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Issue #2 February 2012

NEIGHBOURHOOD TRADITIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

By Julie Cormier, Community Development Manager

The theme for the second edition of the Observer is neighbourhood traditions and partnerships.

With over 36 years of non-profit work in the Fairfield Gonzales neighbourhood, the FGCA inspired many neighbourhood traditions with numerous community events, programs, civic engagements and local projects, while attempting to honour previous traditions of the land.

Partnerships are also really important to showcase as their impacts often go unnoticed.

The FGCA was built on collaboration of neighbours and this development informs how we do business today: by WORKING TOGETHER. The longevity of partnerships lives in many forms, like the launch of small grassroots organizations, the fruition of innovation programs and creative solutions and, ultimately, the growth of community. Happy reading!



A Word from our President

A sense of community plays an important role in our well-being and well-being is a concept meant to "recognize the social, cultural and psychological needs of people, their family, institutions and communities". On a daily basis, we are all faced with challenges that can make it difficult for us to connect with our neighbours and maintain the relationships that form the foundation of a great community. At the FGCA, our mission is to enhance the quality of life in our community by involving community members in identifying and acting on the needs of our residents. We value accessibility to and the quality of our programs and services, and they are designed to meet the specific needs of our community. Our out of school care, family, recreation and youth programs do that and so much more to ensure long term sustainability, by supporting member access and embracing the rich diversity of our community members. We do our best to be a responsive and adaptable association and our strong community-based partnerships and relationships contribute a great deal towards helping us to meet that goal.

- Michael Masson

Carole James, MLA

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Advertising Now Available!!!

Want to advertise in our revived neighbourhood newsletter? Prime ad space is now available in the Fairfield Gonzales Observer. Sponsor a page or purchase ad space and promote your business to the local residents of the Fairfield Gonzales community.

Call Julie at 250-382-4604 for further information about advertising opportunities.



Observer Logo

In honour of all those who worked on the Observer over the past 30 years, we are keeping with tradition and adopting the original Observer logo. The logo was designed in 1983, when popularity of the newsletter launched the publication into a full newspaper.

Building Better Citizens Through Sport

By Joanne Service, President of BHLL

As spring approaches, the local fields will soon be busy with Fairfield kids practicing and playing baseball and softball. Beacon Hill Little League has been active in Fairfield for more than 55 years. Beacon Hill was originally established in 1957 as separate organizations – James Bay Little League and Fairfield Little League. At that time, Fairfield Little League played at Brooke Field, relocating to Hollywood Park in the early 1960's. The two leagues amalgamated in 1973 under the name Beacon Hill Little League, which now serves the communities of James Bay, Fairfield, Rockland and South Oak Bay. Beacon Hill is collecting stories and pictures from alumni who may have played for James Bay and Fairfield Little Leagues. If you'd like to share your memories, please contact Gus Niketas at 250-812-5353 or tniketas@shaw.ca.



During the months of April through June, more than three hundred children from the ages 5 to 12, play t-ball, mini-minors, minor baseball, majors baseball and minors and majors softball, here in our community. The players are coached by a dedicated group of parent volunteers. With a strong focus on player development, in addition to building better citizens through sport, Beacon Hill has seen its teams achieve success in recent years. Beacon Hill hosted and competed in the Canadian Major Girls Softball Championships in 2009 and 2010. And, for the past two seasons, the 9 and 10 year old boys baseball tournament team has won the district championship and attended the provincial championships on the Lower Mainland.

The Hollywood Park concession has developed a loyal clientele in the area, with many neighbours stopping by to eat and watch a few innings at the park, even if they don't have kids playing.

Registration for the 2012 season is happening right now via the website www.beaconhilllittleleague.org. In person registration will take place on February 4, 5, 11, 12, from 1pm to 4pm, at the Hollywood Park clubhouse.

Special Thanks to the FGCA Archivist Volunteers

The *FGCA Archives* project continues to live and grow at the community association thanks to two dedicated volunteers, Rebecca Martens and Stephan Fortin. These volunteers were in search of some job-related experience when they found this archivist opportunity.

We are very lucky to have Rebecca, a recent UBC graduate with a Masters in Library and Information Science. She is passionate about giving back by sharing her expertise in a meaningful way. Rebecca enjoys west coast activities like fishing, camping, ATV-ing, as well as cooking, baking and reading.



With a Bachelor's in Political Science and Environmental Studies, Stephan naturally gravitated to the community association. For him, the archivist volunteer position is a way to get involved in the community and pursue his interests in writing, government relations and community governance. Stephan is a builder, a baker and a cyclist. You can also find him rocking out with his band *Annette's Beach Party* at Logan's pub on March 1st, a fundraiser for the Ministry of Casual Living group. We deeply appreciate all the work you do for us and the cheerful presence you bring to the Fairfield Gonzales Community Place.

