

# ArchivesNews

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## Focus on the Record – Our Favourites

"What is your favourite archival record?" This is a frequent question we are asked, but one that is hard to answer since there are so many to choose from. As archivists we have met donors who have touched our hearts and we have had the honour of working with information that has personally changed us and the way we see the world. With over 1 kilometre of textual records, 175,000 photographs, 20,000 maps and plans, over 500 sound and moving image recordings, a small reference library, and subject and biographical reference files, there are so many treasures in the holdings at the City of Richmond Archives. The holdings consist of both municipal records as well as community records. We also receive new donations of private records on a regular basis and City records are regularly transferred to us to enable access and long term preservation. That being said, and with some help from some volunteers, let's try and highlight some interesting, notable, and significant records. Let's first start with the public.

### Our Favourites – Online Friends and Followers

The Friends of the Richmond Archives have been supporting and promoting the work of the Archives online since 2012. Currently, there is a new Facebook and Instagram post every week. People like, love, react and often comment on the postings that Social Media Coordinator John Campbell publishes.

#### (1) Photograph – 406 Railway bus, No. 3 Road, ca. 1985.

What has been the most popular post? The winner is ... a photograph of a bus taken by Planning Department staff!



City of Richmond Archives photograph #1988 110 13 12.

Posted on August 31, 2023, the Facebook caption was:

*"Folks line up to board the 406 Railway bus outside Richmond Square Mall in this photo, ca. 1985. This block of No. 3 Road has been a hub for transit, from the days when the BC Electric Railway stopped at the Brighthouse station at the corner of Granville and No. 3 Road, until today with the Canada Line's Brighthouse station and multiple bus stops. The 406 bus still runs from Brighthouse, down Railway to Steveston and back."*

This image had a reach of 56,378 with 57,512 impressions. What do these numbers mean? Basically, people loved it! With over 70 comments, people reacted to the photograph by saying things like:

*"406 Railway was my bus baby! Great memories"*

*"Sorry, I'm not getting on, I have to wait for the 408 Garden City. I'll just stand over here."*

#### (2) Photograph of a female cannery worker.

In second place, from the British Columbia Packers Limited fonds, another very popular photograph posted online was this image from the 1940s.



City of Richmond Archives photograph #2001 34 9 591.

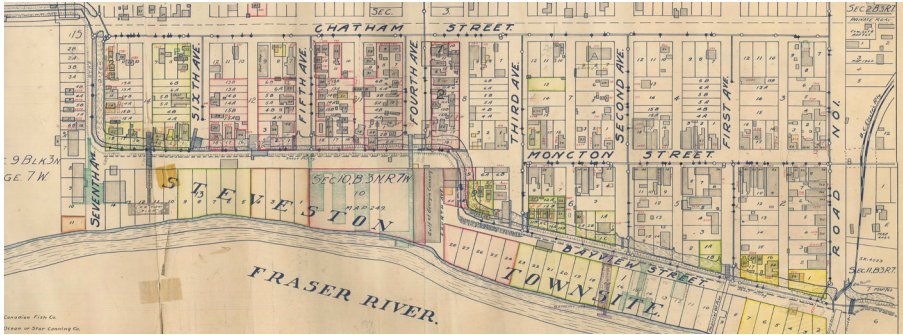
The photograph was published on March 8, 2024 to celebrate International Women's Day. The caption included this detail:

*"About 375,000 Canadian women worked in manufacturing industries and in Richmond female employees kept aircraft rolling off the Boeing factory floor and vital food supplies coming from the farms and canneries. This image from the War years shows a cannery worker wearing the coverall supplied to women by BC Packers, featuring gumboots, gloves, the Cloverleaf logo and a headscarf, an item which became a symbol of women in the War Effort."* Comments included:

