



# LEAVES Newsletter



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## Extraordinary Public Response to Heritage Conservation Planning (HCP)

The final version of the Heritage Conservation Plan (HCP) for the Riverview Lands is now available in electronic form at the following website:

<http://www.riverviewvalues.info>

This 117 page HCP will now be used by the B.C. Housing crown agency as the Provincial Government creates a Land Use Plan for Riverview.

The Riverview Horticultural Centre Society believes that the most important result in the HCP is the extraordinary number of people who provided feedback about the value of the Riverview Lands. The Provincial Government solicited community feedback during the summer by asking citizens to complete a very long questionnaire. Many people found the questionnaire to be as long and difficult as a university exam. In an amazing outpouring of local concern and passion for the Lands, 702 people submitted answers to the questionnaire. (Note: The September 24 draft of the HCP reported 702 respondents, but the final draft lowered that number to 577). In addition to questionnaires, information was collected through 24 interviews, 4 open houses, and an online workshop.

You will find that our thousands of pages of responses are summarized but not quantified on pages 53 to 57 of the HCP. Some values are also summarized on pages 60 to 74. These brief and skeletal summaries show that the Government was not prepared for such an enormous amount of feedback and did not allow the time or budget to more fully report and illustrate the stories, memories, and values that we submitted.

RHCS is very grateful to all of the people who participated in the HCP. We urge you to continue to be involved as the Land Use Plan is developed. In 2007, the B.C. Liberal government proposed building market housing on the Lands. The HCP has some indications of this land use planning in it.

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## Extraordinary Public Response to Heritage Conservation Planning (HCP)



Crease building is like Stonehenge:  
On the winter solstice (Dec 21, when this was taken),  
the sun only shines through the courtyard between  
the buildings at sunset.



Before sunset, the sun is too low in the sky to cast light  
in between the buildings.

For example, on page 82 the HCP claims that it is a “myth” that the Lands (grounds and buildings) can continue to be used for mental health care practices. The heritage consultants who produced this report have not provided evidence that they have the expertise to make this assessment and have not supported this supposed myth with any independent feasibility studies. Furthermore, this is a statement about land-use planning, not heritage assessment, and should not be part of the HCP. The Riverview Lands clearly do permit continued use for modern health care practices, as demonstrated by Connolly, Cottonwood, and Cypress Lodges. At a time when the Province does not have enough or adequate facilities for the patients who were recently moved from Riverview and when purchasing land elsewhere is extremely expensive, new modern facilities could be built on the Riverview Lands, in accord with City of Coquitlam municipal values and policies.

We encourage you to remain involved  
so that we can preserve the Lands as a  
place of healing and beauty.



## John "Jack" Renton

### 1882 - 1972

**John "Jack" Renton** was the head gardener at **Essondale/Riverview**.  
He was responsible for a large portion of the plantings and layout on the site, that remains today.

**Jack Renton** was born in Duns, Berwickshire, Scotland on the 4th of November 1882.

In May of 1904 **Jack** entered Kew Garden for training, previous to this he was working at St. Fagan's Castle, Glamorganshire, Wales. **Jack** left Kew Gardens in December of 1906, and was in B.C. in 1907.

In 1909 **Jack** was working and living at 1075 Harwood Street, Vancouver as a gardener for Samuel Gintzburger. He worked for him from 1909 until 1919. (Samuel was always seen with an orchid in his buttonhole, **Jack** had training in growing plants under glass at Kew).

Samuel was involved in the Children's Aid Society, so that may explain how **Jack** knew about the job opening at Essondale, as the Boys school was being planned in 1919.

In 1919 **Jack** was appointed Superintendent of the Provincial Nursery, Essondale. He was Superintendent from 1919 to 1929, then he was appointed, Outside Overseer of Essondale. He resided at Essondale from 1930-1947. **Jack** retired in 1946, after 40 years in the gardening trade.

After his retirement he lived in Port Coquitlam and became a PoCo councillor for a short while in the early 1950's. He lived at 2245 Shaughnessy Street, Port Coquitlam and was still living there at the time of his death on the 15th of August 1972, at the Royal Columbian Hospital, age 89. Later he was buried at Burnaby Cemetery in the Masonic section.

The present day Riverview Hospital grounds owe a lot to **Jack's** plantings; most of the earlier plantings previous to Jack Renton's have long disappeared.

Niall Williams



The picture is from the Riverview Museum, courtesy of Anna Tremere;

"Jack" Renton with two children in his arms.

**Jack** gave his **Renton Peach** plants away to people in the area on special occasions, marriages, etc.

### RENTON PEACH

**Peach Leaf Curl:** Leaves pucker and curl, developing reddish blisters early in the season. Distorted leaves eventually turn powdery grey and drop. The B.C. Integrated Pest Management Manual recommends to plant resistant cultivars, such as "**Pacific Gold**", or "**Renton**" peach, and maintain vigorous trees.

There is a leaf curl resistant cultivar in moist mild coastal British Columbia called "**Renton**". In the 1980's it was sold by the David Hunter Garden Centres around Vancouver.

**Brooks and Olmo** (Register of Fruit and Nut Varieties 3rd edition, 1997) lists it as follows:

#### **Renton -**

Originated in Coquitlam, B.C., Canada by Jack Renton. Introduced in 1940. Parentage unknown; discovered in 1926. Fruit: flesh yellow, semi-freestone; resembles Howard Fisher. Tree: more resistant to leaf curl than are other varieties.

Should possibly be available in B.C. and North Western states collections.



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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### Birds Listed - Trees Unlisted

We were a small group that went on the annual 2012 Audubon Christmas Bird Count this year. The count was earlier than in previous years, December 15th, and the weather was not good. After meeting at Finnie's we headed for Doctor's Row and into the backyard. I wasn't sure if everyone had seen the **four Sequoia Sempervirens**, common name, California Redwood, and early morning might be the best time to include this area. Kiyoshi Takahashi had his camera with an upgraded new lens and for the first time we were able to get an excellent image.



by Kiyoshi Takahashi

These four trees were only discovered in the back yard a few years ago by volunteers so did not make BCBC's 1995 Riverview Heritage Tree Inventory.

**The Sequoia Sempervirens are Red Listed- Vulnerable 2006 under IUCN (Global)**  
**The Tree Inventory lists only one Sequoia Sempervirens #431, located in front of West Lawn.**

Our count was approximately the same as past years and we actually spent over five hours covering most of the site. We missed not having Dale with us this year. She was always one of our very best birders. She would have been pleased that the cold, wet weather didn't stop her husband Ron Javorsky from joining us.

Norma Gillespie



by Kiyoshi Takahashi

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