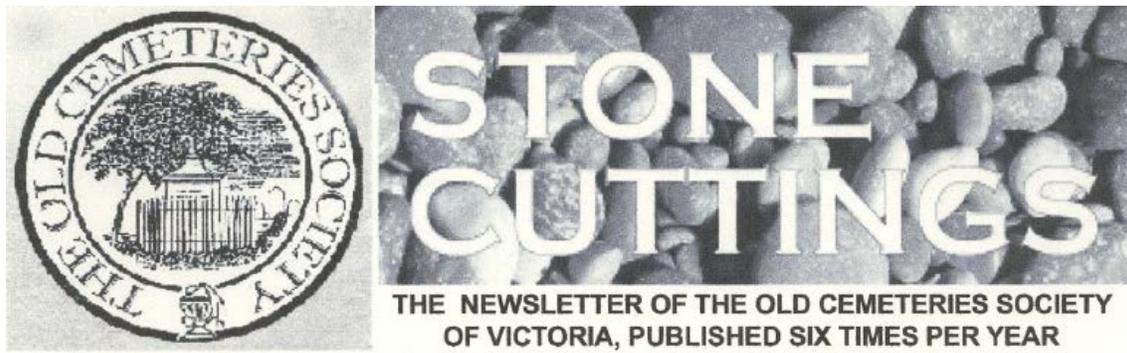


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P.O. Box 50004, RPO Fairfield Plaza, Victoria, B.C. V8S 5L8

Telephone: (250) 598-8870

E-mail [oldcem@pacificcoast.net](mailto:oldcem@pacificcoast.net)Web Site: <http://www.oldcem.bc.ca>

### May-June 2016

#### Cleaning and Restoration

Sharon Welsh

It's that time again! This year our cleaning bees will be held **one Saturday per month** from **9 a.m. to noon**. We will try to work in areas of the cemetery with working water pipes. We have all the necessary soap, scrub brushes, buckets, brooms, and large and small scrapers. All you have to bring is your own waterproof gloves. Many thanks to **Linda Richards** for the donation of a wheelbarrow! Last year we borrowed a wheelbarrow from the Ross Bay Villa gardening team (and owe them much gratitude for their kindness!).

The schedule is as follows:

Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup>  
 Saturday, June 11<sup>th</sup>  
 Saturday, July 9<sup>th</sup>  
 Saturday, August 13<sup>th</sup>  
 Saturday, September 10<sup>th</sup>  
 Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup>



We are also thinking of meeting at 6:00 or 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. on the Wednesday or Thursday prior to the next cleaning bee. At that time we can do some light cleaning in preparation as well as mapping out what to do for the upcoming Saturday cleaning bee. We will try this for a few months to see if it is beneficial. Emails will be sent to the membership prior to each cleaning bee as a reminder and to notify members where to meet.

#### Buccaneer Days

Gerry Buydens

OCS will have a booth at **Buccaneer Days Arts & Crafts Show & Sale on Saturday, May 14 and Sunday, May 15**, to be held at the curling rink at Archie Browning Sports Centre. Members of OCS are welcome to come & enjoy the fun filled event. The doors open at 10:00 AM on both days. We need volunteers to staff our booth. Please contact Gerry Buydens at 383-4873 or [gbuydens@shaw.ca](mailto:gbuydens@shaw.ca) if you can help. Volunteers are needed for the following shifts: Saturday, May 14, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 5 p.m..

On Sunday, May 15, shifts from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. You will welcome the public, hand out our Sunday tour schedule and answer questions relating mainly to Ross Bay Cemetery & OCS. If you do not have the answer, please record the question, the person's name, email address or phone number and someone will contact the enquirer.

### **BC Historical Federation Annual Conference**

This exciting three-day event will take place on May 26 to 28 in the Revelstoke area. Featured are speakers, the AGM, a banquet & some field trips . Registration is open to anyone interested in history. For more information check the BC Historical Federation Website <http://www.bchistory.ca/>

Please contact Gerry Buydens for a delegate form. You need one in order to vote at the AGM.

