

Township Walking Tours

**Seven Walking Tours in
Historic & Scenic Esquimalt**

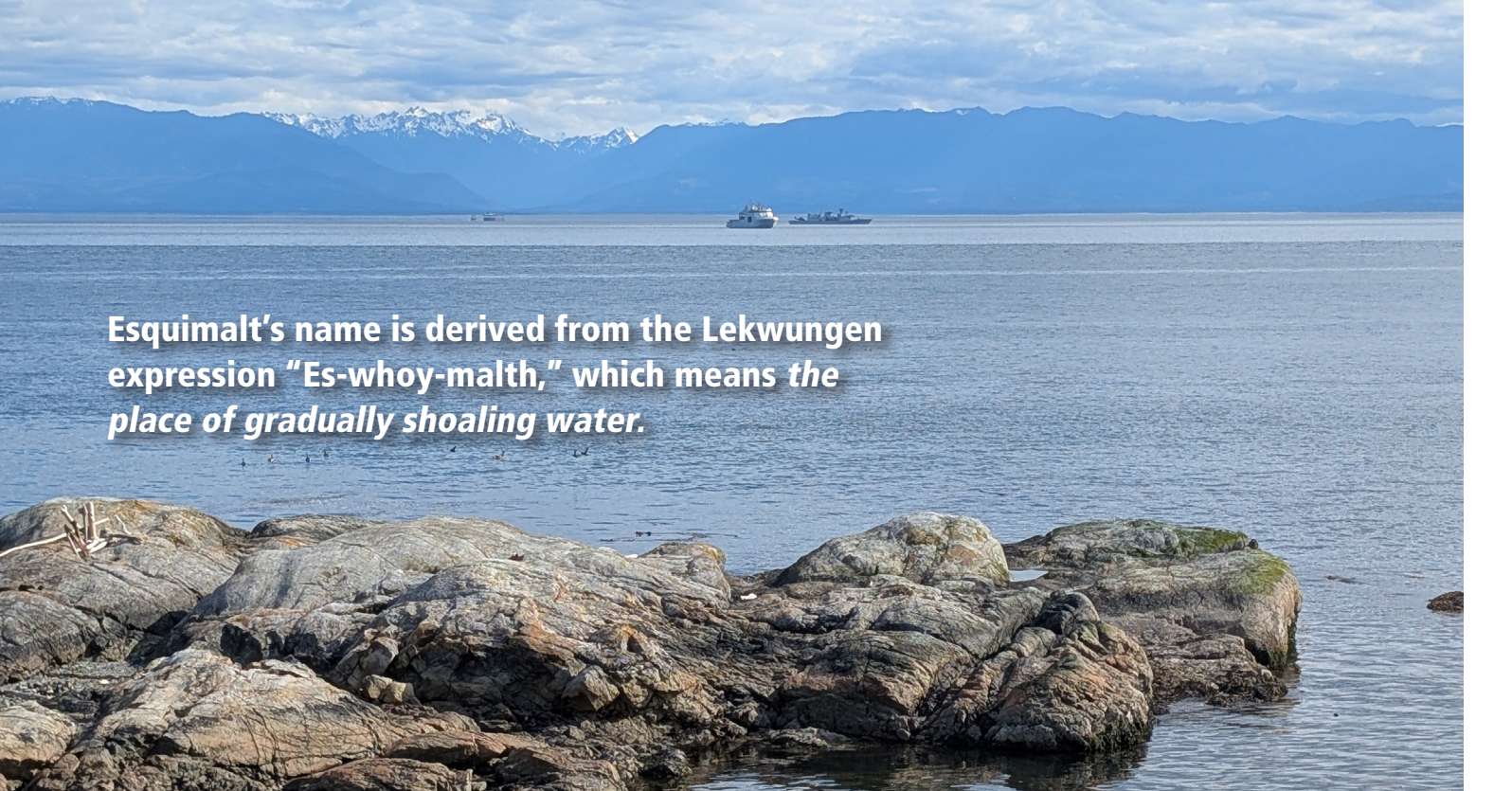
esquimalt.ca/explore

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250-414-7100

2025 edition

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Esquimalt's name is derived from the Lekwungen expression "Es-whoy-malth," which means *the place of gradually shoaling water*.

Seven walking tours of scenic & historic Esquimalt

These seven tours tell the story of Esquimalt, its history and natural features. They have been assembled into an easy-to-carry booklet and each tour takes about an hour to complete. Be prepared for some short steep climbs in the Highrock Park area—Tours Four and Five.

On these tours you will see ancient shorelines, intriguing trails, Garry oak forests, incredible glimpses into our maritime and military past, heritage homes designed by renowned architects, and coastal and upland parks that are the envy of the region.

The township lands hold a rich cultural heritage that began long before Esquimalt's incorporation and extend beyond our municipal borders.

Esquimalt is a compact community, so no matter where you are, you are always close to the transit line, local restaurants and breweries, and other public amenities.

Portions of the tour can be enjoyed on your bicycle, particularly sections which showcase the many heritage homes in the Township.

Explore Esquimalt's history in more detail by visiting each of the Kosapsum (Esquimalt) Nation and Songhees First Nation's websites (esquimaltnation.ca and songheesnation.ca), checking out the Esquimalt Municipal Archives in person or online, or visiting the CFB Esquimalt Naval Museum.

Explore our past at Esquimalt Archives

Esquimalt Archives:

- Collects, preserves, and makes available to the public, archival material pertaining to Esquimalt from the earliest times to the present and within the current and historical boundaries of Esquimalt.
- Promotes public awareness and understanding of Esquimalt's rich heritage
- Records current events and acquires present day information.

The Archives also has a substantial online collection of some 3,600 images depicting Esquimalt people, buildings, events, ships, the military, modes of transportation, sports and landscapes. Call us at 250-412-8540 for hours and information.

esquimalt.ca/archives

Walking Tour One

West Bay Area

1. 810-812 Dunsmuir Road, architect Thomas D. Sedger, built in 1903 on land originally owned by Victoria boot maker Henry Mansell. Home for Ethel and Arthur Wolfenden, both members of pioneer families, until their new home at 622 Head Street was completed in 1910. A manager with BC Land and Investment Agency, he served on Esquimalt Council 1913-1914. Ethel was the daughter of Percival Ridout and Annie Jenkinson Brown of PR Brown Realty Co., now Brown Bros Victoria.



