



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE OLD CEMETERIES SOCIETY
OF VICTORIA, PUBLISHED SIX TIMES PER YEAR

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Jan – Feb 2009

A Message from President Wilf Bruch

As we look back on 2008, there is much to be thankful for. Ross Bay Cemetery has received a lot of attention from the City Parks Department and it shows. Volunteers spent many an hour cleaning section A and B during the summer months. Recording volunteers brought us one step closer to completing the recording of Ross Bay Cemetery. Both our Sunday tours and School tours were very successful due to the dedication of the planners, ticket sellers and tour givers. Stories in Stone produced two excellent new volumes again due to the efforts of volunteers. The Research Committee continues to come up with innumerable new stories for the Sunday tours.

The word VOLUNTEER is common to all our successes in 2008 and will determine our success in 2009. To all volunteers in 2008, THANK YOU and be proud of our group success.

Annual General Meeting

Date: Wednesday, February 4, 2009

Time: 7:30 PM

Location: James Bay New Horizons at 234 Menzies Street

Speaker: Jeanette Taylor, author of "Tidal Passages"

Election of Officers

Elections to the Old Cemeteries Society Board for 2009 will be held. The Board consists of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and five Members at Large.

Board members are expected to attend monthly meetings (third Wednesday of the month) to guide the Society's activities and discuss issues.

Potential Board members please contact Gerry Buydens, Nomination Committee Chair, at gerrybuydens@pacificcoast.net or 250 383-4873 as soon as possible.

Speaker

The Discovery Islands at the top end of Georgia Strait fit together like a jigsaw puzzle along a beautiful stretch of coast, surrounded by the mountains of the Mainland and Vancouver Island. Jeanette Taylor will give an illustrated talk on the history of the many fascinating individuals who have called these islands home over the past two centuries. Her talk will be based up her recent book "Tidal Passages," the result of 30 years of research.

OCS Sunday afternoon tours commence the 2009 season on February 15

February 15. RBC. Heritage Week. A team from some of the city's heritage schools offers a special tour on this year's Heritage Week theme: "A Legacy of Learning: the Heritage of Education."

February 22. RBC. Black History. In the 1850s and 1860s Victoria was a haven for blacks escaping racism in California. Interesting new stories this year identify many of those at RBC.

March 1. Davy Jones' Locker. This is an expression for the bottom of the sea, the resting place for drowned sailors. Ron Armstrong will visit graves of people connected to the sea, including victims of shipwrecks.

March 8. RBC. Taking Care of Business. Mark Anderson will visit the graves of some of Victoria's prominent pioneer businessmen.

March 15. Irish Columbia. It's close enough to St. Patrick's Day to celebrate with a tour to graves of people born on Erin's shores, led by Michael Halleran

Sunday tours show us that cemeteries are full of memories waiting to be remembered. Bringing them to light is what our Society is all about. Bill Magee, editor of Stories in Stone would welcome articles that help give some permanence to glimpses into the buried past. The next issue is due out in March.

Ross Bay Villa Open House

December 20th saw a large group of OCS members brave the snow to visit the Ross Bay Villa. The Land Conservancy, TLC, held an open house from 4PM to 8PM to show off the progress made on the restoration of this 1865 Colonial Cottage. One of the two front formal rooms is now complete and looks wonderful. Stepping into this room brings one back to the turn of the century, high ceilings,

colorful wallpaper, cast iron fireplace and wonderful warm carpets on the floor. The rest of the house is coming along very nicely. Most of the basic work is done. Now it is a matter of finishing each room. This restoration project has come a long way and the volunteers of TLC can be proud of their accomplishments. We continue to look forward to the day we can move our office to this beautifully restored building.

December 14, 2008 Christmas Walking Tour



Maintaining the OCS tradition of never missing a Sunday walking tour, John Adams guided a hardy group of 10 people (eventually) in snow, cold north winds and -5deg. temperatures on the Ross Bay Christmas Tour. Another tradition was honoured when we took a moment in the chill to lay the Christmas wreath made by Sheila Daly on Emily Carr's grave.

Victoria Historical Society Meetings

James Bay New Horizons, 234 Menzies Street at 7:30 p.m.

January 22nd, 2009:

Reverend Robert MacRae: *H.R. Macmillan, the man who gave away*. Reverend Robert MacRae will tell about the man who made millions in the forest industry and gave much of it away to BC institutions and causes.

February 26th, 2009:

Richard Mackie: *Here Before Christ: The Hudson's Bay Company in B.C.* Richard Mackie has done extensive research on the company that in many ways founded and developed the colonies in northwestern North America.

Cemetery Tourism

The governments of such countries as India and South Africa are promoting "cemetery tourism", designed to attract people whose relatives, many of whom died in wars, are buried there. 2007 was the 150th anniversary of Indian Mutiny of 1857. Shimla, the summer capital of the British Raj, was the focus of a campaign to attract the descendants of India's British rulers to their ancestors' burial sites. There are more than 6000 British graves in four cemeteries in Shimla, and there are British graves in five more cemeteries elsewhere in the State of Himachel Pradesh. There are an estimated two million European graves on the Indian subcontinent alone.

(Thanks to Mike Bieling for this information)

Membership Renewal

- Being fiscally responsible we have to announce new membership dues commencing Jan. 1, 2009 as shown below.
- Due to the ever increasing cost of sending newsletters and notices by Canada Post, the executive of OCS urges you to have them sent by e-mail. If you agree with this, please provide your e-mail address on the membership renewal form. The newsletter sent via e-mail or on the website will be formatted so it can be downloaded or printed on 8½" by 11" paper.
- Members can check the status of their membership by looking at the upper right hand corner of the mailing label on the envelope, or you can look at the back of your membership card, or you can e-mail the office at oldcem@pacificcoast.net.
- Office hours are Wednesday mornings 9:30 to noon, at 941 Richmond Rd. corner of Brighton & Richmond.

When renewing your membership for 2009, please complete the form below and return it with your payment. You can also renew at the Annual General Meeting on Feb. 4, 2009.

Dues are: Individual - \$30.00; Household - \$45.00 and Student - \$20.00

 Check applicable category

OCS membership

Donation (any amount is appreciated; income tax receipts are given for donations of \$10 or more.)

Name(s) _____

Mailing Address _____

E-mail _____

Telephone _____ Amount enclosed _____

Make cheques payable to OCS and mail to OCS, Box 50004, #15 – 1594 Fairfield Rd, Victoria, B.C. V8S 1G1.