



CLINTON HERITAGE REGISTER



ESTABLISHED 2026

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CLINTON: WHERE HISTORY MEETS ADVENTURE

The First Nations people who inhabited this territory of land long before western settlement are known as the Secwépemc with traditional territory ranging around 180,000 square kilometres across central-eastern British Columbia. The Secwépemc, which roughly translates to “People of the spread out place” are the largest nation in the interior of British Columbia. Locally, the Peltt’iq’t (Whispering Pines / Clinton Indian Band) and the Llenlley’ten (High Bar First Nation) People have traditional territory around the Village of Clinton.

The settlement that we know today as Clinton occurred in the 1800s upon the development of the Cariboo Wagon Roads and the “rush” from the discovery of gold in the region. As a junction, the location of the settlement made it an ideal resting place for weary travelers and miners en route to the goldfields of Barkerville. As more families decided to permanently settle in the community, it grew into a bustling stop along the Gold Rush Trail. During Clinton’s history, many buildings were erected and while many of those burned to the ground, others still remain.

This Heritage Register is established as a way to prevent Clinton’s history from disappearing from living memory. It is a way to record and document the historically and culturally significant sites in Clinton so current and future generations can better understand their link to the past. It must be acknowledged that First Nation societies underwent significant changes as a result of the European contact. The Village of Clinton, in establishing this register, wishes to record both the wholesome and the problematic historical events, personages and sites in an effort to learn from the past while maintaining historical accuracy.

WHAT IS A HERITAGE REGISTER?

A Community Heritage Register (CHR) is a living document that provides formal recognition of the cultural and historical locations in a community.

A register is intended solely for the purpose of recognizing heritage values, and does not have the regulatory power to limit the ability of the owner to make changes to their property such as with a heritage designation.

Heritage Designation	Community Heritage Register
Provides permanent legal protection for a historic place.	Identifies a historic place that the community deems to have heritage value
Changes require a Heritage Alteration Permit.	Does not provide permanent legal protection.
Is enacted by bylaw.	Is enacted by local government through a resolution

Source: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/celebrating-british-columbia/historic-places/conserving-buildings-properties>

The Village of Clinton will, within 30 days of adding a property to this register, provide notice to the Heritage Branch for inclusion on the BC Register of Historic Places. The BC Registrar at the Heritage Branch will then add it to the Canadian Register of Historic Places.

Being on these registers may improve the property owner's eligibility for heritage funding. However, the property owner is not required to approve the addition of their property to the heritage register.

CRITERIA FOR RECOGNITION

Locations eligible to be recognized in this Heritage Register are locations that reflect the Village of Clinton's Heritage Values.

The following are the Village's Heritage Values:

1. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Locations that have been the site of significant events, notable individuals.

2. CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Sites which reflect the lifestyle or traditions, of Clinton's former inhabitants.

3. RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE

Places with longstanding religious or spiritual meanings for a community or a group of people.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

places with proven archaeological assets that reflect the history or culture of Clinton's settlers and indigenous peoples.

5. ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Buildings that reflect Clinton's unique history or that reflect stylistic designs. Structures designed by notable personages.

Of the above, the emphasis shall be placed on sites that trace their origin to before 1960. However, when determining if a location is eligible for heritage register, Council may consider more recent sites if they are of great significance to the people of Clinton.

ADDITIONS TO THE HERITAGE REGISTER

The Village of Clinton will continue to work with the South Cariboo Historic Museum Society to identify Heritage values in Village limits. It will also accept recommendations or suggestions from property owners and the public in general. The following is the process a location will undergo to be added to the Clinton Heritage Register.

Once a location has been identified as having heritage value, Staff will present the option to Village of Clinton Council, who will provide direction on to staff to begin researching the historical significance of the site.

Staff and community partners will prepare a report to Council on the location, including a draft statement of significance and Council will consider whether the property meets the Criteria for Recognition. Staff may also consult with the property owner on the plan to include the property in the Heritage Register. If Council chooses to approve the addition, they will pass a resolution to that effect, and the property will be added to this document and the Village of Clinton website.

The Village of Clinton will, within 30 days of adding a property to this register, provide notice to the Heritage Branch for inclusion on the BC Register of Historic Places. The BC Registrar at the Heritage Branch will then add it to the Canadian Register of Historic Places. The Village will also formally notify the property owner(s) by letter that the location has been added to the register.

HERITAGE REGISTER

Asset Address	Known As	Circa	Statement of Significance	Added to Register
1418 Cariboo Hwy	Palace Hotel	1887	Page 8	2026

STATEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

PALACE HOTEL

Produced by current owner and South Cariboo Historical Museum Society Douglas Carnegie, with assistance from architect and historian Trelle Morrow.



