



# 6080 RIVER ROAD



**A Thematic Guide to the Records of the  
Olympic Speed Skating Oval Site/Brighthouse Lands  
at the  
City of Richmond Archives**

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## Introduction to the City of Richmond Archives' Olympic Speed Skating Oval Site/Brighthouse Lands Thematic Guide

This guide contains:

- a brief description of the future Olympic Oval Speed Skating site and its significance
- a developed history of the site and the lands around it
- basic information about the City of Richmond Archives
- a listing of specific resources and records directly related to the property
- explanations of the different information resources and various types of records within the Archives' holdings and how they can be accessed by researchers
- a bibliography of resources consulted

It attempts to be as thorough as possible, however this guide should not be considered a definitive listing of all the records pertaining to the Olympic Oval site (6080 River Road) within the Archives' holdings. Additional records are continually being acquired and processed. The City of Richmond's Records Schedule determines when municipal records will be transferred to the Archives. Some records related to the Olympic Oval site will be in active use at Richmond City Hall.

It should also be noted that although extensive research of the Archives resources identified a number of key records related to the specific property, the majority of records encompass the much larger Brighthouse Estate.<sup>1</sup> The individual researcher is best qualified to determine which records are the most relevant to their particular query.

### Disclaimer

*This City of Richmond Archives publication and the CD accompanying it are not an official statement of city policy, law, practice, services or procedure, and should not be construed as such. The City does not guarantee the accuracy of the information they contain as they are intended only to give general information about the City and about an era of local history.*

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<sup>1</sup> In 1962, the Brighthouse Estate included the majority of property located within Sections 5, 6, 7, and 8, B4N R6W, and Fractional Section 32, B5N R6W.

## Significance of the Olympic Speed Skating Oval Site

In 1864, Samuel Brighthouse purchased 697 acres on Lulu Island which encompassed the site of the future Olympic Speed Skating Oval at 6080 River Road.<sup>2</sup> For over a century the property was occupied by residences and used for raising crops and livestock. It was purchased by the municipality in 1962 as part of the Brighthouse Estates and until 1975, the municipality allowed lessees to rent residential property. As part of the Brighthouse Industrial Estates, the property was given a light industrial/recreational zoning but remained vacant until leased to the Richmond Recreational Vehicle Park in 1986. Located along the middle arm of the Fraser River, between the No.2 Bridge and the Dinsmore Bridge, the Olympic Speed Skating Oval site occupies a key piece of Richmond real estate.



*Holt Farm in the foreground, Olympic Speed Skating Oval site at the middle right on the shore of the middle arm of the Fraser River.*

*City of Richmond Archives Photograph 1994 9 1*

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<sup>2</sup> The Land Title System describes the Richmond Olympic Oval site as: Parcel Identifier 005-702-518, Lot 6 except Parcel "A" (plan with bylaw filed 59617) and part subdivided by plan 79376; of Section 6 Block 4 North Range 6, New Westminster District Plan 24195. Taken from BC OnLine – LTO Search by Title <https://www.bconline.gov.bc.ca/> 30 August 2004

## History of the Olympic Oval Speed Skating Site and the Surrounding Lands

The site where the Richmond Olympic Oval will be constructed was originally part of a much larger property owned by one of Richmond's more influential settlers. By the second half of the nineteenth century, particularly between the decades of 1860 to 1880, Lulu Island began to see a slow but continual migration of farmers and their families.<sup>3</sup> One of the earlier settlers in the lower mainland was Samuel Brighthouse who had come from Yorkshire, England. With his partners, John Morton (cousin) and William Hailstone, the "Three Greenhorns" purchased 550 acres on the present site of Vancouver and built a house amidst the forests of what is now the West End.<sup>4</sup>



*Sam Brighthouse circa 1860*

Having foreseen the potential value of the agricultural land in the Fraser Valley, Samuel Brighthouse mapped and purchased 697 acres of farm land along the middle arm of the Fraser River on Lulu Island in 1864. Despite losing an entire crop and the largest barn on the island to a fire in 1870, Samuel Brighthouse, in partnership with William Scratchley, raised crops, stock and thoroughbreds on his Lulu Island farm until 1881, when the partnership dissolved and he returned to his property on the Burrard Inlet.<sup>5</sup> Unlike other early settlers on Lulu Island, Samuel Brighthouse maintained his land holdings on Lulu Island by continuing to lease them to other farmers. Upon his death in 1913, Sam Brighthouse's nephew, Michael Wilkinson Brighthouse, inherited his uncle's estate on Lulu Island.

