

Walking Tour Six

Gorge Park Area

Begin the tour at Esquimalt Gorge Park on Tillicum Road. This road takes its name from the Indian greeting "Klahowya Tilikum" meaning "How do you do friend." *Tilikum* was the name of the small boat, essentially an Indian dugout 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 BC 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 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 was relocated, along with other Japanese families, to the interior of the province. 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 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.

2. The wooden footbridge takes you to Sioux Place.



Japanese Tea House

3. Gorge Vale, 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

- 935 Craigflower Rd., "Clifton Cottage," was completed in 1912 for Bateman and Adelaide Hutchinson on property subdivided from 839. 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.

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.

- 839 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.

5. 1010 Arcadia St. was 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 the First World War there was great concern that German spies were residing in the house. Visit the Esquimalt Archives to learn more!

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.



318 Uganda Street

6. 934 Selkirk Ave. was 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, was built in 1947 for Herbert. E. Stocks, proprietor of the Gorge Auto Camp on West Gorge Road.

8. Gorge Pointe Pub. Go in for refreshments and a rest. Enjoy the display of early photographs of the Gorge area.

