

# SITELINES

Bimonthly Publication of The British Columbia Society of Landscape Architects



## THEN AND NOW

Life • Philip Tattersfield • History • Tribute • Standards • Victoria • Terra Nova

August 2008

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The purpose of *Sitelines* is to provide an open forum for the exchange of ideas and information pertaining to the profession of Landscape Architecture. Individual opinions expressed are those of the writers and not necessarily of those of the BCSLA.



*Cover Image:*  
 Left to right: Ellen and Phil Tattersfield with Carmen Côté at the BCSLA Edwardian Garden Party at Aberthau circa. 1979. Photo by Harry J. Webb.

# EDITOR'S DESK

## ...on the patio

BY JANE GREEN

I guess I must be in a contemplative state of mind, possibly induced by the warm summer breeze wafting across my patio, or perhaps my impending birthday. People I have known or would have liked to have known have been in my thoughts, as I watch, in a moment of summer timelessness, yellow and black winged butterflies, bluebottles and dragonflies float by on the same breeze.

In this issue we remember Philip Tattersfield and his contribution to the BCSLA beginning with its formation in the wake of his recent death. His story is so interesting and Don Vaughan and Blair Guppy offer some thoughts on the man and his life. His place in the history of BCSLA is set in context, along with other early contributors to the Society, in an article entitled 'The Lives of our Time' which was written for the 2004 *Sitelines* Annual.

I was also thinking about some of the volunteers that I know, who, along with the constancy and on-going support of Tara Culham, make the organization that he helped start, run. I attended the UBC MLA program with both our current president Blair Guppy, and past president Dave Thompson, and would like to personally acknowledge Dave Thompson for his hard work steering the society last year and to thank them both for the work they have done and continue to do to further the interests of landscape architecture in BC and the BCSLA.

I was looking for inspiration for this issue in the previous ones that I had kept (many of which are available on line at [sitelines.org](http://sitelines.org)), and couldn't help noticing the number of times Adrienne Brown, Clive Justice and Pawel Gradowski have contributed articles, along with so

many others. I also came across a poem that Philip Tattersfield wrote for his friend John Neill and I enjoyed looking at the direction and content over the past few years, marvelled at the well crafted writing of past contributors and revelled in how the covers have become brighter.

I would like to encourage all our members to consider contributing articles to *Sitelines*. Each of you has a story to tell, and interest to share, a field of expertise that can be explained, and a myriad of different voices make any issue more interesting and exciting to read.

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Philip Tattersfield. Photo: Fred Brooks, MBCSLA #050

## PHILIP WALTER TATTERSFIELD 1917-2008

*Reflections on a life become reflections of our past*

With the recent passing of Philip Tattersfield, BCSLA founder and Member No.1, I am compelled to speak on behalf of all BCSLA members and offer our thanks. Despite having never met Mr. Tattersfield, I feel a great deal of respect for and affiliation with the values and beliefs that he asserted on a long standing tradition of professional practice. Perhaps there is also the connection I feel with having spent most of my life on the North Shore, growing up in a home and garden that Heinz Burger, another founding member of the BCSLA, invested so much time and energy into with my parents. A small but welcoming community, there is an unspoken sense of kinship that resides there amongst all who share in its topographical and natural splendour - a connection with and an affinity that is born of landscape in its most raw form. Phil and others forged the field of Landscape Architecture with meticulous determination not only here but regionally and provincially - sculpting what has become a professional legion of 367 strong. Our many parks, open spaces and regional transportation corridors have matured with silent reverence. It is this tradition and growing following that continue to take the field of Landscape Architecture above and beyond borders and disciplines.

A pleasantly uplifting service in West Vancouver at St. Christopher's Anglican Church, 18 July 2008, was attended by a

stoic group of family, friends, and fellow Landscape Architects. There is a feeling of sadness, and at the same time celebration, that occurs as we reflect on the passing of 'one of our own'. I did not need to know Phil Tattersfield in person to experience the sense of loss that was likely felt by all who did. This loss is a reminder of our place in time - a time to be the best we can possibly be, carrying forward his legacy along with the historical knowledge that is embodied within our Society. Thoughtful reflections on Phil as a person were made by the Venerable Lou Rivers, Don Vaughan, and one of Phil's closest friends Ian (Mick) Hayward. A gentleman of honour and determination, it was obvious that Phil had left a truly positive impression on all those who met him, those who knew him - even those who had never met him, but like me attended his service.

