

PRESENTED BY
The GREATER VICTORIA CYCLING COALITION
and BIKE TO WORK SOCIETY



Discovery
RIDES

MAY - AUGUST 2020

GREATER VICTORIA
CYCLING
COALITION

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SOCIETY

<https://gvcc.bc.ca/theme-rides>



About this

May - August 2020

Discovery
RIDES

Welcome Discovery Riders!

Welcome to the Gorge Tillicum Discovery Ride! This ride will take you through some old heritage and local gems on a route that is accessible for new riders.

This Discovery Ride will be released on July 20th. Until August 4th, you are invited to 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. **Submissions can be sent to us by filling out the short 'experience reflection form' on the GVCC website under 'themed rides', or via Facebook and Instagram by tagging us at @biketoworkvic or #yyjbike!** With every submission, you will be entered into a draw for a chance to win a gift card for take-out food from a local restaurant or bike shop.

How do I win a prize?

Along your ride, take note of the things you see at each 'point of interest' and create a story with the photos, video, or drawings you create from your ride. Prizes will be granted to those who submit content that tell us about their experience or something they discovered on their ride in a creative and thoughtful way. Entries will be randomly selected. **Prizes will awarded and available for pick up at the restaurant/bike shop on August 4th.**

What to bring:

You will need a bicycle, helmet, water bottle, snack, sunglasses, a camera of some kind, and Google maps downloaded on your cellphone. These Discovery Rides are organized like self-guided tours: the routes are downloaded on your phone that highlight points of interest along a route. Each ride is designed to get you exploring new places while physical-distancing; taking between 1-6 hours to complete. Enjoy the adventure! *Remember to allow space for others to pass on trails and roads when necessary to maintain 2m physical-distancing.

Why ride right now?

Studies have shown that cycling helps to reduce stress, boost the immune system, and stay physically active. Cycling is also a great way to get to know your neighbourhood and city during this time of physical-distancing.



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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.



Gorge Tillicum

Points of Interest

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 by filling out the short 'experience reflection form' on the GVCC website under 'themed rides', or via Facebook and Instagram by tagging us at @biketoworkvic or #yyjbike!

1. Background:

Our Discovery Ride begins at what is now a regular suburban block, but was once the site of wealthy and brutal industrialist Robert Dunsmuir's large estate of Burleith Manor. Built in 1892, Burleith was the centre of Victoria's high society, entertaining the future King George V, among others, at fancy balls, regattas, and Mrs Dunsmuir's "Strawberry Socials." The grounds contained tennis courts, croquet lawns, and a dock on the Gorge for Dunsmuir's private yacht. When the Dunsmuir's moved to Hatley Castle, Burleith was left abandoned, until children playing with firecrackers on Halloween accidentally burned it down in 1931.



Action Item: Remaining structures from this mansion now include only the rock wall along Craigflower Road and part of the original gatehouse. Find one of these remaining structures.

Gorge Tillicum

Points of Interest

- 2. Background:** North America's first Japanese Tea Garden was built by Isaburo Kishida in 1907 right here along the Gorge. For years, the tea garden was a hugely popular destination operated by brothers Hayato and Kensuke Takata and featured hundreds of Japanese lamps, cherry trees, and wisteria trellises. Hayato and Kensuke were sent, as were all male Japanese Canadians aged 18-45, to an internment camp in 1942 for the remainder of the Second World War. Local residents then looted and destroyed the once popular tea gardens.

