

site

Lines

o c t o b e r • 1 9 9 9



John Wesley Neill, B.S.A., M.C., Ph.D. (Hort.), LMBCSLA, FCSLA.

John passed away at his Victoria apartment in July. He was eighty-three, and had suffered for some years with MS. He was a patriarch of Landscape Architecture in the Province of British Columbia. A Fellow of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects, John held membership Certificate No. 2 in the British Columbia Society of Landscape Architects.

Born in Ontario in the middle of the years of World War I, he was a Guelph graduate in ornamental horticulture just prior to the start of World War II. Major Neill served in the European theatre from 1943 to 1945 as a tank commander. Three years after war's end he came to UBC to take over the positions that had been held by the then emeritus Professor's Frank Buck¹, as the UBC campus Landscape Architect and professor of ornamental horticulture and floriculture.

John Neill was jointly responsible with Philip Tattersfield for initiating, presenting and defending² the Private Members Bill passed at the 1968 sitting of the BC legislature that gave legal authority and the responsibility to the BCSLA to examine and qualify Landscape Architects in the province. John was our first BCSLA president when the Society was formed in 1966. He served as president for the first five formative years, and was

instrumental in getting this Pacific coast maverick group, to agree to vote to join the CSLA as a Component of the National newly federalized body. In 1979 John became the Chair of the program in Landscape Architecture at UBC, having led the process of establishing the degree program and curriculum that he and Philip Tattersfield with Vic Runeckles, the Chairman of Plant Science, and others, had worked to realize over the previous half decade.

When John retired as head of the Landscape Architecture Program in the Plant Sciences Department at UBC in 1986, the BCSLA modestly honoured his service to Landscape Architecture and linked it to his other great love, trees. The award of the John Wesley Neill Medal to the top graduate in the LA program each year has a 500 dollar travel award and a year's membership in the regionally organized North American wide International Association of Arboriculture (ISA). The travel award can be used to get to the ISA Annual Conference or spent on other travel.

The ISA, which now qualifies Arborists and Urban Foresters as professionals, was formed out of the National Shade Tree Conference. John was a member very early on. The NSTC was

made up of street tree managers, park superintendents and private arborist companies like Davey and Barlett who both advertised themselves as tree experts, along with university professors who taught arboriculture. When the Shade Tree Conference got into tree evaluation, the system required that ornamental trees needed to be regionally value classed. An extreme example: the Palm tree *Phoenix canariensis* would have the lowest or no value at all in the Pacific Northwest region while the Flowering Cherry in the PNW region would have a class I or II value depending on variety. This is sometimes a very subjective judgement. However, John produced the first tree species list for the PNW Region. John's knowledge of ornamental trees was unsurpassed.

continued on page 2

tribute

tribute

Tribute	1
Learning Grounds	3
F.Y.I.	6
Sketch Book	8
Notice Board	8
Market Place	10

John Wesley Neill Tribute
... continued

SITELINES • 10 • 99

BCSLA

sitelines

BCSLA

#110-355 Burrard Street
Vancouver, BC V6C 2G8
Tel: 682-5610
Fax: 681-3394
Email: bcsla@direct.ca

President:	Andrew Wilson	822-0450
President Elect:	Patricia Campbell	437-3942
Past President:	Kevin Connery	946-3351
Registrar:	Adrienne Brown	986-9058
Treasurer:	Margot Long	688-6111
Directors:	Crosland Doak	250-383-2000
	Julie Hicks	669-3201
	Barry Potvin	990-3810
	Judy Walker	250-339-2142
	Liz Watts	224-6707
Associate Rep:	Grant Brumpton	738-4118
Exec. Administrator:	Klaudia Brhlik	682-5610

Graphic Design and Page Layout by Susan Fisher at
Archetype Print Ltd. • #459 – 409 Granville St., Vanc., B.C.
Ph: 604 • 602 • 0282 Fax: 604 • 602 • 0283

Sitelines is published 6 times a year: February, April, June, August, October and December, by the British Columbia Society of Landscape Architects and is mailed to all BCSLA members; registered landscape architects, associates and affiliates.

The editorial deadline is the 8th and advertising deadline is the 16th day of the intervening months. Advertising rate information is available on request.

Inquiries regarding editorial, advertising or other issues should be addressed to the Sitelines Editor, c/o The BCSLA at the above address.

