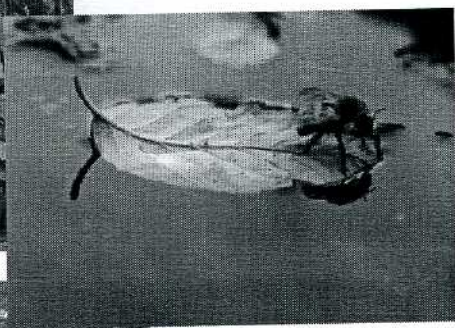


FRIENDS OF MOUNT DOUGLAS

March 2005



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Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, April 13

7:30 p.m.

McMorran's Seaview Room

5109 Cordova Bay Road

Reports from Committees

Election of officers

Speakers

John Readshaw (Sandwell Incorporated)

Peter Sparanese (Saanich Engineering Dept.)

Brian Emmett (Archipelago Marine Rsearch Ltd.)

"Mount Douglas Shoreline Protection Concept"

Annual Report, 2004-05

The most exciting development for the Park over the past year has, of course, been the return of a goodly number of salmon to Douglas Creek. This augurs well for the success of the many years of labour that have been devoted by Bob Bridgeman and the teams of volunteers under his supervision to the restoration of the Creek as an ongoing fish habitat. Our thanks are also due to the Goldstream Fish Hatchery for many contributions of eggs and fry, and to Tom Rutherford, the DFO South Island Coordinator for Streams, for his invaluable support. More on all this in Bob's report further on.

New proposals for the protection of the Park's shoreline have been another auspicious development. Previous proposals to the same end all guaranteed the defacement and curtailment of the beach by walls of rip rap (large boulders) that were supposed to prevent a collapse of the Park's sea bluffs due to wave-erosion. The alternative now being proposed is that of beach nourishment through the construction of headlands,

known as Australian sills, that are specially designed to trap the sands washed in by the sea. Of all the proposals so far tendered, these have met with the least suspicion from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. They have still, however, to pass through a number of consultative procedures

Still on protection: the fragile ecosystems belonging to the beach are a further concern. Michael VanInsberghe, our youth representative, has compiled a comprehensive photographic record of the broad spectrum of marine life to be found in the sands. His listing of these and comments are available in our Newsletter of July 2004.

Our efforts to control invasive plant species continue. Over the past year they have been focussed mainly on the removal of ivy. Volunteers for this task have been drawn, under the direction of Andy Jeffs, from a community a bit wider than our membership. So far relatively isolated patches of ivy have been removed along the Whittaker Trail where it runs between the Cedar Hill Road and the Churchill Drive entrances to the Park. Now we have begun to attack the much more extensive carpet of ivy that borders the trail running past the houses at the head of what once was the old orchard beside Cedar Hill Road. Independently from us, other enemies of ivy have been operating in the Park as well. For the moment we have left the war against broom to our sister organisation GORP (Garry Oak Restoration Project). However, two of our members, Laurie and Michael VanInsberghe have become closely associated with the latter..

Also in need of comment are two recent installations within the Park's boundaries. One of these is an eyesore and the other benign. The eyesore is the cell unit site erected at the entrance to the main parking lot. Recently it has been painted a somewhat virulent glossy green to appease our aesthetic sensibilities. Negotiations for its removal are still under way. The other installation is that of the children's play area. It has now been re-sited within the picnic area on the sunnier side of the main parking lot after removal from the opposite more tree-shrouded side.

Gratifyingly, in the last year the Saanich Environment Advisory Committee honoured our Society with an award in recognition of our achievements in stream protection, invasive species removal, stormwater management, research and public education. The award in the form of a plaque was presented to us with appropriate fanfare by the Mayor at a meeting of Saanich Council.

