour as it rambles along quiet streets. The route is a loop so it is possible to begin at any of the numbered stopping points.

1. King's Printer, northwest corner of Superior Street and Government Street, kitty-corner from the Queen's Printer (same building). Photo 1935. Notice the photo of the old printing presses.



Continue east on Superior Street to the next corner at Douglas Street. Turn right to cross Douglas Street.

2. Stone Bridge, Beacon Hill Park. Southwest corner of Douglas Street and Superior Street. Photo @1900.



Continue south on Douglas Street to past South Park School and turn right onto Michigan Street. Walk one block west to Government Street, cross and turn left. Walk three blocks south to Marifield Street.

3. Bishop Edward Cridge's residence, "Marifield" is a few steps to the left on Marifield Street at Government Street. Photo @1900.



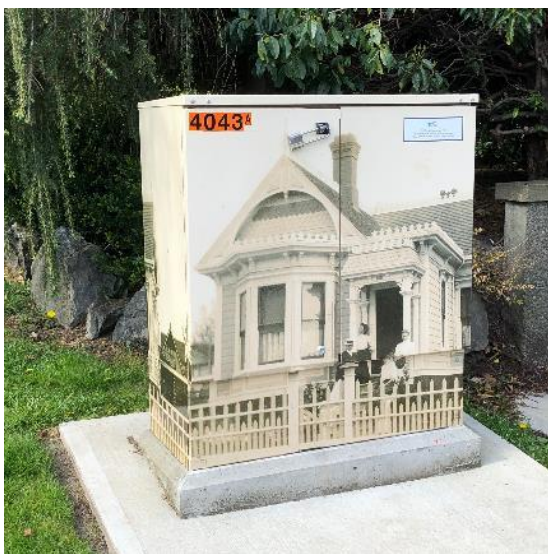
Return to Government Street, turn right and walk one block south to Simcoe Street. Turn right, walk to the t-junction with South Turner Street.

4. “Dee Cottage”, original address, 13 Simcoe Street, now at intersection with South Turner Street. Photo 1903.



Turn onto South Turner Street and enjoy the many heritage homes and gardens on the one-block walk to Niagara Street. Turn right onto Niagara Street and walk west. The next utility box is near the bus stop at Medana Street and Niagara Street.

5. Residence of the Medana family. Photo @ 1910.



Continue west along Niagara Street, cross Menzies Street and continue down Niagara two blocks to Rendall Street. Turn right on Rendall Street and walk one and a half blocks north, past St. James Street.

6. Two utility boxes are on west side of Rendall Street, mid-block beyond St. James Street. “Glaslyn Cottage”, photo 1910. Plus 149 Rendall Street, photo 1915.



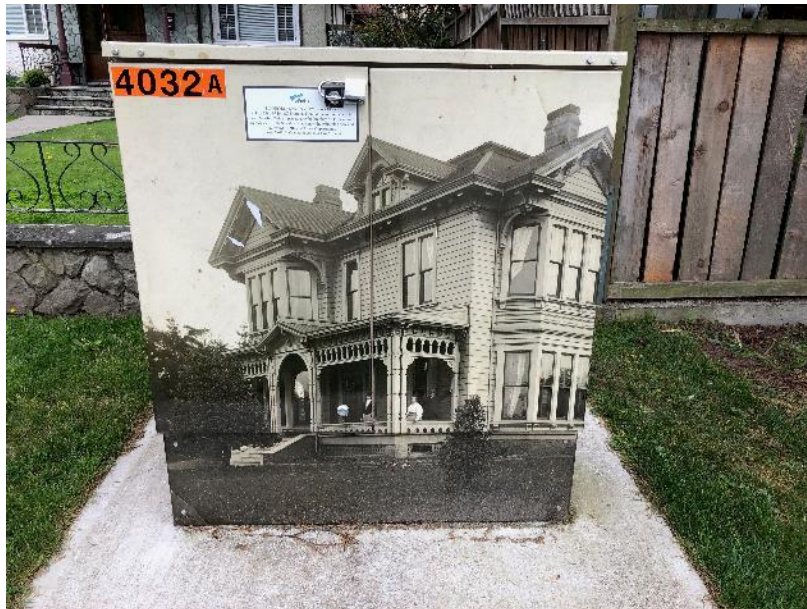
Backtrack to St. James Street and turn right. Walk west to Oswego Street and cross Oswego Street at the crosswalk in front of James Bay Community School. Turn left and continue south on Oswego Street to Niagara Street. Turn right onto the dirt path and continue west on Niagara Street, noticing the large playing field, which is Macdonald Park. Pass the small community garden and turn right into the wide, paved laneway. Continue to the next paved laneway (which is actually Dobinson Street but is unmarked at this end). Turn left and walk along the side of the Montreal Street Community Garden.

7. Three boxes are at the corner of the laneway (Dobinson Street) and Montreal Street. “Armada” was the residence of Senator William J. Macdonald. Photo 1906. The property included what is now the school grounds, the playing field and the rugby club. Margaret and James Fairfull had a dairy herd on the Macdonald property. Photo 1894. On nearby Ladysmith Street the William O’Neil Company had a warehouse. Photo @ 1910. Together, the photos show the broad range of land use in this part of James Bay more than a century ago.



Cross Montreal Street and turn right. Continue north to Michigan Street. Turn left and go a few steps.

8. Residence of BC Premier Hon. William Smith and his wife Martha at 110 Michigan Street. Photo @ 1900s.



Return to Montreal Street and turn left, continuing west to intersection with Kingston Street. Use crosswalk and continue west on Montreal. Where Montreal Street intersects Quebec Street, cross into the small grassy area (Redfern Park.)

9. Two boxes are in Redfern Park. The first is further west, as the road nears the entrance to the Laurel Point Hotel. This box has a photo of Wilby's Garage Machine Shop, which stood at 626 Montreal Street until the 1960s. Backtrack to the larger utility box next to the sidewalk. This photo shows Parker's Garage and Machine Shop, which was located on nearby Belleville Street. Photo @ 1916.



Continue east along the edge of Redfern Park to the intersection of Quebec Street and Pendray Street. Use the crosswalk and continue east on Quebec Street to Menzies Street. Turn right and go south on Menzies Street to Superior Street. Cross Menzies Street at the light.

10. 332 Menzies Street, northeast corner of Menzies Street and Superior Street. This building, kitty-corner from the box and now painted bright pink, still shows its classic lines.



Walkers may continue east on to the corner of Superior Street and Government Street to complete the route.



Route and photos by Britta Gundersen-Bryden, Walk On, Victoria, 2020.

