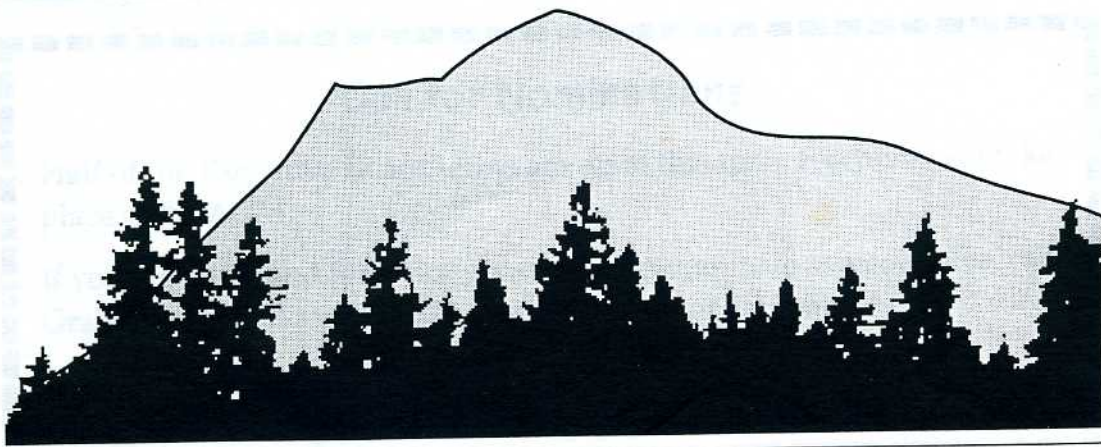


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The Friends of Mount Douglas Park Society

NEWSLETTER

January 1998



## Annual General Meeting

7:30 p.m.

Thursday, February 12, 1998

McMorran's All-purpose Room  
5109 Cordova Bay Road

President's report  
Reports on  
Roads, Planting, Trails,  
Acquisitions, and Mount Douglas Creek.  
Election of Officers

David Fraser will speak on  
"Native Plant Species, Mount Douglas and Environs"

### Call for Nominations

Half of the Executive Board terms are up at this time. Elections will take place at the AGM..

If you wish to stand for office yourself, or to nominate someone else, call Graham Shorthill at 658 -5873 before the 11th of February.

This is a working Board.



## President's Annual Report

1997 has been a year of progress. Practical support for our Sea-To-Summit and Summit-To-Valley Vision for the Park is gaining momentum.

- A drainage system for the section of Cordova Bay Road that runs through the Park has been completed. In design, this is to stabilize the bank along which that section of road runs.
- The decrepit old flume that directed drainage water from the road into Douglas Creek has been replaced by a rock channel designed to empty water into the creek more gently. With growth of vegetation, this channel will tone in visually with the bank it descends.
- Where the creek flows out of culverts just off Robinwood Drive, a weir is being constructed to trap the all-too-frequent oil spills that endanger fish habitat. Due to heavy rainfall just after the work began, completion has had to be postponed to spring or summer.
- Broom and blackberry overgrowth continues to be cleared in selected areas. Thanks to broom clearance, spring flowers bloom again on the mountain top in locations where they had been overwhelmed. The blackberry clearance allows room for recently planted Garry oak seedlings to develop.
- An amendment to the Blenkinsop Local Area Plan that designates the rear portions of 4465, 4525, 4573 and 4589 Blenkinsop Road as proposed future additions to Mount Douglas Park passed its first reading on December 8th. These additions will complement the recently acquired segment of forested land above Pierce Crescent (the former Achs property).
- The annual B.C. Rivers Day celebration was occasion once again for volunteers to converge on the Creek to clear out garbage.



- More tree seedlings have been planted, principally in the relatively denuded strip of park to the south of the Creek.
- 800 Coho fingerlings have been released into the Creek and, at time of writing, seem to be doing well.
- Under the Provincial Capital Commission's program for a system of greenways/blueways throughout the Peninsula, we have been given a grant of \$15,000 to upgrade the badly-eroded part of the Mercer Trail that leads down to Blenkinsop Road, and to ease the linkage between the Park and Lochside Trail via Lohbrunner Road. Saanich Parks is providing an equal amount in materials and labour. Conditions of the grant require Society volunteers to carry out certain tasks. Overall planning and supervision will be done by Board members, but we will be asking your help in the preliminary clearing of debris and the relocation of native plants.

Congratulations and thanks are due to many for this year's work—to the municipal Engineering and Parks departments for their part in bringing plans to fruition for the drainage system, the alternative to the flume, and the weir in its initial stage, as well as for being receptive to our suggestions during planning sessions; to Saanich Council for its willingness to acquire land to extend the park to its natural boundaries in the Blenkinsop Valley; and to our own members and volunteers, who have contributed time and labour to clearing, cleaning and planting activities.

One way of thanking this latter group would be to join them. At times, volunteers are all too few, and have had to expend Herculean efforts to make noticeable progress. It is particularly important that we muster enough volunteers in the spring, when work on the Mercer Trail will begin, in order to fulfill the commitment we made to the Provincial Capital Commission. In this case, the labour should not be arduous, much of it merely depending on ordinary gardening skills.



This may be the place to offer a word of caution. Anyone who wishes to work on some project in the Park of their own devising and at times of their own convenience would be well advised to check with somebody on our executive board and with Dave DeShane, the manager of Parks Operations. Otherwise problems may arise. For instance, persons unknown to us, probably with the best of intentions, have been removing woody debris (essential to good fish habitat) from the Creek. This may have set back our fish-stocking program.

Those of you who have raised your eyes unto the hills during December may have noticed a strange cocoon enfolding the radio mast at the top of the mountain. Its purpose has been to shield workers while they reinforce the mast prior to attaching additional antennae.

Before the work began, we were advised that it would be limited to certain relatively minor changes, and to this we could find no reason to object. As it turned out, however, these limits were exceeded in the course of the work. To stabilize the scaffolding, a system of radiating guy wires was bolted to the rock. Altogether, about 30 bolts were sunk, not all put to use. The guy wires, of course, were only temporary, but the bolts are not. They had the potential of permanently defacing a wide area of rock.

As a result of the alarm that we raised, it appears (on last inspection, at least) that the bolts have been successfully camouflaged. The incident may seem to have been minor, but it illustrates the need never to take stated construction specifications for the Park on absolute trust.

## Membership

*If you find these newsletters interesting and the work of the Society valuable, please continue to support the Society by mailing your \$5.00 membership to*

*Graham Shorthill ( Treasurer ) 4623 Cordova Bay Road, Victoria, B.C. V8X*

