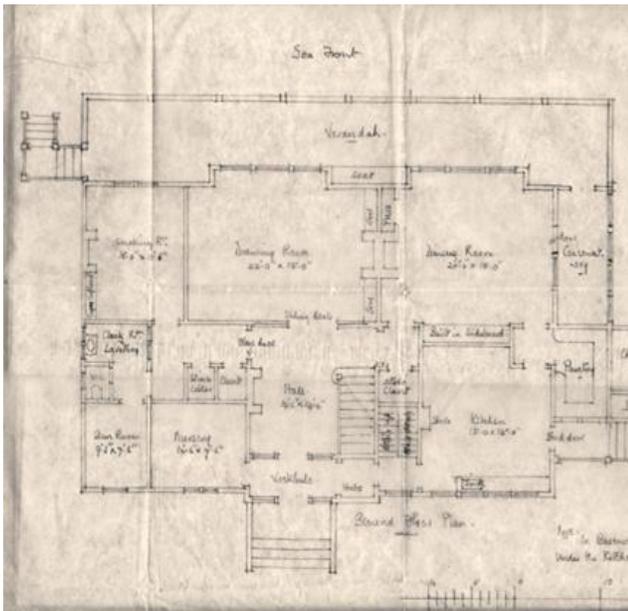


House History

Researching the History of Your Oak Bay Home



Oak Bay Archives

Oak Bay Archives collects, preserves, and shares the Municipality's corporate and community history. The Archives welcomes research inquiries during public open hours on Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons at our reference room in the lower level of the Oak Bay Municipal Hall.

The collections at Oak Bay Archives include reference files, local history publications, maps and plans, photographs, oral history interviews, and official records that document the activities and decisions of the District of Oak Bay, including minutes, correspondence, assessment rolls, and building permits. More than 1,000 photographs have been digitized and are available to search online.

CONTACT OAK BAY ARCHIVES

2167 Oak Bay Avenue Victoria, BC V8R 1G2

Tel: 250-598-3290 | Email: obarchives@oakbay.ca | Web: oakbay.ca/our-community/archives

Open Tuesdays 9:30am to noon and Thursdays 1-3pm. Located in the lower level of the Municipal Hall. Oak Bay Archives gratefully accepts donations of photographs and other material relating to Oak Bay residents, families, business and events. Please contact Caroline Duncan at cduncan@oakbay.ca for more information.

Oak Bay Heritage

The **Oak Bay Heritage Commission** promotes public awareness of heritage conservation, provides research and inventories of real property of heritage significance, and makes recommendations to Council on the content of the heritage register.

The **Oak Bay Heritage Foundation** provides cost-sharing grants to owners of designated and registered properties to assist with preservation, maintenance or restoration. The Foundation promotes education and awareness of heritage in Oak Bay through the annual fall lecture series and other events or workshops. In addition, the Foundation provides bronze Century House plaques at reasonable cost to owners of Oak Bay 'century' homes, one hundred or more years old.

CONTACT OAK BAY HERITAGE

Email: oakbayheritage@oakbay.ca | Web: oakbay.ca/our-community/heritage

Images

Entrance to 2809 Burdick Avenue - ca. 1945-1950 (OBA 2004-012-002)

Family on steps of neighbour William Fernie's home, Kimbolton, ca.1910 (OBA 2010-010-138)

Bongate floor plan (OBA 2006-004-021)

Kitchen of the Lipsey home, 2809 Burdick Avenue, ca. 1945-1950 (OBA 2004-012-008)

Researching the history of your Oak Bay home

Oak Bay's residential buildings provide a tangible record of the community's history over the past century and a half and play an important role in understanding the Municipality's unique culture and identity in the region.

Oak Bay's houses have stories to tell about the people who lived in them and how they shaped our community. By researching the history of your home you can discover when it was constructed, who the former occupants were, the date of additions or modifications, and the names of architects and builders.

Your research can also put your house into a broader context. You can find out what the neighbourhood was like when your home was built, who lived next door, how the landscape has changed, how transportation influenced the location or design of your home, and what historical factors – such as population growth, world conflict, economic downturn – influenced its construction.

Whether you want to compile an album of your home's history or simply know the date that it was built, Oak Bay Archives has many resources to help with your research.

The sources listed below are available at the Oak Bay Archives reference room. Useful links to other sources have also been included.

Reference Files

Oak Bay Archives maintains reference files on most subjects relating to Oak Bay, including historic sites, public buildings, schools, parks, businesses, community organizations, streets, and notable residents. Files include news clippings, copies of correspondence, reference photographs, oral history transcripts and more.