There is a strange feeling that I experience as I reflect on the Society that I - we - belong to. Would Landscape Architecture in British Columbia exist as it does today without the vision and determination this one man had? Would I have had the opportunities to explore a world beyond the visual - truly engaging the experiential and spatial qualities of this place we call British Columbia without the 'collateral' and subsequent events that have occurred since? Perhaps. However, the respect that we as Landscape Architects carry with us today,

and in which our efforts are held, are to be attributed to this one man in some small way. It is with the retiring of BCSLA member #1 that we are all offered a time to reflect on where we have each come from individually, and collectively.

It is with sincerest respect and gratitude that I would like to offer my personal thanks, on behalf of all BCSLA members, to Phil Tattersfield, and our condolences to his family.



Philip in Belgium. Photo: Fred Brooks, MBCSLA #050

# On Philip Tattersfield

FROM DON VAUGHAN, MBCSLA, FCSLA, FASLA

*Don Vaughan spoke at Philip Tattersfield's memorial service and some of his comments follow:*

When Phil came to BC in 1952 landscape architecture was being practiced by a diverse number of people. The profession was not well defined. Phil's first attempt to provide organization began after he met with a chapter of the American Institute of Landscape Architecture in Seattle. This followed with the forming of the BC Chapter of the American Institute of Landscape Architecture in 1959, which quickly evolved into the British Columbia Society of Landscape Architects. Phil's British background and his experience as a Quartermaster in the British Army in World War II taught him that to get recognition and respect landscape architecture would have to be a recognized professional organization. If I were to have asked Phil what his most lasting contribution was, he would have probably told me it was his role in the design and planning of some of the large scale projects he was involved in around the country, or he might have pointed out with pride some of the groves of mature trees he was responsible for. But as important as these were his greatest contribution was in establishing the Landscape Architects Act. Today it still stands as the best written legislation governing landscape architects written in Canada.

As Clive Justice told me, Phil knew how to put this together and he was the one of us that understood politics. He did all of the work himself. In 1968, with the help of Grace McCarthy, MLA, Phil got the Act passed through the Legislature as a Private Member's Bill, one of the very few of this kind. When the Member's Seals were handed out, Phil assigned number 1 to himself.

In the 1970s Phil represented Canada as the CSLA Representative on the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) and in 1978 he was inducted into the CSLA College of Fellows.



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The following is a reprint of part of an article that was written for the 2004 *Sitelines Annual* to provide insight into the formative years of Landscape Architecture in BC and the BCSLA and it included brief profiles of several notable early members including Member No. 1, Philip Tattersfield.

# Lives of Our Time

BY TARA CULHAM  
NOVEMBER 24, 2003

*We have tried to provide a history of the Society, our Members and the profession with the hope that it will give readers a window on the past and an open door to the future. Of course there were many people who, then and now, volunteer their time, energy and expertise to the BCSLA but unfortunately due to space constraints they could not be included here.*

*We thank Halina Babkowski, Clive Justice, Kenneth Morris and Philip Tattersfield for their invaluable assistance and excellent memories.*

The first known BC landscape architect and town planner was Thomas Mawson who hailed from England. In 1911, he established his firm in the Rogers Building that is still on Granville Street in Vancouver today. Mawson was visiting Vancouver when the Park Commissioner heard a speech he was giving and hired him to design the Brockton Point Lighthouse in Stanley Park. He went on to develop the plan for Lost Lagoon that the then-park board superintendent never used. In 1915 Mawson closed his office and moved out of the province.

In the 1920's Frank Buck was the Horticulture Advisor for the Municipality of Point Grey and began the plans for the University of

BC. In 1928 he was responsible for the planting of the silver maples that adorn University Boulevard.

