

# St. Peter's, Lakehill

Prepared by Jesse Robertson (June 26, 2023; revised July 24)

## Property Acquisition

<b>Address</b>	3939 St Peters Road, Victoria, BC
<b>Legal description</b>	LOT 1, SECTION 32, VICTORIA DISTRICT, PLAN 16468 EXCEPT PART IN PLAN 47325
<b>First private landholder</b>	Hudson Bay Company title affirmed by the Crown in 1862.
<b>Diocesan Acquisition</b>	Purchased as separate lots in 1946 and 1949.

## Narrative Overview

St. Peter's, Lakehill is located in the municipality of Saanich (Figure 1) in the territory of the lək'wəŋən people known today as Songhees and Esquimalt nations. Indigenous and Hudson Bay Company (HBC) labourers began clearing the area around 1846 for use as a cattle range and farm.<sup>1</sup> Section 32 (North Dairy Farm) was surveyed and reserved to the HBC around 1853. The Crown affirmed the HBC's title in 1862.<sup>2</sup> The land was gradually subdivided and sold between 1864 and 1946.<sup>3</sup>

The Diocese purchased the current property from Catherine Fleming (1946) and her estate (1949). A small strip of land was purchased at a nominal cost in 1963 to rectify an earlier error locating a wall between St. Peter's and an adjacent property.<sup>4</sup>

## Interpretive Summary

Decisions regarding future land use should bear the following considerations in mind:

⇒ The HBC's title to this land was recognized by the Crown in 1862 and was owned by at least one family prior to its purchase by the Diocese in the 1940s. Prior owners significantly altered the landscape through agricultural and residential development. Diocesan ownership of this land did not directly contribute to the historical dispossession of lək'wəŋən people from their territory.

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<sup>1</sup> Roderick Finlayson, *Biography of Roderick Finlayson* (Victoria: publisher not identified, 1891), 16, <https://open.library.ubc.ca/collections/bcbooks/items/1.0222287>.

<sup>2</sup> Leonard A. Wrinch, 'Land Policy of the Colony of Vancouver Island, 1849-1866' (MA Thesis, Vancouver, University of British Columbia, 1932), 9, 98.

<sup>3</sup> Vancouver Island House of Assembly, 'Report of the Committee on Crown Lands', 1864, 9, [https://www.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.9\\_04198](https://www.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.9_04198); Saanich Archives, 'Neighbourhood Timeline: Quadra', July 2020, <https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/community/archives/exhibits.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Indenture, Catherine Fleming to the Anglican Synod of the Diocese of BC (hereafter ASDBC), text 693, Archives of the Diocese of British Columbia, Victoria, BC (hereafter ADBC); "St. Peter's Anglican Church (A Historical Sketch)," text 784, ADBC; Indenture, Marjorie Toms to ASDBC, 2001-24, ADBC; Letter, Crease, Davey & Co. to ASDBC, 25 Apr 1949, text 63, ADBC; "St. Peter's Anglican Church (A Historical Sketch)," text 784, ADBC.

⇒ While the pre-colonial ecology of the property is unknown, the surrounding area of Lake Hill contained several Garry Oak meadows. Kwetlal (camas), a native flower and Indigenous staple food, also grew in the area.<sup>5</sup> Kwetlal/Garry Oak meadows have been reduced to 5% or less of their historic extent.<sup>6</sup>

⇒ Private property is considered “off the table” for Aboriginal treaty negotiations, such as those currently being pursued by the Songhees Nation.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, the BC Treaty Process provides few opportunities to return land to the Songhees and Esquimalt nations in their heavily urbanized traditional territories.

## Historical Context

The HBC began clearing and cultivating the area in 1846. The farm became known as North Dairy, and was used as cattle range and to grow crops.<sup>8</sup> In 1853, the HBC surveyed and designated the farm and surrounding area as “Section 32, Victoria District” (Figure 2).<sup>9</sup> The HBC’s title to Section 32 was formally recognized by the Crown in 1862 (Figure 3).<sup>10</sup> The land was first subdivided sometime before June 1864. It was further subdivided and sold between 1889 and 1946, when the Diocese acquire the first portion of the current St. Peter’s Church property.<sup>11</sup>