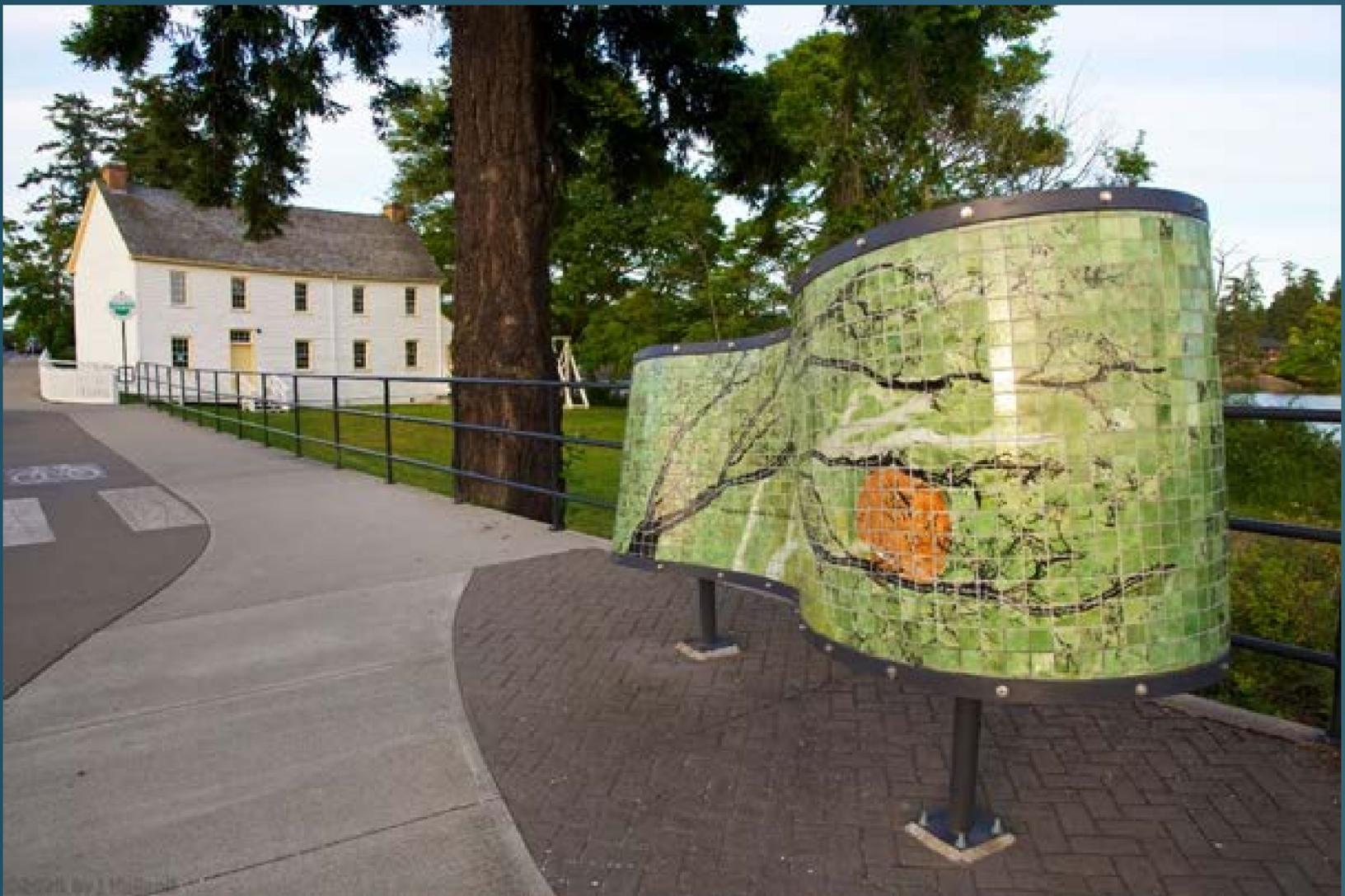


Action Item: Esquimalt has begun to recreate aspects of North America's oldest Japanese Tea Garden in this park. What reconstructed features can you see?

Gorge Tillicum

Points of Interest

- 3. Background:** The head of the Gorge features several historically-significant sites. First is the Craigflower Schoolhouse, built in 1854 to educate the children of settlers and HBC employees. In fact, the schoolhouse is the oldest surviving public building in BC. Before European colonization, this was the site of the Lekwungen “Kosapson” village, until the land was purchased in 1850 and the village relocated. Archaeologists still investigate the shell middens present from this village.



Craigflower Schoolhouse visible behind the “Bridging Perspectives” art installation. Photo by John Holland.

Action Item: Take a photo at a landmark of your choosing at this historic site.

Gorge Tillicum

Points of Interest

Background:

4. Heading north to Cuthbert Holmes Park, we arrive where the Colquitz Creek meets the sea. One of the largest watersheds in Victoria, Colquitz Creek was once an important source of food, medicines, and other resources for local first nations. Indeed, spawning salmon were so numerous into the 19th and early 20th centuries that farmers speared them and tossed them onto their fields for fertilizer. Despite the impacts of urbanization, 200-400 Coho salmon enter the Colquitz creek each fall to spawn, as do several dozen chum salmon.



Where the Colquitz Creek meets the sea. Photo by John Holland.