Desmond Muirhead was the second BC landscape architect who began his professional life in Vancouver in 1948 soon after he graduated from the University of BC Plant Pathology program, having studied engineering at Cambridge prior to World War II. Muirhead and Hans Fischer (trained in horticulture) established a firm and began preparing landscape plans for gardens in the postwar period developing single-family residences. This was the first professional landscape architectural practice west of Winnipeg that was not connected to a nursery or landscape contracting firm. By 1949 Muirhead and Fischer had been established for over a year. William Livingstone, Vancouver Parks Foreman, and his assistant, Ernie Pitt had just finished building the Quarry Garden in Queen Elizabeth Park. Raoul Robillard's Butchart Gardens had been a popular attraction for more than a decade. In 1951-52 only a few landscape architects practiced in BC, and in 1953 talk began about forming a society under the province's Societies Act.

In 1955, some of the people involved in either, design, construction or nursery stock production banded together to form the BC Landscape Association, which evolved in to what we know as the BC Landscape and Nursery Association today.

Muirhead incorporated his firm in Kerrisdale in 1959 and Clive Justice arrived on the scene. Heinz Berger and Inar Brodersen were principals in another landscape architecture firm and subsequently went on to separate distinguished careers; Berger as the first landscape architect to be Vancouver Parks Superintendent and Brodersen to serve as BCSLA's first

Secretary and Registrar. A new landscape architect by the name of Philip Tattersfield had just set up a small firm in downtown Vancouver around the same time. Muirhead and Associates became Muirhead and Justice Landscape Architects. About that time John Lantzus' firm was working with Arthur Erickson and Geoffrey Massey on the University of Victoria and the University of BC campuses.

Tattersfield was the American Institute of Landscape Architects Member-at-Large. He endeavored to interest fellow practitioners in AILA membership with the intention of forming a BC Chapter. The reaction proved to be mixed but a temporary chapter was formed in 1960 with funding from AILA. The inaugural meeting was held early in 1961 and the first organization of BC landscape architects was born with twelve Members. The BC Society of Landscape Architects was officially incorporated on April 20, 1964.

Due to the chronic lack of trained horticultural and landscape personnel in BC it was decided by the Society in 1963, together with the then BC vocational institute and the Department of Labour Apprenticeship Branch, to develop a course for those wishing to become superintendents in the various horticultural fields.

Together with members of the BC Nursery Trades Association, society members sat with government officials and produced a curriculum for a landscape gardening course. The two-year course, given at the BC Institute of Technology, produced technicians capable of doing estimates for landscape contractors and design staff for landscape architect offices.

Largely through the Society's efforts in the educational field, there was encouragement



to again seek the aid of the provincial government in obtaining a "Title Act" that would restrict the use of the term Landscape Architect to the society's members.

Though always a contentious idea – that of a closed shop – society members were encouraged by the provincial Minister of Trade and Commerce to pursue the idea. Since the professional architects' act had a clause which specifically excluded landscape architects, it was felt the prospects of success were good. Formal application was made to the legislature in 1967, and "The Landscape Architects' Act" was passed by the legislature on April 6, 1968.

The act limited the use of the term Landscape Architect to members in good standing of the BCSLA. Any person using the term and not a member in good standing was liable to penalties under the law. An examining board was set up by the legislature to conduct exams twice a year with the first sitting in December 1968.

At that point the BCSLA had a membership of 26 of which 20 were working full time in an area of 1 1/4 million population. This was an approximate ratio of one landscape architect for every 65,000 people. At that time in the USA there was approximately one landscape architect for every 100,000 persons.

The Society was very active right from the beginning. They strongly opposed (successfully) certain freeway routings through Vancouver and particularly Stanley Park. Charter Members made representations to the newly formed regional parks board which governed land acquisition in the Fraser River Valley. They took up many issues that had an impact on BC and made a difference.

BCSLA appointed its first two honorary members in 1968. The first person recognized was Roberto Burle Marx, a Brazilian who worked on Brasilia when it was named the new Brazilian capital city and the second was Professor Frank Buck who designed the beautiful UBC campus in the 1920's.