Indigenous labourers were among those who cleared and cultivated North Dairy Farm.<sup>12</sup> Continuity of land use is indicated by accounts of an Indigenous trail between Cordova Bay and Victoria that passed near the site of St. Peter’s. The trail is shown on an 1852 map (Figure 4) and was remembered as still in use in the 1930s.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> An 1852 map shows an “Indian trail” extending from Cordova Bay to just north of the HBC’s North Dairy Farm. Janet Borden, who resided in the area in the 1930s, recalled Indigenous people still crossing a corner of the Borden farm (bordered by McKenzie, Quadra, and Reynolds). Typed notes, “Janet Borden: Pioneer of St. Peter’s Anglican Church Lake Hill,” 784, ADBC; J.D. Pemberton, “Map showing Haro Strait and Cordova Bay,” 1852, Hudson’s Bay Company Archives (hereafter HBCA), G1/130, *Colonial Despatches*: <https://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/G1-130.html>

<sup>6</sup> ‘Call It Kwetlal, Not Camas: How to Decolonize Your Garden’, *CHEK*, 17 May 2023, <https://www.cheknews.ca/call-it-kwetlal-not-camas-how-to-decolonize-your-garden-1152676/>.

<sup>7</sup> BC Treaty Commission, ‘Land and Resources’, n.d., <https://www.bctreaty.ca/land-and-resources>; ‘Te’ mexw Treaty Association’, Te’ mexw Treaty Association, accessed 15 May 2023, <https://temexw.org/>.

<sup>8</sup> Finlayson, *Biography of Roderick Finlayson*, 16.

<sup>9</sup> Wrinch, ‘Land Policy of the Colony of Vancouver Island, 1849-1866’, 80–81.

<sup>10</sup> Wrinch, 98.

<sup>11</sup> Vancouver Island House of Assembly, ‘Report of the Committee on Crown Lands’, 9; Saanich Archives, ‘Neighbourhood Timeline: Quadra’.

<sup>12</sup> Finlayson, *Biography of Roderick Finlayson*, 16.

<sup>13</sup> Typed notes, “Janet Borden: Pioneer of St. Peter’s Anglican Church Lake Hill,” 784, ADBC; J.D. Pemberton, “Map showing Haro Strait and Cordova Bay,” 1852, HBCA, G1/130, *The Colonial Despatches of Vancouver Island and British Columbia 1846-1871*, Edition 2.4, ed. James Hendrickson and the Colonial Despatches project (Victoria: University of Victoria) (hereafter *Colonial Despatches*): <https://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/G1-130.html>

## Indigenous Presence and Land Use

<b>Languages</b>	ləkʷəŋən (North Straits Salish)
<b>Governance</b>	Songhees Nation; Esquimalt Nation; Te'mexw Treaty Association
<b>Land use</b>	No land use has been confirmed on the land now occupied by St. Peter's. An Indigenous trail linking Victoria to Cordova Bay passed through an adjacent farm to the north and may have run near or through St. Peter's. The Lake Hill area contained several Garry Oak meadows. Kwetlal (camas), a native flower and Indigenous staple food, also grew in the area. <sup>14</sup>
<b>Archaeological data</b>	No known archaeological sites recorded on property.
<b>Historic treaties</b>	Douglas Treaties signed with Kosampsom and Swenghung tribes (1850). <sup>15</sup>
<b>Modern treaties</b>	Songhees Nation is a member of the Te'mexw Treaty Association in Stage 5 of the BC Treaty Process (Negotiation to Finalize a Treaty).  Esquimalt Nation is not involved in the treaty process.
<b>Other</b>	No information specific to this property has been identified. Indigenous and HBC labourers began clearing the land near the North Dairy farm around 1846. <sup>16</sup>

## Timeline

*Italicized* text indicates contextual information. **Bold** text indicates information specific to the property.

