

Neighbourhood Timeline: North Quadra

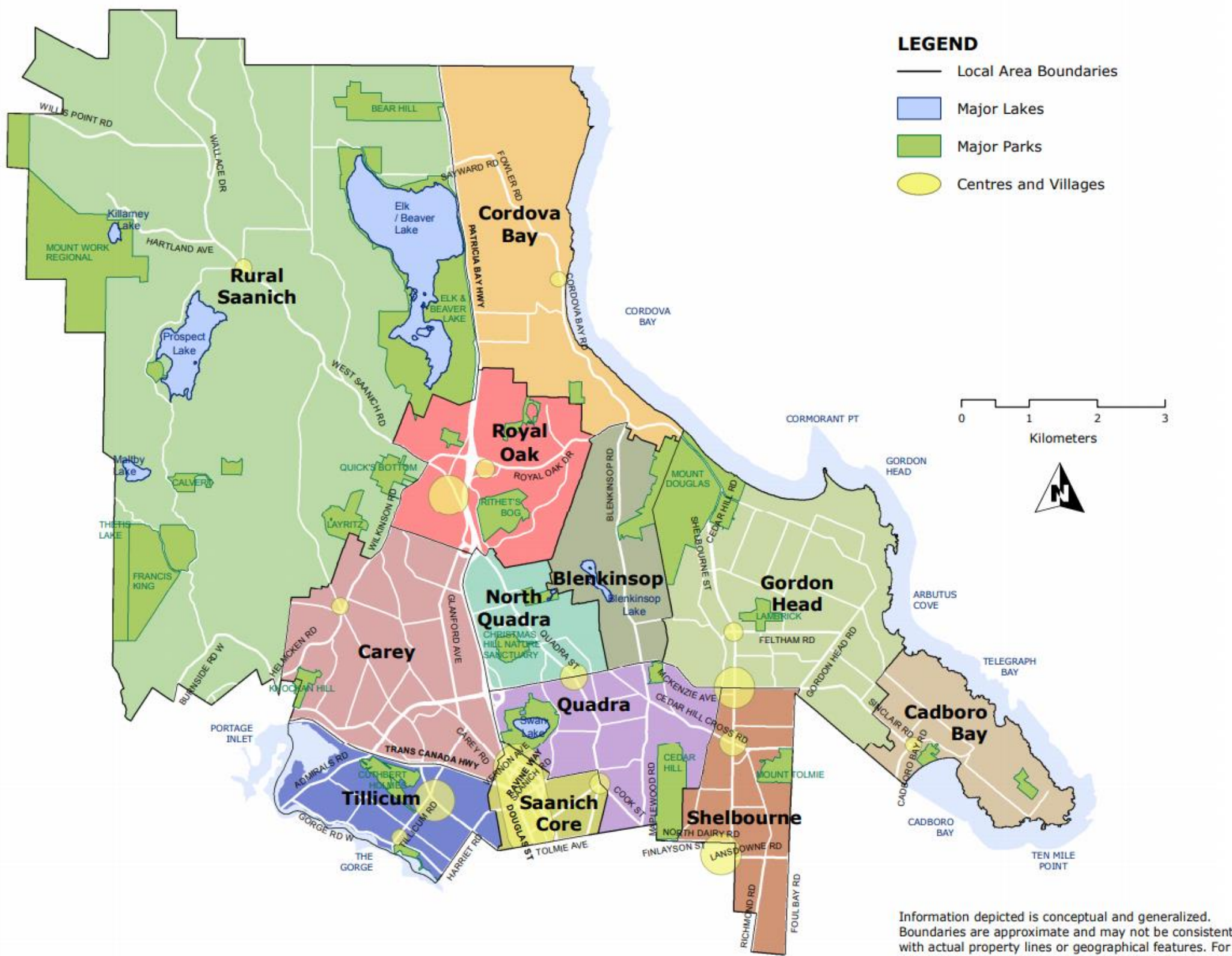


Cow pasture near Christmas Hill, ca. 1912-1928 (2008-025-648)

The North Quadra Local Area is bounded by McKenzie Avenue on the south, Patricia Bay Highway on the west, Broadmead residential area on the north, and Blenkinsop Valley on the east. The most prominent feature is Christmas Hill in the southwest corner. Despite increased urbanization, North Quadra has retained several important parks, including the Christmas Hill Sanctuary which remains a significant Garry Oak habitat. This glacially scoured bedrock hill is noted for its varied flora, large Douglas Firs, and Garry Oak forest. The treed areas and rock outcrops throughout North Quadra are important to the overall character of the area.

