



# ROCKLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION

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

## Winter 2015 Newsletter

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**Please share a copy of the RNA Newsletter with a neighbour.**

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### CITY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: By Pamela Madoff



Hello, Rockland!

I am so pleased to have been appointed as the Council liaison to Rockland.

Having first been elected to Council in 1993 I have been liaison to almost all of our neighbourhoods but this is the first time I have been granted the official connection to Rockland.

When I first ran for Council my platform was based on issues such as community engagement, heritage preservation and sensitive, quality development. After serving more than twenty years on Council these are still the foundational elements of all the work that I do.

Having been born and raised in Victoria I have an intimate familiarity with all of our neighbourhoods and Rockland is

no exception. So many of us, upon graduating from high school, dreamt of finding an apartment in one of Rockland's heritage buildings. Although this was not the case for me I had many friends who did and I spent extended periods in some of the neighbourhood's pre-eminent buildings. How could one not have been affected by walking, and cycling, through this incredible neighbourhood with its tree-lined streets and tucked away treasures? Not to mention trying to cycle up or down Lotbiniere! Walking through Rockland, in the autumn, scuffling through the leaves and admiring the brilliant colour changes of the trees.

I left Victoria in 1976 and was very fortunate to return in 1984. I moved into a heritage home in James Bay and immediately became involved as a community activist working to preserve the character of our James Bay neighbourhood. This scope of this activism expanded when I became involved with downtown planning issues, such as the proposal to build the Eaton's Centre.

At the same time I became a volunteer at Craigdarroch Castle and subsequently became a member of the Board. Since that time I have been President of the Hallmark Society, the B.C. Governor on the board of the Heritage Canada Foundation and a member of the board of the B.C. Heritage Trust.

During my time on Council I have been particularly involved with planning and design issues, including heritage. I am also very involved in the arts community and sit on the board of the Royal McPherson Theatres Society and the CRD Arts Committee. For the past five years I have been very fortunate to be appointed to the board of the Greater Victoria Public Library. I am also the liaison to the Art in Public Places Committee. I am a member of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria and look forward to being closely involved with the proposal to enhance and expand their existing facility. I am also very interested in the plans related to Craigdarroch Castle specific to the property that has been purchased next door to the castle on Joan Crescent.

But enough about me! I want to hear from you. What are your aspirations for your neighbourhood. What does the City do well and what could we do better? I look forward to attending the Rockland Neighbourhood Association meetings and am always available to meet with groups or individuals if there are specific issues you wish to bring to my attention. I look forward to the opportunity to meet you at the Rockland Community Association Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, February 11th.

In terms of connecting with me, I do have two Facebook pages.

I also have a website, which I shamelessly neglect, but hope to direct more attention to it in the upcoming year.

For specific City information please refer to the website – victoria.ca. Council meetings are webcast and may be

accessed via the website. You may watch the proceedings live or you may review meetings through the archive of meetings.

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## **ROCKLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Annual General Meeting will be held at the Grace Lutheran Church Hall, located at 1273 Fort Street on Wednesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.

The doors will be open at 7:00 pm. Please come early if you are planning to join or renew your membership at that time.

We plan to have some interesting displays in the lobby and meeting room that you can view both before and after the meeting.

Niemann, the Hyperspectral – LiDAR Research group works to capture, analyse and interpret information from a variety of cameras and sensors that are carried by airplanes or helicopters. They work in concert with a private firm, Terra Remote Sensing Inc., based in Sidney, BC.

The information they generate is used in forestry for inventory, tree identification and forest health. The sensors are also able to pass through all the vegetation to give a very accurate depiction of the ground surface, and this data is used to answer questions about water drainage at a fine scale.

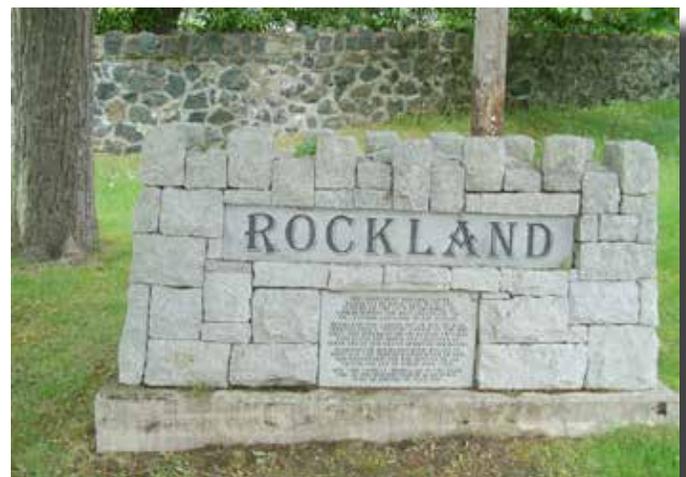
There has been considerable work undertaken in Victoria's watershed, and the City of Victoria is interested in how this technology can be applied in an urban environment.

For more information visit the Research Group's web site

<http://geog.uvic.ca/hlrg/Home.html>



Our guest speaker this year is Roger Stephen, who works with a research group in the University of Victoria's Geography Department. Under the direction of Dr. Olaf



# Baby Bird Season is Approaching



Please  
keep your cats  
indoors!



