

# Columbia River Corridor Strategic Land Use Plan Phase II



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## Doukhobor Culture and Heritage Plan

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Prepared by:

Jayne Hadikin,  
Selkirk College,  
School of Renewable Resources,  
Integrated Environmental Planning

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WITHIN REACH - BEYOND IMAGINATION

Greater Trail Community Skills Centre

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada  
Ressources humaines et Développement des compétences Canada

## **I am a Doukhobor**

I am a Doukhobor,  
I cannot deny there is a Higher Power,  
That helps me face every moment and hour,  
Whose love flows through each man and each flower.

I am a Doukhobor,  
I search for truth, I strive for perfection,  
I believe that Christ showed the perfect direction  
For a life of peace, a life without question.

I am a Doukhobor,  
In the spirit of love I search for the light,  
And I try to live to the highest sense of right  
That I can perceive through the day and the night.

I am a Doukhobor,  
I sincerely feel a love for my brother,  
And because we have one Heavenly Father,  
It makes sense to me to love one another.

I am a Doukhobor,  
I king for the day when all wars would just cease,  
When man could continue to toil while at peace,  
When the love in all people would greatly increase.

I am a Doukhobor,  
I know love in right is I must take a stand,  
I'll reach out to my brother, I'll give him my hand,  
There is room for us all in this bountiful land.

I am a Doukhobor.

*Written by Anne A. Verigin  
Grand Forks, BC*

Reprinted from: *Hospitality: Vegetarian Cooking the Doukhobor Way* - 1995

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document is the first Doukhobor Culture and Heritage Plan prepared for the Columbia River Corridor. This plan is part of a larger document being completed by the graduating students of the Integrated Environmental Planning Program.

This Doukhobor Culture and Heritage Plan provides the necessary steps to preserve the Doukhobor culture, heritage, and legacy of this area for generations to come. The plan includes a map of the Doukhobor sites in the planning area and the potential land uses and conservation strategies for those areas. The plan also includes specific steps to keep alive the language, food, and history of the Doukhobor people in the corridor.

The Doukhobor people have been an important part of the Columbia River Corridor since the beginning of twenty century. The Doukhobors have built communities and industry, they have continued to speak their language throughout the generations, they have adapted and prepared many distinct recipes, and they have created a history within this corridor.

This Doukhobor Culture and Heritage Plan exists because the generation who carries the Doukhobor traditions and knowledge is aging, and more of the younger generations are being assimilated into mainstream North American culture and are therefore not learning the ways of the Doukhobors. In addition, as the area develops, the old Doukhobor buildings and orchards are in danger of being destroyed. A potential exists to lose the Doukhobor culture and heritage forever.

This plan provides information on the current conditions of the remaining Doukhobor sites, the Russian language, the Doukhobor food, and the recorded Doukhobor history of the corridor. This plan also provides recommendations in all of these areas. The recommendations of this plan are intended to help decision makers within the corridor make the best decisions possible in order to preserve the Doukhobor legacy in the Columbia River Corridor for generations to come.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Columbia River Corridor is a beautiful region filled with nature and cultural history. The Columbia River winds its way through the bottom of a valley, and its water helps to sustain all life in the area. The mountains surrounding the river are covered with trees and filled with life. The temperate climate and access to water makes the corridor a natural choice for human settlement. Humans have used this land for generations, and today it is possible to see the evidence of that use through the changes in the natural landscape.



**Fig. 1** - Columbia River Corridor

The Columbia River Corridor is a region that has been influenced by many different cultures; the First Nations, the Italians, and the Doukhobors have each played an important role in influencing the culture in this area. This plan focuses on the Doukhobor culture and heritage in the Castlegar area between the Hugh Keenleyside Dam and the Brilliant Dam down to Genelle.

This Doukhobor Culture and Heritage Plan provides the necessary steps to preserve the Doukhobor culture, heritage, and legacy of this area for generations to come. This plan identifies important aspects of the Doukhobor Culture. The plan includes a map of the Doukhobor sites in the planning area and the potential land uses and conservation strategies for those areas. The plan also includes specific steps to keep alive the language, food, and history of the Doukhobor people.

This plan is part of Phase II of the Columbia River Corridor Strategic Land Use Plan; Phase I was completed last year by the Selkirk College Integrated Environmental Planning graduating class of 2005. This plan is thus part of a greater plan being completed to “act as a guiding document to the communities, organizations, and residents of the corridor with regard to future development practices” (Hopper, 2005, p.4). When all the individual plans are compiled to create the larger Columbia River Corridor Strategic Land Use Plan, the plan will help educate the public on the opportunities and constraints within the corridor and work toward solutions to the problems that exist (Hopper, 2005).

### *1.1 Why do we need a Doukhobor Culture and Heritage Plan?*

This Doukhobor Culture and Heritage Plan exists because the generation who carries the Doukhobor traditions and knowledge is aging, and more of the younger generations are being assimilated into mainstream North American culture and are therefore not learning the ways of the Doukhobors. In addition, as the area develops, the old Doukhobor buildings and orchards are in danger of being destroyed. A potential exists to lose the Doukhobor culture and heritage forever.



## 1.2 What is culture and heritage?

Culture is a term used to describe the distinct ways of a unique group of people. It can be their language, food, way of life, customs, or history. Heritage is the physical structures created by a group of people. "Community heritage resources are the physical elements that make each community what it is. They are the tangible embodiments of intangible historical, cultural, aesthetic and social values. They are the "things" which give a town, city or region its particular sense of time and place, and they are the cultural expressions of what that place is" (Kerr, 1992, p.7).

In this plan, the terms culture and heritage are used interchangeably. Culture and heritage is the physical structures of the Doukhobor people as well as their ideologies and way of life.

## 1.3 Who are the Doukhobors?

The history of the Doukhobor people helps give relevance to the need to plan. Their history gives us an understanding of who the Doukhobors are and why we need to plan in order to preserve their culture and history for generation to come.

Doukhobors are pacifists whose origins come from Russia. The name Doukhobor comes from Archbishop Ambrosius of the Russian Orthodox Church, who in 1785 referred to a group of dissident Russian peasants as the "Doukho-bortsi" (Faminoff et al., 1995). The term was meant to be a derogatory name, but the peasants adopted the name and called themselves Doukhobors, a term meaning "Spirit Wrestlers." "The peasants adopted this name claiming to wrestle with the Holy Spirit in order to lead their lives in accordance with the law of God and the teachings of Jesus Christ" (Faminoff et al., 1995).

