

Annual Report 2021



vancouver.ca/archives
604-736-8561
1150 Chestnut Street,
Vancouver, BC
V6J 3J9

Table of Contents

MESSAGE	2
.....	
HIGHLIGHTS	3
.....	
NUMBERS	4
.....	
HOLDINGS	6
.....	
PRESERVATION	8
.....	
COMMUNITY	9
.....	
PROJECTS	10
.....	
DONORS	11
.....	
SUPPORTERS	12
.....	
CAPTIONS	12
.....	

Message from the City Clerk

As City Clerk, it is my pleasure to present the 44th annual published report of the City of Vancouver Archives. Established in 1933, the Archives is dedicated to the preservation of the corporate memory of the City of Vancouver and the documentary heritage of the local community.

Arriving at an interim resolution on the future of the Archives was a significant accomplishment in 2021. While relocation of the Archives to the Central Library will not proceed, the work to arrive at that decision was beneficial to help us better understand the future needs of the Archives. We now have an improved

understanding of space requirements, growth projections and the type of model that would be ideal for the Archives and its service to the public.

I would like to thank the Archives team for their dedication to their work and service to the public, continuing to provide excellent in-person assistance throughout the COVID pandemic. While many City services transitioned to remote service, the Archives team kept their doors open on a by-appointment basis and returned to normal drop-in service in late summer of 2021.

Katrina Leckovic
City Clerk

2021 HIGHLIGHTS

Relocation and prepping the holdings to move from Vanier Park occupied much of Archives staff's time behind the scenes in 2021, while out front, the reference staff continued to provide public service in the midst of COVID-19 restrictions. What a year.

On the relocation front, design work in 2020 had determined that Level 7 of the Central Library would not provide sufficient space for the long-term growth projected for the Archives, and a satellite storage location would be required. When combined with the findings related to governance, heritage and legislative obligations, and the lack of opportunity for operational efficiency created by these obligations, the relocation project team determined that other facility opportunities should be considered for either a single site or a hub and satellite approach. The City's Real Estate and Facilities Management staff and Diamond Schmitt Architects worked with Archives staff to conduct this review, and the results were presented to the City Manager in July 2021.

As a result, Central Library was removed from consideration as a possible home for the Archives, as it was not the most cost effective hub and satellite solution, and a single site was shown to be the most operationally efficient model to pursue. This meant that the Archives would remain at Vanier Park for the time being, and staff would pursue modest, but critical, upgrades to our satellite site in East Vancouver. Future needs were agreed to be considered as part of the City's 2023-2026 Capital Plan process.

As these decisions were being made, our "Pre-move Project," aimed at preparing the holdings to move, was fast approaching completion and for that reason, was allowed to continue. By December 31, 99.39% of the inventory work was completed and 100% of our unboxed bound volumes and 85% of unboxed rolled drawings and maps were housed in containers. In addition, most of the existing containers at the Vanier site and all containers at the satellite site were barcoded and the barcodes scanned into our new location management system.

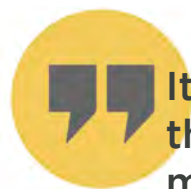
While we won't be moving anywhere for another decade or so, the Pre-move work was a tremendous investment in the care and protection of the Archives' holdings. A thorough inventory was long overdue, and our materials are now safely housed and ready to go, with standards in place to maintain this level of housing and physical control for new material coming in. And the barcode system will be critical in tracking containers that move between Vanier and the satellite, and for providing statistics on records retrieval. We plan to operationalize that system in 2022.

None of this work was impacted by COVID-19 restrictions, but our reading room service remained by appointment until Labour Day. It was with great relief that we returned to our normal drop-in service model at that time. We ended the year with a slightly higher number of visits compared to 2020, but only approaching half of our normal traffic volume. Email and phone enquiries continued to track upward, at about 20% above the five-year average.

