

# ArchivesNews

A publication of the City of Richmond Archives  
Spring 2025 | Volume 30, Number 1

## Reflections from Anouska

Hello! My name is Anouska Kirby, and I am a graduate of the University of Bristol with an MA in the History of Art. I am originally from Vancouver and returned with a desire to focus on local stories. My projects as the second Friends of the Richmond Archives Intern were therefore an incredible experience.



Anouska Kirby in the Archives work room, October 2024. With thanks to funding from the Friends of the Richmond Archives Dody Wray Special Projects fund and a federal Young Canada Works Building Careers in Heritage grant, Anouska worked as an Archives Intern from September 2024 to January 2025.

City of Richmond Archives photograph.

The first task was to create a digital and physical exhibition on the History of Horse Racing in Richmond. The second was to create item-level descriptions for the 2,000 Harada family photographs which were donated by Jeanne Ryan (née Harada) in the fall of 2023 in order for them to be published to the Archives website in 2025.

The process of researching the history of horse racing in Richmond was a privilege, both learning about a slice of local history and discovering the wealth of information that local archives have to offer for such projects. The entirety of the sources used were from the Archives, primary and secondary. All of the photographs are from the Archives' holdings and the artefacts are from the Richmond Museum's collections. The research I undertook was either from the Archives reference library and files or from meetings and interviews with individuals the Archives connected me with.



Anouska Kirby with retired Archivist (and horse racing expert) Bill Purver.  
City of Richmond Archives photograph.



Working on describing the Harada family photograph albums.  
Left to right: Anouska Kirby, David Ohori, Junko Ohori, and Jeanne Ryan.  
City of Richmond Archives photograph.

The Harada photographs were an honour to delve into, and getting to know the Harada family and their community from these albums was very special. The albums begin with immigration and settlement in the early twentieth century, include Japanese internment during the Second World War, and finish rebuilding the Japanese Canadian Steveston fishing community. It was beautiful to see all the joy which persisted in dark times and the perseverance of a family, culture, and community. My meetings with Jeanne and her family, Junko, David, and Sandi and childhood friend Grace were incredible and moving and I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to be a part of this process.

I've loved getting to know this community, including tours of Steveston, the Richmond Cultural Centre, Museum, and Art Gallery. Working alongside the many volunteers and FOTRA members in addition to archives staff Dovel Buie and Karen Ng was a joy. Learning archival processes, and helping with research requests was an invaluable experience. Thank you to all.



Anouska working with Jackie Brown in the Archives work room.  
City of Richmond Archives photograph.



## History of Horse Racing in Richmond

Archives Intern Anouska Kirby created a video and exhibit on the history of horse racing in Richmond. Access the video on YouTube ([www.youtube.com/user/richmondarchives](http://www.youtube.com/user/richmondarchives)) or come visit us at the Archives to see the exhibit. Here are some fun facts!

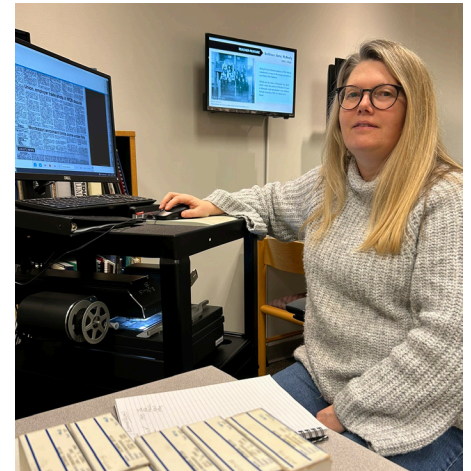


Minoru Race Track, Parade to the Post. City of Richmond Archives photograph 2001 9 30.

### Did you know...

- Horse racing began in Richmond in 1909 at Minoru Park. Minoru Park Race Track opened on August 21, 1909. It was built in 90 days at the cost of \$75,000.
- The thoroughbred, Minoru, under the colours of Edward VII, won the Epsom Derby in England in 1909. The owner of the horse had it named after Minoru Eida, the youngest son of his Japanese master gardener.
- Horse racing was the biggest industry in Richmond in the late 1920s and 1930s.
- Minoru Park closed down in 1914 and re-opened in 1920 as Brighthouse Park.
- Many of the trees planted around the race course at Minoru Park are still standing today.
- The Clubhouse and Grandstand at Brighthouse Park stood where the new Cultural Centre Annex is located today (formerly the Seniors Centre).
- By law, the racing season was limited to two 7 day sessions annually. When Lansdowne Park Race Track opened in 1924, meets alternated between the two race tracks every 7 days thus extending the racing season to four 7 day sessions in all.
- Lansdowne Park was named after the former Governor General of Canada who visited British Columbia in 1895.
- The Vancouver Golden Jubilee Handicap was held at Lansdowne Park in August 1936.
- The B.C. Electric Railway's Interurbans were the main form of transportation to the race tracks from Vancouver.
- Many small business owners in Richmond were dependent upon the racing season at the Brighthouse and Lansdowne Parks.
- The horse racing industry was one of the biggest employers in Richmond prior to the Second World War.
- Brighthouse Park closed in 1941, the land later bought by the Municipality of Richmond in 1958.
- Racing at Lansdowne Park ended in 1960. The site continued to be used as a training facility. The land was sold in 1973 to a shopping centre syndicate.

