

A Major Restoration is in the Works

Our mandate for rejuvenation of the Dominion Brook Park includes restoration of the former Rhodo Ravine. It is a long term, expensive, labour intensive project. However, the Board feels it is the next logical and essential step in our goal to restore the Park to its former glory. **The Rhodo Ravine was the jewel in the crown, much admired and visited by many.**

The Ravine extends from the reservoir adjacent to East Saanich Road to where the Dominion Brook flows under a small stone bridge into the lower pond. The upper reach of the Brook and the adjacent pathways have been severely eroded and the stone stairway has collapsed due to water flow under and around the stairs and consequent settlement. Both slopes of the ravine have become overgrown with invasive plants and obscured what original plantings remain. The pathway which led from the stairs at the upper end of the Brook to the bridge at the lower end is no longer passable and small natural stone retaining walls along the pathway and brook are barely visible behind significant vegetation growth.



The Board has planned a three phase project as follows:

Phase 1 is the conceptual landscape and engineering design and preliminary construction cost estimate for reconstruction of Dominion Brook and the ravine.

Phase 2 is for detail design, specification and tender document preparation for the reconstruction of the ravine and updated cost estimate.

Phase 3 will seek tenders for the reconstruction of the ravine, award contract(s) and complete the construction.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued to consulting engineering firms for Phase 1: conceptual landscape and engineering design. Proposals in response to this RFP were received on Monday 28 September, 2009 and a preliminary evaluation of the proposals was undertaken at the 29 September, 2009 Board meeting. A small funding shortfall was identified and efforts are underway to identify additional funding. On the expectation that funding for the shortfall can be secured, the contract was awarded to Kerr Wood Leidal, Consulting Engineers and Joseph Daly, Landscape Architect.

Following the completion of the Phase 1 work and the receipt of the conceptual plan and drawings which are essential in supporting funding applications, the Board will be able to submit credible funding applications to granting agencies for the next two phases.

We will be looking for immediate funds (\$10,000) to begin Phase 1. It is our hope that private donations and grants will fill this need. Dominion Brook Park is a horticultural treasure whose history covers almost 100 years of Peninsula settlement and is a unique and beautiful space open to everyone. **Please use the enclosed donation form and help us make this park a proud legacy for the community!**



The Park's

The biggest project undertaken this year was the drainage repair. For several years there has been water collecting between Beds 9 and 10 and downward. An area that expanded each season until it was positively swamp-like and becoming a danger to the continued existence of the conifers in that section of the Park.



North Saanich Parks made it a priority and tackled the job in late summer. Trenches were dug so the water supply could be studied to determine where it originated, the amounts and that it was clean. There are aged drainage and irrigation systems throughout the Park with collapsing clay tiles.



New drainage pipes were laid with the appropriate materials, trenches filled, covered with top soil and seeded. It was a four day project with heavy equipment and a team of men. Grass is already appearing and by next year it will be as though there was never a problem. The completion of this project was another example of the co-operation between the District and the Center which has enabled the Friends to continue with the Park restoration.

Changing Faces



While the heavy equipment and men were available in the Park, the removal of fourteen aging and damaged Thujas was undertaken. Stumps were removed, fence repairs made, soil replaced and seeded.

This was a decision not taken lightly as it would give the Park a whole new look not only in and around the Pond but a different view from many areas of the Park as well. All the comments have been positive.





LOGO CONTEST

Got what it takes to design a logo ?

The Friends are asking its members to participate in a logo design contest. The design, to be used on our letterhead, newsletter, pamphlets and upcoming website, must:

1. Be simple and clearly identifiable,
2. Represents well in colour and black and white,
3. Include the name, Dominion Brook Park.

The deadline for submissions is January 31 2010.

Entries are mailed to:

**Logo, Box 20007, 9839 Fifth St., Sidney, BC V8L 5C9,
or email: contactus@dominionbrookpark.ca**

Special recognition of winner to be provided.



Featured Plant

Cornus sanguinea 'Midwinter Fire'

Dogwood 'midwinter fire' is a medium-sized deciduous shrub with dense upright growth to six feet and most noted for its red, yellow and orange winter bark. It looks especially good when grown next to a pond or stream so that the stems are reflected in the water. It has a red/gold foliage in autumn but mainly grown for the richly coloured winter stems. It loves damp ground but will survive in dry areas and need some pruning in late winter. Our six specimens are planted at the bottom of the large pond inside the fenced area so the Park visitor will catch their splendid winter colours walking towards the lower level of the Park. Our newly planted specimens come to us courtesy of Ted Irving, plantsman extraordinaire and long time Park supporter.