Prior to European settlement, the North Quadra area was home to the Ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples. Early European settlement consisted primarily of dairy farming. Subdivision did not occur until the 1910s and the first major suburban development did not occur until the mid-1950s. The addition of sewer service during the 1970s sparked the construction of apartment buildings along some of the major streets, however, this area continues to be composed primarily of single-family dwellings.





Saanich Official Community Plan 2008, Map 22 Local Areas

Information depicted is conceptual and generalized. Boundaries are approximate and may not be consistent with actual property lines or geographical features. For clarification and interpretation, please consult with the Saanich Planning Department.



Snow-covered road with Christmas Hill in background, ca. 1916 (2008-025-281)

The District of Saanich lies within the traditional territories of the Ləkʷəŋən and SENĆOŦEN speaking peoples. Evidence of First Nations settlement in the area now called Saanich dates back over 4,000 years. The Ləkʷəŋən peoples are made up of two nations, the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, and the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples include five nations, W̱JOŁEŁP (Tsartlip), BOKÉĆEN (Pauquachin), S̱ÁUTW (Tsawout), W̱SIKEM (Tseycum) and MÁLEXEŁ (Malahat) Nations. Each nation had their own territory and travelled freely over their land; hunting, fishing and gathering resources. The Ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples have historical connections with the land which continue to this day.

1850-1854

From 1850-1854, James Douglas, Chief Factor and later Governor of the Hudson Bay Company colony on Vancouver Island, signed treaties with 14 Indigenous groups. These documents are often referred to as the **“Fort Victoria Treaties”** or the **“Douglas Treaties”**. James Douglas did not explicitly use the word treaty in these agreements, but a Supreme Court decision ruled that these agreements were and remain valid treaties since Douglas, who was acting as an agent of the Crown at the time, arranged them with the Indigenous peoples. First Nations argue that their ancestors understood these as peace treaties or agreements of cohabitation of the land. The British, however, interpreted these treaties as purchase agreements that surrendered lands near Hudson Bay Company posts in exchange for the continued right to hunt and fish, reserve lands, and a one-time payment.

00000

The treaty that covers the area today known as **North Quadra** was signed by 20 members of the **Kosampson** tribe whose primary settlement was centered around Craigflower Park on Admirals Road. The treaty referred to the land *“on the east side of the arm, enclosing Christmas Hill and Lake and the lands west of those objects.”* The conditions of the treaty state *“that our village sites and enclosed fields are to be kept for our own use, for the use of our children, and for those who may follow after us and the land shall be properly surveyed hereafter. It is understood, however, that the land itself, with these small exceptions, becomes the entire property of the white people for ever; it is also understood that we are at liberty to hunt over the unoccupied lands, and to carry on our fisheries as formerly. We have received, as payment, fifty-two pounds ten shillings sterling.”* (Full text available online through Indigenous Services Canada)

1860s-1915

One of the first roads to service this area was **Saanich Road**. Until approximately 1915, Quadra Street ended at Nicholson Street and Saanich Road continued from Nicholson to West Saanich Road in the Royal Oak area. In 1864, citizens petitioned the Governor of Vancouver Island to make improvements to Saanich Road explaining that the road was impassable in winter. Saanich Road was improved again in 1915 at which time, the section north of where Saanich Road now ends near Nicholson, was renamed North Quadra Street. By 1946, North Quadra Street was incorporated into Quadra Street.



House on Saanich Road (now Quadra Street) at Beckwith Avenue, 1897 (1989-008-016)

1866

In 1852, **Kenneth McKenzie** was recruited to serve as bailiff at Craigflower Farm, the largest of the four Puget Sound Agricultural Company farms (a subsidiary of the Hudson's Bay Company). While he would be supplied with the equipment and material needed to build a successful farm, he was expected to recruit workers in Scotland who would accompany him to Canada. That August, McKenzie, his wife Agnes and their children, Agnes's brother and sister, and men hired as carpenters, blacksmiths, and labourers and their families (about 70 individuals in total) boarded the *Norman Morison*. By 1855, construction of the Craigflower farmhouse was complete in addition to 21 other buildings including modest cabins for the labourers and their families, a saw mill, a blacksmith's shop, a carpenter's shop, a general store, a lime kiln and a bakery.