In the mid 1960's Eunice Campbell Purdy (#015) joined the Society, as the first female

member, after receiving a visit from Clive Justice, John Neill and Philip Tattersfield at her Christina Lake cabin. In 1969, the first year of BCSLA operations under the Landscape Architects Act, the pre-examination candidates included Don Vaughan, Art Cowie and Dan Matsushita. The same year Justice and Muirhead changed to Justice and Webb when Harry J. Webb came on board. Art Cowie brought practitioners from allied fields into his newly established firm Ecos that worked on important projects all over BC.

In the 1970's and 1980's one of the key firms in Vancouver was Don Vaughan and Associates, which included Jeff Philips, Ron Rule and Richard Pavelek. The firm's projects included a network of Skytrain stations, urban plazas and fountains all over Vancouver. The firm evolved over the years with Philips, Rule and Pavelek setting up their own successful practices. Kim Perry and Jane Durante were also part of these alumni. Vaughan brought all of his past associates and partners together in 1984 to work on Expo 86, one of Vancouver's largest landscape architecture projects. It was during this time that Cornelia Oberlander and Kenneth Morris were working with Arthur Erickson on the Museum of Anthropology and Robson Square.

In 1982 Ray Visser established L.A. West Landscape Architects in Kamloops. He worked on projects ranging in size from residential design to downtown revitalization. Tony Bradwell joined the multi-disciplinary firm of Urban Systems in Kamloops in 1985. That same year Larry Foster was working in the Planning Department for the City of Kelowna after working for Parks Canada designing plans for the Village of Lake Louise and projects in Banff National Park.

In 1970 the BCSLA saw membership numbers grow to over 100 including more than ten firms with multiple members. By 1979, there had been a decade when landscape architecture in BC obtained equal status in BC with other professions like architecture and engineering. Landscape architects even enjoyed a place on environmental

restoration and development teams. The BCSLA/BCNTA BC Landscape Standard was the first in Canada for construction specifications for hard and soft landscaping and became an integral part of the Construction Specifications of Canada.

Also in 1979 the University of British Columbia began offering its first landscape architecture program with a modest-sized class. In 1980 Patrick Miller, Larry Diamond and Doug Paterson joined the faculty. Throughout the 1980's and the 1990's the profession of landscape architecture continued to thrive and a dedicated group of volunteers ran the Society.

By the early nineties BCSLA Members were having an impact with their work on important design projects such as Coal Harbour, False Creek and on advisory design panels. In 1994 the City of Vancouver Planning Department commissioned landscape architects to draw guidelines for greenways and parks.

The Landscape Architectural Project (LAP) began in 1996 as part of a three-step process. BCSLA's work to modernize and update the profession's governance, from registration and reciprocity, to communications and continuing education, is now at the profession's leading edge in Canada. In 2003 BCSLA drafted a request for updated legislation to the Title Act that would provide for effective and accountable regulation of the profession of landscape architecture into the future. The Society continues to work with the provincial government to bring the updated legislation in to effect.

Today, BCSLA has Members in five provinces, two territories, eight US states and four continents. They live and work in the interior cities such as Kamloops, Kelowna, Revelstoke and Salmon Arm. There are firms flourishing up and down Vancouver Island and in the Lower Mainland. Landscape architects are taking the lead on projects in the northern regions of the province from the hubs of Prince George and Fort St. John. This is just part of the story of landscape architecture and the BCSLA in BC. ▶



# Philip Tattersfield,

RCA, LMBCSLA, FCSLA

Philip Tattersfield (#001-L) was born in London, England in 1917. He served in World War II in Africa, the Middle East and Europe and was awarded the Military Cross Mention in Despatches, 8th Army Clasp. In 1952 Tattersfield immigrated to Canada with his wife, Ellen, two kids, a dog and \$600. To earn a living he worked on the Vancouver docks as a labourer by day and did his garden design work in the evening.

His practice soon flourished with projects in Canada, USA, Caribbean, East and West Africa and the Pacific. His clients included oil companies, shopping centers, apartment complexes, golf course developers, school boards and numerous private residences.