## Who Uses the Archives?



Jessica Morrison, School District No. 38 Teacher.  
City of Richmond Archives photograph.

*"Recently, I have had the privilege of immersing myself in research at the City of Richmond Archives on a near-weekly basis. During my visits, I carefully examine School District 38 Board minutes from the 1980s to the late 1990s, alongside local Richmond newspapers. This research forms the foundation of my Master's in Education thesis, which explores the public Montessori movement in British Columbia, with a particular focus on the Richmond School District. By analyzing publicly available school board minutes and local news coverage, I have uncovered recurring themes that have shaped the Montessori program since its inception in Richmond's public schools. Among the most prominent are the strong parental involvement in advocating for and supporting the program, the consistently high demand for educational choice within the public school system, and the ongoing challenge of finding qualified teachers trained in Montessori pedagogy.*

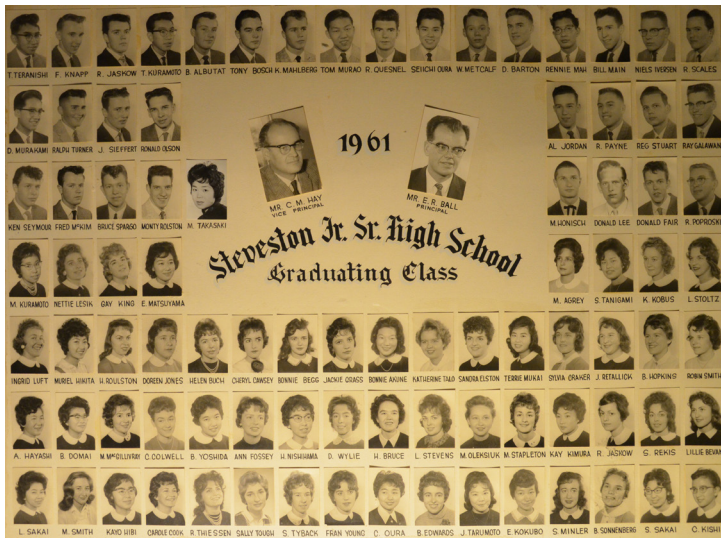
*I hope to complete my thesis by the end of the summer, with the final chapter dedicated to recommendations for sustaining a strong and thriving public Montessori program. This aspect of my research is especially important to me—not only as a researcher but also as a Montessori teacher in the Richmond School District.*

*Thank you to the City of Richmond Archives for providing a dedicated space to research and reflect, for offering guidance and support, and for sharing in my excitement when I uncover a valuable piece of information or gain a clearer understanding of the bigger picture!"*

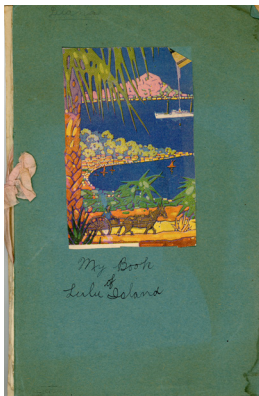
## Acquisition Highlights

With gratitude, the Archives acquired a total of 49 new acquisitions in 2024. This included 38 new donations of records from individuals, companies, and community organizations as well as 10 transfers of records from City departments. Some highlights include:

- Photographer George Bergson donated photograph prints and slides of scenes and views of Richmond, as well as from his time working for Canadian National Rail and Canadian Pacific.
- Elizabeth Toomey donated her mother Diana Burdett's records, which reflect her time growing up in Steveston and working as a Canadian Women's Army Corps sergeant.
- A City transfer of records brought in photograph albums of the opening of the new City Hall building in 2000.
- Photographs from the late Fred Hilderman, an Industrial Education teacher at Steveston Secondary School, show the buildings and construction projects that students in the Construction 12 class worked on, such as the Hugh Boyd Park Pitch and Putt, the Deas Island Tunnel Tourist Information Building, the London Farm Caretaker Suite, and other residential properties.
- Richmond resident, and new FOTRA Board member, Charan Gill donated digital copies of photograph albums depicting the Gill family and horse racing from 1950–1994.



Steveston Jr. Sr. High School Graduating Class, 1961. Fred Hilderman accession 2024 4.



"My Book of Lulu Island" by Diana Madeline Burdett, ca. 1930s.

Accession 2024 35.



Retired nurses Penny Karjala (left) and Ann Bonham (right) with hospital scrapbook created by Amelia "Amy" Webster, Director of Nursing at Richmond General Hospital in 1966.

City of Richmond Archives photograph.



Richmond City Hall, 2000. Accession 2024 45.

