



GORGETILLICUM

Neighbourhood NEWS



Tillicum Library

On Tuesday, April 13th, 2004 at Pearkes Recreation Centre, Victoria MP David Anderson announced that Saanich municipality had been granted \$2 million in

federal and provincial infrastructure funding towards the cost of building a new library branch in the Tillicum area.

Also on hand for the announcement were John Les, provincial Minister for Small Business and Economic Development, provincial MLA's Susan Brice and Sheila Orr, Saanich Mayor Frank Leonard, and Saanich councillors Jackie Ngai, Carol Pickup, Bob Gillespie and Leif Wergeland.

The cost of the new branch will be approximately \$3.1 million, with the remaining \$1.1 million coming from Saanich municipality (\$480,000) from its 10-year capital borrowing plan, and from RioCan (\$530,000) for amending the reciprocal parking agreement with Saanich at Tillicum Centre.

The new facility is being proposed as a "Library of the Future" with state of the art equipment, which could include a computer training centre, designated internet stations, a digital reference centre, and possibly a fibre-optic connection to Saanich Municipal Hall

The new branch will be a vital addition to the community, as the Greater Victoria Public Library has stated that Saanich is underserved for library services, and the Tillicum area in particular would benefit from a new facility. Demographic data shows that the number of children in the Tillicum area aged 0-4 with active library cards, and children aged 0-5 borrowing books are both at the bottom percentile in the GVPL system.

Also, Tillicum residents rely to a high degree on branches outside Saanich, with 50% borrowing material elsewhere compared to 21% on average, and usage at 13.4 users is well below the average of 19.9 users per 1000 population.

The model is based on the very successful Ironwood branch in Richmond which is located in a busy shopping mall. The new facility will be located at the Pearkes Recreation Centre, and four possible sites were shown at public meetings last September. The final choice for location will be chosen soon, and the new branch is expected to be opened in 2006 in time for Saanich's centennial celebrations. — **Harry Lewis**

Inside This Issue

- 1 Tillicum Library
- 2 A Word from The President
- 3 Gorge Canada Day Picnic
Voices - Notes on Voting & Elections
- 4 News From Tillicum Centre
The Green Space
- 5 The Green Space
- 6 Voices
Of Days Gone By
- 7 Local Heroes
West Gorge Transportation
Committee
- 8 G.R. Pearkes Recreation Centre
What will happen to Hampton
School?



GORGETILLICUM

**Gorge-Tillicum
Neighbourhood News**

We welcome comments—please let us know what you think of your newsletter!

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Do you have experience maintaining websites? Please contact: Ray Farmer 382-1122

**Gorge Tillicum
Community Association
Membership**

GTCA memberships run Jan. to Dec. at a cost of \$5.00 for individuals and \$25.00 for businesses.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Mail to: GTCA, PO Box 44152,
2947 Tillicum Rd., Victoria, BC V9A 2A0.

a word from the **president**

Recent events in Gorge / Tillicum demonstrate that this area is a vibrant and healthy community, with many exciting projects and ideas taking shape.

Tillicum Centre has become our " Village Centre " with \$7 million spent adding Old Navy and Linens n' Things stores, \$2 million renovations to Pearkes Recreation Centre about to begin, and \$3 million to build a new library branch to open in time for Saanich's Centennial celebrations in 2006.

Also, Saanich has just been awarded a second federal / provincial infrastructure grant for its 2006 Centennial Trails project, focussing mainly on the Interurban Trail, which connects to the Colquitz Linear Park and Trail in our area.

Colquitz School is due to open this year, and has a shared agreement with Pearkes Recreation Centre for the community to use space, equipment and facilities after school hours.

The GTCA Transportation Committee was awarded a Saanich Community Matching Grant to distribute and collate survey data to present to Saanich to identify traffic issues in our community.

The steering committee on the Tillicum/Burnside Action Plan will continue to work on issues and oppor-

tunities in land use and transportation along the Tillicum / Burnside corridors. A very successful charrette process was held last October in partnership with Saanich, Smart Growth BC and the GTCA, and the finished document will be incorporated into the Action Plan to help in directing that process.

Landscaping and sidewalk improvements will continue at Kosapsom Park and Gorge Waterway Park, and there will be improved signage and neighbourhood maps created on the Colquitz River Trail.

