

Museum Corner: A Page From History

August 2019– Fashion

We begin our fashion show with a photo on the right of Ruth Leslie (Haddock). In the late 1890s to early 1900s, the S-curve was the common style. Shoulder frills and flounces, with elaborate trimmings on the bodice made it appear to pouch over a tiny belted waist line. Much of the dress material was black and made of linen, cotton, merino, or silk depending on your wealth.



Picture below right, 1907 3-piece wedding ensemble worn by Ethel Moore

By 1910 (below left), the style became less puffy and more of an A-line style. Furs added a stylish and expensive touch to outfits.



Ashcroft residents purchased their fashions at the Fosters, and McCosh Stores. The McCosh family of Ashcroft came from Scotland in 1895 and opened a tailor and ladies wear shop. Mrs. Margaret McCosh sold fabulous hats. Hats were a major accessory to every outfit and they were made out of felt, fur, cloth, etc. and dazzled with feathers, flowers, or hat pins. In the early years they had wide brims.



The Great War (1914-1918), changed peoples' lives in dramatic ways. During WW1 people took on a plainer lifestyle including their clothing. Clothing became less frivolous and jewelry was not worn anymore. In 1915, hemlines rose to mid-calf because of shortage of fabric. Colours of clothing were dull and neutral. Photo below from: <https://glamourdate.com/history-of-womens-fashion/1900-to-1919>



TIN CANS USED TO MAKE LADIES' SILK STOCKINGS

Few women who are proud of the fact that they wear hosiery, underwear and dresses made of silk realize that old tin cans contribute from 20 to 30 per cent. in weight to the glossy silk worn by them, says the Popular Science Monthly. The price of silk has increased enormously and to be able to sell heavy silks at a price that would yield a reasonable profit, and yet be within the means of the average purchaser, the manufacturers resort to the practice of weighing the silk with tin tetrachloride, derived from tin cans. Five thousand tons of tin were used for that purpose in 1917.

Pure Linen Skirts \$1.29

In the window tonight we are showing some Linen Skirts at \$1.29, which we cannot very well describe in the paper because we cannot satisfactorily describe them. They are from the Country Club styles, trimmed with piped buttons. What we want you to do is to come down to the window tonight and see them. Belt sizes 22 to 28. They will be on sale tomorrow at 8:30 a.m. **\$1.29**

Four Styles of Dresses at \$1.98

The point we want to emphasize is that they are strictly stylish. These dresses would very well take the place of expensive dresses, from the standpoint of style and appearance, on the street, in the country, wherever you may be. A glance shows that the much care has been taken in the style and general appearance as would have to be expected in the making of \$5, \$6 or \$7 dresses. In other words, why not have a \$7.00 effect for \$1.98? That is what this offering means.

Tonight in the windows. Tomorrow on sale, at **\$1.98**

Sizes 14, 16 and 18, 20, 22, 24 and 26.

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New Fall Millinery
at \$5.00, \$7.95, \$10.00 and \$3.95

Inviting values these are—felts, felt and velvets, and velours—a collection that offers a style to fill every need—and a value decidedly rare.

Imported Felts and Velours, \$5.00
Fine quality material in large and small shapes, plain styles, ribbon banded, in shades of sand, green, rose, red, grey, navy and black. Special **\$5.00**

Imported High Class Felts, \$7.95
In two-tone effects in neat small shapes, with felt and velvet; also plain effects in all assorted shades; also two and three-tone effects. Special **\$7.95**

100 Trimmed Hats, \$10.00
In all the new shades with embroidery. Also felt and velvet effects, in large and small shapes, also large and small head sizes. In all assorted shades, including black. Special at **\$10.00**

Children's Hats
In all the latest styles in felt and velvet; also the school hats in black and navy felt. **\$2.50 TO \$3.95**
Special.....

—Aisle 7, Floor Three, H.B.C.



Below: 1930s
Biltmore
men's straw
hat



Cloche hat belonged to: Jenny Durban, worn on her wedding day 1927

Fashion Continued

By the 1920s, fashion took a turn to the “scandalous” side. Dresses became more flowy and light weight with drapes of different fabric, the hemline went up more to the knee to allow for better movement such as dancing.

Big colourful pieces of jewelry were worn, beaded headbands, sashes or belts on the low waist, purses, gloves, and stockings added another touch of creativity to outfits.

The cloche hat was popular in the 1920s and was used to make “daring fashion statements” because it was a close fitted floppy brimmed hat that went against previous hat choices. Often a bright band or strap accentuated the transition from the body of the hat to the brim, and were ornamented with ribbons, broches, and other decorations that was up to the preference of the wearer.

Photo from: <http://www.pinterest.ca/ pin/314129830177950511/Zjw4t0t6>



“Make do and mend” was the theme during the 1930s and the second world war. This was nothing new to the women of Ashcroft, they used everything including bleached flour sacks. Because elastic was scarce, buttons were used to hold up everything. They shopped at rummage sales for clothes to bring home and convert into new clothing. The women of Ashcroft used what was at their finger tips to make do.

“We learned how to sew at a young age” - Hazel Tuohey

“Stockings were scarce and women would paint a strip up the back of their legs to make it look like they had stockings on” - Bill Drinkwater

Teenage girls began to sport sweaters, knee-length skirts, and bobby socks during the 1940s. The style held over into the 1950s, but the 1940s skirts were not as full.



One of the less predictable results of wartime was the popularity of the two-piece bathing suit due to fabric rationing. Photo above, 1942



The Ashcroft Museum is open from Monday to Sunday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Come on down and learn some fascinating history about the area.

Located at 151 and 4th Street.

250-453-9232

museum@ashcroftbc.ca

1952 Merry Widow Corset (photo to left), donated by: Rae Eckford

This corset was inspired by the show Merry Widow in 1952 who starred Lana Turner wearing an elaborate long line corset. It was designed to be worn under the tight-fitting dresses of the 1950s. The Merry Widow corset was designed to reduce the measurement of the waist by up to 3 inches.

While the corsets changed in style over the 1950s, they were all promoted to shape the fashionable wasp-waisted silhouette.

Info from: “Exposed— A history of Lingerie”