

MARITIME HISTORY

This reference guide provides an overview of the types of records from the City of Vancouver Archives that relate to researching maritime history, including examples of specific fonds or collections. Please keep in mind that additional records may be found among the total Archives' holdings.

Records may be accessed either through record requests submitted for retrieval from our secure storage, self-serve microfiche access copies in the Reading Room, or, if digitized, viewed as a digital copy from our online database. Record retrievals run Monday-Friday, 10:00-4:30.

PRIVATE SECTOR HOLDINGS ca. 1870-1980

Storage

Private records used as primary sources on vessels, shipping companies, industry groups, and other topics related to maritime development in Vancouver and British Columbia. Our holdings of private records, identified as "AM" (or formerly "Add. Mss." for "Additional Manuscripts") can be searched using our online database. Suggestions of related fonds are:

- **Maritime Museum Collection ([AM335](#))**
 - Includes records related to a variety of topics including vessels, crew, shipping operations, companies, harbours, lighthouses, and other subjects
 - Collection includes records of logbooks, diaries, financial records, correspondence, ships plans and other records
- **Major Matthews Collection ([AM54-Series 23 - Topical and categorical files](#))**
 - See Subseries 1 - Categorical files re: "Ships" which are subcategorized by name or by type, primarily merchant marine, eg. "Ships-merchant marine-bridge ships"
 - Subseries 2 - Topical files also includes records on various companies and individuals involved in the shipping industry and maritime history
 - Files contain compilations of notes, correspondence, pamphlets, and ephemera
- **H. L. Cadieux fonds ([AM782](#))**
 - Includes records on ships involved in accidents as well as other records related to harbours, tugboats, lighthouses and other maritime subjects for British Columbia
 - Fonds contains primarily notes, but also includes photographs, maps, news clippings and other records
- **B.C. Marine Shipbuilders fonds ([AM717](#))**
 - Includes records of ship repairs and employee payroll ledgers
- **Thomas Guns fonds ([AM407](#))**
 - Includes records related to pilots and pilotage
- **B.C. Towboat Owners' Association fonds ([AM317](#))**
 - Consists of Association records including minutes, maps, subject files etc.

CITY RECORDS

Online & Storage

ca. 1880s-present

City records used as primary sources related to City operations and development of the maritime industry in Vancouver. Search the Archives' database for Departmental records, including maps and photographs.

- City Council Minutes ([COV-S31](#))
- City By-laws ([COV-S36](#))
- Business License Registers ([COV-S383](#))
- City Publications Collection ([PUB](#))

PHOTOGRAPHS

Online & Reading Room (photo binders)

ca. 1860-1990

Used for images of specific ships or aspects of maritime activity. A large number of photographic material has been digitized to search, view, and download directly from our database. Suggestions of related records are:

- Major Matthews Collection ([AM54-Series 4 - Collected Photographs](#))
 - Photographs available online from the Archives' database or access prints can be viewed in the Reading Room, categorized under "Boats", "Beaches", "Bridges" or "Waterfront" in the photo binders; or by ship name or marine activity in the card index
- City of Vancouver Archives Photograph Collection ([AM1376](#))
 - Photographs available online from the Archives' database; a smaller amount of access prints can also be viewed in the Reading Room
- H. L. Cadieux fonds ([AM782](#))
 - Fonds includes photographs arranged in multiple series; includes views of ports, lighthouses, shipwrecks, vessels listed by ship name
- Walter E. Frost fonds ([AM1506](#))
 - Series 3 - Ships includes over 10,000 images of ships that have been digitized
- Union Steamship Company of British Columbia fonds ([AM75](#))
 - Series 1 - Photographs includes views of ships, harbours, company activities etc.

SHIP'S PLANS

Storage & Reading Room (microfiche)

ca. 1770-1980

Used for reviewing schematic drawings of individual vessels.

- Maritime Museum Collection ([AM335](#))
 - Collection includes over 600 ship's plans that have been microfilmed (M-106); see Private Sector Holdings section of guide for more description of this collection
- William M. Reid fonds ([AM858](#))
 - Consists of plans for over 100 ships

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NEWS CLIPPINGS

Reading Room (microfiche)

ca. 1860-2005

Used for information about maritime issues and on individual ships. Clippings are accessed by microfiche and can be searched by either card indexes or finding aids available in the Reading Room. There are four sets of microfiche, each with its own alphabetical sequence:

- **Major Matthews Collection (AM54-Series 17- News clippings)** 1860-1970
 - See [card index](#) drawer on “Ships” which is divided into three subsections by ship type, subject, and ship name; also search subject headings such as “Canadian Pacific Navigation Company”, “Lighthouses”, “Union Steamships” etc.
- **City of Vancouver Archives News Clippings Collection** 1972-2005
 - See [card index](#) for headings such as “Gastown Fishermen’s & Farmers’ Market”, “Komagata Maru”, “North Vancouver ferries”, “Pier B-C”, “Port of Vancouver”, etc.
- **Pacific Press I and II** ca. 1930-1985
 - See [finding aid binder](#) for headings such as “Waterfront”, “Ballantyne Pier”, “Seamen” etc.

PAMPHLETS

Storage & Reading Room (microfiche)

ca. 1880-present

Used for information about maritime issues from various sources. Pamphlets can be searched through our online Archives’ database.

- City of Vancouver Archives Pamphlets Collection ([AM1519](#))

CITY DIRECTORIES

Reading Room

1860-1996

Annual directories produced by private firms listing names of residents, properties, and business listings. For lists of firms by type see the Classified Business Section under terms such as boats, ferries, fishing, ships, etc.

BOOKS

Storage

ca. 1920-present

Secondary sources used for overviews of the maritime history of Vancouver and the region. The Archives’ has its own reference library collection that can be accessed when visiting the Archives.

- City of Vancouver Archives Library Collection

Search our holdings: <https://searcharchives.vancouver.ca/>

Please contact the Archives for further questions about our holdings or to discuss a research topic with an archivist.

604-736-8561

archives@vancouver.ca

www.vancouver.ca/archives