

The British Columbia Genealogical Society Library & Research Centre

For more than 50 years the BCGS (bcgs.ca) has been collecting genealogical books and journals, cemetery and church records, newspaper clippings and other family history documents. This collection has grown into one of the largest genealogical libraries in Canada.

The Library has over 18,000 items in its online catalogue (20575.rmwebopac.com); more are continually being added by a dedicated group of volunteer cataloguers. The Library has an extensive collection of BC and Canadian local histories, US and worldwide genealogical and historical periodicals (over 900 titles), family histories, and BC high school and university yearbooks, telephone directories and voters lists. Over 800 books were donated to the Library several years ago by the Vancouver Branch of the United Empire Loyalists Association of Canada.

The Library is a FamilySearch affiliate, allowing you to view record sets not accessible from home. Several databases are available exclusively on the Library's computers, including a name index compiled from unindexed BC books, an index of BC church records and the BC Pioneer Register.





Housed in a two-storey unit in a commercial complex in Surrey, the Library's lower floor contains the book stacks, host's desk, a computer and printer, and a lunch area and washroom. On the upper floor are several more computers, a printer and flatbed scanner, boardroom, and filing cabinets of maps, localities and BC surnames, plus microfilm and fiche.

Thanks to a bequest from member Walter Draycott—after whom the Library is officially named—the BCGS was able to purchase the unit as a permanent home for the Library in 1996, after several moves into and out of other facilities. At one point the Library was housed in Aberthau, a heritage home owned by the City of Vancouver. After a decade in this space the Library had to be removed: the weight of the books was too much for the wooden floor!

Many thousands of volunteer hours have been spent developing and maintaining this wonderful genealogical resource. Members of BCGS affiliate societies are welcome to use it at no cost; however, only BCGS members may check books out.

The Library is open Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 10AM to 3PM, except on holidays and during extreme weather. It's located at Unit 211, 12837 76 Avenue in Surrey, phone 604.502.9119 (the phone is answered when the library is open).



If you visit the Lower Mainland on a day when the Library isn't scheduled to be open, email library@bcgs.ca and we'll do our best to accommodate you.