The Doukhobors became known around the world when they destroyed their weapons in 1895 as a demonstration of their belief in peace (Faminoff et al., 1995). Because the Doukhobors destroyed their weapons and rejected military service, men were exiled from Russia and families were scattered; they lived in terrible conditions (Plotnikoff, 2000). The Doukhobors' plight came to the attention of writer and humanitarian, Leo Tolstoy. Tolstoy and other sympathizers raised money to help the Doukhobors immigrate to Canada. "In 1899, four shiploads of Doukhobors arrived in Canada, totaling nearly 7,500 people" (Plotnikoff, 2000). In 1902, the Doukhobor leader, Peter Verigin, arrived in Saskatchewan and helped strengthen the Doukhobor communities (Plotnikoff, 2000).



**Fig. 2** - Peter "Lordly" Verigin

### 1.4 What is the history of the Doukhobors in this area?

The Doukhobors first came to the West Kootenays between 1908 and 1913 (Plotnikoff, 2000) In 1922, there were fifty-seven Doukhobor villages in the West Kootenay, totaling 114 individual houses; twenty-four of these villages, 48 houses, were in Ootischia alone (Farrar, 2000). By 1938, there were 36 different villages (Fig. 7). The first place they settled in British Columbia was “Dolina Ootischia” meaning Valley of Consolation. Brilliant, Blagodatnoye and Raspberry were settled shortly after. Each village had ten to fifteen families who all helped in the gardens and orchards that supplied the food (Plotnikoff, 2000).



Fig. 3 – Dolina Ootischia first houses

The Doukhobor communities lived a communal lifestyle. In 1917, The Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood (CCUB) was formed. The CCUB owned the land and a central committee managed the finances for the members of the communities (Plotnikoff, 2000). Men worked outside the community and earned money that they then gave to the community (Plotnikoff, 2000). The women took turns doing different chores within the community from cooking and serving meals, to weeding the garden, to milking the cows. At meal times, everyone ate together in the large kitchens after the Lord’s Prayer was recited (Plotnikoff, 2000).

The Doukhobors had different types of industry in West Kootenay. At its peak in 1912, there were eight saw mills on community lands. Brilliant had a large honey factory and jam factory. The Brilliant jam factory was the heart of the Doukhobor industry. Communities from all around provided the fruit for the factory. “At peak times, sixty people could produce 1,050 cans of jam per hour, with shipments of 43,000 cases annually” (Plotnikoff, 2000). Many irrigation systems were built to provide water to the gardens and orchards in the different communities. In 1913 the Brilliant Suspension Bridge, which still exists today, was built to allow easier access between Ootischia and Brilliant (Kluckner, 2005).



Fig. 4 – Brilliant Jam Factory and Peter “Lordly” Verigin’s house

The Doukhobor communities were successful and happy in the early twenties, but all that changed on October 29, 1924, when their leader, Peter “Lordly” Verigin was murdered in a train explosion. Over 7000 people from across western Canada came to Verigin’s funeral. That





### *1.5 Who are the Doukhobors of Today?*

The Doukhobors are now an integral part of the current West Kootenay culture as they have been for over a hundred years. The USCC remains active today, and John J. Verigin remains the Honorary Chairman of the organization. The USCC is the hub of Doukhobor activity with 1195 members throughout the West Kootenay region. The Brilliant Cultural Center, located in Brilliant, is one venue where Doukhobor culture is still strong. Today, the Doukhobor presence is strong in the communities of Ootischenia, Brilliant, and Castlegar.

The USCC has many different working groups, addressing peace, human rights, environment and development. There is also an active women's organization and youth organization (Plotnikoff, 2000). Some other groups prepare Doukhobor meals while others create beautiful woodwork.

Doukhobor choirs from this region are known for their soulful four-part harmony, acappella singing and the Doukhobors stand out for their pacifist and peace activist nature. ISKRA, a publication representing the voice of the Doukhobors, is published twice a month from the Grand Forks and Brilliant USCC offices containing both articles in English and Russian (Plotnikoff, 2000).



Fig. 6 - USCC Choir

In Castlegar, a Doukhobor Village Museum exists in the form of a reconstructed Doukhobor village. The museum receives approximately 1000 visitors per month during the tourist season, and it provides a history lesson on the Doukhobor people in this area.

The last decade has also been one of reconciliation and cooperation with the larger Doukhobor communities. The different groups of Doukhobors have worked to put the past behind them so that they can move into the future and pass their heritage and cultural traditions on to the future generations.