Silk tassel bush



Licorice ferns



Bluebell eradicators

# in the Rockland Woodland Garden



Young Arbutus



Bob June

**DO YOU OWN A DOG(S), ARE A SERVANT TO A DOG(S) OR WISH YOU HAD A DOG(S)?**



In recognition of the unique makeup of the Rockland neighborhood, in particular our love of our furry canine friends, the Rockland Neighborhood Association (RNA) is in the early stages of planning a dog event specific to the Rockland area. Whether it is a community picnic with a BYOD (Bring your own dog), a dog trade show, dog agility or a dog beauty contest remains to be decided. The location of the event is also to be worked out, but some possible hosting venues are being pursued.

We are hoping to host the dog event this summer or perhaps early fall of 2015 or 2016.

If you have any ideas or would like to participate in the planning or be a volunteer, please respond by March 31<sup>st</sup> 2015 to [vice-president@rockland.bc.ca](mailto:vice-president@rockland.bc.ca). Your ideas are welcome and participation is encouraged!!

As well, your Director of all things dogs and RNA Board Member Marc HUNTER (you may recognize him walking his Golden Retrievers around the neighborhood) is hoping to put together a ‘Dogs of Rockland’ calendar for 2016. More details to follow.

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*Photo credits: page 1: Pam Madoff; page 2, upper: UVic; lower: Helen Edwards; page 3 and page 4: Janet Simpson; page 5. left: Marc Hunter; right, postcard from Helen Edwards' collection; page 6: 1045 Joan Crescent in 1971, Hallmark Heritage Society Archives.*

# **HOLD THE DATE**

## **ROCKLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION**

### **GOVERNMENT HOUSE RECEPTION**

**FRIDAY AUGUST 7, 2015**

**MORE DETAILS LATER**

### **1045 JOAN CRESCENT HAS CONNECTION TO EARLY VICTORIA COMMERCE** by Helen Edwards



This property was bought by J. William and Lillian Watts Spencer just after the 1910 subdivision of Craigdarroch Park. For many years, it was the only property listed on Joan Crescent, other than the Castle. Thomas Hooper's 1918 design has been substantially altered. Percy Fox designed the interior library in 1920 and Ralph Berrill added further alterations and a chauffeur's dwelling and garage in 1928-29. The original wraparound verandah has been filled in and walls have been moved to accommodate the new use as a rest home.

The marriage of John William Spencer and Lillian Lemon Watts was the social event of the year. Married at the Metropolitan Methodist Church on December 29, 1909 by pastor Reverend T. E. Holling, it united the

daughter of John Henry and Elizabeth (Lemon) Watts and the son of David and Emma (Lazenby) Spencer. The newspaper account of the nuptials notes: “The ceremony was attended by a host of friends and acquaintances of the bride and groom, the auditorium of the church filled to overflowing.” The reception was held at the home of the bride’s parents, on Pemberton Road, with the house “exquisitely decorated for the occasion.” The couple left for a honeymoon in Europe after which they were expected to spend some time visiting friends in the east before returning some six months later to take up residence in Rockland. We know that the couple were resident in their new home on Joan Crescent by April 23, 1911 as *The Daily Colonist* published a notice that: “Mrs. J. William Spencer will receive for the first time at her home, *Hael-y-bryn*, Craigdarroch Park, on Wednesday and Thursday afternoon, the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> instant. The name of the house was Welsh for “the brow of the hill,” an apt description of the location of the mansion and an acknowledgement of the ancestry of his father, David Spencer.



Will, as he was called, began working in his father’s store in 1899. He later became secretary-treasurer and a director of the business. During his term, they expanded, acquiring Weiler’s Department Store and Mitchell & Duncan’s jewellery store location. During World War One, Will supervised Vancouver Island’s Victory Loans and served on numerous boards in Victoria. He was also a fine singer, performing with the Arion Male Voice Choir. Wilspencer Place, a short street that runs beside the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria (located in his parents’ old home) is named for him. Will and Lillian’s daughter Myfanwy was one of Canada’s foremost portrait artists, with Pierre Trudeau, Yehudi Menuhin and Katherine Hepburn among her subjects.

After Will’s death of coronary thrombosis on June 18, 1946, Lillian sold the house and moved to a suite on Fort Street. She lived in different locations, mostly in Rockland, and , at the time of her death on January 3, 1977 of pneumonia, she was living at 1663 Rockland Avenue.

## RNA BOARD OF DIRECTORS – 2014-2015

President: Janet Simpson  
 Vice President: Bob June  
 Secretary: Susan Simpson  
 Treasurer: Norman Clark  
 Directors: David Clark  
 Vanessa Dingley  
 Marc Hunter  
 John Edwards  
 Ian Mayhill  
 Stephen Roughley

## 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](http://www.rockland.bc.ca).

## ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

The Rockland Neighbourhood Association Newsletter is published during the year. It is distributed electronically to all members. Submissions from members on issues of interest are always accepted and photographs are particularly welcome.

### Deadlines for the next issue is:

April 15, 2015

All submissions should be sent to Newsletter Editor, Helen Edwards at [heritagelady@gmail.com](mailto:heritagelady@gmail.com).

## CAN WE HELP YOU?

Is there a building in Rockland that you would like to know the history of? Do you have an old photo that needs identification? Let me know at [heritagelady@gmail.com](mailto:heritagelady@gmail.com) and I will see what I can find.