



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE OLD CEMETERIES SOCIETY  
OF VICTORIA, PUBLISHED SIX TIMES PER YEAR

Correspondence: P.O. Box 50004, #15 – 1594 Fairfield Road, Victoria BC V8S 1G1  
Telephone: (250) 598-8870 Fax: (250) 598-8811

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

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

## September – October 2009

### Upcoming OCS Activities

Except for Sept. 13, all walking tours meet in front of Starbucks Coffee, Fairfield Plaza. Arrive at 1:45 pm for start at 2:00 pm. Admission is \$5, no reservations needed.

**September 6 Colonial Women**

**September 13 Hatley Memorial Gardens**

**September 20 Origins of Ross Bay Cemetery**

**September 27 "Awake and Dreaming"**

**October 4 Emily Carr Tour**

**October 11 "Tidal Passages"**

**October 17 (Saturday). Day Excursion to Chemainus.** There are still a few seats available.

We must give the precise number of our group by October 1 so please book now (sorry, no refunds or cancellations after that date). Cost is \$90.00. Call Leona at 250-592-3512 or e-mail [leonataylor@telus.net](mailto:leonataylor@telus.net) We will leave Victoria around 9am to get to Chemainus in time for a bit of a walk-about before we take part in a delicious pre-matinee buffet lunch. Then we will settle in to be entertained as the play 'The Woman In Black' unfolds. This is an old-fashioned ghost story and has played to sold-out houses in London's West End for over twenty years.

**October 18 Women's History**

**October 25 Annual Ghost Tour** at Ross Bay Cemetery. Tours depart in front of Starbucks Coffee, Fairfield Plaza, every 15 min. from 1 to 3 pm to accommodate large numbers. This is always the OCS's most popular tour of the year.

**October 16-30 Ghost Bus-tours©.** Our 16th annual bus excursion past some of Victoria's most haunted sites. New route and many new stories. **Reserve your seat early.** Check [www.discoverthepast.com](http://www.discoverthepast.com) for details.

**November 4 (Wednesday) 7:30 p.m. OCS Fall Meeting** at James Bay New Horizons, 234 Menzies Street.

### Volunteers needed

Fall is our busiest time of year and we are looking for volunteers to help with the following:

**Annual Ghost Tour** at Ross Bay Cemetery on October 25.

**Cemetery Patrols** on October 30 and 31

**Ghost Bus Tours** from October 16 to 30.

**If you are willing to volunteer to help at any of these activities, Please leave a message at the office, or call Wilf Bruch at 250-383-7514 or Gerry Buydens at 250-383-4873.**

**OCS History** A couple of years ago Sheila Daly kindly took on the task of preparing a history of OCS based on the minutes of Board meetings and AGMs up to 2006. Sheila is busy with other things so we need a volunteer to bring the history up to date. There is no deadline for this project except that it would nice to have it completed by spring 2010. If you are interested, please leave a message at the office and someone will arrange to give you more details.

### **Summer Student**

Cailin, our enthusiastic summer student, has been recording the gravesites in Section U of Ross Bay Cemetery. He started on May 10 and has managed to record all of the 700 or so gravesites in that section. Cailin is to be congratulated on the large number of sites recorded and the high quality of the records. We wish him well with this year's studies at U Vic.

### **Report on Summer Work**

Wilf Bruch

Cleaning has gone well this summer with lots of bees in June and July and much accomplished. In August, due to my absence, we have had only one bee but will resume with a full slate of weekend cleaning bees in September. September 5 will be the first one and we will meet near the McKenzie Mausoleum at the Stannard Street entrance to the cemetery. Hope to see you there.

### **Thanks to Yvonne and Glenn**

Yvonne and Glenn have got us through another summer of entertaining and colourful Sunday afternoon tours at Ross Bay Cemetery. Glenn gives the lively "Gossip in the Graveyard" tour alternating with Yvonne's captivating "Gold Rush!" tour. They deserve a great "round of applause". Thanks Yvonne and Glenn for your dedication.

### **Vandalism at Ross Bay Cemetery** Don Reksten

During the evening of August 4-5 twelve monuments were pushed over by vandals - four tablets and eight obelisks. The RBC City Parks staff reported the vandalism to Victoria City Police on Aug. 5. Mortimer's Monumental Works were contacted as well. We were not informed, and I found out about the damage from our summer student on Sat. Aug. 8. We listed the monuments, reported the damage to City Police, and by Sunday Doug Miller had done a detailed assessment of the damage and what would be required to complete repairs. Stewart Dashwood took photos. I followed up with visits to RBC and talking to Parks about getting the repairs done quickly and was told that Mortimer's had been out to inspect the damage but were very busy.

Regarding the Times-Colonist report, I don't know who contacted the Times-Colonist but I gave the reporter an interview by phone on Aug. 22. Not all the information in the Aug. 23 article was correct and complete: the location of the damaged monuments is wrong; Leona noticed two more damaged headstones on Saturday, not Friday; it was the Parks staff which made the report to City Police on Aug. 5. I said that it was OCS that suggested the Commissionaire cost might be better spent; and that Parks had put a lot of work into improving and maintaining the landscaping in the last year which helped security aspects.

Other media coverage was an interview with CHEK TV News on Sun. Aug. 23 and an interview with CFA radio which aired on Aug. 24. The City Police appeared on the A-Channel News on Aug. 25 urging the public to contact Crimestoppers if they have any information, and urging the perpetrators to come forward.

Except for some chipping, the monuments were toppled with little damage. The repair work required was mainly to raise the obelisks (weight up to 900 lb.) and cement them to the base. This work was carried out by Mortimer's on the morning of August 24.

The monuments damaged and their location are:

O 085 E M, MACNUTT; P 091 E I, BEBBINGTON; M 040 E 03, SMITH, WILLIAM;  
G 043 E 09, PLATZ, GEORGE; G 041 E 10, MARSDEN; G 046 E 12, POINTER;  
O 064 W T, PHILLIPS, A H; O 071 E T, BIRNEY; O 079 W M, MCLENNAN, Miss  
O 082 E M, BROMELL, RICHARD; G 044/045 W 15, PAMPHLET; O 069 E T, WRIGHT, C.

Two more monuments were noticed damaged on August 15:

M 085/086 W G, MACAULAY and M 084/085 E F HESCOTT.

Unfortunately I forgot to point these out to Parks in time, so they have not been repaired yet.

We have no descendants listed in our records, but if you do know of any please let Leona Taylor know by phone or email the OCS office.

Out of this we found out that Mortimer's were busy in Vancouver on a large veterans cemetery project; they do not have a "standing contract" to repair damage at RBC, they are the first ones called when repairs are needed; and the turnaround time allowed for making repairs is 20 days.

If you notice any damage from vandalism in Ross Bay Cemetery please leave a message at the OCS office 250.598.8870, or [oldcem@pacificcoast.net](mailto:oldcem@pacificcoast.net) and if there are Parks staff working in the cemetery, let them know.



The MacNutt Monument



The Marsden Monument

(S. Dashwood photos)