

ArchivesNews

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Focus on the Record:

Back to School and Mr. David Dick

As summer ends, we look forward to the beauty of autumn and all the changes this season brings. For many, September is also a time of new beginnings, particularly for teachers and students alike. Mr. David Dick, Richmond school bus driver from 1929 to 1959, would have observed first-hand many of Richmond's youth as they returned to school.

The City of Richmond Archives has more than 400 oral history interviews, including a 1975 interview with Mr. Dick who started driving a school bus in September 1929. Oral history interviews can be a wealth of information. In terms of Mr. Dick, he shared a great deal about his life as a bus driver in Richmond.

In an era when roads were narrower, deep ditches more common, and homes spread out, Mr. Dick and his bus provided a critical link in our community. In his interview, he explains that, as is the case today, in order to drive a bus, he was required to have a special license. To receive his Class A license, Mr. Dick had to travel to New Westminster to write a test. Remembering the day he had to make the journey, Mr. Dick said "it was one of Lulu Island's real foggy days." In fact, he stated that there "wasn't very much room in front of the car that wasn't occupied by fog." Once he arrived safely, Mr. Dick explained that the "inspector wanted to know how we got there." After telling him that he had driven through the dense fog, the inspector was surprised and said: "Well, you shouldn't have to write, but I guess you better. If you can drive through that fog, you're all right."

If you are interested to learn more about the City of Richmond Archives oral history collection, copies of summaries or transcripts of interviews are available online (see: www.richmond.ca/cityhall/archives/search-archives.htm). If you would like to listen to the interviews, contact the Archives to make arrangements.



David Dick shown with his school bus, ca. 1950.
City of Richmond Archives photograph #1977 24 93.



Waiting for the school bus, 1940.
City of Richmond Archives photograph #1977 24 94.



David Dick shown with school bus and group of school children, ca. 1950.
City of Richmond Archives photograph #1977 24 95.

"One of the things I wish is that anyone [who] has children could have as many happy years of working with them as I had in 30 years of bus driving."

David Dick, 1975 Oral History Interview.

Who Uses the Archives?

Professor Sarah Nickel

As a Secwépemc historian of the twentieth century with a particular interest in Indigenous histories, social movements, and gender, archives are vital to accessing the voices and perspectives of those typically left out of traditional Canadian histories. I am always fascinated by the records that individuals, groups, and organizations created themselves because they offer rich and alternative narratives about the work they were doing, what they were interested in, and how they negotiated the challenges around them. One of my current book projects, with University of Victoria historian Lynne Marks and Queen's University Gender and Politics scholar Margaret Little, is looking at how racialized, immigrant, Indigenous, and low-income women across Canada between the 1960s and 1980s used motherhood as a key aspect of their political activism. Many of these women advocated for welfare rights, reinstated status under the *Indian Act*, and wages for housework (among other things) in various ad hoc groups and organizations, and through this, they created their own archival records. The Richmond Women's Resource Centre was one such group, and consulting their papers at the City of Richmond Archives gave me detailed insight into how this organization began, who was involved, and what it accomplished, but also how it related to like minded groups and individuals across the Lower Mainland and beyond. As women struggled for social, political, and economic equality, they found allies and leveraged those relationships to forward their cause in important ways. The archives enable me to trace those developments. As a former Richmond resident, coming home to these archives was a real treat.

I pair archival work in national, regional, community, and private archives with oral history interviews of individuals who were politically active during this period, and this helps me to write historical narratives that foreground women, Indigenous peoples, immigrants, and others where they have otherwise been forgotten or erased.

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Sarah Nickel, PhD, Associate Professor

Canadian Indigenous History, University of Alberta



University of Alberta Professor Sarah Nickel in the City of Richmond Archives Reference Room, May 2022.

Sahira Memon



My name is Sahira Memon, and I am a student with the City of Richmond Engineering Department. I have been using the Archives for the past month to research certain laws as they were applied in the 1950s–1980s. The records at the Archives are always well organized and in excellent condition, it is very clear how much care goes in to preserving Richmond's history.

Vicky Brkich



Vicky Brkich photographed in the Archives Reference Room with her recently completed book "The Lacrosse Girls of Summers Past, A Scrapbook History of Girls and Women's box Lacrosse in Richmond, BC from 1972–1982."

Kelvin and Kay Higo



Long time supporters of the Richmond Archives, Kay and Kelvin Higo spend some time in the Archives Reference Room.

Mary Keen's Book "No Idle Hands" Available Online

In 1996, Mary Keen's book *"No Idle Hands: From the Parlour to the Rec Room: Leisure Choices in Richmond, 1875–1955"* was published. The Archives has sold the last copy and, as has been the case with other out of print publications, we have published a digital copy on the Archives website. Mary Keen's daughter Jennifer Gervès-Keen shares the following reflection on Mary and the joy she had publishing books.

