

# Bulkley Valley Museum fonds

*Fonds No. OF1*

*Accession No.: 2010.5, 2017.22, 2017.63, 2017.71, 2017.72, 2017.128, 2018.15, 2020.8, 2020.27, 2020.35, 2020.36, 2021.1, 2021.3, 2021.15*

*Physical Description: 13 boxes of textual and graphic material; 1 box photographs; [] architectural plans; 2 videocassettes, 1 CD, [] digital records*

*Date Range: 1961-2017*

## **Administrative History/Biographical Sketch**

The Bulkley Valley Museum was founded in large part by Ernest Hann, an early pioneer of the Bulkley Valley. Ernest was one of several local residents who had been slowly amassing a collection of documents, photographs and artifacts representing early settler history in the Valley. These personal collections became the core collection upon which the Museum was founded. A shift towards not only collecting, but also displaying materials came in 1967 when the Museum's first public displays opened in the newly constructed Smithers Public Library, a centennial project for the Town of Smithers.

In 1971 the Museum was officially incorporated under the Society's Act of British Columbia as the Bulkley Valley Historical & Museum Society (BVH&MS). In 1974 as space became limited in the Library, the Museum was moved to the Central Park Building, a heritage building constructed in 1925 as the government building and courthouse. The Museum first shared space in the Central Park Building with the Smithers Art Gallery, later moving to its own space on the first floor. Today the Museum collects, preserves and presents items of historical and cultural significance from Smithers and the Bulkley Valley and is enjoyed by over 5000 people per year.

## **Custodial History**

All items in this fonds were retained by the Museum as internal records following their initial creation and use, and were accessioned and entered into the OF1 fonds upon being found in collections.

## **Scope and Content**

This fonds contains material created and used by the Bulkley Valley Museum during the course of its day-to-day activities, from the time of its inception as a historical society in the early 1960s up to and including the present. These are primarily textual records such as meeting minutes, staff reports, exhibit plans, correspondence, policies, financial documents, curator diaries, guest books, scrapbooks, and membership lists. The fonds also includes photographs, pamphlets, posters, floor plans, 2 videocassettes, and an audio recording of a 1985 BVHMS outing in Telkwa. Furthermore, there is an increasing amount of born-digital material (Word docs, PDFs, images) which have yet to be fully processed into the fonds.

## **Arrangement**

This fonds was first arranged around 2018 by Manda Haligowski and was rearranged in spring 2021 by Holly Peterson. In its current form, the OF1 fonds is divided into nine series: **S1**) Office of the Curator, **S2**) Board of Directors, **S3**) events and promotions, **S4**) Old Church, **S5**) guest books/lists, **S6**) scrapbooks, **S7**) maps and plans, **S8**) photographs, and **S9**) audiovisual materials. Series 1, 2, 3, and 4 have been further subdivided into subseries and/or files; see their Arrangement fields for more details.

## Restrictions

Some records (particularly grant application files in S1 SS1 and S1 SS2) may contain personal or sensitive internal financial information; researcher agreement should be signed.

## Accruals

Further accruals can be expected as more records are created by the Bulkley Valley Museum and pass into disuse. As of present there is no detailed plan or schedule for the transfer of these internal records into the OF1 fonds. The majority of future accruals are likely to be born-digital records, although ephemeral items such as posters, pamphlets, and tickets may be preserved in physical format.

## Conservation

Many of the grant and correspondence folders, particularly for the older decades (1980s-1990s), still contain staples which should be removed to prevent rusting.

## Notes

A large amount of unprocessed born-digital material, dating from the 2000s onwards, exists on the Museum's servers and has yet to be fully integrated into the OF1 fonds. See File List for further details.

