

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS
COMMUNITY HERITAGE COMMISSION

DATE: 2015 February 05

FROM: CITY ARCHIVIST

FILE: 2410-20
*Reference: Community Heritage
Commission*

SUBJECT: CITY OF BURNABY ARCHIVES ANNUAL REPORT 2014

PURPOSE: To present the 2014 Annual Report of the City of Burnaby Archives

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** this report be received for information.

REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The City of Burnaby Archives had a dynamic and inspiring year in 2014 due in large part to the Outreach programs we were invited to participate in, which have become an integral part of our operations.

IN BRIEF

The year began with Archives staff participation in the “Go! Vancouver” segment focusing on “Burnaby.” Spring brought us to the Burnaby Historical Society general meeting as guest speakers, presenting on “People, Places, Politics- the Importance of Community Record Keeping” and an ongoing photograph reproduction partnership with the Heights Merchants Association involving “Throwback Thursdays.” The Fall saw us involved in The Paver’s Ceremony Open House, representing the Clerks’ department alongside our colleagues in Elections, as well as participants in the BVM and BPL initiative “Burnaby Neighbourhood Talks” for both the “South Burnaby On Film” presentation at the Bob Prittie Metrotown Library and the “History in the Heights” event “Living on the Waterfront” at our own McGill Library Branch. Additionally, City Archives’ participation in the Burnaby Now newspaper feature “Then and NOW” continued throughout the year.

Community Heritage Commission Capital Projects, Community Record donations, City Record transfers, Records Management partnerships and new hires rounded out this evolving and energetic year.

The following report provides a detailed summary of our operations throughout 2014.

HISTORY OF ARCHIVAL RECORDS PROGRAM

The City of Burnaby Archives opened in the new McGill Library in 2001 and functions as a division of the Office of the City Clerk. The Archives is the official repository for all inactive civic records of permanent administrative, legal, fiscal, historical, evidential and/or informational value to the City of Burnaby. Archival material is preserved as evidence of the functions, legal rights, obligations, policies, decisions, procedures, accountabilities, and operations of the City. It is the responsibility of the City Archives to ensure the preservation and accessibility of these vital records by providing proper facilities, environmental controls and resources to maintain the archival material in perpetuity.

Our City record description and digitization program has produced a current index of all Council minutes and reports dating back to 1934 and can be searched online with full-text versions of the documents, available from 1977 to the present. All City Bylaws, dating back to 1892, are also available as full-text pdf documents online as are descriptions and finding aids for all files and records in our holdings.

In addition, the Archives has supported the protection and preservation of the City's documentary heritage by way of its expanded collections mandate and the incorporation of the Burnaby Historical Society Community Archives collections into the City's holdings. This transfer saw over 100 meters of textual records and over 10,000 photographs moved to the Archives facility in 2007.

CURRENT ARCHIVAL RECORDS PROGRAM

City Manager's Reports that went to Council between 1970 and 1979 only exist on microfilm. We need to be able to access these records for operational purposes but our microfilm reader/printer no longer functions. The Archives is not alone on this issue; as we learned by attending the City-wide Microfilm Replacement Project meetings, many departments have already been impacted by lack of access to working film technology. The Archives put forward a proposal that was supported by the City Clerk to convert copies of these records to pdf format. Micro Com was contracted to accommodate these conversions which will ensure that these pertinent and often called-on reports are once again accessible to City Hall staff and the public. This project was completed in June of 2014.

In 2014, the Legal Department, Planning and Building Departments, Engineering, Finance Department, Mayor's Office, and the Office of the City Clerk transferred a total of 68 boxes of records of enduring value to the Archives. These records (along with 1,400 backlogged City Records from 2012) have now been processed catalogued and indexed according to the highest level of archival practices and standards, thus allowing the public and City Officials quick, efficient and direct access to information stored within them. Such a system plays a vital role in offering open, transparent and accountable governance.

To: *Community Heritage Commission*
From: *City Archivist*
Re: *CITY OF BURNABY ARCHIVES ANNUAL REPORT*
2014
2015 February 05.....Page 3

In addition to the official City records, in August, our community collection saw the inclusion of a significant donation from Diane Smith, daughter of former Burnaby Historical Society member Mary Forsyth, and grand-daughter of former Commissioner of Burnaby, Richard Bolton. Records include Mary Forsyth's research papers of early families in the Big Bend Area of Burnaby, her father Richard Bolton, and award-winning walking tours in North Burnaby (created by Mary Forsyth).

