

## LEAVES Newsletter



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring is on the way which can only mean a new season of Tree Tours at Riverview are about to start. Our first public tree walk will be held on Sunday, March 18.

We had a preliminary report of storm damage in December but have been told that Arborist Julian Dunster will be preparing a further report later in the spring when the full impact of damage will become more apparent. The good news is that the large Scarlet Oak that lost a huge branch from snow/wind is still standing. We assume that with this report we will have more information on whether this wonderful tree can be saved.

In view of the storm damage and the fact that other trees have either come down or have been taken down over the last couple of years, RHCS has had recent correspondence with ARES (formerly BCBC) re the planting of new trees. We were disappointed to be told that a Management Plan (read planting of new trees) can only be developed when the tree collection vision is finalized which we hope will be soon. ARES will be asking Julian Dunster to craft the outline of an overall tree management plan. This is encouraging but we had hoped that some kind of interim plan could have been put in place earlier as the window of opportunity to plant trees is very limited. Spring planting is appropriate in some instances but at Riverview where watering cannot be guaranteed we are really restricted to fall planting so we are very hopeful that something is in place for the fall of 2007.

We look forward to seeing our members out at tree tours. Bring your friends and family. We still have so many people tell us that they drive by Riverview every day on their way to work and are amazed when they finally discover what is here and what the potential of this amazing site could be.

*Donna Crosby*

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### online newsletters

Save a tree - View our newsletters online!

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

The March & September editions are also available in print to members by request.

The newsletters will be posted on our website in pdf format. A direct link will be sent in an email.

Approximately March, June, September & December

[newsletter@rhcs.org](mailto:newsletter@rhcs.org)

Please email us your email address so we can let you know when the latest Newsletter is available online for viewing!

*Your email address will be used only to inform you of RHCS news, we will not share your address.*

### AGM Announcement!

**EVERYONE is WELCOME**

Please come join us for Our  
**Annual General Meeting**  
**Thursday June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007**



at 7:30 pm  
**Henry Esson Young Building**  
**Riverview Hospital**

call for more info: 604-290-9910

If you want to know more about what is happening with the Society, and at Riverview this is a chance to hear the latest news we have.

**Membership  
Renewal Due  
April 1st, 2007**

## The Connected Pond

Valerie Adolph

### Nurturing and Therapeutic

The pond is part of the natural world that nurtures our soul. On the Pacific Coast, there is a hospital for people with a mental illness. It's one of those big old institutions built about a hundred years ago, with large, forbidding buildings, fences and these days large parking lots for visitors and staff. But this hospital is a little different from most because it is surrounded by glorious trees that are legacy of it being built beside the original botanical garden for the region. And in addition to this, there is a garden behind it that was created over 50 years ago by a nurse named Art Finnie. He and his patients terraced part of the slope behind the buildings and created their own garden. Finnie had the wisdom to include a pond. It's not large, but it's almost circular, set in a grassy area with a couple of overhanging trees. It's one of the loveliest little ponds you'll ever see. The fish attract the occasional heron. Squirrels scamper across the grass.

The volunteers, who maintain Finnie's garden these days, report seeing raccoons pausing to wash their food. The building of the garden, Finnie reported, "was the best therapy for the patients that they could have had." Dr. Karl Menniner, speaking of horticultural therapy, said, "It takes the blinders off patients and gives them a wider horizon."

Finnie's Pond



Photo by Sue Haberber

### A Focal Point for Healing

The garden, and especially its pond, are almost half a century. Treatment modalities have come and gone, staff and patients have come and gone, but the garden and pond maintain their healing presence. Patients whose illness divorces them from reality, whose diagnosis isolates them from family and friends, have this one spot where they can reconnect to the natural and eternal world of earth and water.

But more than that, Finnie's Garden and its pond brings outsiders into the hospital. The garden, along with the glorious trees from the old botanical garden, attracts neighbors and naturalists, tourists from far away places, gardeners and artists. The isolation for patients is greatly reduced and some of them have become the experts on the wildlife and the plants.