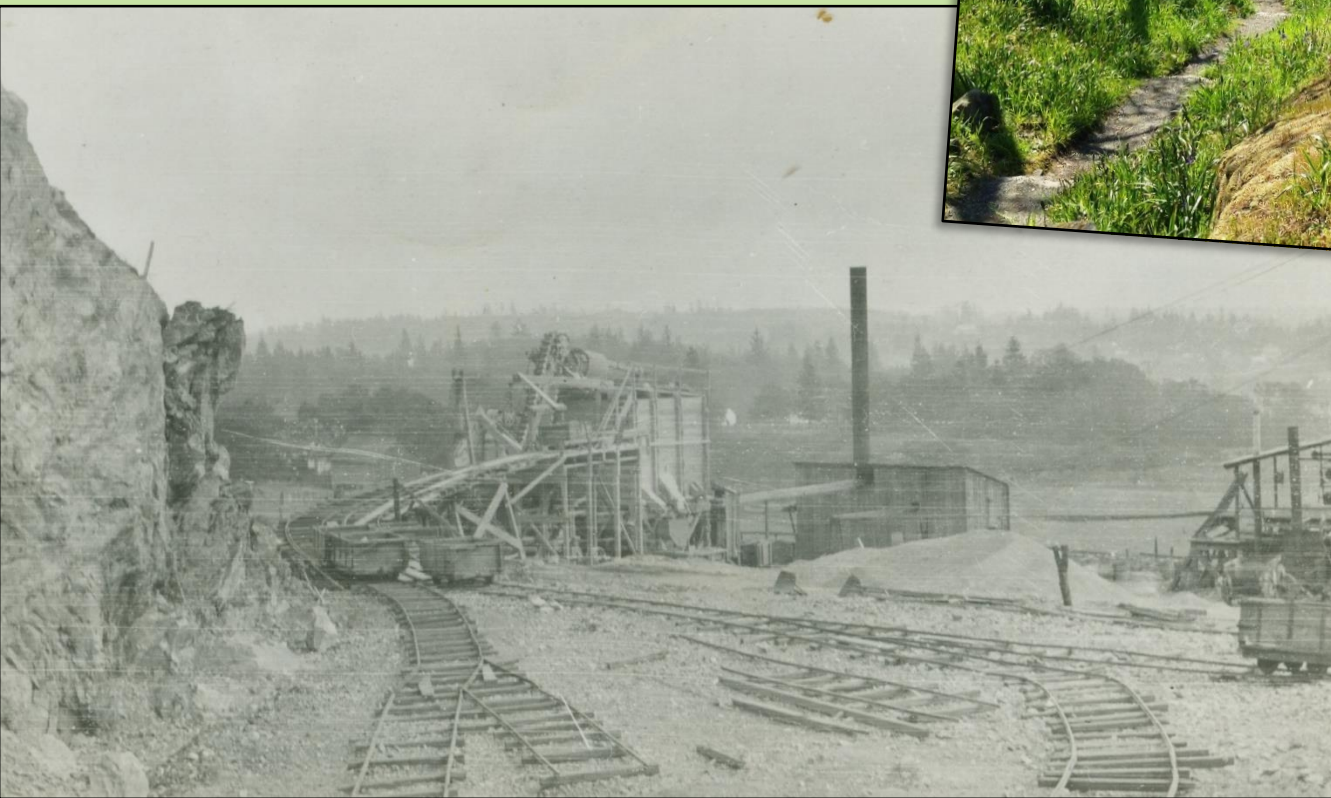


The farm at Craigflower was not large enough for both crop land and pasturage for the sheep which McKenzie hoped to raise, so in 1855 he established a sheep farm at Lake Hill. In 1856 or 1857, he began acquiring additional land and in 1866, when his contract at Craigflower ended, he moved his family to a newly built home at **Lake Hill**. The farmhouse, located at the corner of McKenzie Avenue and Douglas Street (now Pat Bay Highway), was also built in 1866. McKenzie died in 1874 and his wife Agnes died in 1897. Two of their daughters, Agnes and Goodie, lived in the Lake Hill house with one of their nephews, Alexander Watson until their deaths in 1928 and 1929. In 1929, "all of the fine old furnishings" that had come with the family on the *Norman Morison* were sold at auction, but Alexander Watson continued to live in the house until the 1940s. The farmhouse was demolished in 1985.