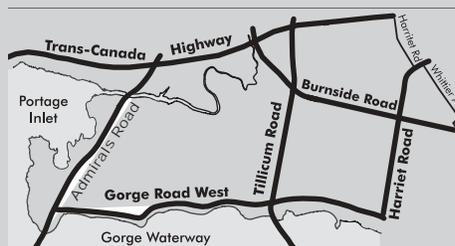
As part of Saanich Community Arts Awareness week recently, there was an organized tour of artists' studios in the Gorge / Tillicum neighbourhood, which will probably be expanded on in future years.

The 6th annual Gorge Canada Day Picnic will be held on July 1st, an event that just keeps getting better every year....see you all there !

Finally, at the GTCA AGM on May 13th, 2004, a new board was elected , with 13 diverse and committed volunteers wanting to help our community grow and improve. Without these dedicated people, neighbourhoods would not thrive, so my thanks to all of them for taking ownership of this community, and for wanting to contribute to its success.

Regards,
Paul Gerrard.

Gorge Tillicum Community Association www.gorgetillicum.ca



GTCA Board of Directors 2003/2004

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The Board meets the first Thursday of each month, September to June, at Pearkes Recreation Centre. All members are welcome to attend!

Local Heroes Ernie Yakimovich



Erne Yakimovich is not a resident of the Gorge Tillicum neighbourhood, but he has developed a strong commitment to the area as his business is located at the busy intersection of Burnside and Tillicum. Ernie has run EY Properties for over 30 years and it has grown into a highly successful property management business for commercial and residential holdings.

I met Ernie for the first time at the Tillicum Burnside charrette held last October. During an intensive weekend approximately 20 people representing local residents, business, property owners and Saanich municipality deliberated on the possibilities of how the living and working spaces on Tillicum and Burnside Roads might be transformed in the future. I was teamed up with Ernie and could not have been more im-

pressed by his enthusiasm and energy for the community. It is businessmen like Ernie who may be the catalysts in changing the nature of these major streetscapes, and it was great to see him so invigorated and involved.

Recently Ernie was voted Business Leader of the Year at the C-FAX Community Awards. Besides his successful business Ernie has helped out causes at home and abroad. He supports athletes in association with Pacific Sports and has donated space to groups helping with Third World charity projects. In his spare time he is actively involved in the Van.Is. Porsche Club.

The Community Association looks forward to working in partnership with local hero Ernie Yakimovich.

— By Harry Lewis



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West Gorge Transportation Committee Report

The committee is busy tabulating the results from the transportation surveys it has received so far. A total of approximately 1140 surveys were distributed and to date 220 surveys have been returned- many thanks to those who did so. We appreciated the time many people spent in setting out their ideas and concerns.

A preliminary report on the surveys and other information will be available at the GTCA membership tent on July 1st at the 6th Annual Canada Day Picnic. If for some reason you haven't had the opportunity to fill in a survey yet it's not too late, as we'll have additional copies at the membership tent. Or, if the survey is still sitting in your 'to-do' pile, please complete it and send it in as soon as possible.

Your feedback is very important, as it enables us to gauge the sentiments of the residents in the area

— by **John Hoole**

If you have any questions, or if you would like to join the committee or help in any way, please contact

Donna Roth 388-7039 donnaroth@shaw.ca
or John Hoole 386-7458 jhoole@spca.bc.ca



A Penny for your thoughts

Is there a need demand for seniors' housing in the neighborhood?

Ernie Yakimovich, a builder with deep roots in the community, wants to know the answer to this question. **Discussion:** Silver Threads Centre, 286 Hamplon Rd **June 23, 1:30pm OR June 24, 1:30pm**

Learn about seniors' housing developments in the Victoria area and share your ideas with Ernie.

There will be coffee and cookies and a draw for a \$50 Safeway gift certificate. Please call Denise at 361-3690 to reserve!

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Voices

GTCA - REFLECTIONS ON FIVE YEARS ('99 - '04)

It was five years ago in May that a number of us joined together to create the Gorge Tillicum Community Association, born out of the former ratepayers group. In the time since I think we can say with some certainty that our efforts to improve the quality of life in the neighbourhood have borne some fruit. Some of the accomplishments over the years have been - establishing a great community newsletter, seeing to completion the Waterway Park all the way to Tillicum Rd.; hosting all candidates meetings at elections; initiating the Tillicum / Burnside Action Plan and cohosting the charrette on the future of these roadways; successfully lobbying for a library at Pearkes; and of course our banner event, the annual Gorge Canada Day Picnic.

We have done our best to represent the interests of Gorge Tillicum and have endeavoured to be proactive rather than reactive in all of our affairs. This positive approach has gone a long way to building good relationships with Saanich Council and staff.