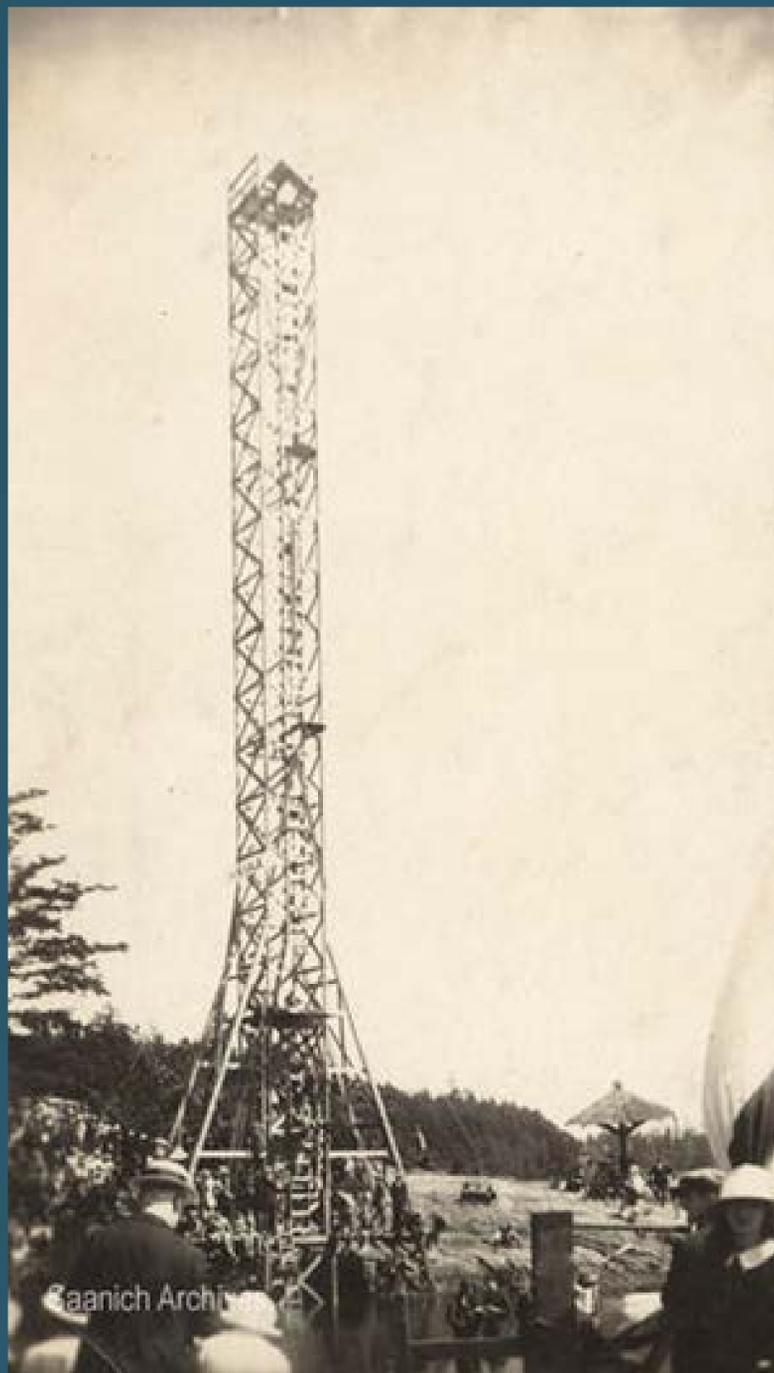
Action Item: Take a photo on the small bridge spanning the creek just opposite from Meadow Park.

Gorge Tillicum

Points of Interest

Background:

5. Returning to the Gorge, we pass by the Gorge Park Community Gardens, started in 2015, which contain communal and allotted plots as well as areas designed for pollinators such as mason bees. Just past the park is Curtis Point, which was (100 years ago), the location of a deadly 110 foot diving tower. The Gorge was, in the early 1900s, the premiere destination for Victorians looking for a swim (despite its strong currents). The diving tower, built in 1922, saw divers landing in only 15 feet of water below. However, provincial diving champion Billy Muir died due to injuries sustained while diving soon after the tower was completed. The diving tower was therefore taken down.



Action Item: The concrete slab that this tower sat on remains at Curtis Point, find it!

Gorge Tillicum

Points of Interest

Background:

6. Crossing the Gorge for the final time on this Discovery Ride, we bike to the Selkirk Trestle. Built originally by the Canadian National railway in 1918, the trestle was converted to a pedestrian and bike trail after years of disuse. Looking towards Victoria harbour, The Island of the Dead (renamed Halkett Island) is visible. This small rocky island was an indigenous burial site in active use during the establishment of Fort Victoria. Sadly, vandals set the island on fire in 1867, destroying the burial site. Similar conflicts continue in BC as small rocky islands, which were often used as burial grounds by indigenous groups, are targets for developing expensive homes.



The Selkirk Trestle. Photo by John Holland.

Action Item: Take a photo of the Island of the Dead.

Congratulations! You have completed the Gorge Discovery Ride. Thank you for taking part in our Neighbourhood Rides Program. We hope you enjoyed your bike ride. Please log your ride for a chance to win prizes by completing the short form on our website or by posting a photo from your ride using the #yyjbike.

Reminder: These activities are taking place on the unceded territories of the Lekwungen and WSÁNEĆ Nations.

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