

# ArchivesNews

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Steveston, [1891] or [1895].  
City of Richmond Archives, photograph #1984 17 75.



Minoru Park Racetrack, [ca. 1910]. Marjorie Knight Photograph Collection.  
City of Richmond Archives, photograph #2001 9 24.



First airplane visitor to Vancouver B.C. lands in Minoru Park, 1910.  
City of Richmond Archives, photograph #1978 15 18

## From the Richmond Archives Blog— Richmond 150: From Bog to City

*This is an abridged version of the original blog post from June 29, 2017. To see the full version, including the decades 1987-2017, visit the Friends of the Richmond Archives blog "Outside the Box" at <https://richmondarchives.ca/2017/06/29/richmond-150-from-bog-to-city/>.*

### 1867 to 1877

Starting with Hugh McRoberts there began a slow but steady migration of farmers to Lulu and Sea Islands.

### 1877 to 1887

Richmond continued to grow over the next decade as more people acquired land and homesteaded. Many pioneer families arrived during this time period, and in 1879 a group of them petitioned the BC Government to incorporate as a municipality. On November 10, 1879 The Corporation of the Township of Richmond was incorporated. A new Town Hall was built on land which now forms the corner of Cambie and River Roads and the first school district was formed, with the Town Hall acting as the schoolhouse. In 1882 the first cannery was built in Steveston beginning our long fishing industry heritage.

### 1887 to 1897

By 1887 Richmond's population had grown to 200-300 people. In 1889 the first North Arm bridge was built to Richmond, from Eburne on the Vancouver side of the River to Sea Island and then a second span to Lulu Island. Communities developed in Steveston, London's Landing and Eburne. Japanese immigration was underway, filling labour needs in the fishing industry. The first police constable was employed by the Municipality.

### 1897 to 1907

By 1897 there were 23 canneries operating on the Fraser River in Richmond. The agricultural industry was performing well too with Richmond acting as the lower mainland's breadbasket. Into this successful mix came the BC Electric Railway Co. in 1905.

### 1907 to 1917

In 1909, the opening of Minoru Park Racetrack made Richmond a popular destination for race fans. The track also became a centre for aviation in the Lower Mainland, being the location of the first flight of an airplane in Western Canada, the starting point of the first flight over the Rockies, etc.

Richmond's population continued to grow and by 1914 the Bridgeport area was home to a flour mill, a shinglemill, an iron bar mill, the Dominion Safe Works, a sawmill and many residents. The advent of World War I in 1914 put the nation and Richmond on a war footing and while industries important to the war effort grew, Minoru Park was closed until after the war. Many young men left Richmond to join the battle, 25 were never to return.



Boeing Plant on Sea Island, 1942.  
City of Richmond Archives, photograph #1985 199 1.



Oak Street Bridge construction, March 1957,  
1957. Bill Topping fonds.  
City of Richmond Archives, photograph #2008 36 2 23.



[Last Run], 1958. Ted Clark fonds.  
City of Richmond Archives, photograph #1999 4 3 1340.

## 1917 to 1927

On May 14, 1918 Steveston burned. There had been fires before but the 1918 fire resulted in the loss of most of the buildings between No. 1 Road and 3rd. Ave. south of Moncton St., including three canneries, three hotels and numerous businesses. Approximately 600 Japanese, Chinese and First Nations workers were made homeless. Total damages amounted to \$500,000.

In 1920 a new Town Hall was built at the corner of Granville Avenue and No.3 Road, replacing the original one which had burned in 1912. The racetrack also reopened in 1920 with a new name. Now known as Brighthouse Park Racetrack it was joined by Lansdowne Park Racetrack in 1924.

## 1927 to 1937

In 1929, in a farmer's field just north of Lansdowne Park Racetrack, BC's second licenced airfield opened. The Vancouver Airport was a temporary construction consisting of a grass field with some structures, hangars and a terminal building close to the Alexandra Road Interurban station. It was replaced in 1931 by the modern new Vancouver Airport on Sea Island.

The Richmond Review published its first newspaper on April 1, 1932. The paper would continue to publish "in the interests of Richmond and community" until its demise in 2015. The Great Depression was well underway when Reeve Rudy Grauer came up with a plan which resulted in not one Richmond property owner losing their property due to unpaid taxes in Richmond during the depression.