The Association has been really fortunate in attracting some very good people to its Board of Directors and I'm happy to say that this tradition continues with the new directors voted in at the recent AGM.

We have built a strong Community Association in Gorge Tillicum and I hope you will continue to support us by joining as members and finding a way to be involved.

— Harry Lewis, Past President

Of Days Gone By



Craigflower Schoolhouse catches your eye as you cross the Gorge. Square and bright, accented with blue trim and nestled in a frame of soft greens. On second look though, the roof is decidedly swaybacked and on the inside the tilt of the floors can bring on a touch of sea sickness.

Despite its sags its amazing the schoolhouse survives at all.

Robert Melrose, reports on Monday, July 21, 1854, that "Gideon and his Gang commenced to build and School, and Schoolhouse." By Saturday, September 23 the "School-house frame is erected...", but the "...whole company in general notoriously drunk." The schoolhouse is completed by February 20th, 1855 with the schoolmaster, Charles Clark and his wife moving in on March 2nd.

By 1862 though, Craigflower's second schoolmaster, Henry Claypole, reports, "The buildings and premises are in so dilapidated a condition as to make it a question of whether the present house ought to be repaired or a new house built". Despite regular pleas from Claypole, it takes until 1865 for the His Excellency the Governor to authorize the necessary funds - \$60!

By 1870 the foundation is giving way and in 1872 a visiting school superintendent reports that the schoolhouse is "...exceedingly dilapidated and almost past repair." The next year the new Provincial Government spends \$1,125 on repairs.

With the closing of the school in 1911 time takes its toll and by 1925 "the schoolhouse building was in a very deteriorated condition." Fortunately for us today the Native Sons and Daughters of British Columbia step forward to take responsibility for Craigflower Schoolhouse. In 1927 they take steps crucial to its survival: they add a new roof and a new foundation.

At critical moments throughout its history someone has stepped forward to ensure the survival of Craigflower. In 2003 it was the Land Conservancy's turn. With the help of our members, volunteers and the community, TLC is committed to ensure that the oldest standing schoolhouse in western Canada and neighbouring Craigflower Manor are standing for a very long time to come. This summer you may notice work being done on Craigflower Manor as we replace some window sills and siding and paint the exterior.

We also want to make the stories of Melrose, and Claypole and Gideon and his gang live again. Until the end of September, Wednesday through Sunday afternoons both the Schoolhouse and Manor are open and our volunteer room stewards share the fascinating history of Craigflower with our visitors.

If you'd like to become more involved with the protection and presentation of Craigflower a call please contact TLC at 250.479.8053.



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Gorge Canada Day Picnic

The Naden Band is Coming!



We are quickly coming up on another Canada Day Picnic and we look forward to an even bigger and better event. Last year was superb with many happy faces amid the variety of activities going on up and down the Waterway. This year all the old favourites are back, plus some great new features!

We are very pleased to announce that the MARITIME FORCES PACIFIC NADEN BAND will be joining us for Canada Day on the Gorge this year for the first time. Over many years the Naden Band has established a reputation for musical excellence, and to have them as our guests on Canada Day will be a special treat. We anticipate that the band will play as part of our opening ceremony so come early, have some pancakes and get a good seat for the best concert in town on July 1st.

Another new feature this year is a wild seafood barbeque at the new park area beyond the Canoe and Kayak Club. This is being put on by a variety of west coast fishers who are dedicated to preserving our wild seafood stocks. Come out and enjoy great seafood, meet the people involved and support a good cause. The barbeque will begin around 11am.

Again we'd like to invite everyone to 'dress Canadian' and join in the Canada Day parade at 9am. We have

some neighbourhood streets that come down together and make a party of it, so why not grab the folks on your block and join in. And to the residents on Gorge Rd we invite you to decorate for the day and make the paraders welcome.

Preliminary schedule of Picnic events

8:30am	Pancake Breakfast at Kosapsom Park
9:00am	Canada Day parade begins at Gorge and Tillicum
10:00am	Opening Ceremonies at Kosapsom Park
10:30am	Stage entertainment begins (Naden Band, Sweet Adelines /Esquimalt High Jazz/ Flamenco dancers/ Uminari Taiko drummers/ ME Smith) Canada Day Artisans Market Classic car display Canoe rides
11:00am	Music in the park (Gorge @Tillicum)
Noon	Wild seafood Barbeque Waterway Park at Canoe & Kayak Club Kids Games/ Bike rodeo/ Road hockey
1:30pm	Strawberry Tea at Canoe and Kayak Club
4:00 pm	Wrap up!