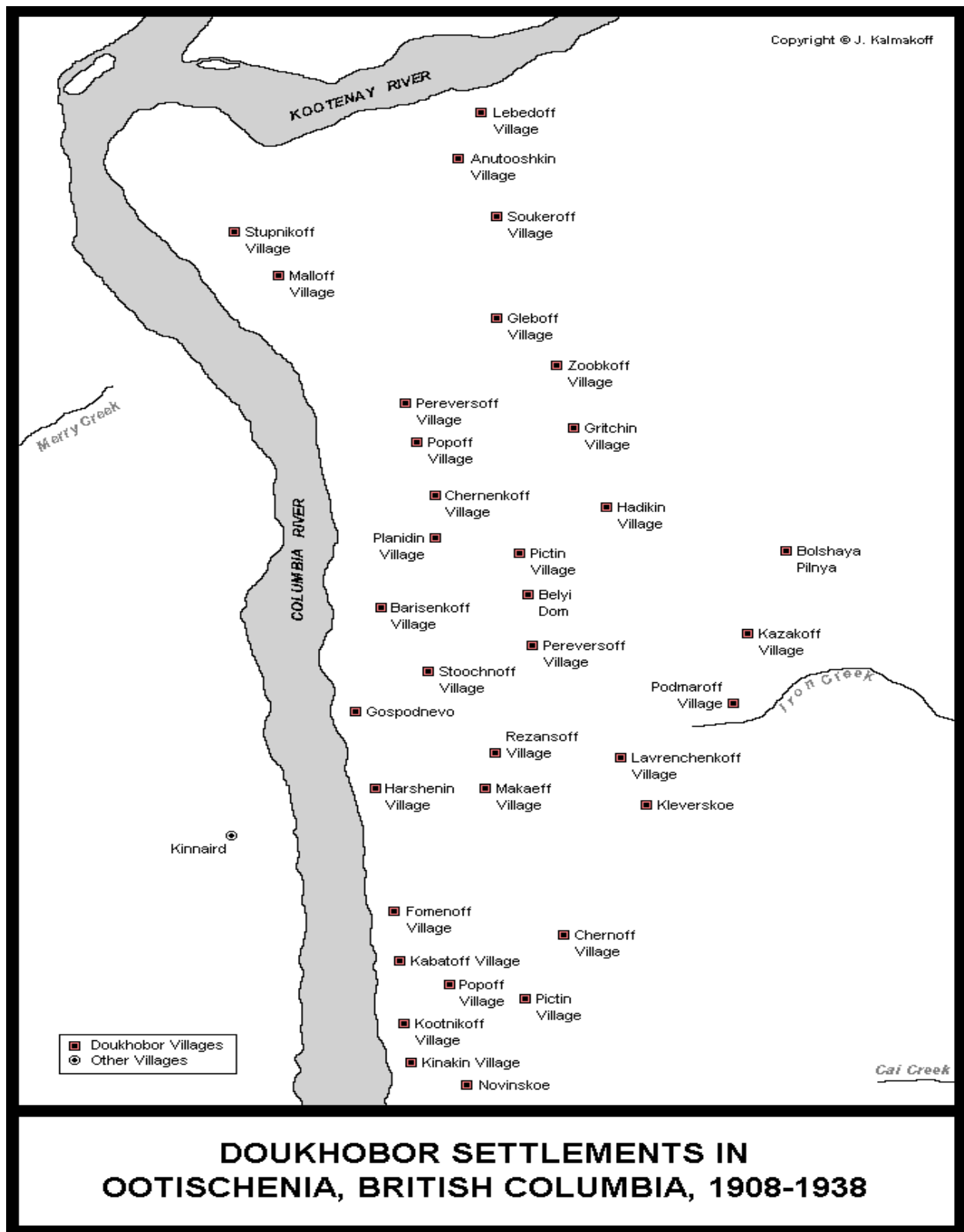


Fig. 7 - Doukhobor settlements in Ootischenia between 1908 - 1938. *Courtesy of Jonathan Kalmakoff.*

## 2.0 MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS

The plan's mission statement and goals provide a set of priorities that will help continue the legacy of the Doukhobor people.

***Mission:***

To preserve the Doukhobor culture and history in the Lower Columbia River Corridor for generations to come.

***Goals:***

- To preserve the cultural significance of Doukhobor sites.
- To keep alive the language, food, and history of the Doukhobor people.

## 3.0 CURRENT CONDITIONS AND PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

### 3.1 Development Guidelines for Doukhobor Sites

There are many different types of Doukhobor sites within the planning area. Many Doukhobor sites have been destroyed in the past, and the remaining Doukhobor sites need to be documented and protected. Development guidelines for these Doukhobor sites need to be created in order to use the remaining sites to their full cultural potential. This section of the plan is intended to provide information on the current conditions of the remaining Doukhobor sites and recommendations for those sites.



**Fig. 8** – Doukhobor houses in Raspberry in the 1920's

For the purposes of this plan, the Doukhobor sites will be split up into four main geographical areas: Ootischenia, Brilliant, Blagodatnoye, and Raspberry. These communities were chosen because there are the communities within the planning area that still containing Doukhobor sites.

#### 3.1.1 Current Conditions of Remaining Doukhobor Sites

The current conditions of the remaining Doukhobor sites is important to understand in order to know what needs to be done to preserve those sites for generations to come.

The Doukhobors settled many areas in the West Kootenay at the beginning of the twentieth century (Fig. 9). When the Doukhobors first settled in the Columbia River corridor between 1908 and 1913, they built simple small wood structures to live in that provided needed shelter from the elements. Around 1911, brick factories were built and the wood houses were replaced by brick houses. These two story structures were 32 feet by 40 feet and contained an attic and half basement. Each Doukhobor village consisted of two houses built side by side, joined by a one-story building in a U-shape (Farrar, 2000). Orchards were grown to sustain the populations in each village and cemeteries were established to bury the deceased. The majority of the remaining Doukhobor sites in the planning area are located in Ootischenia, Brilliant, Blagodatnoye, and Raspberry (see map); their individual issues are explained below. There are other Doukhobor areas that exist outside of the planning area; the issues for these communities are similar to the communities examined in this plan. This plan can be used as a precedent for those other communities. Due to the continued growth in population in the Columbia River Corridor, a potential exists for the remaining Doukhobor sites to be destroyed and redeveloped.



