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September-October 2021

OBON

The OBON ceremony was cancelled this year due to the pandemic. The Japanese Cultural Society did do their annual cleaning of the graves and held a tour in the cemetery of prominent Japanese pioneers. It was well attended.

Old Cemeteries Society Garden Party

For the past few years, the executive has organized a garden party for the members & their guests as a thank you for their support during the year. Unfortunately again this year, the garden party had to be cancelled due to the pandemic. We still would like to thank everyone for their ongoing support. Keep safe, keep healthy and hopefully, we will see you next year.

The tour schedule has returned to in person tours and the turnout has been good. People have acted very responsibly and social distancing has been adhered to.

Ghost Bus Tours in 2021 cancelled due to COVID

Given the need to avoid large groups in close proximity during the COVID pandemic, OCS will not be conducting Ghost Bus Tours during October this year. They have been offered every year since 1994 and have always proven very popular. They have been one of the OCS's biggest annual fund raisers. Hopefully conditions in 2022 will allow the Ghost Bus Tours to operate again.

In the meantime, planning for the busy October tours at Ross Bay Cemetery is underway. Murder Most Foul, Women's History Tours and the Annual Ghost Walk all attract larger than normal numbers of participants. It is hoped that these tours do not need to be cancelled and they are conducted in as safe a manner as possible for the guides, helpers and public participants. Watch for possible changes which will be announced on Facebook, our website and our telephone message.

Old Cemeteries Society 2021 Tour Schedule — October to December

Oct. 3. RBC. **Women's History.** Teaching was one of the few professions open to women in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Some women operated their own schools, some taught in the public schools in cities and towns, and others faced a lonely life in remote rural schools far from family and friends. To celebrate Canada's Women's History Month this year, Yvonne Van Ruskenveld will focus on teachers and their experiences.

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Oct. 10. RBC. **Scottish Columbia.** Many of the earliest settlers on the island came from Scotland. Join Ron Armstrong for fascinating stories about some of the Scottish pioneers who are at RBC, from the rich and famous to the humble.

Oct. 17. RBC. **Murder Most Foul – Part 2.** Back again by popular demand, Michael Halleran takes us to graves of murderers and their victims and tells the grisly tales he has found in coroners' files, old newspapers and through interviews with family members. This tour will include different stories from Michael's tour on March 21.

Oct. 24. RBC. **Spiritualism in Victoria.** From small beginnings in rural New York State in the 1840s, spiritualism went viral. By the 1860s, it was all the rage in Victoria and other places across the continent. Even Abraham Lincoln is said to have participated in seances at the White House. Find out who its main proponents were in Victoria, many of whom are buried at RBC, and what they experienced during their seances.

Oct. 31. RBC. **Annual Ghost Tour.** One of the OCS's most popular annual tours is based on ghost stories linked to people buried at RBC. On some of the graves the occupants might even seem to come to life and tell their tales. Extra guides will be on hand for large numbers.

Nov. 7. Veterans' Cemetery. **Remembrance Day Tour.** At this annual tour at the Esquimalt Veterans' Cemetery (God's Acre), John Azar and guests will share stories of the contributions and sacrifices made by people in the service of our country. Lest we forget. Access off Colville Road near the Base Hospital.

Nov. 14. **Royal Oak Burial Park Crematorium.** Come inside the Garden Chapel and have a seat to hear about the crematorium's history and how funerary practices have changed since it opened in 1937. Staff will conduct a tour and demonstrate how the retorts are used and the procedures involved in preparing the cremated remains. Meet at the Garden Chapel (crematorium) inside the Royal Oak Burial Park, 4673 Falaise Drive.

Nov. 21. **Christ Church Cathedral.** One of the cathedral's volunteer guides will explain the history of the church, opened in 1929 to replace an earlier wooden structure across the street, and lead a tour that will include some of the building's outstanding architectural and heritage features, including the crypt beneath the nave.

Nov. 28. **Stewart's Monumental Works.** Founded in 1896, Stewart's Monumental Works still operates on its original site in Fairfield, near RBC. Learn about one of the city's oldest

monument makers and tour their modern facility. Meet at Stewart's Monumental Works, 1403 May Street.

Dec. 5. **Old Burying Ground Christmas Tour.** Christmas and holiday stories from Victoria of old will delight and amaze you. New Christmas tales and old favourites, combined with the history of one of Victoria's oldest cemeteries, in use from 1855 to 1873. Meet at the corner of Quadra St. and Rockland Ave.