Take time to renew your membership at the Annual General Meeting

The changing scene in Cordova Bay

If you have read the latest edition of The Cordovan you will have seen the article about the Pat Bay Highway. Apparently, Mayor Amos of Sydney wants changes to the highway to relieve the congestion in his area, and wants better access at points along the route with an interchange at McTavish. At this stage he also wants a proper on-ramp at Sayward. This a long way short of the full interchange plan that the Department of Highways brings forward periodically, but it has the potential to increase traffic through Cordova Bay. In response, the Cordova Bay Association has dusted off its proposal for a frontage road running parallel with the highway west of the ridge, which would not only help traffic move in and out of Cordova Bay with greater ease but reduce the traffic through the heart of Cordova Bay. Now that Lochside Drive is little more than a country lane for motor traffic, the pressure on Cordova Bay Road is rising by the month and will continue to do so unless some relief is found.

The aspect of this debate that has a direct effect on the Park is the idea of abandoning the marine scenic drive concept at Sayward in favour of directions to particular destinations. In the sector between the highway and McKenzie these would include: golf courses, B&Bs, Mattick's Farm, McMorran's, the beach, the park and farm-gate operations in the Blenkinsop valley. Not only would this keep the through-traffic on the highway, it would encourage people to stop, to explore and to spend. As a result, such traffic could return more to the community than the present mode of operation. This approach also has the merit of leading people to non-tourist destinations such as the Elk Lake Rowing Centre.

Because of our climate and the success of sports such as rowing and cycling, Greater Victoria has the opportunity to become the national centre for more and more summer sports. If easy access is provided from the centres to these destinations in the region we could achieve what economists call a "virtuous circle" where each element reinforces and enhances the other. In short, we want to reduce traffic but encourage people who like what they see to stop and enjoy what we have to offer because, in doing so, they will enrich our community.

All of the above could be dismissed as wishful thinking if it were not for the fact that small groups along the whole length of the peninsula are translating plans into results that aim to protect their communities from the ravages of mindless traffic. In Cordova Bay over the last two years, the issue has been how to protect the village character and

the semi rural environment. This became a matter of particular concern when the traffic restrictions went into effect along Lochside. Fortunately the arduous work of the original streetscape committee was available, and progress on the next section of Cordova Bay Road has moved forward in a matter of months rather than years. Consequently, a new section of the streetscape should be in place over the next eighteen months from Maxine Lane to Haliburton. There will be numerous opportunities like this in the future, but to take maximum advantage it is necessary to have a few clear-cut goals and an appreciation of what has gone before. Of course there will be some jostling between the groups in the competition for scarce resources, but as long as we are all heading in approximately the same direction, there is a good chance everyone will gain.

Approaches to the Park

Last year, it was the orchard off Cedar Hill Road, this year it's the section from the park to Blenkinsop and Royal Oak. In both cases the sound of hammers and saws and the steady delivery of pre-mixed concrete heralds the transformation of the land around the park, and the process is likely to continue for some time come.

If you were intrigued by the sight of the drilling crews driving pipes into the cliff face opposite the motel in early March, this was a private venture.

Apparently, people are interested in purchasing the property with view to building a home. However, Saanich will not issue building permits in this area unless there is, in every sense, solid geotechnical data that the soil can stand the load and the building won't fall down. Prospective buyers must hire a drilling company to provide the samples for analysis and a geotechnical company to assess the risk.

After the wonderfully warm and dry February we have all enjoyed, it is difficult to recall the heavy rains at the end of last year, but the memory of the major land slide in North Vancouver caught everyone's attention and highlighted once again the catastrophic effect heavy rains can have on steep, sandy slopes in this part of the world. As a precaution, Saanich's own survey crew were in the area around the motel checking their markers to see what had happened.

We should have the results of that survey at the Annual General Meeting on April 13.

The watershed

* It's interesting how priorities change as events unfold. A few years ago, we applied to the Habitat Conservation Trust for a grant. At that time, the restoration of the stream was in its hopeful phase—that is, we had done a lot of work with no tangible results. They liked our ideas about improving the quality of the water flowing into the Creek at the Robinwood entrance, where it emerges into daylight from the underground system that extends throughout the Gordon Head watershed. They asked us for three alternate and economically viable methods of treating the water before it saw the light of day. At the time, we were desperately casting about for the means to keep the project alive and this seemed like a long shot, but one we had to try.