HISTORY OF FGCA COMMUNITY EVENTS AND NEIGHBOURHOOD GATHERINGS

By Stephan Fortin, FGCA Archivist

For decades the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association (FGCA) has been organizing and holding community events in the Fairfield neighbourhood. Picnics, Halloween bonfires, rummage sales, Easter egg hunts and the ever-popular Swiftsure Breakfast, continue to be family-friendly opportunities for neighbours to meet neighbours and have a good time. As a volunteer at the FGCA, I've spent the last few months as part of a small team organizing and preserving the community association's archives. The archives collect many of the original plans for these events, as well as community members' recollections and photographs of these events over the years. This material gives a lot of perspective on the efforts of the FGCA and local residents in holding these events, as well as the benefits they provide for the neighbourhood.

The process of putting on these various events almost always begins with a big idea humbly proposed. The Swiftsure Breakfast, one of the largest events organized by the community association, was the brainchild of Corinne Campbell, an involved and enthusiastic community member at the time, who thought it would be a good idea to serve breakfast to the crowds of people who already congregated to watch the sailboats racing in the Swiftsure International Yacht Race. With the help of Steve New, Syd Langhelt, and many others, the Swiftsure Breakfast grew from an idea to a widely attended annual event. The Halloween bonfire was also Corinne's idea and expanded by others in Fairfield living rooms. All manner of logistical planning and hurdles were overcome by hard-working community volunteers who wanted to provide these events for their community.



Evolution of the Swiftsure Breakfast event (1982-2010)

Holding events of any size requires the involvement of several people, businesses and groups in the community. Using community space for these events means consulting with the City of Victoria and neighbours. Some events call for even more special consideration and help, such as getting special permission and

consideration from the Fire Department for the bonfire, and supplies of water and electricity for the kitchens at the Swiftsure Breakfast. Beyond giving approval for the events, the City and others also kindly provide services and help in putting on the FGCA's community events. Consultation with the Fire Department for the Halloween bonfire led not only to a permit to hold the bonfire, but also a loaned fire hose and a volunteer team of firefighters to install it and pack it up at the end of the night. Once the City of Victoria agreed to allow the Swiftsure Breakfast to take place by Beacon Hill Park, it also volunteered the use of the electricity and water made available to the park for the Queen's Tea, which had taken place there years before. Corporate sponsors and local business support have also been a part of the FGCA's community events for many years, including many generous food donations from Thrifty Foods, Island Farms, and Bubby Rose's Bakery, among others. This is to say nothing of the volunteers who help with these events. The Swiftsure Breakfast boasts over one hundred volunteers, and even the smallest community picnics require the help of dedicated community members to make them run smoothly.

The guiding principle for the events the community association has

organized has always been to create places and opportunities for people and families of all ages to meet their neighbours and experience their neighbourhood in a new way. When the community association holds a picnic, an art show or a harvest festival like 2011's Fall Fairfield, the benefit for the community extends far beyond the day itself. The skills and stories that community members share at a neighbourhood event are just a few of the unseen benefits of a connected community. When neighbours make friends and collaborate, the neighbourhood becomes a happier, safer and more enjoyable place to live. The FGCA holds community events in order to foster these connections between residents, artists, community groups and local businesses. Like the community events of the past, Fall Fairfield was a great success because of the community's continued interest and participation in such events. This kind of enthusiasm for fun and local events is sure to make this year's neighbourhood celebration just as successful.

Join your community on

September 29th 2012

Fall Fairfield

Harvest Fete celebration!

at Robert Porter Park



Fireworks and fire jugglers at the Halloween bonfire event

FALL FAIRFIELD The Fields are Harvested, the Fair Lands Rest

By Carolyn Knight, 2011 FGCA Artist-in-Residence

A new seasonal community celebration event in Fairfield - just my cup of tea! The seed was planted long before the FGCA and I applied for the City of Victoria's Artist in Residence grant in May 2011.

As a long-time Victoria resident, I had connected with the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association (FGCA) in a number of ways: as the parent of a youth who attended and created events in the Garry Oak Room; as a yoga class participant in 2004-05, where I met the executive director, Joan Kotarski; and as an artist in residence (AIR) for ICA's Luminara 2010, where we created giant garlic and camas seed pod lanterns with community residents (which was exceptionally fun!).