As Canada's representative to the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) he encouraged other Canadian landscape architects to share in the exchange of ideas, experiences and perspectives with landscape architects from all over the world.

Tattersfield, Michael Pope and John Neill were an integral part of BCSLA from the very beginning. They devoted a great deal of time and energy trying to achieve recognition for the profession in BC while enlisting new members. The granting of the Charter in 1964 was followed by its Act in 1968.

The oft told story by Neill is that the Architectural Institute of BC objected to the BCSLA using the word "architect" as they claimed exclusivity over it. Neill did a bit of research and at the preliminary hearing he pointed out that the act of the BC legislature setting up the AIBC as the licensing authority for Architects passed in 1921 or thereabouts, contains a section with the provision, that read something like: 'save and except for Naval Architects and Landscape Architects.' Game over, the BCSLA Act was passed the next day.

Despite Tattersfield's volunteer activities and serving as the principal in a large firm he still found the time to author more than 150 publications, briefs, lectures and television series' in North America and overseas covering

philosophical and technical aspects of practice. He served as an expert witness for legal testimony in environmental aesthetics and landscape evaluation in federal and provincial courts.

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# Tribute

## A tribute to Professor John Wesley Neill on his retirement as Director Faculty of Landscape Architecture March 1981

### A TRIBUTE TO A GENTLE MAN

In the year of our Lord 1948,

There occurred an event which I am glad to relate  
Significantly altered the regime at Point Grey,  
Albeit quite subtle, but in a positive way.

The campus was privileged in plant science no less  
To add one to its faculty, who I now must confess  
I was later to know for thirty full years,  
Both as friend and professional, sharing triumphs and fears.

Born in '16 in Salford, a town in the east  
Into the world still fighting; however, at least  
The Ontario countryside was bucolic and calm,  
Unruffled by war in both township and farm.

It was thus our generation was launched into life  
'midst nations where war and destruction were rife.  
We were to mature in a world-wide depression;  
Our search for security, a major obsession.

But this man from Salford, sincere and devout  
His ancestry celtic was never in doubt.  
Once thought a vocation might lead to the kirk  
To join such as Wesley's evangelical work.

However, the fates with their usual sagacity  
Had reserved a career in a different capacity  
Which led him to Guelph's agricultural college sedate  
And to his degree, B.S.A. Class of '38.

He became managing editor of publications in print  
But those fates had in store a far different stint.  
In Europe a madman maintained might was right,  
Underlining his rantings with bombs in the night.

Responding in concert with the rest of the nation  
He quickly acquired at a military station  
Those skills we all learned to use and deploy  
'Gainst an enemy seeking our armed might to destroy.

*This poem first appeared in the December 1999 issue of Sidelines and was written by Philip Tattersfield, under his pen name Urbanus. The conclusion of the poem is a quote from John Wesley's "Rule of Conduct" and seems both inspirational and a fitting tribute for two of our earliest members.*

His exploits in Europe in Armoured squadron command  
Soon focused attention and then a demand  
For an award to our captain who facing enemy knavery  
Had led his tanks into action with outstanding bravery.

And so it transpired that before very long,  
In military parlance he collected a "Gong"  
For contributing substantially to the enemy's loss,  
To him his sovereign awarded the military cross.

Home again, safe, in wind and limb sound  
To resume his lifestyle if it could be found,  
Until 1948, when he thought it best  
To become director of Landscape at UBC in the west.

His love of the plant world as time passed on,  
Brought his doctorate of philosophy from Corvallis, Oregon.  
Thus armed with his sheepskin he then sallied forth  
And returned to his campus, about 400 miles north.

From this time forward, his future assured  
In the subject of landscape he was completely immersed.  
In teaching, in lectures, in all things academic  
His passion for landscape was entirely endemic.

He was influenced strongly by the former Frank Buck,  
And in planning the campus he would have no truck  
With esoteric designers who, obsessed with their building,  
Regarded the landscape as superfluous gilding.

He developed the campus as his very own fief,  
Evolving his concepts from the basic belief  
That landscape, together with man's physical state,  
Must develop in harmony, must integrate.