However, with the success we have had over the last two years, it now seems the most natural and logical next step to ensure that the returning fish will have a cleaner habitat in which to spawn. The preliminary work has been done by a project team from Royal Roads University and we have asked Murdoch Landscape Planning and Design Ltd. to carry out the assessment and provide the alternatives. Their report should be ready before the summer, and then the long and difficult task of getting their recommendations adopted as standard operating procedures will begin—another small example of time and events changing all things.

Sampling in the Creek

For some time we have wanted to know just what was going into the Creek. We could see the latex paint every Friday night as some one washed out their brushes and we could smell the fuel oil that seeped in after heavy rains, but all the standard methods indicated that the water quality was fine—except for the population of bugs. Firstly, the numbers were low, but the absence of those types of bug known to be very sensitive to water-borne pollution was more worrying: we needed a better method of checking the system and a much shorter time scale.

We have been extremely fortunate in having Brian Fowler from Axys Analytical Services volunteer his time to set up a sampling station and collect samples on a weekly basis for more than a year. The samples collected have been analyzed and they do contain lots of organic matter: as with most modern methods the problem is how to sift through the masses of data to extract the major significant features.

If anything follows this paragraph, Brian will have met the deadline for this newsletter and if not, the first set of results will appear next time. Whatever the result, it is fair to say that is only the beginning.; By using this up-to- date technology we have opened a new window through which we can see the behaviour of pollutants in streams on a scale and in such detail as was unthinkable ten years ago.

Goodbye, Hal!

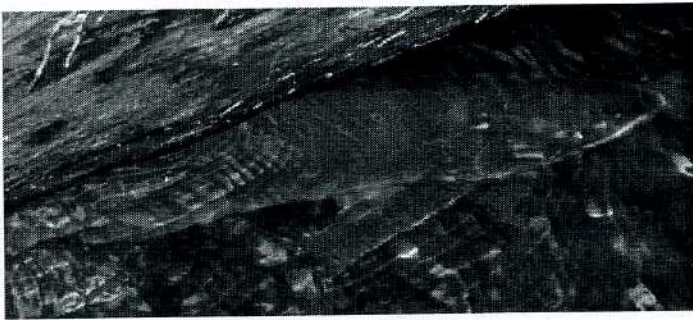
Finally, it is with regret that we have to report the resignation of Hal Gibbard from our board of directors. Among his other commitments he has been carrying the weight of GOMP (another of these Garry Oak Societies) on his shoulders. The board will miss him particularly since, as a professional biologist and former administrator, he has added a voice of authority to our deliberations.

Creek Calendar

November 7, 2004: The first of three days of planting the shrubs and trees propagated by Rob Hagel at Pacific Forestry Centre, in the Creek riparian. Mary Steel, Ian Bruce, Kevin Jancowski and Kenneth Rankin represented the Society. They were joined by two gardeners from Saanich and about 50 volunteers. This mix of people and interests made for a very successful event.

November 11, 2004: Interesting to see how far upstream in the Creek the returning salmon were able to travel despite the indifferent amounts of rainfall we were receiving. We spotted a female coho swimming with an immature male and several well-developed fry. Upstream was a dead male chum, partially scavenged. Further upstream yet were

two chum egg sacks, fully intact, with no sign of the bodies—a most curious circumstance because to fish-eaters the eggs are always a delicacy. At 11:00 a.m. we paused to reflect on the Canadian war dead and war-wounded in conflicts of the last hundred years. I am



loath to trivialize those efforts with comparisons of lesser events but couldn't help reflecting how we are at war with the natural systems that grace our living places—these torn out stream banks and this rotten stinking water seem to exemplify all that is wrong with a warlike approach to living.

November 12, 2004: We delivered seeds for the 2005 Significant Tree Day tree-plant to Rob Hagel at the Pacific Forestry Centre. He is propagating them for planting out. In the afternoon we joined the community and Saanich Parks in planting 200 riparian species (red osier dogwood, Douglas maple, ocean spray, red elderberry, Indian plum, and red current) along the Creek above Ash Road. Participants included: Thomas Cordner, Brad Parten, Jessica Gelling, Bryanne and Donna Montgomery, Michelle Hunter, Patsy McCarter Sides, David Jasinski, Doug Siberg, Mary Steel, Kevin Jancowski, and Bob Bridgeman.

