



Friends of Cypress Provincial Park Society
P.O. Box 91053, West Vancouver, B.C. V7V 3N3
www.cypresspark.ca
FALL-WINTER 2019 NEWSLETTER

FCPP's Summer Activities

What we did this summer

Summer Walks and Hikes co-sponsored with Nature Vancouver:

FCPP in conjunction with Nature Vancouver sponsored 11 outings this year with engaged leaders and walkers. There were botany walks with Eva Nagy, Anne George, Elise Roberts (Elders Council for BC Parks), and Alex Wallace. Gail Ross led a Discovery Walk relating the human and natural history of the park. David Cook led a Geology of Cypress Park walk and an Ecology of Old Growth Forest walk. Other hike leaders included Lyn Grants and Anne Leathem with destinations of Blue Gentian Lake, Lost Lake, Hollyburn Mountain and Eagle Bluff.



*Gail Ross leads Nature and History Walk
Photo by Phonmany Phanthavong*

Coho Festival and Community Days

FCPP shared a tent with the Old Growth Conservancy Society with our displays, maps and tree samples. The day started very wet underfoot with Eva Nagy, Alex Wallace and Marshall Bauman sloshing around setting-up. Later the sun came out to a very warm afternoon. Many interested visitors were entertained by FCPP members and left carrying colourful flower pamphlets and maps.

FCPP had no involvement in Community Days this year as it has become a cultural festival without WV stewardship groups.

West Vancouver Liaison Meetings: One of the topics at these meetings was the development of the 12, 14 and 16 storey towers at Km 3 and Km 4 of the Cypress Bowl Road, up to the Chippendale junction. British Pacific Properties (BPP) has done a traffic impact study to model how this will affect North Shore traffic; however it is still not clear how the residential traffic from these side roads will safely join or cross the speeding ski area and park visitor traffic. In order to express our concerns about future traffic safety issues arising from the development of the Rodgers Creek subdivision, FCPP met with MLA Ralph Sultan, Mayor Booth and Cllr. Soprovich of West Vancouver, as well as raising the issues at several WV Cypress Liaison meetings and attending the West Vancouver Transportation meeting this summer. We also met with BPP at their request in order to have the Rezoning plans and traffic study explained, however it was still unclear as to how the considerable residential traffic would merge on to the park highway traffic in summer or winter (i.e. in the ski season). Plus, it is utilizing a provincial highway to route residential traffic, and we did not hear from Ministry of Transportation & Highways or BC Parks on this issue. On Monday, December 3rd West Vancouver Council unanimously approved the amended Rezoning for the BPP Rodgers Creek plans.

<https://www.nsnews.com/news/west-van-supports-massive-rodgers-creek-development-1.24028582>

The pending Cypress Village subdivision development proposal by BPP for Km 2 of the Cypress Bowl Road is still on the drawing board, i.e. the lands West of the West Vancouver Works Yard, but the residential construction at Km 1 near Mulgrave School is already under way.

BC Parks celebrates 25th Anniversary of Yew Lake Trail – September 9, 2019

By Anne George

The 25th anniversary of the Yew Lake Trail was celebrated by BC Parks to acknowledge the extensive efforts of Lesley Bohm and Anders Ourom to develop the barrier-free accessible trail. The Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (FMCBC), with Lesley as President and Anders as Executive Director, led the initiative in 1993/94. The FMCBC drafted contracts, hired crews and managed the major funding collaboration that included contributions from MEC, BC Ministry of Parks, Wildwood Canada, Cypress Bowl Recreation, and FCPP among others. FMCBC also successfully applied for funding from the federal Canada Job Strategy Program to cover labour costs of workers who were receiving Unemployment Insurance.

As well as Lesley and Anders, the celebration was attended by FCPP Board members Alex Wallace, Eva Nagy and Anne George, as well as 4 BC Parks personnel - Area Supervisor Scott Donker, Community Liaison Officer Elyse Curley, and two Rangers Simon Debisschop and Gareth Wheatley. The celebration began at the Black Mountain Lodge with Elyse Curley presenting Lesley with a plaque to honour the FMCBC efforts. Alex, Anders and Lesley each described their own memories of the history of the extensive work to complete the project.

In spite of the rainy day, the group enjoyed walking the Trail, noting its beauty, its plant diversity, its excellent condition even after 25 years, and noted the newly installed ropes to designate the paths. However, concern was expressed that access to the Trail is challenging for wheelchair users because of the shoddiness of the short path leading to the Trail. BC Parks Area Supervisor Scott Donker committed to addressing that problem by improving the surface from the Lodge to the Trail.

Probably because it was a soggy Monday morning, few others were on the Trail. We did find a group of 10 from the West Vancouver Seniors Centre Ramblers, who were enthusiastic about their walk and about seeing so many uniformed BC Parks staff.