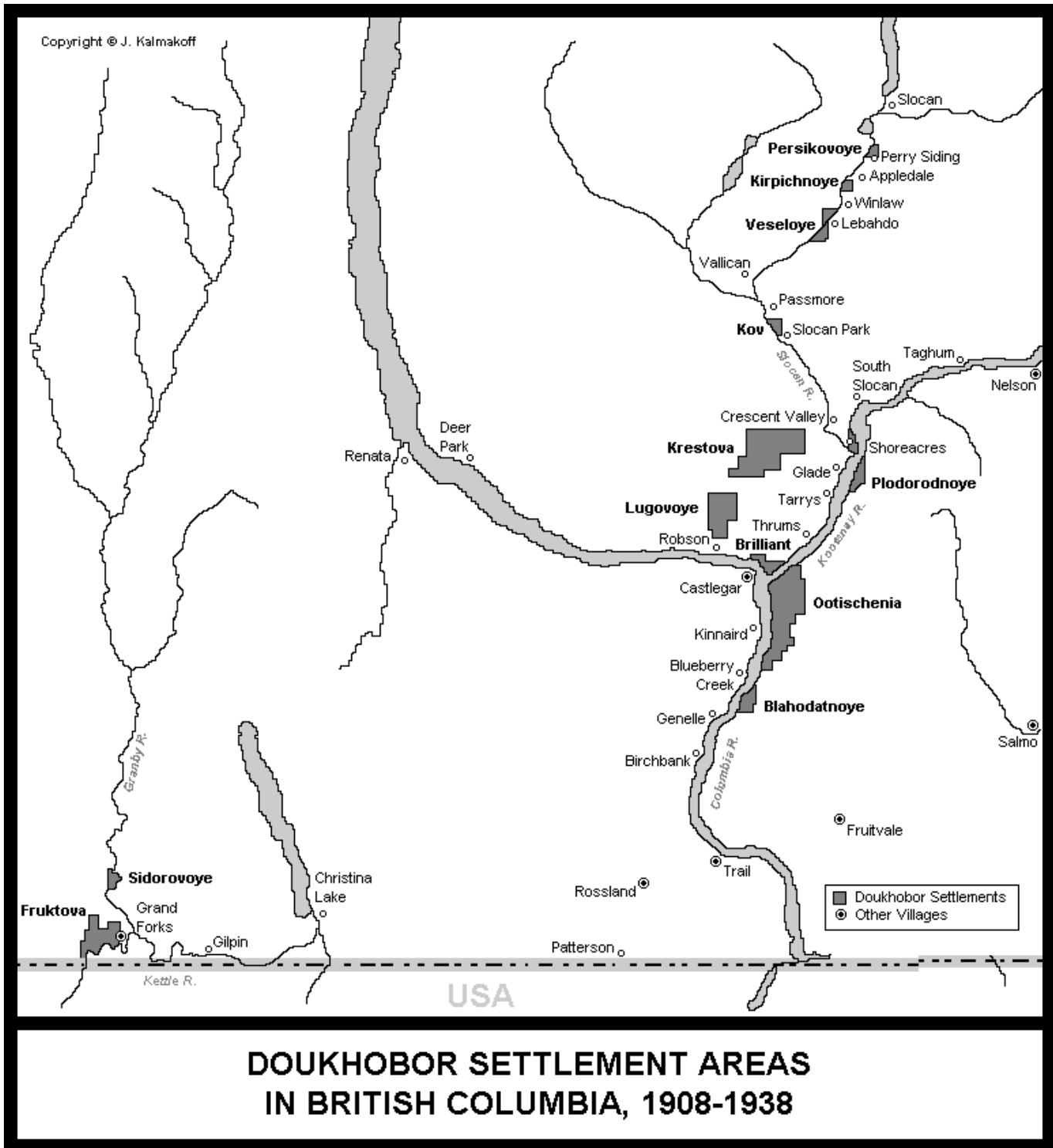


Fig. 9 - Doukhobor Settlements in the West Kootenay between 1908 - 1938. Courtesy of Jonathon Kalmakoff.

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## Ootischnia

Ootischnia is located just east of the confluence of the Kootenay and Columbia rivers. In 1922, over forty percent of the Doukhobor houses in the West Kootenay were built in Ootischnia. Ten years ago, it was possible to see three remaining wood Doukhobor houses and at least four brick Doukhobor houses. Today, only the two brick Doukhobor houses remain plus the two reconstructed houses at the Doukhobor Village Museum (Fig. 10). There are still some Doukhobor barns in Ootischnia, but they are in very poor condition. There is a Doukhobor cemetery located by the Columbia River in Ootischnia that was established in 1908 and still remains in use today.



**Fig. 10** - Reconstructed Doukhobor house at the Doukhobor Village Museum.

In the past five years, Ootischnia has become a popular place to develop. Current trends are residential development. Ootischnia has two golf courses, one of them was just completed in 2005, and new houses are being built around both of these recreational lands. The new Little Bear Golf Course is built directly across the road from the Doukhobor cemetery and vacant land around the cemetery and golf course is being filled with new housing developments. There is lots of open land left in Ootischnia, and this land will be developed in the future. A potential exists for the remaining Doukhobor sites in Ootischnia to be torn down or destroyed to make way for this development.

## Brilliant

Brilliant is located just north of the confluence of the Kootenay and Columbia Rivers. Brilliant had a lesser number of Doukhobor settlements than Ootischnia, but Brilliant had the Brilliant Jam Factory, the biggest Doukhobor commercial enterprise (Farrar, 2000). This factory no longer exists today, but the land where it was built remains empty with only the overgrown orchard trees indicating its past use. Just next to the vacant land where the jam factory once stood, up on a higher terrace, the Brilliant Doukhobor cemetery remains in use today as it was when the Doukhobors first arrived (Fig. 11). Surrounded by houses, this cemetery is overgrown and is close to reaching its capacity.



**Fig. 11** - Brilliant Cemetery

The Doukhobor built Brilliant Suspension Bridge connected the communities of Ootischenia and Brilliant (Fig. 12). It was built over the Kootenay River in 1913, but decommissioned in 1961. Since then, it has remained in place with its approach ripped up so that no one attempts to cross the rotting deck (Kluckner, 2005). The bridge has escaped being torn down many times, and a feasibility study has been completed in 2005 looking at restoring the bridge and creating a regional park around it. There is lots of support for the plan, but funding for the project is a problem; the City of Castlegar and the Regional District of Central Kootenay need to decide whether or not to go ahead with the plan.



**Fig. 12.** The Brilliant Suspension Bridge.

The Brilliant Cultural Centre is located at the heart of Brilliant. It is the building that houses all the Doukhobor functions in the Columbia River Corridor today. Built in 1976, the Brilliant Cultural Centre replaced the Brilliant Community Hall that burnt down in 1960 (Kalmakoff, 2006).

Peter “Lordly” Verigin and his family are buried on top of a rocky bluff looking out over Brilliant. Verigin’s Tomb, now called USCC Memorial Park, is a beautiful area where Doukhobors and non-Doukhobors can go and visit. Until early 2006, the site was not very accessible, but in January 2006 many community members worked hard together to put in a road to the tomb and build a bigger guest house. These improvements will allow the site to be visited by more people and will improve the sustainability of the site.

### **Blagodatnoye**

Blagodatnoye, also called Champion Creek or Poupour, is located across the Columbia River from the town of Genelle (Fig. 13). These 92 hectares of land were first settled by the Doukhobors in 1905 (Bullock, 2000). An elder who was born in the area indicated that there were four villages on the property, consisting of at least eight houses. Poupour was abandoned in the 1950’s because of “impacts from local industry, poor access and prohibitive water requirements” (Bullock, 2000). The land has been polluted from the past practices of the lead smelter, Tech Cominco, just south of the property, and the road leading south from Ootischenia to Blagodatnoye is a dirt road that frequently washes out. Today, none of the structures remain on this land; all that remains is the water system, orchards, building foundations and cemetery (Bullock, 2000).



**Fig. 13** – Blagodatnoye property

This land is owned by the Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ (USCC). The USCC would like to redevelop this land in a manner that respects the historical land uses. The USCC has begun to work on the land. They have planted over 220 000 trees to re-vegetate the land and they have planted 2500 Christmas trees to sell.