Kenneth McKenzie Sr., before 1874 (2019-014-002)



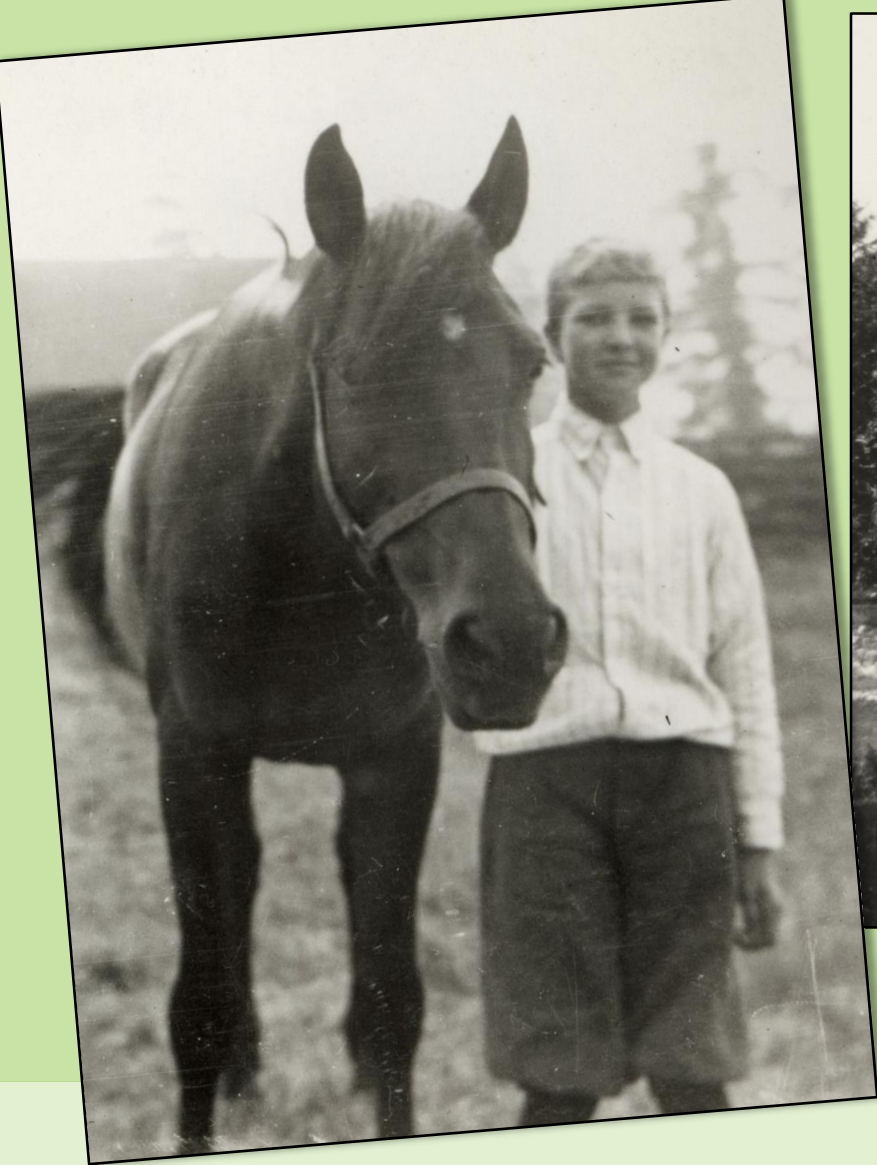
*Above: Garry oaks and camas, Christmas Hill, 2010s (courtesy of Saanich Parks)
Left: Rock quarry at Christmas Hill, ca. 1913 (1984-005-015a)*



The most prominent topographic feature of North Quadra is **Christmas Hill**. During the late 1800s and early 1900s, the hill was variously called Lake Hill and Christmas Hill. One story suggests that Christmas Hill was named by Joseph William McKay, factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, who is said to have discovered it on Christmas Day in the early 1840's.

Prior to European settlement, the rocky **Garry oak** forested slopes of Christmas Hill would have been used by First Nations for the cultivation of the **camas** bulb, an important part of the First Nations diet. They practiced a wide variety of cultivation techniques, including prescribed burning, to preserve the open landscape favored by the camas lily. It is thought that the predominance and persistence of Garry Oak ecosystems across much of Greater Victoria before European settlement was a direct result of centuries of burning and harvesting Camas bulbs.