## Office of the Curator

Series no.: **S1**

Related accessions: 2017.22, 2017.27, 2017.63, 2017.71, 2017.72, 2018.15, 2020.8, 2020.27, 2021.1

Date range: 1961-2015

## Scope and content

This series contains of primarily textual records created and/or used by curators and other staff members (ex. museum assistants, archivists, interpreters/programmers, summer students) in the course of their duties at the Museum. These include newsletters, staff reports and diaries, financial records, grant applications, correspondence, press releases, plans for a new museum building and/or storage space, and materials relating to collections, exhibits, projects, educational programs.

## Arrangement

This series has been divided into subseries corresponding to each curatorial 'era' of the Museum's history. Further subseries may be added in the future as necessary.

- **Subseries 1 (SS1)** covers the **early period** from the museum's inception in the 1960s until the hiring of the first long-term curator, Lillian Weedmark, in April 1993. Curators from this period include Susan Denny (1979 – October 1982), Tom Leach (February 1983 – June 1984), Jackson Hirota (September 1985-?), Ruth Murdoch (March 1986 – early 1989), Jim Whittome (April 1989-?), Lori Hudson (October 1989 – January 1990), Leah Hubensky (February 1991 – August 1992), and Sonya Ooman (September 1992 – February 1993).
- **Subseries 2 (SS2)** covers the curatorship of **Lillian Weedmark** from April 1993 until her death in February 2002.
- **Subseries 3 (SS3)** covers the **interim period** of 2002-2007, including the curatorships of Laura Massey (2002?), Jane Young Stevenson (2002?-2005) and Peter Haines (2005-2006).

- **Subseries 4 (SS4)** covers the directorship of **Fergus Tomlin** from February 2007 until September 2014. Curators during this period include Allison White (January-September 2009), Michelle Reguly (January-October 2012), and Melissa Sawatsky (January-June 2013).
- **Subseries 5 (SS5)**, which is still a work in progress, is intended to cover the ongoing curatorship of **Kira Westby**, beginning in November 2014.

Subseries 1-4 have each been divided into the following files based on the function and format of their contents. Series Further files may be added to each subseries as necessary.

- **F1 – Newsletters**
- **F2 – Reports** (by Curators and other staff)
- **F3 – Finances**
- **F4 – Collections, Exhibits, & Projects**
- **F5 – Grants**
- **F6 – New Museum/Storage Space**
- **F7 – Correspondence**

Files exclusive to Subseries 1 and 2:

- **F8 – Press Releases** (SS1 only) / **Education and Programming** (SS2 only)
- **F9 – Curator Diaries** (SS1 only)
- **F10 – Education and Programming** (SS1 only)

## Board of Directors

Series no.: **S2**

Related accessions: 2017.72, 2018.15, 2020.8

Date range: 1967-2011

### Scope and content

This series contains textual records produced and/or used by the BVH&MS' Board of Directors, including incorporation documents, meeting minutes, policies and procedures, annual reports, multi-year plans, job descriptions and applications, and membership-related material.

### Arrangement

This series has been divided into the following subseries:

- **SS1 – Bulkley Valley Historical & Museum Society** – documents relating to the incorporation and governance of the society, as well as Society Annual Reports.
- **SS2 – Meeting Minutes** – including minutes of sub-committees (Finance Committee, Ways and Means Committee, Committee of the Whole, etc.) in addition to the BVH&MS itself.
- **SS3 – Policies and Procedures** – collections management, archival/photograph collection, oral history, education/interpretation, conservation, policy handbooks.
- **SS4 – Annual Reports** of the BVH&MS.
- **SS5 – Multi-Year Plans**
- **SS6 – Job Descriptions & Applications**
- **SS7 – Memberships** – including membership books and lists, letters/memos to members, and other membership-related material.

## Events & Promotions

Series no.: **S3**

Related accessions: 2018.15, 2020.8, 2021.1

Date range: [1980s]-2017

### Scope and content

This series contains posters, pamphlets, tickets, a scrapbook, and other material advertising the Bulkley Valley Museum and special events held by it, particularly long-running events which recurred across multiple curatorial 'eras.' It also includes textual records detailing the planning, implementation, and evaluation of these programs. Events with their own files include Wintergold, Katimavik, garden tours, the perennial plant sale, and Carols in the Garden.

