

Logo design and drawings courtesy of  
Brenda Gillespie and Kiyoshi Takahashi

# The Riverview Horticultural Centre Society

Fall 2012  
Volume 20, Issue 4

## LEAVES Newsletter



### ACTION UPDATE

by Sue Habeger

A huge thank-you to our supporters who attended public meetings or completed questionnaires for the Heritage Conservation Planning process. Events have moved rapidly during the past few months – Riverview was named to Heritage Canada's Top Ten list of Endangered Places, and the Provincial Hospital was officially closed. As a result, there has been considerable media coverage on the past and future of Riverview – most of it very supportive of RHCS goals. We remain hopeful that the Provincial Government will understand how important it is to keep the site intact and public but there is still silence from the decision makers.

Currently, the only patients now receiving care at Riverview are in the Fraser Health Authority's Lodges at the North end, or in the small cottages as part of the Forensic Psychiatric Institute's transition program. All the large heritage buildings are empty and used only for occasional filming. The Henry Esson Young building is closed and its excellent facilities no longer available for public use. Building and grounds maintenance has been cut to bare bones and no long term leases are offered to organizations such as SPARC, Community Development, Arts Connect or Coast Mental Health who for years have run programs at Riverview. All this gives us great cause for concern.

We are counting on our members to be strong voices during the final phase of heritage consultation planning in September and during the land-use planning process expected in 2013. Please ensure that your membership and contact information is up to date; particularly your e-mail address or phone number so we can contact you quickly. Check our website and Facebook page regularly for the latest news.

A century ago, this site was dedicated to provide sanctuary and treatment for the less fortunate people among us who struggle with mental illness. This problem is far from being solved and Riverview should continue to serve their current needs. Together we can make it happen.

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### online newsletters

Save a tree; View our  
newsletters online!

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

The Spring, Summer, Fall  
& Winter newsletters will  
be posted on our website  
in pdf format. A direct link  
will be sent in an email.

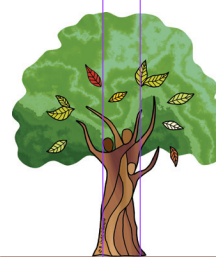
Newsletter editions are  
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members by request.

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the latest Newsletter  
is available online for  
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Your email address will be  
used only to inform you  
of RHCS news, we will not  
share your address.

**19th Annual  
2012 TREEFEST**  
September 15th  
Saturday 11 am- 4 pm



**Treefest**

## Hon. Henry Esson Young B.A., M.D., C.M., LL.D

by Valerie Fletcher Adolph

Born in the 19th century, Henry Esson Young had the vision to bring British Columbia's mental health into the 20th century.

The son of a Presbyterian minister from Northern Scotland he was born in 1867 in English River Quebec, attended Queens University and later McGill where he graduated in medicine with honours. Before attending McGill he worked briefly on CPR construction at Lake Superior.

In addition to his medical degree, McGill also awarded him the Logan medal for proficiency in geology. (Later he became an Associate member of the Metallurgical Institute of England and a member of the Canadian Mining Institute.) He did post-graduate work at the University of Pennsylvania, eighteen months of post-graduate work in hospitals in England, then practiced medicine in St Louis, Missouri.

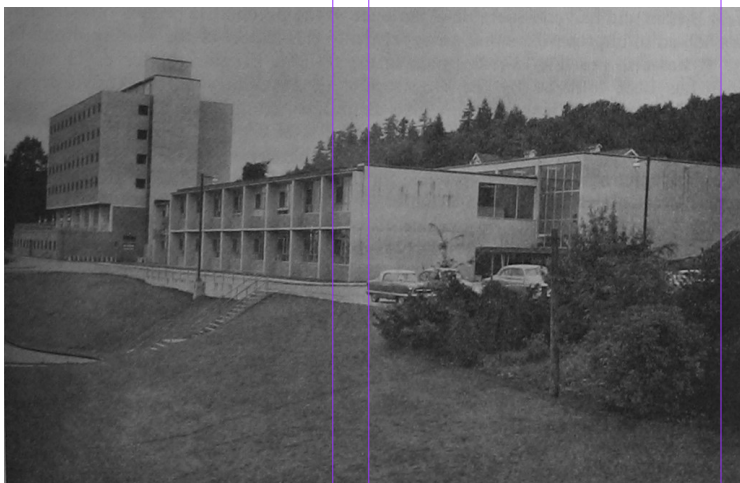
This might have become his life but in 1901 he joined the gold rush to Atlin in northern BC. (at the time its population was 20,000; now it is about 400). A couple of years later Premier Sir Richard McBride persuaded him to run for election to the Legislature in the first election under the party system in BC. He was re-elected in the elections of 1907 (the year he became Provincial Secretary and Minister of Education) and again in 1909 and in 1912. He resigned his seat in 1915 when Sir Richard McBride left to become Agent General in England

He was a man who recognized that the early, not-yet-organized days of the province had to end and a higher and more comprehensive level of infrastructure, educational and health services had to be developed.