Donations of private-sector records picked up again, compared to 2020. We were particularly delighted that Catherine Clement donated the Yucho Chow Community Archive collection. This hybrid analogue-digital collection resulted from Catherine's work researching photographer Yucho Chow and curating the exhibit "Chinatown Through a Wide Lens: the Hidden Photographs of Yucho Chow." The collection consists of over 500 digitized images of photographs of Chow's clients, most of whom came from diverse communities not represented in traditional Vancouver historical narratives, and is an extremely important addition to the Archives' holdings. It was this wonderful donation that helped us reach a significant milestone—over 200,000 digital objects available online!

As usual, my thanks to all the Archives staff for making all of our accomplishments of the past year possible. In particular, I am deeply grateful to the Pre-move staff, some of whom had moved on to other opportunities by the end of the year, for everything they have brought to our team since 2018/2019. The Archives is in great shape thanks to your efforts.

Heather M. Gordon
City Archivist



It was this wonderful donation that helped us reach a significant milestone—over 200,000 digital objects available online!

BY THE NUMBERS

FINANCIAL REPORT OPERATING BUDGET: REVENUE

Recoveries

Sale of photographs, photocopies, publications and tax searches	\$6,103
Grants	24,000
TOTAL	\$30,103

OPERATING BUDGET: EXPENDITURES

Salaries	\$972,317
Supplies and Services	38,618
TOTAL	\$1,010,934

ENDOWMENT FUNDS

Fund	Expenditures	Revenues
Major Matthews Memorial Fund		
Donations		\$0
Interest		727
Schwesinger Legacy		
Publication Sales		11
Interest		1,736
TOTAL		\$1,747



DATABASE DESCRIPTIONS

At December 31, 2021, the number of descriptive records in the Archives' database stood as follows:

Level	Total
Fonds/collection	957
Sous-fonds	15
Series	1,910
Sub-series	436
File	194,692
Item	218,541
Part	11,230
TOTAL	427,781

DIGITAL OBJECTS ONLINE

At December 31, 2021, the number of digital objects in the Archives' database stood as follows:

Type	Total
Image	195,512
Text	563
Video	1,041
Audio	2,374
Other	2,178
TOTAL	201,668

CITY RECORDS PROCESSED

Records scheduled for archival retention through the City of Vancouver Records and Information Management program arrive on a regular basis. The following is a list of the public records processed this year.

Department	Retained & Described
City Clerk's Office	2.0m
Board of Parks and Recreation	3.0m
Vancouver Public Library	2.5m
TOTAL	7.5m



BY THE NUMBERS

PROFILE OF USERS

Users who do research on site at the Archives are as many and varied as their topics. We serve a wide variety of citizens, institutions and organizations. In 2021, due to COVID-19 restrictions, on-site users represented only 18% of our researchers; off-site users (those who rely on our services by telephone, e-mail, mail, and social media) represented 82%.

Researchers on site at the Archives

Artist	4%
Business	15%
City of Vancouver Staff	1%
General Public	48%
Government - Federal, Provincial, Regional, Other	
Municipal, First Nations	0%
Media	2%
Religious/Cultural Institution	5%
School	3%
Society or Association	1%
University/College	21%
Other	0%

Research Subject

Biography	1%
Building	23%
Business/Industry	2%
City of Vancouver Government	5%
Genealogy	3%
Maritime	0%
Military	0%
Neighbourhood	21%
Social/Cultural	33%
Site Assessment	6%
Other	6%

WEB STATISTICS

searcharchives.vancouver.ca: 373,086 visits

AuthentiCity Blog:*

Sessions	11,597
Users	9,421
Pageviews	21,942

YouTube (total views-74 videos): 14,622

Flickr views of images: 196,613

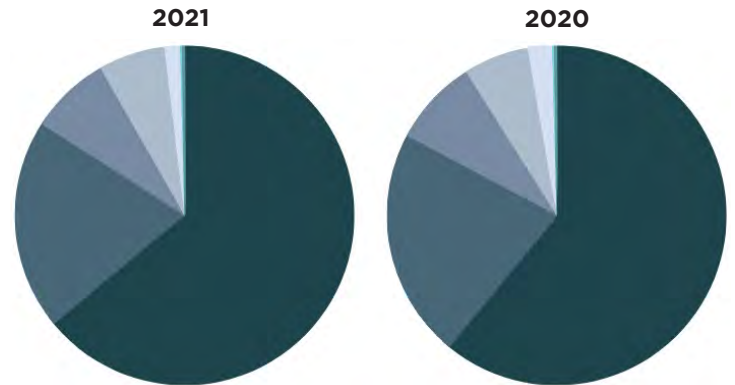
*AuthentiCity statistics available for January 1 to September 14th only due to analytics software failure.

