



## LEAVES Newsletter



### RIVERVIEW NOW ON THE PROVINCIAL HERITAGE REGISTRY

Sue Habeger

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4 newsletters a year are published **online**.

The March & September editions are also available in print to members by request.

The newsletters will be posted on our website in pdf format. A direct link will be sent in an email.

Approximately March, June, September & December

**newsletter@rhcs.org**

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As reported in our last newsletter, the City of Coquitlam in January placed the entire Riverview site on its Community Heritage Registry. On April 30, we were informed that Riverview is now also on the Provincial Heritage Registry. This is normally automatic but since, in Riverview's case, the Provincial Government is also the owner of the land, the situation was unusual. The Ministry of Housing has proposed a market housing development for the site, and heritage designation, while not providing legal protection, certainly makes such a proposal more complicated. For this reason, the inclusion of Riverview in the Provincial Heritage Registry is particularly welcome and is a clear recognition of the site's historic importance to our community and the citizens of BC.

This is one more step on the road to our goal of preserving the Riverview Lands for continued mental health and community use. Our efforts must now be directed to ensuring Riverview's entry on the Canadian Register of Historic Places. The documents prepared for Coquitlam by Donald Luxton have been written in the correct format for such an application. (There is a link to this fascinating Statement of Significance on the RHCS website.)

Coquitlam staffer, Andrew Young, has already been in contact with federal groups and reports that the Heritage Canada Foundation ([www.heritagecanada.org](http://www.heritagecanada.org)) has expressed interest in the site and is considering an article about Riverview for their quarterly magazine.

RHCS wishes to express our appreciation for the support and dedication of heritage professionals, Donald Luxton and Laura Pasacreta; Coquitlam council members Mae Reid and Fin Donnelly, Coquitlam heritage staffer, Andrew Young, and many talented community volunteers including Niall Williams, Anna Tremere, and Elaine Golds. We are most encouraged by the success of this initiative so far.



Photo by Niall Williams

fl-Paulownia\_Tomentosa

## Riverview Horticultural Centre Society In the Beginning

Val Adolph

Mental Health Week was celebrated at Riverview the first week of May each year. Prior to Mental Health Week of 1992 staff were asked to come up with ideas for events. The Volunteer Department, which was in Home 6, (one of the old houses just below the Henry Esson Young Building) always organized events and were very involved in planning for the week. Its secretary, Ena d'Ambrumenil, co-ordinator Ann Neale and manager Val Adolph were discussing possible new events and were joined by Norma Gillespie.

Discussion led to the idea that almost all staff, volunteers, patients and families loved the beauty of the grounds and especially the trees. We wondered if some event could be organized that related to that. After discussion we thought that while people loved the grounds and felt connected to them and a sense of healing and comfort from them, no-one seemed to know very much about them. What if we could organize an event where people were invited to walk around the finest of the trees while someone explained the trees to them?



Gradually we pinned it down to having two 'tree walks' during Mental Health Week while the trees were at their loveliest, one in the afternoon and one in the evening of the same day. But who would we get to lead a walk who would have enough knowledge about the trees?

We decided to ask David Tarrant at UBC's botanical garden. To our surprise he agreed. He also told us that the Riverview Lands were the site of the first botanical garden in BC. For the second walk leader we decided to ask Bill Browne. Bob Elsdon, who was in charge of grounds maintenance and who had tended the trees lovingly for 16 years, had come

across Bill exploring the site. Bill was recently retired from his position as Vancouver city Arborist. He had been thrilled when he discovered this great collection of large exotic trees and he spent many hours exploring the grounds. Trees were his specialty. We were all set!



Bill Browne leading a Tree Tour

We had no idea how many people would show up for these very first tree walks but there were a very large number for David Tarrant's walk in the afternoon so Katie Hughes went to the local RCMP detachment afterwards and borrowed a bull horn for the evening session led by Bill Browne. This was also well attended, and attendees included a number of members of the Coquitlam Parks Department who later became our strong supporters and leaders of tree walks. We had a contest to 'Name that Tree'. This was the Abies pinsapo (Spanish fir) right beside Home 6. Almost all the Parks staff got it right, and we knew then that there were more people around who could tell us about the trees.

Because of the huge success of the two tree walks – a few hundred people came out – we realized the true significance of the Riverview Lands. It was decided to start a society. The first meeting to set up an organization was held at the invitation of Freddie Foster in the OT department at East Lawn. Because there was some concern around the sensitivity of Riverview Administration about conflict of interest issues, Bill Browne stepped forward to become the first president. Incorporation was applied for right away and meetings have been held regularly since the Society was incorporated on December 23, 1992.





## THE OAK QUERCUS

Mary Brown

At Riverview we are blessed with several different species of oak, many of which have grown into mature specimens, which add considerably to the grand landscape on the site. Some of them are now showing wear and tear from the storms of a couple of years ago. We are delighted to hear that Julian Dunster, the consultant arborist for ARES (current landlord of the Lands) has purchased four Red Oaks, and several other oaks for planting at Riverview, as replacement for trees that have failed or been removed.