Title search resulted in listing Fredrick Soues as the original owner of the Palace property in 1886, with there being 12 succeeding owners up to the 2007 purchase by the present owners. Fredrick Soues had purchased two lots of Crown property, both located on the Cariboo Road passing through the Clinton village. He became Government Agent in 1881 and, during his tenure he arranged to build the Palace Hotel on lot one, and an Agent's residence and government office on the other lot, all in 1887. The Palace was a

residence initially and is believed to commence hotel service in 1895. Photographic record suggests the Fredrick Soues family was in the top echelon of society in the community of Clinton, as would be expected as his role in government service at the time.

The architecture of the Palace can be described as high quality 19th century vernacular, in standard wood stud framing. The veranda was included at the time of construction. The fan-shaped gusset with spindles at the ridge, and gussets on the chamfered veranda columns, offer distinction to the building design. The builder incorporated a coordinating dormer design feature on each of the 2nd floor side wall windows.¹

Commercial business and the real estate market in the South Cariboo was expanding rapidly in 1886 due to the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway through Ashcroft. Stephen Tingley moved the head office of the British Columbia Express Company from Yale to Ashcroft.

Emile La Forest became a stage driver for the BC Express Co in 1886, and his family became the first residential tenants in the Palace building after construction.

Photographic record shows Emile with his wife and 2 children on the front porch in 1895. There is no signage identifying the Palace Hotel at this date, and it appears that hotel services commenced after the La Forest departure in 1896. Emile has left his distinctive autograph on the wall of the hallway closet on the main floor.²

The La Forest family emigrated to San Francisco where he continued employment as a stage driver for the Wells Fargo Co. At the time of the earthquake and fire of 1906, Emile had become the Stable Superintendent for Wells Fargo.³

¹ Trelle A Morrow

² Douglas Carnegie

³ Marianne Babel essay



A 1901 B.C. census shows a total of 7 people staying at the hotel, two of which were Chinese servants or houseboys. “Charlie Soues was a gardener employed by Government Agent Soues at the Palace Hotel. Chinese were frequently named Charlie or John, and as he worked for Soues, he became Charlie Soues.”⁴


Fredrick Soues died as the result of a sledding accident in 1915, and the ownership passed to Geoffrey M Downton, a surveyor who used the Palace building as an office until 1921. Geoffrey then moved to Lillooet where he gained distinction for his primary role in diverting the waters of Downton Lake into Seton Lake for hydro electric power.⁵

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The heritage value of the Palace Hotel, relative to heritage values in the community, can be supported by a review of both social values, as well as the architectural components. Social significance is established based on ownership of the property, the occupation

⁴ Johnny Tait, Clinton B.C. “In A Strange Land” by Richard Thomas Wright 1988

⁵ Douglas Carnegie



and characteristic functioning of the building. The physical components of the building established its architectural merit.

There is a substantial local history record in various B.C. archives, plus local input from individual memories in the community, including valuable photographic records in the Clinton Museum.⁶

CHARACTERISTICS

The exterior form of the building has remained as constructed, with the exception of the veranda which has received slight modification of the roof slope, as well as the balustrade on the front porch which has not yet been restored to its original design. The rear bathhouse addition, built to accommodate travelers during its conversion to a hotel, has been detached and moved back ten feet to remain as a separate structure. This detachment has allowed for the original rear door and windows of the kitchen to be exposed and restored for use.

The interior restoration is ongoing, with the current owners removing modern improvements and replacing heritage architectural features using salvaged components as patterns. Much of the interior woodwork has been salvaged and refinished, with damaged and missing woodwork being manufactured using original components as patterns. Multiple layers of wood, carpet, and linoleum floor coverings have been removed to expose the original fir wood flooring. New panel doors matching the originals have been manufactured and installed.

Notable changes to the interior include conversion of an upstairs bedroom into a bathroom, which was missing from the

⁶ Trelle Morrow

original design because of the common use of exterior facilities at the time. Slight changes to interior kitchen and closets have been made to accommodate plumbing, also missing at the time of construction. Renovations have exposed the fact that interior plumbing and electricity were not introduced until approximately 1960.⁷

ISSUES OF COMPROMISE

The Palace Hotel property has undergone many changes of ownership since its construction in 1887. The original owner, Fredrick Soues, and his master builders, appear to have used quality materials for the day. The building floor plan suffered only slight partitioning revision over the years to accommodate the needs of the times. These changes have been removed, and the interior is now back to its original layout.

The site of the Palace has been compromised by the construction of an addition of a doctor's office in approximately 1960. This addition is currently a busy coffee shop which provides public access to the property. The addition detracts from the grandeur of the Palace, but the opportunity exists for a future project to detach and move, or demolish the addition, to expose the approach to the Palace to its original view from the Cariboo Highway.⁸

Other heritage features of the Palace property include the original Bank of Montreal building, which was relocated in previous times to the rear of the lot, and an early outbuilding which houses blacksmith equipment. The current owners plans are for the Bank of Montreal building to be moved back towards the front of the property, adjacent to the Palace, at its original location, facing the Cariboo Highway.⁹

⁷ Douglas Carnegie

⁸ Trelle Morrow

⁹ Douglas Carnegie