SERVING THE COMMUNITY

Services to citizens are a top priority for the Archives. We serve the community by acquiring records from donors, preserving them, and making them available to a wide variety of users and researchers. The community accesses our services by website, e-mail, phone, fax, regular mail, personal visits, and tours.

SERVICE STATISTICS

	2021	2020
Document retrievals	6,095	5,147
E-mail enquiries	1,914	1,840
Telephone enquiries	731	697
Researcher visits	605	525
New researcher registrations	151	197
Social media enquiries	25	28
Mail & fax enquiries	7	7



OUR HOLDINGS

The Archives is the largest repository for the documentary heritage of Vancouver and its holdings include:

- 2,900 linear meters of textual City records
- 1,975 linear meters of textual records from individuals, organizations, and institutions
- 7.2 million photographs
- 76,000 architectural drawings
- 13,000 pamphlets
- 6,800 maps
- 6,000 City publications
- 3,000 postcards
- 1,300 works of documentary art
- 2,700 audio recordings
- 2,900 moving image records
- 90 TB of born-digital and digitized records



PRIVATE SECTOR ACQUISITIONS

In 2021, 61 private-sector accessions were completed. These included textual records, photographs, architectural drawings, maps, audio recordings, film, and video. Acquisitions of note include:

- Yucho Chow Community Archive collection. Donation consists of over 580 photographs collected and digitized by Catherine Clement for the exhibit “Chinatown Through a Wide Lens: The Hidden Photographs of Yucho Chow.” This hybrid analogue-digital donation includes 510 photographs taken by commercial photographer Yucho Chow and contributed by diverse communities, 75 family photographs contributed by Yucho Chow’s descendants, news clippings, studio graphic design work and ephemera, media stories, and project records.
- An accrual to the Heritage Vancouver Society fonds. Donation includes Board minutes from 1991-2000 and correspondence from 1996-2001.
- Materials related to the making of the documentary “Vancouver: A Portrait by Arthur Erickson,” including a 16mm print of the finished film, original negative A and B rolls, negative optical soundtrack, Betacam copies of the finished film, a 35mm master mix, 16mm interpositive, and 1/4” audio recordings of interviews with Arthur Erickson.
- Mau Dan Gardens Co-operative Housing Association fonds. Donation consists of 20 metres of records pertaining to the establishment and operation of the Mau Dan Gardens housing co-op, including board and committee meeting minutes, membership files, reports, financial records, and correspondence with the City of Vancouver, CMHC, and other public and private bodies.
- Two scrapbooks documenting activities at the Marco Polo theatre and restaurant. Includes photographs, menus and newspaper clippings.
- ca. 70 architectural drawings of tenant improvements at the Oceanic Plaza, Guinness Tower and the Marine Building, ca. 1978-1990. Includes two map drawings of the Coal Harbour area showing building heights ca. 1980s.
- Vancouver Cricket Club minutes book dating 1889-1911.

2900 linear meters

OF TEXTUAL CITY RECORDS

13000

PAMPHLETS

7.2 million

PHOTOGRAPHS

6800

MAPS

1300

DOCUMENTARY ARTWORKS

6000

CITY
PUBLICATIONS

3000

POSTCARDS

1975 linear meters

OF TEXTUAL RECORDS FROM INDIVIDUALS,
ORGANIZATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONS

2900

MOVING IMAGE
RECORDS

76000

ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS

2700

AUDIO
RECORDINGS

90 TB

OF BORN-DIGITAL AND DIGITIZED RECORDS

PRESERVATION

In support of our digitization program, thousands of photographs were inspected and some were treated for tears, and cleaned of adhesive residue and surface dirt. The rehousing and freezing of the millions of Pacific Press photographs acquired in 2017 continued. 22,238 digital objects created through our digitization program, a total of 1.2 terabytes, were preserved in our digital preservation system, and we passed the milestone of 200,000 digital objects (both digitized and born-digital) made available online.