This unlikely but valuable spot illustrates one of nature's truths – where there is a pond, people will gravitate towards it. Thoreau found his pond ready-made and his reflections upon it have resonated for generations. The pond at Finnie's Garden has not only connected people one to each other but also helped re-establish for some people the connection between themselves and the reality that most of us value.

### Vital Ingredient

Psychologists Stephen and Rachel Kaplan have researched the restorative effects of nature and conclude that, "Nature is not merely 'nice.' It is not just a matter of improving one's mood, rather it is a vital ingredient in healthy human functioning."

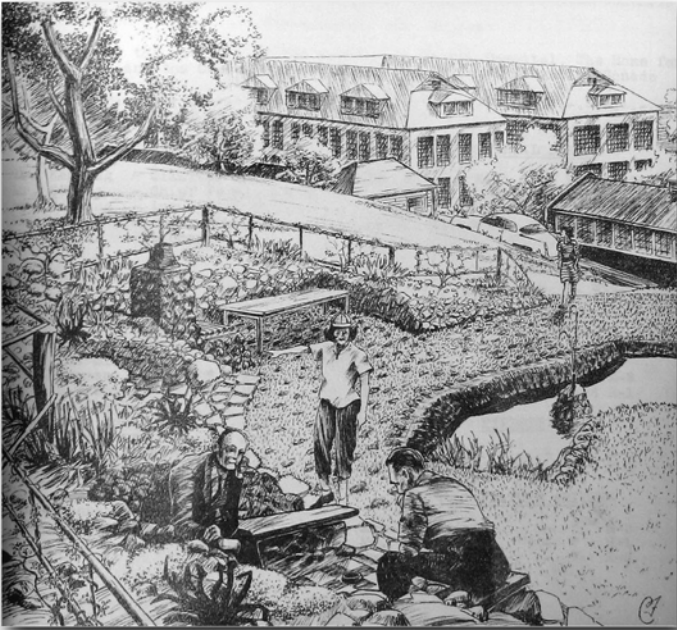
How lucky we are to have our own ponds, our own means of connecting and maintaining our well-being and our own reminder of realities greater than the daily round and common task. Ralph Waldo Emerson must have been thinking about that when he wrote, "He who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the plants, the waters, the heavens, and how to come at these enchantments, is the rich and royal man."

An excerpt from Valerie Adolph's full article that ran in the Summer 2005 issue of Aquascape Lifestyles magazine.



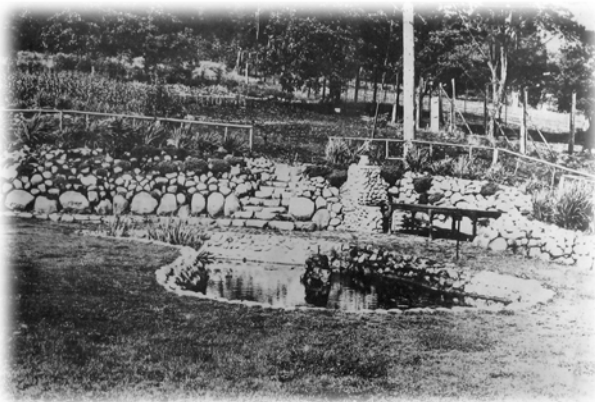
## Finnies Pond (Lake Finnie)

Niall Williams



May, 1959 cover of "The Leader" the patients newsletter

On April 18, 1951, a small group of male patients climbed the hill behind Centre Lawn, to the rough uncultivated hillside above the main buildings of Riverview Hospital. Dr. B.F. Bryson encouraged nurse, Art Finnie to take on the task of building a garden, which he did full throttle. The patients also liked the idea, and word went out about the happenings at "Farm View," later to be called "Finnies Garden" in recognition of Art Finnie's contribution, above and beyond the call of duty. The immediate area around the pond was where it all started....