During the early 1900s, a **rock quarry** was established on Christmas Hill. Rock from this quarry was used for the first paving of Quadra Street and Tolmie Avenue. Gradually, homes began to appear along the slope of Christmas Hill. In 1992, the 2.5 kilometer trail leading from the Swan Lake Nature House up to the hill's summit was completed and in 2005, Saanich purchased another section of property to add to the Swan Lake-Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary. In 2017, Christmas Hill Park was renamed Vic Derman Park in memory of a former Saanich councillor who had worked to acquire parkland on Christmas Hill, and to improve greenbelts and commuting trails.



*Left: George Rogers Jr. at Agnes Street Home, ca. 1915 (1978-003-006)
Right: Second home of George Rogers at 4116 Quadra Street
(now 931 Woodhall Drive), 1925 (1978-003-014)*

1903

George Rogers Sr. arrived in Victoria in 1886 and took a job on Medina Farm in James Bay. He worked there for a year then took over as the tenant farmer on Stewart Yates' Craigie Lea farm on the northwest corner of Tillicum and Gorge Road where he established a dairy farm. In 1897, George married Lillie Stevens and in 1903 he purchased Alderley Farm, 255 acres stretching from Agnes Street to Quadra Street, established by the Van Allman family in 1858. The family's first home was located on Agnes Street and the V&S Railway ran through the farm quite close to the house. That house was demolished and replaced by townhouses in the 1970s.

In the early days, much of Alderley Farm was uncleared bush, so Chinese labour was brought in to clear the land. At some point in the years that followed, the name of the farm was changed from Alderley to **Chester Lea**. The story goes that the Sayward family who farmed at Cordova Bay felt that they had prior claim to the name Alderley so George Rogers agreed to change it. After Lillie died in 1920, George had a new farmhouse built at **931 Woodhall Drive** which was completed in 1925. The first major subdivision of the farm land occurred in 1923 when part of Douglas Street was built through Rogers' land. Around the same time, **George Jr.** took over part of the farm and continued the dairy operation until 1958 when the property was further subdivided. By 1976, all but a few acres had been sold for subdivision. Many of the streets around Rogers Avenue are also named for their association with the Rogers family; Chesterlea after the farm, Genevieve after George Jr.'s wife, and Lily after his mother.

George Jr.'s daughter Phyllis, her husband Richard Fatt and their sons continued to operate **Fatt's Poultry Farm** on the remaining 23 acres behind their house on Dieppe Road until the mid-2000s.

1907



Around 1890, **Josiah Bull** bought approximately 40 acres on Claremont Avenue near Elk Lake from George William Anderson to start a dairy farm. In addition to farming, Bull cut cordwood for delivery to the Victoria Waterworks pumping stations to fire their boilers. Also in 1890, he married Victoria native Ellen “Nellie” Speed.