In visible proof how such an attitude hardens  
We have him to thank for the Nitobe gardens  
And collaborator Mori of Osaka, Japan  
For giving us these authentic, unique works man.

His interests were ranging both far and wide  
In youth training, in opera, which he took in his stride  
In addition to professional bodies legion  
Covering shade trees and highways throughout the whole region.

The message he gave us from decade to decade  
Was concern for the landscape, and what efforts he made  
To initiate courses in things environmental  
With a passionate fervour that was quite elemental.

In the year '59 he became an original member  
Of a society which in '64 in December  
Became registered, then at a '68 session  
Was made legally B.C.'s landscape architecture profession.

He was the first president of the legal society  
A post which he filled with both charm and propriety.  
He has served as director; and on many a committee  
On boards and commissions, and retained by the city.

He has worked without ceasing through some 20 odd years,  
Sometimes with or without the support of his peers,  
Somewhere on the campus to set up a degree  
To serve our professional future, whatever that be.

At last the impossible he helped to achieve  
Over obstacles so complex, so hard to believe.  
He was appointed director - a fitting reward  
For his great contribution till then underscored.

The profession at large, all colleagues and friends  
Owe him much for his influence on education and trends.  
Our thanks are whole-hearted, expressed best we can  
To one of nature's great assets, a truly fine gentle man.

As fitting conclusion to this sincere panegyric  
I have borrowed some wisdom from John's patronymic;  
John Wesley's "Rule of Conduct" in 1915  
John's adherence to which is readily seen.

Do all the good you can

By all the means you can

In all the ways you can

In all the places you can

At all the times you can

To all the people you can

As long as ever you can.

— Urbanus



# 7th Edition of the BC Landscape Standard

BY ANNIKA INGRAM - BCLNA  
INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT



1. BC Landscape Standard - 7th Edition cover  
2. Green Roof Standards cover

A joint committee of the BC Society of Landscape Architects (BCSLA) and the BC Landscape & Nursery Association (BCLNA) completed the long awaited revisions and additions to the *BC Landscape Standard*, which was released this past June. The 6th edition was published in January of 2001, so an in depth review was needed to update the document. This new edition includes; two new sections 'Interior Plantscapes' and 'Integrated Pest Management and Plant Health Care'; and two new appendices, 'Winter Damage to Plant Material and Related Issues' and 'Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM)'. The general layout and format has been changed to allow for ease of reading and referencing.

The purpose of the *BC Landscape Standard* is to outline set guidelines and recommendations for acceptable landscape construction and maintenance practices for the province of British Columbia as agreed upon by the BCSLA, the BCLNA, government authorities, and other industry associations. It is intended that Landscape Architects, parks departments, and all associated trades in the province will refer to this Standard as the basis for their specifications. Acceptance of the BC Landscape Standard has grown with each edition allowing for more uniform enforcement of performance levels.

It is encouraged that any part of the BC Landscape Standard be used in contracts

and tender documents, and reference to the 7th edition of the BC Landscape Standard must be made.

Another publication by the BCSLA and BCLNA is the BC Standard for Extensive Green Roofs, which was released in June of 2007. This Green Roof Standard is to be used in conjunction with the latest edition of the BC Landscape Standard.

Thank you to all members of the BCSLA and BCLNA who contributed to the 7th edition of the BC Landscape Standard.

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# HISTORIC VICTORIA TREE

*The following is a letter that may interest our readers regarding an arbutus tree that graces the lawn of the Fairmont Empress Hotel in Victoria's inner harbour.*



Photos by Rich Haag

30, June 2008  
Chief Executive Officer  
The Fairmont Empress  
721 Government Street  
Victoria BC V8W 1W5 CANADA

Dear Sir or Madame:

As a landscape architect, member of the British Columbia Society of Landscape Architecture and a concerned visitor, I bring the following to your attention. In the north forecourt of your historic hotel is a magnificent specimen tree; a middle-aged, fully matured, *Arbutus menziesii* commonly called madrona or madrone. This tree is a treasure-for the Fairmont Empress Hotel and for the city of Victoria. The life story of this particular tree is puzzling – a horticultural conundrum for several reasons.