A seed was planted when I first met Joan. "We should do some arts-based community event at Fairfield," Joan said. And I agreed. Seed planted. We composted the seed bed during the Luminara community lantern festivals where I met Thomas King, the community recreation coordinator, and the great staff members at the FGCA.

As Fairfield determined how it would recreate its celebration activities, the idea lay dormant that winter into spring until I received a call from Thomas in April 2011. "Do you want to apply for AIR funding to create a new autumn celebration event?" he asked. We did just that and we were successful.

Now, to nurture that seed, make hay while the sun shines!

Throughout the summer, a host of activities took place in the Fairfield Gonzales neighbourhood: free public art-making workshops at Saturday Moss Street Markets; making fabric prints and giant papier mâché apples; volunteer involvement with weekly communi-TEA conversations at the Fairfield Community Place, the neighbourhood community centre; hands-on art-making with FGCA out-of-school care children and staff; and an array of invitations to participate extended to area churches, businesses, neighbours, gardeners, artists and seniors.



My favourite part is conducting what I refer to as IN-reach. Like outreach, seeking participation, IN-reach discovers who, what and where community links already exist in order to create even more community connectivity. This is a hallmark of what we offer as community engaged artists.

Hundreds of people participated in making art, volunteering at the Harvest Fête celebration, which was nurtured by supportive staff. Roots and shoots grew beautifully, offering a true harvest of community abundance.

A few seeds overwintering, a new corm or two, maybe a rhizome doing its quiet underground expansion, will send up new shoots in the spring. I am confident a new harvest awaits.



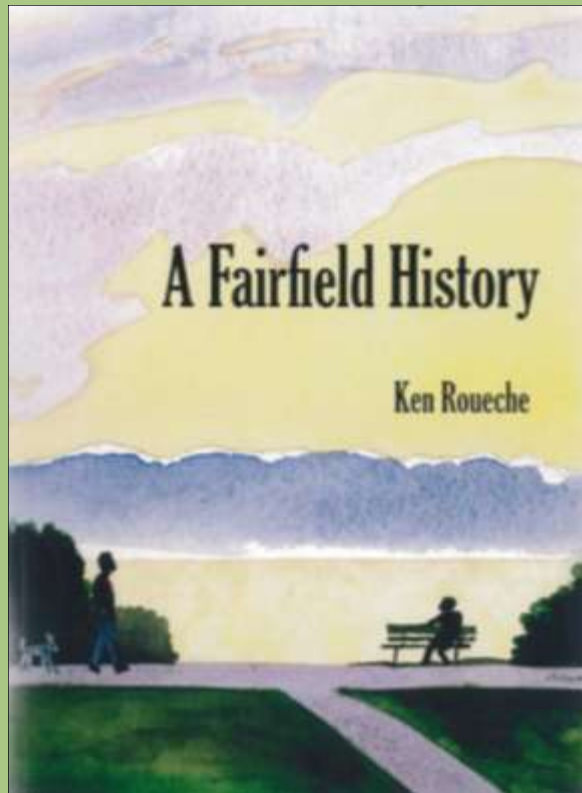
View of the 2011 Fall Fairfield Harvest Fête

Come Celebrate at the next Fall Fairfield September 29th!!!

Five Points

By Ken Roueche

A chapter from 'A Fairfield History'



Five Points *By Ken Roueche*

In the days before two cars in the driveway, coffee emporiums and Fairfield Plaza, Five Points was the centre of the neighbourhood. Major development started when Sir James Douglas School opened in November 1910 with five classrooms and about 125 students, ranging in age from six to fourteen years. The school was built in response to the great Victoria real estate boom that was bringing many more people to Fairfield. Previously children from the area had attended either Central or South Park. By 1912 the student population had exploded to 351 in seven classes and the following year a manual training building was opened over on Thurlow Street.

The school, designed by John Charles Keith, initially had five teachers, including Ernst Campbell the Principal, who was one of the many educators from Prince Edward

Island who had migrated to British Columbia. Among the first group of teachers was Miss Winnifred Grieg who had taught at Cadboro Bay and South Park before arriving at SJD. Miss Grieg did not retire until 1950. In the early 20's Katrina Goodfellow (nee McKinnon), fondly remembers walking back to school after lunch with her favourite teacher, Miss Grieg. Another favourite with the students was one Captain Ian Sinclair who assisted as a gym teacher, outfitted in his army uniform complete with kilt. The Captain was deaf and blind and communicated with the children by signing by hand.

