



ROCKLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 5276, Station B, Victoria BC, V8R 6N4

Autumn 2008 Newsletter

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VICTORIA NEEDLE EXCHANGE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

I am sure most of you are aware of the Victoria Needle Exchange. The Times Colonist has published numerous articles on the difficulties experienced by service providers and neighbourhoods in accommodating these services. The Mobile Needle Exchange Services as currently provided have not worked as expected and are considered inadequate.

The Victoria Island Health Authority (VIHA) has established a committee under the Chief Medical Health Officer to support the delivery of effective-evidence based needle exchange services in Victoria.

The mandate of the Committee is to provide input and feedback on issues related to policy, program development, and the delivery of health and social services by needle exchange programs. This Committee will endeavour to address the needs and concerns of both the community and service users.

The first committee meeting took place on Tuesday, July 8, 2008. Various organizations were represented including the Downtown Residents Association, North Park Neighbourhood Association, and Burnside Gorge Community Association, the community associations most affected. During the discussions at that meeting it was concluded to invite all Victoria community associations.

The second meeting took place on Friday, September 26, 2008. The Rockland Neighbourhood Association was represented. The meeting concentrated on information dissemination related to VIHA organization structure, vision and reporting relationship of the Committee, and orientation to harm reduction.

No date was set for the next meeting. We intend to participate in the committee and we will keep you informed. Any member interested in the subject matter and willing to volunteer their time, please contact the President of the Rockland Neighbourhood Association via the web-site.

Doreen Mueller, President

LAND USE UPDATE

The Land-Use Committee believes it is vital that the immediate neighbours to a potential development be fully informed of the plans and the process, and that the committee be aware of the neighbours' opinions. In order to facilitate this, we have been working on a Neighbour Feedback Form, which we have presented below. Please read it over and let us know if there are any changes you'd like to suggest.

NEIGHBOUR FEEDBACK FORM

This form was developed by the land use committee of the Rockland Neighbourhood Association. When a development proposal requires rezoning, the applicant is advised to consult with the immediate neighbours so that their concerns can be considered. Please read this form carefully, checking the statements with which you are in agreement, and signing the bottom to indicate that you have been informed about this development proposal. You are encouraged to provide comments; however, your ultimate position need not be declared until after the community meeting. That would be the time to write a letter to Mayor and Council, if you so chose. The developer is responsible for ensuring the Association has received all of the completed forms.

____ I have reviewed in full the proposal and plans for the development at _____

____ I am aware of both the existing zoning and the proposed re-zoning.

____ The plans I have seen include clearly-indicated heights, setbacks, and site coverage, plus context drawings to show views of how the development will fit the surroundings from all four sides

____ I am aware of proposed blasting and/or tree removal.

____ The proposed landscaping for our common property line is acceptable to me.

____ I realize that the plans I have seen may change considerably, and that it would also be in my best interest to view the plans presented at the community meeting.

Please check one of the following to indicate your objection to or support for this development as it has been proposed to date.

____ I have no objections to the concept being proposed at this time.

____ I am not prepared to voice an opinion at this time.

____ I am opposed to this development as it has been proposed.

Comments:

Signature(s) of the owner(s): _____

Date: _____

Address of the owner(s): _____

Thank you. Please do not hesitate to contact the Rockland Neighbourhood Association if you have any questions or concerns. (LUC Chairs: Lois Johnson at 598-6657 or Janet Simpson at jesimpson@shaw.ca)

Janet Simpson, One of the Chairs

VAN "CRASHES" GOVERNMENT HOUSE GATE



Dave Clark photo

COMMUNITY WELL PROJECT IN FERNWOOD



An Act for the Union of the Colony of Vancouver Island and the Colony of British Columbia between the Crown and the Hudson's Bay Company states that the Company surrender all the land of the Island to the large Colony except "one well set apart and appropriated to public use," signed August 6, 1866 by Governor James Douglas and Her Majesty Queen Victoria.

The Fernwood Community Association has set a good example with its community well project. Members of the Rockland Neighbourhood Association, as well as the other neighbourhood associations bordering on Fernwood, were invited to attend Fernwood's dedication ceremony to celebrate Victoria's community well on Saturday, September 27, 2008. The ceremony recognized Springridge as a historic water source and affirmed water as a critical public resource.

The ceremony represented the culmination of several years of work by community members. When Kevin Neish found a reference in the Act of Union for British Columbia (1866) which appropriated a well in the Fernwood area for public use, the Association decided that the public should have access to that well.

Fernwood resident Ron Welch undertook to douse for water and found an aquifer in Stevenson Park. Volunteers drilled a shallow well in July of 2005. Public health concerns

necessitated the drilling of a second well, 150 deep, in 2008. Funding from the City of Victoria provided for a hand pump. The water quality will be tested and a hydrologist has been working with VIHA on testing and approval criteria.

Nearly 200 people attended the well dedication ceremony to witness the unveiling of the plaque by the Honourable Steven L. Point, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia. His Honour used the hand pump to raise water from the well and then the well was blessed by representatives of four different religious faiths. Children gathered to welcome the well water and it was tasted by all. The ceremony ended with dancing to the rhythm of the Unity Drummers.