Henry Esson Young

Henry Esson Young was a driving force behind the establishment and endowment of the first university in British Columbia and worked tirelessly towards its creation. He was awarded an honorary LL.D from the new university, along with honorary LL.Ds from the University of Toronto and McGill. Within his new university he ensured



The Education Centre, Essondale, opened in 1958. The classroom unit is on the right, while the students' residence is on the left.



Henry Esson Young Building

...con't **Hon. Henry Esson Young B.A., M.D., C.M., LL.**

the establishment of a Chair of Nursing and developed departments of Bacteriology and Pathology.

As Minister of Education it was said that he completely reorganized the educational system in BC. He established a 'normal school' (college for training teachers) and evening classes for further education. He brought physical training and manual training into the school system and introduced legislation to make school textbooks free of charge.

As Provincial Secretary he completely reorganized the Civil Service and greatly increased funding for hospitals, especially those in more remote areas of the province.

In 1916 he was appointed Secretary of the Provincial Board of Health, a position he held until his death. He developed comprehensive health services throughout the province including the medical inspection of all school children, public health nursing services and health units in many areas of the province, TB and STD clinics.. He also established the inspection of logging, mining, lumber and railway camps and required sanitation for them.

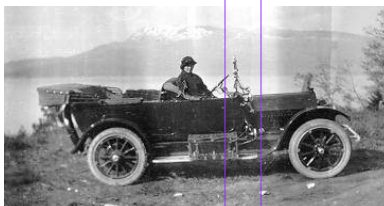
It was his efforts to improve the life of every British Columbian that ensured a supply of teachers and nurses were trained here, that diseases and conditions in children were diagnosed and treated while they were still young. It was said that his focus on preventative medicine in BC set the standard of public health services across the continent.

Along with his new 'Hospital for the Mind' he created the provincial demonstration farm to raise the standard of agriculture throughout the province and the provincial botanical garden to identify and categorize the flora of BC.

He was Chair, and later made life member of the Canadian Public Health Association, was President in 1936 of the State and Provincial Health Authorities of North America, and President of the western branch of the American Health Association.

Henry Esson Young himself was described by contemporaries as 'a man of conspicuous talent and energy' and as 'a man of courtesy and great firmness and a good debater'. Alongside his achievements bringing British Columbia from a very rough outpost of Empire to 20th century standards of education and health care, mention must also be made of his wife. He married his equal, Rosalind Watson.

She had been awarded her MA from McGill University, a tremendous achievement for a woman of the time. She was Gold Medallist to boot. In 1903 she became the only woman member of the Canadian Mining Institute. A few years later she wrote the geography of BC, part of a textbook that was standard in BC schools for about 50 years.



Mrs. HEY

Of course, with intelligence like that no-one thought the poor girl would ever find a husband. But while she had been researching her MA thesis she met Henry Esson Young.

Never one to turn down a challenge, he married her at the home of Premier McBride. They had four children. It was said that at that time she was in favour of women's suffrage. That's right. With all those accomplishments she was still unable to vote.

But the achievement for which Henry Esson Young is chiefly remembered is the construction of his Hospital for the Mind in Port Coquitlam – the third (and largest) hospital for people with mental illnesses in British Columbia. Growing eventually to a population of over 4300 he had in fact created a small town dedicated to healing the mind. The name of his hospital "Essondale" reminded generations of British Columbians of his work.

He had the wisdom to look at the welfare of the person as a whole. He also had the wisdom to see that beautiful surroundings contributed to the mental health of the individual. The hospital for the mind he created lasted almost a century. Later known as Riverview, it provided treatment and a true asylum for people with a mental illness within a setting of great beauty.

The years since Essondale/Riverview hospital was built have seen many advances in treatments of mental illness. Born in the 19th century, Henry Esson Young had the vision to bring British Columbia's mental health into the 20th century. Now we are in the 21st century, with even more advances in knowledge if not in wisdom.