The late Jessie Cox recalled many funeral processions along Fairfield Road during and after World War I. When soldiers marched past the school on their way to a burial at Ross Bay Cemetery the students would stand at attention. By 1919 the shingle annex on Fairfield Road was built. SJD fostered many very special students over the years. Perhaps the most remarkable might have been the collection of six world class physicists who attended during the forties and early fifties:

Lyle Robertson, 1308 Carnsew Street, Professor of Nuclear Physics at Uvic
 Garth Jones, 1248 Oscar Street, Professor of Nuclear Physics at UBC
 Barry Turner, 1243 Oscar Street, Radio Astronomer at University of Virginia
 Chuck Brown, 1651 Fairfield Road, Scientist at Fermi National Accelerator Lab
 Donald Heywood, 440 Kipling Street, TRIUMF Lab UBC and Nortel Scientist
 Stew Smith, 1261 Oscar Street, Professor of Physics at Princeton University



Hawkes Boros. Esso Station circa 1930. Jack Hawkes photographer

Firehall No. 7 opened on the south side of Fairfield at Cornwall in 1911 and operated for seven years. Five Point Shoe Repair, now Fairfield Fish & Chips, was also opened by Mr. Crothall. The family operated the shop until about 1977. The Dutton & Co. building at the corner was



Lester Patrick, 1948. Jack Hawkes photographer

also built about this time and by the mid 20's had become Foster's Confectionery. The Fosters were friends to generations of neighbourhood children, dispensing penny candies in little brown bags. The store was later run by Mrs. Ingalls. A grocery store opened about 1913, at the location of the Dutton & Co. building on Moss. The old building had many lives: as a grocery, a butcher shop, a produce store, a bakery and eventually a flower shop.

The building currently housing the Corner Store and Fairfield Bicycle Shop was also built about 1913 and was home to Five Point

Pharmacy, operated by Harold Knott. The building was separated into two shops on the Moss Street side, with the grocery store on the north end and the pharmacy on the south end. The steps to the pharmacy can still be seen at the the south end of the Corner Store.

By 1921 J.A. Shanks, later a city Alderman, opened Five Point Barber Shop at 1283 Fairfield, now the lane between the Dunn & Co. building and Fairfield Fish & Chips. Shanks, according to the late Bruce Hutchinson, was once sued by the parents of a boy who received an unusual haircut. The suit was later dropped when the evidence was lost...

In 1922 Imperial Oil built a gas station where the Newport Realty Building now stands. In early times petrol was apparently sometimes dispensed in a bucket from grocery stores! With the growth of car ownership there was a need to take the business seriously and Imperial Oil developed the technology that resulted in two hundred ninety-five stylish, and safe, service stations from coast to coast by 1924. Premier brand gasoline was declared to be: "absolutely the best and most reliable gasoline you can find." In July 1929 Jack and Bob Hawkes, aged 19 and 20, leased the station with its one hand operated pump and an outside pit for servicing cars. During the thirties the hours were long and prices were rock bottom: a six coat paint job was \$22.50. The brothers, who operated the station until 1958, employed as many as thirteen people.

The original service station, which was demolished in 1952, was designed by Townley & Matheson Architects of Vancouver. The partners did a number of "Gothic Revival" projects including this gas station. The firm's most prominent project was Vancouver City Hall. In Victoria their designs include St. Andrews School on Pandora and the tower at the Tourism Victoria Information Centre, aka Causeway Esso.

The evolution of the last major development, Fairfield United Church, began in 1912 with an 875 square foot canvas tent pitched in a field near the corner of May and Moss. Within months about a hundred area children were attending the Methodist Sunday School in the tent. During the early years, when both the community and the church were struggling to get established and to cope with the incomprehensible devastation of World War I, the Rev. A.B. Osterhous proved to be an accomplished parson. His guidance helped create the stability that resulted in construction of a permanent Church some years later. Osterhout went on to publish "Orientals in Canada", in which he pleaded with an indifferent government and a largely unsympathetic public to recognize Asian Canadians as citizens. A call that would take another twenty years to be heard.

Where the church now stands was part of the thirteen acre Glenville Estate, owned by Augustus Pemberton. The arts and craft half-timbered church was opened on October 13, 1926. The \$7500 mortgage was paid off on February 14, 1945, with Mrs. A. Schroeder ceremoniously burning it. It sounds like a simple enough task, but the Great Depression and World War II intervened to many times test the faith and resourcefulness of the parishioners. Many church members bought \$10 bricks for each family member to help finance the church.

The church's architect was Major K. B. Spurgin. The first of many of his substantial projects was Margaret Jenkins School, built in 1913. His designs still grace the neighbourhood, including 304 Beechwood, 525 St. Charles, 1147 Faithful, 98 Moss and 1126 Dallas. He also designed Qualicum College School, now the Qualicum College Inn. The Major, who served with the 103rd Battalion, the Timber Wolves, in France during World War I and practiced his craft until his death in 1936. During his career he designed only one very special church.