The BC Parks people themselves admitted that it was rare for 4 of them to be in the Cypress Provincial Park at the same time, given their work load.

The 2 km trail has been very popular during the past 25 years, especially with those looking for a shorter trek, because of its beauty, its botanical diversity and its picnic tables. It offers the most easily accessible subalpine old-growth forest and meadows in the Lower Mainland.

Park Projects and Trail Work

Baden-Powell Black Mountain to Eagle Bluff Trail

FCPP had previously donated \$40,000 to the improvement of the Black Mountain trail. Last year two reroutes were made around problem sections. This year the Student Rangers with Rangers Gareth Wheatley, Simon Debisschop and Eryk Chamberland built stairs over a deep mud hole that had heavy trail braiding around it. They also improved the reroute around the second steep rock section towards Eagle Bluff.



Alex Wallace describing history to Lesley, Anders and Park Rangers.



Lesley Bohm, Anders Ourom and BC Parks rangers and staff, at a picnic table donated by FCPP



Steps built over mud hole on Black Mountain Plateau

Dream Wizards

This season, the company Dream Wizards owned by Ted Tempany, famed for his weather-proof mountain bike trails, has been hired to work on the Black Mountain B-P trail. Along with the help of a small excavator and the hard labour of the workers many efficient drainage ditches have been dug, trail edges built up, huge boulders moved, culverts replaced and sections of the trail rerouted around the muddier areas; more work will be done next year.



Dream Wizards' work on Black Mountain B-P Trail by Sam and Theagill Lakes

Blue Gentian Lake Trail

Student Rangers worked on the board walks on this hike this summer. Rangers Erin Rutherford, Simon Debisschop and David Whiteside led the projects. Planks were carried in from the old West Lake Lodge site. The old broken and cracked boards by the lake were wrenched out and after a foundation was prepared, new planks and their supports were installed. David said there was a metre-long steel post holding a cross-bar in place; they had a great time levering it out. They also did some trail marking and brushing-out along the Lost Lake Trail.



Simon Debisschop and Student Rangers



David Whiteside and Student Rangers

Lost Lake Trail Work

This trail likely needs the most work of all the trails with its many seepage areas and seasonal streams. Paul Berlinguette and Fiona Wright have been labouring on this trail for years building bog bridges and clearing shrubs and debris from wind storms. Part of the trail going north after Stoney Creek needs rerouting, hopefully next year.



Paul Berlinguette on Lost Lake Trail

Howe Sound Crest Trail by Alex Wallace

The Howe Sound Crest Trail (HSCT) project went ahead very late in the third week of September. The trail crews then encountered extremely poor weather conditions, and it is unclear why they were delayed until after the four months of dry summer weather. We hope that the Howe Sound Crest Trail section out to St Marks Summit will be completed in the next three to four years, by using more of the summer months. However, some trail rebuilding was done, with a



Rare Earth Workers on HSCT

reroute built across the 'Preliminary Bump' of St Marks using gravel that was helicoptered in, and several sections including a bog bridge (using the last of our cedar boards) were rebuilt on Black Mountain Plateau before the work shut down on October 31st.

The Northern section of the Howe Sound Crest Trail at Km 29 was unexpectedly cut off by a mining closure in early June, the result of a local stonemason getting a permit to blow up basalt pillars on Kallahne Creek to use for fireplaces and barbecues. This Ministry of Mines 'Active Mining' closure order on the gravel road meant that the HSCT effectively was closed at the Porteau Road end. Alex Wallace was able to locate the old "abandoned" hiking trail in the area (built by a youth crew from the BC Corrections Porteau camp in about 1971) and with this assistance a corridor past the closed area was set up by BC Parks, in a liability agreement with the new owners of this area, Concord Pacific. The entire area was originally owned by BC Rail (i.e. the provincial government) for many years, and FCPP put forward a proposal in 1997 to Bob Dalziel, then Director of BC Parks that when BC Rail was sold, this land could be added to Cypress Provincial Park, connecting it to Porteau Cove Provincial Park to the north - instead of Cypress "ending" at Deeks Lake. However, it was then transferred to the Squamish Nation in a land swap, and Concord Pacific was engaged in a partnership to develop it into a new 'Mountainside Community' of 1400 homes, ironically called Porteau Cove. Other than a survey crew working in the area, there was no move to start construction, but we were assured by BC Parks that access through the new town would be guaranteed for hikers. It then appears that after roughly 20 years (of no construction), Concord Pacific exercised an obscure buyout clause in their agreement with the Squamish Nation and were able to get full ownership of these extensive lands for \$1 in 2017, with the BC Courts apparently agreeing, and the Squamish Nation deciding subsequently not to appeal the decision. Concord Pacific had argued in court that they had spent \$17 million in developing the site at Porteau, although there is arguably no evidence to show this, other than some old, tattered flagging tape. The old "abandoned" hiking trail section at Km 29 is now once again in use and is accessible from the well-maintained Porteau Road hiker parking lot at Kallahne Creek.



