



Resource Centre Location:  
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NEWS RELEASE

October 26, 2013

### **Decades of cemetery research is donated to the Victoria Genealogical Society**

Local genealogist, Judy Wasylenko, has been recording and transcribing memorials inscriptions in cemeteries throughout Alberta and Vancouver Island since the early 1980's. Whether on her own or with teams of volunteers Judy's goal has always been to make this information more accessible to others and to that end Judy recently donated her impressive Vancouver Island collection of research to the Victoria Genealogical Society.

"I consider the information gleaned from these cemeteries, especially from rural areas, of utmost importance to family research", says Judy, "and the Victoria Genealogical Society is a key venue to make this information available to as many people as possible".

### **Judy's donation of burial files contains over 100,000 names from 46 cemeteries located in southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands.**

"What sets Judy's work apart from other collections of memorial inscriptions," says Pat Acton, President of the Victoria Genealogical Society, "is that wherever she could Judy has added information from official government death records. The end product is a wonderful resource for family history researchers and represents an incredible dedication by Judy".

"Today we are celebrating Family History Month with the launch of a new and free online index system for these burial files" reports Claudia Boorman, Webmaster for the Victoria Genealogical Society. "Anyone who ever wondered if a person they are researching was interred on southern Vancouver Island or the Gulf Islands can now access our free online burial indexes and find out."

**The internet URL for the Victoria Genealogical Society Online Burial Indexes is [www.victoriags.org/indexes/burial/burial.php](http://www.victoriags.org/indexes/burial/burial.php).**

Due to the volume of material involved these online indexes are limited to names and cemetery locations, but if researchers want more information about the deceased they may view the full Burial Files by visiting the Victoria Genealogical Society Resource Centre at 947 Alston Street, Victoria, where volunteers can help them conduct their search.

The Victoria Genealogical Society Burial Files contain the name of deceased, and some or all of the following:

- Date of birth;
- Where born;
- Date of death;
- Age at death;
- Burial date;
- Cemetery name and location;
- Cemetery Block and plot number;
- Other comments or inscription information.

The Victoria Genealogical Society Resource Centre and Library is open to the public six afternoons a week (closed Sundays). For hours of operation see [www.victoriags.org](http://www.victoriags.org) or phone 250-360-2808. The Victoria Genealogical Society is a non profit, volunteer run organization. Using the materials at the Resource Centre is free for members and non-members can access the records by paying a modest fee that supports the Library.

Researchers who are not able to visit the Victoria Genealogical Society Resource Centre in person can email a request for information to [Queries@victoriags.org](mailto:Queries@victoriags.org) . For a modest fee volunteers will search the Burial Files or other resources.

For more information about this or other programs and services of the Victoria Genealogical Society visit their website at [www.victoriags.org](http://www.victoriags.org) or email [projects@victoriags.org](mailto:projects@victoriags.org).

Note: Media Backgrounder with information about the Victoria Genealogical Society follows below.

Contact:  
Merv Scott  
Project Director  
Victoria Genealogical Society  
Email: [projects@victoriags.org](mailto:projects@victoriags.org)  
Website: [www.victoriags.org](http://www.victoriags.org)

## **MEDIA BACKGROUNDER**

**TOPIC:** OVERVIEW OF THE VICTORIA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY (VGS)

**DATE PREPARED:** September 16, 2013

**CONTACT:** Merv Scott, Project Director, Victoria Genealogical Society; Email: [projects@victoriags.org](mailto:projects@victoriags.org)

**DESCRIPTION:**

The Victoria Genealogical Society (VGS) was established in 1978 as a non-profit volunteer run society whose aim is to further the study of genealogy - the exciting search for one's ancestors and family history. For more information read below or visit our website at [www.victoriags.org](http://www.victoriags.org).

The Victoria Genealogical Society is a registered charity, CRA #0951210-21.

