

Harbour.

Not a single stick of furniture or a kitchen utensil has been purchased, for everything in Point Ellice House has been used by three generations of O'Reillys.

Visitors get their first glimpse of the old fashioned life from the O'Reillys themselves, who dress in period costumes. John O'Reilly wears a top hat, cutaway coat and striped trousers; his wife 19th century high fashion.

Antique furniture fills every

and brother of Mrs. O'Reilly), a fireplace of Italian marble and a large flawless mirror over the fireplace.

The kitchen has a large range and a collection of blackened stew pots of the type sold by the Hudson's Bay Trading Company, and there is wine imported to Victoria when it was a Crown Colony.

Some years ago, curator Carolyn Case of the provincial museum said she had never seen

never a problem, we do, however, have our own living quarters, which are not actually open to the public."

Speaking at the official opening ceremony of Point Ellice House in 1967, Deputy Provincial Secretary Laurie Wallace noted, "Many old Victoria homes could be restored if people would only use their imaginations."

John and Inez O'Reilly are one couple who did, and others are now following the trend.

How the Navy was kept clean

Soue Kee helped keep the Canadian navy clean for 50 years.

When he died several years ago in his early 80's, the navy lost a friend and gave him a military funeral in keeping with its affection for the most famous laundryman in Esquimalt.

His real name was Tang Kam Chew. Born in Canton, he emigrated to Canada in 1909 at the age of 25 and for the next 46 years operated a laundry called Soue Kee's in the municipality.

Few people knew him by his real name, but many thousands of

navymen during three wars and the intervening years of peace depended on Soue Kee to keep them neat and clean.

He made daily trips to ships in dock at Esquimalt to pick up and deliver laundry. His arrival was greeted with almost as much ceremony as a visit from the admiral.

When Soue mounted the gangway of the Big 'O', the light cruiser HMCS Ontario, he was piped aboard like a celebrity. And when he reached the quarter-deck he always gave a smart salute.

On the cruiser HMCS Uganda, Soue was allowed to announce on the ship's public address system that he had arrived and was ready to collect laundry.

And more than one soundly sleeping seaman in the shore establishment at HMCS Naden was rudely awakened early in the morning with a thumb under his hammock as Soue made his way through the barracks shouting: "Wakey Wakey!"

Soue operated his business with a prodigious memory. No sailor can recall ever receiving a ticket for his laundry and never was an item misplaced. He was also the navy's unofficial "Banker" for seamen caught short between paydays. He never charged interest and was always repaid.

Soue rarely passed a mess-hall without being invited in for a meal and, of course, there was always a warming tot of navy issue rum.

He retired in 1955 and entered the Chinese Community Hospital seven years later. Physically frail, with a wisp of white hair fringing his bald head, Soue would sit in his pyjamas watching television, and sometimes when his old navy friends would drop in to seem him he would talk of the days when he was the unofficial mascot of the fleet.

To matron Mrs. Birdie Pegg he was "a wonderful patient...my favorite." Soue would always reply to the compliment with "I'm a good boy...number one!"

And that he was to thousands of navymen across Canada...not only their laundryman, but also banker and friend.

In Esquimalt, Soue Kee became an institution.

ESQUIMALT PROFILE **Souh**

oliday
A-Car System

**FOR PEOPLE
GOING PLACES**

A CANADIAN COMPANY

PRODUCTS AND OTHER FINE CARS

**TRUCKS- A MOVING EXPERIENCE
FROM \$10 PER DAY 10c PER MILE**



AY — THE HOLIDAY WAY
LIDAY RENT A CAR 384-8109

4 Dec 1974