

Researching the history of your house

Saanich Archives

Explore Saanich Archives Resources for Researching Your House



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*Cover Photo: Formal Garden at 321 Gorge Road West
(Saanich Archives 2007-179-004)*



1. Saanich Archives Reference Material

These resources are available in the Saanich Archives reference room and are the best starting point for research. After signing in, visitors are welcome to consult this self-serve material. Archives staff will be available to answer any questions.

City Directories

Listings in city directories are arranged by last name and by street. By looking up your street address, you may find the name and occupation of past owners or tenants, which could open up further lines of research. Saanich Archives does not have a complete set of directories; however additional volumes may be viewed online through the Vancouver Public Library: <http://bccd.vpl.ca/>

SHELBOURNE ST - (Cont'd)

3949 Gordon Head Gar -A32
 3951 Shelbourne Food Centre -A178
 3951*Simpson P -A178
 3959*Scott L G -A315X
 ws Shelbourne Greenhouses -A282
 ws*Young Chow -A282
 3965 Young Day Co green hses -A171
 3965*Lum Young Day -A171
 3970 Lum Jong .
 3987 Saan Mun (Fire Hall No 3)
 3989*Price J -A21M
 3990*Peirce D S L pntr -A273
 3995*Burch W G -A21X
 3996*Green L R -A302R

Detail, 1953 Victoria City and Vancouver Island Directory

Directories available at Saanich Archives:

YEAR	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1860	Victoria City Directory	Edward Mallandaine
1860-1903	BC Directory/ Saanich and Victoria	
1874-1899	BC Directory/ Saanich	
1892	Victoria City Directory Vol. 1	Henderson's
1892	Victoria City Directory Vol. 2 (Leading Business & Professionals)	Henderson's
1900	Victoria City Directory	Henderson's
1900-1920	BC Directory/ Saanich	
1908	City of Victoria & Suburbs	Henderson's
1924	BCD/Vancouver & Victoria	Wrigley's
1926	BCD/Vancouver & Victoria	Wrigley's
1927	BCD/ Vancouver & Victoria	Wrigley's
1928	BCD/Vancouver & Victoria	Wrigley's
1929	BCD/ Vancouver & Victoria	Wrigley's
1930	BCD/ Vancouver & Victoria	Wrigley's

1931	BCD/Vancouver & Victoria	Wrigley's
1932	BCD/Vancouver & Victoria	Wrigley's
1934	Complete Directory of BC	Vancouver Sun
1935	BC & Yukon Directory	Sun Directories
1936	BC & Yukon Directory	Sun Directories
1937	BC Directory	Sun Directories
1938	BC Directory	Sun Directories
1939	BC Directory	Sun Directories
1940	BC Directory	Sun Directories
1941	BC Directory	Sun Directories
1942	BC Directory	Sun Directories
1943	BC Directory	Sun Directories
1944	BC Directory	Sun Directories
1945	BC Directory	Sun Directories
1946	BC Directory	Sun Directories
1949	Victoria City Directory	Sun Directories
1951	Victoria City & Vancouver Island	BC Directories
1952	Victoria City & Vancouver Island	BC Directories
1953	Victoria City & Vancouver Island	BC Directories
1954	Victoria City & Vancouver Island	BC Directories
1955	Victoria City & Vancouver Island	BC Directories
1956	Victoria City & Vancouver Island	BC Directories
1957	Victoria City & Vancouver Island	BC Directories
1958	Victoria & Suburban Directory	BC Directories
1959	Victoria & Suburban Directory	BC Directories
1960	Victoria & Suburban Directory	BC Directories
1961	Victoria & Suburban Directory	BC Directories
1962	Victoria & Suburban Directory	BC Directories
1963	Victoria & Suburban Directory	BC Directories
1964	Victoria & Suburban Directory	BC Directories
1967	Victoria & Suburban Directory	BC Directories
1968	Victoria & Suburban Directory	BC Directories
1971	Victoria & Suburban Directory	BC Directories
1972	Victoria & Suburban Directory	BC Directories
1973	Victoria & Suburban Directory	BC Directories
1974	Greater Victoria Directory	BC Directories
1975	Greater Victoria Directory	BC Directories
1976	Greater Victoria Directory	BC Directories
1978	Greater Victoria Directory	BC Directories
1979	Greater Victoria Directory	BC Directories
1981	Greater Victoria Directory	BC Directories
1983/1984	Greater Victoria City Directory	BC Directories
1987	Greater Victoria City Directory	Polk Directories
1988	Greater Victoria City Directory	Polk Directories
1989	Greater Victoria City Directory	Polk Directories
1990	Greater Victoria City Directory	Polk Directories

