

ST MICHAEL'S INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL, ALERT BAY, BC

15 students were listed on the NCTR website in 2021 as having died at the former St Michael's Indian Residential School:

<https://nctr.ca/residential-schools/british-columbia/st-michaels-alert-bay/>

Name	Date of Death (Year/Month/Day)
Andrea Helen Alfred	1965-06-04
Alfred McKay	1932-01-01
Douglas Benson	Not known
Eva George	ca. 1944
George L. Humchitt	1944-08-30
Jackie Archie James	Not known
Lucy Gordon	ca. 1933-01-01
Molly Irene Moon	1961-08-23
Mona	1902-01-01 – 1903-12-31
Reggie Allan	1948-05-20
Samson Edgar	1939-05-01 – 1939-09-30
Samson Harris	1923-01-12
Sophia Edgar	1939-05-01 – 1939-05-31
Thomas Mason	1925-09-19
May Nysok	1932-04-09

The above-referenced 15 students are not 'missing'. They are listed below in the order in which they appear on the NCTR website with the following indications as to source material concerning the date of death, cause of death, and place of burial for each student.

(1) **Names followed by an asterisk** are students for whom the BC Archives has an online death record, although a microfilmed copy of the full death certificate is not available for viewing online. Where a BC death record exists, a copy of the full death certificate also likely exists, and can be ordered at a cost of \$50 per certificate. BC Archives death records can be searched for here:

<http://search-collections.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/Genealogy>

(2) **Names followed by the letter [C]** are students for whom the BC Archives has a full copy of the death certificate which can be viewed online at the link above.

(3) **The letters DIA** indicate that the student's death was reported in a Department of Indian Affairs Annual Report. DIA Annual Reports can be accessed here:

<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/aboriginal-heritage/first-nations/indian-affairs-annual-reports/Pages/search.aspx>

Andrea Helen Alfred (1965/6/4), [C]; 6 yrs old; d. St George's Hospital, Alert Bay; massive pulmonary atelectasis (other contributing causes listed); death certificate signed by doctor, District Registrar; buried Alert Bay Indian Cemetery [NB: death certificate does not identify her as a student]

Alfred McKay* (1932/1/1), 11 yrs old; d. Vancouver [NB: death record states date of death was 1932/4/18]

Douglas Benson* (date of death unknown), 17 yrs old; d. Alert Bay [NB: death record states date of death was **1918/10/31**]

Eva George* (ca. 1944), 10 yrs old; d. Alert Bay [NB: death record states date of death was 1944/8/20]

George L. Humchitt* (1944/8/30), 15 yrs old; d. Namu [NB: death record states name was George **Mason** Humchitt] [NB: death record states date of death was 1944/8/18]

Jackie Archie James (date of death unknown) [DEATH CERTIFICATE NOT YET LOCATED]

Lucy Gordon (ca. 1933/1/1) [DEATH CERTIFICATE NOT YET LOCATED]

Molly Irene Moon (1961/8/23), [C]; 10 yrs old; d. St George's Hospital, Alert Bay; pulmonary infarct (other contributing causes listed); death certificate signed by doctor, District Registrar; buried Kingcome Inlet Indian Cemetery [NB: death certificate states name was Molly Moon] [NB: death certificate does not identify her as a student]

Mona (1902/1/1- 1903/12/31) [DEATH CERTIFICATE NOT YET LOCATED] DIA Annual Report dated 30 June 1903 states: *The health of the pupils has been good with one exception. In June Mona died of pneumonia.* [NB: death could not have occurred after **30 June 1903**]

Reggie Allan* (1948/5/20), 13 yrs old; d. Alert Bay [NB: death record states name was Reggie **Maxwell Allen**]

Samson Edgar* (1939/5/1 – 1939/9/30), 21 yrs old; d. Bella Coola [NB: death record states date of death was 1939/6/21] [NB: age indicates he was not a student at St Michael's]

Samson Harris* (1923/1/12), 12 yrs old; d. Alert Bay [NB: death record states date of death was 1923/1/7]

Sophia Edgar* (1939/5/1 – 1939/5/31), 11 yrs old; d. Bella Coola [NB: death record states date of death was 1939/4/26]

Thomas Mason* (1925/9/19), 20 yrs old; d. Bella Bella [NB: age indicates he was

not a student at St Michael's]

May Nysok* (1932/4/9), 9 yrs old; d. Alert Bay [NB: death record states date of death was 1932/4/5]

Excerpt from Indian Agent's report on Alert Bay in the Department of Indian Affairs Annual Report for the fiscal year ending 30 June 1904:

Health and Sanitation. - The health of these Indians during the past year has been very poor. There has been no epidemic of any kind, the principal ailments being Pneumonia, bronchitis and consumption. It will be noticed in the statistics that, although there has been quite a large number of births, there has been a still greater number of deaths, resulting in a decrease in population throughout the agency of twenty-eight. Every effort has been made to inculcate habits of cleanliness, and I am pleased to be able to report considerable improvement in that direction during the part year. The water-supply has been carefully looked after, and is now as good as one could wish; the absence of typhoid fever and similar diseases is pretty good evidence that there is little or no sickness resulting from that source. **Vaccination has been attended to** but the effects of it on these Indians is so severe that it is most difficult to carry out a thorough system in that direction. **The principal cause of so much sickness and the decrease in the population can be largely attributed to the habit of the Indians of congregating in large numbers during the winter months;** the insufficient shelter, and, at times, scarcity of food leaves them in the spring, after a long siege, in a more or less debilitated condition. An effort was made last April to break up this practice and get the Indians back to their several homes, but the result was not altogether successful.

Compiled by Nina Green 25 November 2021; updated 19 November 2022.