## 1937 to 1947

This decade was dominated by World War II. The airport on Sea Island was designated for direct military use, including elementary flight training for Air Force Pilots as well as Air Force use. Boeing Canada erected a plant for the construction of patrol bombers for the war effort.

The internment of Japanese Canadians and their removal from the coast in early 1942 changed the face of Richmond, especially in Steveston which lost 80 percent of its population. On Sea Island the community of Burkeville was built to provide housing for workers employed at the Boeing Canada Aircraft plant and their families. Once again young Richmond men signed up for the armed forces and 36 did not come home.

## 1947 to 1957

Post war development saw Richmond's population grow. The Brighthouse area developed into a commercial hub and subdivisions developed to house families moving to the area. In 1948 one of the worst floods in memory occurred in the Fraser Valley. While serious damage was done in many areas, Richmond came out well with only one breach of the dyke 100 yards east of the rice mill.

## 1957 to 1967

In 1957 the Oak Street bridge was built. A new City Hall was opened the same year in the same location as the old one. With the new ease of access and bus service expanding all around the region, the BC Electric trams were made redundant and the Marpole to Steveston line saw its last run in 1958.

The Municipality purchased the Brighthouse Estates in 1962, the deal providing land for Minoru Park, the Richmond Hospital and industrial land. Richmond's retail options increased in 1964 with the opening of Richmond Square Shopping Centre, built on part of the old Brighthouse/Minoru Racetrack. In 1966 the Hudson's Bay Company announced plans to build a store in Richmond. The Richmond General Hospital opened on February 26, 1966 providing much needed local care for residents.



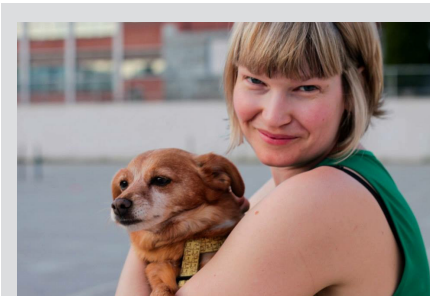
New Richmond Municipal Hall under construction behind the old Richmond Municipal Hall, shown in the foreground, ca. 1957.

City of Richmond Archives, photograph #1997 42 3 47.



Richmond Arts Centre, ca. 1967.

City of Richmond Archives, photograph #2004 11.



### Welcome Laura Fortier!

Laura Fortier has been hired as the maternity leave replacement for Jennifer Yuhasz, Archivist. Laura holds a Masters of Archival Studies degree from the University of British Columbia. Laura is an experienced Archivist who previously worked as a Local History Coordinator for the Saskatoon Public Library, as well as six years as the Archivist and Collections Manager for the Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art and History in British Columbia. Please feel free to stop by the Archives to say hello to Laura.

## 1967 to 1977

Canada's 100th Birthday was in 1967 and like most communities around the country Richmond marked the occasion with commemorative projects. The Richmond Arts Centre was one of these, along with the placement of Minoru Chapel in Minoru Park, and a Pioneers Luncheon. In 1968 the Vancouver International Airport's new \$32 Million terminal opened. In 1972 the first two towers of Richmond's first high rise development were ready for occupation, the third tower opened in 1973.

After much controversy a new shopping mall project was started on the grounds of the old Lansdowne Park Racetrack. Woodward's would be the anchor store for the new Lansdowne park mall. While the newest of Richmond's retail outlets was under construction its oldest was lost in 1976 when Grauer's Store shut down after 63 years of service to the community, a victim of airport expansion and bureaucracy.

## 1977 to 1987

On January 1, 1977 a new street address system was introduced in Richmond with all residents and businesses adding a zero to the end of even numbered address and a one to the end of odd numbered addresses. In 1979 Richmond's 100th Anniversary was marked by celebrations and commemorative projects including hosting the BC Summer Games, a history book, "Richmond: Child of the Fraser", and the adoption of a new coat of arms and official seal.