Dec. 12. RBC. **Ross Bay Christmas Tour.** John Adams continues the yuletide theme with more warm-hearted and humorous stories. Themes are different each year, but the final stop on the tour is always Emily Carr's family plot where a holly wreath will be placed, now an annual tradition of the OCS. (Emily's birthday is Dec. 13.)

Cleaning and Restoration

Wilf Bruch

The summer of 2021 saw a number of cleaning bees, one fence painted, 6 new row markers and 4 repaired grave stones. All in all, a productive summer. However, the best is still to come! In January we received correspondence from a couple in Shawnigan Lake stating that they were in possession of tiles that were originally from a grave in Ross Bay Cemetery. It turns out that the tiles were given to them by Ms. Anita Bossi when she moved from her house on Quadra Street around 1998. Her hope was that they would find their way back to Ross Bay.

What could we say? Of course we would take possession of the tiles and try and figure out where they came from and what we could do with them. We have determined that they were originally installed on the Carlo Bossi grave (F41E21A) and were probably removed for a new burial in 1930 or 1931 and never re-installed. Over the years some were lost, broken or buried. We received 250 marble and slate tiles which is not nearly enough to re-tile this large grave site. So we have decided to use them to tile the Anita Bossi double plot (M60/61W05) near the caretakers shed in Block M. The job of cleaning the old tiles (at 5 minutes each) is now complete and a new concrete top will be poured shortly to form a new base for the tiles. If all goes well, we should be laying the tiles by the end of September. This is an exciting project for us and will fulfill Anita Bossi's wish to return these tiles to Ross Bay Cemetery. Watch for pictures in the next newsletter and on our website under "OCS Projects."





We are happily positioned behind one of the graves that we cleaned on our July 17th cleanup day.

A Wedding Ring with a Spanish Flu Connection

Lois Carole Allen

Inherited family wedding rings are special, as is mine. But mine has a Spanish Flu connection and an adventurous keeper of the ring. When Colin and I became engaged my father offered me his mother's wedding ring. This would not have been unusual except for the circumstances of how my father had received the ring and kept it safe throughout his adventurous life. In September 1909 my paternal grandparents, Eric and Matilda Ulinder, emigrated to Canada from Sweden with their two sons, John, my father who was two years old, and one year old brother Godfrey. The family settled on a small farm in Silverdale, BC. Shortly afterwards a daughter, Esther was born. Tragedy struck the Ulinder family in 1910 when my grandfather who was working on a house in Vancouver was killed by collapsing scaffolding. My grandmother moved the family to Vancouver to be closer to her brother-in-law, Olaf Ulinder. There wasn't any life insurance or other support for my grandmother and her three orphaned children so she took in washing and did housework to help make ends meet. The City of Vancouver began welfare payments to the needy in 1912 and set up a Welfare Department in 1914. In the meantime, SVEA, a Swedish benevolent organization, was set up to help needy Swedish

families. On October 6, 1910 SVEA reported on money collected for the E. Ulinder Family. The collection amounted to \$139.25 as well as a donated pair of child's shoes. Vancouver's *Svenskar: A History of the Swedish Community in Vancouver* by Irene Howard: 1970 Vancouver Historical Society, page 45. The family contracted Spanish Flu and my grandmother died in 1920. My father was 13 years old and the oldest child so he received his mother's wedding ring. The orphans went to live with their Uncle Olaf and his wife. The three children attended John Oliver School. After John Oliver School my father first went to work in the woods. He later applied for and got a banking job, took their training course but couldn't live on their low wages. Wages were much better working with the Canadian Government Merchant Marine so he signed on to a lumber freighter sailing to North Queensland and Sydney. The cargo ship brought back wool, mutton and other freight and returned to Vancouver - a five month round sailing. There were still few jobs around Vancouver so my father signed on to a lumber freighter sailing to Japan. Approaching Japan they became embroiled in the Tokyo-Yokohama earthquake that struck September 1, 1923 killing more than 140,000 people. The ship couldn't dock in Yokohama which was burning and blanketed in smoke so it sailed to Kobe. Even Kobe was covered by dust and shrouded by smoke so dense it blocked out the sun for days. Martial law was declared so no one was allowed to disembark. When my father returned to Canada he went back to the woods, working for several years on the Queen Charlottes - Haida Gwaii. The Charlottes were a very special place for my father and he often mentioned his time there. My father also worked in Port Renfrew, many years before the highway was built. During his time in Vancouver my father attended Pitman's Business College studying to improve his business and management skills. These proved useful in his future logging management years. Travel was never far from my father's mind. He rode the rails to the Chicago World's Fair in 1933. My father married my mother, Maisie Mathews in 1937 and settled in Ladysmith. My brother, John Darrow and I were born in Ladysmith. My father worked mainly on Vancouver Island for several logging companies and retired from MacMillan Bloedel Copper Canyon, Chemainus Division as a logging supervisor and after his retirement as a consultant. My father was community minded. For example, he Chaired the Campaign that raised \$100,000 for the Ladysmith General Hospital. Ladysmith has many things to be thankful for Dad's efforts and dedication. I am so grateful that my father took care of my grandmother's wedding ring and gave it to me. When I gaze at my wedding ring I think of the challenges my grandmother faced. But today, while there still are challenges and suffering, thankfully there is so much more support.