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Get your own copy of *A Fairfield History*

Available for \$20 at the Fairfield Community Place.
For every purchase, a donation is made to the FGCA.



Five Points corner at Fairfield Rd., Moss St. & Oscar Rd.

Five Points Corner Today

The Five Points Corner continues to be a central hub for the Fairfield neighbourhood. The space, as it currently looks, is the direct result and impact of neighbourhood community partnerships. These recent changes started through the *Five Points Enhancement* project in 2007. This project grew out of concerns for the lack of public, accessible green spaces in the heart of Fairfield, inspiring a collaboration between the FGCA, the Fairfield United Church, local businesses, the Sir James Douglas Elementary School and residents. The vision for the enhancement project is to rethink the unused space into an inviting, common area where cyclists and pedestrians can get together.

The first phase of the enhancement project involved removing the hedges that overshadowed the space between the bike shop and Duttons & Co. Real Estate Ltd. A path connecting to Moss street, public seating and more greenery was added to improve the flow of people and bicycles. The second phase consisted of updating the look and feel of the Fairfield United Church. With flower beds, built-in seating and a mosaic of memorial plaques, phase two of the *Five Points Enhancement* renewed the character of the church building.

Just look at the differences community partnerships can make with a little time and local expertise. If you're interested in getting involved in the third phase of this community initiative, give us a call ,250-382-4604.



Original plan for Phase 1 of Five Points Improvement project



BEFORE Phase 1:
Image of Oscar Street at Moss Street.



AFTER Phase 1:
Oscar Street dead end



Phase 1 celebration:
(R-L)

*Jim Masterton,
Sarah Amos,
Sandra McMillan,
John Luton, Debra
Bates, John Campos,
Joan Kotarski.*

THANK YOU

∞

Mary Addison
 Carol Armstrong
 Bedside Singers
 Catherine Belanger
 Robert Bhatia
 Bert Blattman
 Michael Bloomfield
 Douglas Campbell
 Lauren Cox
 Robert Crane
 Edward Davidson
 Pippa Davis
 Camil Dufort
 Helen Durie
 Lois Dutton
 Brenda Fox
 D.E. Gould
 Chrystine Green
 Margaret & John
 Griesbach
 Judith Hodgson
 Julie Holder
 Blair Humphrey
 Brad Jarvis
 Donna Jones
 Robin Jones
 Sherry Kirkvold
 Hans Larsen
 Judith Mackay
 Fran McArthur
 Richard Moulton
 Oxford Foods Ltd.
 Gil Parker
 Dick Proctor
 Judi Quail
 Arnold Ranneris
 Frances Rosenberg
 William Philip Sawkins
 Shampoo Hair Bar
 Janet Slaughter
 Don Trapnell
 Judy Trousdell
 Renate Varwig
 Neil & Jo-Anne Vickers
 Mary Virtue
 E.T. & I. Von Boetticher
 Nick & Carmel
 Westhuizen
 Carolyn Wick
 Joanne Winstanley

A heartfelt thank you to all our community members, partners and local businesses who donated to the Youth Space Capital Campaign. The capital campaign reached a total amount of \$11,145!! Thanks to all of you, young folks now have a safe place to go to after school.

- Joan Kotarski, ED



THE NEW FGCA YOUTH SPACE IS HERE!

OPEN HOUSE!

Come celebrate the newly designated youth space
at the Fairfield Community Place.

Friday, March 16th from 3-4pm.

Join us for this symbolic opening and learn about how
the space is impacting youth and victoria Youth groups.
Hope to see you there!



"We value community and are very fond of the Fairfield-Gonzales neighbourhood.
We see the FCGA as the organization which most sensitively addresses the
neighbourhood's issues and opportunities."
- Brad Jarvis, donor

"The Centre is well aware of the trends and issues in its neighborhood and works in
collaboration with the community to create an environment within its centre and
within the community that allows people to feel welcome and safe."

-United Way of Greater Victoria

THE ROCK

By Marianne Sämänn-Wyss

I am the ancient Guardian of this place. I live in the heart of what you now call Fairfield, but Fairfield is just one name, and there have been many others before. I have been here since the beginning of time, and I remember. I have seen seasons, tribes, and peoples come and go, I have witnessed many small and large changes, and people have come to me for perspective and guidance. And when they listened to my stories, the tree of life flourished and all the children of the earth lived in abundance and in harmony with the laws of the earth.

My stories are about the interconnectedness of all life. They are about belonging, community, and how to support each other. They tell that the plants and animals are our relatives and that the sun, wind, soil and water are living beings that want to be respected as that...and the tree of life flowered with these stories.