## Old Church

Series no.: **S4**

Related accessions: 2018.15, 2020.8, 2021.15

Date range: 2003-2014

### History/Bio

St. James' Anglican Church was constructed in 1913 and served as a spiritual and community center for the town of Smithers for over 60 years. It fell into disrepair after the parish of St. James moved to a new building on Princess Street in 1975. Beginning in the early 2000s, a dedicated and dynamic group of volunteers worked to renovate and reopen the Old Church as a community hall. This vision was realized in 2005, with a public garden opening beside the Church the following year. Administered and maintained by the Bulkley Valley Museum, the revitalized Old Church remains a popular venue for weddings, lectures, parties, meetings, concerts, and performances.

### Scope and content

This series consists of meeting minutes, financial records, reports, correspondence, promotional material, concept art, and architectural and technical drawings relating to the renovation, reopening, and usage of the Old Church and its Garden in the early 2000s.

### Arrangement

This series has been divided into the following files:

- **F1 – Bulkley Valley Museum-related material** – meeting minutes, correspondence, etc. produced about the Old Church by the BVM.
- **F2 – Financials**
- **F3 – Reports** on the progress of the Old Church restoration project.
- **F4 – Promotional Material**
- **F5 – Drawings** – plans and concept art of the renovated Old Church.
- **F6 – Old Church Garden**
- **F7 – Photos** – including a scrapbook

## Guest Books & Lists

Series no.: **S5**

Related accessions: 2018.15

Date range: 1967-2016

### Scope and content

This series contains guest books and other records of visitors from the 1960s to the 2010s.

## Scrapbooks

Series no.: **S6**

Related accessions: 2017.128

Date range: 1977-2001

### Scope and content

This series contains three scrapbooks of newspaper clippings and other material related to the Museum.

## Maps and Plans

Series no.: **S7**

Related accessions: 2017.71, 2017.128, 2020.8, 2020.35

Date range: [1990s-2000s]

### Scope and content

This series contains floor plans for the Bulkley Valley Museum, plans of a proposed building site for a new museum and storage/display building, and plans of a proposed equipment display building at the Fall Fair grounds.

## Photographs

Series no.: **S8**

Related accessions: 2020.36, 2021.3

Date range: [1980s]-2006

### Scope and content

This series contains photographs taken of museum exhibits, events, staff and volunteers between the 1980s and the early 2000s. Specific events depicted include, but are not limited to: garden tours, plant sales, high teas, walking tours, wagon rides, pioneer days, children's programming, plays, Christmas events, the Fall Fair and Parade, the Seniors Millennium Garden Party, a Youth Volunteer Camp, a Round Lake Hall picnic, Klondike Days, and a Valentine's Day raffle.

### Notes

Most photographs in this series have not been digitized or assigned P numbers. Exceptions are P7893 (curator Jane Young, Meg Hobson, and Kate Smallwood holding copies of historic photographs) and P8896- P8897 (staff visit to Cronin Mine).

Not all photos in the OF1 fonds are contained in this series; see also OF1 S3 (Katimavik photos, garden tour album), OF1 S1 SS1 F4 (photo project undertaken in 1988), OF1 S1 SS3 F4 (2002 Fall Fair), and OF1 S4 F7 (Old Church photo album; P7348-P7362).

## **Audiovisual material**

Series no.: **S9**

Related accessions: 2018.15

Date range: [1990s?]

### **Scope and content**

This series contains two video cassettes: one with an episode of the Skeena Journal featuring the Bulkley Valley Museum, and one with a film and slideshow of the “Building the Railway” summer program.

### **Notes**

Both videos have been digitized and saved under Z:\Digitized Archival Items\OF1 BV Museum fonds\Audiovisual Materials.