



Logo design and drawings courtesy of
Brenda Gillespie and Kiyoshi Takahashi

The Riverview Horticultural Centre Society

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LETTERS of SUPPORT

A few excerpts from letters to the Premier

Riverview Lands can still provide a superior site for mentally ill patients while utilizing vacant buildings to other community activities without interrupting activities of patients. Please make a quick decision to cancel all development and proceed to designate the grounds as a National Historic Site.

Kiyoshi Takahashi, Coquitlam

As we work to understand mental health, we are learning more and more about the importance of the natural environment in good health. As we rise to the challenge of an aging population, we must be realistic about the types of facilities and options that will be needed in the not-very-distant future.

Cynthia van Ginkel, Port Moody

It would be an act of desecration to turn this wonderful site into just another housing development. Our heritage would be lost forever.

Anne Holt, Coquitlam

I am writing to urge you to respect and protect this whole area as a Canadian Heritage Site. After all it is 100years years old, which in western Canada is old. This whole area is a haven and legacy for all the people of British Columbia.

Beryl Cunningham, Maple Ridge

This remaining 244 acre parcel of public land must remain as a place of refuge in perpetuity for future generations, and for our mental and aging population.

Bonnie Olsen, Richmond

Thank you to all who have written the Premier and to those of you
who have not yet written, please do so.

CAMPERDOWN & OTHER ELMS

Mary Brown, with thanks to Niall Williams

We are lucky to have 18 specimens of *Ulmus glabra* 'camperdownii' at Riverview. They have been planted across the Lands, and seem to be doing well. RHCS uses a picture of the tree on our letterhead. This tree originated from a mutant branch discovered in 1835-1840 on the estate of the Earl of Camperdown, in Dundee, Scotland. It was grafted onto a *U. glabra*, (Wych Elm), and all subsequent specimens have a direct line to this original tree. Usually they are grafted onto *U. glabra*, but *U. x hollandica* (Dutch Elm) or *U. pumila* (Siberian Elm) have been used successfully. Usually the graft is made 1.5 m from the ground, although some at Riverview have been made higher, to allow for more clearance on walkways. The leaves are asymmetrical as for most elms, with one side meeting the stalk higher on one side than the other. The upper branches are very twisted, forming a good canopy, which this past year was used as a parasol on very hot days, and as an umbrella when a rain storm came along.

Other species of Elm on the lands include *U. minor* (or *carpinifolia*), Smooth-leaf Elm, with varieties 'cornubiensis' (Cornish) and 'sarniensis', (Guernsey), *Ulmus glabra* which is known as Wych's Elm, *U. x hollandica* (Dutch Elm), and *U. parvifolia* (Chinese Elm). There are only 1-2 specimens of the latter three.



Camperdown Elm

This leads to a mention of Dutch Elm Disease, also known as DED. Thanks to 'Nifty Niall' for his internet research, where he found some early books about the first identification of DED. Apparently it was first identified in the Netherlands in 1919, in Great Britain in 1927, and in US in 1930. The cause, a fungus called *Pumila graphium* 'ulmi' has since spread to many countries. Some has been found in parts of Canada, but so far the Lower Mainland seems to be free of DED. Symptoms include sudden die-off. If just a branch is affected surgery may prevent spread. There is no known cure.

This leads to the hypothesis that the Riverview Camperdown's could have been raised in the tree nursery on the grounds, starting around 1917 when Jack Renton brought his grafting skills to the Lands. This would be before the DED scourge was identified, and the trees would mature in time to move to some of the later buildings, such as Centre Lawn (1924), Crease Clinic (1934 & '39), Valleyview (1936). It is possible that we would not have had these beautiful trees if they had had to be imported after the DED was starting to spread. It was tragic to see wonderful mature Elms disappear from the English landscape during the 70's, as they were cut down to try to prevent spread.