Sitelines Group

Jean Kindratsky	Interim Editor	Email Address: jkindrat@istar.ca
Klaudia Brhlik	Advertising Editor	Ph: 682-5610 Fax: 681-3394

The purpose of Sitelines is to provide an open forum for the exchange of ideas and information pertaining to the profession of Landscape Architecture. Individual opinions expressed are those of the writers and not necessarily those of the BCSLA.

Gerald Staley gives John the credit due him in his now classic book, *Trees of Vancouver*. In 1988 during his early retirement years in our province's capitol, John edited a tree book of the close to 300 historic trees of Greater Victoria that had been inventoried by Gerry Chaster, BCSLA, D.W. Ross, Forester, and Herb Warren, Victoria's Parks Supt. John correlated and linked the intimate and detailed histories and locations of these trees into a tree compendium and field guide. Since there is no legislative protection for Heritage and Landmark Trees, *Trees of Greater Victoria: A Heritage* creates awareness and recognition of this landscape legacy.

In the freewheeling highway building days when Kamloops' Fly'n Phil Gaglardi was our Province's Minister of Highways, John led the way with Graham Drew of UBC's Extension Department and a few others like BCSLA members Michael Pope, Phil Tattersfield and Gerry Chaster in putting together an annual conference called the Western Canadian Roadside Development Conference. There were at least six of these CRDC's held. Since the word beautification was a 'dirty' one before Lady Bird Johnson made it respectable in her Beautifying America campaign; we had to choose a word that steered clear of arty connotations and implied direct action for the series of conferences that were held to persuade the highways department's engineers to include landscaping of roadways as an integral and necessary (not a frill) part of highway development. Landscaping of the provincial highways gradually went from not being necessary in the

50's to voluntary in the 60's to mandatory in construction contracts in the 70's. This was due in no small part to the Roadside Development Conferences. The Highways engineers were always the stumbling blocks. Since John came from academia he was perceived not to stand to gain from any highway landscaping work so he was always our front man.

John gave a presentation at the Sixth Roadside Development Conference held at Totem Park in June of 1969. Under the title "A look At Massed Planting Techniques" (a great action type title) John talked about the types of ground cover plants that had proved most successful in the test plots he had set up on the Burnaby 401, (then called the Trans Canada Highway), on the Stormont overpass slopes. He then went on to talk about the aesthetics of massed plant textures and colours and rated a number of locally used shrubs as groundcovers for highway use on the aesthetic of viewing landscape from a vehicle of speed.

At the time when John was UBC planner he worked from a well-stocked campus nursery that he had set up so that he was able to raise and plant out on campus a number of rhododendron groves. One in particular that stands out in memory is west of the Law building and north of the Buchanan building. He was always very proud to show a large espaliered Medlar, *Mespilus germanicus*, beautifully displayed against the garage wall of Cecil Greene Residence. When the nursery was decommissioned in later years, the many large species rhododendrons and other Asian plants were dug and moved into

continued on page 3

bcsla

tribute



John Wesley Neill Tribute
... continued



the forested Asian Garden component of the UBC Botanical Gardens. In the days before John was head of the LA Program he gave a course annually to architects on ornamental plant I.D. John's campus walkabouts identifying trees, shrubs and groundcovers were legendary and persuaded more than one would be building architect to change and become a landscape architect.



John Neill also gave service to landscape architecture or garden art that came in another way, when he worked to bring about the Nitobe Gardens onto the campus. As he wrote some 10 years after, in "Nitobe Memorial Garden—History and Development." Appearing in the second issue of *Davidsonia*, the Journal of the UBC Botanical Gardens: "The Nitobe Memorial Garden . . . is used by

and serves as a source of inspiration for faculty and students in Asian Studies, Fine Arts, Architecture, Landscape Architecture and other University Departments . . . It is a favourite spot for relaxation and contemplation . . . for it is truly a 'Japanese Japanese Garden in Canada.' "

John leaves us this legacy of beauty and service. May we all, give as much and serve our profession as long.

With great respect:
Clive L. Justice, LMBCSLA, FCSLA

1. The late Frank E. Buck was first a full grandfather member of BCSLA and then became the Society's first Honourary Member.