810-812 Dunsmuir

2. At the end of Garrett Place, take the short pathway to the sweeping vistas and viewpoint over the Garry Oak Meadow (the steep stairway leads down to Westsong Way). These 2.4 acres (.9 hectares) of natural habitat were a gift to Esquimalt from Mandalay Development Limited, who built Swallow's Landing. The Nature Conservancy of Canada manages these meadowlands.

3. Westsong Way was built as a joint project of the Provincial Capital Commission, the City of Victoria and the Township of Esquimalt. Completed in 1980, this beautiful seaside walkway offers spectacular views of the harbour.

4. 507 Head St., called "the Big House," was built by shipwright Alexander Watson for Captain Victor Jacobson in 1893 as a wedding gift for his wife Minnie. Described as in the Italianate style—or "Steamboat Gothic," plans for the house came from Victorian Architecture, a house pattern book,

by Bicknell and Comstock. The Captain made his fortune in the sealing industry.

For many years the Jacobson family home was the sternwheeler *Distributor* tied up alongside the Captain's wharf in West Bay.

5. Captain Jacobson Park was officially named and dedicated in 1998. The site, originally the estuary for a small stream, was filled in during the 1950s.

6. Entrance to West Bay and Hidden Harbour Marina. Check at either one for availability of ferries, kayak rentals or water taxis.

7. Selected in December 1887 as permanent barracks, Work Point is one of our oldest landmarks. Canada took complete control of the barracks after British Imperial Troops left in 1906. The barracks are now part of CFB Esquimalt.

8. Paradise Street in the early 1900s, part of Mrs. Bridget Potts' dairy farm, was probably named by Captain Jacobson as a reminder that the sailing vessel *Casco*, owned by the Victoria Sealing Company, was chartered by author Robert Louis Stevenson in 1888 and while cruising in the South Pacific (paradise) he wrote In The South Seas, published in 1889.

9. 901 Wollaston St., "Seascape" was designed by architect John C.M. Keith for eccentric philanthropist John Dean in 1923. Dean resided here until his death in 1943. John Dean Park on Mt. Newton was developed from 22 acres Dean donated to the Municipality of North Saanich. He served as Councillor (1900) and Mayor (1903) of Rossland, BC. Esquimalt children remember him putting the first 25 children to arrive at his door on New Year's Day on a payroll of 25 cents per month for the year. Those arriving later received \$2 on their birthday, a nice sum in those days! To learn more about John Dean read Blessings in Plenty or Sacred Heart by local author Jarrett Teague.



507 Head Street

10. 856 Wollaston St. was built by Herbert Frederick Bourne, CE, the Township's second engineer. A third storey was gained when the Mansard roof was raised in the 1990s. The Waddington family resided in the house for many years. Frederick Waddington, a manual training instructor at Lampson Street School, also organized the school choir that placed first in many local music festivals.



WestSong Way



Captain Jacobson Park is a popular spot for community events.



851 Wollaston Street

11. 851 Wollaston St., designed by architect Francis Mawson Rattenbury. His more notable commissions are the Provincial Legislature Buildings and the Empress Hotel. The house, an eclectic combination of Chalet, Tudor Revival and Queen Anne style was built in 1908 for Arthur and Amy Coles. From 1916-1919, Arthur Coles was reeve (Mayor) of Esquimalt. The house, restored by Bill and Debrah Patterson, was designated heritage in 1994.



Walking Tour Two

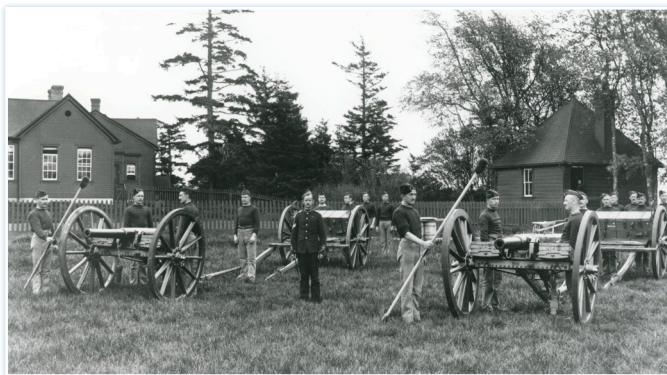
Fleming Beach - Saxe Point

1. Fleming Beach, named for Harold and Edgar Fleming, well-known photographers, who arrived in Victoria in the 1880s from London, England. They built their house "Viewfield" near the beach. It was the first house in the area to have a telephone installed. Edgar was primarily a portrait photographer. In July 1896 he joined an expedition exploring Vancouver Island led by Rev. William Washington Bolton (see Tour 3) and John William Laing. The Fleming Bros. studio was located at 1014 Government street.

2. Walk past the Esquimalt Anglers' Club House and the rock climbing wall out to Buxton Green named to honour the family of Percival (Tich) and Phoebe Buxton and their 14 children. Tich and eight sons served in the Canadian Army. Buxton Green was dedicated as park in 1983.

- Walk out to Macaulay Point, named for Donald Macaulay, bailiff (manager) of Viewfield farm, one of four farms established in the Esquimalt District by the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, a subsidiary of the Hudson's Bay Company. This land is owned by the Government of Canada and leased by the Township of Esquimalt. Explore old Fort Macaulay.
- First earthwork battery. See Tour 7.

3. Plaskett Place (formerly Armit Road) where astronomer Dr. John Stanley Plaskett built his home in 1926. He helped design and build instruments for the Dominion Observatory on Little Saanich Mountain, including the 72" telescope that was when completed in 1918 the largest in the world. In 1984 Minor Planet No. 2905 was named Plaskett in honour of Dr. Plaskett and his son, Harry H. Plaskett, also an astronomer.



Work Point Barracks



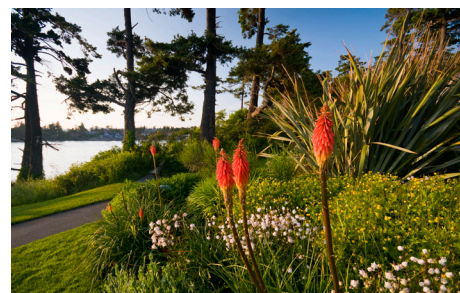
Fleming beach views

4. 1179 Munro St., a dignified Beaux Arts style house called "Stonehenge," designed in 1909 by architect P. Leonard James, was designated heritage in 1998. James, in partnership with Francis Mawson Rattenbury, designed the Crystal Garden (now Victoria Conference Centre), once the largest saltwater swimming pool in the British Empire. James supervised construction of the first wartime housing contract in Esquimalt, three hundred houses in the Colville Road area.