A Victoria "Skeleton" in Baltimore

Diana Pedersen

On August 8, 2021, 35 people gathered at Ross Bay Cemetery for the annual Old Cemeteries Society tour, "Skeletons from Victoria's Closets," featuring the seamier side of our city's past. At the grave of Letitia Caldwell (A 77 W 32), who taught for 25 years at the Girls' Central School until her death in 1897, a new story was presented about the tragic, and scandalous, suicide of her 19-year-old son, Arthur Caldwell. His death in Baltimore was reported on the front page of the *Victoria Daily Times* on December 12, 1890. More surprisingly, it was covered by newspapers all over the United States as a morality tale about a young man from a small town

who succumbed to the temptations of life in the big city. Victoria called itself a city in 1890, with a population of 20,000, but Baltimore had half a million people.

Arthur Caldwell had gone to Baltimore in September 1889 to study at the prestigious Baltimore College of Dental Surgery, the oldest dental college in the United States, founded in 1840. (See the [50th anniversary catalogue](#) detailing his two-year course of study. The building is pictured on the back cover.) In 1888, after completing his schooling in Victoria, Arthur apprenticed with the city's newest dentist, 24-year-old Dr. R. Ford Verrinder from San Francisco, a graduate of the Philadelphia Dental College and the embodiment of modern professional dentistry. Arthur's tuition and living expenses in Baltimore were paid by his uncle, James A. Mahood, a BC government surveyor and civil engineer. The young man had been away from Victoria for 15 months at the time of his death.

According to the newspaper reports, Arthur Caldwell received generous remittances from his wealthy family, attracting unsavory friends who liked him for his money. He spent his funds on wine and women, and neglected his studies. There was a scandal involving a young woman—a runaway who disguised herself as a boy and moved in with Arthur and his room-mate, another student. In his senior year, apparently suffering from depression, Arthur stopped attending lectures in favour of hanging out at a local grocery store. In December, the Dean of the college wrote to Arthur's mother in Victoria, telling her of her son's dissipated habits and advising her to bring him home at once.

When Arthur Caldwell learned of the Dean's letter, he told a friend that he could not face his mother after what he had done; that night he drank a fatal dose of chloral hydrate, used by dentists as a sedative and anaesthetic. While awaiting instructions from Victoria, the undertaker told the *Baltimore Sun* that it would cost over \$200 to ship the young man's body back home. Lettie Caldwell telegraphed a request that her son should receive a respectable burial in Baltimore. His funeral was attended by a large number of students from the dental college and he was buried at the Loudon Park Cemetery.

That was not quite the end of the story. The wonders of online research made it possible for the author to connect with a pair of keen bloggers in Baltimore, Kathi Santora and Richard Berglund, who have created a beautiful website and blog, [Dying to Tell Their Stories: Who's Buried in Baltimore's Historic Cemeteries?](#) They generously took some time to visit the Loudon Park Cemetery to consult with the office staff. They did find a burial record for Arthur Caldwell but it provided a plot number that did not actually exist. Kathi and Dick managed to locate and photograph the approximate area in Section G where Arthur Caldwell was buried but there appears to be no surviving grave marker. However, they were rewarded by learning for the first time about the history of the world's oldest dental college in their own city—[the building survives](#) and was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1987. Please check out some of the stories on their blog and the photographs on their ["Loudon Park Cemetery" page](#)—a beautiful Victorian cemetery founded in 1853 with many Civil war graves from both sides of the conflict.



