# ARCHIVES
news

Above: Royal Canadian Air Force takes over the operation of Sea Island Airport, 1939.

Right: Gordon Irons, King Edward School Glider Club, Vancouver Airport, 1932.
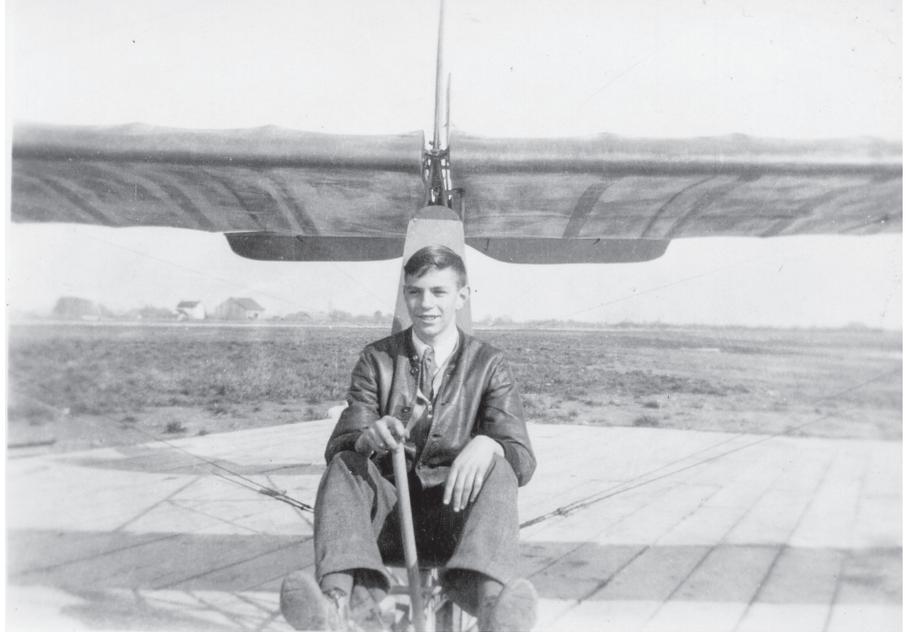
New terminal building and control tower, Vancouver Airport, 1931.

Trans Canada Airlines Lockheed 14, 1935.

New Photographs Illuminate the History of Aviation in Richmond

The City of Richmond Archives was indeed fortunate this winter in being the recipient of a large donation of historical photographs documenting early aviation activities in Richmond and aircraft dating from the 1930s and 1940s.

This unique collection of over 4500 photographic prints was created by Gordon Irons, a pilot and amateur photographer, who began work as a control tower operator at Vancouver International Airport in 1933. After military service with the RCAF during World War II, he returned to civilian work in control towers in both Vancouver and Edmonton.

After Mr. Irons' death in 2002, his wife, Rena, presented the photographs to Harry Pride, a pilot and aviation historian, who had grown up in Richmond and had been a long-time friend and associate. Over 70 of the photographs taken by Gordon Irons were used in the book, "A Life With Wings: Growing Up with Aviation in Richmond, B.C.," authored by Harry Pride and published in 2010.

The images capture the rapid technological changes that occurred in the early era of aviation history and document the role Richmond has played in being the centre of aviation activities in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia.
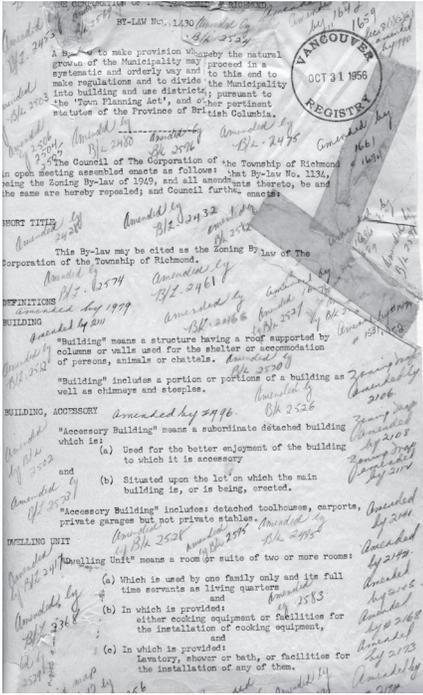
Richmond

Above: First page of Bylaw 1430 (1956), with amendment bylaw number annotations in pencil.

