

## Chinatown

Most people of Chinese descent who live in Canada live in Vancouver, and most of those who live in Vancouver live in Chinatown, a huge neighbourhood, perhaps a mile long and a half-mile wide. It includes Shanghai and Canton Alleys, Pender Street and much of Main Street and is a vigorous inner-directed community with two Chinese-language newspapers. A visitor walking into a crowded restaurant may find the tables filled with Chinese families including infants and grandmothers, and the menu filled with scores of dishes he has never before encountered. There are no fortune cookies.

In the late 1960s the city planned to knock down most of the Strathcona section of Chinatown for urban renewal, but the residents resisted and, with government help, organized the Strathcona Rehabilitation Project. In 1970 the city cancelled all urban renewal projects and adopted a \$19 million, city-wide federally and provincially supported program called Community Improvement and Development (CID). It and its national successor, the Neighbourhood Improvement Program (NIP), have overhauled eight neighbourhoods in Vancouver — Kitsilano, Riley Park, Cedar Cottage, Downtown-Eastside, Mount Pleasant, Grandview-Woodland, Kiwassa and Kensington. Each plan is unique. Some have developed new housing, some have preserved existing homes, and all have provided parks and open spaces.

## False Creek

Vancouver is a major ocean port, and its waterfront is not a total disgrace, thanks to False Creek, a mid-town residential community that has replaced grimy work sheds and battered houses. The creek is now depolluted and full of sailboats. Around the yacht basin, new condominiums, stacked like blocks, face the water from the sides of gentle hills. Most are high rent; some are supplemented housing for low-income families. Further up the hills are the old, peaked-roof, two-



or three-bedroom frame houses. Some were once the homes of hippies living ten to a room. The hippies are gone, and many houses have been converted into offices for lawyers and architects or homes for the affluent. Buildings that once sold for taxes now bring up to \$150,000. "If you want to make money in real estate," realtor Marilyn Currie says, "follow the hippies." Ms. Currie and other realtors have persuaded the city to zone the old houses commercial, allowing free conversion to offices. Many are still occupied by long-time residents, and some house recently-arrived working couples, such as Richard and Lyn Glazier, a lawyer and a school teacher. The house they bought six years ago, when it was full of debris and noxious odours, is now handsomely redone, mostly by Lyn and, like its neighbours, hangs on a hillside and looks down to sailboats in the basin and across to the high-rise centre of Vancouver and the coastal mountains beyond.

There has been some resistance. "Fight Redevelopment" is scrawled across a sign announcing plans for a lot next to an extraordinarily long, narrow, unrestored building that was a dormitory for Japanese pulp-mill workers at the turn of the century. However, most old residents are pleased to see property values rising. An untouched house and lot now sell for up to \$100,000,