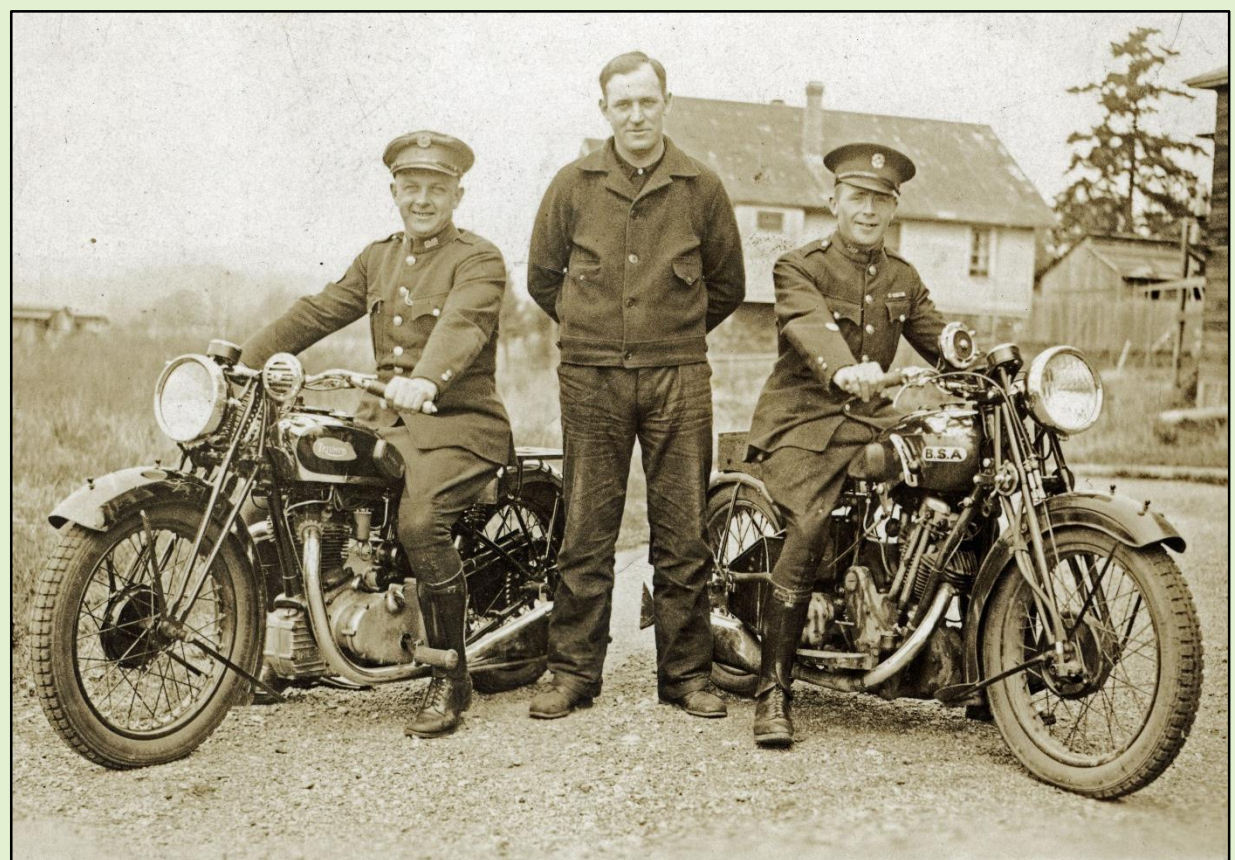
In 1907, Josiah moved his dairy business from Claremont Avenue to Lake Hill. His stone house still stands near the corner of Beckwith Avenue and Quadra Street and is listed on the Saanich heritage inventory. Josiah and Nellie called their house **Manor House** after the farm where Josiah was born in Huntingdonshire, England. Their son, **Josiah Jr. “Joe” Bull**, continued to run the dairy farm on his father’s property until 1930 when he joined the Saanich Police Department. He served as Chief of Saanich Police from 1938 until he retired in 1957. Joe Bull died in 1965, but his widow Gladys continued to live in the Quadra street home until the mid-1980s.

Josiah and Nellie’s daughter Annie also worked for the District of Saanich. In 1917, she was employed as a scribe for the tax department at a salary of \$65 per month. After 9 years, she left to get married, but in 1949, at the request of the Assessor Stan Green, she returned to work in the Waterworks Department and in Accounting. **Annie Bull Robinson** was employed by Saanich for over 21 years. She died in 1990.

Top: Nellie and Josiah Bull Sr., ca. 1930s (1981-025-004b)

Bottom left: Saanich employees Annie Bull, Kathleen Butt, and Helen Elliot outside old Municipal Hall on West Saanich Road, ca.1920 (1981-026-006)

Bottom right: Saanich Police Force, Ken Cummings, Joe Bull (standing), Eric Elwell, 1930 (1982-001-004b)



1926-1992

Bruce Hutchison was a noted Canadian journalist and author. In 1918, at the age of 16, he joined the staff of the Victoria Daily Times and by his early 20s, he was reporting on the British Columbia Legislature. He worked in Ottawa and Washington, D.C. as well as for the Winnipeg Free Press and the Vancouver Sun. He also wrote short stories and books, both fiction and non-fiction.

In 1926, Hutchison and his wife Dorothy Kidd (nee McDiarmid) bought 11 acres from George Rogers Sr. and built their now heritage designated house at 820 Rogers Avenue. In his book, "A Life in the Country", Hutchison describes building his house, working in his garden, and living among the people of the area. Dorothy died tragically in a car accident in Ottawa in 1969. In 1990, Bruce was made a Freeman of the District of Saanich. He died at his Rogers Avenue home in 1992.

1936

In 1936, **Frank Burdge** and his family moved into a 1907 farmhouse on Quadra and Beckwith which they rented from Josiah Bull. In 1945, they moved to a new farmhouse near what is now **Beckwith Park**. From here, Frank Burdge installed the Island's first milking parlour, a barn designed specifically for the new cow-milking machines. Frank started his **dairy business** with 10 Jersey cows but at its height, they owned 65 dairy cows and delivered milk to homes along Quadra, Cook, and Tattersall Streets in their Deaston Dairy Family company vehicle. Some of the Burdge land is now part of Beckwith Park, the basketball court being the former location of their chicken shed.