## Raspberry



**Fig. 14** - Rundown Doukhobor house in Raspberry.

Raspberry is location North West of the confluence of the Columbia and Kootenay Rivers where Norns Creek flows into the Columbia. Raspberry was an area that contained one village and the remainder of the land was used to plant berries for the Brilliant Jam Factory. Raspberry has two Doukhobor houses that remain. Today, these brick Doukhobor houses are rundown and are surrounded by modern day dwellings (Fig. 14). At one time, one of the houses had an extension built and was used as an old-age home. Today, a community group has been suggesting using that building as a drug treatment centre for men. These two houses are very important to the history of Raspberry and the Doukhobor people.

Also located in Raspberry is an old Doukhobor schoolhouse (Fig. 15). This building remained empty until 2004 when it was renovated into a restaurant. The Schoolhouse Restaurant's interior still maintains the feel of the Doukhobor culture and the history of the building by maintaining the original chalk boards and flooring that existed, as well as putting old pictures on the wall showing the building's past use. The menu at the restaurant contains some traditional Doukhobor foods.

This restaurant is a great way of preserving the Doukhobor culture, but it is important that the restaurant remains viable so that it does not have to close its doors one day and the building become vacant again.



**Fig. 15** - Schoolhouse Restaurant

### ***3.1.2 Recommendations for remaining Doukhobor sites***

The following recommendations are provided to give direction to decision makers. These recommendations will help preserve the legacy of the Doukhobor people by providing ideas to protect the cultural integrity of the remaining Doukhobor sites.

#### **A. Have an organization such as the USCC buy the remaining Doukhobor houses**

There are only a few remaining Doukhobor houses in Ootischenia and Raspberry. These houses are in poor condition and need attention. An organization such as the USCC should buy these houses to ensure that they are not destroyed and the land redeveloped. An organization



can take control of these properties and work to restore the houses. Once restored, the houses can be turned into Bed and Breakfasts. The funds raised by the paying guests at these bed and breakfasts can help payoff the costs of buying the land, and renovating the houses. If the Bed and Breakfasts are properly promoted and advertised throughout the world, there is an opportunity for the houses to be filled with guests throughout the entire tourist season.

### **B. Promote the history and signage at the Brilliant Cultural Centre**

There is history to the Brilliant Cultural Centre. A plaque should be created that informs people on the history of the land the Centre sits on and the hard work and dedication involved in raising money and building the Brilliant Cultural Centre.

The Brilliant Cultural Centre sign is not very appealing (Fig. 16). It is a sheet of plywood with the words 'Brilliant Culture Centre →'; the sign is very boring. There are many very talented Doukhobor carpenters who could make a really nice wood carved sign that will show off the culture of the Doukhobor people.



**Fig. 16** - Brilliant Cultural Centre sign.

### **C. Create the Brilliant Suspension Bridge Regional Park**

A feasibility study into the formation of the Brilliant Suspension Bridge has already been completed and the park could be created if the City of Castlegar and the Regional District of Central Kootenay approve the plan and come up with funding. It is essential that members of the Doukhobor community and the greater community write the municipal politicians and encourage them to go ahead with the park.

### **D. Clean up the cemeteries**

There are cemeteries in Ootischenia, Brilliant, and Blagodatnoye that are not very aesthetically pleasing. Although the grass is cut occasionally, the grass is not green lawn grass, but sparse tall native and exotic grass, sedge and shrub species. Because the Ootischenia and Brilliant cemeteries are in residential areas and are still being used, they should be seeded with grass and weeds pulled. Other problem with the cemeteries is that some of the older grave markers are gone or are broken. Since many of the family members of the deceased with no markers are also deceased there is no one able to buy new headstones. The USCC, in collaboration with Jonathan Kalmakoff of the Doukhobor Genealogy Website, should start a fund to raise money to purchase headstones for the graves with no markers. Cleaning up the cemeteries now will allow the cemeteries to be sustainable into the future.

**E. Increase the visits to the Schoolhouse Restaurant through promoting its Doukhobor history**

The Schoolhouse restaurant has lots of Doukhobor history it can share with visitors and the community. It is important that there will be continued visits to the restaurant to ensure that it will stay open indefinitely. It is important to promote the Schoolhouse Restaurant to keep it open. An organization such as the Doukhobor Village Museum can help do this by giving out a coupon to each visitor of the museum. The coupon can be for a 'buy one get one free' Doukhobor menu item at the Schoolhouse Restaurant. If visitors have this coupon, they have a greater chance of visiting the restaurant and buying some food supporting the restaurant and tasting part of the Doukhobor culture.

**F. Create signage for the Blagodatnoye property**

A dirt road already exists to the Blagodatnoye property. This road is blocked off to keep unwanted vehicles from going to the property and potentially damaging the land. But, Blagodatnoye is a beautiful piece of property on the Columbia River, and the USCC should advertise the road as a bike/hiking trail. A sign can be put up at the start of the trail indicating the way to Blagodatnoye and that it is private property but respectful use of the land is allowed. Once in Blagodatnoye, there can be signs indicating the various sites that still exist, such as the cemetery or water line.

**G. Have the USCC plan for future residential development on the Blagodatnoye property**

Right now Blagodatnoye is owned by the USCC and the land is undeveloped. Eventually as property values go up and the need for residential housing increases, there will be an increasing demand for the Blagodatnoye property to be developed regardless of the cost to improve the access road or put infrastructure in. If this development is going to occur in the future, the USCC should have a say in the development. The USCC can allow residential development, but do it in a way that will preserve some of the history of the land; streets can be given Doukhobor names or the community can still be called Blagodatnoye.

## 3.2 Keeping Alive the Russian Language

This section outlines the current status of the Russian language in the corridor and provides recommendations to keep the Russian language alive.

Doukhobors speak Russian. They speak Russian because they brought the language over from Russia when they arrived in Canada. When the Doukhobors arrived in British Columbia, they continued to speak Russian rather than speaking English, therefore the Russian language has continued for a couple generations. Now, many of the older Doukhobors speak both Russian and English, however, some of the eldest Doukhobors still speak only Russian.

### 3.2.1 Current Status of the Russian Language in the Corridor

The current status of the Russian language is important to understand in order to know what needs to be done to keep alive the language for generations to come.

Language is a very important part of any culture. When a language is lost, part of the culture is lost as well. Today, many of older Doukhobors still speak Russian, but the younger generations are not speaking the language. Twenty years ago, Russian could be heard anywhere in Castlegar, but today it is rarely heard; it is more common to hear the older Doukhobors speak English with a Russian accent. As the older generation of Doukhobors ages and passes away, the Russian language also dies. A potential exists for the language to be lost in this area forever.

