

DREAMERS AND DISSIDENTS

A History of the Kootenays

BROADCAST PREMIERE

Monday, August 3 at 8pm

Repeats at 10pm

The rugged beauty of the Kootenays, with its snow-capped peaks, verdant valleys and shimmering lakes, has long lured those who dared to dream big and defy conventions. Drawn by the riches of the land and the promise of a better life, they carved out communities defined by resilience and an independent spirit. In *Dreamers and Dissidents*, Nelson filmmaker Amy Bohigian explores the region's history through the personal stories of individuals who have lived in the Kootenays over the past century. From war resisters to prisoners of war, hopeful immigrants to urban refugees, the film looks at why they chose to call this place "home."

Amy's documentary got its start at a two-day competition and workshop held by Knowledge Network in Nelson in 2013. Fifteen emerging BC filmmakers were given the opportunity to pitch their best stories about the history of Nelson and the Kootenays. Amy's idea came out on top, and she was awarded funding and support from Knowledge to make *Dreamers and Dissidents*.

In the film, Amy sets out to understand what kind of people created this place, what brought them here and why they decided to stay. Originally from the US, Amy made the move from fast-paced Toronto to the Kootenays, so it's a question that holds meaning in her own life; in fact, her story is in the film.

"I've always been interested in how people make a home," she says. "That's been a theme for me for a lot of years now creatively. But I didn't know it would be such a personal story; it really felt like every single person that I ended up focusing on had a certain reflection of why I was here."

Some of the stories in the film were driven by archival photos that Amy tracked down, while others are common knowledge,

such as the displacement of residents in the 60s and 70s by flooding from BC Hydro dams.

"Then there are stories that are classic around here," says Amy. "In Trail, there's always been an Italian community. It was really founded on the fact that it was a smelter town. I thought, there are so many cultural groups around - how did they get here? I was literally rifling through shoeboxes of family photos, finding out a lot about these people."

Each segment of the documentary has aspects that resonate with Amy, but the one she feels most deeply involves three women from different generations who moved to the Kootenays because

of their anti-establishment beliefs and protestations of war. They connected over the counter-culture experience that the area is still known for today.

"It was important to me to tell that story through the eyes of these three

women because war resister stories are typically told by men," says Amy. "Women played a central role in the peace movements that often goes unrecognized."

Opportunity or circumstance - whatever brought people to the Kootenays, for many it was the sense of community that made them put down roots and stay. It's fitting, then, that *Dreamers and Dissidents* premiered on May 28 with two full-house screenings at Nelson's historic Civic Theatre, which re-opened in 2013 after community efforts brought it back to life.

"I think the whole event really confirmed for me that this is a place that celebrates its own people," says Amy. "Having it in the Civic Theatre was perfect because it represents what we're about. We're a grassroots, do-it-yourself, make-it-happen kind of community, and that's exactly what was reflected in the film."

**For generations, people
here have been able to live
life their own way.**

Celebrate BC Day!

Watch *Dreamers and Dissidents* along with other BC-focused programs.

Details on page 27



Mattie Gunterman

In 1898, a pioneering woman set off on foot from the Coast with her family and camera, documenting rugged Interior life along the way.



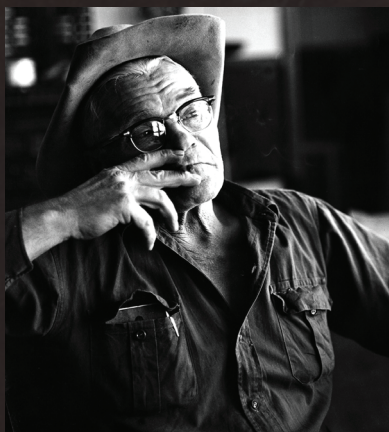
Hannah Hadikin/Betty Tillotson/Irene Mock

Three women who fled persecution for their anti-establishment beliefs found tolerance in the Kootenays.



Jack and Daisy Philips

Lured from England in the early 1900s by the promise of prime agricultural land, the Philips abandoned their Windermere farm to fight in World War I.



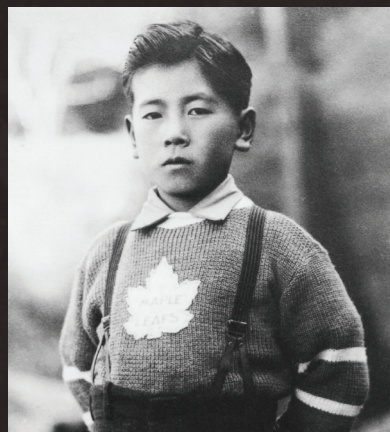
Stanley Triggs

Stanley Triggs documented the farmers, the landscape and a way of life that disappeared after the land was flooded by BC Hydro dams.



Bruce Rohn

Bruce Rohn was a teenager when he and his family were forced out of his childhood home to clear the land for dams in the late 1960s.



Basil Izumi

When Basil Izumi was five, his family was torn apart and sent to live in internment camps at the beginning of World War II.



Gina Landucci

Gina Landucci's grandfather and other Italian immigrants recreated their culture in grocery stores, bocci pits and social clubs.



Sophie Pierre

Forced to attend a residential school in the 1960s, Sophie Pierre went on to become a prominent leader among the Ktunaxa Nation.



Amy Bohigian

With her partner, Jane Byers, Amy found a sense of community in the Kootenays that has anchored her and her family there for the long term.