

Gordon Head/UVic Discovery Ride - Printable Version

For Week of May 4th

Explore the 'points of interest' outlined in each ride package and send us a photo, story, or video telling us about your experience or something you discovered on your Discovery Ride.

Photos, videos, drawings, and other media can be sent to us via email at sara@biketowork.ca or via Facebook and Instagram by tagging us at [@biketoworkvic](https://www.facebook.com/biketoworkvic) or [#yyjbike!](https://www.instagram.com/biketoworkvic) With every story you send us, you will be entered into an online contest for a chance to win a gift card for take-out food from a local restaurant or bike shop near you. Prizes for this Gordon Head/UVic challenge will be mailed to draw winners on May 18th. *See prize details on the "About this" page above.*

This Discovery Ride will take you from Mt. Douglas to the easternmost point of Vancouver Island in the Ten Mile Point neighbourhood. Enjoy a quiet ride through Gordon Head along the Seaside Touring Route with a detour through UVic.

Activities are designed with adult supervision in mind. Before undertaking any outdoor activities, please be sure to follow the latest COVID-19 Provincial Support and Information.

Points of Interest:

Point 1:

Background:

Called PKOLS "White Head" by the Saanich and Songhees people, Mt. Douglas is the largest park in Saanich. The translation of White Head is believed to refer to the fact that PKOLS was the last place where glaciers receded from Southern Vancouver Island. PKOLS is a Victoria landmark visible in much of the surrounding area.

Action item

Complete a riding route around Mt. Doug (for example: Cordova Bay Rd, Lochside trail, Mt. Douglas Cross Rd, Cedar Hill Rd.) and take a picture of your favourite spot with Mt. Doug in the background. More experienced riders may want to cycle bike up Mt. Doug and take a picture at the top! As always, remember to ride within your comfort level.

Point 2:

Background: With its quiet residential streets and connecting paths, Gordon Head has great opportunities for neighbourhood cycling. Even though there are fewer bike lanes and less infrastructure than downtown, certain routes are still designated greenways or bike routes. One such route is the *Seaside Touring Route*.

Action item

Ride the Seaside Touring Route and take a picture at what you think is the most beautiful spot along the way.

Point 3:

Background: Before becoming a residential neighbourhood beginning in the 1950's, Gordon Head was settled primarily by farmers who grew crops such as daffodils and strawberries. The introduction of city water service to the area in 1921 led to a proliferation of greenhouses and vegetable farming.

Action item

While biking through Gordon Head along the *Seaside Touring Route*, pretend it's 1925 and look for the perfect spot to have a strawberry farm... perhaps a nice park or a grassy patch with an ocean view!

Point 4:

Background: Nellie McClung was a pioneer teacher, author, suffragist, social reformer, lecturer, and legislator. She was a champion for the causes of women's rights, prohibition, and the Liberal party. As a result of her efforts, in 1916 Manitoba became the first province to give women the right to vote and to run for public office. The public library at the corner of Cedar Hill Rd and McKenzie Ave. is named after her. From 1934 until her death in 1951, McClung resided at the Fullerton house in Gordon Head.

Action item

The McClung House, a registered Canadian Historical Place, can be found set back from the road along the Seaside Touring Route. Once you've found it, snap a photo of the location (note: as the house is occupied, please avoid taking pictures of the house itself).

Point 5:

Background: The University of Victoria first opened in 1963 and today has a student population of approximately 22,000. One cyclist has noted that the speed camera on Uvic's Ring Road is one of the few which detects bicycles.

More experienced cyclists might enjoy doing several laps around Ring Road, which will enable them to appreciate the Campus and have fun by checking their speed in the speed camera. Remember to obey the speed limit and ride within your comfort zone.

Action item

Alternately, those with young families or those who want a more leisurely ride could ride around *the Quad* and take a photo at their favourite building that they find on campus.

Point 6:

Background: Canada entered the Second World War in September 1939; several reminders of this history exist in Gordon Head. Two of these are now on the property of UVic. The first is the Gordon Head Army Camp, which once included 50 buildings to house up to 1000 soldiers undergoing intensive training. Several of these buildings have been deconstructed in recent years yet some are still standing and serve as administrative buildings for UVic staff.

The second is the Maritime Communications Centre, constructed during the Second World War as part of a network of defense radio posts. The building is easily identifiable as a bunker due to its thick concrete walls and rounded corners, even if it is no longer surrounded by a barbed wire fence or guarded by sentries.ⁱ

Action item

Ride by one of these historic buildings and snap a picture.

Point 7:

Background: Leaving UVic and heading towards Ten Mile Point, you will end up on Arbutus Road, named for the Arbutus tree. The Arbutus is the only broad-leafed evergreen tree native to Canada and grows on rocky outcrops usually no further than 8 km from the ocean. Arbutus trees are noted for their peeling bark, resistance to strong winds, and twisting limbs.ⁱⁱ

Action item

Since the neighbourhood between Gordon Head and 10 Mile Point is known as *Arbutus*, look for the biggest Arbutus tree you can find on your ride. Snap a picture of it.

Point 8:

Background: Bordering Cadboro Bay, Ten Mile Point has beautiful marine life easily accessible through its many coves. One such cove is the aptly named Smuggler's Cove, which has a long criminal history. Smugglers have used this area at least as early as the 1860's, originally running whiskey to US soldiers stationed on the San Juan Islands. Prohibition in the US began a new era of smuggling, with bootleggers smuggling rum into Washington State from Ten Mile Point.

Action item

Find a cove or beach access in Ten Mile Point that you think would be best for smuggling during prohibition and take a picture of it.

Congratulations! Thank you for taking part in our Discovery Ride from Gordon Head to Ten Mile Point. We hope you enjoyed your ride.



Information Sources:

https://web.archive.org/web/20140709095310/http://www.saanich.ca/discover/artshitagearc/heritage/pdf/gordon_head.pdf

ⁱⁱ <https://vancouverislandbigtrees.blogspot.com/2010/12/arbutus-canadas-only-native-broad.html>