

COMMUNITY HERITAGE COMMISSION

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS*

SUBJECT: CITY ARCHIVES ORAL HISTORY CAPITAL PROJECT

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT the next phase of the Oral History Project focus on the history of Burnaby Mountain and its many uses including: hiking/biking, conservation area, education facilities.
2. THAT Council approve funding in the estimated amount of \$2,500 to digitize, describe, and index the ten oral history tapes recently received as a donation to the Archives from the editor of "Suburb of Happy Homes" that included oral history tapes of prominent Burnaby residents.

REPORT

The Community Heritage Commission, at its meeting held on 2015 February 05, received and adopted the attached report recommending a theme for the next phase of the Oral History Project.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor C. Jordan
Chair

Councillor N. Volkow
Vice Chair

Councillor J. Wang
Member

Copied to:	City Manager City Clerk City Archivist Director Planning & Building Director Finance
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TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS
COMMUNITY HERITAGE COMMISSION

DATE: 2015 February 05

FROM: CITY CLERK
CITY ARCHIVIST

FILE: 2410-20

SUBJECT: CITY ARCHIVES ORAL HISTORY CAPITAL PROJECT

PURPOSE: To recommend a theme for the next phase of the oral history project

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** the next phase of the Oral History Project focus on the history of Burnaby Mountain and its many uses including: hiking/biking, conservation area, education facilities.
2. **THAT** funding in the estimated amount of \$2,500 be allocated to digitize, describe, and index the ten oral history tapes recently received as a donation to the Archives from the editor of "Suburb of Happy Homes" that included oral history tapes of prominent Burnaby residents.

REPORT**1.0 BACKGROUND**

At the December 4, 2014 meeting of the Community Heritage Commission, the matter of the Oral History Project was discussed. The discussion was particularly centered on how to proceed with the next phase of the project, including what basis to select and identify the further participants in the interview process.

It was agreed that a subcommittee be established to consider the various options, and to bring forward a recommendation to the February meeting of the Commission.

The following members of the Commission volunteered to sit on the subcommittee:

- Margaret Bell
- Les Lee Lowe
- Harry Pride
- Zoe Towle

Due to other commitments Mr. Pride had to withdraw from the subcommittee.

2.0 DISCUSSION

The subcommittee met on January 20, 2015, and considered a range of options and approaches.

From that discussion, it was agreed that Burnaby Mountain would be a good theme to select for the next phase of the oral history project, focusing on the many uses that take place and are accommodated within the boundaries of Burnaby Mountain. These uses range from hiking, biking and conservation area to post-secondary education facilities and industry uses. 2015 is very significant year for Simon Fraser University as this is the year that it celebrates its 50th anniversary.

Beginnings of Burnaby Mountain

Also known as Admiralty Mountain, Barnet Mountain, and Snake Hill; Burnaby Mountain was first logged in 1903, and became a popular hiking area in the 1920s. The mountain was formally dedicated in 1942 as public park land, but by 1952, its boundaries were already being reconsidered to accommodate the development of the Trans Mountain Pipeline. Although the boundaries were adjusted to accommodate this project, significant conservation and park lands were left untouched, and in 1957, the City formally dedicated the area for park and recreation use.

Simon Fraser University and town site development

Named after early explorer, Simon Fraser, the University opened on September 9, 1965 with 2, 500 students. Noted Canadian architects Arthur Erickson and Geoffrey Massey designed the original Burnaby Mountain campus to foster interdisciplinary contact between students and researchers. Tall buildings would have been out of scale with the massive mountaintop ridge, so a series of horizontal terraced structures were designed to hug the ridge and dissolve into the landscape. The idea of establishing a town site around the university had been discussed by the municipality as early as 1964, but it was not until the mid-1990s that the idea came to fruition.

In 1995, the university transferred 820 acres of its land to the Burnaby Conservation Area and today, a network of 22 multi-use trails covering 23 kilometers crisscrosses this 576 hectare protected natural heritage site.

Project Details Discussed

The Sub-Committee recommends the interviews be conducted as 'single issue interviews', with the Mountain as the focus. Potential interviewees could include former SFU students, SFU professors (both retired and current), Parks and Recreation Commissioners (especially those responsible for the dedication of the Conservation Area), residents of the mountain, and so on.

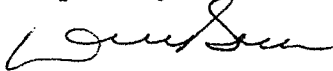
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From: City Clerk & City Archivist
Re: City Archives Oral History Capital Project
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A suggestion was also brought forward to include Focus Group sessions that would invite feedback from Community members in order to glean what they see as most the important issues as well as potential suggestions for interviewee candidates.

Recent Oral History Accession

In August of last year Leonard J Evenden, the editor of 'Suburb of Happy Homes / Burnaby / Centennial Themes' came into the Archives with a donation of textual records, books and audio cassette tapes created under the auspice of the SFU / Burnaby Centennial Committee. Archives staff have just begun the descriptive work for these records, and have made an impressive discovery of ten audio cassette tapes in which Burnaby residents were interviewed, many of whom have since passed away and include; former Mayor Bill Copeland, Ed Apps, Al Nixon, Don Brown, Toki Myashita, Kay Zimmerman, former Mayor Bill Lewarne, Merrill Gordon, Sev Morin, Annie Boulanger, and Eileen Kernaghan. All records were created by Leonard J Evenden and his assistant Rod Fowler. These need to digitized, described, and indexed in order to make them accessible. Some of the budget could be allocated for this purpose with a projected cost of \$2500, thus leaving the remaining funds of \$22,500 in the overall Oral History Capital Project budget.

Respectfully submitted,



Dennis Back
CITY CLERK



Rebecca Pasch
CITY ARCHIVIST