When the earliest settlers began to arrive on Lulu Island in the nineteenth century, approximately one third of the island was covered with peat bogs. Low-lying areas often consisted of marshy terrain. Roads were difficult to construct and maintain so people travelled by boat. As a result, the most desirable properties were adjacent to the rivers and sloughs that served as the highways of the early settlers. The proximity and expanse of Samuel Brighthouse's property along the middle arm of the Fraser guaranteed him a positive return on his investment. In 1880, the Richmond Township purchased five acres of his property at the price of \$400 (intersection of River Road and Cambie Road) for the construction of a Town Hall and in 1891, the Richmond Methodist Mission erected the island's first church at the same junction.<sup>6</sup> The Brighthouse area quickly developed into a central community meeting place and it was one of the first areas of Lulu Island to experience the development of dykes and roads in order to drain fields and improve transportation.

<sup>3</sup> Ross, Leslie J., *Richmond: Child of the Fraser*, Richmond '79 Centennial Society, p.30.

<sup>4</sup> S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, "Sam Brighthouse," in *British Columbia From the Earliest Times to the Present*, Vol. IV, p.345.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Council Minutes, 4 October 1880, Vol. 1, p.22.



*Richmond's first Town Hall on land donated by Samuel Brighthouse.  
City of Richmond Photograph 1978 14 13*

For over a century, Samuel Brighthouse's property and the lands surrounding it have supported a number of different industries. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the waterfront along the middle arm of the Fraser River was dotted with canneries such as Acme, Terra Nova, and Vancouver. Assisted by his nephew, Michael Wilkinson Brighthouse, Samuel Brighthouse ventured into the salmon canning business as a subscriber of the Dinsmore Island Cannery. Lulu Island was also renowned for its love of horse racing and in 1909 Mr. Brighthouse sold a portion of his property to H.E. Springer, F.R. Springer, C.M. Marpole, A.E. Suckling, and Charles Lewis who developed the one-mile Minoru Park Racetrack which reopened as Brighthouse Park in 1920.<sup>7</sup> Closing its gates in 1941, the British Columbia Turf and Country Club purchased the 60 acres in 1945 and managed the property until they sold the land to the municipality in 1958.<sup>8</sup>

In 1961, City Council placed a plebiscite before the Richmond ratepayers to purchase the entirety of the Brighthouse Estate. The initial vote failed but in 1962, City Council approved the purchase from general revenue and initiated the development of the Brighthouse Industrial Estates. After investing large sums of capital into developing roads and sewers, the municipality passed zoning regulations to market the industrial park to companies as the ideal location for building factories, warehouses, and offices. Currently, this portion of the Brighthouse Estate is populated with commercial and industrial businesses but the land at 6080 River Road remained vacant until the Richmond R.V. Park leased the property to accommodate Expo visitors in 1986. This lease was renewed until recently (December 2003.)

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<sup>7</sup> Ross, p.100.

<sup>8</sup> Gilker, Gerry, Jack Lowe, and Geraldine Wray, *Whispers From the Shedrows: A History of Thoroughbred Racing in Richmond*, p.18.

The earliest and longest running land uses for the Olympic Oval site in the Brighthouse Estates have been residential and mixed farming. Samuel Brighthouse raised crops and livestock on and around this property until 1881, his nephew farmed a large portion of the farm until his uncle's death in 1913, and the executors of the Brighthouse Estate leased out various parcels of the property to local farming families such as the McClellands, Shaws, and Zellwegers until the mid-1960s.