Above: Bruce Hutchison speaking at Freeman ceremony, May 1990 (1990-028-018)

Below: Rough sketch of lots on Rogers Avenue and Saanich Road, 1926 (B692)



Burdge Farm on Beckwith Avenue, 1976 (1978-001-124a)

1936

Centre of Parish

New Catholic Church Slated for Lake Hill

A new Roman Catholic Church is to be built in the Lake Hill District. At a cost of \$155,000 it will be the new centre of Rev. John Planeta's Sacred Heart Parish.

The old church is at 1130 Palmer Road; the new will be in the 800 block McKenzie Avenue.

The sod was recently turned by Father Planeta and completion is expected by next April in time for Easter services.

"I will still be saying mass at the old church for some time after construction of the new is completed," said Father Planeta.

"There are 70 Polish families, many of whom are elderly couples, who would find it inconvenient to attend at the new location."

However, a move had to be made to accommodate an increasing number of worshippers. Father Planeta said that two of the four regular Sunday services were overcrowded.

The architect for the new church is John Di Castri.

The first **Sacred Heart Catholic Church** was built at 1120 Palmer Road under the supervision of Carl Albury. The Sisters of St. Ann donated the stained glass windows and new parishioners donated the organ and other necessities. Father Albury celebrated the first Mass on 4 May 1936. From 1936 until 1941, the parish was known as Lake Hill Mission, not to be confused with the Lakehill Mission Church located on Falmouth Road that later became the Cathedral Church of St. John the Evangelist.

In 1941, it ceased to be a mission and Father Thomas Mangan was appointed the first full time pastor of Sacred Heart Parish. A parish school opened in the basement rectory in 1942, staffed by Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. By 1964, the parish had outgrown the original church, so a larger one was constructed on Nelthorpe Street overlooking Swan Lake. Father Jan Planeta celebrated the first Sunday Mass in the new church on September 5, 1965. The old church on Palmer Road was sold and later demolished.

Daily Colonist,
17 October 1964

1950

In 1950, a license was issued to Mr. Stanley Janes to operate **Oak Lodge Private Hospital** at 4036 Quadra Street. At this time, the superintendent was Mrs. Elizabeth Fraser and the hospital was licensed for 25 patients.

By 1981, the hospital had 39 beds, a percentage of which were reserved for welfare cases. The patients consisted primarily of seniors over the age of 70.



Top: Oak Lodge Private Hospital, ca. 1960s (1981-021-041)

Bottom left: Therapy room, ca. 1960s (1981-021-044)

Bottom right: Mr. Janes, Owner and Administrator, ca. 1960s (1981-021-042)



1956

Saanich resident **Lum Young Chow** arrived in Victoria in 1903 at the age of 18. For several years he worked 14 to 16 hours a day earning as little as \$3 a month. Eventually he was able to go into business for himself, and in 1924 he bought land on Shelbourne Street and established a greenhouse. In 1927, he married Lee Don Gui and in 1928, their eldest son **Edward Lum** was born.

Shortly after Lum Young Chow died in 1956, Ed Lum and some of his brothers expanded the business and purchased additional **greenhouses** on Douglas Street. For a time, they had the largest greenhouse operation in BC, owning over 400,000 square feet.

1960

By 1958, it was apparent that the **Saanich Public Works yard**, located at 3681 Douglas Street, was no longer sufficient. In November 1958, Saanich purchased 5 lots at McKenzie Avenue and Borden Street for the new yard, and by July 1960, the last of the buildings were being demolished at the old site.



Lum greenhouses, Douglas Street, ca. 1960s (1978-001-072)



Left: Staff at Saanich Municipal Yard, 1967 (1980-015-078)

Right: Saanich Municipal Yard, 1965 (1981-007-014)



1968-1979

By 1960, the need for a high volume east-west connector road was becoming clear. In February 1963, Saanich purchased land from A.D. Ballantyne, C.H. Borden, and J.V. Borden near the intersection of McKenzie and Borden Street, and approved the plans for the **McKenzie Avenue extension**. This project would be the largest single road construction program undertaken in Saanich up to that point.

In 1968, the BC Provincial Government approved funds to contribute to the McKenzie Avenue construction project. McKenzie Avenue was reclassified as a secondary highway, which meant that the Province would contribute half of the construction cost.