Porteau Lookout km 29 HSCT

SOME MEMORIES OF BLACK MOUNTAIN by Terry Taylor August 2019

Sixty years ago the expert on Black Mountain was Laurence McEwan in the British Columbia Mountaineering Club. He told me that he learned the routes on Black Mountain from Walter Cadillac. Both Laurence McEwan and Walter Cadillac have quite a few photographs in the first edition of 103 Hikes.

The BCMC had constructed a trail to the summit of Black Mountain in the 1920's. It started at one of the stations on the PGE. My mother had hiked part of the trail, probably around 1927 or 1928, but she did not go to the summit. This is not the same trail as presently goes from the highway near Horseshoe Bay. I still have some photographs she took there. I have tried to ascertain where it was located, and why it no longer exists, but have not been successful in finding that out. I have been able to find an article about its original construction in the BCMC Archives. For anyone who is interested in the history of the exploration of the North Shore mountains from 1907 onwards these records are well worth reading. They are kept at the North Vancouver Archives. They also used to be in the Northwest History collection at the Vancouver Public Library, but I do not know if they still have them.

Since my mother had told me about Black Mountain when I was in elementary school and I could see it from our house in Kitsilano, I had wanted to go there. In 1960 a friend's father directed me to Roy Mason in the BCMC. He told me that Laurence was the person to speak to, so I contacted Laurence. He drew me a map of how to get there. I have since given it to Don Grant of the Holybum Heritage Society, and it may be in the North Vancouver archives.

Laurence showed the little lakes on the plateau and gave the names used at the time by the mountaineering community. Cabin Lake was Paradise Lake, and before there was a trail here, it had a much more beautiful appearance than it does now. Theagill Lake was Long Lake. I was told by somebody that it is now named for Vic Adamo's daughters Thea and Gillian. He was a ranger for B.C. Parks. Sam Lake was Airplane Lake because of its shape. The lake with the island, farther along the plateau was Island Lake.

On Saturday September 3, 1960, with Laurence's map and two friends, I tried to hike to the summit of Black Mountain. We followed an old logging road from the highway near Horseshoe Bay, and then a well blazed trail to Nelson Creek. The trail was less distinct beyond Nelson Creek but still well marked. It took us to Donut Hill, but there were no markers beyond there. We were not able to find a way to the peak. Laurence told me that Donut Hill has that name because on one of the BCMC trips there, someone in the club had doughnuts for lunch. Since there was no name for the hill, they called it Donut Hill. Laurence had mentioned another route as well. Turn left at Nelson Creek and go up the talus slopes. Some of us tried this way on Tuesday September 6, 1960 and on Sunday July 16, 1961, and still did not get to the peak. I made fairly detailed notes of my hiking trips, which I still have, and can refer to them, and also have some photos from the talus slopes. Finally on Sunday August 20, 1961 we reached the peak of the rock slide route. It was an eleven and a half hour return trip. There was a cairn on the south summit, and we signed the book. The earliest record was from 1948.

On Sunday September 10, 1961 the BCMC had a trail cutting trip to complete the trail from Donut Hill to the summit. Myself and about six friends decided to go on this trip. It was led by June Barnish. She later married Paul Binkert who was also there. Laurence taped the route to the peak, and the group started clearing at Donut Hill. Part of the group was led by George Otto, the lichenologist at UBC, and worked on a connecting trail to Eagle Bluff. Bill Hughes and the North Shore Hikers worked on cutting a trail from Hollyburn Ridge. None of the groups actually completed their trail cutting, but we followed Laurence's tapes to the peak. Club members finished the trail to the peak a little later. The 2009 centennial edition of the B.C Mountaineer reprinted June's account of the trail cutting trip.

On Sunday May 19, 1963 the BCMC had a hike to Eagle Bluffs. It was led by Hugh Aikens. The trail did not go all the way to the main bluff, but some of us found the route there. I noted that it was covered by kinnikinnick, but did not realize at the time, what a unique habitat this was. I believe that Don Grant has Hugh Aiken's slides and has made a presentation with them. There may be some Black Mountain ones among them.