There haven't been many people up here lately to listen to my stories, and I have seen more change than ever before and this change is different than the change I know...this new change brings with it noise and stench and pain and suffering...and I don't understand. Please help me and tell me, what are the stories you tell yourself, and what are the stories you tell your children? Do your stories sustain and nourish you, do they teach you how to dance the dance of life so that all may live? Do they nourish the tree of life? That's at the core of all stories...do your stories nourish the tree of life so it can nourish you in return???



Too often when people these days come to me they seem confused and disconnected...it seems as if they have a hole in their soul, and this hole is slowly swallowing the people and the future of their children and grandchildren. And it's taking with it the trees, whales, salmon, wolves and spirit bears...tell me, what are the stories that cause this emptiness?

Oh, you may say, I realize that there's something not working with my story and I would be willing to change it, but I don't know how...there's no path in front of me, and I feel lost, overwhelmed and powerless. And at times I don't even know what I really need and I feel trapped and stuck.

When you've reached this place, come to me. Come and walk up the little path that leads to my rugged, rounded peak. I am the Guardian, the Record Keeper, the Story Teller. Come, take a deep breath, open your eyes and open your heart. Can you see the many faces of people and animals in my body? Each one holds a story, each one keeps a record, and each one is willing to share it with you. Look at them closely, see which one calls to you, and then sit down and listen.

I know what your soul is longing for, I can show you how to fill the hole in your soul...come to me, sit down and listen. Whatever is burdening you, I know how to make your load lighter...come to me, sit down and listen. Are you worried about the state of your health care or education system? Are you worried about the environmental degradation, the many species that are being extinct every minute? Come, come and listen...listen to the old stories, the stories that kept the tree of life flowering. There were many before you who sat here and listened, and they all left nourished.

Buy Your Own Copy of
***Hanging on to Paradise: An Illustrated Anthology of
 Community Visions in Prose and Poetry***
and
**discover the past, present and future visions of Fairfield through
 artistic expressions.**
Available at the Fairfield Community Centre

And when your heart understands, get up and slowly walk up my rugged terrain – don't forget to thank your feet for carrying you up – and then look some more. Look at me from this new vantage point, then look around and take in the magnificent 360-degree view. Say hi to my brothers across the big water, say hi to my sister the ocean, give thanks for the power and the beauty and the sacredness of all there is, and give thanks that you are part of all this. Take your time on my ancient look out, take it all in, and become aware of the ones that have been here before you. And whenever you're ready, whenever you found what you were longing for, slowly find your way down again. Know that the changes that happened inside of you today are my gifts to you. Know that you are welcome to return as often as you want to. I'm here...I have been here long before you came here, and I will be here long after you are gone. I am the Guardian, I am the Record Keeper, and I am the Story Teller and you can find me in the heart of what you now call Fairfield.

Excerpt from *Hanging on to Paradise: An Illustrated Anthology of Community Visions in Prose and Poetry*

Are you a Provincial Government Employee???

Become a philanthropic leader at your workplace by donating through the Provincial Employees Community Services Fund.

The Community Services Fund has been supporting our youth initiatives and programs for almost 10 years. Youth drop-ins, counselling and prevention programs, as well as a newly designated youth space, are some of our accomplishments from this funding. The FGCA believes it is important to provide accessible safe and healthy spaces for youth in the neighbourhood.

This supported funding has just been cut for the next three years, but you can still help us continue to foster healthy youth. To donate, find the FGCA on the charity list when filling out your next Community Services Fund form. Remember, healthy youth makes for healthy communities.

Be a Leader for Your Community Association!

'Who is the FGCA?': A Survey

This year's priority for the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association is to develop a clear profile that speaks to the true spirit of what we do for the community. There is significant value to us and the community in defining what we do and what we are known for.

Help us paint the picture of our community association by filling out the survey.

Please submit your answers by March 1st at 5pm in person, by mail, e-mail or, even better, find the survey link on our website homepage and submit your answers anonymously!

Your participation is greatly appreciated.

3 QUESTIONS:

1. What interests brought you to the FGCA?
2. What are we known for?
3. What should we be known for?

THE FAIRFIELD NEW HORIZONS SENIOR CENTRE

By Helen Oldershaw, founder of the FGCA

Once the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association was formally incorporated in 1975, committees were set up and projects were started. One project suggestion was to establish a seniors centre.