The North Quadra and Carey portions of the project saw McKenzie widened from two lanes to four, Douglas Street reconstructed and reconfigured, and McKenzie extended from Carey road to connect with the Trans-Canada Highway to the west. To the east, the project also included the extension of McKenzie from Cedar Hill Cross Road to join Ruby Road, continuing all the way to the University of Victoria.



*McKenzie Avenue Construction, 1968
(1980-015-038i)*

1980s

Beckwith Park (as well as Beckwith Pond and Beckwith Avenue) are believed to be named after John L. Beckwith. He arrived in Victoria in 1885 and served as alderman on the Victoria City Council from 1899 to 1901 and again in 1904. He served as Mayor of Victoria in 1912, during which time he signed the Sooke Water Works Agreement. Beckwith also served as school trustee. He died in 1924.

Saanich acquired the land on Beckwith Avenue in the early 1980s and soon after, established Beckwith Park. The waterpark opened in August 2000.



*View of Beckwith Pond with area between Beckwith and Lucas
Avenues east of Quadra, 1970s (1980-015-245i)*

1990

In 1989, despite opposition from some members of the community, Saanich Council voted to remove a section of land formerly of Rogers Farm from the Agricultural Land Reserve in order to build a school. Located on Rogers Avenue, the school was named **Rogers Elementary** in honor of more than a century of farming by the Rogers family. The school officially opened in 1990 with room for 250 students from kindergarten to grade 7.



Rogers Farm on Christmas Hill, 1966 (1978-001-131b)

1992-1994

In the spring of 1992, construction of the **Patricia Bay Highway-McKenzie Avenue interchange** began. For 2 years, traffic was diverted around what had been the busiest intersection on Vancouver Island. The new design cost \$50 million and resulted in the overpass over McKenzie Avenue that is there today.

One of the new interchange's key design features was the loop in the southeast corner that cut into Rainbow Park and required 60 homes, several businesses, and the North Douglas Pentecostal Tabernacle to be demolished.

In 1993, residents also lobbied for the installation of a **pedestrian overpass** at Rainbow Street. Prior to this, there was a marked crosswalk with button control and a crossing guard on duty mornings and afternoons for students. Despite this, parents and students felt that the intersection was not safe. That same year, the North Douglas Pentecostal Tabernacle, now called **North Douglas Church**, rebuilt on the west side of Patricia Bay Highway on Jolly Place.

McKENZIE AVENUE INTERCHANGE ^{Saanich News 29/4/92}

Temporary Diversion Route Activated

As part of the new McKenzie Avenue Interchange on the Patricia Bay Highway, the Ministry of Transportation and Highways has constructed a temporary diversion route to carry traffic away from the interchange construction site. Weather permitting, traffic will be moved onto the diversion route this weekend.

Friday morning, May 22nd:
The East half of the diversion for McKenzie Avenue will be put into use with a temporary connection to the existing intersection (shown as dashes on the diagram).

Saturday morning, May 23rd:
Traffic on the highway will be reduced to one lane each direction north of McKenzie while crews tie the diversion route into the existing highway.

Evening:
Highway traffic will be moved onto the diversion route once the traffic control signals on the diversion route are activated.

Sunday, May 24th:
The balance of the diversion route for McKenzie Avenue will be tied in. All traffic should be on the diversion route by evening.

A 30 kilometre per speed limit will be strictly enforced over the weekend. Please follow the directions of flagpeople. Your patience during this phase of construction is appreciated.

Highway traffic will use the diversion route for approximately 18 months.

For further information contact:
Vancouver Island Highway Project Tel: 361-9442
200, 546 Yates Street, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8W 1K8

ISLAND HIGHWAY

Above: Saanich News, 29 April 1992
Right: Times Colonist, 16 February 1993

^{T-C 16/2/93}
**Residents
keep alive
overpass
pressure**

Saanich residents fighting for a McKenzie Avenue pedestrian overpass to link Rainbow Park with Christmas Hill aren't taking no for an answer — even if the “No” is from Highways Minister Art Charbonneau.



Working on your own research project?

Visit www.saanich.ca/archives to access our online finding aids and photo search site.

Saanich Archives is located inside the Saanich Centennial Library next to Pearkes Recreation Centre at 3100 Tillicum Road.

Our hours are:

Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

For more information contact us at:
archives@saanich.ca | 250 475 5494 ext. 3478



Produced by Saanich Archives, September 2020