### **Veteran's Cemetery**

After much discussion the Department of Veteran's Affairs will be issuing a statement indicating that they will extend the life of God's Acre by purchasing some land from the Gorge Vale Golf Course. The Veteran's Cemetery was rapidly filling up; there are fewer than 10 plots left. A decision had to be made whether to close the cemetery or add more land. After much pressure was applied they decided to extend the cemetery. An official announcement from Veteran's Affairs is forthcoming.

### **Eileen Edgar 1926-2016**



### **Leona Taylor *et al***

Eileen passed away peacefully on Saturday April 16. This photo was taken a week before at her 90th birthday tea at Victoria Golf Club. We have all lost a true friend. Eileen was kind, smart, funny and oh, what a sense of adventure that woman had! She was brave and stoic and set a grand example for us all. We had lunch with her just last week and she was looking forward to another trip to Scotland to visit her much-loved sister Patricia. She was an enthusiastic OCS excursion participant and volunteer. We can't think of anyone who ever knew her in the whole of her life who wouldn't have respected and admired her. Farewell, Eileen. It's been good to know you.

We want to share with you the eulogy written by Eileen's sister Pat (Edgar) Leishman, and read at the service by Joyce Notley, as follows:

Eileen Katherine Edgar was born in the small town of Douglas, Cape Province, South Africa, where Father was the bank manager. We lived in the bank house surrounded by a mini-farm. From an early age Eileen showed her interest in and rapport with animals. She, like her father, had itchy feet. His father had emigrated from Scotland to South Africa where Father was born.

Eileen kept up friendships, even doing some detective work in finding our mother's great friend who lived in Cape Town. When we met in the lovely bookshop she owned she said ``Darlings, I used to push you in your prams``.

Sadly Mother died when we were seven and five and our brother was a year old. Father took us to England to live with our Aunt Kitty and her husband. Our brother stayed in South Africa where his four boys and their children still live.

Eileen and I had happy times in Exeter, including our school days, but ten years later Uncle Herbert died and Aunt Kitty wanted to return to her native Scotland. Eileen was always so interested in people and caring for them, so not surprisingly she trained in the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Edinburgh and became a nurse. She still corresponded with a friend she met there.

Near the end of her time at Sick Kids she was appointed in charge of the baby unit. I visited her there. I had never seen a blue baby or a cleft palate but she took it all in her stride. After all she was there to help the children. I remember so well a very small toddler across from us in a large room, at the baby unit. Eileen was clapping her hands and saying `Come on, you can do it.` The child staggered over and fell into Eileen`s outstretched arms, laughing with pleasure. I have seen her at work many times and had the same feelings of wonder and admiration at what she could achieve.

When she finished her training she was asked by Mr. and Mrs. Payne to come to South Africa and care for their infant son John. Mrs Payne had been our teacher in Exeter and then became the headmistress of a school in Cape Town. Eileen of course put her in touch with Father. Eileen went to live with them in Durban for a few years.

They wanted to leave South Africa and wondered where is the best place in the world to live--Victoria BC. The itchy feet came to rest in Canada. She saw a lot of the Payne family, living with them until John went to school, and later visiting him and his family during her frequent visits to her other home in Britain.

She started a wonderful career working with mentally and physically challenged children, encouraging them with her usual patience and humour. My husband and I visited her at Pearkes and all were laughing at the waving of the blue spoon which was threatened to anyone misbehaving. Before going to Pearkes the children were cared for in Elford Street where the staff were helped by many volunteers, some of them parents, many becoming lifelong friends. I was at the ceremony when Lieutenant Governor David Lam presented her with a pin for twenty-five years service.

She gathered friends wherever she went. Bud Sauter was a very great friend. Lyle and Bud`s family became her adopted family who have cared so much for her. They called her Geggarr.

Father spent his last years in Canada. They had holidays together, Eileen driving to the Rockies, an expedition I shared. We had many adventures together, visiting father in South Africa once for six months. Eileen`s motto seemed to be "Let`s get going...." so we went....to Amsterdam, Vienna, Italy, Isles of Scilly, Canada of course, U.S.A., and last year Vancouver.