Traffic Reminder

Gorge Rd West will be closed to traffic from 8am to 6pm on Thursday, July 1st. Residents are asked to remove parked cars from Gorge Rd for the day. Cars should be parked on the sidestreets for access and exit purposes.

Traffic arrangements for the event have been coordinated with Saanich police and engineering and we thank area residents for their cooperation on this special day.

Voices

NOTES ON VOTING AND ELECTIONS

1. We are in the midst of a federal election. While the association is not able to host an all candidates forum due to time constraints in organizing the Picnic, we do urge you to exercise your right to vote on election day June 28th - if you don't vote you give the power to those who do!
2. During this summer and fall a most important debate is going on in B.C.

The Citizens Assembly on Electoral Reform is reviewing our provinces electoral system. Should the Assembly recommend a change, perhaps to some form of proportional representation, then this will be the subject of a referendum at the same time as the next provincial election in May 2005.

For further information visit www.citizensassembly.bc.ca

— Harry Lewis

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News From Tillicum Centre



Through its recent expansion and redevelopment project, Tillicum Centre is thrilled to have recently welcomed two exciting and exclusive retailers to Vancouver Island. Old Navy opened for business for the first time over the May long weekend. There were an estimated 11,000 excited shoppers through the doors on opening day – an unconfirmed record for Old Navy store openings! Linens 'n Things is due to open in about a month in the later part of June.

This project, in addition to bringing over 200 full and part-time jobs into our community, has transformed Arena Road and the formerly unutilized parking areas at the south east corner of the property. In addition a meandering pathway lined with trees connects this parking area to the new stores. Improvements to the

parking areas for Pearkes Arena will service an increasingly busy community centre for many years to come.

The ever popular Most Photogenic Baby Contest takes place at Tillicum Centre from June 7-30th so you'll want to be sure to check it out before our winners are announced at the Awards Ceremony on June 30th. We'll have a summer full of savings with our Summer Sidewalk Clearance Event taking place from July 9th to 18th.

RioCan Real Estate Investment Trust thanks the community for allowing us to contribute to area improvements such as the G.R. Pearkes Library Branch project and to participate in activities such as the Gorge Canada Day Picnic. We wish you all a wonderful community celebration on our nation's birthday. Happy Canada Day! — Laura Poland

“Solitudo is Latin for nature. In true solitude, you remember yourself as a part of everything, a part of nature.” – Bill Potkin, Soulcraft

Thanks to Colquitz students Discovery 8 class – by Leona Smith

For the second year in a row, the Discovery 8 class at Colquitz Jr. Secondary School has pitched in to remove garbage from Colquitz Creek. In conjunction with Saanich Parks Youth week, the students were studying the environment. They then decided to do a creek clean up in Colquitz River Park, from where the creek crosses under Interurban Road down to Tillicum Mall. In one session, they pulled five green garbage bags full from the area. The litter consisted mainly of paper and plastic fast food wrappers. However they did encounter one shopping cart.

Teacher Kelda Cobham reports that the students feel good after contributing to cleaning up the environment in this way. Thanks again!

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PEMBERTON HOLMES

The Green Space

Natural History of Portage Inlet - Introduction



Portage Inlet and the Upper Gorge define most of our community boundaries.

This article introduces a series of 4 articles that will look at the many factors that created and affect today's Portage Inlet and our role in maintaining its health and viability.

We enjoy the flow of the water, the rites of passage of the herring and salmon, the annual bird migrations as well as the residents. But do you know how unusual this body of water is along our coast? Do we understand how the geography and physiology of the Upper Gorge and Portage Inlet determine what kinds of plants and animals can thrive here? If we want to live with less impact on our waterways, some understanding can help us measure our effects on our environment. And besides: it's just neat landscape!

So, what's so unusual about Portage Inlet and the Gorge? It is one of only a few extremely restricted-flow fjords on the Pacific North American coast that were formed by the retreat of the glaciers about 12,000 years ago.

This type of fjord is characterised by a narrow tidal channel that connects the open ocean with a landlocked basin. The channel restricts the exchange of seawater between the basin and the open ocean. In different climates, this can lead to curious effects, such as salt basins. In the north, the weather is not as hot or dry as it can be here, so evaporation is less.

Portage Inlet has a high degree of evaporation and heat capture relative to its volume. This concentrates the salt in the water so that the water is very salty and tropically warm in the summer. But in the winter, the rain makes it only partly salty and nearly freezing. This is a rare and tough ecological niche that can be exploited by many unexciting plants and animals, but less so by resident fish.