Sadly, this valuable and significant historic tree is in a serious state of decline and in imminent danger of dying. The attached photos from June 22, 2008 show several problems. The cumulative effect is not good, not to mention nutritional and systemic issues.

- A. Die back of the upper canopy branches.
- B. Decaying bark, perhaps cambium, maybe xylem, at the soil line, an entry portal for pathogens, fungi, viruses, etc.
- C. An ill-treated wound on the south trunk is another portal for disease.
- D. Likewise water catchment in the crotch of the trunk.
- E. A stone constricting normal root buttressing, another entry portal.
- F. The lawn should be removed, out to the drip line. Grass and madrones are adversaries, each prosper under very different biotic regimes.
- G. Soil compaction by people posing with the tree or touching it, as well as mowers, etc. endangers a tree that requires loose, well-drained soils.
- H. Irrigation is probably unnecessary, even detrimental.

The really good news is that with proper diagnosis and care, the tree can recover and continue to grace the hotel indefinitely.

I recommend two immediate steps:

- Install a polite "institutional" barrier, a discrete, low, loop-the-loop along the sidewalks and an interpretive sign identifying the species, some history, and what is being done to protect and restore the health of the tree.
- Retain Olaf Ribeiro, PhD, CPAg, a certified (world renowned) plant pathologist to restore the health and longevity of this priceless heritage tree. He can be reached at 206-842-1157. Please review, [www.ribeiroplantlab.com](http://www.ribeiroplantlab.com) email: [fungispore@comcast.net](mailto:fungispore@comcast.net)

If you desire, I could forward a brief resume outlining my experience in this arena. If you have any questions, please contact me. I look forward to the conversation. Your small investment will be hugely rewarded by publicity and good will from near and far, and just knowing you did the right thing.

Sincerely,

Rich Haag, FASLA, Hon. AIA, MBCSLA  
ASLA Medal 2003 and ASLA Design Medal 2007  
Professor Emeritus, University of Washington  
Principal, Rich Haag Associates / Landscape Architect  
Richard Haag Associates Inc, Landscape Architects  
2412 10th Avenue East, Seattle, WA 98102  
206-325-8119 Fax: 325-8722  
[rhaag@richhaagassoc.com](mailto:rhaag@richhaagassoc.com)

cc: Roger Soane, General Manager, Fairmont Empress Hotel / Michelle White, Director, Environmental Affairs, Fairmont Hotels & Resorts / British Columbia Society of Landscape Architects



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# TERRA NOVA RURAL PARK:

Respecting the past and living the future

BY YVONNE STICH, BCSLA INTERN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT, PARK PLANNER, CITY OF RICHMOND



The City of Richmond is a growing, dynamic urban centre that is rapidly transforming itself from a rural and suburban community into an international city. The City will be home for the 2010 Olympic Speed skating events at the iconic Oval building; a new and progressive City Centre Area Plan has just been adopted; Canada Line is changing the landscape of No. 3 Road; and the Middle Arm waterfront is undergoing a renaissance from being a ‘backdoor’ of the City Centre to the ‘front door’ greeting the world. In addition, the City has been recognized nationally and internationally as the healthiest city in Canada.

The City is recreating itself in many ways; however, it has also recognized the value of retaining a unique identity through protecting its natural heritage and vernacular cultural landscapes. Terra Nova Rural Park is one of the city’s newest parks that through careful management support a vision of sustainability that respects the past and lives the future through linking people, nature, heritage and urban agriculture.

What makes Terra Nova so special is that the existing landscape reflects layers of stories of individual and community aspirations and values and a dedication to the land over time.

The park contains remnants of a First Nation’s fishing camp, 1880’s pioneer settlers homes, gardens and orchards, pilings from two 1890’s canneries, fallow farmland, hedgerows, waterways and newly constructed trails and boardwalks that are combined with unique non-traditional urban agriculture programs including a teaching garden area that engages over 400 school aged children, and a 2.5 acre non-profit farm run by volunteers.

