

Concrete reasons to visit Bamberton

GHOST TOWN: But whispers of the past can still be heard and shadows seen

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News Leader Pictorial

Walking through Bamberton is walking through a ghost town.

And this summer, visitors will be able to explore even more of the fascinating historical site.

You can almost hear the laughter of children and the steady industrial noise of the cement factories made before the town closed in 1980.

On the well-worn dirt road that was the main drag, there are squat walls built unevenly with rocks.

These were made by Chinese workers near the emergence of the town, which opened in 1912.

Behind these walls rested beautiful houses, but since their removal the forest has sprung up again and grown over everything.

"It's amazing what 25 years can do," said Maureen Alexander, president of the Bamberton Historical Society, as she looks around the site.

Bamberton was one of the most important industrial sites in the province. It provided cement for projects across Canada for more than 50 years, and shipped its product around the world.

"The cement shipped to Saudi Arabia, Alaska, and South America," said Alexander.

The town was inhabited by 150 people at its peak and its economy revolved around the cement manufacturing plant.

Other cement sites started popping up, and in the '80s, the cement industry wasn't what it used to be.

Bamberton's plant shut down and its inhabitants moved elsewhere.

Three Point Properties

owns the land now, and they supported the opening of a museum and a walking tour by the Historical Society.

Almost all of the buildings were declared hazardous and have been taken down, but a few remain, along with trails and informational displays plastered with pictures of what used to be.

There is a new segment of the tour this summer — visi-

tors are allowed to drive down to the waterfront and look at the old docks where ships used to collect the cement.

The docks are beside what used to be the main factory buildings, but only one remains, and is still used by industrial workers.

The museum opened two years ago, and has since expanded to include a wide range of material that will

interest the most skeptical visitors.

Alexander said there are three options for visitors: they can do the walking tour, the driving tour, or they can tour the museum. Or do all three.

"With the price of gas, we want to make it worthwhile," she said. "You can make it a whole day event."

The Bamberton museum and tours are open every

Sunday until September.

If you want to book a cus-

tom tour, call the Historical Society at 250-743-9196.

Your ticket

- ▶ **What:** Bamberton historical tours and museum
- ▶ **When:** Every Sunday until September, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- ▶ **Where:** Historic Bamberton site
- ▶ **Tickets:** Museum by donation, tours \$6, kids free