Though her leg was troubling her she would never give in. "I`m all right." She had wide interests and many accomplishments, gathering friends wherever she went, among them the Woodlanders at Government House, where she worked in the gardens for many years, the walkers, though latterly becoming one of the slow ones, the Old Cemeteries Society whose expeditions she found so exciting. She was a member of B.C. museums and archives, and loved the transmissions from the New York Opera, orchestral concerts, and visits to Langham Court.

Eileen knitted beautiful garments, was a wonderful letter writer...eight pages were no problem. Eileen was quick to smile and laugh, she was kind and generous and always had time to listen. Eighty-six guests were at her ninetieth birthday party which I'm told was a very happy event organized by her much loved adopted family. We are saying goodbye to our dear Eileen. We will miss her so much, and her many friends will not forget her. We hope to plant a tree at Government House in her memory.



Eileen at Cougar Annie's Garden  
Photo by Barbara Forsythe 2003

### **Death Then and Now**

Wilf Bruch & Russ Stewart

When thinking about the average life expectancy of our pioneering ancestors, we often have the misconception that they did not live as long as is normal now. However, even one hundred years ago, people lived to a ripe old age and also died young. Here are some obituaries for you to ponder:

“Died Feb 19, 1903 at Victoria, BC, Mrs. Amelia Fraser, relic of the late Paul Fraser, chief factor of HBC. Deceased was n/o NWT and was 89. She came to Victoria after the death of husband in 1856, and took up her residence for a number of year at Glengarry farm, Metchosin. She leaves, besides 3 sons and 5 daughters, 20 grandchildren, 8 great grandchildren.” She is buried in Ross Bay Cemetery, H 067 E 18

“Died at Victoria, BC, Aug. 1, 1884, James Philip Kennedy, of the honorable HBC's service, aged 45. The Chinese cook in the employ of Mr. Kennedy made a ghastly discovery in his master's bedroom. Kennedy was the son of the late Dr. Kennedy, the vise of the HBC and born in Fort Simpson. He raised a large family of sons all of whom, we believe, are now dead. Funeral from his late residence, Beacon Hill. N/O BC”  
He is also buried at Ross Bay Cemetery, F 27 E 15

“His death resulted from sheer old age”.....opined the Victoria Daily Colonist in February of 1880, reporting on the funeral of John Dougall. He was 70 years old!

### **Tombstone Oddities**



William Shakespeare died at age 52 in 1616, four hundred years ago this year, and is buried under the floor of Holy Trinity Church in his hometown of Stratford-Upon-Avon. A few years later a monument to him was erected in the church. This demi-figure is one of only two representations definitely accepted as accurately portraying William Shakespeare's physical appearance. Revenue from the steady stream of visitors to his grave pays for the maintenance of the church.

Visitors are often intrigued by the curse Shakespeare placed on his grave. The following words are carved into the stones covering the grave:

*Good friend for Jesus sake forbear,  
To digg the dust enclosed here.  
Blese be the man that spares thes stones,  
And cursed be he that moves my bones.*

In Shakespeare's day it was customary move bones from the churchyard and from the graves within the church into a charnel house to make way for more burials. From time to time the bones in the charnel house were burned. This was commonly known as the *bonefire* (thus *bonfire*.) Some people, including William Shakespeare, did not approve of this practice. It was quite common for people who felt this way to place a curse on anyone disturbing their grave. To investigate rumours that Shakespeare's skull was missing from the grave, and possibly in an attempt to circumvent the curse, researchers recently probed the grave with ground penetrating radar. Results were inconclusive.

### Last Words

William Shakespeare "I commend my soul into the hands of God my Creator, hoping and assuredly believing, through the only merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour, to be made partaker of life everlasting; and my body to the earth, whereof it was made."

### Photo Vignettes from Ross Bay Cemetery

Susan Henderson



### Membership Renewal Form

Many members have not yet renewed their OCS membership for 2016. Please renew now. The board thanks you for your continued support. 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.**

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

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

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

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