There is a Russian preschool in the Brilliant Cultural Centre, and in Castlegar, a Russian Immersion program exists for children in K-12, but there are no courses taught at the college level or in the community. Unless someone is entered into

Russian Immersion in kindergarden or speaks Russian at home, it is difficult for someone to learn the language traditionally spoken by the Doukhobors.

<p><b>Spa-ci-hoos-pi-ti:</b> Thank you  <b>Na-ster-o-vi-a:</b> You're welcome  <b>Ya-lou-blu-ti-bay:</b> I love you  <b>Se-quant-ka:</b> Dish rag</p>
---

**Fig. 17** - Common Russian phrases and words

### 3.2.2 Recommendations to Keep Alive the Russian Language

The following recommendations are provided to give direction to decision makers. These recommendations will help preserve the legacy of the Doukhobor people by providing ideas to keep alive the Russian language.

**A. Have beginner Russian courses within the community**

Beginner Russian courses can be taught throughout the community at places such as the Castlegar Library or Selkirk College. Russian was taught at Selkirk College until 2001 when the instructor retired; his position was never replaced. Beginner Spanish and French are presently taught at the college and beginner Russian should be added. There are many members of the Doukhobor community who could easily teach a beginner's Russian course. If these courses were taught in the evening, it would be accessible to everyone in the community. Having beginner Russian courses would be beneficial to the continuation of the Russian language and the Doukhobor's culture in this area.

**B. Encourage exchange trips to Russia**

Exchange trips are a great way to learn a new language. The USCC, Selkirk College, the Doukhobor Village Museum, or the City of Castlegar should encourage exchange trips to Russia. Community members of all ages and backgrounds should have the opportunity to travel to Russia to experience the culture and learn the Russian language. The USCC has very close ties to the City of Yasnaya Polyana. An exchange program should be organized between Yasnaya Polyana and Castlegar for a number of participants each year. The sponsoring organization should help fund part of this exchange in order to have a variety of applicants participate. This exchange would help the Russian language continue in this region.

**C. Conserve the Russian Immersion program in the school curriculum**

Presently there is a Russian immersion program and French immersion program in the Castlegar school system. It is crucial that the Russian immersion program is conserved for long term. Many of the students in the Russian immersion program come from non-Doukhobor backgrounds, and it is important that parents continue to enroll their children in the Russian program, rather than changing to the French immersion program. The USCC community needs to keep a close eye on the enrollment numbers of the Russian Immersion program. If the numbers start to go down, the Doukhobor community should start a campaign to keep the Russian immersion enrollment up.

Recently, the Russian immersion program has been very successful; it has had a huge enrollment demand. More parents want their children in the program than there are spaces. The school board should look into the long-term demand of the Russian immersion program and increase the number of student spaces if it is sustainable.

### 3.3 Keeping Alive the Doukhobor Food

This section outlines the current status of the Doukhobor food in the corridor and provides recommendations to keep the Doukhobor food alive.

Food is a very important part of the Doukhobor culture. Although, many people refer to the Doukhobor food as Russian food, Doukhobor food is distinctly unique. Due to the geographical separation between Russia and British Columbia, the Doukhobors have adapted many of the Russian, Slavic, Ukrainian, and Turkish recipes to become recipes of their own.

Doukhobors are traditionally vegetarian and therefore all Doukhobor recipes contain no meat. Some popular Doukhobor meals are borshch, a vegetable beet soup; pyrahi, a pastry tart filled with vegetables or fruit; blintsi, a crepe; vareniki, similar to the to pirogis in Canada; or kwas, a cold cucumber dill soup.

**Borshch**

3 quarts water	6 cups – 1.5 L shredded cabbage
5 medium potatoes	1 tbsp – 15 mL salt
¾ cup – 180 mL butter	½ cup – 125 mL chopped carrots
½ cup – 125 mL carrots, grated	4 cups – 1 L canned tomatoes
1 small beet	¾ cup – 180 mL green pepper
1 cup – 250 mL onions, chopped	¾ cup – 180 mL green onion
2 tbsp – 30 mL fresh dill, chopped	¼ cup – 60 mL chopped celery
1 cup – 250 mL potatoes, diced	1 cup – 250 mL whipping cream

- In a pan pour 4 cups – 1L of canned tomatoes and mash. Add 1tbsp – 15 mL butter and ¼ cup – 60 mL of onions and simmer until thick.
- Place ¼ cup – 60 mL butter, ¾ cup – 180 mL chopped onions, ½ cup – 125 mL finely grated carrots and ¼ cup – 60 mL chopped green pepper into a frying pan and sauté until transparent – do not brown.
- In a separate frying pan, place 3 cups – 750 mL of shredded cabbage and ¼ cup – 60 mL of butter and sauté until tender – do not brown.
- Boil 3 quarts – of water in a large pot, add 1 tbsp. salt, ½ cup- 125mL chopped carrots, 4 medium potatoes halved, 1 whole beet, ¼ cup – 60 mL chopped celery, and add ½ cup of simmered tomatoes from step 1. Continue to boil ingredients in pot until potatoes are tender.
- Remove potatoes and mash with 1 tbsp. of butter, ½ cup – 125 mL cream, ¼ cup – 60 mL green pepper, ¼ cup – 60 mL green onions, 1 tbsp – 15 mL dill; set aside.
- To the large pot add 1 cup – 250 mL of diced potatoes, 3 cups – 750 mL shredded cabbage, ½ cup – 125 mL cream and bring to boil.
- Pour the mashed potatoes back into the large pot; bring to boil.
- Remove the pot from heat and add remainder of simmered tomatoes from step 1, fried inions and carrots from step 2, the fried cabbage from step 3, add ½ cup – 125 mL green onions, ¼ cup – 60 mL green pepper and 1 tbsp – 15mL dill
- Discard the whole beet. Season to taste with black pepper.
- Let sit for a few minutes before serving to allow flavors to mix. Serve hot.

**Fig. 18 - Borshch Recipe** (*Recipe from Hospitality: Vegetarian Cooking the Doukhobor Way*)



### 3.3.1 Current Status of the Doukhobor Food in the Corridor

The current status of the Doukhobor food in the corridor is important to understand in order to know what needs to be done to keep alive the food for generations to come.

The generation of Doukhobor women that prepare the Doukhobor food is aging, and the younger generations are not learning their recipes. Although there will always be cookbooks, the true Doukhobor touch in the Doukhobor recipes is in threat of being lost forever.