## List of Records Donated in 2024

- Kishi family and Kishi Boatworks photographs and records
- Richmond Artist Guild fonds accrual
- Fred Hilderman accession
- Richmond Legion records
- Yoshio Shimano photographs
- Bob Mukai School District 38 school records and photographs
- George Bergson CP Air photographs and records
- Steves family collection photographs
- 1994 publication of the Pacific Gillnetter
- Richmond Museum oral histories
- Deas Tunnel construction photographs and newspaper clippings
- Photographs of Alcan Extrusions at Vancouver Works employees
- MacKinnon Canning Co. employees and Minoru Park photographs
- Richmond Oval and 2010 Olympics records from Intergovernmental Relations
- *A Place for Stories: Preserving Precious Memories* by Jacqueline Lee-Son
- Cambie Junior High School and Richmond Senior High School annuals
- Richmond Junior-Senior High School, Taber High School, and Britannia High School annuals
- Ken Peterson family photographs
- Hong Wo Store photograph slides
- Richmond Scouters' minutes
- BC Electric Railway maps
- Chung Chuck Potato Grower's building
- Harada family photographs and fishing license
- Reference materials from the Richmond Public Library
- 50th anniversary Wakayama Sister City records
- Photographs of Easthope Bros. Ltd. Marine Engines and B.C. Packers Association invoices
- Rotary Club of Richmond, B.C.: Our first 26 years of service
- Diana Madeline Burdett records and books
- R.M. Grauer class photographs
- 1947 Richmond Steveston Handy Telephone Directory and 1952 Telephone Directory
- New City Hall photograph albums from 2000
- Gill family horse racing photographs
- Lord Byng Elementary School Registers of Pupils
- Tom-Mac Shipyards photo book
- "Galaxie" merchant vessel photographs
- Easthope Engine Records
- Richmond General Hospital Scrapbook album



## Friends of the RICHMOND ARCHIVES

### 2024 Donations

In 2024, the Friends gratefully received \$1,289.00 in donations. Thank you so much!

### Thank you, Precilla!



Precilla Huang with Christine McGilvray at AGM.  
City of Richmond Archives photograph.

After 11 years of dedicated service, Precilla Huang is stepping down from the Friends Board. Throughout the years, she has contributed in countless ways – from translating materials and assisting with accounting and research, to attending events and sharing historic recipes from newspapers and archival records. Some of her tasty creations can still be found on the Archives' "Outside the Box" blog under "Archives Kitchen."

Precilla, thank you for your many contributions!

## CITY OF RICHMOND Archives

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[www.richmond.ca/archives](http://www.richmond.ca/archives)

Public Reference Room Hours:  
Monday–Thursday: 9:00am–4:30pm  
Appointment recommended

## UBC Friends of the Richmond Archives Mary Keen Memorial Prize in Archival Studies

Kira Vandermeulen graduated from the UBC iSchool in 2024 with master's degrees in Archival Studies and Library and Information Studies and currently works as a Records Analyst for Metro Vancouver. During her studies, at the Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre she walked alongside Survivors and Intergenerational Survivors in accessing residential school records, assisted with describing Larry Loyie's records, as well as assisted with developing the records management program. She also worked on archival projects at Simon Fraser University and was active in student organizations, including the Library and Archival Studies Students Association and Out on the Shelves.

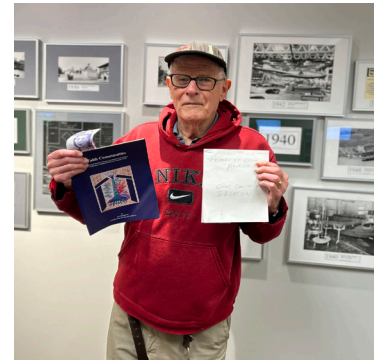


Kira Vandermeulen.  
Photograph submitted.

## Making a Difference: Volunteer News & Highlights

### Jon Henderson, Long Service Award

In December 2024, Jon was honoured with a long service award for his 21 years of dedication. Having served in numerous roles including Director, Treasurer, Vice President, and President, his books *Richmond Schools – What's in a Name* and *Faith Communities* remain valuable resources. Jon's commitment to the Friends' mission is reflected in his active participation in Board meetings, AGMs, the Tea, Remembrance Day, and many community events.



Long Service Award recipient Jon Henderson is busy at work. Here he poses with his *Faith Communities* book and a FOTRA bank deposit book.  
City of Richmond Archives photograph.

### New Volunteer

We are pleased to welcome Yvette on Wednesday mornings. Yvette started in February.

### Friends AGM

On March 19th, the Friends of the Richmond Archives held their Annual General Meeting. At this yearly business meeting, the Friends review the previous year, report on financial matters, and adopt a work plan and budget for the upcoming year. We are very grateful to welcome Charan Gill and Clarence Sihoe to the FOTRA Board of Directors.



2025–2026 FOTRA Board Members. Left to right: Jackie Brown (Vice President and Secretary), John Campbell (Treasurer and Social Media Coordinator), Clarence Sihoe (Director), Christine McGilvray (President), Jon Henderson (Director), Charan Gill (Director) and Lance Carey (Director).

City of Richmond Archives  
photograph.