

Armchair Tour of the Park

By Ian Cameron

This is the second in a series of vignettes based on the tours I conduct in the park.

The tours start at the kiosk on East Saanich Road, with a history of the Centre for Plant Health and the Park, which I assume anyone reading this knows about. We then face north and walk about ten paces to the first two trees, the one on the right being a small conifer, *Cryptomeria japonica*, which I discussed in the first of this series.

Directly across from it is a *Cedrus Lebani*, or Cedar of Lebanon, a true cedar, as opposed to the Red Cedar, which is actually a cypress. Cedars of Lebanon, as the name suggests, are native to the Eastern end of the Mediterranean, originally growing on the coast from Israel to the entrance to the Aegean Sea. They were almost wiped out in Lebanon, although reforestation projects are changing that, and are now found mostly in Turkey, where reforestation is also important.

Cedar of Lebanon is one of the most historically and culturally important trees of the western hemisphere,

being mentioned numerous times in the Bible. My favourite mention is in Psalm 92: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon". It's enough to make anyone want to be righteous.

In ancient times they were to their area as the red cedar was to the natives of the Pacific Coast – enormously important. They are still fairly significant commercially, being an attractive yellow colour, even grained, fragrant, insect and rot resistant, and are used for timber, furniture, and handicrafts. The resin and oil are prized around the world.

While I do not generally suggest removing items from the park I can make an exception in the case of seeds from the Cedar of Lebanon. They lie around the base of the tree in gay profusion, and you may be able to propagate them. Soak the seeds at 20C for 24 hours, dry with a paper towel, and place them in a plastic bag in the coldest part of your refrigerator for a month. Sow them in potting soil, water lightly, and keep them in weak sunlight at 20C, watering lightly. Good luck.



Image: *Cedrus Lebani*

AGM with Jeff de Jong

The annual general meeting of the Friends of Dominion Brook Park Society will be held on April 18, 2023 at 7:00 pm at the Pavilion (Building 21), at the Centre for Plant Health, 8801 East Saanich Road.

This is your opportunity to hear a report on the past year's activities, get an update on our financial situation and elect the Board for 2023.

The meeting will be followed by a presentation by local horticulturist, landscape designer, writer and educator Jeff de Jong.

Jeff's talk is called: *If I Could Only Have One*.

Think of all the glorious trees that are available for us to grow in our moderate climate. Incredible blooms, showy leaves, striking bark and vibrant Autumn colours are a few traits to consider.

But what if you could only have one. Is this choice impossible or not? Jeff will tackle this question and try to narrow the field. All the while you may discover a few amazing woody plants that you may not have previously known.

The evening is open to new and existing members. This is a great time to renew or buy your membership and support a local park. Annual memberships can be purchased at the door, \$20/ household.



OUR LOVELY
PARK IS FILLING
UP WITH DOG
POOP!

Please don't forget to
SCOOP the POOP



Your Membership Counts!

Did you know that when non-profit organizations apply for funding grants, the grant committee looks at how many members are in the applicant's organization? Higher member rates show a higher level of community support. And your membership funds contribute to improvements in the Park. Our Society is volunteer run which keeps our administrative costs to a minimum.

So, if you haven't renewed your membership, please consider doing so. Your membership of \$20.00/household will help us to maintain the park and our membership numbers will help with our grant applications.

You can join and pay online through our website: dominionbrookpark.ca or you can mail your renewal and payment to Friends of Dominion Brook Park Society, Box PO Box 20007, Beacon Avenue, Sidney, B.C. V8L 5V9. We look forward to hearing from you again.

JOIN US!



2023 Work Season

The work season for volunteers will be starting as soon as the weather and ground conditions permit. We work for two hours on Wednesday mornings. Volunteers meet at 9:00 at the Marshall Road entrance to get their work assignment.

If you are interested in joining us, you can just show up at 9:00 on a Wednesday morning. It's fun, it's good exercise and it's rewarding. You will be helping care for an historically interesting, horticulturally significant, beautiful park in our community.

We will be in touch with past volunteers by email once we have a start date.

If you have any questions or want more information our email address is contactus@dominionbrookpark.ca

Board Members Needed

We have a couple of vacancies on the Board of Directors of the Friends of Dominion Brook Park Society.

Qualifications:

- Desire to give back to your community
- Enthusiasm for Dominion Brook Park
- Enjoy working collaboratively with others

What is required:

- Prepare for and attend meetings once a month for one to two hours (no meeting in December or April)
- Attend Annual General meeting with Society members in Spring
- Contribute to the development of strategic priorities and work plans for the year and help see them achieved.
- Participate in special tasks or projects

If you are interested, please send an email to contactus@dominionbrookpark.ca



Updates on construction at the Centre for Plant Health

Construction is underway for a brand new science facility at the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) Centre for Plant Health, just south of the park. Visitors to the park and passersby may have noticed excavation and construction activity on the site. The new structures are starting to take shape as foundations are poured and walls are built. The project is anticipated to be completed in 2025, and the new facility will provide modern tools and infrastructure to support new generations of scientists to advance plant health science in Canada.

Before construction began, the Centre

for Plant Health enlisted the help of knowledgeable community volunteers to sort through records and artifacts at the site dating back more than a century. One of these volunteers was Jody Aylard, Vice President of the Friends of Dominion Brook Park Society. The volunteers' findings are like a time capsule of the last several decades of agricultural and horticultural research in Canada, and offer a glimpse into the history of the region. Read [Digging through the past and planting seeds for the future](#) from the CFIA to learn more about the history of the land, the Centre for Plant Health and the park.

For more information, visit Renewing the Sidney Centre for Plant Health (inspection.canada.ca/sidney-laboratory) or contact cfia.CPH-Sidney-CPV.acia@inspection.gc.ca.



Staff this issue: Jody Aylard, Ian Cameron, Dawn Gould, Emma Dickinson (CFIA)