Doukhobor recipes are still prepared by many Doukhobors. Within the USCC there is a ladies cooking committee, there is a catering group, and there are community cooking circles. These women prepare food for Doukhobor events large and small and to sell at the Brilliant Cultural Center.

The problem is that it is mainly the older generation of Doukhobors that are preparing the Doukhobor recipes, not the younger generations. This can be due in part to the fact that there are so many other recipes to cook from, fast food is more convenient, and the older Doukhobor women like to cook and they don't want anyone else in their kitchen. Even if someone wanted to learn the Doukhobor recipes, it is very hard to find someone who can teach you. Many Doukhobor women put ingredients in "to taste" not a measured amount. So unless everyone knows how much "to taste" is, learning the recipes is very hard.

It is also important that all community members, regardless of their background, learn to appreciate the Doukhobor food. There are not very many places that sell Doukhobor food. The Brilliant Cultural Centre sells Doukhobor food sometimes, Weezies Borscht Hut in Castlegar sells Doukhobor food, and Kootenay Market in Castlegar sells Borscht. With exception to Weezies, Doukhobor food is not readily available to someone who wants it.

### 3.3.2 Recommendations to Keep Alive the Doukhobor Food

The following recommendations are provided to give direction to decision makers. These recommendations will help preserve the legacy of the Doukhobor people by providing ideas to keep alive the Doukhobor food.



**Fig. 19** USCC ladies selling *lapsha* at the Christmas Craft Faire

## **A. Make Doukhobor cookbooks more accessible**

Doukhobor cookbooks exist, but it is important that they are distributed widely within the community so that more people will have access to the Doukhobor recipes. *Hospitality: Vegetarian Cooking the Doukhobor Way* is an excellent Doukhobor cookbook published by the

USCC in 1995 to commemorate the Doukhobors 100<sup>th</sup> year in Canada. This cookbook can be bought at the Brilliant Cultural Centre and a few other locations in the corridor, but the cookbook should be available in more locations within the Columbia River Corridor.

Cookbooks should be available for purchase at:

- grocery stores,
- bookshops,
- coffee shops,
- The Station Museum, and
- Kootenay Gallery.

## **B. Have cooking courses at Brilliant Cultural Centre**

The Brilliant Cultural Centre is a wonderful facility that has a large kitchen and lots of room to teach Doukhobor cooking classes. The USCC can hire a Doukhobor lady or ladies to teach paying community members how to cook Doukhobor food. The money raised from these cooking workshops can then go to paying the instructor as well as to the Brilliant Cultural Centre. By creating an affordable opportunity for community members to learn to cook Doukhobor recipes it will ensure that the traditional Doukhobor meals will continue to be cooked in households for generations to come.

## **C. Teach Doukhobor recipes to high school students**

Stanley Humphries Secondary School in Castlegar is the only high school within the planning area. All high schools in the province have home-economic classes that teach students how to cook. These classes should include a module on Doukhobor recipes. If students learn to cook the Doukhobor meals at a young age, regardless of their background, they will learn to appreciate the Doukhobor food, and they will have a higher probability of cooking the recipes at home or buying the food from a restaurant or store.

## **D. Market Doukhobor food**

Many people would buy Doukhobor food if it was available. Community member or an organization such as the USCC should market Doukhobor food. Community members and/or the USCC can make the food sell it at the local grocery stores. This would allow more people to have access to the Doukhobor foods, and therefore create a better appreciation for the Doukhobor food.

### **3.4 Keeping Alive the Doukhobor History of the Corridor**

This section provides the current status of the recorded Doukhobor history of the corridor and provides recommendations to keep alive the Doukhobor history in the area.

The history of any group of people is important to their way of life. Their history defines who they are today. This is why it is important to keep alive the history of any cultural group. Children need to know where they came from and how their ancestors lived; if they know this information they will have a better sense of who they are and where they are going. As well, other members of the community should learn about the history in order to enable understanding, respect, and tolerance of the Doukhobor people.

#### ***3.4.1 Current Status of the Recorded Doukhobor History of the Corridor***

The current status of the recorded Doukhobor history is important to understand in order to know what needs to be done to keep alive the history for generations to come.

There is so much Doukhobor history in the Castlegar area. Each community has many stories unique to their surroundings. Whether it is the history of how people lived and worked in a certain area or a specific as how people got to work each day. Much of this history is not written down anywhere, it is in the memories of the older generation that experienced these ways of life.

As the older generation of Doukhobors ages and passes away, the history of their time dies with them. This history is very important and needs to be documented before it is lost forever.

#### ***3.4.2 Recommendations to Keep Alive the Doukhobor History***

The following recommendations are provided to give direction to decision makers. These recommendations will help preserve the legacy of the Doukhobor people by providing ideas to keep alive the Doukhobor history in the corridor.

##### **A. Make sure all Doukhobor historical information be archived at in one location**

There is so much information that already exists on the history of the Doukhobor people, but this information is not organized and is not in any one location where it can be found easily. Some locations which could house this information are Selkirk College, the Brilliant Cultural Centre, or the Doukhobor Village Museum. The Selkirk College Minto Room in the library is one good location to house the Doukhobor historical information. The Minto Room is built in a fashion that will protect the archives from aging, and it can be used for research by the general public.

The archive room can include:

- Photographs,
- Letters,
- Backdated ISKRA copies,
- Previous research, and
- All other relevant Doukhobor documentation.

### **B. Interview the older Doukhobor generation now to get the oral history**

There is a lot of Doukhobor history that is not written down, but is in the memories of the older Doukhobor generations. It is very important that this oral history is recorded before it is too late. This needs to happen right away. In the communities such as Blagodatnoye, the written history is limited and the people who lived there at one time are in their 80's or older today; no time can be wasted in recording this history. The USCC or local community should find volunteers, hire someone, or get children in elementary or high school to go around and talk to all these people and record what they have to say. Once the history is recorded, it should be placed in the archive room at the Brilliant Cultural Centre as described above.

### **C. Create a book specifically detailing the Doukhobor history of the area for each community**

There are only a few books that exist that have a chapter in it detailing a part of the Doukhobor history, but no book exists solely on the Doukhobors. A book should be created that is all about the Doukhobor people in this area. Each chapter of the book should contain the history about a specific Doukhobor community, such as Ootischenia or Blagodatnoye, or a specific part of their history, such as agriculture or food. This book would allow more people to have easy access to the history of the Doukhobor people in this area.

