

## VICTORIA, A BRIEF GUIDE TO GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH SOURCES

by M. Diane Rogers, Revised June 2012.

The City of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada celebrates its 150th anniversary in August, 2012. Those researching ancestors in Victoria, BC, will be pleased to see so many free genealogical and historical resources on-line, including a few new projects.

**VIHistory.ca**—Vancouver Island University and the University of Victoria – searchable details for Vancouver Island individuals from census, directories and tax assessment rolls and maps of Nanaimo and Victoria. Allows for annotations and comments on records: <http://vihistory.ca> Other census indexes and images from 1881-1911 on are available at [www.automatedgenealogy.com](http://www.automatedgenealogy.com) and/or at Library and Archives Canada, Genealogy and Family History section: <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/genealogy/index-e.html?selected=1.1> along with official Canadian immigration and military records.

**City of Victoria Archives**—On-line indexes to the Ross Bay Cemetery Records Index, 1872-1980, and Marriage and Death Notices from the Victoria Daily Times, 1901-1939, index of newspaper clipping, Victoria 150 Archival Photo Gallery and a section of Family History research information and catalogues for materials available on-site: [www.victoria.ca/EN/main/departments/legislative-services/archives.html](http://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/departments/legislative-services/archives.html)

**Old Cemeteries Society of Victoria, BC**—information on Victoria area cemeteries, some indexes, and virtual tours. Don't miss an Old Cemeteries tour date if you're going to Victoria. [www.oldcem.bc.ca](http://www.oldcem.bc.ca)

**Greater Victoria Public Library**—Local History Room for Vancouver Island and Gulf Islands history. More than 2500 books, including church histories, and an extensive clipping file with a biographical section for local people. Also other resources, for example, BC voters' lists and local directories from 1860. 'Tales from the Vault' is an on-line local history feature: [www.gvpl.ca](http://www.gvpl.ca)

**Victoria Genealogical Society**—on-line Pioneers Index for Greater Victoria (to 1910), and surname indexes to these 2 books *Pioneer Women of Vancouver Island* by N. de Bertrand Lugin 1843 – 1866 (1928) and *Wild Roses at their Feet*, by Elizabeth Forbes (1971). Much more is at the VGS Library. [www.victoriags.org](http://www.victoriags.org)

**University of Victoria's Digital Collections**—Victoria Fire Insurance Plans, 1885-1916, Victoria's Early History-Maps, the *British Colonist*, Victoria newspaper 1858-1910 and Victoria's Early History-maps, books, pamphlets and ephemera, and Victoria material from the Sylvester Collection, the Chinese Canadian Benevolent Association of Victoria's records, the Victoria Women's Movement Archives, and the University's paper, *The Martlet*, 1948-1973. The UVIC library has books and archival collections on-site for Victoria area and for University history; catalogues on-line. <http://library.uvic.ca/dig/UVicDigitalCollectionsIndex.html>

**Victoria's Victoria**—Malaspina University College and University of Victoria student research and Leona Taylor and Dorothy Mindenhall's extensive Index of Historical

First published in *The British Columbia Genealogist*, June 2012. Revised. BCGS: [www.bcgs.ca](http://www.bcgs.ca)

Victoria Newspapers. Also links to selected resources for Victoria: <http://web.uvic.ca/vv>

You may find that your Victoria ancestors lived outside the City. Check out nearby research collections at local archives and museums, for example, by searching **MemoryBC**, The British Columbia Archival Information Network: [www.memorybc.ca](http://www.memorybc.ca) and **The West Beyond the West**: <http://westbeyondthewest.ca>

Local area archives and museums include the **Saanich Archives**—see Researching the history of your house: [www.saanich.ca/discover/artsheritagearc/saanicharchives/pdf/research-houses.pdf](http://www.saanich.ca/discover/artsheritagearc/saanicharchives/pdf/research-houses.pdf) and the **Sidney Museum and Archives**—on-line photographs and information on pioneer families: [www.sidneymuseum.ca](http://www.sidneymuseum.ca)

**CFB Esquimalt Naval and Military Museum**—collections relating to Canada's West Coast Navy and the military on Southern Vancouver Island. Photographs and articles on-line include 'Local Heroes' and 'Defending the Coast': [www.navalandmilitarymuseum.org](http://www.navalandmilitarymuseum.org)

And the **BC Archives** in Victoria—especially for microfilmed newspapers, public and private records, photographs and maps relating to early Victoria and Vancouver Island, and records of colonial governments, as well as provincial records for birth, marriage and death, and for wills and probate, land records, etc.: [www.bcarchives.bc.ca](http://www.bcarchives.bc.ca) (BC BMD indexes and Victoria newspaper indexes are also on-line at [www.FamilySearch.org](http://www.FamilySearch.org) as are Victoria County Court naturalization related documents.)

**Published sources**—Many books have been written about Victoria.

At the **BCGS Walter Draycott Library**, there is a good selection, including genealogical and biographical works like *Présence francophone à Victoria, C.-B., 1843-1987* by Gerald Ricard, Laurette Agnew and others (also in English), John Bosher's *Imperial Vancouver Island: Who was Who 1850-1950* and Dave Obee's *British Columbia 1871: A list of residents based on the work of Edward Mallandaine*, as well as the BCGS's own Victoria area and BC publications, for instance, *B.C. Jewish Cemeteries, Lower Mainland and Victoria* and *Heads of Household in British Columbia in 1874*.

The BCGS Library has telephone books and directories for more recent years. For historical directories, see British Columbia City Directories, 1860-1947, including the early Victoria ones, on-line at the Vancouver Public Library website: [www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php](http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php)

Two British Columbia journals, *BC History* and *BC Studies* and as well, *The Beaver*, now known as *Canada's History Magazine*, have published many articles relating to Victoria's history and inhabitants. These are available at the BCGS Walter Draycott Library. Some indexes are on-line. Check each publication's website –  
*BC History*: <http://bchistory.ca/publications/journal/index.html>  
*BC Studies*: <http://www.bcstudies.com>  
*Canada's History Magazine*: <http://www.canadashistory.ca/Magazine.aspx>

At university libraries, you will also find academic articles, books and theses relating to

Victoria area history.

University of Victoria: <http://library.uvic.ca/>

University of British Columbia: <http://www.library.ubc.ca>

Simon Fraser University: <http://www.lib.sfu.ca/>

For early Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) connections, see the HBC Archives at the Manitoba Archives: [www.gov.mb.ca/chc](http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc) and check Bruce McIntyre Watson's 3 volume set of western HBC biographies in the BCGS Library, *Lives Lived West of the Divide*.

At the BCGS website is a handout on British Columbia Genealogy Sources and Links which may be useful to you. Web link:

<http://www.bcgsc.ca/Documents/Archived%20files/BCVPL%20handout.pdf>

For a general guide to researching British Columbians which discusses national records like passenger lists and immigration records for the period after 1871 when British Columbia joined Canada, see the Cloverdale Library BC Research Guide:

[www.surreylibraries.ca](http://www.surreylibraries.ca) or see the Library and Archives Canada website:

[www.collectionscanada.ca](http://www.collectionscanada.ca)

For information about travel to Victoria and accommodation, etc., please contact Tourism Victoria:

<http://www.tourismvictoria.com> Tourism Victoria Telephone: 1-800-663-3883 or 250-953-2033.

Please send your favourite, must-have and new references for Victoria genealogy to the BCGS Editor: [editor@bcgs.ca](mailto:editor@bcgs.ca)