Local papers have referred to two outbreaks of anthrax that resulted in buried cattle carcasses on the property (circa 1918 and 1963.) The Archives has very little information on this subject as it fell under the responsibility of the Federal Government and locally, the Richmond Health Department.<sup>9</sup> More information may be accessible from the Library and Archives of Canada (LAC.)<sup>10</sup>

In 1980, the City of Richmond's Planning Committee recommended that the site of the future Olympic Speed Skating Oval, as part of Brighthouse Service District 5, be allocated a light industry and recreation zoning.<sup>11</sup> The most recent amendment to the Official Community Plan in 2004, indicated that a Detailed Land Use Study was required for the property at 6080 River Road but that the site would include a Park, the configuration and location to be determined. It defined a Park as "an area of City-owned public space including, but not limited to, public facilities such as recreation centres and schools."<sup>12</sup>

Introducing a new phase of development for the Brighthouse Industrial Estates, the future Olympic Speed Skating Oval will once again alter the appearance and use of the riverfront along the middle arm of the Fraser River.

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<sup>9</sup> In the Richmond Oral History Project fonds, Bob McClelland recalls that his father stopped farming shortly after the outbreak that claimed several of his cattle. An entry in the Health Committee Minutes (June 2, 1973) refers to three cows that were incinerated and buried in lime. However, a photocopy of the Federal Inspectors report from 1963, states that only one cow carcass was burned and buried at 608 River Road (Vancouver Coastal Health, Richmond Health Department – Anthrax File.)

<sup>10</sup> Library and Archives of Canada website <http://www.collectionscanada.ca>

<sup>11</sup> Information taken from a report concerning the proposed zoning for the Brighthouse Service Districts 1 – 6 presented by the Planning Committee to City Council. Document found in the Bob Ransford fonds, Series 3, File 10, Brighthouse Industrial Estates, [1979-1980.]

<sup>12</sup> City Centre, in An Official Community Plan: Bylaw 7100 Schedule 2.10, p.68.

## Introduction to the City of Richmond Archives

The City of Richmond Archives, located in the Library and Cultural Centre building at Minoru Park Plaza, is the official repository for records about Richmond. Governed by the Corporate Records Management Program Bylaw 7400,<sup>13</sup> the Archives acquires official City records, such as Council Minutes and Bylaws, as well as records generated by private individuals and organizations. Whether of public or private origin, these records include textual documents, photographs, maps and plans, audiotapes, and videotapes.

The Archives' Reference Room is open Monday to Thursday from 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM and visitors are welcome to browse through the various finding aids to locate records relevant to their research. You can also begin your research by visiting the City of Richmond Archives' website <http://www.richmond.ca/archives> where you can search for records in three different ways:

1. **Photographs** by subject, name or keyword search
2. **Maps** by subject, name, keyword, planning areas, legal description (block, range, and section) or date search
3. **All-Media** by selecting a drop-down menu from community records or municipal records, and by subject, name or keyword search

Phoning ahead to book an appointment ensures that the City Archivist can set aside the time to give you a personal introduction to how the finding aids work and help to get your research started.

Unlike other information materials, archival records are one-of-a-kind originals and it is imperative that they are handled carefully – if a record is lost or damaged it cannot be replaced. White gloves are provided for handling fragile records and photographs, only pencils are permitted, and original order within the files must be maintained. Research is conducted in the reference room, as archival records are not available for loan. Photocopying and photographic ordering services are available.

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<sup>13</sup> The Corporate Records Management Program Bylaw 7400 can be viewed at the following link [http://www.richmond.ca/\\_shared/assets/bylaw\\_7400463.pdf](http://www.richmond.ca/_shared/assets/bylaw_7400463.pdf)



## Specific Sources Directly Related to the Olympic Oval Site

### Municipal Records:

#### 1. City Council Minutes

##### Early Development Concerning Brighthouse Estate

<b>2 Mar. 1889</b>	Permission to line out permanent roadway across property	p. 246
<b>1 Mar. 1890</b>	Grading of No.17 Road from No.2 Road to No.3 Road	p. 369
<b>14 July 1894</b>	Drainage scheme along No. 2 Road	p. 490
<b>7 Nov. 1896</b>	Flooding and damage to Mr. Brighthouse's property	p. 258
<b>19 May 1900</b>	Request for mortgage loan from Mr. Brighthouse	p. 177
<b>13 June 1900</b>	Granting of \$19,000 loan for security of real estate	p. 182
<b>7 Apr. 1913</b>	Proposed dyke and road fronting the Brighthouse property	p. 58
<b>16 Oct. 1916</b>	Consultation on how to construct dyke	p. 271
<b>4 Sept. 1947</b>	Installation of bridge to detour traffic to River Road	p. 270