SITELINES • 10 • 99

2. John relates: that the Architectural Institute of British Columbia objected to the BCSLA using the word architect as they, the AIBC, claimed exclusivity over it. John did a bit of diligent digging and at the preliminary hearing he pointed out that the act of the BC legislature setting up on the AIBC as the licensing authority for Architects, passed in 1921 or thereabouts, contains a section with provision, that reads something like: 'save and except for Naval Architects and Landscape Architects.' Gave over! The BCSLA act was passed the next day.

LEARNING GROUNDS

In an effort to find out the latest news and issues of concern to our membership, we are inviting members from communities throughout the province to share their perspective.

If there are burning issues in your community, or solutions to the challenges that face us all, please send us 500 – 750 words (and photos!) for inclusion in our future issues.

In addition, we will be actively soliciting articles, and look forward to your enthusiastic response!

In this issue, **Kevin McFarland** tours us through Whistler's public art initiatives and **Judy Walker** shares her life in the Comox Valley.

continued on page 4



SITELINES • 10 • 99

Landscape Architecture & Public Art in Whistler



by
Kevin
McFarland

BCSLA

The resort and community of Whistler have been shaped by the work of landscape architects. That influence remains strong, as landscape architects are integral to the planning and design of some notable private and public sector projects. For example, over the next few years Intrawest Resort Corporation will transform the Creekside commercial area, and will develop a new South Whistler neighbourhood. The consultant teams for these projects feature several landscape architects involved in master planning, design and public art administration.

On the public sector side, the Municipality has landscape architects responsible for planning, design and development review. Currently, the Parks Planning group is developing two of the park sites that make up the Village Park network. The Village Park network is

the major public amenity funded by the development of Village North. The park network is linked by a water channel, use of public art, and by a remarkable path. Each of the parks that comprise this linear system is distinct in character. The completed East Park is an urban plaza, the Centre Park is a forest remnant, and the West Park has a more ornamental character. Along this network of parks, a series of small gathering places is being created. Public art and community projects are being integrated with development of these gathering places. For the West Park, an artist has been commissioned to create a Storyteller's Chair to sit atop a spiral mound. Within the Centre Park an intimate council ring enclosed by trees and large, logger notched stumps, has inspired both the Library and Museum Society to plan outdoor events, such as Halloween Ghost Storytelling.

Through development of at least three other public art commissions, a

community birdhouse building project for Centre Park, and interpretation of the area's natural and cultural history, the Village Park network will offer diverse experiences within a relatively compact, central area.

As suggested above, public art has been fairly integrated into our way of doing things. From small projects, such as an artist's involvement in the creation of a spray pool, to a prominent, interactive project within Village Park East, the public art program has grown steadily since its inception a few years ago. A volunteer Public Art Committee was established by Council, and a Public Art Policy has been adopted. The public art program has grown through a series of successes. The Kip Jones / Jennifer Macklem bridge artwork, "Sightlines", has proven to be a phenomenal place maker. Throughout the year, people stop and become involved with the twenty objects that comprise this artwork.

continued on page 5



Sightlines at Village Park East

LEARNING GROUNDS

GROUNDS

Landscape Architecture and Public Art in Whistler
... continued



SITELINES • 10 • 99

Unfortunately, this summer a thief became involved, and we are now replacing one stolen component.

Another notable initiative is the development of a new skateboard park to complement Whistler's skatebowl. For this project, we have worked in partnership with a skateboarder, whose knowledge of the sport and design have enabled the creation of an extraordinary facility. The bowl, the new facility, and a future skate plaza are integrated with the existing forest and Valley Trail network.

As these projects suggest, Whistler is still developing at an unusual pace for a small town. However, Whistler is approaching the limit set by a cap on development. With this change there will be a substantial shift in the management of the community and its parks and recreation system. As the emphasis moves away from development, Whistler will

continue to meet the challenge of maintaining amenities that both inspire and delight the public, through accessible art.