*"Thank you Ladies!" and "My grandma."*

## Our Favourites – Volunteers

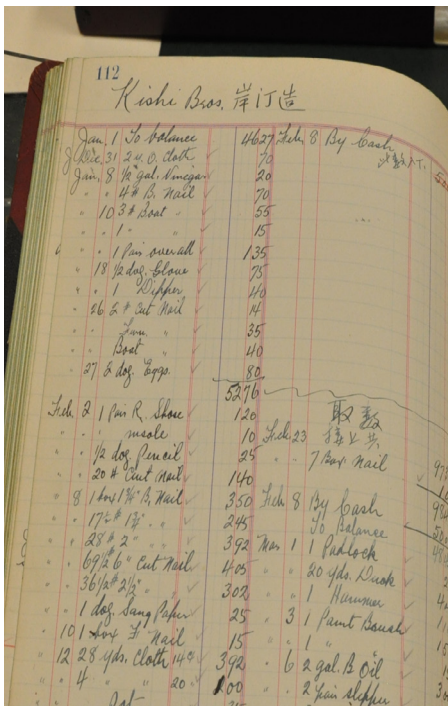
Christine McGilvray's favourite record is the 1936 Waterworks atlas. A retired City employee, and current President of the Friends, she values the vital information which is recorded in this historic document. The Waterworks atlas consists of 132 detailed contiguous area maps depicting water lines, sewers, pump houses and even outbuildings like henhouses and sheds. The maps also depict the placement and orientation of roads and buildings (sometimes including street addresses) and provide some information linking certain public works projects with bylaws.



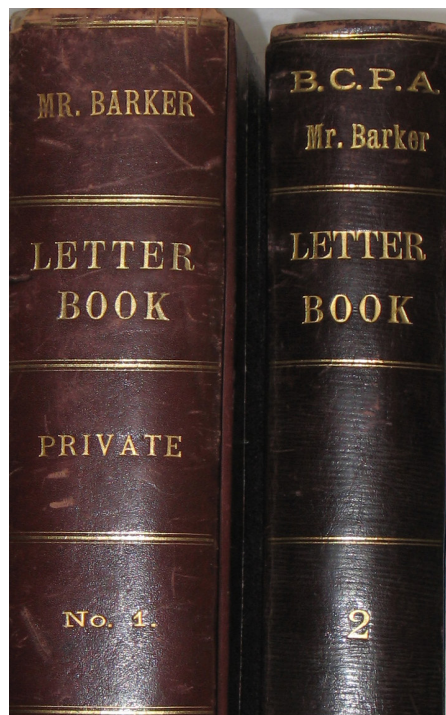
Waterworks atlas map of Steveston townsite area south of Chatham Street, including the waterfront, MR 519, item #1991 40 18.

The 1917 Hong Wo & Co. Store ledger is a favourite record for Lily Liu, 2023 Archives Intern, current volunteer and UBC Master of Archival Studies student. Lily likes this record because it gives us a glimpse into the historic store in Steveston and the ways its services were interwoven into the fabric of Richmond's community. Written in both English and Chinese, the ledger lists customers, goods for sale, and prices.

John Campbell's favourite record are the Barker Letter Books. Barker was the manager and President of BC Packers during a pivotal time in BC's fishing industry. The letters deal with day to day business, but also his personal views into things like conservation of the resource, government interference, Asian exclusion and changes to the industry.



Hong Wo & Co. Store ledger, 1917. Accession 2008 3.



The Barker Letter Books, Volumes One and Two, 1905-1926. BC Packers Limited fonds, series 2.

Terry Eastwood's favourite records are the Lance Carey fonds which consists of personal records; records of the Richmond Field Hockey Club; and records of Lance Carey's involvement in the Richmond sports community. However, Terry notes that the most interesting and informative documents among Lance's records are his diaries kept of his international play for Canada, in which he reveals details of matches and all kinds of colourful observations of places and people he encounters along the way.



Lance Carey (left) and Terry Eastwood (right) share a laugh or two in the Archives workroom, 2024.

City of Richmond Archives photograph.

After describing 2,000 photographs, 2024 Archives Intern Anouska Kirby has a clear favourite: the Harada family photograph albums.

Anouska returned to the Archives to volunteer with donor Jeanne Ryan (née Harada) to curate an exhibit featuring 14 carefully selected photographs. With thanks to our Richmond Museum colleagues, we also have Harada and Akune family artefacts on display. Come by the Archives and see the new exhibit. The exhibit will also be available online this fall.



Jeanne Ryan (left) and Anouska Kirby (right) work on new exhibit, 2025.