Victoria's original public spring was located in Fernwood by Spring Road. The Spring Ridge Water Company provided water to Victoria in the 1860s. Two breweries, the Lion Brewery and Saloon and the Empire Brewery and Saloon used the spring water to brew beer.

As only 2.5% of the world's water is fresh water; protecting drinking water as a public resource is critical. The appropriation of the Fernwood well for public use in the 1866 Act of Union by Sir James Douglas was in response to public outcry over the privatization of the water. The project was consistent with the Fernwood Community Plan which called for a project around the water or springs of the neighbourhood. The well water will be used as an emergency water source. Well done, Fernwood.

Linda Foubister

ROCKLAND WOODLAND GARDEN

The native plants are just LOVING all this rain! It's so rewarding to see all the Licorice ferns returning to the mossy clumps we rescued from a construction site on the west side of Mount Douglas. What we'd like to get some help with right now is

a) finding a nursery that's selling Pacific rhododendron (*Rhododendron macrophyllum*)

and b) planting the trays of Shooting stars that we salvaged from a construction site in the Highlands.

If you're interested in joining us, please give Janet Simpson a call at 250-381-6657 or send me an email at jesimpson@shaw.ca.

Janet Simpson, Garden Committee Chair

DEER IN ROCKLAND



Linda Foubister photo

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, deer sightings in Rockland are becoming increasingly common. Reports indicate that up to 10 deer are currently resident, and this population is likely to grow. Some residents look on this as a positive wildlife viewing opportunity, and others are concerned over the potential for destruction of prized gardens, the product of considerable investment of time and money.

This article gives some background on the legal status of deer, and options for deterrence that may be effective at the level of a single property.

The Conservation Officer Service of the Ministry of Environment has compiled a wealth of information on human-deer

interaction, and links are provided at the end of this article. The Conservation Officer Service responds directly only to complaints involving predators (bears, wolves and cougars) where human safety is at risk.

BACKGROUND

Columbian Black-tail Deer are a species native to the coast, and fall within the definition of Wildlife under the Provincial "Wildlife Act", and are under the protection of the act.

http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/W/96488_01.htm

They are classed as a Big Game species, and are subject to hunting regulations. No shooting and no hunting zones extend far beyond the neighbourhood and the municipality, so they are locally protected. Deer that are involved in property damage may not be captured or killed (outside of general open seasons) unless you receive a permit from the regional Fish and Wildlife Office.

It is an offence to allow a dog to pursue or harass any wildlife.

Over most of BC, populations are limited by hunting, winter starvation and to a lesser extent, predation. Predators such as cougar, bears and wolves are largely absent from the Greater Victoria area.

So a combination of reduced hunting pressure, lack of predators, and mild winters have caused deer populations to increase on the Saanich Peninsula, with animals increasingly dispersing into the urban areas of Saanich, Oak Bay, and now Rockland.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

The deer are here to stay, but there are some measures that can be taken to make your property less attractive.

A good reference site can be found at http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/cos/info/wildlife_human_interaction/docs/garden.html

This web site includes information on:

- Use of landscape plants that ungulates don't seem to like;
- Use of landscape plants which ungulates can't reach;
- Application of commercial deer repellents;
- Use of motion detecting sound, light or water scare mechanisms;
- Construction of deer, sheep and elk-proof fencing;
- Use of browse "barriers".

Even more information can be found at

http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/cos/info/wildlife_human_interaction/docs/ungulates.html#trees

BC Environment Staff contributed to an excellent guide: "Living with wildlife" published by Washington State:

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/wlm/living/deer.htm>

Other good websites include these two from Maryland :

<http://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/ddmtintro.asp>

<http://www.peopleandwildlife.org.uk/crmaterials/FS810-A.pdf>

-Dave Clark, Secretary, with notes from the Conservation Officer Service and the Fish and Wildlife Branch of the Provincial Ministry of Environment

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HISTORIC BUILDING BURNS, BUT WILL BE RESTORED

In the evening of June 23, 2008, the roof of the Rockland mansion at 1015 Moss Street was engulfed with flames. Thanks to the efficient work by the Victoria Fire Department, the major structural damage was confined to the roof area although suites on lower floors sustained smoke and water damage. Ironically, the re-roofing job was almost finished. Onlookers were curious about the history of the house, so I decided

to investigate. I knew a bit about the house as I had interviewed Mary Helmcken at the time of the Sir James Douglas School reunion and she had told me her parents had the house built.



*1015 Moss Street, 1960s,
Hallmark Society photo*

The home was designed by Percy Leonrad James and his brother Douglas for Dr. James Douglas Helmcken. Built in the Tudor Revival style with American shingle style elements in 1912 during the height of Victoria's building boom, it has remained a landmark since its construction. Despite being divided into suites in 1937, it has retained its extensive Edwardian landscaping and provides a welcome green space on a busy residential street.

