

Museum Musings – March 2012

THE MARBLE BAY HOTEL
HOTEL OF LEDGENDED

The Marble Bay Hotel is gone. Nothing of the building is left, but in its day it was a hub and it remains in the minds and memory of many who live on Texada today.

J.J. Palmer, owner of the successful Marble Bay Mine, hired architect Maxwell Muir of Victoria to design a new hotel for Texada. In June of 1897 a contractor from Victoria won the right to build the new hotel with the stipulation that the building had to be completed in 60 days.

J.J. Palmer was an entrepreneur of substance. Beside owning the Marble Bay Mine he founded Texada City, a community surrounding his Marble Bay Mine and adjacent to the community of Van Anda. The Marble Bay Hotel was built in Texada City (hence the occasional confusion of the hotel being called the Texada Hotel in reports). It was situated on a one acre bluff overlooking Sturt Bay looking north and east across the Malaspina Strait to the mainland.

Originally the Hotel was part of an audacious plan to promote the new town of Texada City. Everyone who purchased a lot in the new town was entered into a draw. The prize was to be the completed Marble Bay Hotel. Unfortunately too few lots were sold and the draw never went ahead.

One of the many stories about the Marble Bay Hotel is that the men who came to look at the mill site and town of Powell River, and who later surveyed the Powell River Townsite, stayed at the Marble Bay Hotel.

The Marble Bay Hotel was in ruins by 1920 and later demolished.

A public park has been developed in the area that the hotel once occupied. It is a beautiful site and overlooks the Van Anda Boat Club with views over the ocean.

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