1950's - Note the Bulrushes

A lake is defined as having an inlet & outlet, this "pond" meets that criteria. The pond was rapidly becoming choked by the invasive Yellow Flag Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*); so I decided to deal with it by eradication. The pond is entirely built with cobbles, and the lower portion has been

faced with poor quality cement, which through the years has cracked, leading to numerous leaks. This spring we will drain it, and grout with cement the obvious cracks, hopefully this will limit the leakage to a tolerable level, so that Goldfish (*Carassius auratus*) can be re-introduced. The outlet drainage, has been mostly rebuilt, and cleared of major blockages. Now that the outlet is fixed the water level should stay at a constant level, which will enable us to re-plant with aquatic plants that require a more stable water level, than was previously available.

In progress March 2007



Photo by Niall Williams

We may in the future build a small berm, paralleling the bowling green wall to re-direct water, through a gravel filter ("French drain"), then into the pond so that a constant winter flow will be assured, since the fountain is shut-off in winter at present which usually leads to rapid draining, and the demise of the Goldfish. When cleaning out the pond, I discovered a Long-Toed Salamander (*Ambystoma macrodactylum*), habitat will be created with them in mind. Also found in the pond mud: a ring, a watch, three marbles, and nearly \$10 in change. The original pond contained Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*), I have built a Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) crib, to contain their re-introduction.

A slide show about Finnie's garden at YouTube: Farm View  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3DPnzi\\_xS4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3DPnzi_xS4)

**RHCS Executive**

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

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

**SECRETARY**  
Sue Haberger  
sue@rhcs.org

**acting TREASURER**  
Liz Rowley  
liz@rhcs.org

**TREE WALK DIRECTOR**  
Mary Brown  
mary@rhcs.org

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

**DIRECTORS at LARGE**  
Val Adolph, Ron Javorsky,  
Liz Rowley

**UPDATE for MARCH 2007**

Sue Haberger

There has been a great deal recently in the media about the problem of housing for the mentally ill, many of whom have ended up homeless and drug-addicted. Premier Gordon Campbell has stated that the initiative to de-institutionalize mental patients has been a failure and new solutions are needed. Coquitlam councillors Fin Donnelly and Mae Reid met last October with Health Minister George Abbott and local MLA, Diane Thorne. During the meeting, they presented the Minister with a copy of the Task Force Report, "For the Future of Riverview" They feel that the timing is very good for an initiative to develop more housing and care for the mentally ill at Riverview. Also, the possibility of locating Health Region Administrative offices at Riverview was raised.

Abbott later told a Tri-City News reporter that unlike most municipalities, Coquitlam has indicated it would welcome new residential facilities using the Riverview Hospital property. He also noted it already is the site of one modern mental health facility (Connolly and Cottonwood Lodges). "We would not see the construction of the sort of large warehouse mental health facility that we had in the past at Riverview, but I think by using contemporary standards, using contemporary best practices around the construction of mental health facilities, we could look at Riverview as a potential area for those community health facilities for the Lower Mainland, that is both Fraser and for Vancouver Coastal," Abbott said. "But that's something we are in relatively early discussion on."

However, despite increasing publicity about the inability of the Royal Columbian Hospital to meet the demands on it, and the lack of appropriate housing for the mentally ill, there was no money in last month's provincial budget and no mention of new initiatives to deal with these problems. Instead, Riverview's North Lawn building will be emptied by the end of March, to sit vacant like East Lawn as the downsizing of Riverview Hospital continues. We continue to wait for a provincial government plan for its future.

RHCS directors are preparing to participate in a possible public education campaign once a new plan is suggested. We intend to prepare presentations on different aspects of the Riverview site such as its history, its tree collection, and our community vision for its future. We need to emphasize that recent developments underline why the entire site must stay in the public domain, available to serve the needs of the mentally ill. Policies change and what seems a good idea today may be proclaimed a mistake tomorrow. Once the land is in private hands, it is unrecoverable.