Camperdown Elm

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE



Camperdown Elm

I would like to personally thank all our members for their continued support in 2010. We had more walks then ever before and they were well attended not only by the locals but by the larger community. Weather for Treefest was not good but even on that day large numbers showed up for tours, and many were first time visitors. We were never short helpers or 'hosts' as we call them. I continue to receive phone calls from people who want tours or just want to talk about issues or pass on ideas how they might be able to help. I welcome these calls.

Keep your Action letters coming and please continue to send us a copy. We are all encouraged when we see this great support. Thank You so very much.

Norma

RHCS wishes all our members and supporters Season's Greetings And Health and Happiness to All in 2011

TREEFEST 2010

Mary Brown

Treefest this year was enjoyed by those of us who braved the weather, which was very wet. We seemed to run into various road blocks along the way, and I was somehow not surprised when the forecast was not in our favour. However we had people out enjoying the walks, led by our wonderful friends the arborists who did a great job again. There was a lot of interest in the heritage panel (indoors, with some of the artists also taking advantage of the HEY amenities). Many of the visitors were new to the grounds, and some took advantage of our early October walk to come again in better weather. The environmental groups were more in their element, and had an opportunity for some networking. Our young volunteers kept cheerful, and some have already said that they would like to come again. Bless them.

Our thanks go to TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, the Coquitlam Foundation and BC Transmission Corporation for their financial support. We also received in kind help from the City of Coquitlam, BC Mental Health Society, Riverview Hospital Historical Society, EPR Coquitlam for the trailer, and SPARC museum, Thrifty Foods, GardenWorks, and WSI, not to mention the Bus driver all played their part. Members of the Maple Creek Streamkeepers and friends picked and picked for the Blackberry tea.

BMN and ArtsConnect, Shared Services BC had members sitting on the Planning Committee. RHCS would like to thank everybody for helping us to put on the 17th annual Celebration of the Trees at Riverview. We could not do it without you.

P.S. the trees loved the drink!



Camperdown Elm



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Niall Williams

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Sue Habegger

Thank you to all our supporters who have written to the provincial government urging them to support the application for National Historic Site status for Riverview. These letters are making a difference. So far, the official response has been that the site managers, Shared Services of BC (SSBC), have declined to support the application but are working together with the Heritage Branch to create a "conservation plan" for the site.

What is a conservation plan? According to Adam Perry of SSBC, "Conservation planning differs from the traditional management plan because it is specifically driven by heritage value. Conservation planning identifies policies for an historic place that strike a balance between use and heritage significance and provides a useful framework when making decisions about an historic place. A conservation planning process can form the basis of planning for the sustainability of an historic resource."

It is encouraging to know that the Heritage Branch is involved and that the site managers are discussing the heritage aspect of the Riverview Lands, but such a plan provides no heritage protection and no direction for future land use. It is at best, another level of recognition for the historic value of Riverview and at worst, another collection of big words and shiny pictures. RHCS representatives have had some chance to discuss the terms of reference for the proposed conservation plan and will continue to push for involvement as it proceeds.

However, it is important that we do not see this as an either-or situation. There is no reason why conservation planning cannot go forward at the same time as the application for National Historic Site. In fact, a decision on whether or not Riverview qualifies as a National Historic Site should be an important factor in the creation of such a plan. There is no reason to fear a successful application. Our vision for the future of Riverview could still be realized.

As a National Historic Site, the Riverview Lands could continue to provide sanctuary, treatment and research for the mentally ill and addicted. The designation would not rule out revenue generating activities and there may be federal funds available for maintenance costs. The botanical treasures located there would be enhanced and preserved and the property would likely become a conference centre and tourist destination. Most importantly, it would ensure that the property remains in public ownership and accessible to all the people of Canada.

We must continue to speak out and let Provincial politicians and bureaucrats know how important these lands are to us. We must keep up the pressure to allow the application to proceed. It is only waiting a nod from the Provincial Government. If you have not yet expressed your opinion, please do so today.

Check the website: www.rhcs.org or contact us for details.**Liriodendron tulipifera**