

Are you interested in the story behind your house? Do you want to find out when it was built or who lived there? The Archives has a number of resources that document the history of West Vancouver's homes.

Visit us at:

- westvancouver.ca/archives
- Or at 680 17th Street, West Vancouver during our public research hours: Wednesday and Thursday 1:00–4:30

Tax Assessment Rolls (1912 to 1974)

Get started by determining when your house was built. Tax assessment rolls are the official records of property values and taxes owed, dating to the incorporation of the municipality in 1912. The information found in the registers can be used to determine when a house was built, the size and value of the land and structure, and the names of the property owners.

To access this information, you'll need the property's legal address (district lot, block and lot number), which can be found on WestMap. Go to westvancouver.ca/maps.

BC Directory (1920, 1921, 1935, 1937-1942, 1944-1994):

Directories can be used to trace the occupancy history of your home. West Vancouver was first listed in 1934. Listings may include ownership, spouse name, occupation, and address.

Fire insurance plans and legend (1930, 1938)

If your house was built prior to 1938, the insurance plans will show details of the lot and building construction.

Historical and aerial photographs, maps

Search the Archives' online database for your address, street name, or neighbourhood to find photographs or maps of your house.

Other sources in the Archives

- Clipping files on neighbourhoods in West Vancouver
- Microfiche of *Lions Gate Times*, *West Van News* and *North Shore News* (1926-1993)
- Architectural plans – although most of our plans are for public buildings, we have some architectural plans for residences. Please note: Permission of the registered owner of a building must be obtained before viewing any architectural plans.

Other Sources of Property information

DISTRICT OF WEST VANCOUVER MUNICIPAL HALL | 750 17th Street | westvancouver.ca
(Requires photo ID and written permission of owner)

- Permits: history cards on individual properties; filed by address
- Legislative Services: documents and agreements (e.g. easements, right-of-way, party-to-party agreements) filed by number indicated on title search documents; Council meeting minutes
- Buildings: house plans; legal surveys (not registered at BC Land and Title Survey)
- Planning: information on properties listed on the District of West Vancouver Heritage Inventory
- Engineering: water cards (utility hook-up dates); legal plans (registered at BC Land and Title Survey); ortho (satellite) photos

WEST VANCOUVER MEMORIAL LIBRARY | 1950 Marine Drive | westvanlibrary.ca

- Historical photograph collection [See: digital.westvanlibrary.ca]
- Clipping files on areas in West Vancouver
- Books on West Vancouver, heritage, architecture, people, etc.

VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY | 350 West Georgia Street, Vancouver | www.vpl.ca

- Historical photograph collection [See: www.vpl.ca/find/cat/C393/C393]
- *BC Directory*, 1860-present [1860-1952 available online, see: www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php]

CITY OF VANCOUVER ARCHIVES | 1150 Chestnut Street, Vancouver | vancouver.ca/archives

- *BC Directory* (1882-present)
- Map, photograph, and topical files collections – some pertaining to West Vancouver

PERSON-TO-PERSON

- Discover and interview previous owners/occupants
- Talk to your neighbours and long-time residents
- Go to local history presentations of interest

THE HOUSE ITSELF

- Look for newspapers in pocket doors, wall lining, dates written under wallpaper during renovations—photograph and document what you find.
- Look for plaques or other mementos in attic and basement rafters.
- Research the style of house, the building materials, its fixtures etc.

RELATED TOPICS TO RESEARCH

- Research the history of your neighbourhood to provide general background—you may often serendipitously find references to your house and past owners. Topics include significant businesses and past residents of local renown.

Reference Materials

WEST VANCOUVER ARCHITECTURE AND HERITAGE

District of West Vancouver Planning Department's Heritage web page

[See: <http://westvancouver.ca/home-building-property/planning/heritage>]

Downs, Barry. *The Poetics of West Coast Modernism in West Vancouver*. West Vancouver: West Vancouver Cultural Services, 2005.

F.G. Architectural & Planning Consultants. *The West Vancouver Survey of Significant Architecture 1945 – 1975*. West Vancouver: District of West Vancouver, 1994.

[See: <http://archives.westvancouver.ca/permalink/13309/default.aspx>]

Foundation Group Designs. *West Vancouver Heritage Inventory*. West Vancouver: District of West Vancouver, 1988.

[See: <http://archives.westvancouver.ca/permalink/12260/default.aspx>]

Luxton, Donald, ed. *Building the West: Early Architects of British Columbia*. Vancouver: Talonbooks, 2003.

WEST VANCOUVER NEIGHBOURHOODS

Hall, Peter. *Place Names of West Vancouver*. West Vancouver, 2004.

Mansbridge, Francis. *Cottages to Community: The Story of West Vancouver's Neighbourhoods*. West Vancouver: West Vancouver Historical Society, 2011.

Ramsay, Bruce. *A Place of Excellence: A Chronicle of West Vancouver, 1912-1987*. West Vancouver: Corporation of the District of West Vancouver, 1987.

West Vancouver Archives. *Destinations Time Walk* (web exhibit with heritage walks).

[See: archives.westvancouver.ca/destinationtimewalk/index.html]