November 19, 2004: We finished the 2004 riparian project by planting 200 riparian species—same as on November 12—along the Creek by Ash Road. We were joined by Larry Anderson, Bradly Perkins, Michelle Hunter, and Kelly Mulhern from Saanich Parks. Charlotte Holton from Gordon Head Elementary organized and lead the school planting crew which included: Caitlyn L., David K., Janel G., Jade F., Taryn G., Corina F., Natalie F., Jessica R., Max T., Kelsey E., Caleigh G., Amanda D., Sasha C., Adam S., Dakota S., Destiny A., Jonathon B., Sharon L., Tyler N., Logan C., Maura D., Ciara J., Ashely L., and parents: Mrs. Norman, Mrs. Gaube, Mrs. Lowe, Mrs. Gmitroski, and Mrs. Dundas. This event was enjoyed by all.

This three-day planting was a partnership between the Municipality of Saanich, the Friends of Mount Doug, Pacific Forestry Centre and the community—a satisfying example of restoration carried out in the community by a sharing of responsibilities, resources and tasks, all working together for a sustainable future

November 20, 2004: Spotted 2 live female chum and 2 carcasses—one of the latter with the head chewed off. Lots of racoon tracks about. Unfortunately, we didn't get enough rain for the chum to move upstream into better cover. Because of the rapid runoff from upstream the Creek swings from a flood to low water very quickly.

November 26, 2004: Spotted 1 dead immature coho. This one was curious—newly dead without apparent reason, mouth gaping and back arched, postures we have seen in newly-killed fry. There was no indication of anything bad coming through.

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December 12, 2004: We transplanted 100 carcasses (mostly coho—they are beautiful fish with their ruby spawning colours) and 1000 coho fry. We know, (because the literature says so), that there are coho fry in the stream when the coho come in to spawn. At this time we have 3 different age classes of coho: coming (in eggs), rearing (as fry), and leaving as mature fish). The rearing of fry is interconnected with the nutrient cycles energized by the spawned-out carcasses which display, for our edification, one of nature's amazing cycles. Exciting times for us – enjoying the results of all the hard work of the volunteers and the contributions of our partners before us in Douglas Creek.

The fry we transplanted had their adipose fins clipped at the Howard English hatchery by the Goldstream Salmon Enhancement Society volunteers. These fry should return in 2006. We had a good turnout. Notable was a group of students and volunteers from Belmont High. Belmont has been supplying a lot of volunteers lately. You can see some of their work in the piles of ivy on the fire road behind Edgemont.

January 02/03, 2005: We put down four fry traps to see how the transplant worked out. When we picked the traps up we found 27 fry, with nose to fork length of 80–100 mm.

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up. etc.
February 10/11, 2005: We set a fry trap in a downstream pool adjacent to where chum might have spawned. When we picked up the trap it contained 7 sculpins (some of which can live in fresh water and migrate in from the ocean) and 6 coho with clipped adipose fins. We also surveyed the suspected spawning area in preparation for hydro sampling for viable chum eggs.

February 17, 2005: Kevin Jancowski and Tom Rutherford hydro-sampled in the suspected spawning areas—pushing compressed air through a tube as the tube is forced into the substrate gravel: the idea is to wash up some eggs or alevins out of a redd to see how the eggs or alevins are developing. None were seen (which doesn't mean that the chum didn't spawn before they were eaten but it would have been nice to turn something up). When fry develop out of eggs that have been spawned into the Creek then we have our first wild salmon production.

Later that evening we made a presentation to the Goldstream Salmon Enhancement Society and the Esquimalt Anglers detailing how their efforts at the Howard English Hatchery have enabled us to bring these fish back into the Creek; it was well received.