1179 Munro Street

5. Saxe Point Park on Cape Saxe, named by Lt. Commander James Wood, a member of the crew of HMS *Pandora*, who surveyed the area in 1849. The name Saxe is part of the title of HRH Queen



Saxe Point Park

Victoria's husband and consort, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. The waters around Saxe Point are considered to be some of the best in the area for scuba diving.

6. When leaving the park, walk north on Fraser to Greenwood Avenue or Bewdley Avenue. Residential lots of one acre were created here in the "Viewfield Farm Estate" and sold by the Hudson's Bay Company in February 1913. Buyers camped out overnight and sales of \$160,000 were realized during the first two hours on the first day. Councillor George Mathews paid \$8,600 (highest price) for property at the corner of Wychbury Avenue and Lampson Street.

7. This area was once known as the Lake District of Esquimalt.

8. "Keyton" at 1110 Greenwood Avenue was built in 1913 for Richard Orchard. For a number of years it was home for Constable William J. Parry, RCMP who joined the force in June 1935. In 1943 he was one of the crew of RCMP vessel *St. Roch* to receive the Polar Medal given to "those who render extraordinary services in the Polar Regions and Canada's north." *St. Roch*, a wooden schooner, was the first ship to completely navigate North America.

9. "Rosemead" at 429 Lampson Street is a Tudor Revival-style home designed by architect Samuel Maclure. It was built in 1908 for T. Harry Slater, an early realtor and developer. Maclure designed Hatley Castle, now part of Royal Roads University in Colwood. Despite the many additions and alterations, it was given heritage designation



429 Lampson Street (2018)

in November 2013. Formerly known as the Old England Inn, it was established by Sam and Rosina Lane in 1948.

Further discovery

For more information about earlier photographers read *Camera Workers, BC Photographers Directory 1858-1900* by David Mattison.

To learn more about P. Leonard James read *The Life and Times of Victoria Architect P. Leonard James* written by his daughter Rosemary James Cross.



Walking Tour Three

Old Esquimalt Village Area

1. Founded with the support of crew members of HMCS *Rainbow*, Esquimalt United Church was called the Esquimalt Naval and Military Methodist Church until 1925 when the congregation joined the newly formed United Church of Canada. It was designed by American architects Emanuel J. Bresemann and Eugene Durfee. The cornerstone was laid by Miss Sarah Spencer, on September 11, 1913. In the 1950s the name changed to The Esquimalt United Church.

2. "Selwyn," at 1253 Lyall street was built about 1910 by Charles Jordan in the Queen Anne Cottage style. It was the home of Commander Rowland Bourke, VC, DSO, Legion of Merit and Croix de Guerre, who received the Victoria Cross for valour at Zeebrugge-Ostend during World War One. He was instrumental in the formation of the Fishermen's Volunteer Reserve organized just before the Second World War.



Commander Bourke

3. St. Paul's historic Naval and Garrison Church was built in 1866 at the foot of Signal Hill. Architect Thomas Trounce supervised construction. Designated heritage in 1999, it is a fine example of Gothic Vernacular and one of the oldest buildings in Esquimalt. In 1904 the church was taken apart, moved to this site and reconstructed under the supervision of architect Thomas Woodgate. Major George F. Foster donated the land.

- Interesting artifacts and memorials include the laid-up colours of the Royal Canadian Navy, the Canadian Merchant Marines, the Old Contemptibles and the Burma Star. The memorial windows were unveiled during the Royal Canadian Navy Centennial (1910-2010) and designed by Mercer & Schaefer Glass Studios. The Memorial Window Project committee was chaired by Rear-Admiral (Ret'd) William (Bill) Hughes, CD.

- The pipe organ, built in 1891 by Peter Conacher Company Ltd. of Huddersfield, England, was purchased in 1912 from the Old Iron Church (St. John the Divine) and installed in 1913. Crew members of HMS *Shearwater* helped raise the funds.



In 2006 the organ received heritage designation from the Royal Canadian College of Organists.

4. "Devon Cottage," the Regency Style house at 1388 St. Paul's Place was built by John Day, owner of the Esquimalt Hotel in the Old Esquimalt Village (now HMC Dockyard). Later, under the proprietorship of the Brunsdon family, the hotel was known as "The Bucket of Blood." Arthur Lockley, a former reeve of Esquimalt, lived here until his death in the rose garden in 1944. The house was restored by Walter Sharpe and designated heritage in 2000.



1388 St. Paul's Place

5. "Glenday," at 1382 St. Paul's Place, also in the Regency Style was built in 1901 for Jessie Price Day, John's first wife. In 1919 the second story and the bow-front window were added.

6. 622 Constance Ave., built for Robert Henry Nunn who also built 620 Constance Ave. Nunn came to Esquimalt with the Royal Marines retiring here after twenty-one years service. He also served with British forces in Egypt. Nunn was a special constable and the first poundkeeper for the Township. He carried out his duties on horseback.



Robert Henry Nunn, Special Constable.

What's in a name?

Constance Avenue is named for HMS *Constance*, the first warship to drop anchor in Esquimalt Harbour.

Nelson Street is named for Viscount Horatio Nelson, Vice-Admiral of the White, HMS *Victory*, who defeated the French at the Battle of Trafalgar, October 21, 1805.

Sturdee Street is named after Admiral Sturdee

Foster Street is named for Major George Foster Foster, Esquimalt District Member of the House of Assembly for Vancouver Island in 1860.

Grafton Street is named after HMS *Grafton*, the last flagship (1903) on the Pacific Coast.

