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# ARCHIVES

news

## In This Issue...

**“A Bridge To The World... .”**  
**Art Mystery Solved**  
**Archives Week Awards**  
**Lacrosse Photos**  
**‘Friends’ News**  
**Richmond’s Suburban History**

*Right: Author Mary Keen with her new book revisits the site of much of her research - the stacks of the Richmond Archives. Photo courtesy of Richmond News, Dan Toulgoet Photographer.*

*Below: The book cover uses Eric Rathborne’s photograph of Sea Island fields and farms in the background as a plane prepared to land, circa 1937. The photo can be found in the Archives - item number 1997 5 55.*

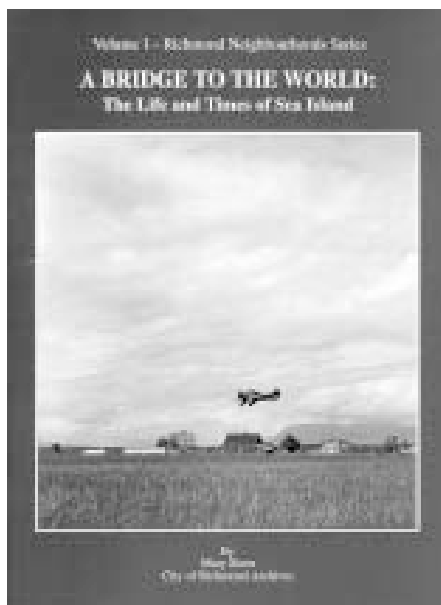


## ‘A Bridge to the World’ introduced at Archives Tea

“A Bridge to the World: The Life and Times of Sea Island” was officially introduced at the Friends of the Richmond Archives Sixth Annual Tea October 18. The new book by local historian and author Mary Keen documents the history of the Island from the times before European exploration, when people of the First Nations harvested berries and fish during annual migrations, to the present day.

Mrs. Keen did the bulk of her research using the holdings of the City of Richmond Archives. This included the City records and Council Minutes referring to the near secession of Sea Island from Richmond’s municipal government in 1921. In her acknowledgments in the book and at the tea, the author paid tribute to a Friend of the Archives, Don Gordon, who recently donated a lifetime of photographs and documents to our community’s archival holdings.

The book is intended as the first in a series of social histories looking at the settlement of several areas of Richmond. The next volume will be about “The Country,” the areas of south and east Richmond that have been farmed for more than 150 years by some of Richmond’s earliest European settlers.





*Ms. Cook used five illustrations from the J.M Wells Construction Limited sales pamphlet for Seafair Estates. The pamphlet, circa 1962, was found in the Archives Reference Files. The one on the left shows a perfectly coiffed housewife wearing a low cut cocktail dress and pearls to work in the kitchen. The photo on the right is of a "state of the art" kitchen of the day.*



*Mayor Malcolm Brodie waits to sign in before helping to open the sixth annual Archives Tea. He also became one of the Friends newest members.*

### Friends of the Richmond Archives Make News

The Friends of the Richmond Archives held their sixth annual Archives Tea, October 18, 2002. The event has become so popular that at the last minute this year, we had to obtain additional space by opening the doors to the old Cultural Centre Cafe.

In other news, Jennifer McLean was the winner of the annual Friends of the Richmond Archives Prize in Archival studies awarded annually at UBC. The recipient is a student in the Masters of Archival Studies Program who excels in the study of community archives. The \$300 prize is funded by a \$5,000 endowment donated to UBC in 1998.

Esther Rabinovitch and Carol Farrell have begun a long project to transcribe 1905 letter books that discuss the early days of the fishing industry in BC. The project will allow for the protection of the fragile documents. More on this project in the next newsletter.

**Editor's Note:** The project to write a history of Richmond's suburbs started with a suggestion from the Heritage Advisory Commission. With funding from the Commission, historian Denise Cook researched Richmond's Suburbia using maps, reference files, photographs, subdivision files, and minutes from City Council and committees. Included were interviews with the docents of the Friends of the Richmond Archives. Ms. Cook's story describes what it is really like to do research in an Archives.

"Richmond's Suburban History" by Denise Cook is available on the City of Richmond website at: [http://www.city.richmond.bc.ca/planning/heritage/suburban\\_history.htm](http://www.city.richmond.bc.ca/planning/heritage/suburban_history.htm) . There is also a hardcopy version available in the Richmond Archives Reference Room. In her article Ms. Cook referred to Richmond's Heritage Inventory which is online at: <http://www.city.richmond.bc.ca/planning/heritage/heritageinventory.htm> . This is also available in the Archives Reference Room.



*Painted about 1965, this scene captures the days on Sea Island when Grauer's Dairy delivered products in a horse-drawn wagon. The painting is part of the holdings of the City of Richmond Archives.*

### Art Mystery Solved

A question at the Friends of the Richmond Archives Tea in October had a number of amateur art historians sleuthing through Richmond to locate some information about the artist of the painting above. Little was known about Pat Davies. Following some quick detective work by several of Richmond's long-time residents, the artist herself phoned the Archives and got caught up. Pat Davies lived in Richmond from 1948 to 1972 and during that time used watercolours and oil paints to capture the City's rural landscape. Several of her paintings are hanging in public places, including the Agrodome at Hastings Park. Mrs. Davies is now living in Langley. Her son John is a long time fire fighter with the Richmond Fire Department. He was able to positively identify the painting as one of his mother's.