Staff this issue:

*Joan Gibb
Ed Johnson
Edna Ralston*

For more information on Dominion Brook Park, please visit http://www.dominionbrookpark.ca/Dominion_Brook_Park.htm

To contact the Friends of Dominion Brook Park Society please write to Box 20007, 9839 Fifth St, Sidney, B.C. V8L 5C9

General and Membership enquiries : 250-656-6574 Volunteers : 250-656-4185

email : contactus@dominionbrookpark.ca

2009 Work Party Exceeds Expectations !

The 2009 Wednesday morning work session is closed. It has been a wonderfully productive year for the Park and its stalwart volunteers. We have logged just over 700 hours even with four work days cancelled and the results are evident.



Cedrus atlantica Glauca planting

The season started with general clean-up and progressed to the hardcore weeding and annual removal of noxious growth that is ongoing. Our main objective this year was the renovation of **Sam's Garden**, removal of unwanted material and replanting with appropriate shrubs, trees and ground covers.

One of the big projects was the restoration of the stream bed in Sam's Garden. New caulking on the wall and in the stream bed has allowed, for the first time in most of our memories, a free flowing stream in the low water season. Our last effort in that area saw a top dressing of amended soil to put the sunken garden

to bed for the winter. We did add an almost invisible fencing around the pool area. We have been plagued by unleashed dogs running amok and jumping into the pool - and on their way damaging the newly planted specimens.

A second objective was the area in and around the **pond**. Visitors to the Park will notice an immense difference. The Wilson rhodos have been expertly pruned by **Francois Frutger**, Sargitti Landscaping, as a gift to the Park and the undergrowth removed. Self-seeded trees and shrubs have been eliminated and some new plantings added to give all year round interest. The most noticeable change has been the removal of the overgrown and unsightly Thujas. This has given the Park visitor a clear view across the pond into the mature rhodos. More work will be done next year to enhance the plantings and condition of the pond.

Arborists have been busy with work on the laurel hedge and older trees needing professional pruning. **Nigel Ramer**, Arboright Tree Services, **Scott Busse**, Cut Above Tree Service and **Andre Chabot**, Chabot Landscaping and Trees have done this work either pro bono or with a generous discount.

North Saanich Parks staff have been with us each Wednesday with their talent and power tools without whom we could not have accomplished the amount of work and improvements done this year.

One of the more noticeable is the bushwacking under low growing branches and edging around the **Island Beds** and down the **North Border**. It has been the most remarked upon change by our visitors.

Recent Park goers will have noticed the improved **Picnic Shelter**. Through a set of circumstances, a Park admirer volunteered to remove the graffiti from the inside of the shelter - or so we thought. In fact, he meant not only to remove the graffiti but to paint the entire shelter with the help of his son and grandson. One job leads to another and with the co-operation of North Saanich, repairs were made, a new counter installed, power washing accomplished and a new paint job done. New plantings (*Cotoneaster apiculatis*) were installed and it looks grand.

We have added to **Sam's Garden**, *Pinus aristata* (dwarf bristlecone pine), *Rhodo Monarch Horizon*, *Pinus densiflora 'Umbraculifera'* (*Sciadopitys Verticillata*, Japanese umbrella pine), *Azara microphylla 'Variegata'*, and tree *Paeonia Kinshi*. In **Bed 9**, *Cedrus atlantica Glauca*. On the **entrance slope** a *Fraxinus excelsior 'Aureofolia'* (Ash) and *Tsuga Sieboldii* (Japanese Hemlock). *Cornus sanguinea 'Midwinter Fire'* and *Salix fargesii* inside the Pond fence. A *Rhodo Sir Charles Lemon* was placed on the south slope of the **Ravine** near the stone stairs and a small hedge of *Berberis 'Concorde'* at the **Marshall Road Entrance**. Some of these were made possible by the generous donations to our Plant Acquisition Fund.



Tsuga Sieboldii (Japanese Hemlock)



Lance Rath hard at work

We look forward to other Park supporters contributing to our Fund which will enable us to continue the rejuvenation of the Park for all to enjoy.

We have had a very faithful volunteer following this year. Some new, some regulars and some there from the beginning of our work parties: **John Dawson, John Ashton, Barry Hall, Stu and Joan MacDonald, Bob Parr, Brian Rowe, Alan Warren, Lee Pears, Lance Rath** (he lowered the average age statistic dramatically), **Verna Warren** and the tractor guy, **Gerry Warren**. Without the assistance of **Cliff Halliday** from the

District of North Saanich and his crew and the continuing support of **David Lye** of the Centre for Plant Health, we could not have accomplished the amazing amount of work done this season.

Hats off to all of you!