



LEAVES Newsletter



SUMMER 2009

Norma Gillespie

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“ Riverview gains recognition nationally for historic value ”

All of us in the Riverview Horticultural Centre Society were thrilled when we learned that Coquitlam’s Riverview hospital site had been added to Canada’s Register of Historic Places and then to see Sarah Payne’s coverage in The Tri-City News was just so uplifting.

When we started out in 1992, Bill Browne, our founding president and the horticulturist who first drew attention to this site, stated: *“We have here a unique and beautiful creation that is the legacy and gift of previous generations. We want to take this botanical creation and use it for education, for therapy, and for the mental health of the people of British Columbia and Canada. This is our vision.”* That strong vision statement has guided our efforts for the past 17 years as we fought to preserve the unique heritage that is Riverview.



We have so many people to recognize who have helped us achieve this heritage status. It was during Treefest 2003 that Don Luxton, an award- winning author and heritage consultant, led our very first Heritage walks at Riverview. And it was in that same year that the city of Coquitlam reaffirmed its resolution to lobby for the preservation of the site and approved the formation of the Riverview Task Force. Arborists have volunteered their time to lead the popular public tree tours. Retired architect Ron Simpson constructed a 3D map of Riverview and he, too, led



walks. The Burke Mountain Naturalists sent delegations to local councils urging them to protect Riverview. The list goes on and Riverview is now thought, by many, to be a motherhood issue.

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

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 4th, 2009
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.

CALL FOR SUPPORT TO ALL PAST MEMBERS

Ken Baker

For the past 16 years our society has been fighting to save the Riverview lands from being transformed into yet more cement, high rise buildings and black top. There is only one "Riverview Lands" These lands are unique, as unique as the myriad of life that has evolved undisturbed here for a century. The architecture is unique and beautiful, and the trees are priceless encapsulating an arboretum second to none anywhere on this globe.

We should all be bursting with pride to share this beautiful legacy with the world. A gem of life , a window of history, a tranquil treasure. A legacy for the mental health of all British Columbians, for those with mental challenges first, of course, But also for all to enjoy, appreciate, and cherish in our fast paced lives where green space is replaced daily with cement structures and roads. We must never allow this to happen to our Riverview Lands. Unfortunately our fight is far from over yet. The threat to this beautiful land base is still very real and without the support of our membership our voice carries less clout. That is why I am making this special appeal to all our members from last year to please renew you membership this year. Our renewals are down 50% from last year, we need your support more than ever, this year will be critical in our fight to save these lands please do not give up the fight. You are our strength, without your support we are in trouble.

Please take the time to call today ...

Thank you for your support,
Ken Baker Vice President RHCS



A Place

There is a place of beauty, not very far from here,

In stroke of time, it stretches back many a year.

Western Canada's first botanical garden thrives,

Majestic buildings, a unique flavor touches lives.

A historical legacy, ancestral gift, woven in time.

Nature glowing and growing, tranquility rhyme!

This place of beauty, cherished by all who see.

Protection depends on support from you and me.

Pulse of progress, removing "old" quick as a wink!

There is a place not far from here, value rich in the soul ...Think!

Ken Baker

LINDEN WALKS 2009

Mary Brown

Yes, we are having two Linden walks this year. Some people have not been able to attend our Thursday evening walks, so we decided to hold a Sunday afternoon one as well. We hope that the trees will oblige us with some flowers for at least one of them, although this has been a fairly unpredictable flowering season. Anyway we visit the trees, and let people know where they will find flowers soon, if it has been too cold to tempt them to flower in time for the walk. There is always lots to see at Riverview, so you will not go home unhappy!

We will have Linden tea, and Mary's special "Linden" cake. (I am taking a bit of a liberty with the Brits who call Lindens "Lime trees", so we have Lime cake. I can do that, I was one of them).