##### Richmond Industrial Development Bylaw (No. 1827)

<b>17 Apr. 1961</b>	Proposal for plebiscite regarding purchase of Brighthouse Estate	p. 508
<b>29 May 1961</b>	Request for pollution Bylaw concerning proposed development	p. 715
<b>19 June 1961</b>	Proposed wording for the June 17 referendum ballot	p. 768
<b>3 July 1961</b>	Richmond Industrial Development Bylaw defeated	p. 838
<b>30 Oct. 1961</b>	Recommendation to omit Bylaw from December election	p. 1443

##### Purchase of Brighthouse Estate

<b>12 Mar. 1962</b>	Executors offer price of \$1,450,000 (5 interest free payments)	p. 301
<b>21 Mar. 1962</b>	Community opposition to purchase	p. 391
<b>9 Apr. 1962</b>	Property division of lots K and L in Brighthouse Estate	p. 447
<b>16 Apr. 1962</b>	Agreement for Sale of Land between executors and municipality	p. 518
<b>3 Apr. 1967</b>	Final payment and exchange for the deed of land	p. 498

##### Development and Land Use

<b>9 Dec. 1971</b>	Status report on development within Brighthouse Estates	p. 1904
<b>20 Jan. 1982</b>	Subdivision of 32-acre parcel on River Road into four to six lots	p. 356

<b>27 Jan. 1986</b>	Recommendation to give Landlord's consent to Taina RV Ltd.	p. 297
<b>9 Apr. 1990</b>	Taina RV Ltd. lease is extended until October 13, 1991	p. 18
<b>14 Sept. 1998</b>	Community Garden proposal – three year pilot project	p. 12

There are also multiple entries referring to the Brighthouse Estates and the Brighthouse Industrial Park that can be found in the indices to the Council Minutes for 1960-1982, 1986-1988, 1990, and 1997-1998.

## 2. Bylaws

16 June 1961	<b>Bylaw No. 1827</b> Not passed	Initial Richmond Industrial Development Bylaw placed before Owner-Electors in a municipal referendum
10 Dec. 1962	<b>Bylaw No. 1929</b>	Bylaw concerning the authorization for acquisition of land in order to widen No. 2 Road
10 Apr. 1967	<b>Land Purchase Bylaw No. 93</b>	Pertains to the fifth instalment for the purchase of the Brighthouse Estate (Sale of Lot Six (6) EXCEPT a 0.270 acre portion outlined in red on plan with by-law deposited No.59617...) File includes final deed to the Brighthouse Estate property in its entirety
12 Jan. 1987	<b>Bylaw No. 4744</b>	Refers to an exchange of land required for a highway (Lot 6, Section 6, B4N R6W)

There are also bylaws regarding the first four instalments for the purchase of the Brighthouse Estate, as well multiple bylaws referring in general to the Brighthouse Estate

## 3. Municipal Records Series

### Series 5 ~ Sinking funds – investments

File 650      **Brighthouse mortgage -- 1890-1945**

### Series 28 ~ Zoning

File 3712      **Zoning of Brighthouse & B.C. Turf property -- 1954-1959**

### Series 41 ~ Health

File 5243-3      **Temporary recreational vehicle – parks -- 1984-1988**

### Series 49 ~ Public companies

File 6035-1      **Relocation of CPR tracks through Brighthouse Estates -- 1962-1968**

Series 51 ~ Agreements

File 2716 **Michael Wilkinson Brighthouse agreement -- 1889-1916**

Series 56 ~ Brighthouse Estates and relocations

File 7000 **Brighthouse Estate – miscellaneous, Brighthouse Industrial Park -- 1962-1980**

File 7000-1 **Signed agreement with John Holt Wilkinson Brighthouse & Jane Holt Wilkinson Brighthouse for the purchase of the Brighthouse Estate – copies of agreement -- 1962-1967**

File 7001 **Reports, communications, memos, etc. from members of staff re: Brighthouse Estate -- 1962-1965**

File 7001-1 **Brighthouse Industrial Park – utility easement – 1967-1973**

File 7001-2 **Power distribution in the new River Road area, Brighthouse Industrial Estate -- 1971**