**What would Henry Esson Young think of our mental health facilities today?**

by Valerie Fletcher Adolph



Henry Esson Young's Wife with Painting



**RHCS  
Executive**

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

**VICE-PRESIDENT**  
Donna Crosby  
donna@rhcs.org

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

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

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

**TREES, TREE TOURS & HERITAGE  
COMMITTEE**  
Norma G., Mary B., Fred B., Jenny F., Val A.  
norma@rhcs.org mary@rhcs.org

**COMMUNICATION & CONSERVATION  
COMMITTEE**  
Sue H., Ludy M.  
sue@rhcs.org

**DIRECTORS at LARGE**  
Val Adolph, Ken Baker, Fred Bennett, Mary Brown,  
Jenny Farley, Sue Habberger, Ludy Moysiuk

**TREEFEST COMMITTEE**  
Donna C., Mary B., Carole E., Teri M.,  
donna@rhcs.org

**FRIENDS of FINNIES**  
Don G., Donna G., Carole E., Kiyoshi T.  
norma@rhcs.org

**STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE**  
Norma G., Donna C., Mary B.  
norma@rhcs.org

**LEAVES Newsletter**

**EDITOR**  
Teri Madaisky

**PROOFREADERS**  
Norma, Mary, Donna, Sue

**CONTRIBUTORS**  
Val A., Sue H., Ludy M.

**DISTRIBUTION**  
Sue, Norma, Mary, Donna

**PHOTOS**  
George Reamsbottom

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Editorial email:  
newsletter@rhcs.org

**RHCS**

**Riverview Horticultural  
Centre Society**  
P.O. Box 64616,  
RPO Como Lake  
Coquitlam, BC  
V3J 7V7

Phone: 604-290-9910

Email: trees@rhcs.org

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visit us:**

**www.rhcs.org**

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**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

**Fall 2012**

I would like to thank everyone for your support in writing letters, attending work shops, getting out for our walks and keeping in touch. It's been a long haul, but we knew from the beginning that it wasn't going to be easy. Don't let up. Encourage your friends and family to become involved.

Please remember that Riverview is public land and people are welcome to visit - **dawn to dusk** - is what we usually tell folks. Spread the word. It's a wonderful place to have a picnic, spend some time with family and check out all the magnificent trees. Riverview is accessible by car with lots of parking, or by bike, or by public transport.

Thank you once again and I hope to visit with some of you at Treefest again this year.

*Norma Gillespie*



Photo by George Reamsbottom  
in Finnies Garden

2012 Tree Tour  
Schedule On-line at  
[www.rhcs.org](http://www.rhcs.org)

**2012 Tree Walk Schedule**

Sept. 15	Saturday 11-4	TREEFEST 2012- walks on the hour
October 14	Sunday 1 pm	Public Tree Tour - Last of the season

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

**Letter to Editor**

Current treatment of people with mental illness in B.C. is not a legacy to be proud of. Closing Riverview Hospital is a bad decision.

One in five people have a mental illness, the population is increasing and there are many seniors.

Closing Riverview has increased homelessness, drug addiction, has removed long-term care, has reduced or removed various therapies and has placed people into facilities that are inappropriate. How does moving a patient from Riverview into temporary community facilities now make the patient independent, able to cope and able to look after themselves?

The Riverview lands are public lands. Surely it is more cost effective to develop a new model of care for people with mental illness on the remaining Riverview lands.

Riverview is a sanctuary with its integration of buildings, gardens, trees and nature, a unique garden of healing. We must speak up for a new model of care on all 98 hectares for people with mental illness and addictions.

Let's leave a legacy future generations can be proud of.

Ludy Moysiuk, Burnaby



Saturday, September 15, 2012  
11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Riverview Hospital Grounds 2601 Lougheed Highway.  
Outside of the Henry Esson Young Building.

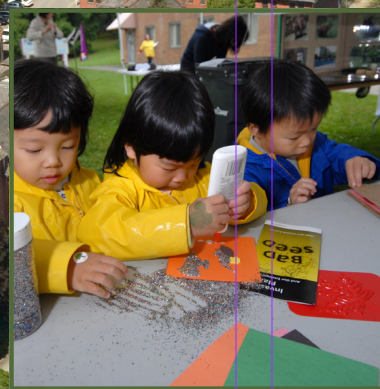
The Riverview Horticultural  
Centre Society Presents

# Treefest 2012

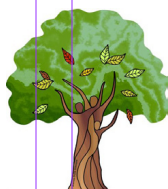
Enjoy guided tree-tours, heritage walk,  
blackberry tea, entertainers, children's  
activities, food concessions and radio  
museum.

For more information visit  
[www.rhcs.org](http://www.rhcs.org) or call 604-927-3583.

*Rain or Shine  
Free Family  
Event*



The Riverview Horticultural Centre Society



Treefest



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