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### **March – April 2017**

#### **Annual General Meeting**

Gerry Buydens

The Annual General Meeting of the Old Cemeteries Society of Victoria was held on Wednesday, February 15, 2017 at Old Craigflower School. There were 25 people in attendance. The meeting was chaired by Gerry Buydens, President of OCS.

The treasurer's report was presented by Gudrun Leys. Gerry Buydens summarized the highlights from the president's report & the committee reports. He thanked the executive for their support and also thanked the many volunteers. OCS has a high number of volunteers.

**The Executive** for 2017 will be Gerry Buydens - President; Wilf Bruch – Past President; Vice President – vacant; Gudrun Leys - Treasurer; Michael Halleran - Secretary; and Members at large are: Bente Svendsen, Drew Waveryn, Linda Richards, Stewart Dashwood, Pat Lydon,


The business portion of the meeting ended at 8:30 pm. There was a refreshment break and then the group was treated to a presentation by Ken Johnson, President of Hallmark Society about the History of Historic Craigflower School House.

This was a very informative talk. Craigflower School is the oldest existing school in Canada and is still being used by school aged children.


A copy of the Treasurer's Report and all other Committee Reports are available upon request from the office. Sunday Tour Brochures have been delivered to the various public libraries and the local archives. They are also available at the Sunday tours or from the office.

#### **Membership Dues for 2017:**

We would like to express our appreciation to the members who have submitted their membership dues for 2017 and we encourage those who have not yet done so to please submit your dues as soon as possible. Membership cards are no longer automatically mailed to you, but will be provided to members who request them.




**Vimy100 at the Bay Street Armoury (BSA)**  
**Sunday 9 April 2017, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm**



The Old Cemeteries Society will be participating in the *Vimy100 at the Bay Street Armoury (BSA)* open house and commemoration event on Sunday April 9, 2017.

We will be one of over 30 military units, regimental-family organizations, cadet units, veterans' organizations, museums, archives, community heritage and history groups will participate with displays and performances. We will be helping commemorate Canada's success at the Battle of Vimy Ridge, the selection of this site for the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and the continuing significance the site and memorial has for Canadians.



Join us at this free public event that will include:

**Open House: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm**

- ~ **The Military Then and Now Displays**  
Militia units from the Bay Street Armoury and the Lt. General Ashton Armoury will have displays and demonstrations related to their historical and modern activities. Cadet units will be participating in a variety of ways.
- ~ **Museums, Archives, History and Heritage Group Displays**  
Civilian organizations will showcase their material and information related to Vimy and the First World War—overseas and at home. They will also promote their other activities and initiatives.

**Tea Party**  
The Canadian Scottish Regiment Women's Auxiliary will be holding a traditional tea party in the Currie dining room featuring costumes, food, music and skits from the Great War era. Tickets for 11:00 am sitting are \$10 and can be ordered from Dixie Allan at: [dixie.allan@shawcable.com](mailto:dixie.allan@shawcable.com)

**Musical Interludes and Commemoration Program**  
Military and non-military musical interludes will be taking place throughout the day. A 45-minute commemoration program will feature stories, bands, songs and slides that take us on an historic tour of the First World War, the Battle of Vimy Ridge, through the design and unveiling of the National Vimy Monument in the 1930s, and on to the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the continuing relevance of the site and monument.

So come and see the OCS display and all the other elements to this important commemoration event.

**Black History Heritage Day**

Linda Richards

On Feb. 19th, the O.C.S. was invited, along with other societies, to have a display table at the Black History Heritage Day Event held at the Cook Street Village Activity Centre.

A bronze plaque honouring Mifflin Winstar Gibbs was unveiled by Liberal M.P. John Aldgar, Dr. Richard Wishart of Historic Sites and Monuments, Dr. Yvonne Brown of UVIC Social Justice Studies and Mavis DeGerolamo of the BCBHAA. Parks Canada is in talks with the City of Victoria to hopefully place the plaque in Irving Park at Menzies and Michigan Street where Mifflin Gibbs had his home.

Mifflin Gibbs arrived in Victoria in 1858 with the other over four hundred blacks who had been invited to settle in B.C. by Sir James Douglas. Mr. Gibbs was already a prosperous merchant and a founder of California's first black newspaper.

He was the first black person to hold elected office in B.C., serving on city council in 1867. He returned to the United states in 1870 and was elected a judge in Arkansas. He was later appointed Consul to Madagascar, and died at age ninety-two in 1915.

Karen Hoshal, a descendant of the pioneer Alexander family, gave a well-received talk about her own and other pioneer black families. Mbira Spirit finished off the event by entertaining us with an African music medley that had people clapping, singing, and even dancing!

Thank you to the Black History Awareness Society for including the O.C.S. in this wonderful event!

### **Ross Bay Christmas Tour**

Here is a photo of the wreath placed on Emily Carr's grave at the RBC Christmas Tour on December 11. The wreath was made by OCS member Kathryn Bergstrom, who now lives in Parksville.



### **Family History Seminar**

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is sponsoring a family history seminar again this year. The dates are March 10 and 11, and we expect that numbers for attendance will likely surpass last year's. This is a popular event, so register as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

Registration starts on February 20. Go to website [www.Victoriafhc.org/index.html](http://www.Victoriafhc.org/index.html)

### **Nellie Cashman Fund Update**

On January 20th 2017, the Nellie Cashman Fund Committee, consisting of Gerry Buydens, Gudrun Leys and myself, met in the Ross Bay Pub for lunch (dry!) and we had an opportunity to look over the proposals from Mortimer's Monuments regarding the plans for a centennial stone for Nellie Cashman's gravesite. The fund has some \$1,800 and we still hope to collect near \$3,000. If sufficient funds are available, we would hope to bring the gravesite

Patrick Lydon



up to code by placing a six inch concrete apron around the present curbing. This would offer better protection of the present concrete curbing and allow the maintenance staff better access to grass cutting and general care.

We have now made contact with the Nellie Cashman Family representative who lives in San Diego California. He is the great grand nephew of Nellie Cashman, his name is Mr. Jim O'Fallon, and he is delighted to hear that the OCS is taking steps to honor her memory and are preparing to place a centennial stone on her gravesite. Jim will communicate with other relatives in the USA and we hope to hear from him in May when Wilf Bruch will be available to comment on the proposals for the gravesite.

What we propose to do will be appreciated for many years to come, and I am confident that the Old Cemeteries Society will take great pride in their achievement, and the new monument to Nellie Cashman will be a credit to Ross Bay Cemetery.

**Tombstone Oddities**



.....in a pet cemetery

**Last Words**....from the guillotine...

**Marie Antoinette** 1755-1793



"Excuse me, sir, I did not mean to do it."

She had accidentally stepped on the executioner's foot.

**Membership Renewal**

**Check applicable category**

**OCS membership**

**Donation** (any amount appreciated, income tax receipt are given for donation of \$10 or more)

When renewing your membership for 2017 please complete the form below & return it with your payment. Individual - \$30.00; Household - \$45.00 and Student - \$20.00

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Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Make cheques payable to OCS and mail to OCS, Box 50004, RPO Fairfield Plaza, Victoria, B.C. V8S 5L8. You can also pay at the AGM.

Please send a Membership card. Membership cards are **only given**, if requested.