AESCULUS HIPPOCASTANUM - HORSE CHESTNUT

Mary Brown

Horse Chestnuts are native to northern Greece and Albania, but have been cultivated in many parts of Europe. They can reach 38 metres, with spreading branches, so need a fair bit of room. The leaves have 5-7 broad stalk less leaflets, the flowers are white with a yellow, turning to red patch on the petal bases which form clusters 12-20 cm followed by fruit with shiny brown nuts, covered with spiny cases, much appreciated by squirrels, and small boys for conker wars! (Val Adolph has a good description of this ritual in "Tales of the Trees" available through RHCS).

There are at least 57 listed Horse Chestnuts on the Riverview Lands, about half of them are the common white-flowered variety, which have white flowers, appearing in May.

Varieties include *A. hippocastanum* 'Baumanni', (previously called 'flore pleno'), which has white, stumper candles with double flowers. The leaves are smaller, and cupped. There are few or no conkers. *Aesculus x carnea* is a cross with Red Buckeye *A. pavia*. It has dull crimson flowers, in rather dumpy candles. The conker husks have few spines.

The name comes from the Greek 'hippo' meaning 'horse', and 'kastanon' meaning 'chestnut'. There are horseshoe-shaped leaf scars on the twig, even having 'nail' holes, which may account for the name, and they also have a connection with horses for their medicinal properties. Horse Chestnuts must not be confused with *Castanea mollissima*, also on the Riverview grounds, which are edible.



Identifying features include the sticky buds which are found late winter or early spring, and make a nice indoor display as the leaves emerge. The husks and thick, fingered leaves often linger around the trees all year, and the candle shaped buds and flowers are distinctive, during May.



**Membership Renewal Was
April 1st, 2009**

If you haven't already renewed your support, please take a moment to do so now. Thank you!



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ACTION UPDATE - JUNE 2009

Sue Habeger

Like all volunteers working on long term community projects, I sometimes feel discouraged and wonder, "Why I am doing this?" We negotiate with bureaucrats who are being paid to obstruct us, we listen to politicians at election time paying lip service to the importance of the Riverview Lands, and we spend long hours working on documents that never seem to get past the "vision" stage. Of course, it is encouraging when I think back on 15 years of work and see the major change in public opinion, or when I make a presentation to people who were not previously aware of the issue and hear them gasp when they see the beautiful images of the site, or when membership forms are returned with personal notes and donations. But by far, the best way to cure a bout of discouragement is to walk about the Riverview Lands with a first time visitor. I had the opportunity to do just that on a sunny May afternoon with a friend and her sister visiting from Alberta.



So the battle will continue and we welcome your on-going help. Maybe you are involved with an organization to which we could make a presentation or offer a special tour? Maybe you know an educator with whom we could discuss field trip options? But perhaps the simplest and most effective act would be to give a friend or relative the personal Riverview experience this summer. You are welcome to explore the lands on your own and I guarantee a memorable outing. Call or e-mail us for more information about self-guided tours.

Our tour started in Finnie's Garden where we met some "Friends of Finnie's" working to maintain and enhance this magical garden. Moving down to the lawn area, we strolled past the heritage buildings set among the giant Linden, Tulip, and Chestnut trees in their fresh summer leaves. We explored the mottled green rooms under the Camperdown Elm and Weeping Beech trees and marveled at the half-century old rhododendrons in full bloom. A Chinese Dove tree (Davidia involucreta) waved it's white handkerchief-like flowers at us. Several times, we talked to patients who wanted to visit with us and our dogs and we toured their cafeteria and unique vintage bowling alley in Penn Hall. Standing in front of North Lawn admiring the Hawthorns in full bloom and the sweeping view of the mountains, the answer to my question was clear - I am working to preserve an important treasure so that future generations will have this sanctuary in the centre of a huge metropolis.

2009 Tree Walk Schedule



June 14	Sunday	1 pm	Public Tree Tour
June 21	Sunday	1 pm	BMN Backyard walk
June 28	Sunday	1 pm	Linden walk 1
July 9	Thursday	7:30 pm	Linden walk 2
July 19	Sunday	1 pm	Public Tree Tour
August 16	Sunday	1 pm	Public Tree Tour
August 23	Sunday	1 pm	BMN Backyard walk
September 13	Sunday	11-4pm	TREEFEST 2009
October 4	Sunday	1 pm	Public Tree Tour

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