

Saanich Archives

News & Events | Spring 2020

Update: Saanich Archives Still Closed



After a long closure caused by a flood in the facility last August, we hoped to reopen on March 31st. But, because of the COVID-19 risk, we will remain closed for the time being. Archives staff are still available, though, so keep emailing us your research questions! Check out our [website](#) for updates. And of course, thank you to our patrons for your patience!

Online: Diverse Saanich Exhibit



February was **Heritage Week** in BC. Saanich Archives created an exhibit around this year's theme, "Bringing the Past into the Future," exploring the **cultural diversity** that existed during early settlement of the Saanich Peninsula. Drawn to British Columbia by the Gold Rush, immigrants from around the world chose to settle here. Prior to European settlement, this area was the traditional territories of Lək'wəŋən and SENĆOTEN speaking peoples whose historical connections with the land continue to this day. Thanks to everyone who visited our exhibit at Cedar Hill Rec. Don't worry if you missed it, the [full exhibit](#) is on our website.

Featured: Russell Family Photo Album



Thomas Russell was a teenager when he arrived in Victoria in 1853 aboard the Hudson's Bay Company ship *Norman Morison*. In 1865, he was appointed teacher at Craigflower School, the third in the school's history. When he left his teaching position, he moved to Victoria where he opened a grocery. He later worked as superintendent of the Queen Charlotte Mining Company, assessor for the City of Victoria, and as an accountant in both Washington State and Victoria. Last year, we acquired a beautiful [photo album](#) containing over 100 photos of the Russell family and their friends and neighbours from the 1860s to the 1920s.

Looking Back: The Swan Lake Hotel



Did you know that from the late 1860s until 1897 there was a hotel on Saanich Road near Falmouth? The **Swan Lake Hotel** first opened in the late 1860s. This resort was advertised as having a "*commodious ballroom open for quadrille parties every evening*" with the rooms and beds "*kept with the strictest regard to cleanliness and comfort*". The location next to Swan Lake provided guests a choice of recreational activities such as fishing, boating, and skating. The Hotel was finally destroyed by fire in 1897 but the lake remained a popular recreation spot for locals.

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