

Appendix 2:

The Old Cemeteries Society (OCS) started informally in 1983. It brought together people from the Victoria Genealogical Society, several local monument makers and many private citizens who were interested in the preservation of Victoria's beautiful and historic cemeteries. There are about 20 of these cemeteries including burial parks, columbaria and churchyards.

By 1984, these groups had formed the Old Cemeteries Committee under the sponsorship of the Victoria Historical Society. They wanted to present a united front to the Victoria City Council so they could request more action on such things as vandalism. The committee also formed volunteer patrols of the cemeteries at high-vandalism times such as Halloween.

In 1985, the committee decided that raising the public (and City Council) awareness of all the issues facing old cemeteries was essential to protecting the cemeteries.

In 1990, the Old Cemeteries Committee formed its own society called the Old Cemeteries Society. This new society decided that regular walking history tours was a good way to raise awareness of the cemeteries. A small fee is charged for the tours to raise money for ongoing conservation and restoration work in Victoria's heritage cemeteries.

Major projects and events have included:

- 1988 ◦Workshops in monument conservation; cleaning and restoration of monuments at Ross Bay Cemetery commenced;
- 1991 ◦Restoration of cast-iron grave fence around the grave of Charles Moss;
- 1992 ◦Moving some gravestones from the Old Burying Ground to safe storage and repairing markers and curbing that had been knocked over or damaged;
- 1993 ◦Restoration of cast-iron grave fences around the Douglas family plot;
- 1997 ◦Restoration and conservation of the Pritchard Tomb in the Old Burying Ground (Pioneer Square);
- 2000 ◦Ross Bay restoration Millennium Project – complete restoration and conservation work on 160 monuments;
- 2005 ◦Restoration of hand-worked wrought iron fence around the grave of Charles and Hannah (Parker) Ball;
- 2006 ◦Old Cemetery Society received the Heritage Society of BC Outstanding Achievement Award for Heritage Advocacy;
- 2008 ◦Historical Fair – hosted participants and chaperones who attended tours, cleaning sessions and recording instruction at Ross Bay Cemetery;
- 2009◦A grant from the BC 150 Legacy Fund resulted in a burial database and self-guided tour guide for The Old Quadra Street Burying Ground;
- 2010 ◦Ross Bay Cemetery Row Marker Project established a system for locating grave plots;

◦Restoration of ironwork at Ross Bay Cemetery – after preparing a detailed inventory of iron fencing, gate features and curbing, 55 examples were cleaned, scraped and repainted. This ambitious project will add many years of life to these irreplaceable iron features.

◦We also undertook the restoration and stabilization of the Houston Mausoleum. The damaged walls were stabilized and the iron gate was cleaned and painted.

• 2013◦Our restoration efforts in 2013 were concentrated on our Ross/Grimm project.

◦The project comprised of refurbishing the Isabella Ross marker, replicating the Alexander Ross marker and restoring the Grimm Family iron fence. This project was successfully completed in October at a cost of \$3864.00. See “current issues” for pictures. Thank You to Thrifty Food for their support.

◦Other restoration efforts included, repairing 28 markers through out Ross Bay Cemetery, creating 8 new bases for broken tablet markers and installing them, re-tiling the Huston family plot and close to 100 hours of power washing curbing and bases at Ross Bay Cemetery.

•2014 ◦To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the founding of Leechtown in 1864 by Peter Leech, a special tour was prepared by Dr Patirck Lydon. In attendance were the Lt. Governor, representatives of the Royal Corp of Engineers and descendants of Peter Leech. A new monument was also unveiled.

•2015 ◦This summer saw the restoration of a number on very old monuments that had been vandalized many years ago and left to deteriorate.

•2016 ◦Our priority for this year was to expand the “Row Marker Project” at Ross Bay Cemetery. Markers to direct people to Nellie Cashman, Billy Barker and Emily Carr were among the 25 new row markers placed.

•2017/2018 ◦This period saw the addition of 7 new row markers. But our main efforts were to complete the photographing of all the grave markers in Ross Bay Cemetery. This project is in preparation of the addition a burial database to our website.