Also of particular note, further accruals came in from the community- one being an organizational entity and one being a private family; from the South Burnaby Garden Club and from the R.H. Hardy family. Private donations such as those of School Annuals and Church photographs have built on existing record groups, adding even greater value and significance to our holdings.

HERITAGE BURNABY & PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

This past years' Public Programming and Outreach opportunities for the City of Burnaby Archives have been extensive.

Staff participated in the online Heritage Week "Heritage Afloat" feature on www.burnaby.ca in February by curating a selection of relevant photographs. These heritage assets were chosen from the current proliferation of images on www.heritageburnaby.ca.

Burnaby Historical Society hosted the City Archives as guest speakers at their April meeting. This was the first outreach presentation of the year for Archives staff, and was entitled "People, Places, Politics – The Importance of Community Record Keeping," formally giving thanks to the Society for their invaluable contribution to the City of Burnaby and its citizens.

City Archives photographs were used on the Facebook page for Burnaby Heights Merchants Association each Thursday, beginning in May, for "Throwback Thursdays."

In September the Archives participated in the Paver's Ceremony Open House. We were proud to be invited by our Department to participate, and it was a great success with 45 visitors to the Archives booth.

In October, as part of the five local history lectures co-hosted by Burnaby Village Museum and Burnaby Public Library, Archives staff presented on Archival record description best practices as part of the "South Burnaby on Film" talk at Metrotown. This sort of programming not only heightens awareness of the City of Burnaby Archives, but also elevates the larger Archival community. Thus, the Archives is doing its small part here in Burnaby!

In November, as part of the event "Living on the Waterfront", Archives staff presented a chronological compilation of photographs of life on the Burrard Inlet from both a personal and industrial perspective.

To: Community Heritage Commission
From: City Archivist
Re: CITY OF BURNABY ARCHIVES ANNUAL REPORT
2014
2015 February 05.....Page 4

The Burnaby Now newspaper has continued their relationship with the Archives, as a resource for their “Then and NOW” monthly photograph series throughout 2014.

Under the direction of the Community Heritage Commission, The City of Burnaby Archives and its Heritage Partners have continued to build on the existing infrastructure already in place through projects which capture and promote Burnaby’s recorded history; specifically, the film digitization project, and the book scanning and Heritage Burnaby website upgrades project. Our City Information Technology Department has been working closely with Andornot Consulting to ensure that the work is being completed to the technological specifications required by the City (and outlined in Andornot’s Statement of Work). We are grateful for the sterling job that Helen Mitten, our Project Lead for IT, and her team have been doing on these projects.

By fall of 2014, the Archives had met its responsibilities on the Archives Film Digitization Project. Archives staff processed, described and indexed all of the digitized moving images (home movies) that were previously in our holdings, as well as a number of born-digital moving images that were donated in early 2014. The film descriptions have been written to RAD (Rules of Archival Description) standard and include the same sophisticated name, subject and geographic indexing utilized for all photographs, oral histories, landmarks and artifact descriptions currently online at heritageburnaby.ca. In the last weeks of 2014, Andornot Consulting began to write the code that will allow these records to be viewed online, and the project is scheduled to roll out with the larger upgrades project in spring of 2015.

IN CONCLUSION

Our 2015 work schedule includes the completion of the Moving Image Project, The Website Upgrades and Book Scanning Pilot Project and the renewal of the Oral History Project. Moreover, daily operations will continue to see increasing numbers of City records transfers and Community record donations, thereby increasing the labour hours required to accession, arrange and describe those records, and provide access and research assistance to both City staff and the public.

Outreach events scheduled for 2015 include demonstrations on how to navigate the newly upgraded Heritage Burnaby website, City Archives’ participation in Simon Fraser University’s 50th Anniversary Celebration and our continued participation in the “Then and NOW” feature with the Burnaby NOW newspaper.

The resources that have been provided to allow a regular full-time archival assistant position and an increase in hours for the part-time auxiliary clerk have been integral to the success of our public programming and our ability to service vital capital projects throughout this year. Under the continued guidance and support of the Community Heritage Commission and Burnaby City Council, we look forward to building on these successes as we move into 2015.

To: *Community Heritage Commission*
From: *City Archivist*
Re: *CITY OF BURNABY ARCHIVES ANNUAL REPORT*
2014
2015 February 05.....Page 5

Respectfully submitted,



Rebecca Pasch
CITY ARCHIVIST

:rp

cc: City Manager
Deputy City Manager (C. Turpin)
City Clerk
Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
Chief Librarian
Director of Planning and Building
Chief Information Officer