Series 69 ~ Administrator's subject files

File 200 **C.A.O. – Brighthouse Industrial Estate -- 1973-1981**

Series 92 ~ Land transactions

Sub series 3 ~ Land sales

File 40 **Land sales – 1<sup>st</sup> drawer – Brighthouse Industrial Park -- 1976-1978**

File 60 **Brighthouse industrial Park – General -- 1962-1974**

File 63 **Land sales – 1<sup>st</sup> drawer – Brighthouse Industrial Estates – Arten Investments Limited -- 1973-1975**

File 71 **Negotiations with Mr. and Miss Brighthouse re. purchase of estate -- 1962-1968**

Sub series 9 ~ C.P.R. relocation

File 7 **C.P.R. relocation – Miscellaneous plans re. rail R/W & River Rd. -- 1962**

4. Government Publications

GP 24 **Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 7100 Schedule 2**

GP 125 **Brighthouse Core Area Study Summary**

## Community Records:

### Bob Ransford Fonds

#### Series 3 ~ Subject References

File 10      **Brighthouse Industrial Estates -- 1979-1980**

### Richmond Oral History Project Fonds

12 Apr. 1972      **J.H. Wilkinson Brighthouse interview**      Int. 16, Tape 1

14 Apr. 1972      **Bob McClelland interview**      Int. 17, Tape 1

**Photographs:**

[ca.1900]	<b>Richmond Town Hall</b>	1978 14 13
[ca.1890-1935]	<b>Michael Wilkinson Brighthouse</b>	2001 9 3
[ca.1890-1935]	<b>Michael Wilkinson Brighthouse and family</b>	2001 9 8
[ca.1925]	<b>Middle arm of Fraser (not for duplication)</b>	1985 166 1
1953	<b>Brighthouse area</b>	1984 17 22
[ca.1954-1960]	<b>Aerial Photograph of Holt Farm and Middle Arm near Dover Road</b>	1994 9 1
1967	<b>Brighthouse area</b>	1984 17 55
1976	<b>Highway 99 and Westminster Highway</b>	1988 10 8
1982	<b>North east over Brighthouse</b>	1988 10 781
1984	<b>Richmond Town Centre and Sea Island</b>	1988 10 795



*Looking west toward the Olympic Speed Skating Oval Site and Sea Island in 1976.  
City of Richmond Archives George McNutt Photograph 1988 10 8*

**Maps:**

1908	<b>Plan of land enclosed and known as Lulu Island West Dyking district</b>	1988 17 76
1936	<b>Waterworks atlas map of middle arm waterfront between No.1 Road and No.3 Road</b>	1991 40 8
1936	<b>Waterworks atlas map of area along middle arm waterfront around north end of No.2 Road</b>	1991 40 33
1938	<b>Map Richmond Municipality, with annotations as to filling</b>	1988 17 63
1954	<b>D6 (Controlled mosaic part of the Municipality of Richmond)</b>	1987 44 33
1958	<b>The Township of Richmond land use (agricultural)</b>	1987 27 27
1959	<b>Town Centre to airport air photograph</b>	1987 31 11
1961	<b>Proposed relocation of C.P.R. - B.C.E.R. right of way</b>	1987 25 21
1962	<b>Richmond Industrial Estates - land use</b>	1987 26 2 to 1987 26 3
[1963?]	<b>The Township of Richmond – zoning map</b>	1996 6 5
1979	<b>Information maps</b>	1985 99 1 to 1985 99 11
[198?]	<b>E. Thompson area</b>	1993 16 1093
1982	<b>Land use 1981, the Township of Richmond</b>	1985 130 1
[1985?]	<b>Richmond land ownership plans</b>	1996 6 29.g
1986	<b>Crown grant acquisition</b>	1986 70 3

There are also numerous maps and plans within the files in the Municipal Records Series.



*City of Richmond Archives Map item 1988 1763*

## Additional Resources:

### 1. Biography Files

- Sam Brighthouse** File contains biographical notes and photocopies of newspaper articles, photographs, and book excerpts
- Michael Wilkinson Brighthouse and Patricia Gertrude Brighthouse** File contains an obituary notice and a duplicate copy of an indenture between MWB and the Corporation of the Township of Richmond

### 2. Books

*British Columbia From the Earliest Times to the Present, Vol. IV.* "Sam Brighthouse."  
Vancouver: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1914.