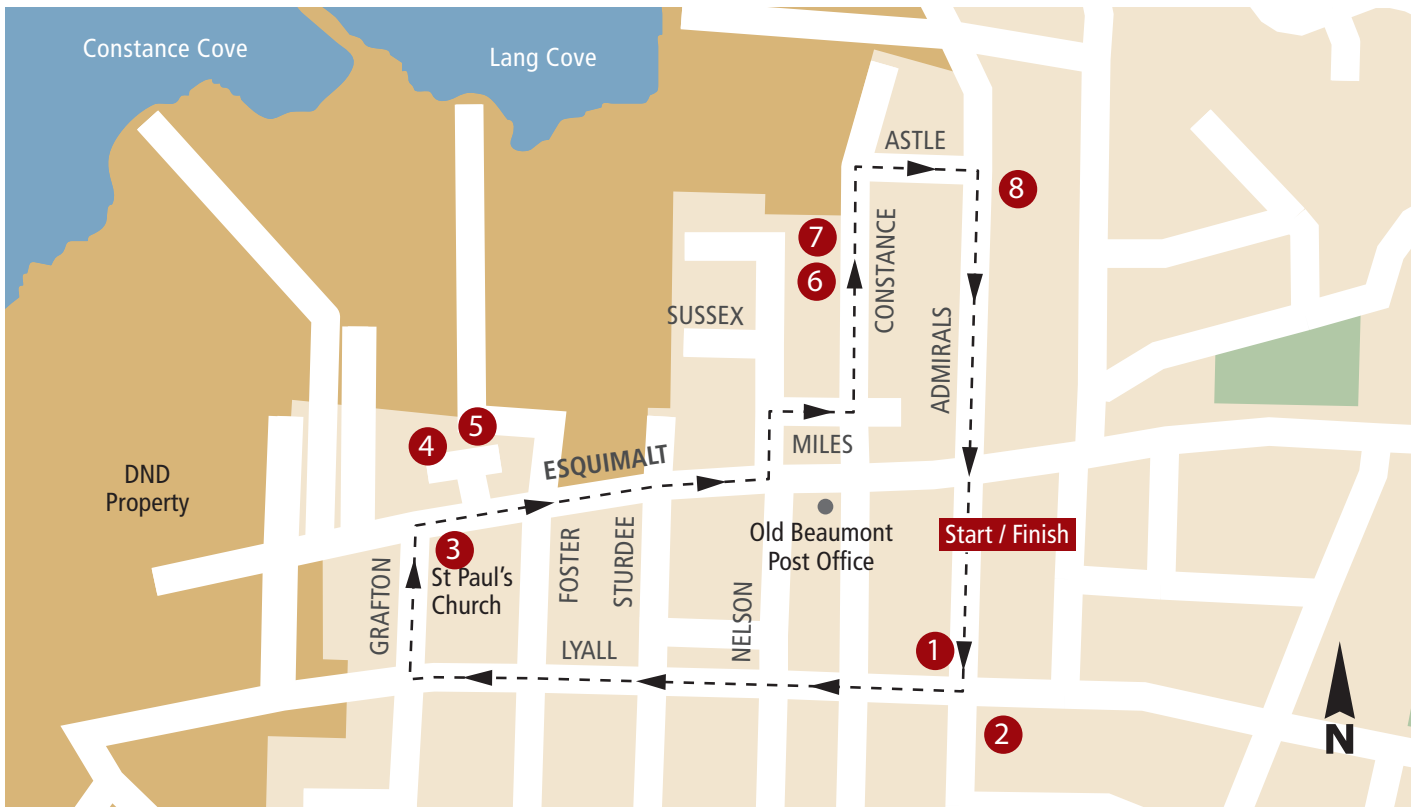


649 Admirals Road

School). The house foundation and first storey are cement brick, scored to look like masonry. Architect Peter Cotton lived in the house from 1969 to 1980. Despite the recommendation of the building inspector in 1970 to demolish the house, Cotton renovated it! In 1996, Bill and Debrah Patterson restored then adapted the house for new use. It was designated heritage in 1996.

7. 638 Constance Ave., built about 1910 for Frederick and Alma Avon Neild Luscombe. Fred worked at Yarrows, the Dockyard and with BC Electric Railway. The family was connected with the property from 1907 to 1980.

8. "Ervyger," 649 Admirals Rd., built in 1908 for Rev. William Washington Bolton and his wife Agnes Jane Bushby. Rev. Bolton founded the University School for Boys (now St. Michael's University



Walking Tour Four

Memorial Park & Highrock/Old Transfer Woods Area

1. Esquimalt Municipal Hall, designed by architect Vic Davies opened in 2003. The Esquimalt Branch of the Greater Victoria Public library shared the building until 2022 then relocated in a new building next door.

2. Memorial Park, created through the efforts of the Esquimalt Chapter of Independent Order of the Daughters of the Empire (IODE) and the Wardens of St. Paul's Church under the direction of Rev. Canon Harry Stocken. Dedication of this most significant & important historical landmark designed by architect Hubert Savage took place September 27, 1927. In 1995 Memorial Park became the first parcel of public land to receive heritage designation.

- The Esquimalt Millennium time capsule was buried beneath Legion Way July 1, 2001.
- World War One German field guns were received as war prize in 1921. The guns were declared Memorial by municipal bylaw in 1941, saving them from becoming scrap metal. Both guns were captured by the 2nd Canadian Mounted Rifles: one at Vimy in 1917, and one at Cambrai in 1918.
- The Children's Memorial Playground, begun in 1924 under the direction of the Municipal Engineer Herbert Bourne, CE, has seen many changes over the years. It officially opened July 1, 1927.
- HMCS *Esquimalt* Memorial, relocated to Memorial Park from Town Square in 2017, is dedicated to the memory of sailors who lost their lives when *Esquimalt* was torpedoed and sunk in the approaches to Halifax Harbour April 16, 1945. She was the last Canadian warship lost during the Second World War.
- In 1858, to the west of the park, the first mission church in BC, St. Joseph's Mission, was built by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI), later known as St. Charles Mission after Father Charles Pandosy. The civic address today is 1230 Esquimalt Rd.
- The small cement survey post marks the boundary line between the suburban lots, Viewfield Farm and Constance Cove Farm. Joseph Despard Pemberton, surveyor for the Hudson's Bay Company, began surveying Esquimalt District in 1851.
- Hudson's Bay Company survey marker, unveiled November 14, 1996 by Adele Matte, a member of the pioneer Sinnott family who was manager of the HBC store, Victoria.

3. Historic Old Esquimalt Rd., the oldest planned road in the west (see Tour 5) was designated a heritage road in 2014.

- 1214, 1218, 1221 Old Esquimalt Rd., designed in the 1940s by Arthur H.F. Stelck, a well known hardware merchant whose stores were located at 1237 Esquimalt Rd. and 2680 Quadra St. 1221, a one-storey, seven room dwelling was built in 1945 at a cost of \$4950. It was designated heritage in 1994.
- "Longstone," 1211 Old Esquimalt Rd., a half-timbered Tudor Revival style home, built about 1909 for Colonel John A. Hall, a chemist by profession and a founding partner in the Victoria Chemical Company. Architect Samuel Maclure may have designed the house. No plans exist. Col. Hall began his military career in the 5th (BC) Field Artillery Regiment and was in command when the British Army left in 1906. In 1908 he helped organize the 88th Fusiliers. In 1913, in command of the Civil Aid Forces, he took troops to Nanaimo to control striking coal miners at the Dunsmuir Mines.
- "Lyndhurst," 706 Warder Place, designed by architect Thomas Hooper, was built for Percival Redout Brown in 1913. Robert Pooley, conservative MLA for Esquimalt (1912-1937), Attorney General (1928-1933), purchased the house in 1928. The house has changed hands many times. Esquimalt residents still call it the "Pooley House." It was designated heritage in 1985.
- 1165 Old Esquimalt Rd., begun in 1911 and completed in 1912 when the permit to build was taken out. Owner Ralph Stephens was a Master Machinist with Yarrows Shipyard who came from the USA in 1893 to work in the Bullen Shipyards and stayed on when Sir Alfred Yarrow purchased the yard in 1914. Construction cost of this Arts and Craft Chalet style house was \$7,000, \$1000 of which paid for the hot water heating system. The house is similar in design to 1010 Arcadia St. (see Tour 6).