James Douglas Helmcken was the son of John Sebastian Helmcken, pioneer doctor and legislator, and the grandson of Sir James Douglas. Born in 1858, he received his medical training in Edinburgh and had a practice on Langley Street. He was also the physician for the provincial jail and the official Indian doctor. He married Mary Jane Halliday in 1886 but she unfortunately died a few months later. The next year, he married Ethel Mouat. They had five children, the youngest of which was Ainslie James Helmcken who was responsible for the establishment of the City of Victoria Archives. In 1919, James died and was buried in the family plot in Ross Bay Cemetery.

With the family grown and gone from the family home, Ethel Helmcken decided to build a smaller house on property she owned at 1538 Beach Drive on which the family had a small verandah-fronted cottage named *Bide-a-wee* for use as a summer residence. In 1923, she commissioned Samuel Maclure to build a new bungalow overlooking Oak Bay and the boat house. The name of the original summer cottage was retained for the permanent home.

The details of subsequent owners/occupants of 1015 Moss Street are historically interesting as well. From 1921-27, it was occupied by Lieutenant-Colonel Fraser Homer-Dixon who had earned a DSO in World War I. He had married Evelyn A. Cameron, the daughter of Sir Douglas Cameron, Lieutenant-governor of Manitoba 1911-1916. The Homer-Dixons retired to Victoria after the war. The next owner was a retired Major C R Hay who lived there between 1928-30. In 1931, George Augustus Bucklin moved in with his wife Mary Ann. He served as the American Consul during his ownership of 1015 Moss Street. A series of short-term owners followed including John Macdonald (retired), Paul W. Rookes (President of International Importing and Exporting). John Archibald Moxam, a local building contractor and his wife Blanche, lived here from 1937 and it was they who converted it to apartments. They owned several other apartment blocks in the City. After John's death in 1942, Blanche continued to live here until her death in 1965.

The current owner of 1015 Moss Street is quite obviously involved with the insurance companies and so not much has happened for the last several weeks. He has stated he has a love of heritage buildings and it is hoped it can be restored as much as possible to the original state. Also, he said he will give more details for the next newsletter.

Helen Edwards, Newsletter Producer

CRAIGDARROCH CASTLE GETS A NEW MANAGER

Colleen Williams is taking over the top job at Craigdarroch Castle from Kathy Summers, who has run the popular attraction in the Rockland neighbourhood for the past 12 years.

Williams brings more than 25 years of experience in senior banking and finance positions as well as operating her own business.

She is also an active volunteer, and is currently Treasurer of the Greater Victoria Crimestoppers Association board.

Kathy Summers will officially "hang up her tartan" at Craigdarroch Oct. 31. She and her husband, John Picken, former owner of Lifestyles Travel, are returning to the Niagara region in Ontario to be closer to family.

The castle, built in the 1880s by coal baron Robert Dunsmuir, is now owned by a museum society and attracts 150,000 visitors a year.

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BUTTERWORTH COTTAGE RESTORATION



Helen Edwards photo

The rehabilitation of Butterworth Cottage, one of the oldest buildings in Victoria, was celebrated in a ceremony on September 18,

2008. Visitors heard speeches by distinguished guests including His Honour Steven Point, Lieutenant Governor of BC, and the Honourable William Bennett, Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts. Brian Rogers, President of the Friends of Government House presented His Honour with a framed picture of the original Cary Castle.

Located on the Government House grounds, Butterworth Cottage was rehabilitated as part of a master plan for the original service buildings on the Estate. The Cottage will serve the Estate of the Lieutenant Governor and its visitors as an interpretive centre and a potential tea room.

Butterworth Cottage is part of the Cary Castle Mews, the collection of wooden service buildings located on the southeast side of the Government House grounds. This unique set of buildings dates back to the early 1870s and includes stables, carriage house, wash house, root cellar, coal shed and Butterworth Cottage.

Government House worked closely with the Heritage Branch of the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts to develop this Government House Foundation project. In addition to the heritage stewardship advisory role to Government House, the Heritage Branch awarded \$25,000 towards the rehabilitation of Butterworth Cottage.

The Cottage was originally built as a poultry barn and in the 1920s was partially adapted as a residence for the head gardener. The Cary Castle Mews underwent exterior and structural stabilization in 1992 and in 2003 the Government House Foundation supported the installation of electrical and water services to the buildings.

***Helen Edwards, Newsletter Producer,** with notes from Government House and the Times Colonist*



BUYING AT THE BUTTERWORTH: ART CRAFT AND BAKE SALE

Sat., November 15th, 2008 (10am – 5 pm)
Sun., November 16th, 2008 (11 am – 3 pm)

The Friends of Government House Gardens and Honorary Patron, Her Honour Mrs. Gwendolyn Point invite all to browse tasteful wares and baked goods while enjoying the newly renovated Butterworth Cottage during this fundraising event for the Friends of Government House Gardens Society.

Here shopping is done right...live music with Brad Prevedoros and Greg Joy plays in the background. Complimentary cookies and coffee will be offered.

The sale presents interesting arts and crafts, palate tempting baked goods and preserves, photography, silent auction items, surprise "bulb bags" and more.

Please come and join the Friends of Government House Garden Society at their event.

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RNA Email Server List

Would you like to hear more about events in Rockland? Please join the neighbours list through the RNA website at www.rockland.bc.ca.