February 27, 2005: We transplanted 2000 eyed coho eggs into the Creek. These were in egg condos supplied by the Howard English Hatchery and filled with coho eyed eggs

by the Goldstream Salmon Enhancement Society. Several members from Goldstream attended: Gloria McDormand, Art Inglis, and Charlie Thibadeau. Belmont School folk included Janet and Jessica Riecken and Eric Chown. Other friends included Moraia Grau Lopez, Ross and William Archibald, Gary Gillespie from Dockyard and Bob Bridgeman. For a good explanation of the egg condominiums—with pictures—go to the following Scott Plastics web site—<http://www.scotty.com/conserves.htm>



Plans for the summer include:

- an engineered woody debris structure;
- ongoing fry trapping; *trapping*
- a chum fry transplant; and
- planning for the Significant Tree Day planting in November.

The Story of Salmon in Douglas Creek

On February 17, Director of Streams Bob Bridgeman told the Goldstream Salmon Enhancement Society the history of the reintroduction of salmon into the Creek. With its evident success this past year, it's a good time to tell that story in sequence to our members.

It started as early as February 1996, when the Friends of Mount Douglas Park first made plans to restore the Creek. In May of that year, David Lock of the B.C. Fly Fishers saw the Creek and said, "We can have a stream running through the Park—with fish in it—if we are prepared to take the trouble and give them a chance. The Friends started a water-quality monitoring program to sample three stations each week for a year.

By 1997 it was evident that stormwater was the problem. In May, through the offices of Tom Rutherford of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Friends were given a first fry transplant permit and the first release—20 classroom-reared coho—went into the Creek. In October, 800 coho fry were released. Regular fry-trapping began, to assess the success

the summer

of the program. All woody debris was removed from the Creek between December of 1997 and February of 1998, so the fry were flushed out: there wasn't even a place left to set a fry-trap. No further releases were possible for most of 1998 because there was no habitat left in the Creek.

In October, a Saanich arboriculture crew cut windfalls, dropping one end of each into the Creek, and on the 31st 800 hatchery-reared coho fry were released. By May of 1999 the traps caught no fry at all. On June 27, 1500 hatchery-reared coho fry were released, the beginning of a strategy to probe for salmon production bottlenecks by transplanting different life-cycle stages. There were three fry kills this summer, and by December only a few fry found in the traps.

In March of 2000, the first eyed-egg transplant—2200 eggs— was carried out. Some were buried in the gravel, some tied into woody debris. Then, in April, smolts from the June 1999 transplant were seen moving downstream and leaving the Creek and at the same time fry from the March transplant were found emerging from the gravel. Summer trapping results showed few if any fry left in the Creek, so in October we transplanted 2000 coho fry. This was a registered millennium project.

In February of 2001, October fry were still showing up in traps. We transplanted 2000 eyed coho eggs, and in late March they began to come out of the gravel. But in early May came the first fish kill—both fry and smolt, with some fry still fry swimming among the dead fry and smolts. We transplanted another 2000 coho fry into the Creek in November.

In February of 2002 we transplanted 2000 coho eyed-eggs and an experimental egg condo for chum with 8000 eggs in it. Walking the Creek in late April we didn't see a fry. We held 30,000 chum fry behind the weir for 48 hours, and then released them to make their way downstream. By May 19 coho fry 55–60 mm in length started to show up, and later in May there were still chum fry in the Creek. In late November we made restoration history in British Columbia by transplanting 100 carcasses into Douglas Creek. The carcasses came from Goldstream River via the Howard English Hatchery egg-take. Quote from the Friends' newsletter regarding the preparation for the first chum carcass transplant: "The Goldstream Salmon Enhancement Society volunteers are donating the screens, chum fry, and all of the labour that goes along with them. These people have done a lot of good for us and for people like us. If you ever meet up with one, doff your hat, please."

The story goes on. On January 18 we transplanted 1000 coho fry, and on January 29 there was a fall of 24 mm of rain in 24 hours. On the 5th of April we tried to outplant 30,000 chum fry but rain set in and we had to call of the transplant. On the 26th we managed to transplant the 30,000 chum and 2000 coho fry in the same event. Then, on the 27th, a water main broke and 2 million litres of tap water roared through the Creek. On the 29th we counted 2000 live fry and 50 dead chum fry. More perished, and many more were flushed out. However, by early May there were still coho fry and smolts in the Creek. There were also chum fry. This was the first time we had 2 age classes of coho and 2 species of salmon in the Creek.