4. Cairn Park, at 232 feet, the highest point in Esquimalt, has a 360 degree view. The stone cairn and directional dais was designed by municipal engineer, John Graeme, CE and dedicated in 1962



1165 Old Esquimalt Road

during the Township's Golden Jubilee year. The path along the old HBC survey line was the original border between Puget Sound Agricultural Farms, Viewfield and Constance Cove.

5. Constructed in 1903, Lampson Street School began as a four-room brick building with architect William Ridgeway Wilson hired to supervise construction. The school was overcrowded by 1909 and plans were put in place to add a second storey. Architect Maxwell Muir was hired to prepare the design.

When the 1903 walls proved unsafe, the building was torn down with



Lampson Street School

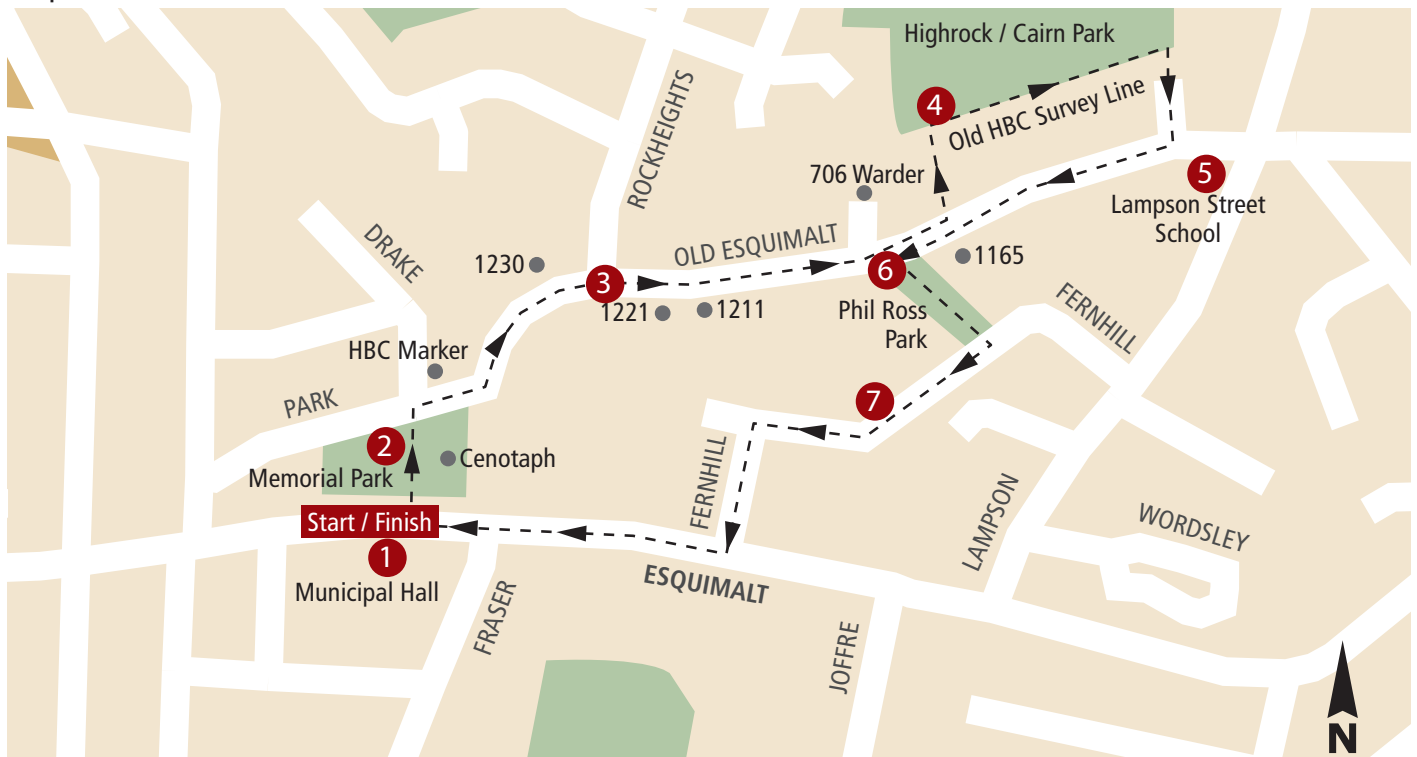
the contract to build a new eight-room school awarded to Thomas Ashe. In 1913 plans of architect W. Ridgeway Wilson were selected for two new wings and an addition. The school opened 9 April 1914.

Closed in 1976, it received heritage designation in 1990 and reopened in 1993 after being completely restored by the Greater Victoria School District with architect and engineer Paul Smith, UE, CE supervising the work. It closed as a public school in 2007 and is now maintained by the Francophone School Board.

6. Take the path through Phil Ross Park named to honour United Church Minister Rev. Philip Ross (1917-1991), Esquimalt Councillor from 1983 to 1990.



7. Turn right on Fernhill Road created in 1945 to remember "Fernhill" the home of pioneers Charles and Elizabeth Fisher Pooley located on 26 acres in the area now known at Norma Court and follow it down to Esquimalt Road.



Walking Tour Five

Lampson Street - Highrock Park

1. Memorial unveiled in August 2014 in memory of Lampson Street School (Tour Four) students killed in action during World War One. The elm trees around the perimeter of the schoolyard, along Lampson Street and Old Esquimalt Road were planted as memorial trees in 1917.