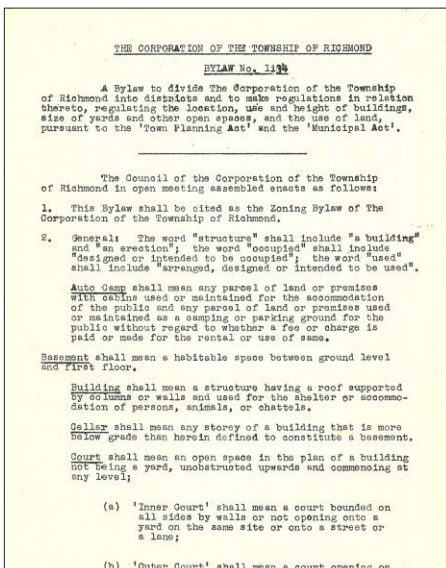
City of Richmond Archives photograph.



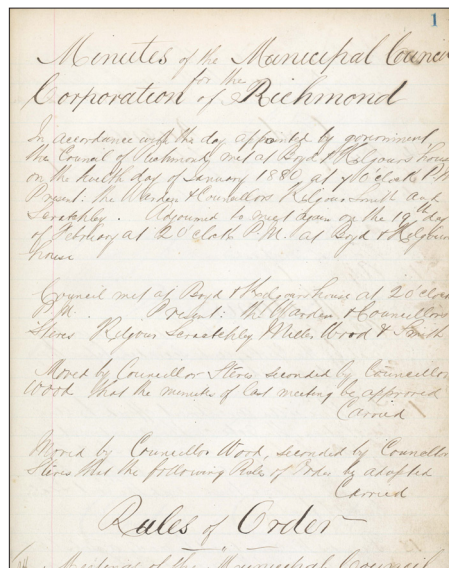
## Our Favourites – Staff

Bylaws are Records Analyst Karen Ng's favourite records. Zoning bylaws and maps, which provide legal information about how land and buildings can be used, reflect Richmond's growth and development over the years and are vital for researching and learning about how the decisions around land can affect housing, commercial areas, and green spaces. These bylaws and maps are preserved in the Archives for safekeeping and are available to the public. Furthermore, these types of records provide great research value and are still actively consulted by City staff.

Archivist Dovel Buie's favourite records are Council minutes. Like many other municipal records, Council minutes serve as the organization's corporate memory. Recording discussions, decisions, and actions taken, these records are the official record of Council. An interesting fact is that in 1913, when the first town hall burnt down, people saved the minutes and bylaws from the flames. All staff in the City Clerk's Office play a role to carefully manage these important records. Legislative Services staff record the minutes and then publish them to the website. Records staff index the minutes into an online searchable database. At the Archives, we preserve the minutes and provide access to these historic records, dating back to the first Council meeting on January 12, 1880.



Zoning Bylaw 1134, 1949. MR 114.



Richmond Council minutes, January 1880. MR 1.

## Congratulations Terry!

Terry Eastwood is a recipient of one of the Richmond Heritage Awards for 2025.

Terry, who has been a Richmond resident since 1981, is a retired archivist and professor of archival studies.

Terry has been a supporter of the Archives since it was established in 1982. His name appears on a Friends meeting sign-in document from 1986. Terry has been a weekly volunteer since January 2023. He has contributed hundreds of hours arranging and describing records. He has also been a mentor to our interns and students who have visited the Archives. Thank you Terry!



Terry with UBC Master of Archival Studies students Lily Liu (left) and Linnet Chappelka (right).

City of Richmond Archives photograph.

## Who Uses the Archives?

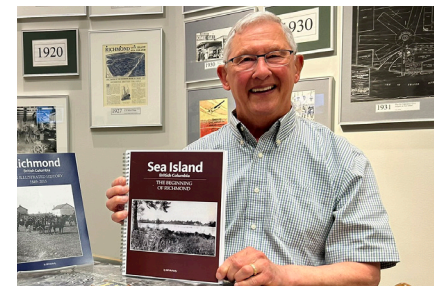


Cynthia Lussier, Planner.

City of Richmond Archives photograph.