Date	Details
<i>1843</i>	Hudson Bay Company (HBC) erects Fort Victoria in ləkʷəŋən territory.
<b>circa 1846</b>	Indigenous and HBC labourers begin clearing and cultivating land at what would become known the North Dairy Farm for use as a cattle range and farm. <sup>17</sup>
<i>13 Jan 1849</i>	HBC awarded ten-year charter for the "advancement of colonization" on the Colony of Vancouver Island. <sup>18</sup>
<i>30 Apr 1850</i>	Treaties signed with "chiefs and people" of the Kosampsom and Swenghung tribes. <sup>19</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Typed notes, "Janet Borden: Pioneer of St. Peter's Anglican Church Lake Hill, text 784, ADBC; J.D. Pemberton, "Map showing Haro Strait and Cordova Bay," 1852, HBCA, G1/130, *Colonial Despatches*: <https://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/G1-130.html>

<sup>15</sup> Kosampsom lands are described as extending up the Colquitz Valley and encompassing Christmas (Lake) Hill, Swan Lake, and lands to their west. Swenghung lands are described as extending from the border of the Kosampsom lands east to Spring Ridge (Fernwood). "Register of land purchases from Indians," MS-0772, BC Archives, Victoria, BC: <https://search-bcarchives.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/register-of-land-purchases-from-indians>; Wilson Duff, 'The Fort Victoria Treaties', *BC Studies*, no. 3 (Fall 1969): 11–12.

<sup>16</sup> Finlayson, *Biography of Roderick Finlayson*, 16.

<sup>17</sup> Finlayson, 16.

<sup>18</sup> 'The Colonization of Vancouver Island, 1849-1858', *BC Studies*, no. 96 (1992): 6.

<sup>19</sup> "Register of land purchases from Indians," MS-0772, BC Archives: <https://search-bcarchives.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/register-of-land-purchases-from-indians>; Duff, 'The Fort Victoria Treaties', 11–12.

1852	Map by surveyor J.D. Pemberton shows an Indigenous trail leading from Cordova Bay to the area just north of North Dairy Farm (Figure 4). <sup>20</sup>
<b>Circa Apr 1853</b>	Section 32 (North Dairy Farm, around 723 acres) surveyed and reserved for the HBC. <sup>21</sup>
12 Jan 1859	Diocese of British Columbia established amidst global expansion of British Empire and Church of England (38 new dioceses established between 1814-1859). The Letters Patent creating the Diocese give the Bishop power to hold property on behalf of the church. <sup>22</sup>
<b>1862</b>	Crown recognizes the HBC's title to Section 32, or North Dairy Farm. <sup>23</sup>
<i>Before Jun 1864</i>	Section 32 subdivided; HBC sells 255 acres. <sup>24</sup>
1889	North Dairy Farm further subdivided. HBC sells 459 acres sold to W. Brown and the Puget Sound Agricultural Company (an HBC subsidiary). The land continued to be subdivided and sold between 1891 and 1946. <sup>25</sup>
6 Apr 1889	Anglican Synod of the Diocese of British Columbia incorporated by Act of Provincial Legislature and empowered to acquire, hold, and sell property.
1930s	Lake Hill of the 1930s was later remembered by Janet Borden as "a farming community with orchards and large fields where cows grazed." Indigenous people walking from Cordova Bay to Victoria still crossed a corner of the Borden farm, located near the future site of St. Peter's. <sup>26</sup>
8 Mar 1944	First work in future parish as Janet Borden offers Sunday school from her house to save children from having to walk to St. Luke's. <sup>27</sup>
Jan 1946	Lake Hill Sunday School moves to the Lake Hill Women's Institute Hall. <sup>28</sup>
<i>Circa 1946</i>	Canon Pike (Rector of St. Luke's) warns Synod that a site should be purchased "before it was too late" if a church is to be established in the area. <sup>29</sup>

<sup>20</sup> J.D. Pemberton, "Map showing Haro Strait and Cordova Bay," 1852, HBCA, G1/130, *Colonial Despatches*: <https://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/G1-130.html>

<sup>21</sup> Wrinch, 'Land Policy of the Colony of Vancouver Island, 1849-1866', 80-81; Vancouver Island House of Assembly, 'Report of the Committee on Crown Lands', 9.

<sup>22</sup> "Letters Patent of the Bishop of Columbia, 1859" (copy), 85.36, AD BC.; G. Hollis Slate, 'New Light on Herbert Beaver', *British Columbia Historical Quarterly* 6, no. 1 (January 1942): 14.

<sup>23</sup> Wrinch, 'Land Policy of the Colony of Vancouver Island, 1849-1866', 98.

<sup>24</sup> Vancouver Island House of Assembly, 'Report of the Committee on Crown Lands', 9.