Through this decade Richmond continued its expansion with the construction of hotels, businesses, temples and churches and community buildings such as the Gateway Theatre and Minoru Senior's Centre. Improvements to other community buildings were made, such as a roof for the Minoru swimming pool and a second ice rink. In 1986, after 20 years of planning, the Alex Fraser Bridge was opened connecting Richmond to Surrey and Delta.

The Municipality purchased the land at Garry Point from the Bell-Irving family in 1981, with the intention to make it a park and to prevent development of the site. The racial demographic of Richmond began to change in the 1980s as an influx of immigrants from Hong Kong began, many making the Municipality their home.

## Records Legacy Project—Update



In the fall of 2016, the City of Richmond Archives began a project to preserve original bylaws. Dated between 1925 and the 1970s, these vital records were previously identified as fragile and in need of conservation treatment. The Records Legacy Project involved physically removing the bylaws from their bindings by removing rusty nails and deteriorating glues. After the bylaws were removed from the bindings they were gently cleaned and rehoused into acid-free archival folders. Large plans or maps attached to the bylaws were also carefully removed, flattened and stored in a new map cabinet purchased by the Friends of the Richmond Archives specifically for this project. The Records Legacy Project was completed May 2017.

In addition to celebrating Richmond's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a City in 2015, this project also serves to commemorate Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> year of Confederation in 2017. The Records Legacy Project is a part of an important step towards ensuring that fragile City records are kept safe, accessible and preserved for future generations.



## Canada 150 Projects—Update

### *What's in a Name? Name Origins Project*

A new database has been launched on the City of Richmond's website (<http://archives.richmond.ca/archives/places/>). Community members now can explore and discover the people and history behind the names of local roads, bridges, islands and other places through the new Name Origins Database. For more than 20 years, Friends of the Richmond Archives volunteers and City of Richmond Archives staff have dedicated countless hours researching the name origins of streets, areas, and landmarks in Richmond.

Many of the nearly 500 name entries in the database are accompanied by a Google map which shows the current location. The work is ongoing and the database will continue to be updated as new discoveries are made.

Research into Richmond's fallen servicemen is included in the Name Origins Database, as well as in the "We Will Remember Them" website launched earlier this year.

### *Richmond Review Newspaper Digitization Project Phase 1*

Phase 1 of the digitization of the Richmond Review is well underway. Currently, 194 issues from 1935–1938 and 103 issues from 1948–1949 have been digitized and we are working on making these accessible online. By the end of 2017, we hope to digitize and make accessible online issues from the Richmond Review dating well into the 1950s. Issues will be made available on the new archives database on the City of Richmond's website (<http://archives.richmond.ca/archives/descriptions/>).

## Archives Tea 2017

The annual Archives Tea, hosted by the Friends of the Richmond Archives, will take place this year on Friday, October 13 at 2:00 pm (doors will open at 1:30 pm). The Tea will be held again this year at the Minoru Place Activity Centre (Minoru Seniors Centre) across the plaza from the Richmond Library and Cultural Centre.

This year marks the 21st anniversary of our annual event. Guests are welcome, so please bring along friends who would enjoy taking part in this pleasant affair.

The Friends would once again like to thank the Minoru Seniors Society for its generosity and ongoing support in allowing the use of their Main Hall for the Tea.

We look forward to an afternoon of good food, excellent company and captivating conversation. Books from the Archives' publication program will be available for purchase as will the DVD of Ted Clark's 1949 film of the BC Electric Railway Lulu Island Line.



Picnic in Stanley Park, [ca. 1910].  
City of Richmond Archives, photograph #1978 15 5.

## Out in the Community—Friends of the Richmond Archives

As usual the Friends of the Richmond Archives have been busy attending community events and putting on displays. However, with Canada 150 celebrations going on this year, the Friends have been busier than ever with their regular community events as well as attending special Canada 150 events.



*Left to right: 1. Graham Turnbull and Jackie Brown at the Public Works Open House May 13, 2017. 2. Christine McGilvray (left) and Lynne Farquharson (right) with the Friends of the Richmond Archives display at the Pioneer Luncheon held at City Hall May 27, 2017. 3. Christine McGilvray (left) and Barbara Williams (right) with the Friends of the Richmond Archives display at the 2017 Steveston Salmon Festival July 1, 2017.*

CITY OF RICHMOND  
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Appointment recommended