Village Park East, Whistler
 Paving — "Glacial Traces" by Celine Rich
 Lookout — "Sightlines" by K. Jones / J. Macklem

Photo: K. McCallip

LEARNING
 Grounds



**Reflections
 From "Big
 Island, Small
 Town"**



by
 Judy
 Walker

BCSLA

When asked to write an article for *Sitelines* regarding "small town" views I began reflecting on what, if any, are the differences in land use issues here in the Comox Valley. Certainly in Vancouver you can attend as many public hearings, open houses, lectures and rallies as there are days in the week. Ditto for the Comox Valley. Not even the summer and the mayor's holidays will deter the turn-out for a controversial change to an official community plan. I thought about issues: in the Lower Mainland there are wetlands to protect, heritage buildings to save and greenbelts to

conserve. Ditto for the Comox Valley. In one week, I toured a small precious wetland, huddled beside a mountain of fill. Alison Mewett (BCSLA) of the Regional District Comox-Strathcona and Maggie Heningman (MELP) joined me to look at options for its protection. I worked with a small passionate group to search for the means to purchase, restore and develop a long term business plan for a 1958 Arthur Erikson house on 7 acres of spectacular bluff waterfront. That same week, I spoke at a public hearing against a proposed

continued on page 6



"Big Island, Small Town"
... continued

amendment to Comox's Official Community Plan to allow for a large shopping mall to be developed outside of the downtown core and adjacent to Agricultural Land Reserve.

Due to all the controversy that seems to surround every land use issue in the Comox Valley, a small group of professionals along with The Communities Institute began a casual evening lecture / discussion series — we called it **The Land Use Café**. We felt a forum was needed for gathering information

and providing an opportunity for lively debate, *before* some issue became "too hot to handle". We had sessions on Big Box Retail, Ecovillages vs Suburban Sprawl and Green Housing. The topics and good speakers were readily available, but the program is temporarily on hold due to a lack of funding at the Institute. I would encourage this format for all sorts of issues and for many scales — it works for a neighbourhood or for a town.

I don't think the actual issues are different here, but it is how close the issues get to you. The issues make you look at your values, your practice and your life. It gets personal here, very fast. I can go to the Cumberland Auction, an art gallery opening, the SPCA garage sale — any gathering, and I will know several people by reputation, several more by name, one or two

clients and a government official that I work with regularly. It is hard to separate Judy "Larc at Large" and Judy "Citizen on Petition". It is generally known that I have a Golden Retriever, that I had a large pond dug last fall and that my partner drives a Honda ST1100. For some of you this may seem too close for comfort, that potential clients may discover your real passions (and it isn't parking lots!). But in caring about the environment and the quality of life in the Comox Valley and actively taking an informed advocate position I become a better professional. I think small towns encourage that kind of involvement, perhaps even insist on it. It may be why the extremists seem to live in small towns and on islands everywhere — you either become a recluse or an activist!



LEARNING GROUND

**Report on
BCSLA
Committees**

*by Yolanda M Leung,
Associate Member*

**A short refresher
course on existing
committees.
Opportunities for
involvement abound!**

There are 5 required standing Committees that are staffed by interested parties and BCSLA Board Members. Questions regarding any

of the BCSLA Committees should be directed to Klaudia Brhlik who will forward the inquiry to the appropriate member.

**Standing Committees
are as follows:**

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee has nothing new to report.

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee has minimum 2 meetings per year with

meetings as required to review applications for membership and coordinate the pre-exam sections.

By-Laws Committee

More and more municipalities are requesting Letters of Assurance from design professionals. Because the BC Building Code does not recognize Landscape Architects as a registered profession, the existing system of Letters of Assurance requires the handwritten addition of the word 'landscape' to the form. The By-Laws Committee has

continued on page 7

f.u.i

f.u.i

Report on BCSLA Committees
... continued

endorsed a standardized Letters of Assurance for Landscape Architects. Members are not compelled to use these forms. The municipalities are receptive to a consistent format and the use of the proposed Letters of Assurance should contribute to the profession's credibility. Other items of interest include a planned review of the Code of Ethics. A meeting is tentatively scheduled later in the fall.

Public & Professional Relations Committee

A **career fair** at the Vancouver Trade & Convention Centre is planned in **May 2000**. Individuals interested in representing the profession of landscape architecture are needed. Please contact Adrienne Brown or Klaudia Brhlik for more information.

The **Design Lab at Gladstone Secondary School** will display work by local firms, Philips Farvaag Smalberg and Durante Kreuk, until the end of October.