### **Education and research facilities and services:**

- **Library and Resource Centre:** located at 947 Alston Street in Vic West our Library and Resource Centre is bright, comfortable and roomy, and staffed with friendly volunteers to guide you in your research. We have over 335 feet of linear shelf space filled with books, BC Directories, indexes, journals, maps, CDs, family histories, etc. Use one of our computer terminals to search for your roots on Ancestry.com, our various census indexes or our popular databases like the BC Vital Statistics, estates and wills probated between 1861-1981, or BC naturalization records between 1859-1963. Parking and WiFi are both free. For opening hours and other information call the VGS Library and Resource Centre at [250-360-2808](tel:250-360-2808) or visit from home at <http://www.victoriags.org/library.php>.
- Visit our Victoria Genealogical Library and Resource Centre in person to benefit from our **1-on-1 Research Assistance** or send us your **Query** by mail or email and we'll research our records for you. Both services are provided for modest fees.
- **Online Indexes** on a variety of research topics can be accessed from the comfort of your home including our catalogue of library collections, our index of Greater Victoria Pioneers news clippings, past editions of our VGS Journal or the Surname Research Interests Index of our members.
- **Publications for sale** – we also publish our own books including our quarterly **VGS Journal** and our new youth activity book titled **“Who’s In Your Family Tree?” A step-by-step guide for the Detective in your family.**
- **Workshops** are provided to VGS members and the public each Saturday morning at the VGS Library and Resource Centre (except during the summer). Recent topics included Parish Registers In The UK And Ireland, Researching Your Ancestors In Eastern Europe and First Steps In Genealogy. See our schedule of upcoming workshops, fees and speakers at <http://www.victoriags.org/events.php>.
- VGS members have the opportunity to join one or more **SIGs - Special Interest Groups** - where members with similar interests and research objectives participate in small, focused meetings and discussions. See <http://www.victoriags.org/sigs.php> for the schedule of upcoming SIG meetings.
- **Monthly Meetings** provide members the opportunity to chat about family history research, learn from each other and learn from special guest speakers. Visitors are welcome by donation. There are book sales tables, refreshments, 50/50 draws and more. See the schedule of upcoming meetings and speakers at <http://www.victoriags.org/meetings.php>.

- **Annual Seminars** – Each fall our members get together for a full day of genealogy. Expert guest speakers, vendors, exhibitors, draw prizes and lunch make this a fun and rewarding event. Watch our website for details.

### **Supporting Our Community:**

- Monthly “**Ask Granny!**” seminars are provided free to senior citizens in retirement residences.
- **Genealogy in the Classroom** is our new web based resource developed by teachers for teachers, students and parents. With no registrations hassles, no passwords and no fees it’s easy to use and fun. Check out this new website at [www.victoriags.org/school](http://www.victoriags.org/school).
- **Esquimalt’s Veterans’ Cemetery:** VGS members are always working on projects important to our community like the current project indexing memorial inscriptions at the Veteran’s Cemetery located on Colville Road in Esquimalt. The index will soon be published in a 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the popular (and sold out) book titled **God’s Acre**.
- The Victoria Genealogical Society supports local events and initiatives by **hosting information and display booths** at events including Remembrance Week at the Royal BC Museum, Victoria Highland Games, Oak Bay Tea Party, Esquimalt Days, Black History Awareness Month and more.

### **Financial outlook:**

The Victoria Genealogical Society has not received government financial assistance in recent years and we are in need of corporate sponsors for our programs. We have worked hard to develop alternate revenue streams like our weekly workshops and publications but we continue to fall behind and may soon have to curtail our services. If you are interested in becoming a member or providing a donation or sponsorship please phone 250-360-2808 or email [Projects@victoriags.org](mailto:Projects@victoriags.org).

**Annual membership fees** are currently \$50. All the **benefits** of becoming a member are available online at <http://www.victoriags.org/about.php#membership> as is the **Membership Application Form**. You can print off and mail in the on-line application form or pick one up at the VGS Library and Resource Centre or at our Monthly Meetings.

The Victoria Genealogical Society gratefully recognizes the financial support provided by the **Thrifty Food’s Smile Card Fundraising Program**.