With financial assistance from a federal government community grant, two co-ordinators, Helen Oldershaw and Joan Halvorsen, were hired for a six-month period from November, 1975 till May, 1976. During this time, these two would look for and find a number of seniors who were interested and willing to serve on a board of directors. These directors would, in turn, complete and file an application for another federal grant: a New Horizons grant, which would be used to establish a permanent Fairfield Seniors Centre. This New Horizons grant was approved and awarded in May, 1976.

And what a resolute, hands-on, alive group these directors and some other members turned out to be. The majority of them were women who had lost their husbands to illness, but were determined to continue to live life to the fullest in the company of new congenial friends. One of the most active movers-and-shakers, Greta Ferguson, organised sight-seeing trips to places like Hurricane Ridge to the Olympic Peninsula.



1st Seniors Centre Board of Directors

*Back Row: L-R: Peter Porter, Lou Hall, Anne Mulley(President).
Middle Row:L-R: Greta Ferguson (Co-ordinator), Jess Robinson (Sect/
Treas.), Doris Morson, Margaret Barker.Front Row:L-R: Helen Oldershaw
(LIP grant Co-ordinator), Doris Portman, Elizabeth Rogers.
Missing from photo:Win Tapping & Evelyn Banfield.*



Joan Halvorsen & Helen Oldershaw (L-R)

Seniors' movie night





June 1976 at the Empress Hotel
Several of the guests at the Thank-you dinner for grant
co-ordinators, Joan Halvorsen & Helen Oldershaw
Jack & Doris Burt, Margaret Barker, Win Tapping & friend,
Anne Mulley & friends. (from left to right)



Helen and Joan - the
seniors surprised Helen and
Joan with a celebration at
the Empress hotel. They
received coursages, sat at
the head of a long table, and
participated in a cake
cutting ceremony.

Ribbon cutting at the SJD Annex building



Small groups of newly-formed friends would often go out for dinner or to a show after the day's Seniors Centre activities were over. Another keen member, Jean Creech, started up the craft group, "Busy Hands", which was enthusiastically attended and whose members contributed their work to Craft Fairs, thereby raising steady and substantial amounts of extra funds for the Seniors Centre.

The whole process of setting up the Seniors Centre was a true community effort. Gwen Lundy and Jack Humble of the local Ministry of Human Resources office, were able to provide office space for the two coordinators. Then the Seniors Centre was offered the use of the large basement at Fairfield United Church, for their activities. These included arts and craft classes, card games, film shows, and special-occasion teas. Many of the Seniors Centre's members cheerfully pitched in to help when needed, doing everything from washing dishes to offering their homes for board meetings.

From the church basement, the Seniors Centre moved across the street to the former annex building of Sir James Douglas School, and eventually from there to the new Cook Street location, now known as the Cook Street Activity Centre. With yearly financial assistance from the City of Victoria, membership grew, more activities and services were offered and permanent staff were hired.

DID YOU KNOW?

Building Community Centres Through Partnerships

By Julie Cormier & Stephan Fortin

In 1980 the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association (FGCA) was a well-established, 15-year-old organization, but lacked a permanent community centre. Though well-received by some members of Victoria City Council, a formal request for a community centre came to nothing, simply because there was no suitable and available space in the neighbourhood.



With this in mind, community association members entered into conversation with School District 61 about leasing space from Sir James Douglas (SJD) Elementary School. Two possibilities came out of these discussions: (a) sharing time and space with the school by leasing facilities after the school day, or (b) operating as a community school. It was this latter option which led the FGCA to secure a centre.

Community schools are about partnerships between schools and community groups together offering a range of educational and community services, such as after-school programs and even academics. As a popular trend in the 1970's, FGCA members were inspired by the successful establishment of the James Bay Community School.

In 1984 the FGCA was granted shared access of the SJD brick annex building, initially called *The Place*. The annex building no longer lives in the neighbourhood, but once thrived on Thurlow Street next to the old SJD school gym, which is now the parking lot next to Robert Porter park.

Today, the FGCA continues to partner with School District 61 in a variety of ways, one of which is a joint-use agreement of the Garry Oak room and Corinne's Kitchen on Thurlow St.

Community Voices: Call for submissions!!!

Each month, the Board of Directors spares a bit of time at their meetings to hear from Fairfield Gonzales community members. These neighbourhood conversations are called *Community Voices*. We want to bring Community Voices to the Observer! We want to hear from you for the next edition coming out September 1st. The theme for the upcoming issue is Community Spaces.

Send us recipes, artwork, poems, rants, crosswords, photography, or any other form of printable expression you want to share with your neighbourhood. Keep in mind, submissions that are inclusive and community-minded will be favoured for publication.