As part of the **continuing public access program**, the recently renovated website at **www.designsource.bc.ca** currently lists a number of our members on a site designed to promote the design professions to the public. **Design Access** is part of the Career Preparation Program of the Vancouver School Board and is a coordinated effort among the Apparel Designers, the BC Industrial Designers Society, the Interior Designers Institute, the Society of Graphic Designers (BC Chapter) and the BCSLA. The Design Access Web site can be found at **www.designaccessbc.com**.

A separate **BCSLA website** has been under construction for about the past 2 years and continues to be a work in progress. The framework for the BCSLA website is ready and the contents are under discussion. We look forward to logging on to our very own website!

Nominations Committee

Nominations for new Board Members will be accepted now. Nominations must be submitted 60 days prior to the AGM. Contact Klaudia Brhlik for nomination forms and review section 1.0 The Profession Policies and Procedures in the BCSLA Professional Practise Handbook 1998 for member responsibilities.

Optional Ad Hoc Committees

(additional Ad Hoc Committees are listed on 1 - 35 of the BCSLA Professional Practice Handbook 1998)

Standards Committee

The BCSLA in conjunction with the BCLNA is working to make the Landscape Standards available in a PDF format. Stay tuned.

Design Panel Committee

There are always opportunities to volunteer as a member of a design panel. There is currently a request from the Municipality of Maple Ridge for a Landscape Architect to sit on their design panel.

SITELINES • 10 • 99

Call Klaudia or Bruce Hemstock for more information.

Sitelines Committee

Sitelines continues to develop as a tool for communication. Articles, photographs, art, opinions & information are always welcome.

Environment Committee

The Environment Committee is preparing a comment on Burns Bog. This comment will be available for review through the BCSLA.

Continuing Education Committee

The results of the Continuing Education Survey (Sitelines February 1999) have been compiled. Many topics of interest have been identified. Strategies to provide continuing education shall be developed and it has been suggested that a credit system be established and that continuing education be a requirement for licensure. Please write, fax or e-mail your comments regarding this suggestion.

World Wide Web Watch

... see page 8
for details



Claude Monet created his gardens at Giverny as a source for his famous waterlily paintings.

“From the sketchbook of . . . Cameron Murray”



Auguste Renoir also created a garden in the south of France, which appeared in his paintings. Derek Fell has written a new book called “Renoir’s Garden”.

World Wide Web Watch

As we move into the new millennium, it can be tough to keep track of new resources.

Web watch is here to list sites of interest on the internet.

If you discover a site you’d like to share, please email jkindrat@istar.ca or bcsla@direct.ca and we’ll include your sites and site reviews in the next issue.

A starting point . . .

www.csla.ca — The Canadian Society of Landscape Architects site. Includes history, publications, awards, employment, information on the Landscape Architecture Canada Foundation and *links to provincial association websites!*

www.apala.net — The Atlantic Provinces Association of Landscape Architects site is a bit slow to load (be patient). This site includes a useful explanation of services that LA’s can provide, as well as links, news, members and education.

www.asla.org — The American Society of Landscape Architects site offers a free screensaver, in addition to a bookstore, buyer’s guide, events, jobs and information on continuing education.

Watch this space for the launch of our very own BCSLA Web site!

noticeboard



SITELINES • 10 • 99

Wanted

Articles / Reviews / Opinions / Events / Photographs / Cartoons

If you have something to share with our membership, such as:

A great book, an excellent lecture, a new plant, a new baby, a job opportunity, an issue that makes you hot under the collar, a place that refreshes and delights you, new knowledge or a way to save the world (like a chicken in every backyard)!
Coming soon in our February issue.

Write it, shoot it (with a camera), draw it, express it, and send it to us, and we'll discover the wealth of individuals and their ideas that make up the BCSLA!



Announcement

The Vancouver Art Gallery
will see the millennium out with an exhibit titled
"Out of This Century".

Cornelia Hahn Oberlander, has the honour of being one of six guest curators who will select and interpret works from the VAG's permanent collection for this exhibit.

Join Cornelia and poet Robin Blazer, for a Curator's Talk on Thursday, October 28th at 7:30 pm at the VAG.

The show runs from **October 23, 1999 to February 27, 2000.**



Wanted

A UBC student correspondent,
to keep Sitelines and our readers informed
(and occasionally invited?) of academic activities on and off campus.

Call Jean directly at 731-7891 or email jkindrat@istar.ca.

noticeboard