On July 12 the first summer flush of the storm drains was carried out by Saanich, killing coho smolts, and later in July and then in October there were two sewage spills into the Creek—thousands of litres—that devastated the fry downstream of Ash Road Bridge. Trapping in August turned up no fish at all.

And then, in the last week of October 2003 a male coho came through the culvert into the Creek above the Ash Road Bridge. Bob Bridgeman had his wife down there with a flashlight at 10:00 p.m. for a witness! This was our first return.

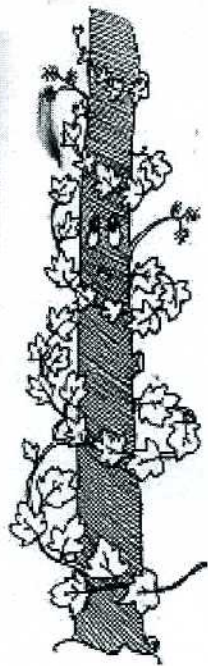
In mid-November we transplanted 1200 chum fry into the Creek, and in mid-December transplanted 105 mixed chum and coho—mostly coho—carcasses into the Creek. Then in February of 2004 we transplanted 2000 eyed coho eggs in cassettes. On the 21st of March we found large coho fry lying on their sides and doing the death spiral. The water was clear and no smells. We saw about a dozen very nice fry die. As we moved downstream we saw fry where we had never seen them before—being driven out by whatever was in the water.

In April we saw a few lovely fry in the traps, the best and largest—at 130 mm—we had ever seen. Then, on November 11, we saw a large female coho, a jack and large fry in a pool upstream of the mouth of the Creek. We had several earlier reports from very enthusiastic people that there were up to 16 chum in the Creek, a few up to Ash Road Bridge (these were from the first chum transplant in 2001).

So that's the story—persistence, determination, belief, and a very great deal of hard work on the part of a great many people—our Bob Bridgeman, Tom Rutherford of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Goldstream Salmon Enhancement Society, the Howard English Hatchery (those latter two provided salmonids for all the transplants, as well as much work) and all the volunteers—far too numerous to be named individually. As

Bob Bridgeman told the Goldstream Salmon Enhancement Society, "Aquatic restoration on the southern Island cannot be done without people like these. All the barren and soon-to-be-barren streams depend on them—they are creating a living legacy that will return year in and year out." All we at the Friends can do is say a wholly sincere Thank You to all of them.

The ivy pull goes on!



The first-Sunday-of-the-month dates for the ivy-pulling in the Park for the next six months of 2005 are

April 3

May 1

June 5

July 3

August 7

September 4

October 2

We meet at the parking lot at 10:00 a.m. those Sundays

However, pull ivy whenever you find it in the Park (as many unknown friends already do).

Just be sure to drag it out onto the side of a path, where it will dry out (most times of the year) before it can send out new shoots.

Board of Directors 2004/2005

President	Kenneth Rankin	4285 Cedar Hill Road	V8N 3C7	477-8007
Vice President	Darrell Wick	1491 Edgemont Road	V8N 4P7	477-9291
Treasurer	Graham Shorthill	4623 Cordova Bay Road	V8X 3V6	658-5873
Secretary	Sheilagh Ogilvie	515 Carnation Place	V8Z6G6	479- 4281
Streams	Robert Bridgeman	1481 Elnido Road	V8N 4Z7	477-7464
At-large	Hal Gibbard	1439 Wende Road	V8P 3T7	477-2986
At-large	Kay Porter	5041 Wesley Road	V8Y 1Z5	658-5792
Youth Rep.	Mike Vaninsberghe	4585 Bonnieview Place	V8N 3V5	472-6138
	Historian:	Pam Lewis		

Membership

Please check your address label (above); if it reads less than '05, your renewal time has come. We hope you will continue to support the work of the Society for another year by sending \$5 for each one-year membership to the address below.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code _____ Telephone No. _____

Individual membership fee is \$5.00 per year

Membership 1 year 2 year 3 year

Send or deliver to: Graham Shorthill, Treasurer
4623 Cordova Bay Road, Victoria B.C. V8X 3V6