*History of Richmond Municipality* by Thomas Kidd. Richmond: Richmond Printers Ltd., 1973.

*Richmond: Child of the Fraser* by Leslie J. Ross. Richmond '79 Centennial Society 1979.

## General Resources Available at the City of Richmond Archives

The City of Richmond Archives provides researchers with access to a variety of archival records and reference materials.

**Municipal Records** are those records created, received and preserved by the City of Richmond in the course of its official business.

- The **City Council Minutes** record the official meetings of the Richmond City Council and cover the period from 1880 to 2003. Researchers can search the Council Minutes indexes (binders) in the reference room. The Council Minutes are available in microfilm and microfiche.
- The municipal **Bylaws** reflect the official rules that govern and regulate City affairs. The Archives provides access to Bylaws 1 through 6799 (1880-1998) with the most recent bylaws accessible on the City of Richmond website.<sup>14</sup>
- The records of the different offices and departments of the City of Richmond are arranged into **Municipal Records Series** according to function. Researchers can identify relevant records via keyword searching on the Archives' website and by reviewing the name and subject indexes for the Municipal Records in the Archives' reference room.

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<sup>14</sup> City of Richmond website <http://www.richmond.ca/cityhall/bylaws/alpha.htm>

- **Government Publications** are City of Richmond publications and reports. These include planning studies, engineering reports, surveys, and general information publications specific to Richmond produced between 1955-2003.

**Community Records** are the records created by private individuals, families, businesses, or organizations.

- Descriptive inventories of the **Community Records** are available in the reference room. These non-governmental records range in date from 1900-2002 and cover a wide variety of subjects.

**Non-textual Records** are acquired from both public and private sources. Photographs and maps are the most extensive non-textual records within the Archives' holdings.

- The Archives provides access to **Photographs** on many subjects and its collections of aerial photographs are particularly useful for identifying structure and land use details. Researchers can search for relevant photographs on the Archives' website and by reviewing the binders in the reference room which allow you to search by name-as-subject, subject, and by area and date for aerial views.
- There are many **Maps and Plans** specific to Richmond that can be accessed via microfilm at the Archives. These include published street maps, specialized thematic maps, and a 1930s Waterworks Atlas that provides considerable detail concerning buildings. Researchers can search for maps and plans on the Archives' website and by reviewing the binders in the reference room which allow you to search by subject.
- The Archives also has **Oral Histories** accompanied by supporting documentation that researchers can access. You can choose to search by interviewee name or subject, but the recordings and summaries are only available in the Archives Reference room.

**Additional Resources** are non-archival materials held by the City of Richmond Archives.

- The Archivist can provide access to over 200 **Biography Files** on individuals and families that have played a significant role in Richmond's development. Researchers can browse an alphabetical list by surname on the Archives' website.
- The Archives is continually adding **Reference Files** (currently there are 297) to its resource collection. These files, which are arranged alphabetically by subject, may contain newspaper clippings, pamphlets, publications, and other forms of information. Researchers can browse an alphabetical subject list on the Archives' website.
- Similar to a telephone directory, **Directories** are arranged alphabetically by name and often provide limited information about the individual. Some directories also allow you to search by street address. Researchers can access Richmond Directories and a limited number of Fraser Valley and Vancouver directories in the reference room.
- There are **Books** relating to Richmond available for use in the reference room and the Archivist can also provide access to additional publications. Books on Richmond's history published by the Archives and City of Richmond are also available for purchase.



## Bibliography

Gilker, Gerry, Jack Lowe, and Geraldine Wray, *Whispers From the Shedrows: A History of Thoroughbred Racing in Richmond*, Richmond, B.C.: City of Richmond Archives, 2001.

Kidd, Thomas. *History of Richmond Municipality*. Richmond: Richmond Printers Ltd., 1973.

Ross, Leslie J. *Richmond: Child of the Fraser*. Richmond '79 Centennial Society, 1979.

“Sam Brighthouse.” In *British Columbia From the Earliest Times to the Present, Vol. IV*. Vancouver: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1914. (p.342-346)

An appointment with the Archivist is required for records retrieval and assistance in research.

Reference Room open for independent study:  
Monday through Thursday  
9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



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