

# Saanich Archives

## Newsletter | Fall 2023



### [New Photo Gallery](#)

Saanich Archives is happy to announce a new online photo gallery available for viewing now! Beginning in 1906 with the incorporation of the District of Saanich, until our centennial in 2006, Saanich has had 23 community-minded reeves and mayors. Would you like to know which one of our mayors was a carpenter who built coffins to supplement his income? Which one had a career as a barber? How many of our former mayors were farmers? (Spoiler – quite a few!) Our online gallery provides answers with a photo and a brief biography of each mayor.

[Mayors of Saanich: the First Hundred Years \[PDF - 4 MB\]](#)

*Saanich Municipal Council, 1908 (1981-004-006a)*



## New Collection



Saanich Archives recently received a donation of photo albums, portraits and postcards belonging to different members of the **Nicholson family**. Thomas and Catherine Nicholson were immigrants from England. In 1912 they were living in the Royal Oak area of Saanich with their daughter Muriel. Their son and daughter-in-law, Nevil and Molly Nicholson, lived in Saskatchewan where Nevil served as a Sergeant Major in the Royal North-West Mounted Police. Molly died in 1916, and Nevil was killed the following year in a Mounted Police training exercise. Their other son, Gordon Nicholson, served with the 231st Battalion C.E.F. during WW1, and he later moved to Australia. Muriel remained single and eventually moved into Victoria, where she stayed until her death in 1979.

To view the new collection, please click [here](#).

**Above:** Nicholson family on top of PKOLS/Mount Douglas, 1912. (2023-010-025)

**Left:** Nevil Nicholson wearing his RNWMP uniform, 1912. (2023-010-298)

## Haunted History

With **Halloween** just around the corner, please enjoy a **ghost story** to help get you in the spooky mood - with a touch of local history!



On May 30th, 1939, Colin and Florence Forrest opened their English-style tearoom, **The Royal Oak Inn**. The building was later sold to **John and Katharine Maltwood**, who furnished it with antiques and art works and renamed it *The Thatch*. Katharine was a noted sculptor and student of the British Arts and Crafts movement. The couple lived there until Katharine's death in 1961. In her memory, John donated the building and much of her art collection to the University of Victoria in 1964. UVic operated the house as the **Maltwood Museum** until 1981. At that time, the building was sold and converted to restaurant use once more, first as *The Chantecler*, then as the *Fireside Grill*.

With such an active history, it's not entirely surprising that the restaurant has a few ghost stories to share, including sightings of Katharine Maltwood herself. Deeply fascinated by the esoteric and the occult in life, Katharine purportedly now makes herself known by triggering alarm systems, unnerving dogs, and occasionally speaking with staff and patrons. She doesn't seem to be alone in the afterlife, at least, as a second female apparition is sometimes seen with a ghostly dog in tow.

*The "Thatch" Maltwood house, 1979 (1979-001-006b)*

## In Their Own Words

November is the month for remembrance, and Saanich Archives would like to highlight one of the resources that we have available on our website, located [here](#). In this document, you will be able to read recollections of the First World War from Saanich community members. Their memories give insight into what home life was like during WWI and illustrate the resilience of those who lived through it. To view more of our online reference collections, please [click here](#).

### *Photos:*

*Madeline Bradshaw, 1910s. (2019-016-701)*

*Dorothy Ramsay riding a stone boat with Buster the dog, 1915. (1980-006-016a)*

*Stephen Herbert Levings in cadet uniform on old Gorge Bridge, 1915. (1980-006-016a)*



## Contact Us

Saanich Archives  
3100 Tillicum Road  
Victoria, BC  
V9A 6t2

t. 250-475-5494 ext. 3478  
e. [archives@saanich.ca](mailto:archives@saanich.ca)  
[saanich.ca/archives](http://saanich.ca/archives)