New\_Oaks\_Davidson\_Creek

The majority of our Oaks are *Quercus robur* English Oak, with 54 specimens listed, (and many babies popping up if they have a chance). Others are four *Quercus coccinea*, Scarlet Oak, five *Quercus palustris*, Pin Oak, one *Quercus cerris*, Turkish Oak, and four *Quercus rubra*, Red Oak. Additional interesting varieties are *Quercus rubra* 'lutea', Golden Red Oak, (which puts on a wonderful show at this time of year, starting with bright yellow leaves, (contrasting with its neighbours) turning to green, and red in the fall), and *Quercus robur* 'fastigiata', Pyramid English Oak. The only native species *Quercus garryana*, Garry Oak, is to be found in Finnie's Garden, as is *Quercus dentata* Daimo Oak which has the largest leaves of any oak.



L\_of\_Quercus-Forest Green



L\_of\_Daimo\_Oak

Live and Willow, White and Red. White oaks have dense wood that was used extensively for ship building, furniture, and flooring. They can live for a thousand years, and may develop a hollow trunk, and still survive. Red oaks have a spongy trunk, which is not conducive to floating i.e. ship building. They are particularly attractive for their Fall colours, but are shorter lived than other oaks. The acorns have been valued for their medicinal properties, and in difficult times have been eaten, or made into a coffee substitute. Truffles are harvested from under oak trees, particularly in France, where pigs are employed to sniff them out for the diggers. Most Oak trees will be seen in winter, with their persistent, dead brown leaves. Oak trees are known for their massive form, with a broad dome shaped head, and like deep soil, space and sun.

An old English weather prediction says:

**" If the oak comes out before the ash the summer it will be a splash  
If the ash comes out before the oak the summer it will be a soak."**

I am never sure if it works the same in Canada! But I am hoping for the Oak!



**RHCS  
Executive**

**PRESIDENT**  
Norma Gillespie  
norma@rhcs.org

**VICE-PRESIDENT**  
Ken Baker  
ken@rhcs.org

**SECRETARY**  
Donna Crosby  
donna@rhcs.org

**TREASURERS**  
Murray Clare  
murray@rhcs.org

**TREE WALK DIRECTOR**  
Mary Brown  
mary@rhcs.org

**WEBSITE**  
Teri Madaisky  
teri@rhcs.org

**DIRECTORS at LARGE**  
Val Adolph, Ron Javorsky,  
Sue Habeger, Liz Rowley,  
Suzanne Williams, Fred Bennett

**LEAVES** newsletter**EDITOR**

Teri Madaisky

**PROOFREADERS**

Donna, Norma, Mary, Sue

**CONTRIBUTORS**

Sue, Mary, Donna, Norma  
Val Adolph

**DISTRIBUTION**

Sue

**PHOTOS**

Niall Williams & Norma G.

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Editorial email:  
newsletter@rhcs.org

**RHCS**

Riverview Horticultural  
Centre Society

P.O. Box 64616,  
1942 Como Lake Ave.  
Coquitlam, BC  
V3J 7V7

Phone: 604-290-9910

Email: trees@rhcs.org

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**www.rhcs.org**

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**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

June 2008



On February 14, 2008 The Vancouver Sun once again screamed doom and gloom headlines "Riverview Revamp grows; Towers could house 30,000" and this time even showed a map depicting "The New Riverview". This map was supposedly a draft plan showing many high-rise and mid-rise towers. Once again the Provincial Government backed off with claims that it was an old development plan. Minister Abbott has been quoted as saying there has been "some pushback" from local (read Tri-City) governments. This was an understatement. The most recent public statement from the government was from Premier Campbell at a May 2/08 appearance in Port Moody. The Premier acknowledged the heritage value of the facility's architecture and trees, but said a variety of stakeholders will have the opportunity to weigh in with what's done with the land. "Helping to shape any decisions on the Riverview community are going to be not just the people of Coquitlam, but the people around it as well".

Due to the ongoing threat of development on the Riverview Lands, we continue with our efforts to spread the word about this wonderful site. If you, your family, friends or anyone you know, would have a venue suitable for us to make a presentation or put up a display, please let us know. We can design a presentation to focus on the heritage aspects of the site, trees/unusual trees, importance of the green corridor focusing on native plants and wildlife values, or the Riverview Hospital history. We have photos and materials that can be put together in many ways. Ken Baker's beautiful "Four Seasons of the Riverview Lands" is now available on CD. It could be used on its own or as background to a display. New materials produced by the City of Coquitlam include an 8 minute video, "Riverview – Past and Present", and a full colour handout.

Our aim is to reach people beyond the Tri-City area. If you could suggest a venue for us to spread the Riverview Lands story, please contact Donna at 604-939-4064 or Norma at 604-942-7378.

Our next Tree Tour is Fathers Day - Sunday, June 15th. Hope to see some of you there.

Donna Crosby

**2008 Tree Walk Schedule**

June 15th	Sunday	1 pm	Public Tree Tour
June 22nd	Sunday	1 pm	BMN Backyard walk
June 26th	Thursday	7:30 pm	Linden walk
July 20th	Sunday	1 pm	Public Tree Tour
August 17th	Sunday	1 pm	Public Tree Tour
August 24th	Sunday	1 pm	BMN Backyard walk
September 21st	Sunday	11-4pm	TREEFEST 2008
October 5th	Sunday	1 pm	Public Tree Tour

All walks start at the HEY building at 1 pm unless stated otherwise.