1991	Greater Victoria City Directory	Polk Directories
1992	Greater Victoria City Directory	Polk Directories
1993	Greater Victoria City Directory	Polk Directories
1994	Greater Victoria City Directory	Polk Directories
1995	Greater Victoria City Directory	Polk Directories
1996	Greater Victoria City Directory	Polk Directories
1998	Greater Victoria City Directory	Polk Directories
1999	Greater Victoria City Directory	Polk Directories

Saanich GIS Mapping

Enter your address in this interactive viewer and use the “Identify” icon to access your property’s legal description. This information can be useful in searching archival records, as some refer only to legal description rather than address: <http://www.saanich.ca/services/gis/index.html>

Early Landowners Finding Aid & Reference Maps

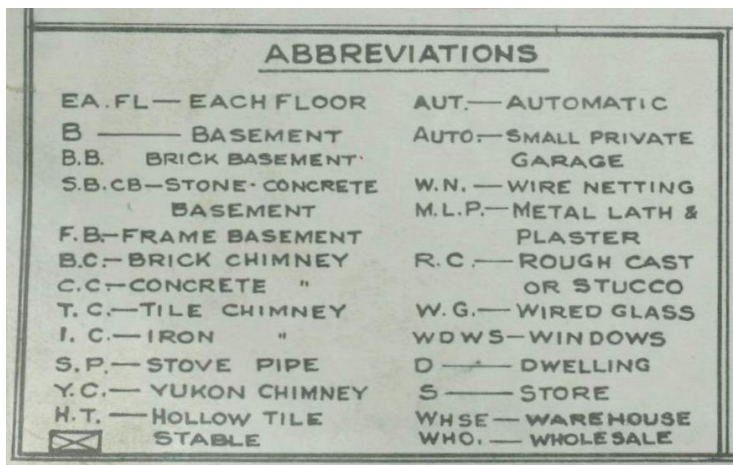
The finding aid includes owner and purchase information (price, number of acres) listed by Legal Section number for the Victoria and Lake land districts of Saanich. Your section number is part of your legal description (see Saanich GIS Mapping, above). A separate list of early landowner names includes all sections owned by each. Reference maps show the location and boundaries of the sections, as well as early landowner names.

Vertical Files

Our reference room filing cabinets include subject files (green label, arranged alphabetically) containing general information on the history of neighbourhoods, businesses, public buildings, groups, and more. These files may provide useful background information on the area in which your house is located. The pioneer and resident files (yellow label, arranged by last name) may contain biographical information on individuals associated with your home.

Fire Insurance Plans 1925 and 1968

These plans include structure information such as building materials and type of structure. They are also useful for neighbourhood research, old street names and routes, old street numbering, location of greenhouses, and location of outbuildings (barns, sheds, garages, etc.). While they do not cover all parts of Saanich, they are worth consulting.



Detail, Fire Insurance Plan Key

Saanich Archives Online Photograph Search

Search for photographs relating to your house and neighbourhood on the Saanich Archives website. If entering your street name as a keyword does not return results, try searching by your local area (pull-down menu). <http://www.saanich.ca/archives>

Saanich Archives Census Project

View complete Saanich data from the 1911 and 1921 census to find out about who lived in your house during these years. Includes information like occupation, religion, and country of birth.

<http://www.saanich.ca/archives>

1	Hubert Charles	Cedar Hill	Mr	Head	Mr	Feb.	1876	25	England	1904	English
	Mary	"	W	Wife	W	Nov.	1870	26	England	1910	English
	Milhae	"	W	Daughter	D	Jan.	1892	13	England	1910	English
	Charles	"	W	Son	S	Aug.	1900	10	England	1910	English
	Phillip	"	W	Daughter	D	Feb.	1902	7	England	1910	English
	Edwin	"	W	Son	S	Dec.	1907	3	England	1910	English
	Leigh Emma	"	W	Domestic	M	Jan.	1880	31	England	1910	English
	William	"	W	Son	S	June	1908	3	England	1910	English

Detail, 1911 Census

Reference Books

The [Saanich Heritage Register](#) (1991 and 2008 editions) contains photographs and short histories of Saanich Heritage Structures. Our reference collection also includes books on architects, architecture, and the history of areas in Saanich.

