



NANAIMO MUSEUM

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Nanaimo Museum

Nanaimo Museum Hosts Pioneer Cemetery Tour

Nanaimo – Uncover stories from Nanaimo's past this summer in the city's oldest cemetery. The Nanaimo Museum is offering guided tours of the Pioneer Cemetery on the corner of Wallace and Comox in July and August. The tour highlights life in Nanaimo from the 1850s-1890s and chronicles the history of the cemetery itself.

Nanaimo's Pioneer Cemetery is the third oldest cemetery in BC and is now a municipal park. "Just a fraction of the original markers remain," says Aimee Greenaway, Interpretation Curator at the Nanaimo Museum. "The tour will include people who have grave markers in the cemetery, others with markers that have been lost over time, and even a few who were moved when the cemetery was closed in 1895." Over 150 people are believed to have been buried in the Pioneer Cemetery.

Researching stories of people who were buried in the Pioneer Cemetery painted a picture of life in Nanaimo over 160 years ago. "There are people interred in that cemetery who were born in Pennsylvania, Maine, Scotland, Ireland and England who were attracted to this area to work in the coal mines," says Greenaway. "There is an American Civil War veteran and a casualty of the Crimean War in Russia." Samuel Sargent, who died in Nanaimo from wounds received in the Crimean War, is believed to be the only casualty of that war buried in North America. Tour participants will hear stories about average and prominent Nanaimo citizens and uncover the often controversial history of the cemetery.

The tours last 45 minutes and start at 10:00am on July 6 and August 3. The cost is \$10 per person and advance registration is required. The Nanaimo Museum is open 10am-5pm daily until Labour Day weekend. For more information please call 250 753-1821 or visit www.nanaimomuseum.ca. The museum is located in the Vancouver Island Conference Centre.

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