
Record year for Coquitlam archives

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[Janis Cleugh](#) / Tri-City News

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Coquitlam archivist Emily Lonie with Ken Wood of the Eagle Ridge Residents' Association. Its fonds have now been fully processed into the archives' holdings.

Photograph By TERRY O'NEILL

Coquitlam's 125th milestone anniversary spurred interest in historical data and photos of the city for hundreds of researchers, artists, students and business people last year.

City archivist Emily Lonie said the 2016 celebrations drew 50% more reference requests than the previous year, with people wanting to know more about their hometown and ancestors as well as to dig into information for their local heritage projects.

"It's been fantastic to see how much people have embraced the archives," said Lonie, a former Library and Archives Canada employee who created the city's collection in 2013. "It just shows to me that we are getting the message out and people are becoming aware that we're here and we can support them in any kind of historical work."

Among those who accessed the holdings last year included:

- consultants and developers wanting to conserve older homes under the Heritage Revitalization Agreement;
- artists searching for images to highlight at the new Evergreen Extension stations (i.e., the pine beetle wood piece at the Lafarge Lake-Douglas station);
- and Vancity, which is updating its Maillardville branch with historical photos.

"We are seeing a lot of research being done that's leading to very positive impacts on the community," Lonie told *The Tri-City News* last Friday.

The year-long 125th party also gave the department — which has a budget of around \$200,000 annually — a chance to get out to more civic functions.

Lonie, who was involved in the city's CAST task force with the aim to give committee members a sense of history in their planning, promoted the archives collection at the 125th events, which in turn increased the number of donations of photos, letters, maps and tapes, for example.

A significant acquisition came in through the Coquitlam Public Library and Coun. Craig Hodge — a former *Tri-City News* photographer — who donated photos and materials used to prepare the Coquitlam 100 Years: Reflections of the Past anthology, of which he was a contributor.

Another contribution came in last May from Ken Wood of The Eagle Ridge Residents' Association or TERRA, which represented residents in the Coquitlam neighbourhood from 1981 to 2003; the Westwood Plateau Community Association also gave its operational records from 1999 to present day to the archives.

As well, *The Tri-City News* added to the collection by handing over 29 bound print editions of the newspaper, spanning from 1990 to '96, plus six rolls of microfilm that included editions from '85 and '86.

And the Fenton family donated eight pictures of Fraser Mills and social gatherings of the saw mill employees, dating back to the mid-1940s, and two advertising posters produced by the Canadian Western Lumber Company Ltd. and Crown Zellerbach.

Lonie said she's now on the hunt for material about Coquitlam from the 1950s to '80s.

"That may not be a time that people would consider historical but that's something that we're really missing," she said, noting she plans to speak to the Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce members in June to ask for businesses to turn over any operational records from that period, if possible.

As for this year — the country's 150th anniversary — Lonie hopes for another big push with online and physical exhibits (including a Vimy Ridge display at city hall next month) and a focus on digital access especially through [Quest](#), the archives' online search portal.

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WANTED

Photos, letters, diaries, business records, meeting minutes, correspondence, maps, films and video- and audiotapes — from any era in Coquitlam — are sought by the city archives for its archival collection. To donate materials, email archives@coquitlam.ca.