PRESERVATION STATISTICS

Maps and plans treated	190
Photographs treated	1,630
Text treated	1

Other:	
Internet Inquiries	3
Telephone Inquiries	1

DIGITIZATION PROGRAM

We digitized 5,013 stinky, deteriorating acetate negatives from the Williams Bros. Photographers Collection; the last 360 BCGLA photographs; 1275 photographs from the Jessie Richardson Award Society fonds; 438 postcards; and maps, plans, and photographs from an assortment of small fonds. Digitization and optical character recognition of Council Minutes from the late 1960s continued. The tax microfiche digitized are part of our multi-year project to create access copies for the thousands of fiche that only exist as a master copy; this is over half completed.

In 2021, the following records were digitized:

- 12,882 images (photographs, maps and art)
- 42 pages of text
- 965 pieces of tax microfiche
- 11 films and 7 audio tapes

A total of 77 digital reproduction orders were completed for a total of 254 items. Revenue generated from reproduction charges was \$5,202.



ARCHIVES IN THE COMMUNITY

PARTNERSHIPS

In 2021, the Archives collaborated on projects with a number of outside organizations including the following:

- Historypin
- Internet Archive
- InterPARES
- Vancouver Heritage Foundation

EXHIBITIONS & DISPLAYS

- W.J. Moore Panoramas (Gallery)
- Games in the City (Video Wall)
- Seasons: Vancouver Through the Year (Video Wall)
- Vancouver Vignettes (Video Wall)

LOANS

- Panoramic photographs for display in the Mayor's Office
- Panoramic photographs for display in Councillors Bligh's, Boyle's, Carr's, Dominato's, Fry's, Hardwick's, Kirby-Yung's, and Wiebe's offices
- Panoramic photographs for display in the City Manager's Office corridor and boardroom
- King John Sword replica to St. John Ambulance BC & Yukon Council Provincial Headquarters

ORGANIZATION AND STAFF

In 2021, City of Vancouver Archives staffing stood at eight regular full time positions.

City Archivist:
Heather Gordon

Archivists:
Kira Baker (TFT)
Laura Fortier (TFT) (to Aug. 28)
Katie Powell (AUX) (May-Dec)
Jamie Sanford (TFT) (to Mar. 6)
Kristy Waller (AUX) (Jan.-May)
Chak Yung

Conservators:
Paola Merkins (TFT)
Dorcas Tong (TFT)

Digital Archivists:
Glenn Dingwall
Jana Grazley
Sharon Walz

Digital Conservator:
Sue Bigelow

Office Assistant:
Jeannie Hounslow

Archival Assistants:
Mandy Roddick (AUX)
Bronwyn Smyth
Christine Tutt (TFT)
Kim Unruh (TFT) (to Nov. 1)

TOURS

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, only one in-person tour was conducted in 2021, for new members of the Friends of the Vancouver City Archives Board of Directors in September.

VOLUNTEERS

Kathy Kinakin worked on re-housing and photo identification projects throughout the year.

SPECIAL EVENTS/OUTREACH HIGHLIGHTS

COVID-19 restrictions continued to impact the Archives' participation in in-person community events, and our by-appointment reference service model left less time than usual for virtual outreach events and activities.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- Jana Grazley attended and chaired a session at the Association of Canadian Archivists' virtual annual conference, "Home Improvement: Building Archives Through Change", at her own expense.
- Kira Baker attended and moderated a session at the Archives Association of Ontario's virtual annual conference, "Doing the Work: From Colonial Pasts to Inclusive Futures", at her own expense.
- Bronwyn Smyth attended the Association of Canadian Archivists webinar "Legal Issues in Archival Donations", at her own expense.
- Kira Baker, Laura Fortier, Paola Merkins, Mandy Roddick, Bronwyn Smith, Dorcas Tong, Christine Tutt, Kim Unruh, Sharon Walz and Chak Yung attended a training session on appraisal of archival material with Stephen Lunsford.
- Dorcas Tong completed the Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI)/ Canadian Heritage Information Network's (CHIN) "Digital Preservation" workshop, at her own expense.
- Chak Yung attended a virtual Prevention of Workplace Violence workshop.
- Paola Merkins completed two BCIT courses: Canadian OHS Legislation and Accident Causation and Analysis, at her own expense.

