

“Summer Resort on North Arm”

Researched By: Ralph Drew, Belcarra, BC, April 2025.

Source: [Vancouver Daily World, Tuesday, August 28th, 1906, page 6.](#)

Holiday Homes to be Built at Belcarra Bay

“Nine miles up [‘Burrard Inlet’] is the North Arm [*a.k.a.* ‘Indian Arm’], east of ‘Barnet’, under the gentle protection of lofty mountains to the north and south, is the charming ‘Bay of Belcarra’. ‘Belcarra’ means ‘beautiful land of sunshine’, and the land that borders on the shores of the bay is beautifully described by those eight letters. All about it are big dark mountains covered with nature’s wilderness, but below them is furnished warmth and shelter. About half an hour’s walk from the shore, a mountain stream [*a.k.a.* ‘Ray Creek’] trickles down the mountainside, and though one may espy [catch sight of] the brook, the tinkling sound is everywhere. Strolling through the bushes one finds the remains of many by-paths, used by lowing kine [cows] on their way to and from pasture.”

“It was with a view of exploiting this primeval forest, to see what advantages were offered for making it into a summer resort, that a party, under the auspices of Messrs. Loewen and Harvey [Vancouver real estate agents], engaged the steam launch ‘Beaver’ on Saturday afternoon [August 25th, 1906] for a trip up to Judge Bole’s ranch. That the possibilities of converting it into a resort are favourable, everyone in the party was convinced, and operations for clearing the land and laying it out into lots will be inaugurated as soon as possible.”

“Endowed with beautiful scenery and possessing all the advantages of a resort that appeal to the comfort-seeker, this charming bit of landscape is bound to become the summer home of many of Vancouver’s pleasure seekers. Eight acres will be reserved for hotel sites and the beach frontage will be occupied by cottages.”

“About three-quarters of a mile [~1.2 km] or more from the frontage on Belcarra Bay is another bay called ‘Bidwell’ [*a.k.a.* ‘Bedwell Bay’]. This magnificent bit of land and sea resembles numerous lochs [lakes] of the old country, and is linked with other little bays in the vicinity, thus reproducing in some considerable degree the wonderful picturesqueness of the harbour of Sydney. [Sydney Harbour, Australia???] The bay is a mile and a quarter [2.0 km] long and is about one-eighth of a mile [200 m] wide. Its shores are entirely unbroken and are walled by precipitous mountains, which tower thousands of feet above. As a haven for a fleet of yachts, launches and other pleasure craft the bay’s usefulness is unsurpassed, and for bathing the shores can be easily cleared of obstacles. Launch owners would enjoy the daily cruise to and from the city, the run down the inlet being easily made in half an hour. But the lack of a launch need not bar any one locating there, for within a half-an-hour’s walk [to Port Moody???], the early morning’s train into Vancouver may be caught. As North Vancouver grows, the tram line [from Lonsdale] will be extended to Deep Cove, and a few minutes row from Belcarra Bay will land one at the [tram] car’s door.” [What a sales pitch!]

Afternotes:

1. In 1904, Florence Blanchard Bole (1860–1928), wife of William Norman Bole (1846–1923), sold District Lot 229 (*a.k.a.* ‘Bole’s Ranch’) for \$5,000 (about \$135,000 today) to Captain John Andrews (‘Jack’) Cates (1866–1942), owner of the ‘Terminal Steamship Company’, although land title records indicate that title to the property was not transferred until 1906. The ‘Terminal Steamship Company’ retained the right to use the wharf and picnic grounds.
2. In May 1904, Capt. Cates constructed a 150-foot by 40-foot floating wharf at ‘Bole’s Ranch’ designed to accommodate the many large picnic parties that visited the ranch during the summer months.
3. In 1905, Florence Blanchard Bole applied for the western portion (96± acres) of the old 1870 Bedwell Bay Timber Lease ‘M’, located immediately south of District Lot 229, which was sold to her and title officially transferred in 1907.

4. In 1906, Arthur Charles (A.C.) Ray (1864–1936) of Vancouver obtained an option on DL229, formed 'The Bidwell Bay and Belcarra Land Company' and subsequently purchased the property for \$10,000 (about \$270,000 today). Frederick Coate (F.C.) Wade (1860–1924), KC, was president. The 'Terminal Steamship Company' retained the right to use the Belcarra wharf and picnic grounds.
5. In 1908, 'Bole's Ranch' was subdivided into about 118 lots, most of which were waterfront. The 'Belcarra Subdivision' was marketed by the 'Loewen & Harvey' real estate firm and went on sale at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, March 29th, 1909, beginning with the sale of "26 beautiful summer homesites on Belcarra Peninsula [*a.k.a.* 'Turtlehead Peninsula']."
6. The lots were placed on the market at a price of \$200 and up (today, about \$5,400 and up). All of the \$200 lots were purchased the first day by real estate agent J. Eades Ward (1878–1940) and subsequently resold within a couple of weeks for about \$100 more. The prices continued to increase until some of the lots were sold at \$1,000 each (about \$27,000 today).
7. In 1908, F.C. Wade bought four lots (9 to 12) immediately behind 'Turtlehead Island' (*a.k.a.* 'Hamber Island'), which (at low tide) is joined to the Turtlehead Peninsula by a sandy isthmus. In 1909, F.C. Wade applied to the 'Dominion Government of Canada' to purchase both 'Turtlehead Island' and the sandy isthmus.
8. In 1922, F.C. Wade sold his cottage and properties to Eric Werge Hamber (1879–1960), who became the 'Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia' in 1936. The small island ('Turtlehead Island') in front of the property was subsequently named after Hamber in 1951.
9. In 1927, 'The Harbour Navigation Company' bought 12 acres of 'reserved land' at Belcarra Bay (Lots 'A' and 'B', Plan 4072) from 'The Bidwell Bay and Belcarra Company' where the ferry company developed the 'Belcarra Park' resort facilities including a large wharf, picnic grounds, 10 rental cabins, a dance pavilion, and a small store.