*Graham Turnbull, left, and Fred Penland did a brisk business at the Tea selling books published by the Friends.*

*Barbara (Moodie) Kinahan is the Friends new secretary. She was one of the members greeting those attending the Archives Tea.*





*Researcher Denise Cook, hard at work at Richmond Archives.*

### **New Shelving Increases Archives Capacity**



*Ken Young, Records and Information Manager, is barely visible at the end of a long stretch of new mobile shelving installed last spring. The compact units have added 200 linear meters to Archives storage. The previous fixed shelving was at capacity. The new shelves provide expanded room for City records without looking to outside storage. While the goal at City Hall is a “paper-less” office we still have many years of paper records to accommodate.*

## **Working in the Richmond Archives, where “...documents created in the past as part of people’s everyday lives bring history closer.”**

*by Denise Cook*

Over the past two years I have spent many hours researching in the Richmond Archives while updating the City of Richmond Heritage Inventory. This led to other projects, including a heritage review of the Terra Nova area, and most recently, an overview of Richmond’s suburban history.

Through all of this I have been fortunate to work with Lynne Waller, our archivist. She has responded unfailingly to my most obscure and (typically) last minute requests. One of her greatest resources is her association with Richmond’s ‘old-timers’ with whom she has put me in touch on most of my projects, and who unfailingly respond to my questions and requests for documents and photographs. For me, this has been one of the least expected and most interesting aspects of my archival work in Richmond, and the one which has brought me closest to understanding Richmond’s history.

My work in the Archives has spanned a wide range of subjects and many types of archival materials. The initial inventory update involved mostly the review of previous work in the Heritage Commission records. New projects, such as documenting land-scapes and heritage areas, required the use of primary sources such as historical photographs, personal and city documents, and, my favourite, maps and plans. Like the personal interviews, these documents created in the past as part of people’s everyday lives bring history closer, providing material for endless stories and points of view. Using the finding aids in the reference room and computer research, we generate lists of references and documents to explore

There is the joy of too much material, as I found when I was determined to review and map every subdivision plan in the Archives; and the quiet satisfaction of finding the one document, map or photograph that exists relating to the subject at hand.

Every time I walk through the door and hear the little buzzer, take a handful of dull pencils from the holder on the table to sharpen them and say hello to Lynne, Marilyn, Graham, or whoever else may be around, I feel very fortunate to have such interesting work to do and such a good place in which to do it.



*This 1954 photo (1978 37 11) of the Grauer area looking south on Garden City, was one of five aerial photos from the Richmond Archives used in the Heritage Commission’s Suburban History.*



*Sam and Gertie Gilmore. The photo is from Mrs. Audrey Wylie's collection and probably pre-dates World War I.*

### Lacrosse Photos and Documents Sought for New Book by Friends of Archives

Mrs. Audrey Wylie responded to a request from the Friends of the Archives for photographs and textual material about the early days of lacrosse in Richmond. Two of her photos, donated for use in the new book, are reprinted here.

If you have relevant material, contact Archivist Lynne Waller or book project leader Jack Lowe.



*South Arm Sovereigns, Intermediate Lacrosse team, 1938, in Steveston.*

# Archives Week Volunteer Award to Jack Lowe

The City of Richmond Archives will be marking Archives Week In British Columbia with a Proclamation by Mayor Malcolm Brodie and the second annual Archives Awards.

The theme of Archives Week this year is celebrating 150 years of public education in British Columbia. A day school with 18 pupils was opened at Fort Victoria in March 1852. Archives Week always falls during the week of November 19, Douglas Day, which marks the establishment of the mainland colony of BC in 1858 under Governor Sir James Douglas.

Richmond Archives has in its holdings School Board records going back to 1878, the year before Richmond became a municipality.

The Archives awards highlight our volunteers and others who make a contribution to our community's documentary heritage. The Volunteer of the Year award goes to Jack Lowe for his work as a docent and as a researcher for books of local history.

In keeping with the educational theme, Larry Davis of AM Productions Inc. won in the category of Best Commercial Use of the Archives for his inclusion of historic photographs of Richmond in a video production commissioned by Richmond School District 38.

Kiyoshi Otsuji's work will be familiar to those who admire the design of the invitations to the Archives teas. Mr. Otsuji is Graphics Coordinator and a member of a team which produces graphic art work for the City of Richmond. We are fortunate he is able to assist the Archives: overseeing the printing of the Archives News, invitations and, this year, the poster advertising the new book on Sea Island.

The awards are framed photographs, reproductions of images in the holdings of the City Archives. A brief public ceremony was held November 21st, at the Archives



*Jack Lowe is this year's winner of the Volunteer of the Year award. After a long career as a teacher, principal and education administrator, Jack has developed a full schedule as a volunteer. His work at the City Archives on books, a newspaper project, and as a docent is much appreciated by the community. He is shown here with an award from the Richmond Heritage Commission for his part in the writing of "Whispers From the Shedrows: The history of thoroughbred racing in Richmond." Jack is developing a new book on the history of lacrosse in Richmond and still finds time to assist at the Archives. This year he is also president of the Richmond Retired Teachers Association.*



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Public Reference Room Hours  
Monday - Thursday  
9:30-11:30 and 1:00-4:00