MAJOR PROJECTS

Staff worked on a number of major projects in 2021 as follows:

- Heather Gordon oversaw the Archives' Pre-move Project, which prepares the Archives' holdings to move to its future home.
- Led by Sue Bigelow, Dorcas Tong and Paola Merkins carried out conservation-related tasks for the Pre-move Project.
- Led by Sharon Walz, Christine Tutt, Jamie Sanford, Laura Fortier and Kim Unruh carried out inventory-related tasks for the Pre-Move Project.
- Heather Gordon, Sue Bigelow, Glenn Dingwall, Jana Grazley and Sharon Walz worked with Real Estate and Facilities Management staff and Diamond Schmitt Architects on design development for the Archives' space on Level 7 of the Central Library building.
- Heather Gordon and Paola Merkins regularly updated the Archives COVID-19 Safety Plan, and prepared the facility for a safe return in September to the drop-in service model used before pandemic restrictions applied.
- With funding from the BC History Digitization Program and the Friends of the Vancouver City Archives, Archives staff undertook a project to make 5,122 photographic negatives created by Don Coltman available online. Mandy Roddick, Sue Bigelow, Kristy Waller and Jana Grazley were involved in completing this project.
- Bronwyn Smyth continued to transcribe metadata from Vancouver Sun photo shoot job envelopes and boxed them for preservation in frozen storage. This metadata will eventually be imported into the Archives' public online database as file-level descriptions, at which point public access to the negatives will be possible.



PRE-MOVE PROJECT FACTS AND FIGURES

- 2 conservators hired
- 2 archival assistants hired
- 3 archivists hired
- 50,030 file level descriptions added to the Archives database
- 25,536 metadata issues corrected
- 25,704 items not in database made discoverable
- 45,306 conservation and housing issues identified and corrected
- Over 6,000 brittle or damaged boxes replaced (~37% of existing containers)
- 1,682 custom containers used for unboxed bound volumes
- 669 containers used for unboxed rolled drawings and maps
- 1,269 inventory-revealed conservation issues resolved
- 70,898 container barcode labels printed
- 12,303 location barcode labels printed

In sum, we fixed about 100,000 things and made 50,000 descriptions for already-processed records fully searchable via the Archives online database.



Donors

The Archives could not preserve Vancouver's documentary heritage without the concern and active support of the many organizations and individuals who donate records and other materials.

Thank you to our 2021 donors.

Atchison County Historical Society
Barman, Jean
Bateman, Anthony
BC Music Teachers' Association
Bomhoff, Tom
Braidwood, Robin
Brisbin, William
Carter, Tom
Celsop, Sharom
Chase & District Museum & Archives
Clement, Catherine
Crawford, Patricia
Desmond, Stephen
Farmer, Frank
Foret, Jeannette
Fowlie, Nicola
Gronert, Linda
Guild, Brenda
Hall, Patricia
Harper, Lynette
Heritage Vancouver Society
Holm, Judy
Jerome, Carolyn
Kalman, Hal
Keirstead, Robin
Kernighan, Edith
Kingsville Archives

Lambert, Barbara
Louis, Tim
Mackie, John
Mau Dan Gardens Co-operative Housing Association
McCann, David
McOuat, Donna
Merilees, B.
Nicolle, Douglas
Oxford Properties
Riter, Ron
Robinson, Sal
Rogers, Leona
Rossiter, Sean and Margaret Atchison
Royal Scottish Country Dance Society Vancouver Branch
Schneewind, Rachel
Scoones, Kate
Seaforth Highlanders Museum of Canada
Smith, Geoff
Smith, Lynne
Taylor, Paul
Teranishi, Margaret
Tinck, Fred
United Empire Loyalists Association of Canada, Vancouver Branch
VanDusen Botanical Garden Association
Warkentin, Elinor
Wiggs, Blake
Wolf, Jim