Right: Aerial view of Richmond (population 8,000) in the 1930s, before the establishment of zoning bylaws.

Correction Notice

The gremlins crept in to the last issue of the Archives News with the identification of the photo of 1965 municipal election staff. "Bill Lowe" was of course William (Bill) Lane, long-time municipal solicitor of Richmond. Thank you to several readers who caught the typo.

Focus on the Record—Records of Early Land Use Regulation

The City of Richmond Archives holds records created by Council, its committees, and City departments involved in guiding land use in Richmond, from the very earliest town planning discussions to recent zoning bylaws. Before the post World War II growth of suburban development, the local government role in guiding land use was largely carried out through building and subdivision approval. In Richmond, the first subdivision plans approval bylaw was passed in 1908. The Archives holds a variety of early subdivision plans.

After World War II the need for formal planning and building control became more pressing; land was being subdivided and buildings were being constructed at an increasing rate. In 1947 a Town Planning Commission was established to advise Council in carrying out the powers and provisions of the provincial "Town Planning Act" (1925). The Archives holds the original minutes and reports of the Town Planning Commission, and its successor body, the Advisory Planning Commission, from the latter's establishment in 1957 until 1992, when it was formally disbanded.

As evidenced in the early meeting minutes, the Town Planning Commission was empowered to issue or deny building permits and to make decisions relating to permissible activities on specific properties. The Commission was assisted in its decision making by the Municipal Engineer and the Municipal Clerk.

With the help of the provincial government's Regional Planning Division, a comprehensive planning tool was developed in 1949. This was the first zoning bylaw, Bylaw 1134 (1949), for the regulation of land use and building, in 7 types of districts, known as the Town Plan. The bylaw was officially described as: "A bylaw to divide the Corporation of the Township of Richmond into

districts and to make regulations in relation thereto, regulating the location, use and height of buildings, size of yards and other open spaces, and the use of land, pursuant to the 'Town Planning Act' and the 'Municipal Act'".

Until 1957, when a Planning Department was created and Richmond's first Town Planner was hired, Council's oversight of the planning process was carried out through the Town Planning Commission and outside consultants. This mechanism proved inadequate to manage growth. In 1955 the City's consultants presented a report which became the basis for the next zoning bylaw, to replace the 1949 bylaw. Bylaw 1430 (1956) created 11 use classifications. With multiple amendments (over 1000), it served to guide land use control until a new Zoning Bylaw was adopted in 1989. The new 1989 bylaw (Bylaw 5300) was established in association with Richmond's Official Community Plan, first adopted in 1986.

The Archives holds extensive municipal government records of planning functions carried out since the creation of the Planning Department, including those relating to community planning and zoning administration. Researchers are welcome to make an appointment to consult these at the Archives.

Helen Hopkins, 1941–2012

The Archives lost a dedicated and courageous friend in January with the passing of Helen Hopkins. Helen served on the Executive of the Friends of the Richmond Archives as Membership Chair, and for many years was an Archives' volunteer.

Her commitment, integrity, and genuine warmth will be greatly missed by the staff and volunteers at the Archives.

Larry Burton—Volunteer of the Year

This year's "Volunteer of the Year Award" might have been better termed "Volunteer of the Last 25 Years Award". Unfortunately that wording could not fit on the plaque attached to the framed photograph presented in December to Larry Burton.

Larry was active in promoting the establishment of the Archives in its present form and served as the first interim President of the Friends of the Richmond Archives prior to its formal incorporation as a society. And since then, for 25 straight years, he has been on the Executive Committee of the Friends, serving for much of that time as Treasurer.

On behalf of the Friends, Larry has played a major role in the Archives' historical publication program as a result of his responsibility for the sale and distribution of books. His common sense and solid grasp of the intricacies of accounting for a non-profit charitable organization has provided a solid foundation upon which the Friends have been able to raise money and contribute to the development of the City of Richmond Archives.

