

Burnaby's Documentary Heritage

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF RECORD KEEPING AND REFLECTION

Pioneer Burnaby

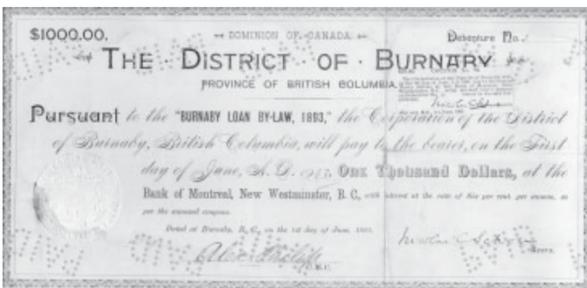
1892-1911



New Westminster after the "Great Fire" of September 11, 1898.
(New Westminster Public Library)

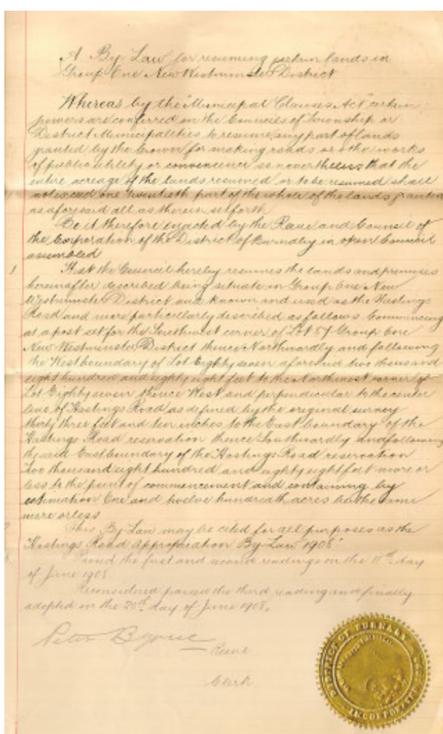


Records rescued from the New Westminster City Hall's safe, strewn on the lawn of the Court House, September 12, 1898.
(New Westminster Public Library)



Debenture issued by the District of Burnaby on June 1, 1893.

This was the third of twenty-five \$1000.00 debentures issued to raise money for constructing roads throughout the municipality.
(City of Burnaby Archives)



Hastings Road Appropriation By-Law, 1908.

This bylaw permitted Council to use a portion of the lands granted by the Crown for Hastings Road. Today this road now forms Canada Way and Douglas Road.
(City of Burnaby Archives)

The growth and development of Burnaby is largely due to its location between the early pioneer cities of Vancouver and New Westminster. On September 22, 1892, the Corporation of the District of Burnaby was granted letters patent by the Provincial Government in response to a petition by residents to incorporate the district.

Burnaby's first Council was elected by acclamation three weeks after incorporation and consisted of Reeve Charles R. Shaw and five councillors. Council conducted its meetings in various locations, including private homes, offices in New Westminster, and the tramline's powerhouse on Griffiths Avenue near Kingsway.

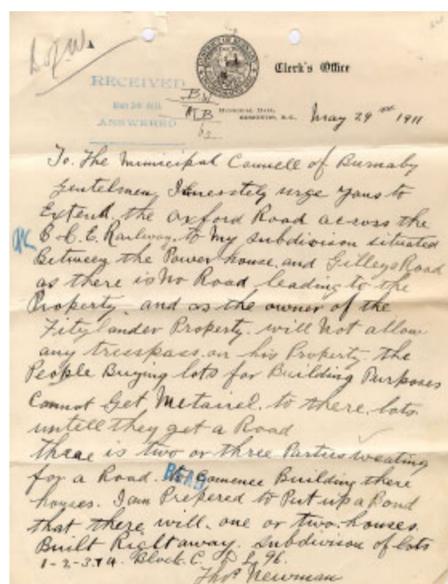
The records of the first Council and the municipality were kept by Burnaby's first employee, Alexander Philip, who was also the first municipal clerk. Council's original minute books and papers were stored in a safe in New Westminster under the care of Burnaby's second Clerk, Alfred Smither. Unfortunately, on September 11, 1898, New Westminster's "great fire" destroyed most of the downtown area along with most of Burnaby's early records.

After the disaster, Council worked to establish a municipal hall to serve the citizens of Burnaby and to provide a secure and convenient repository for municipal records. In June 1899, Burnaby's first municipal hall opened at Kingsway and Edmonds (now site of Burnaby Public Library – Edmonds Branch) and marked the beginning of municipal record keeping.



Burnaby's first Municipal Hall, ca. 1909.

This hall was built at Kingsway and Edmonds after the "great fire" of New Westminster in 1898. The first meeting of Council was held there in June 1899. Staff stand behind members of Council and municipal officials.
(Burnaby Village Museum)



A letter, dated May 29, 1911, from a resident requesting the municipality to develop a road to his property.

Such demands from residents were common during this period of rapid development. In this case, the applicant has been given stationary from the Clerk's Department to formally make his request to Council.
(City of Burnaby Archives)