



## NANAIMO MUSEUM

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### **Roof taken off Nanaimo's historic Bastion structure**

Derek Spalding, Nanaimo Daily News, Friday, August 13, 2010

Internationally renowned restoration specialists finished deconstructing most of the historic Bastion in downtown Nanaimo on Thursday.

The heritage building will be completely refurbished and returned to its Front Street location in early October.

Carpentry experts from Macdonald and Lawrence Timber Framing plan to preserve 90% of the original wood during the \$300,000 refurbishing project that will improve the esthetics of the building while maintaining the integrity of the 157-year-old structure.

Original restoration plans expanded once workers began to remove rotting timber. Planners decided to remove most of the Bastion in order to restore it properly. The extra work will not cost the city any more money and it has revealed much more detail about how the tower was built.

Square structural beams were hewed from large trees on the site where it was built. Any patchwork will be done with many of the same techniques from that era, said Randy Churchill, senior project manager at Macdonald and Lawrence.

"When you get into it, you can see the quality of the cut, the chisel work, the hewing work," he said. "We don't want to get rid of any of that, that's priceless."

Contractors from previous repairs have used modern-day circular saws when replacing the wood and others have tried to use hewing techniques to match the original work.

"Hewing is a lost skill, let's say," Churchill said.

Nanaimo District Museum general manager Debbie Trueman boasted about the new revelations that the restoration has revealed.

Museum fundraising efforts have contributed about \$145,000 to help pay for the project, largely from two major donations. The first was from the Hudson's Bay Company, which offered \$80,000, and the second was from Nanaimo's self-made millionaire and philanthropist Sidney Sharman, who donated \$50,000.

The city's parks maintenance and construction manager said this restoration should last longer than previous repairs and will prepare the building so it will be easier to restore in future.

"I don't want to be doing this again in 15 to 20 years," said Ian Blackwood. "We're really trying to maintain the historical component, but we're also trying to make this thing structurally sound so that it will last that much longer."



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The city plans to wrap the building in a protective tarp during the winter season to prevent further rot from the rain.

Metal support beams installed in the 1990s will now be inserted into the original timber beams in order to hide the metal from public view.

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