2. Saanich Archives Original Records

These resources are held in the Saanich Archives vault and may provide additional information not found in the reference room. Visitors may request to have this material brought forward for viewing. Finding aids are available for some collections. Please ask staff for assistance.

Maps & Plans Collection

This collection includes approximately 3,500 plans, 1906-1980, including residential and commercial structures, sketch plans of proposed additions and outbuildings, subdivisions, and public works proposals. This collection is not exhaustive and does not include all structures in Saanich. The Saanich Planning Department, Inspections Division, also has some building plans. They may be reached by phone at 250-475-1775 Extension 5457.



Inset of Cadboro Bay, Wall Map, ca. 1912

Clerk's Office Correspondence 1906-1980

This extensive collection consists of correspondence to and from the Clerk's Department from the time of incorporation to 1980. The records are arranged by year, and grouped by categories. If you know the year in which your house was built (or had additions, etc.), you may wish to look through categories such as Buildings and Plumbing, Drainage and Water, Taxes, Board of Variance, Inspections, and Zoning for that year.

Aerial Photographs Collection

This small collection includes aerial photographs from the 1950s through 1970s. Staff can also direct you to larger resources for aerial photographs of Saanich and the Victoria area. Aerial photographs can be useful for seeing buildings, roads, and trees in your neighbourhood at a specific point in time.

Street Files Collection

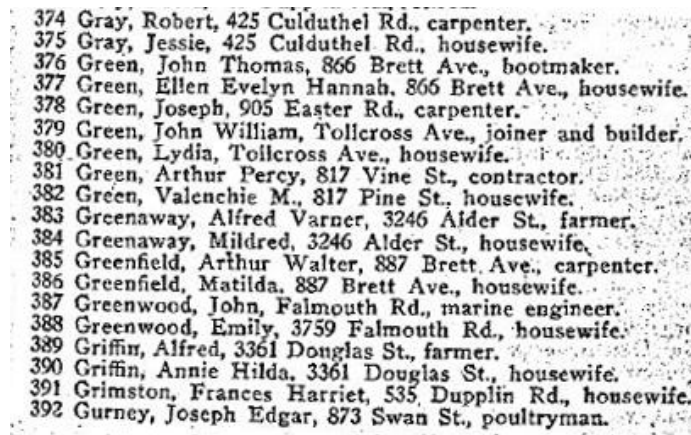
This collection, mostly from the 1950s and 1960s, contains plans, petitions, correspondence and copies of legal documents relating to such topics as subdivisions, road and sidewalk construction, sewers and drainage. The records have been indexed by street.

Heritage Structures Inventory Files & Photographs

These files and accompanying photographs were compiled during the research for the Saanich Heritage Structure Inventory (1991). Files are available for heritage homes of note, for those both on the registry and those that were not included.

Voters Lists

Voters Lists can provide information similar to that from directories (see above). Saanich Archives holds voter's lists from as early as 1874.



374 Gray, Robert, 425 Culduthel Rd., carpenter.
 375 Gray, Jessie, 425 Culduthel Rd., housewife.
 376 Green, John Thomas, 866 Brett Ave., bootmaker.
 377 Green, Ellen Evelyn Hannah, 866 Brett Ave., housewife.
 378 Green, Joseph, 905 Easter Rd., carpenter.
 379 Green, John William, Tollcross Ave., joiner and builder.
 380 Green, Lydia, Tollcross Ave., housewife.
 381 Green, Arthur Percy, 817 Vine St., contractor.
 382 Green, Valenchie M., 817 Pine St., housewife.
 383 Greenaway, Alfred Varner, 3246 Alder St., farmer.
 384 Greenaway, Mildred, 3246 Alder St., housewife.
 385 Greenfield, Arthur Walter, 887 Brett Ave., carpenter.
 386 Greenfield, Matilda, 887 Brett Ave., housewife.
 387 Greenwood, John, Falmouth Rd., marine engineer.
 388 Greenwood, Emily, 3759 Falmouth Rd., housewife.
 389 Griffin, Alfred, 3361 Douglas St., farmer.
 390 Griffin, Annie Hilda, 3361 Douglas St., housewife.
 391 Grimston, Frances Harriet, 535 Dupplin Rd., housewife.
 392 Gurney, Joseph Edgar, 873 Swan St., poultryman.