<sup>25</sup> Saanich Archives, 'Neighbourhood Timeline: Quadra'.

<sup>26</sup> Typed notes, "Janet Borden: Pioneer of St. Peter's Anglican Church Lake Hill," text 784, AD BC.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> "St. Peter's Anglican Church (A Historical Sketch)," text 784, AD BC.

<b>5 Jul 1946</b>	Diocese purchases property along what is now St. Peter's Road (Amended Lot 18 of Subdivision of Lots 22, 23, and 24, Section 32, Victoria District) from Catherine Fleming for \$1200. <sup>30</sup>
<i>1947</i>	Sunday school moves to the Fleming house on the newly acquired Church property. <sup>31</sup>
<b>22 Apr 1949</b>	Diocese purchases adjacent property (Lot 16 of Subdivision of Lots 22, 23, and 24, Section 32, Victoria District) from Marjorie Toms (executor of late Catherine Fleming) for \$5000. <sup>32</sup>
<i>1958</i>	Former canteen from a closed army barracks purchased and moved to site for use as church. <sup>33</sup>
<b>Circa Oct 1963</b>	Diocese purchases strip of land already occupied by church due to error in locating the wall dividing it from an adjacent property. Owners agree to sell the strip for \$1.00. <sup>34</sup>
<b>Circa 1987</b>	Diocese sales portion of land to St. Peter's Abbeyfield Society, establishing the current parameters of the property. <sup>35</sup>

## Figures

**Figure 1.** Map showing current extent St. Peter's, Lakehill property.

PMBC Parcel Cadastre 004040384, iMapBC, Province of British Columbia.

**Figure 2.** Crown Grant map showing extent of Section 32. Blenkinsop Lake and the summit of PKOLS (Mount Douglas) are shown at the top beyond the section boundaries.

Crown Grant Image P105, Lot 32, Victoria District, Government Access tool for Online Retrieval (GATOR): [https://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pls/gator/gator\\$queryforms.menu](https://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pls/gator/gator$queryforms.menu)

**Figure 3.** Map showing areas in pink reserved to the Hudson Bay Company by the Crown in 1862, including Section 32 (North Dairy Farm).

"Plan of Southern Portion of Vancouver Island Shewing the three Sections," 1862, Land Title and Survey Authority Maps, University of Victoria Libraries:  
[https://vault.library.uvic.ca/concern/generic\\_works/bb8c93c5-6b4c-4e88-8be4-19a9319fc805](https://vault.library.uvic.ca/concern/generic_works/bb8c93c5-6b4c-4e88-8be4-19a9319fc805)

<sup>30</sup> Indenture, Catherine Fleming to the Anglican Synod of the Diocese of BC (ASDBC), file 20, 2001-24, ADBC; "St. Peter's Anglican Church (A Historical Sketch)," text 784, ADBC.

<sup>31</sup> Typed notes, "Janet Borden: Pioneer of St. Peter's Anglican Church Lake Hill," text 784, ADBC.

<sup>32</sup> Indenture, Marjorie Toms to ASDBC, 2001-24, ADBC; Letter, Crease, Davey & Co. to ASDBC, 25 Apr 1949, text 63, ADBC; "St. Peter's Anglican Church (A Historical Sketch)," text 784, ADBC.

<sup>33</sup> "St. Peter's Anglican Church (A Historical Sketch)," text 784, ADBC.

<sup>34</sup> Letter, A.O. Noakes to Crease and Company, 2001-24, ADBC; Certificate of Title (Lot 1, Section 32, Victoria District), 23 Oct 1963, 2001-24, ADBC; Copy of letter, K.M. King to Planning Office (District of the Municipality of Saanich), 16 Jul 1963, text 794, ADBC.

<sup>35</sup> Proposed deed to St. Peter's Abbeyfield Society, 85.36, ADBC.

**Figure 4.** *Map of Cordova Bay and adjacent coast with faint orange lines demarcating Indigenous trail. One trail runs from Cordova Bay, center, to Christmas (Lake) Hill, at bottom right.*

J.D. Pemberton, "Map showing Haro Strait and Cordova Bay," 1852, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, G1/130. *The Colonial Despatches of Vancouver Island and British Columbia 1846-1871*, Edition 2.4, ed. James Hendrickson and the Colonial Despatches project (Victoria: University of Victoria):

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