



The Gorge Narrows



First log bridge over Gorge Narrows circa 1850s - Image A-05963 courtesy of Royal BC Museum, BC Archives

The first bridge across the Gorge consisted of a single tree felled in 1848 to span the 10m gap across the narrows. A four-log road bridge was later built in 1867, and since then six other bridges have spanned this gap. In the 1890s a walkway was built along the north shore for use as a towpath. Be careful - many people have lost their lives here in boating and swimming mishaps.

THE DRAMATIC TIDAL NARROWS at this site is an important cultural landmark for First Nations of the region. The upper reaches of the waterway provided abundant food (e.g. herring, clams, ducks) and the narrows formed a natural barrier for potential invaders.

In 1960 a large rock in the narrows was blasted to improve navigation through the Gorge, dramatically altering the tidal rapids. Despite this change, strong tidal currents here support a diverse and abundant community of underwater marine life.

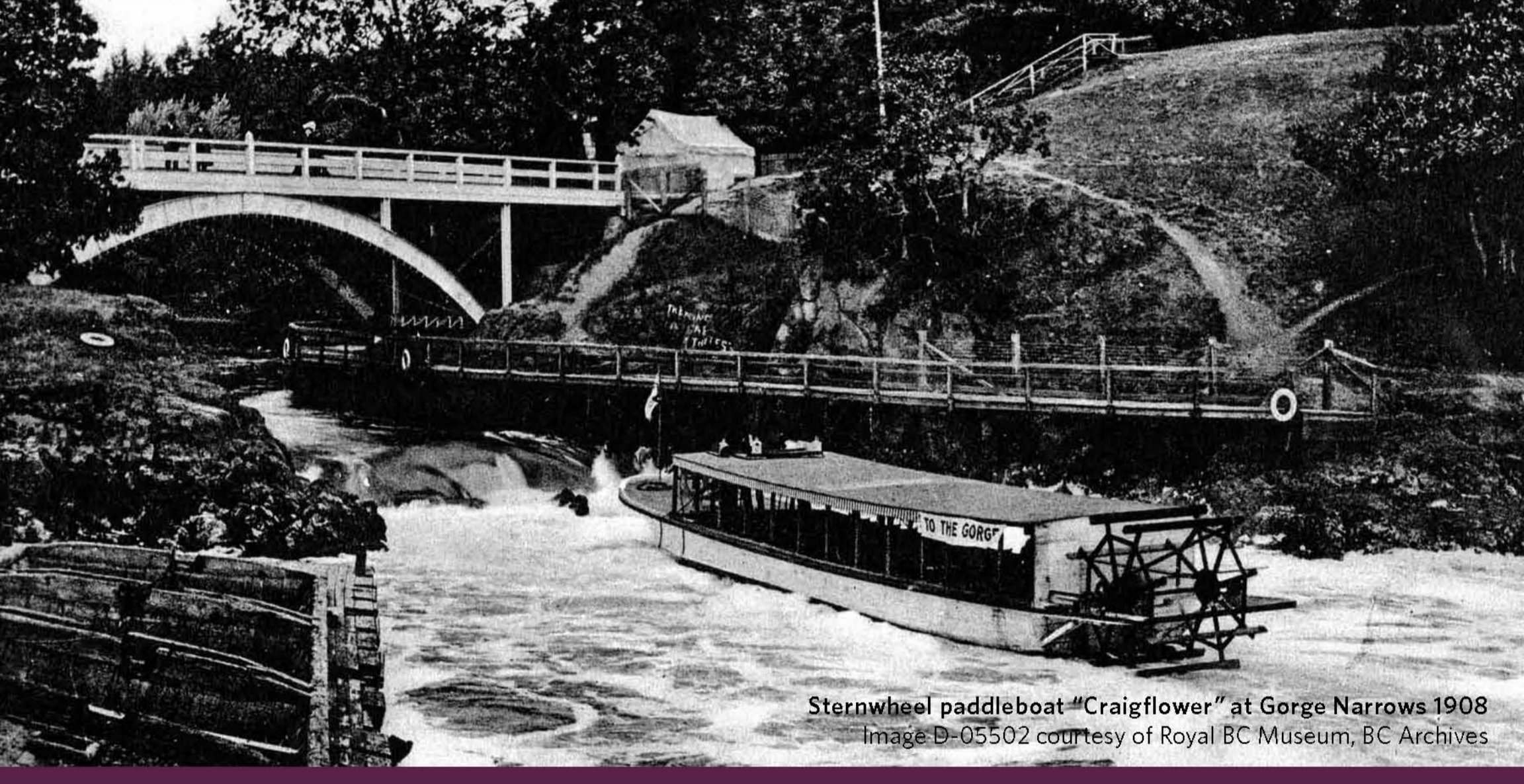


Colony of sea squirts



Sponge and anemone

Animals such as sponges, anemones and sea squirts feed on the plankton brought in by tidal currents sweeping past.



Sternwheel paddleboat "Craigflower" at Gorge Narrows 1908 Image D-05502 courtesy of Royal BC Museum, BC Archives

In the heyday of the Gorge Waterway (ca 1860s-1930s) regular boat tours were offered from Victoria Harbour to view the famous reversing falls at Gorge Narrows.