LEAVES newsletter

**EDITOR**

Teri Madaisky

**PROOFREADERS**

Donna, Norma, Mary, Sue

**PHOTOS**

Sue Haberger

**CONTRIBUTORS**

Niall, Valerie, Sue, Norma,  
Mary, Donna

**DISTRIBUTION**

Sue, Norma, Teri  
Mary, Donna

The Leaves newsletter is published 4 times a year by the Riverview Horticultural Centre Society (RHCS), a non-profit society dedicated to preserving & protecting the Riverview trees & lands. Opinions and ideas expressed are not necessarily those of the society or the editor.

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Editorial email:  
newsletter@rhcs.org

**RHCS**

Riverview Horticultural  
Centre Society

P.O. Box 64616,  
1942 Como Lake Ave.  
Coquitlam, BC  
V3J 7V7

Phone: 604-290-9910

Email: trees@rhcs.org

We're on the Web!  
visit us:

www.rhcs.org



**2007 Tree Walk Schedule**



March 18th	Sunday	1 pm	1st walk of the 2007 season
April 15th	Sunday	1 pm	Public Tree Tour
April 22nd	Sunday	1 pm	BMN Backyard walk
April 29th	Sunday	1 pm	Magnolia time
May 13th	Sunday	1 pm	Public Tree Tour
May 27th	Sunday	1 pm	Children's walk
June 17th	Sunday	1 pm	Public Tree Tour
June 24th	Sunday	1 pm	BMN Backyard walk
July 5th	Thursday	7:30pm	Linden walk
July 15th	Sunday	1 pm	Public Tree Tour
July 29th	Sunday	1 pm	Public Tree Tour
August 19th	Sunday	1 pm	Public Tree Tour
August 26th	Sunday	1 pm	BMN Backyard walk
September 23rd	Sunday	11-4pm	TREEFEST 2007
October 14th	Sunday	1 pm	Public Tree Tour

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



The Riverview Horticultural Centre Society

April 1st, 2007 RENEW NOW!!

Logo design and drawing courtesy of Brenda Gillespie and Kiyoshi Takahashi

The RHCS invites you to join us in supporting our efforts to keep the site of British Columbia's first botanical garden, the Riverview Hospital Lands intact.

Your Membership dues support many activities by the Society including public awareness, presentations, displays, etc. These dues are especially helpful for the production of our Newsletter "Leaves". This Newsletter is produced four times a year on-line to keep you up to date and in touch with what is happening currently with RHCS and the Riverview Lands.

Newsletters ONLINE!

Please include your email address with your Renewal so we can send you an email to let you know when 'new' newsletters are available on-line for viewing. Our March & September editions are also mailed upon request.

In this time of change on the lands we really need your continued support more than ever before. We Value your Support & Appreciate all the help you can give.

Walking tours in 2007:

March 18, April 15 & 29, May 13, June 17, July 15 & 29, August 19, & October 14 at 1 pm

Also Children's walk on May 27 at 1pm, Linden Walk Thursday July 5 at 7:30 pm

BMN - Backyard walks also on Sundays at 1pm: April 22, June 24 & August 26

Treefest 2007 takes place on September 23, 11am-4pm. Arborist-led walks, in & around Henry Esson Young Building.

MEMBERSHIP - FORM

The RHCS invites you to join us in supporting our efforts to keep the site of BC's first botanical garden, the Riverview Hospital Lands, intact.

Membership Classification: NEW or RENEWAL Yearly membership is due on April 1st

Student: \$5 Senior: \$5 Adult: \$10 Family: \$15 Corporate: \$25

You are invited to make a donation to support the Society \$ Total amount enclosed \$

- Tax Receipts issued for donations - RHCS is a registered charitable organization

(Please make cheques payable to; Riverview Horticultural Centre Society)

Membership Application:

First Name(s): Last Name(s):

Address: City:

Province: Postal Code: Phone #:

Email address for 'Newsletters' & notices: (personal information will not be shared with other organizations)

Please Mail to: The Riverview Horticultural Centre Society P.O. Box 64616, 1942 Como Lake Avenue Coquitlam, BC, V3J 7V7