2. Lampson Street Heritage Homes.

- "Brierly," 948 Old Esquimalt Rd, built about 1904/05 for Richard Jones, Inland Revenue Collector. In 1915 Norman Yarrow, son of Sir Alfred Yarrow, purchased the house and renamed it "Fairmont." Sir Alfred purchased the BC Marine Railway Company in 1914 renaming it Yarrows Limited. Norman managed the shipyard for 32-years. It is thought architect Samuel Maclure designed the house. Alterations and additions were designed by him in 1917.
- 721 Lampson Street, built in 1913 by Philip Austin as a wedding present for his bride Dorothy Leeming. Austin, an Esquimalt Councillor (1916), served as the Acting Consul for the French Consulate for many years.
- 727 Lampson Street, built in 1893 by Henry Nixon and sold to Leonard and Charlotte Leigh. Leigh, an undertaker by profession, came to Canada from the USA in 1887. Their son, Leonard Jr., was a founding partner of Leigh and Cuthbertson Confectionery in Vancouver. The house, one of the oldest in Esquimalt, was designated heritage in 1990.



727 Lampson Street

- 729 Lampson St. also built by Henry Nixon. Leonard and Charlotte Liegh moved into the larger home, remaining there until 1913 when they sold to Rev. Canon Harry Stocken. Rev. Stocken

was instrumental in having Memorial Park created. See **Walking Tour 4 - Memorial Park** for more information.

- 733 Lampson Street was built in 1908 and called "Owee-Kay-No" by George Munro. It was sold in 1911 to George and Lillian McTavish Simpson. He was the great-grandson of Sir George Simpson, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company. She was the daughter of George Gurd, founder of Gurd Ginger-Ale Company. The house name honoured the Owee-Kay-No (people) from Kwa-Kwa-Me on Schooner's Passage killed in the 1848 massacre. The Stone fence was made from rocks blasted out from under the house one summer while George was at River's Inlet Cannery. The property is now part of "Firgrove" owned and managed by the Capital Region Housing Corporation.



View from Cairn Park

3. Cairn Park (see Tour 4). Veterans Cemetery National Historic Site, called "God's Acre," can be seen to the west. Access to the cemetery is off Colville Rd. The cemetery is open daily for visitors.

4. Old Esquimalt Rd., designated a heritage road in 2014, is the oldest planned road in the west. It was built in 1852 by sailors from HMS *Thetis* supervised by Lt. John Moresby, RN. The ship's captain, Augustus Leopold Kuper and Moresby both had Islands named for them. Kuper Island was renamed Penelakut Island in 2010 to reflect its First Nations history.

- 1147 Old Esquimalt Rd. was owned by Frederick Moore who partnered with Col. John Albert Hall to establish the Victoria Chemical Company. Another interesting resident was William Hastie Cochrane, a well-known sportsman, weaver and poet. His family owned one of the largest woolen manufacturing plants in Scotland. The BC tartan he created in 1937 was registered in Ottawa but it was not accepted by officials in Scotland. He was a veteran of the Boer War.

- 1154 Old Esquimalt Rd., designed by the Township's second engineer, Herbert Frederick Bourne, CE in 1938, was home for Arthur G. Patton and his wife Myra. A solicitor for the City of Victoria, he was connected to the Joker's Club, a popular Victoria establishment in the 1930s and 40s. She was the daughter of veteran printer Frederick Shakespeare and granddaughter of Noah Shakespeare, Victoria postmaster (1888).
- 1158 Old Esquimalt Rd. was built by teacher Alex Hutchinson and his wife Olive Severs in 1939. Hutchinson attended the school for 10-years and taught there for 45-years. His family emigrated from England in 1908.

5. Fernhill Road named for "Fernhill," (see Tour 9) the residence of Charles E. and Elizabeth Fisher Pooley. Their 22-room house was demolished after a fire in 1932. Charles Pooley was a travelling companion of Chief Justice Sir Matthew Baillie Begbie (1819-1894) who trained him in law. Pooley, registrar of the courts for twelve-years, was called to the bar in 1877. He represented Esquimalt in the provincial legislature for twenty-four years. Elizabeth Pooley laid the cornerstone of St. Paul's Church at its present location in 1904.

Pooley was involved in the Colonist Printing and Publishing Company and the Esquimalt Waterworks Company.

6. "Windford," 657 Lampson St., designed by architect John Gerhard Tiarks in 1894. The first resident, Robert Milne Jeffrey, was a cashier for the Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway. He and his wife Mary immigrated to Canada in 1887 settling in the Cowichan Valley where he worked as a miner. Before joining the railway he was an accountant/bookkeeper/cashier for R.P. Rithet, Dunsmuir & Sons and the John Parker Butcher Shop. Completely restored in 1983, it was the first house in Esquimalt to receive heritage designation.



657 Lampson Street



Walking Tour Six

Gorge Park Area

Begin the walk at Esquimalt Gorge Park on Tillicum Road. Tillicum, meaning “friend” or “people” in Chinook Jargon, know as Chinuk Wawa, a language developed in the Pacific Northwest that allowed traders from diverse cultures to communicate with each other. *Tilikum* was the name of the small boat, essentially a 12-metre dugout Nuu-chah-nulth canoe made from a large red cedar log,, that Captain John C. Voss left Victoria aboard in 1901 on his historic three-year, 40,000 mile journey to England. *Tilikum* was restored by Captain Victor Jacobson in the 1940s.

The Gorge Bridge has undergone many changes since the original 1848 single log crossing. The present bridge is the sixth design.

1. Visiting Gorge Park

- First Nations used the Gorge waterway as a traditional food-gathering place. The B. C. Electric Railway Company purchased the land from the Hudson’s Bay Company in 1904 and opened its amusement park on July 26, 1905. From the day the park opened it was the gathering place for Greater Victoria residents. May 24th, Queen Victoria’s birthday, was set aside for the annual Gorge Regatta with canoe races and marathon swims.
- In 1907, Takata Gardens opened. Yoshitaro Kishida, Takata’s partner, brought his father Isaburo Kishida to Esquimalt from Yokohama, Japan to design the gardens. Kishida also designed the Japanese Gardens at Hatley Park and Butchart Gardens. The one-acre Takata Gardens had many trees and shrubs imported from Japan and was highly respected for its authenticity and beauty.
- The Tea Gardens were open until the beginning of the Second World War when the Takata family, along with other Canadian citizens of Japanese ancestry, were sent to internment camps. Sadly, the Tea Gardens closed and the grounds were neglected and vandalized.
- Enjoy the beautifully restored Japanese style garden to the south of the walkway. Look closely; some of the original plantings



Japanese Tea House

can be seen. Exit the park via the wooden footbridge or explore the paths alongside the newly reclaimed Gorge Creek. This \$1.3 million dollar project (2009) set the standard for environmental leadership.

Further discovery

For local First Nations history, read [Songhees Pictorial](#) by Grant Keddie, Curator of Archaeology, Royal British Columbia Museum.