Section G, Loudon Park Cemetery, Baltimore, Maryland

The Curious Case of Oliver Cromwell's Head

Russ Stewart

Charles Stuart became King Charles I of England in 1625 upon the death of his father, James I, he of the King James bible. Charles resented the power of parliament and the country descended into civil war. The nobility and the Scots generally supported the king; the middle class and the ultrareligious Puritans generally supported parliament. The Puritan faction prevailed, Charles was captured and in 1649 was executed for treason. He was buried with King Henry VIII and other royalty in St. George's Chapel at Windsor Castle, where he remains to this day.

The monarchy was disbanded and a country gentleman named Oliver Cromwell, the leader of the Puritans, ruled as Lord Protector until he died of kidney disease in 1658. In death, Cromwell became everything he hated in life. A Puritan who banned gambling, theatre, and Christmas, he had a lavish funeral quite literally fit for a king, including burial in Westminster Abbey. He overthrew the monarchy, but was a ruler for life who passed down his title to his son. That son, Richard Cromwell, was ineffective and made the mistake of picking a fight with the army, who deposed him and put the royal family back on the throne in the person of Charles I's son Charles II. Londoners, thoroughly fed up with the Puritans, celebrated as never before or since. Even Samuel Pepys admitted that he "got very drunk."



All of the men who'd signed King Charles I's death warrant, Cromwell among them, were dead. King Charles II had them disinterred and posthumously decapitated. No one is entirely sure what happened to Cromwell's body. The likeliest story is the one biographer John Morrill tells, which is that his body was thrown into a pit at the site of his posthumous decapitation. Various other theories involve Cromwell's supporters giving him a more dignified second burial. Alternate suggested locations for this include Naseby, the site of one of his military victories, or

the deepest part of the Thames. The wildest story came from Samuel Pepys in 1664, who claimed Cromwell had swapped bodies of various dead kings from one grave to another, with another story raising the possibility that it wasn't Cromwell's corpse that was decapitated, but that of Charles I. This is unlikely, given that Charles had lost his head the first time around.

After the Lord Protector's corpse was decapitated, his head was put on a pike above Westminster Hall. It stayed there for the remainder of Charles II's reign and well into that of his brother, James II. A storm knocked it down sometime around 1689, though different sources can disagree by more than a decade in either direction. A guard picked it up and hid it in his chimney while the rest of London searched for it.

The head eventually made it out of the chimney. No one's exactly sure where or how, but it resurfaced in 1710 in a private museum in London, where it became a popular attraction. It faded in popularity until late in the century, when it fell into the hands of a failed actor, notorious drunkard, and rumored distant relative to Cromwell named Samuel Russell. Russell treated the head considerably worse than the museum did, passing it around at parties, which caused "irreparable erosion of its features."

A goldsmith named James Cox tried to buy the head from Russell but was rebuffed. Instead, he loaned the debt-ridden actor more and more money, until, knowing Russell couldn't pay back the loans, graciously accepted the head as payment. He sold the head for more than twice what he'd loaned Russell. The head was once again exhibited, but since Cox couldn't confirm where the head had been before Russell owned it, it was discredited as a fake.

The head passed through various hands, and was dogged by rumors of inauthenticity until 1911, when a competing Cromwell head surfaced. The other head was declared fake, and the one Cox had sold was declared the genuine article. Finally, the head's latest owner, Horace Wilkinson, asked his alma mater, Sidney Sussex College, to give the head a proper burial. It did so in secret in 1960, only announcing the head's final resting place, their college at Cambridge, in 1962.



Kate Cino Images

Tombstone Oddities

Thanks to Gudrun Leys

I worked in Vanuatu under the auspices of the Canadian University Overseas from 1988 to 2007. In Vanuatu, all the villages have their own customs and traditions. Many don't use coffins; they bury their dead wrapped in woven grass mats.

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The village of Mele, near Port Vila, mark their gravesites with old bottles.



Last Words

Ian Fleming



1908-1964

James Bond's creator's last words were an apology to the ambulance attendants rushing him to hospital.

"I am sorry to trouble you chaps. I don't know how you get along so fast with the traffic on the roads these days."

Do you have a story to tell?

The demise of the OCS journal *Stories in Stone* left us with no place to publish longer articles that our members might want to share. In an effort to partly fill the gap, Stone Cuttings has been publishing longer items submitted by our members. While there is no strict limit on length, articles should be reasonably brief and of general interest to our members. Book reviews and photos relevant to your article are welcome. Submit articles to rste00@shaw.ca. The editor reserves the right to edit or reject any item.