In following articles, we will discuss how the bedrock geology, shaped by the grinding action of the glaciers, formed the channels and basins that are now filled with water and sediment. Since the final retreat of the glaciers, the sea level changes have also affected the sedimentation of the basins. Did you know that Portage Inlet was dry land then a fresh-water peat swamp until only 5470 years ago? We will also look at water chemistry as affected by the annual climate variations. These variations are the defining aspect of what kinds of life can live and prosper in and on Portage Inlet. We will see what types of plants and animals make up the Portage Inlet biological community.

Keep reading the Newsletter for the next exciting chapter....

Remember the Gorge Outfall Testing?

As you take your walk along the beautiful Gorge Waterway, remember to look closely. The health of the water depends in great measure on what goes into it and what goes into it comes from several outfalls along its course. There are still two areas where outfalls are being tested by members of our community. One is an outfall near the ferry landing below the Tillicum Bridge and the other is behind the Tillicum Mall. We test by regularly checking the area around the outfall for general debris, noting the temperature of the air and water, measuring the pH (a check of an acid or base content), and the amount of oxygen in a sample. All of these tests are done according to a protocol using a standard kit. The skills are easily learned.

We would hope to do this testing 2-4 times a month on an on-going basis, but are short of the volunteers required. If you are interested, call Chuck or Judy Sigmund at 384-3841.

Know Any Local Environmental News?

If you know of any environmental news specific to the Gorge-Tillicum area, let us know! E-mail the Green Space coordinator at julia@makeandbelieve.com with a news idea or story. 300 word limit, next deadline Sept 20.



Sheila Orr
MLA, Victoria-Hillside

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WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO HAMPTON SCHOOL?

Hampton elementary school at 231 Regina Avenue will close at the end of this June term, one of five schools the Greater Victoria School District decided to shut down in a decision made last spring. Current students from kindergarten to Grade 4 will go to Tillicum or McKenzie elementary, while Grade 5 - 7 will go to the new Colquitz middle school.

Demographics showing a decline in enrolment may warrant the closure of a neighbourhood school, but what happens to Hampton after it is closed is causing concern in our community.

The School District has hired Colliers International as their agent to secure a tenant or tenants in an attempt to lease the school premises.

Earlier this year, the School board stated that ... "At a minimum, costs to the District must be covered. Preference will be given to uses that result in enhanced operating funds for educational programs. Priority will be given to community-based proposals that build or enhance the public good. Preference will be given to initiatives which have been developed collaboratively with community and demonstrate a strong level of community support."

The GTCA will watch closely to see that the School board follows this policy. This is a valuable community resource, and could be turned into a wellness centre, or different stakeholder groups could combine to form an Arts Centre, perhaps with a commercial component to help finance projects and programs.

Whatever, the last thing we want is to have a boarded-up and abandoned facility in our neighbourhood.

— Paul Gerrard.

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At the Centre

G.R. PEARKES RECREATION CENTRE

Community Access Coming to Colquitz

Coming this fall...the new Colquitz School will open and officially change to a designated middle school. In partnership with Saanich Recreation, seven spaces within the new school have been designated 'community access'. What does this mean for you? Programs will be created and offered at Colquitz School during after school hours for you to participate in. Another great opportunity to 'recreate' close to home.

After 48 years, Colquitz School will come to the ground this summer and in its place the new school's sport field will be placed. The 'new' Colquitz will host a double gymnasium, woodworking and metal shop, dance studio with sprung floor, a foods and clothing lab, a music room, an art room and a multipurpose classroom. These specialty spaces will be accessible through a designated community entry point for community security and convenience.

...Curious to know what will be offered at Colquitz in September? People have been talking and we are listening. Here are some ideas of what will be happening in your community school; drop-in adult sports

such as basketball, badminton and volleyball, adult sport leagues, jazzercise for teens and adults, karate, aikido, Punjabi Dance and language classes, many cultural cooking classes, a youth drumming program, and yes many more Karen Clark Dance classes. How do you register? Treat Colquitz as another amazing Saanich Recreation Centre... all Colquitz programs will be listed in the Saanich Active Living Guide available August 18th in your Saanich news for the August 21st registration date. If you have any ideas for your new community facility, give us a call. We would love to talk with you. We look forward to seeing you at Colquitz this fall!

Sharing the Possibilities with you,

Mena Westhaver
Recreation Programmer, Colquitz School
The Pearkes Recreation Centre
388-6664

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