For history of the waterway and park read [The Gorge of Summers Gone](#) by Dennis Minaker or [Esquimalt Japanese Garden Past and Present](#) by Gordon and Ann-Lee Switzer.

2. The wooden footbridge takes you to Sioux Place.

3. Gorge Vale Golf course, a nine-hole course, designed by A. Vernon McCann, architect of many golf courses in the Pacific Northwest, officially opened November 1, 1930. Between 1934 and 1935, it was enlarged to 18 holes. Final ownership of the property came about in 1950 when the land purchase deal with the Hudson’s Bay Company was completed.

- A unique feature of Gorge Vale is Veterans Cemetery, called “God’s Acre,” located in the centre of the course. This National Historic Site can be reached by Colville Road. It is open daily and is a wonderful place to visit.

4. Craigflower Road Heritage Homes

- 939 Craigflower Rd., built in 1910 by Frederick Quarmby, an Esquimalt Councillor (1915), on land originally owned by Jessie Clay who with her husband Arthur established Clay’s Bakery (later The Nutshell) on Fort street in Victoria. The house was completely rebuilt after a major fire in 2006.
- 935 Craigflower Rd., “Clifton Cottage,” completed in 1912 for Bateman and Adelaide Hutchinson on property subdivided from 939. He was a surveyor with Gore and McGregor Ltd. Well known Esquimalt residents Edgar, a clerk with Pemberton and Son and his wife Edith Rossiter lived here in the 1920s.
- 927 Craigflower Rd., completed in 1912 for Ann Russell who made history in 1892 in a very famous and controversial divorce case. In 2010 the house was given a heritage Certificate of Recognition.
- 876 Craigflower Rd., built in 1911 for Dr. Hugh Campbell. Later home of Harriet and James Elrick, Reeve (Mayor) of Esquimalt from 1927 to 1931. Elrick came to Esquimalt in 1910 from Aberdeenshire, Scotland. Elrick Place in the Rockheights subdivision is named for him.

5. 1010 Arcadia St., built about 1914 for Bodo and Fernadine Theodora Herberta Maria Von Alvensleben. Von Alvensleben and his brother were early realtors and investors in the Victoria area. During WWI, there was great concern that German spies were residing in the house. Visit the Esquimalt Archives to learn more about this story!

6. 934 Selkirk Ave., completed in 1914 by contractor George Young for George E. Moore, a clerk in the Customs Parcel Post Department. A ten-room house, the cost of construction was \$7500. The original property owner was Ralph Randall of the B.C. Hardware Co. Ltd.

7. 318 Uganda St., an Art Deco style home, built in 1947 for Herbert E. Stocks, proprietor of the Gorge Auto Camp on West Gorge Road.



318 Uganda Street

8. Location of the former Gorge Pointe Pub. The pub closed in 2021 but was a local favourite. The site has a long history of pubs and hotels with the first Gorge Hotel opening in 1874. Another version was built in 1924, with a beer parlour added in 1938. From 1926 to 1938 the James Bay Rugby Association used the original building on the site as their clubhouse.

What's in a name?

Selkirk Avenue was named after the Earl of Selkirk who actively promoted immigration to the Red River Settlement near Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Uganda Street was renamed in 1946 to honour HMCS Uganda launched 7 August 1941 at Newcastle-on-Tyne and outfitted by the Government of Uganda at a cost of 10,000 pounds.

Sioux Place, named for HMCS Sioux, a Royal Canadian Navy "V" Class Destroyer of Second World War and Korean War fame.

McNaughton Street named for Major-General A.G.L. McNaughton, Chief of General Staff, Canadian Army, 1929 to 1935.



Walking Tour Seven

Fleming Beach - Buxton Green - Macaulay Point

Visiting Fleming Beach, Buxton Green and Macaulay Point.

For a detailed description of Fleming Beach and Macaulay Point, see Tour 2.

According to Grant Keddie, Archaeology Curator, RBCM, "the Macaulay Point area was known by the Songhees as a place where people fished with a reef net before the coming of the Europeans." Fishermen still gather here. The Esquimalt Anglers' Association (established 1952) built the boat-ramp, launching facility and Anglers' clubhouse (called the Fish Shack).

Buxton Green was built over one of the first natural salt water swimming pools in the Greater Victoria area. It was built by Members of the Canadian Army stationed at Work Point Barracks during World War Two. The Anglers' Association worked with the Esquimalt Parks and Recreation Commission to develop Buxton Green. Members donated in excess of \$80,000 and countless hours of volunteer labour towards the completion of this project. Buxton Green formally opened in October 1983.

Buxton Green was named to honour Percival (Tich) and Phoebe Buxton and their fourteen children.



The Buxton Family

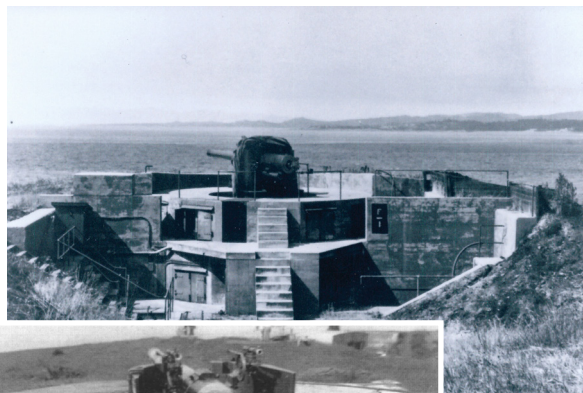
Between June 10 and August 30, 1878, Finlayson Point, Macaulay Point and Brothers Island Battery were completed. The first battery was completed before construction began on the second to insure the coast was defended in case of a Russian attack, thought imminent during the Russo-Turkish War. Thankfully the attack never materialized.

The guns were fired for the first time July 29, 1878 to mark the opening of the 3rd Provincial Assembly with a 13-gun salute fired by the Victoria Battery of Garrison Artillery, antecedent of the present 5th (British Columbia) Field Artillery Regiment, RCA.

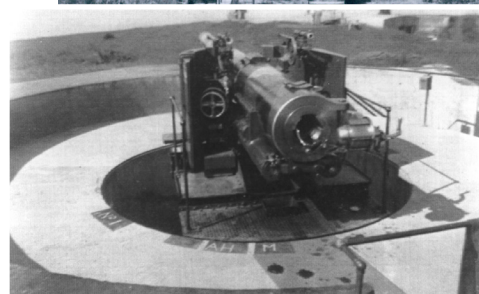
In 1887 the old earthworks at Macaulay Point were dismantled and new six-inch disappearing guns were installed. Under each huge cannon that could pivot 360 degrees was a pressure cylinder. Soldiers would pump the cylinder and the cannon would rise from its circular base to peek over the hill. When fired, the 100-pound shell ripped down the 22-foot-long barrel and the force would recoil the gun back down into the pit. In its day, this equipment was considered quite sophisticated!