Thanks so much, Larry, for your dedication to the Archives and for the tremendous contributions you have made to it over the last quarter of a century!

Donors of Community Records in 2011

Norah Lewis
Edward Samworth
Sheldon Wong
Ross Hamilton
Bill McNulty
Graham Turnbull
Robert Trapp
Ron Stabler
Ken Douglas
Grover, Elliott & Co. Ltd.
Andy Felker
Susan Gordon
William Moffatt
L. Trevor Jones
Fred Hilderman
Don Hall
Linda Barnes
Baha'is of Richmond
Mission District Historical Society
Harry Pride
Joe Bauer
Daryl Stennett
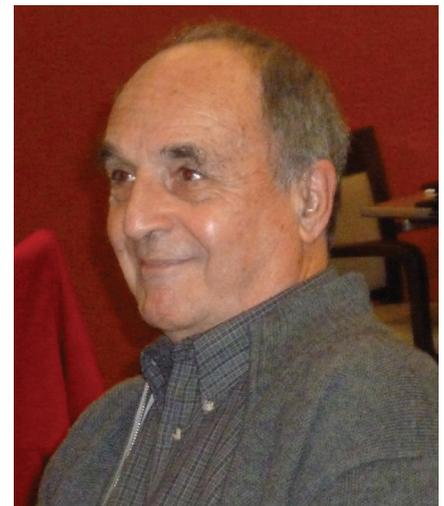
Larry Burton, Volunteer of the Year

Annual General Meeting— Friends of the Archives

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Richmond Archives will be held Wednesday March 21 at 7:00 pm in the Archives Reference Room. This is the yearly business meeting at which the Friends elect a new Executive, report on financial matters, and set a budget for the coming year.

The Friends would also like to remind members that the membership year runs from October 1 to September 30. Those members who are in arrears are encouraged to send their annual dues ($5 per person) to the Friends of the Richmond Archives, c/o City of Richmond Archives, 7700 Minoru Gate, Richmond, B.C. V6Y 1R9. Phone 604-247-8305 if you are unsure about your membership status.

The Friends also welcome donations. The society is a registered charity and can issue tax receipts for amounts over $10.00.

Above: Student presenter Monica Yao and Mayor Brodie at the Archives Tea

CITY OF RICHMOND ARCHIVES

7700 Minoru Gate
Richmond, B.C. V6Y 1R9

Archivist: Bill Purver
Phone: 604-247-8305
Email: archives@richmond.ca

www.richmond.ca/archives

Public Reference Room Hours
Monday–Thursday, 9:00–4:30
Appointment recommended

Financial Contributions of the Friends of the Richmond Archives

No doubt readers of the Archives News are aware of the tremendous volunteer work members of the Friends of the Richmond Archives carry out in the Archives and on its behalf in the community. Many, however, may not be aware of the financial contributions of the Friends in furthering the development of the Archives. Since the inception of the society, the Friends have contributed over $110,000 to the Archives for a wide variety of projects, programs and equipment.

Examples of the financial support given to the Archives by the Friends include:

- financing the Archives' historical publication program (12 books)
- providing funds for numerous projects enabling the Archives to undertake arrangement and description, conservation, database, and web development work
- purchasing specialized furniture, including special shelving units, map cabinets, and a freezer for conservation use
- purchasing specialized software and computer equipment
- purchasing a variety of audio-visual equipment, including digital display screens
- purchasing display units for Archives' exhibits
- funding the production of promotional material for the Archives
- endowing a UBC award to graduate students in the Archival Studies program
- providing cash prizes to local students participating in various community events

The support of the Friends of the Richmond Archives over the years has played a major role in the development of the City Archives. Thank you to all the volunteer members who have made this possible!

Recent Activities of the Friends

Clockwise from top left: Barbara Williams addressing the 2011 Archives Tea; Chinese New Year's Display at the Archives; Friends' Display at Remembrance Day reception at City Hall