In the 1970s, in anticipation of Richmond’s 1979 Centennial, the Richmond Public Library began a program to photograph buildings, landscapes, and community facilities throughout the municipality. This collection of over 1,000 slides has now been scanned and made accessible at the Archives thanks to the work of Graham Turnbull.

The slides provide visual evidence of a rapidly changing community, the images reminding us of places no longer recognizable and of buildings and facilities having met their fate by wrecking ball.

The Richmond Public Library in the 1970s carried out its work in the absence of a formal municipal heritage planning program or a municipal Archives. The slide collection the Library subsequently donated to the Archives also includes copy slides of historical photographs depicting life in Richmond from the 1880s to the 1960s.

To view these images, either in their original slide format or as digitized copies, researchers are welcome to make an appointment to visit the Archives.
Focus on the Record—Records of Taxation

Municipal governments in BC have the authority to tax property owners to pay for the costs of governance and local services. The City of Richmond Archives holds records of these activities carried out in Richmond dating back to the earliest years of the municipality. These include property assessment and the preparation of assessment and local improvement tax rolls, the collection of taxes, tax sales, and the hearing of taxpayer appeals.

The municipality was responsible for tax assessments until 1974 when the BC Assessment Authority was established. Tax assessment and collection rolls dating from 1905 are available on microfilm for research at the Archives. From 1896 to 1974 a Court of Revision for assessments sat to hear appeals from property owners. The Archives holds original minutes of these meetings.

Other records relating to taxation in the Archives’ holdings include early ledgers recording the collection of taxes and delinquencies, early Clerk’s Department correspondence files, files relating to tax sales and taxation policy, and photographs of buildings taken by the municipal Assessor.

“Richmond: Child of the Fraser”
Now Available Online

In 1879 Richmond was incorporated as a municipality. 100 years later the Richmond ’79 Centennial Society, in conjunction with the municipality, published a comprehensive history of our community titled “Richmond: Child of the Fraser.”

Written by Richmond native and historian Leslie Ross, it contains over 300 photographs and reproductions of documents, illustrations by Raymond Chow, maps, and informative appendixes. In 1980 it won a Canadian Historical Association award for best local history.

Since its publication it has become the standard history of our municipality, used by researchers and those just interested in reading about Richmond’s past.

The book is now out-of-print. To ensure continuing accessibility to this valuable resource, the Archives has created a complete PDF version, available for free download. The new online version is fully indexed for easy keyword searching of its content. To view the online publication, go to: www.richmond.ca/cityhall/archives/exhibits/childfraser.htm.

For a list of all historical publications for sale at the Archives or available online from the Archives’ website, go to www.richmond.ca/cityhall/archives/about/publications.htm.
Personal ViewMaster Reels—Noel McConnell and New Technology of the 1950s

Most people will remember a popular pre-digital form of entertainment called the ViewMaster, which used a stereoscopic viewer and photo transparencies mounted on a disk to create a 3-D image.

The majority of the disks were of pre-packaged images of vacation destinations or children’s stories. However, in 1952, the ViewMaster Personal Stereo Camera was introduced, and Noel McConnell of Richmond Photo in Steveston was an early user.

Now, thanks to a recent donation by his family, the Archives has 44 ViewMaster reels of scenes and activities in Richmond taken by Noel McConnell in the 1950s. The images include Salmon Queen Festivals, Lord Byng School sports days, Oak Street Bridge and Deas Island Tunnel construction, the Marpole Bridge, Odori Festival and Shibai parade, scenes of the Brighouse area, and ditch digging on Francis Road.

The challenge for the Archives now is to preserve the reels and make the unique and amazing images on them more readily accessible. For the present time, researchers are welcome to make an appointment to look at the reels at the Archives the way they were meant to be viewed, in their full 3-D glory with the aid of a ViewMaster viewer.

Volunteer of the Year—City of Richmond Archives

This year’s recipient of the Archives’ Volunteer of the Year Award is Christine McGilvray. Christine has served as President of the Friends of the Richmond Archives for the last two years and over that time was instrumental in establishing a number of innovative programs for the Friends which have greatly enhanced the effectiveness of the work of the Society.

Most notably, Christine spearheaded the establishment of the Friends’ Community Exhibit Program, was responsible for modernizing the image of the Friends through the design of a new logo and membership pamphlet, and was active in promoting the Archives and the work of the Friends through cooperation with City staff and other community groups in Richmond.

In addition to her work with the Friends, Christine has carried out important volunteer work at the Archives on a variety of projects, including researching the origins of road names in Richmond and developing a database to record the results.

Congratulations, Christine, and thank you so much for your dedication and hard work!

Donors of Community Records in 2012

Bill McNulty
Andy Felker
Richard Large
Sheldon Wong
Allen Bargen
Brian D. Phillips
Ann Reiner
Richard Reiner
William Moffatt
Jack Lowe
Dave Blair
Boy Scouts, Richmond Georgia District
Laurena Saunders
Kiwanis Club of Richmond
Brian G. Phillips
Steveston Interurban Restoration Society
Jim Balcom
Jack Lubzinski
Larry Hawkins
Derek Applegarth
Julia Boak
Graham Turnbull
David Hilton
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Geraldine Wray
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West Lu Badminton Club
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Gerry Boretta
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Norrie Barth
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Eric Hartney
Richmond Photo Club
Doreen Braverman
Dorothy Morse
Pat Lewis
Barry Edwards
David Paiger
Grover, Elliott & Co.
Jiri Heinz
South Arm Community Association

Christine McGilvray receiving volunteer award from Bill Purver.
Friends of the Richmond Archives on Facebook

The Friends of the Richmond Archives are pleased to announce their newest foray into the world of social media with the launch of a Facebook page. Leading this initiative has been Friends’ Board member John Campbell, who has kept the page fresh with several new postings every week.

Many postings, with historical images or moving image clips, are inspired by current news events or by new activities in the Archives. Some are just “cool” old photographs of people, places and activities in the community.

The Friends of the Richmond Archives’ Facebook page is a place to reminisce collectively about times past in Richmond. People are encouraged to comment or make postings themselves to the page.

Come “like” us on Facebook and join the conversation. Point your browser to www.facebook.com/friendsoftherichmondarchives.

People are also reminded of two other social media portals established by the Archives. Check out the “City of Richmond Archives Channel” on History Pin by going to http://www.historypin.com/channels/view/id/7947312 or see the latest movies digitized by the Archives at the “Richmond Archives Channel” on YouTube at http://www.youtube.com/user/richmondarchives.

Friends of the Richmond Archives
“Books to Care Homes” Program

Thanks to the initiative of long-time Friends’ Board member Larry Burton, collections of books produced through the Archives’ historical publication program were donated to a number of long-term care facilities in Richmond over the past year.

Packaged in attractive and easy-to-use document cases, the books were gratefully received. They now serve as important resources to stimulate discussions among residents and with their visitors.

Thank you, Larry, for a most thoughtful and successful project.

Archives Tea 2012