Heritage Buildings Files

Reference files are available for buildings on Oak Bay's heritage register. These files are arranged by street address and may include statements of significance, lists of former occupants, information on the architect or builder, sales brochures, and other information.

Reference Library

Oak Bay Archives maintains a small reference library of books relating to local history and heritage. Publications include:

Oak Bay, British Columbia: in Photographs 1906-2006. Produced by the Oak Bay Community Archives for the Oak Bay Centennial Committee in honour of Oak Bay's 100th birthday.

Only in Oak Bay: Oak Bay Municipality: 1906-1981. 75th Anniversary commemorative book edited by Fred C. Barnes

Oak Bay's Heritage Buildings: More than just Bricks and Boards by Stuart Stark, 1980.

Success Story: The History of Oak Bay by Ron Baird, 1979.

The History of the Municipality of Oak Bay by former Reeve George Murdoch. Murdoch compiled and condensed Council minutes from 1906 until 1968.

The Corporation of the District of Oak Bay Golden Jubilee 1906 – 1956. Souvenir Booklet by The Anniversary Committee of the Council, Councillors George Murdoch, JV Johnson, CHC Mann, 1956.

City Directories

Victoria area directories include historical information about Oak Bay, including street names, residents, businesses, population statistics, and local government listings. They can be used to locate individuals and families, discover occupations, explore the development of neighbourhoods, trace street names that may have changed over time, find addresses, and determine the time period businesses were in operation. Directories are particularly useful when used in conjunction with other sources such as censuses records, assessment rolls and voters lists.

- Oak Bay Archives directories for 1966-1996
- Vancouver Public Library has BC city directories online for the years 1860 to 1955
<http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php>

Building permits

Building permits for Oak Bay are available from 1908 to the 1960s. Building permit data for dwellings constructed up to 1916 is available on our website at <https://www.oakbay.ca/our-community/history/archives/collections/municipal-records>.

Assessment Rolls

Tax assessment rolls include the name of the property owner, legal property description (Section/Block/Lot), property size, and assessed value. Assessment rolls for 1907 and 1912 have been transcribed by Oak Bay Archives volunteers and are available online at <https://www.oakbay.ca/our-community/history/archives/collections>.

Appraisal Cards

These records were compiled by the Municipality for taxation purposes. Used until the 1970s, appraisal cards record house details and property improvements. They are arranged by address.

Fire Insurance Plans

Fire Insurance Plans contain detailed information about streets, neighbourhoods, and structures. Originally created by insurance underwriters to help determine fire risk, the plans are coded to show construction material and building use. The plans include street names, addresses, building footprints, business names, and street car tracks. They are a valuable source for understanding the development of neighbourhoods and transportation, changes to streets and street names, the location of commercial and public buildings, and the siting of residential structures.

- Oak Bay Archives has original Fire Insurance Plans for 1925 (with later updates)
- University of Victoria Libraries provides access to Victoria Fire Insurance Plans 1891-1913
<http://www.uvic.ca/library/featured/collections/cartography/VictoriaFirePlans.php>

Census Records

Census records provide details on each household in Oak Bay during the census years. Oak Bay was incorporated in 1906 and is included in the 1911 and 1921 Census of Canada. Census records include names of residents, age, occupation, birthplace, religion, and much more.

- Census records for Vancouver Island for 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901 & 1911 can be searched at viHistory.ca <http://vihistory.ca/content/census/census.php>
- **1911** – Data for Oak Bay in the 1911 Census of Canada has been transcribed by Oak Bay Archives volunteers and is available to search in the reference room.
- **1921** – census records for the 1921 Census are available at Library & Archives Canada <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/news/pages/2013/08-1921-census.aspx>
(Note: Oak Bay is part of Enumeration District 19, Sub-districts 47-51 in the 1921 Census)
A volunteer project is underway to transcribe the Oak Bay data for 1921.

Voters Lists

Oak Bay Archives has a small collection of voters lists available to researchers.

Photographs

Since 2012, volunteers have been digitizing Oak Bay Archives' extensive collection of photographs. More than one thousand images are now available online and can be searched by keyword, subject, and photographer. Photographs include residential and commercial buildings, streets, landscapes, geographical features and people.

Search online at <https://www.oakbay.ca/our-community/archives/photographs>.

Other Resources

BC Archives

<http://www.bcarchives.bc.ca>

BC Land Title & Survey Authority

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

Canada's Historic Places

www.historicplaces.ca

Hallmark Heritage Society

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

UVIC Special Collections – Architecture Collections (incl. Samuel Maclure architectural drawings)

<https://www.uvic.ca/library/locations/home/spcoll/collections/subject/architecture.php>

Victoria Heritage Foundation

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