Send your submission to
development@fairfieldcommunity.ca



The FGCA actively supports and collaborates with local artists. From housing an art gallery, to promoting local authors, artists bring vibrancy to our community centre, events, and programs. Artists, in turn, support the community association by volunteering, igniting creative projects and contributing to fundraising initiatives. Check out our website to find out more about how you can donate to the FGCA while supporting local artists or how you can share your artistic flare with the community association and the whole neighbourhood.

GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION!

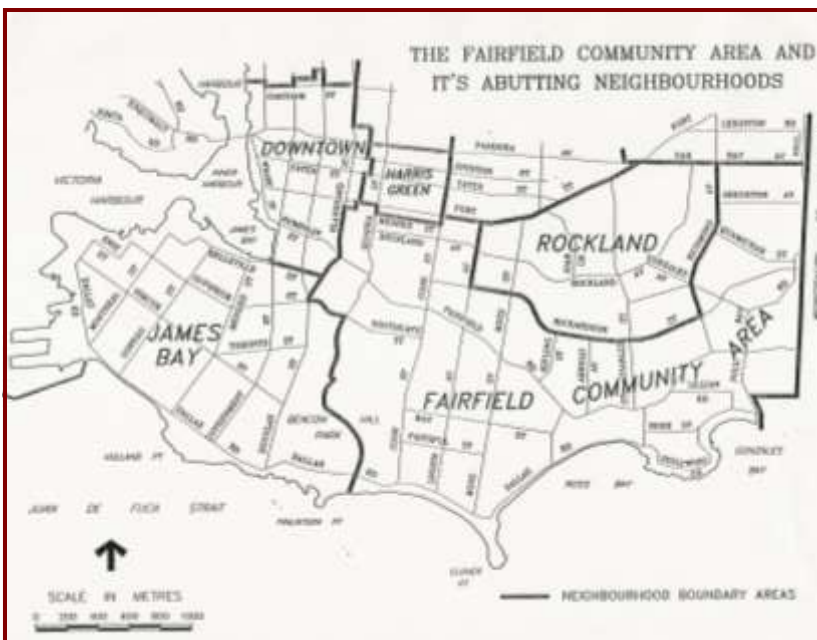
The FGCA is a place where neighbors, parents, business owners, families, children and youth come to learn, play and build community. With a strong history in partnerships and collaboration, the FGCA is an integral part of the neighborhoods' development and planning, environmental preservation and accessibility to local and affordable programs for all ages.

**Five Ways to
Get Involved**
Become a member
Attend our Fall Fair *field* Harvest Fête
Donate to us
Volunteer with us
Like us on Facebook

Become a Member of the FGCA

Our association membership is open to any individual who lives in or owns a business in the Fairfield/Gonzales Area. There is no charge for membership and it is perpetual.

Membership is a simple step to becoming more involved with your community.



Volunteer Opportunities

Publication Volunteer

Want to take part in the production of a neighbourhood publication? The Fairfield Gonzales Observer is back and we're gaining interest from the community to form a committee. The Observer reports on community news, events, projects and neighbourhood history. Contact Julie at development@fairfieldcommunity.ca

Moss Street Market Booth Attendant

If you thrive on the Moss Street Market vibe, this booth attendant position is for you! This is an opportunity to represent your neighborhood community association at one of the top rated markets in town. The booth attendant will set-up and take down an interactive display booth during Saturday market hours and engage with the market goers about the new and on-going programs and services offered by the FGCA. Interested? Contact Thomas at 250-382-4604 or recreation@fairfieldcommunity.ca

Board Member

Join us for an exciting year as we raise our community profile and take on new events and projects. Board members must live or operate a licensed business in the Fairfield Gonzales area. Board members are expected to attend monthly meetings and join a committee. Expect about 4 hours of activity each month for the 2011/2012 term.

Sign up to have the
Observer emailed to you!

Send any
questions or
comments to:



place@fairfieldcommunity.ca

CONTACT
INFORMATION

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WINTER OFFICE HOURS

Monday
9:30 am to 8:00 pm

Tuesday to Saturday
9:30 am to 2:30 pm

Sunday
Closed

*We are closed all statutory
holidays & Saturdays which
fall in a long weekend*



SPONSORS



Community Jazz Gala
Supporting Fairfield Gonzales Community Association



February 10th, 2012
Wardroom - Officer's Mess CFB
Esquimalt
1586 Esquimalt Rd.
Victoria B.C.
7 pm - 1am
\$35 per person
\$60 per couple
Email event@fairfieldcommunity.ca
to donate or sponsor

www.fairfieldcommunity.ca
Ticket Sales @

Silent & Live Auction
Live Jazz Music
Wine Tasting
Gourmet Appetizers

*ALL RANKS EVENT

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