Detail, 1920 Voters List

Building permits 1918-1920, 1937-1970, and 1966-1976

Saanich Archives holds building permits for 1918-1920, and building permit lists for 1937-1970 and 1966-1976. The Saanich Inspections Division may also have building permits. They may be reached by phone at 250-475-1775 Extension 5457.

Planning Files

Dating from 1955 to 1980 and sorted by year, the Planning Files are largely text, with maps, plans and a few publications used or produced by the Planning Department. The files consist mainly of correspondence between planning staff and members of the public or developers. Typical letters addressed to the Planning Department request permission to subdivide, rezone or purchase property, or to contravene setback and height restrictions. There are also a number of petitions from local area citizens' groups protesting decisions made by the municipality, excerpts from committee minutes, decisions written by officials, and copies of pertinent by-laws.

BC Assessment Authority Photographs

This collection consists of photographs taken by BC Assessment of various houses, 1980s and 1990s. Photographs are arranged by street and house number.

Saanich Heritage Foundation Collection

For heritage home owners, this collection includes photographs, as well as correspondence, reports, restoration guides, and other material.

Public Works and Engineering Photographs

These collections include some photographs of specific properties as well as general street views, 1970s.

Land Tax Assessments 1895-1906, 1913

These volumes contain early landowner names; legal description, size, and values for the properties; and notations. The assessment information is listed in oversized ledgers, but certain years are available in spreadsheet format.

*3010 Quadra Street
(Saanich Archives 1980-011-006c)*



3. Other Resources & Links

Saanich Archives Online Photograph Search

Search for photographs relating to your house and neighbourhood on the Saanich Archives website. If entering your street name as a keyword does not return results, try searching by your local area (pull-down menu).

<http://www.saanich.ca/archives>

Saanich Heritage Foundation

Information on the House Grants Program, which can provide assistance with the cost of preserving or restoring the exterior of your heritage house. The Saanich Heritage Foundation also works with the Saanich Planning Department in reviewing heritage designation and alteration applications.

<http://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/parks-recreation-culture/heritage/saanich-heritage-foundation.html>

Hallmark Heritage Society

Services include heritage consultation, office with archival material and a lending library, advice on proper restoration practices, publications, heritage legislation research, heritage building and landscape inventory and research.

<https://www.facebook.com/hallmarksociety/>

BC Land Title & Survey Authority

Historical records relating to title, plan or other reference numbers; land owner names; boundary descriptions and descriptions of rights that have been granted or reserved. Fees apply.

<http://www.ltsa.ca/cms/>

BC Archives

Searchable online photograph and genealogy database

<http://royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/bc-archives/info>

Victoria Heritage Foundation

Resources for owners of heritage homes, including “Your Old House” technical pamphlets

<http://www.victoriaheritagefoundation.ca/>

Saanich Pioneer & Log Cabin Museum

Historical records relating to the Saanich Peninsula

<https://www.saanichpioneersociety.com/>

Oak Bay Archives

Online photo search

<https://www.oakbay.ca/our-community/archives>

Esquimalt Archives

Online photo search

<http://www.esquimalt.ca/cultureHeritage/archives/>

Canada's Historic Places

Searchable database of historic places and buildings across Canada, including Saanich

www.historicplaces.ca

Aerial Photography at UVic

UVic Maps and GIS has roughly 100,000 air photos of Greater Victoria, most of Vancouver Island, the Lower Mainland and the Queen Charlotte Islands. The photos, in colour and black and white, date from 1926 to 2005, and can be found in scales from 1:5,000 to 1:70,000.

<https://www.uvic.ca/library/locations/home/map/aerial/index.php>