



NEWSLETTER

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Armchair Tour of the Park

By Ian Cameron

We left this armchair tour of the park at the top of the path leading down the hill to the north of the kiosk. When we reach the bottom we walk about ten metres and I ask the group to turn around and look at the trees on either side of the path. The one on the left is not a very handsome tree, because it's been very badly treated by having the entire right side pruned over the years so the tree is totally lopsided.

It's a *Quercus dentata* (Daimyo Oak, Emperor Oak, Sweet Oak), the largest-leafed oak in the world. It's not very tall, but it's very wide, and should be twice as wide but has been pruned to keep the path open. It is one of the original trees in the park, from Yokohama in 1913.

The trees grow to a respectable size in Japan and Korea but are not widely used for lumber because there are branches all the way up the trunk, which means all the lumber has knots, very hard knots that are difficult to cut. And they are protected in Korea because they provide an interesting food called dotori-muk or acorn jelly, made by grinding up the very large acorns and treating them in a fairly complex process. It was originally made in mountainous areas of ancient Korea, and does not spoil easily, so it was used as a lunch box when traveling a long way, much like pemmican on the plains of North America. It is still used as a side dish, with small chunks of dotori-muk seasoned and mixed with other ingredients such as slivered carrots and scallions, garlic, soy sauce, sesame oil, red chili pepper powder,

and sesame seeds. If not treated properly, acorn meal can be quite toxic. Please don't try making it.

In Japan the leaves are used to make kashiwa mochi, a confection of white mochi surrounding a sweet red bean paste filling with an oak (*Kashiwa*) leaf wrapped around it. Ordinarily a cherry blossom leaf is used, and it's called sakura mochi, and the leaves are eaten, but the oak leaf used in kashiwa mochi is not eaten and used only to guarantee prosperity for one's descendants.



One stop - two tours on the Flavour Trail

The Flavour Trail Festival is taking place August 18 to 20. Again this year, the Friends of Dominion Brook Park Society and the Centre for Plant Health are offering tours. With one stop you can find out about the work that goes on at the Centre and the new facility being built on the site. Then hop across the road to learn about the interesting, rare and century-old plants growing in Dominion Brook Park.

Tours will take place **Saturday, August 19.**

Centre for Plant Health tours are at:
9:00, 10:30 and noon.

Dominion Brook Park Tours are at
10:15, 11:15, 12:15 and 1:15.



Volunteer Carnival

Interested in local volunteer opportunities? Beacon Community Services is hosting a volunteer carnival on Saturday, September 23, 2023, from 1 pm to 5pm. It will be held at the Shoal Centre in Sidney, located at 10030 Resthaven Drive in Sidney. Come and learn about volunteer opportunities on the Saanich Peninsula.

Friends of Dominion Brook Park will have a table at the event. If you can spare an hour and would like to help out at our table, please contact Ian Cameron at ianc@uvic.ca

Working in the Park

In July volunteers spread 13 yards of mulch in some of the beds in the Park. Mulch helps retain moisture and discourage weed growth. This is an example of the care and maintenance of the horticulture collection that is done by the Friends of Dominion Brook Park.

**SCOOP the POOP
PLEASE**



A Look Back

These photos were taken in 1912 and 1913, the first years of development of the experimental farm property. They show the area by the pond and sunken garden in the Park, before and after the stonework was installed by the pond. In the second photo you can see in the distance, the power lines and the station for the electric railway, which began operation in 1913 and ran until 1924.



Correcting our History

We recently learned that we need to revise the story about the picnic shelter in the Park. We had understood that it was the train station for the electric railway from Victoria. It is true that the station building was moved to that location after the train stopped running in 1924. It

served as a tea house for over 30 years. However, in 1956 the train station building was replaced with a new structure; the one that now serves as the picnic shelter. This fact emerged during a review of some of the archival documents held by the library of the Centre for Plant Health.



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