Construction of Fort Macaulay began in 1894 with the laying out and building of the earth and concrete fort by Sappers of the Royal Engineers, 18th Company, Halifax, Nova Scotia. The date, 1895, on the face of the tunnel indicates the year of completion.

At one time, a seven-foot picket fence was built around the fort to protect the trenches. It was eventually replaced by barbed wire. The star-shape of Fort Macaulay, similar to the citadels in Halifax and in Quebec City, is still visible from the air.



Fort Macaulay



In 1906 Canada assumed all responsibility for the defence establishments in Esquimalt. The guns were manned during both World Wars and again, never fired in anger. The Canadian government declared Fort Macaulay obsolete in 1957.

Federal works grants were obtained under the auspices of the Anglers' Association in 1985. At this time, the Township acquired leave to trespass on the Macaulay Point lands for recreational and historical purposes. Defined trails were developed, benches were installed and the infrastructure was made safer.

In 2017, through a Canada 150 Grant, interpretive signage was developed to tell the story of Fort Macaulay. An interpretive event is held annually near the end of May at this historic site.

Heritage homes near Macaulay Point

1024 Munro St., "Mountain View" built in 1894 by contractor George Mesher. The house was designed by architect John Gerhard Tiarks for Hans Olgilvie Price, a clerk in HM Naval Dockyard. Members of the Price family were connected with the house until 1953.

330 Kinver St., designed by architect Hubert Savage in 1935 for Mabel Ellen Carlos Dring. It was home for many years to Cecy Margaret Baldwin (1913-2009) described in her obituary as "Devoted botanist, intrepid adventurer, and ageless spirit" and her companion architect Robert Punderson.



Macaulay Point Park



Esquimalt facts

- The area now known as Esquimalt has been inhabited by the Coast Salish People for over 4,000 years. The Township is in the traditional territories of the **Ləkʷəŋən** People, known today as the Kosapsun (Esquimalt) Nation and the Songhees Nation.
- Year of incorporation: September 1, 1912.
- Esquimalt is home to about 18,000 residents living in over 8,300 dwellings.
- The municipality covers approximately 10 square kilometres (or 1,000 hectares).
- The highest point in Esquimalt is 71 metres (232 feet) at Highrock Park.
- Esquimalt has over 40 hectares of parkland, many of these parks overlooking waterways along the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the Gorge.
- There are over 30 parks, beaches and green spaces in the Township.
- The cairn on the top of Highrock Park was built in 1962 in celebration of Esquimalt's Golden Jubilee.
- The western shoreline off present-day Esquimalt was used by the Royal Navy as early as 1837 and was designated Pacific Headquarters by Order-in-Council in 1865.
- The Japanese Gardens in Gorge Park were created by the Takata family on BC Electric property in 1907. They were designed by Isaburo Kishida, BC's pioneer Japanese landscape designer.
- The Township held an official re-opening ceremony of the Gardens in 2009 with members of the Japanese community. The Esquimalt Gorge Pavilion opened in 2022—the Japanese-inspired architecture pays respect to the original tea house.





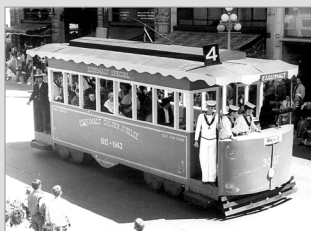
Historic St. Paul's Historic Naval and Garrison Church on Esquimalt Road is a designated heritage building.



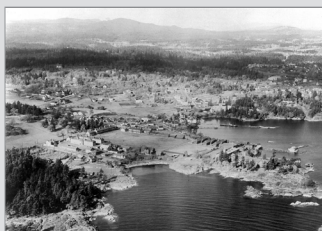
God's Acre Ceremony at Gorge Vale Golf Course is a veteran's cemetery administered by Veteran's Affairs Canada



Maypole dance in Memorial Park, c. 1920.



Esquimalt's entry in the Victoria Day Parade during the Township's Golden Jubilee Celebrations in 1962.



Early aerial photograph of Work Point in Esquimalt.

Esquimalt annual events

January 1

New Year's Day Levee

April

Esquimalt 5K and Kid's 1K

May

Esquimalt Buccaneer Days
Fort Macaulay Day

June - August

Memorial Park Music Fest

July - August

Summer Stories in the Park
Outdoor movies

September

Esquimalt RibFest

December

Celebration of Lights

For a complete listing, go to Esquimalt/events



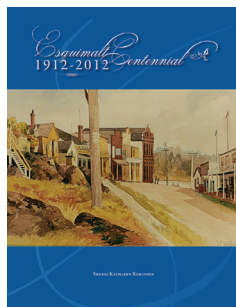
Outdoor movies in Esquimalt parks

About the author

The Township Walking Tours were developed by Sherri Robinson, a writer, story teller, historian and archivist. A fifth generation Esquimalt resident, she lives with husband Darwin in a 1911 heritage home on historic Old Esquimalt Road.



Sherri is also the author of "Esquimalt Centennial: 1912-2012." This 140-page high quality book features historic photos that remind us how Esquimalt changed from a wooded hamlet to the thriving community it is today. The book is available at the Greater Victoria Public Library and local book stores. Display copies are at the Municipal Archives.



esquimalt.ca/archives



Captain Jacobson Park

Esquimalt—spend an afternoon or the whole day; there is lots to discover in our seaside community.

Esquimalt's parks are gorgeous any time of year, but they truly shine as the seasons change—visit the Japanese garden at Gorge Park for stunning colourful displays. If you're wandering the tall Douglas firs of Saxe Point, keep an eye out for barred owls and other wildlife. All our parks are enhanced with restoration work, so alongside lovely ornamental plants, you'll see salal, snowberry and other native species that help maintain our important biodiversity.

Esquimalt loves local, and the community boasts several unique restaurants with cuisines from around the world. There are local breweries where you can stay for a pint or simply fill your growler to take to your next adventure, conveniently located just off the E&N trail. Enjoy the festive atmosphere of the award-winning Esquimalt Farmers Market while you shop for food, soaps, coffee, wines and other locally-made goods.

From past to present, there is always lots to explore in Esquimalt.



Gorge Park Pavilion



Westbay Marina