EXTERNAL SUPPORT

FRIENDS OF THE VANCOUVER CITY ARCHIVES

Chair

Jill Kelly

Vice Chair

Merrilee Robson

Secretary

Kevin Bowers

Treasurer

Neal Jennings

Members at Large

Richard Arias-Hernandez

John Atkin

Tom Carter

Aaron Chapman

Jennifer Chutter

Elana Zysblat

The Board of Directors held ten meetings during the year. The Annual General Meeting was held on March 30 and featured Heritage consultant Elana Zysblat and architectural historian Jim Wolf speaking on the ongoing conservation and planned restoration of New Westminster's Columbia Theatre.

In 2021 the Friends provided funding to the Archives in the amount of \$8,500 to assist in the digitization of over 5,000 photographic images taken by professional photographer Don Coltman.

The Friends also held two successful online fundraisers during the year. On May 26th, Portland-based light artist Craig Winslow spoke about his use of projection and emerging light and video mapping technology to highlight and preserve fading painted historical advertisements. He was joined by urban archaeologist Matt Cohen who has researched over 100 ghost signs in Winnipeg's Exchange District and collaborated with Craig on a restoration event of several of these signs. On December 3, Aaron Chapman commemorated the 91st anniversary of the Commodore Ballroom with a presentation on the history of the venerable nightclub.

Sadly, Board member Wendy Hunt, who served on the Board from April 2015 to March 2021, passed away on June 22, 2021.



ARCHIVES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Sue Baptie

Neal Jennings

Dr. Mary Ellen Kelm

Dr. Tina Merrill Loo

Norman Young (to April)

The Committee is authorized by City Council to assist the Archives on matters such as acquisition policy, donations, revenue projects, educational matters, public relations, and physical plant. It also oversees the use of the Major Matthews Memorial Fund. Neal Jennings attends meetings in the role of liaison from the Friends of the Vancouver City Archives. The Committee met once in 2021, on December 1. Members were saddened to hear of the passing on April 9th of long-time member Norman Young.

GRANTS AND DONATIONS

British Columbia History Digitization Program

Steffens-Colmer Studios and Don Coltman Company
Photographs digitization **\$15,000**
Funding was received to digitize 5,122 photographic negatives created by photographer Don Coltman from 1941-1953.

Friends of the Vancouver City Archives

Steffens-Colmer Studios and Don Coltman Company
Photographs digitization **\$8,500**
Funding was received to digitize 5,122 photographic negatives created by photographer Don Coltman from 1941-1953.

Friends of the Vancouver City Archives

SE False Creek Seawall construction
photographs digitization **\$500**
Funding was received to digitize 60 Engineering department photographs depicting the construction of the seawall along Southeast False Creek ca. 1973-1975.

IMAGE CAPTIONS AND REFERENCE CODES

Front cover:

• Yucho Chow photo - Studio exterior, 1942.
Reference code: AM1688-S2-F7-: 2021-034.651

Page 5:

Don Coltman photos:
• Hastings St. looking west to Invermay Hotel and Marine Building, January 1947.
Reference code: AM1545-S3-: CVA 586-15767
• Movie Sound Lab office interior, 2610 W. Broadway, June 1948.
Reference code: AM1545-S3-: CVA 586-11213
• Three boys from the Vancouver Boys Club Association, 1950.
Reference code: AM1545-S3-: CVA 586-13418

Page 6:

• Yucho Chow photo - Johal-Gurdas Singh family, 1940s.
Reference code: AM1688-S1-F5-: 2021-034.179

Page 8:

• Crayon enlargement of Yucho Chow photo (AM1688-S1-F8-: 2021-034.485) in custom housing, Dorcas Tong photo

Page 10:

• Before and after pre-move re-housing, Dorcas Tong photo
• Yucho Chow self portrait with camera, ca. 1930.
Reference code: AM1688-S2-F1-: 2021-034.580