Cynthia, from Development Applications, remarked after consulting some zoning records: "That's the information I was looking for!" Cynthia also had this to share:

"I have had the pleasure of visiting the Archives and working with the excellent staff there to obtain records associated with various inquiries and projects I have been involved with over the years. Most recently, I needed to consult historical maps to gather information about the former zoning of a property in Richmond. The Archives has a reference room where it is lovely to feel like you're stepping back in time for a moment when looking at the old photographs and videos displayed on the walls."



Councillor Bill McNulty.

City of Richmond Archives photograph.

Bill McNulty has been a regular at the Archives for decades. His new book, *Sea Island British Columbia – The Beginning of Richmond*, includes many photographs from the Archives. The book is available for purchase from the Sea Island Heritage Society. We also have copies at the Archives which can be consulted on-site.



"Journey Through Time" participants from Hamilton visit the Archives. Christine McGilvray, FOTRA President, shows registrants some interesting records.

City of Richmond Archives photograph.

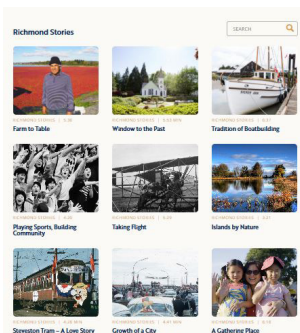


## Richmond Stories

Pop some popcorn and settle in to enjoy a collection of 10 videos that use archival photographs and film to tell some of Richmond's most fascinating stories. A great deal of the content in these videos was obtained from the City of Richmond Archives. The video titles include:

- Growth of a City
- Steveston Tram – A Love Story
- A Window to the Past
- Taking Flight
- Playing Sports, Building Community
- Farm to Table
- Story of Steveston
- Tradition of Boatbuilding
- Islands by Nature
- A Gathering Place

Richmond Stories can be viewed in person at the Richmond Museum or online: [www.richmondmuseum.ca/theatre/](http://www.richmondmuseum.ca/theatre/)



**CITY OF RICHMOND**

# Archives

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

## Dody Wray Special Projects Fund Update

The Friends of the Richmond Archives are thrilled to report that they have received a third Young Canada Works Building Careers in Heritage federal grant. Combined with Dody Wray Special Project funds, a Conservator will be joining us this fall.

The primary task the Intern will work on relates to the Hong Wo General Store and associated business Richmond Gardens Company, which was owned and operated by LAM Ching Ling. The Hong Wo Store holds an important part in Richmond history as this store tells the story of a Chinese Canadian family who operated their family store in Steveston from 1895 to 1971. LAM Ching Ling named his business Hong Wo, meaning “Peace Together” or “Living in Harmony.” The Store served the diverse customer base in Richmond (including: Indigenous peoples as well as Chinese, Japanese, and European settlers). The Richmond Archives has 2 metres of journals and ledgers which were salvaged from the store before it was demolished in 1977.

If time permits, the Intern will also review, update, and/or make recommendations for the City of Richmond Archives Disaster Recovery Plan. Last updated in 2019, the plan requires some revisions to ensure that the most current information is included in this important document. The Conservator will also have the opportunity to review the 2005 Preservation Assessment Report written by a conservator for the City of Richmond Archives. The Intern will conduct an assessment of where the Archives is with the 42 recommendations included in the report written 20 years ago.



Jackie Brown and Dody Wray, 2010 Archives Tea.  
City of Richmond Archives photograph.

## Indigenous Resource Library

The Archives Reference Room has a new Indigenous Resource Library.

With gratitude to the Richmond Public Library, the collection includes publications by and/or about First Nations in British Columbia and Canada. This non-circulating library is available to consult on-site during the Archives opening hours (Monday–Thursday from 9:00am to 4:30pm, closed between 12:00pm to 1:00pm.)

If people would like to take out one of the resources, the Richmond Public Library has a duplicate set for circulation. For more information, please search the Library catalogue: <https://yourlibrary.bibliocommons.com/>.

To learn more, visit: [yourlibrary.ca/indigenous-resources/](http://yourlibrary.ca/indigenous-resources/)



Indigenous Resource Library in the Archives Reference Room.

City of Richmond Archives photograph.