Because the original steep route of the trail beyond Nelson Creek was dangerous due to falling rocks, the trail was re-routed so that it crossed Nelson Creek lower down, and ascended across some talus areas directly to Eagle Bluff, instead of going to Donut Hill. I think Paul Binkert built this new section of trail. This is why the trail across the plateau goes to Eagle Bluff, with only a small indistinct side trail going to Donut Hill. The dangerous piece of trail from Nelson Creek to Donut Hill has been abandoned. The new Trail was called the Black Mountain



Eagle Bluff 2019

Skyline Trail. It was built in either 1969 or 1970. When I heard about it I followed it to Eagle Bluff on Sunday June 7, 1970. I noted just how impressive the site was, as it had not yet been impacted. It was like a meadow of kinnikinnick with lupines and wild strawberries. The lupines were very numerous and impressive. Laurence said this was the best area to collect wild strawberries that he had ever seen. Now it is bare rock, although there are remnants of the original habitat on the steep areas surrounding the bluff. I went on to the summit and the cairn had been removed and there was a 1964 bench mark. There is no longer a bench mark there. It has been removed and there is a small hole where the top of the survey pin was previously located.

I believe that the kinnikinnick slopes on the edge of Eagle Bluff should be considered a protected area by BC Parks. No trails or routes should be established there. It is the last remaining un-impacted part of Eagle Bluff. A vegetation survey should be done to ascertain what plants still occur there. The unique nature of the bluff was not that it contained rare species. It was a site where kinnikinnick, lupines, and strawberries occurred in much larger amounts than any other site I have visited. In its original condition when the flowers were blooming it was incredibly beautiful. In retrospect we should not have put the trail there. When you had to come from Horseshoe Bay the number of people who went there was not too great, but when Cypress Bowl Road was built the number of visitors was so great that the habitat is now only along the edges. So many places we built trails to have also been severely impacted. Leave only footprints means with a lot of people leave only rock.

A Tree for Katharine- North Shore Wetland Partners Honour Katharine Steig and Friends

Paul Berlinguette and Fiona Wright, two of our very hard working Trail Watchers, are also passionate members of North Shore Wetland Partners. Last year when Katharine Steig stepped down from the FCPP Board, they planted a tree beside the Yew Lake Trail to honour Katharine (they didn't tell her). This year, with some funds left over from their wetland projects, they decided to spend it on 11 more young yellow cedars, partly to decommission an old rerouted trail on the Yew Lake Loop, but principally to honour Katharine Steig and her friends for their decades of work for Cypress Provincial Park. From Langley they hauled these gorgeous young trees, by truck and wheel barrow along with sterilized soil and tools, to the dedicated spot. These trees were to honour Louise Irwin, Halvor Lunden, Alex Wallace, Mike and Kitty Castle, Lesley Bohm, Marshall Bauman, Eva Nagy, David Cook, John Beltz and Lynette Grants. What better presents for life-long naturalists than beautiful young trees. Thank you Paul and Fiona.



Katharine Steig, Eva Nagy, Fiona Wright, Paul Berlinguette, Anne Leathem *Yellow Cypress for Yew Lake Trail Restoration*

Pikas Once More

In the Spring 2018 Newsletter, David Cook wrote an article on pika in the North Shore mountains. These tiny creatures (*Ochotona priceps*) dwell in rock piles and talus at elevations of at least 800 metres and cannot survive at higher temperatures. They are a rabbit relative but have small round ears and no external tail. You see their small piles of grasses and flowers laid out on rocks to dry; this will be their winter fodder as they don't hibernate. It was thought that global warming might be threatening them. However, recent research in the USA indicated that disappearance from a den could occur because of their territorial ways. The parents send the offspring off into the world to find their own homes, so a given den may eventually become vacant until another wanderer claims it.



Pika with flowers Wikipedia

In 2017 and 2018 pikas were seen on the Upper Forks Ski run on Black Mountain.

This July 2019, two pikas were spotted several times by hiker Chris Rudden off the Panorama ski run on

Black Mountain several hundred metres from the 2017-2018 sightings. Their high-pitched alarm calls gave them away.

As David Cook reported, empty dens may be the result of population dynamics rather than present climate changes. Let's hope pikas hang on; it's so good to know they are still in Cypress Provincial Park.

FCPP Directors for 2019

President: Alex Wallace; Vice-President: Anne George;

Secretary: Anne Leathem;

Treasurer: Irene Miller,

Directors-at-large: David Cook, Eva Nagy, Lyn Grants, Bill Kinkaid, Gail Ross.

Advisor: Katharine Steig

Contact us at info@cypresspark.ca

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Your \$10 FCPP membership is for a one year period. If you wish to check your membership status for renewal, please contact Treasurer Irene Miller ivm3924@shaw.ca or Eva Nagy evnagy@shaw.ca

Please mail the membership form below or print out the “Join Us” form on www.cypresspark.ca Or you can renew directly at the AGM.

FCPP Directors greatly appreciate your support of the work our Society does to protect and enhance Cypress Provincial Park.

THANK YOU!

For membership in Friends of Cypress Provincial Park Society, please mail to:

Treasurer, Friends of Cypress Provincial Park Society Date: _____

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