The opportunity to create a city park from this rich historic site was almost lost. In the early 1970’s Richmond was going through another period of change from a rural to a suburban community. The land in the area of Terra Nova (named by a pioneer from Terra Nova, Newfoundland in the 1880’s) was being quietly assembled for redevelopment. It was through the actions of a citizen, who

happened to attend a rezoning meeting in 1986, that a grassroots movement called Save Richmond Farmland Society was formed. As a result of the Society’s efforts in raising public awareness, a referendum item was approved in 1996 to borrow \$28.5 million to purchase 65 acres for public use.

In 2002, the City undertook a Biophysical Inventory and Analysis to clarify what was unique about the land and to determine what it was that the community was actually valuing about the site. While the community slogan was to save the farmland, the majority of the site had not been actively farmed for many years. Many of the fields were fallow and had become increasingly important for wildlife.

It was clear from the final report that Terra Nova was a unique site in that multiple objectives could be achieved through the proper management of the environmental, historic and landscape character features and values. Not only were the pre-contact midden and 1880’s historic settlement patterns and remnant landscapes visible ▶





on the site and could be interpreted, these features, in turn, were providing a rich diversity of habitats for wildlife.

The development of the park concept began in 2003 and 2004 through a series of public open houses; the vision “to preserve the unique rural character while providing a balance between agricultural heritage, wildlife preservation, and recreational uses” was supported by 98%. This is the highest support the City has had for any park project.

To ensure that the cultural landscape features were protected and to enhance the ecological function of the land further research was conducted. This due diligence in understanding and respecting the landscape resulted in many delightful discoveries such as locating the Japanese families that lived in Terra Nova before internment during World War 2 who were happy to share their family photographs of the site and the buildings; the location of a buried slough; the layout of the original orchards and circulation patterns.

Construction of the park began in 2005 and is only 50% complete; however, it has already received two national awards (Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators 2008 Environment Award, Canadian Parks and Recreation 2007 Innovation Award) and was a major part of the 2007 Livable Communities international award. One of the most unique and innovative aspects of Terra Nova that is being recognized so early in its development is that the City is dedicating land to a non-traditional use i.e. urban agriculture.

Before the first year of construction was completed two programs were established by enthusiastic volunteer groups. The Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Farm Project is a non-profit society that is farming 2.0 acres of land, running gardening programs and harvesting crops for the Food Bank. The Terra Nova Schoolyard Society engages over 400 school children working in garden plots with the goal of teaching about the value of fresh food and healthy eating habits and global issues of food security.

Through its beautiful setting, rich environment, interesting history, and programming, the community and visitors ►



*Photos provided by the City of Richmond, Parks Department*



have embraced this park. Corporate groups, “gardening grannies”, neighbours, school children, and individuals, discovering the park for the first time and jumping off their bikes to help out, have put in over 10,000 volunteer hours.

Terra Nova Rural Park will continue to develop over the next few years and offer spaces and activities for a wide range of ages and interests, ongoing opportunities for educational programs and events, high functioning and interconnected ecological habitats, and economic benefits to the City through eco-and heritage-tourism. It is this commitment to a vision of sustainability that respects the past and lives the future through linking people, nature, heritage and modern urban agriculture that has resulted in one very special city park.

Lead Landscape Architect:  
*Chris Sterry, MBCSLA*  
 PWL Partnership Landscape Architects Inc.



*Other key Landscape Architecture consultants:*

*Stewart McIntosh, MBCSLA, PWL*  
 Partnership Landscape Architects Inc.

*Katherine Dunster, MBCSLA, R.P. Bio,*  
 Unfolding Landscapes

*Denise Cook, BCSLA Intern Landscape*  
*Architect, Denise Cook Cultural*  
 Resource Planning

*Larry Diamond, MBCSLA,*  
 Sharp & Diamond Landscape  
 Architecture and Planning



For more information,  
 contact Janet Pivnick,  
 Program Coordinator at  
[jpivnick@uvcs.uvic.ca](mailto:jpivnick@uvcs.uvic.ca)  
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