Even when I was a child, I always knew that my mum—Mary Keen—was interested in history and language. An avid reader and staunch defender of good grammar, Mary used her sharp research (from her days as a librarian in the UK) and writing skills to earn top marks as a mature history student at UBC when my parents moved to the west coast in the late 1980's. When she started volunteering for the Archives in Richmond, she had the opportunity to put her formidable skill set to effective use, and our community benefited from her talent and her ongoing interest in telling the stories of the people who lived and worked in Richmond throughout the years.

I was privileged enough to see her fascination with history and the people who lived it first hand on innumerable occasions, but the most memorable was when we were in Normandy together, exploring the Canadian cemeteries so that mum could find the information on the individuals listed on the Richmond cenotaph, which was the material for her book "We Will Remember Them". Mary loved living in Richmond, meeting the people who made up the fabric of the community, and talking with them about their relationships with the town, the land and each other. She was a huge fan of the local history and all the interesting stories that she was then able to turn into thought-provoking books. I am thrilled that people will soon have an opportunity to read "No Idle Hands" and if you knew my mum, I hope that you will have good memories of her while reading the book.

To read the on-line version of "No Idle Hands" go to:
www.richmond.ca/cityhall/archives/about/publications.htm.



Mary Keen working in the Archives workroom, summer 1997.

Mary Keen Memorial Prize in Archival Studies – 2021 Recipient

Every year, the Friends of the Richmond Archives have awarded a prize to a student in the University of British Columbia's Master of Archival Studies program. Last year's recipient was Natalie Trapuzzano. Natalie graduated from the UBC iSchool in 2021.

She writes: "Throughout my time at UBC, I was incredibly lucky to have the opportunity to work closely with various communities and collaborate with them to create greater access and equity in archival spaces. More than anything else, I have cherished the relationships we can build and the trust we can earn that allow us to make a meaningful impact as memory workers. As a settler and beneficiary of systemic injustices that have been historically harmful to marginalized communities and their records, I am honored to be chosen for this prize and to continue what will hopefully be a long career alongside community records."

Natalie is currently working at the University of Maryland as the Assistant University Archivist, where she plans to continue building relationships with communities and their records. Congratulations Natalie!

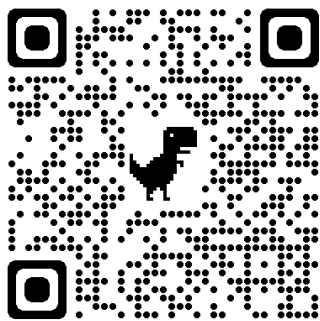


Natalie Trapuzzano, 2021 Mary Keen Memorial Prize Recipient.



Cultural Centre Display Window Exhibit

For the month of May and June, the Friends created an exhibit for the Cultural Centre display windows featuring the Richmond Review Newspaper Digitization Project. Sample pages from the Review were on display as well as a description of how to access copies of the newspapers online. As has been so common during the pandemic, QR codes were used to enable viewers to quickly access the Archives website on a smart phone where they would find further information.



CITY OF RICHMOND
Archives
 7700 Minoru Gate
 Richmond, BC V6Y 1R9
 Archivist: Dovelle Buie
 Records Analyst: Dan Farrell
 Phone: 604-247-8305
 Email: archives@richmond.ca
 www.richmond.ca/archives
 Public Reference Room Hours:
 Monday–Thursday: 9:00am–4:30pm
 Appointment recommended

Sea Island Reunion

Friends Executive members Christine McGilvray, Lynne Farquharson and Ron Hyde were pleased to attend the first Sea Island Reunion, hosted by the Sea Island Heritage Society, on May 28, 2022. They created a display on the importance of community archives and highlighted information on how to donate records to the City of Richmond Archives.



Vice-President Lynne Farquharson and Director Ron Hyde at the Sea Island Reunion, May 2022.

Friends AGM

On March 16th, the Friends of the Richmond Archives held their Annual General Meeting via Zoom. At this yearly business meeting, the Friends review the previous year, report on financial matters, and adopt a work plan and budget for the upcoming year. At the AGM, the following slate of officers were elected for 2022–2023: Christine McGilvray (President), Lynne Farquharson (Vice President), Jackie Brown (Secretary), Jon Henderson (Treasurer), John Campbell (Director), Precilla Huang (Director) and Ron Hyde (Director). This year, following the AGM, all members received copies of a small selection of AGM materials such as the President’s Report, the Archivist’s Report, the Work Plan and Budget.

2022 Heritage Award Recipient Christine McGilvray

Congratulations to Christine McGilvray, President of the Friends of the Richmond Archives, who is one of the recipients of the 2022 Richmond Heritage Awards. Christine was awarded for her contribution as a host of the “Journey Through Time” online and telephone history sessions designed particularly for seniors who are not able to leave their homes or take part in programming during the pandemic. The monthly programs were delivered as part of the Seniors programming at West Richmond Community Centre. There have been about 15 sessions, on a wide range of topics, with approximately 150 registrants since the first session in December 2020. Congratulations Christine! Very well deserved!



Christine McGilvray with her Heritage Award, June 2022.