



P.O. Box 50004, RPO Fairfield Plaza, Victoria, B.C. V8S 5L8  
Telephone: (250) 598-8870

E-mail [oldcem@pacificcoast.net](mailto:oldcem@pacificcoast.net)

Web Site: <http://www.oldcem.bc.ca>

## **January – February 2016**

### **Annual General Meeting**

**Date:** Friday, February 26, 2016, at 7:30 p.m.

**Location:** Victoria City Hall

**Speakers:** Drew Waveryn will give a talk on the History of Victoria's City Hall and some of its colorful mayors. This will follow the business meeting & refreshments. Let us know if you are having difficulties getting there and we will try to set up some car pools.

Due to the difficulty in booking city hall, we have had to settle for a Friday.

### **Election of Officers for 2016**

Elections to the Old Cemeteries Society Board for 2016 will be held and are usually very brief. The Board consists of Past President, President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and five Members at Large. All positions on the board are filled at the moment, but we are still required to open nominations for the year 2016. Board members are expected to attend monthly meetings (third Wednesday of the month) to guide the Society's activities and discuss issues. Potential Board members please contact Gerry Buydens, Nomination Committee Chair, at [gbuydens@shaw.ca](mailto:gbuydens@shaw.ca) or 250-383-4873.

### **Halloween Patrols at Ross Bay Cemetery Wilf Bruch, Sharon Welsh & Gerry Buydens**

This year, we patrolled RBC on Friday October 30<sup>th</sup> and Saturday October 31<sup>st</sup>.

On the Friday, a scant five people (and one dog) were told about the City of Victoria By Laws and escorted out of the Cemetery. The weather report said we would be experiencing rain, but we were lucky as it stayed dry until just before the 10:00pm shift change. It rained steadily until we called it quits at approximately 11:15.

Saturday night saw a ramp up of activities. We encountered about 30 people at various times trying to enter the cemetery. One group was fairly persistent, until the police arrived to investigate the number of flashlights in the cemetery. It turns out it was us. The police presence convinced this group to leave. One group arrived in a limo and stopped at one of the cemetery gates. When advised there was no entrance after sunset, they lingered around for a few minutes and then returned to their limo & drove off. No doubt without our presence some vandalism would have occurred. Rain started about 11 pm so we shut down & went home about 11:30 pm.

**Stories in Stone**, the journal of the Old Cemeteries Society, is currently being finalized and will be mailed after Christmas to miss the postal rush. Please contact the office if you have not received a copy by January 15, 2016.

**Cleaning Report**                      **Sharon Welsh & Wilf Bruch**

Our last cleaning party for 2015 was held on a Saturday, October 24<sup>th</sup>. Section A is almost completed, and will be completed when we start anew in May 2016. We also finally managed to clean out the Helmcken, Collins, Johnson, and Pritchard mausoleums of debris such as leaves, twigs, and lots of spider webs. The change to cleaning once per month was successful, and we are looking forward to continuing again in May 2016.

**Cashier/Ticket Sales Volunteer Needed!**

Would you would be interested in being a Cashier/Ticket Sales for the Sunday Tours? If you are, please leave a message at the Office (250.598.8870) or email [oldcem@pacificcoast.net](mailto:oldcem@pacificcoast.net) and we will add you to the list (and supply all the necessary training and supplies).

**Bay Street Armoury 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (BSA100)**

An open house and commemoration program were held on Sunday 22 November 2016 to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bay Street Armoury (BSA100). The event was hosted by the two resident militia units—the 5<sup>th</sup> (BC) Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery and The Canadian Scottish Regiment (Princess Mary's)—each showcasing their operational units, bands, museum, messes, cadet corps and regimental family organizations.

The Old Cemeteries Society (OCS) was one of fifteen participating heritage and history organizations. Our display featured the “Lest We Forget Where They Lie” exhibit panels and information on our programs. Seven OCS volunteers took turns explaining our display to many of the 700+ people who visited the BSA during the day. In the photo below, Linda Richards and Sharon Welsh staff the display table.

The display panels held information and photographs concerning “war dead” and veterans’ burials in the Greater Victoria area. Most visitors were not aware that the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) “war dead” classification only applied to a small percentage of veterans who died before a designated cut-off date (31 August 1921 and 31 December 1947 for the two world wars). Approximately a dozen people identified themselves as descendants of veterans buried in Ross Bay Cemetery, and requested that their names and particulars be added to the Descendants`List.



In the late afternoon, Her Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor visited our display and spent considerable time asking questions about the panels and the work of the society in general.

She was evidently very pleased with the work we have been doing. In the photo below, Michael Halleran and Linda Richards explain our exhibit to (l. to r.) Honourary Colonel Murray Farmer, The Honourable Judith Guichon, and Lt. Col. Stephen Sawyer, commanding officer of the Canadian Scottish Regiment.



Thanks to all our members who worked to make the event a success and thanks to all who contributed to this write-up. For more photos of the BSA100 event, please visit the OCS Facebook page.

### Coins on Service Members' Graves



### Wilf Bruch

The tradition of leaving coins on the graves of members of the military, especially men or women who had died in combat, dates back to the Roman Empire. The practice became popular in the United States during the Vietnam War. It was a way for friends and comrades to visit a fallen friend and leave a coin as a marker to the family that they had been there to pay respect without having to contact the family directly and possibly make a bad situation worse.

### Christmas Gifts

We still have **SWEATSHIRTS** available for sale @ \$15/ea in S, M, and L sizes, also **T-SHIRTS** @ \$8 and **OCS HATS** @ \$5/ea

If you are interested in these items, please call Gudrun at 250-590-5850 and she will arrange to meet you.

### Dr. Sven Jensen

Sven was an ardent and active member of our society for many years. His last volunteer activity was to act as cashier/ticket sales volunteer at our tours. Sven now resides at St. Charles Manor Care Home, 1006 St. Charles Street, V8S 3P6. He looks forward to receiving visitors.

### Tombstone Oddities



### Last Words

Hank Williams 1923-1953

Country Singer Hank Williams died on New Year's Day while being driven to a concert engagement. His driver stopped at a restaurant and asked if he wanted something to eat. Williams replied that he did not and those are thought to have been his last words. He was 29 years old.



**A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW  
YEAR**



### Membership Renewal Form

It is now time to renew your OCS membership for 2016 and for the board to thank you for your past support of our activities.

Please circle type of membership: Individual \$30    Family \$45    Student 20

Donations are greatly appreciated    \$\_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make cheques payable to **The Old Cemeteries Society** and mail to P.O. Box 50004, RPO Fairfield Plaza, Victoria BC, V8S 5L8

**NB: Membership cards are issued only if requested.**