



*Lowry's Cabin, a site specific, 360° virtual recreation of author Malcolm Lowry's cabin, based on research by Stan Douglas for his photograph Lazy Bay (2015), Cates Park, 4141 Dollarton Highway, North Vancouver*  
*Photo credit: 3D Render Composite by Jonny Ostream*

# Lowry's Cabin

## The Polygon Gallery

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While the buildings of North Vancouver's historical Lazy Bay squatter's community may no longer exist, they can still be seen today via an innovative digital experience developed by the Polygon Gallery. With support from a B.C. | Canada 150 grant, The Polygon Gallery's *The Polygon Outside* project created *Lowry's Cabin*, a digital, site-specific art project that depicts the cabin of famed British novelists Malcolm Lowry and Marjorie Bonner. *Lowry's Cabin* is based on the work of artist Stan Douglas, who has visually recreated numerous historic and erased sites through his work in photography, video installation, and digital media. In his 2016 work *Lazy Bay*, Stan recreated an image of the community as it would have looked while still standing. The research he did for the piece was invaluable to the development of *Lowry's Cabin*. Accessed through the Gallery's free mobile app, visitors can virtually "see" the cabin Lowry occupied while

visiting the former site of Lazy Bay. It is a captivating new entry point for the community to consider the legacy of a site that has lost its built heritage.

The history of squatter communities around Vancouver dates back well over a century. In the 1930s and '40s there were as many as 90 wooden buildings erected on stilts in the intertidal zone along the North Shore waterfront. The concentrated group near Dollarton, where Cates Park is today, was known as "Lazy Bay." Malcolm Lowry and Marjorie Bonner lived in Lazy Bay intermittently between 1940 and 1954. It was during this time that Lowry finished his novel *Under the Volcano*, considered one of the most important novels of the twentieth century. The novel benefitted from Marjorie Bonner's astute editing. Lowry left Dollarton in 1954, angry and dismayed after municipal inspectors evicted the residents and set fire to the structures of Lazy Bay.

Funding through the B.C. | Canada 150 program allowed The Polygon to create truly interactive digital experiences based on recreations of historically and culturally significant spaces. One of the objectives for *Lowry's Cabin* was to expand the public's idea of what gallery "architecture" might encompass. The experience, as well as the context provided for the artwork through the

accompanying text on the mobile app, provides a captivating new entry point for visitors to benefit from an understanding of the artistic legacy of Stan Douglas Malcolm Lowry and Marjorie Bonner. In addition, the project allows visitors to connect directly with Lazy Bay in a way that would have been previously inaccessible. This highlights the history of squatter communities in British Columbia, elevates their stories into the historical narrative, and contributes to an account of the social, cultural, and built landscapes of Vancouver's North Shore. The digital artwork will exist in perpetuity as a representation of and legacy for British Columbia's diverse histories.

The B.C. | Canada 150 grant has enabled The Polygon Gallery to expand its programming into new media technologies, offering artists an innovative space for engaging audiences. These projects position The Polygon Gallery as a leader among visual art institutions in British Columbia in the area of digital art, enabling the organization to explore and benefit from how digital technologies provide opportunities for reaching people with art outside of an institutional setting.

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**13** new digital initiatives  
**RECEIVED FUNDING\***

\*British Columbia | Canada 150: Celebrating B.C. Communities and their Contributions to Canada grant program Impact Report