### **D. Promote the Doukhobor Village Museum**

The Doukhobor Village museum is great facility to learn about the history of the Doukhobor people. The museum should be advertised on the City of Castlegar website to attract more visitors to the museum. Schools in the Columbia River Corridor should bring their students to the museum to teach them the Doukhobor history near their homes.

### 3.5 Summary of Recommendations

Section 3.0 of this plan dealt with the current conditions of the remaining Doukhobors, the Russian language, the Doukhobor food, and the Doukhobor history in the corridor. The section also provided recommendations in all of these areas in order to preserve the Doukhobor legacy in the corridor for generations to come. Fulfillment of these recommendations is an important part of the implementation of this plan. Following is a summary of the recommended actions categorized by agency or entity.

#### ***USCC***

The USCC should:

- ✓ Look into buying the remaining Doukhobor houses and turning them into Bed and Breakfasts.
- ✓ Create a plaque to put at the Brilliant Cultural Centre indicating the history of the site and the hard work involved in fundraising for the building.
- ✓ Get a new sign for the Brilliant Cultural Centre made by one of many talented Doukhobor carpenters.
- ✓ Clean up the Brilliant and Ootischenia cemeteries.
- ✓ Create signage for the Blagodatnoye property.
- ✓ Plan for future residential development on the Blagodatnoye property.
- ✓ Create an exchange program between Russia and Castlegar.
- ✓ Make the cookbook *Hospitality: Vegetarian Cooking the Doukhobor Way* more accessible to purchase.
- ✓ Provide cooking courses at the Brilliant Cultural Centre.
- ✓ Market Doukhobor food in the local grocery stores.
- ✓ Record the oral history from the older Doukhobor people before it is too late.

#### ***Municipal Government***

The City of Castlegar should:

- ✓ Fund and create the Brilliant Suspension Bridge Regional Park.



- ✓ Create an exchange program between Russia and Castlegar.
- ✓ Promote the Doukhobor culture and Doukhobor Village Museum on their website.

### *Schoolhouse Restaurant*

The Schoolhouse Restaurant should:

- ✓ Promote its Doukhobor food by creating 'buy one get one free' coupons and giving them to organizations such as the Doukhobor Village Museum to give out to visitors.

### *Selkirk College*

Selkirk College should:

- ✓ Create an evening beginner's Russian language course at the Castlegar campus.
- ✓ Create an exchange program between Russia and Castlegar.
- ✓ Collect Doukhobor history, photographs, letters, and other relevant Doukhobor documentation and add it to the Minto Room in the Selkirk College library.

### *Community Members*

Community members should:

- ✓ Be encouraged to make homemade Doukhobor food and market it in the local grocery stores.
- ✓ Record the oral history from the older Doukhobor people before it is too late.

### *School Board*

The school board should:

- ✓ Create more spaces in the Russian immersion program in the elementary and secondary schools.
- ✓ Conserve the Russian immersion program by keeping a close eye on enrollment number and actively work hard to ensure that the number of students entering the program does not decline.
- ✓ Ensure that secondary school home-economic courses teach Doukhobor recipes.

## 4.0 PRECEDENTS

There are many precedents for the preservation of cultural heritage throughout North America. Many of these precedents focus on the physical historical structures that remain in a city or town and the preservation of local history. No precedents have been located that focus on the preservation of food, language, or customs of a cultural group. Two precedents are examined below to provide ideas for this plan.

### 4.1 *Halifax Regional Municipality Cultural Plan*



Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, prepared the draft Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) Cultural Plan in December 2005. This plan has five strategic directions with goals and policies to help with the planning process. The plan focuses on all cultural components of Halifax including the history, the arts, and the open spaces. The five strategic directions of the plan are as follows:

1. Focused service delivery and partnerships,
2. Cultural access and equity,
3. Community character and heritage,
4. Life long learning and creative development, and
5. Investment and promotion (HMR Cultural Plan, 2005).

The goal of the heritage portion of the Halifax Cultural Plan is to develop a comprehensive program for the conservation, preservation, and promotion of the HRM municipal and community heritage resources. Some relevant heritage planning ideas included in the plan are:

- Opportunities for the development of heritage conservation districts,
- Requirements for heritage incentives to encourage private conservation initiatives,
- An awareness program to compliment regulatory mechanisms for heritage conservation,
- Promotion of the Heritage Plan to stakeholders,
- The creation of a municipal heritage building to house a museum and archives with consideration for an art gallery and cultural learning centre,
- A GIS-based inventory of heritage resources for public, private, and community use,
- Efforts to raise awareness and knowledge of HRM's civic heritage through visitor cards, signs, and marketing initiatives, and
- More adaptive re-use of HRM's heritage buildings for public administration, community and tourism uses (HMR Cultural Plan, 2005).

This plan can be found at <http://www.halifax.ca/CulturalPlan/documents/RevisedCulturalPlan2006.pdf>

## 4.2 Ottawa 20/20 Arts and Heritage Plan



In April 2003, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, finished their Heritage Plan as part of the Ottawa 20/20 Arts and Heritage Plan. The Ottawa Heritage Plan focuses on the following three main issues pertaining to their City's heritage.

### 1. Identify, Collect, and Preserve

- Collect and preserve Ottawa's rich documentary and material heritage.
- Identify and protect archaeological and built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscapes, streetscapes, cemeteries and burial grounds, and public and symbolic civic places.

### 2. Research, Interpret, and Promote

- Increase knowledge and convey information about local history and heritage to a large and diversifies community through a variety of means.
- Promote local heritage assets and programming as a part of the city's marketing and tourism strategies.

### 3. Build Capacity

- Foster citizen participation and engagement in local heritage preservation and interpretation.
- Provide adequate financial, human and other resources to effectively collect, preserve, research, and interpret Ottawa's rich history and heritage. (Ottawa 20/20, 2003)

This plan can be found at

[http://ottawa.ca/city\\_services/planningzoning/2020/heritage/pdf/heritage.pdf](http://ottawa.ca/city_services/planningzoning/2020/heritage/pdf/heritage.pdf)

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## **6.0 APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1 - Halifax Regional Municipality Draft Cultural Plan (Relevant Excerpts)**

**Appendix 2 - Ottawa 20/20 Heritage Plan (Relevant Excerpts)**

**Appendix 1: Halifax Regional Municipality Cultural Plan (Relevant Excerpts)**









## **Appendix 2: Ottawa 20/20 Heritage Plan (Relevant Excerpts)**





