

GABRIOLA LAND AND TRAILS TRUST

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday March 3, 2020; at Gabriola Golf and Country Club, South Road.

GaLTT's President Rob Brockley called the meeting to order at 7pm, recognizing that we met on the unceded lands of the Snunémuxw First Nation.

GUEST SPEAKER: Brockley introduced and welcomed Dr Richard Hebda, who spoke about *Climate Change and the Gulf Islands Environment*. Hebda first depressed us with data confirming the rapidly changing climate that is raising sea-levels significantly and will greatly change the array of native plants that can live in the Gulf Islands environment (such as the loss of Western red cedar and hemlock), being unable to withstand drier conditions in summer or to adapt quickly enough. But then he heartened us with reminders of Gulf Island trees that may be happy in the new conditions, such as Garry oak and arbutus, and told us of ways to use appropriate native plantings more suitable to survival in a drier-summer, wetter-winter climate. He encouraged us to:

- protect our wetlands like Coats Marsh
- resist all healthy tree removal, especially the clearcutting of lots
- where trees must be cut or fall in the wind, toss them into the woods to rot into the forest soil
- remove and discourage invasive plants such as *Daphne laureola* and Scotch broom
- plant more resistant native species in invasive plants' place, as well as in our gardens. He mentioned Nootka rose, Ocean spray (ironwood), Fawn lilies, June plum, Stonecrop, Nodding onion, Sea blush, Woolly sunflower, and Camas lilies, among others.

He also stated that the island was probably capable of being fully self-reliant for food, assuming we can capture the generous rainfall of winter. He cheered the gardeners among us considerably by suggesting the possibility of growing olives and avocados here rather than importing them from California. He brought with him to distribute some interesting potatoes he had grown from seed, as well as some starts of "Nootka potatoes", long established on Vancouver Island by very early settlers.

Hebda took questions from the floor. When asked what could be done about out of control deer populations, he stated that deer have been here for a very long time and were eaten by First Nations before settlers arrived. The demise of wolves and cougars has affected their population. Fences were the best defence.

Past President Anne Landry thanked Hebda for his presentation and gave him a small gift.

GaLTT AGM business meeting

1. At 8:45, noting that appropriate notice of the meeting had been given to members and the public, and that 48 members were present, constituting a quorum, Brockley reviewed the agenda.

2. **MINUTES:** Secretary Jenni Gehlbach presented the minutes from the AGM held March 4, 2019.

MOTION: proposed by Jenni Gehlbach, seconded by Rose Jones, to approve the minutes for the 2019 AGM as presented. No discussion. Carried unanimously.

3. **PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT:**

Brockley presented the President's Report for 2019, first outlining the work of the Executive Committee and then inviting the various Committee heads to report on their work during the past year.

a. EXECUTIVE Committee—Chair Rob Brockley

- Supported the establishment of ecological protection zoning by Island Trust

- Advocated for accessibility improvements and shoreline erosion protection at Twin Beaches (Gabriola Sands Provincial Park)
- Proposed and assisted with design and implementation, improvements to wayfinding in 707 Community Park.
- Contributed to RDN Regional Parks and Trails strategic planning
- Conducted community accessibility survey to identify major barriers to trail and shore access, especially for people with mobility restrictions.
- Used the results to develop a list of priority projects.
- Seeking partnerships with government agencies (RDN, BC Parks, ITC) to improve access.
- Formed two new standing committees: invasive species, and cycling.
- Formed two ad hoc committees to work on accessibility issues; shore accesses.
- Acquired a \$1000 grant from Gabriola Recreation Society for new boardwalk on the Peterson-McDonald connector trail.
- Acquired a \$1923 RDN Community Grant for purchase of chainsaw and hedge trimmers.
- Mudge Island Land Trust Association folded and donated its remaining funds to GaLTT in appreciation of our help purchasing land for Dodd Narrows Community Park.
- Streamkeepers has been on hiatus in 2019 but will reactivate this March.

b. TRAIL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE—Chair Peter Danenhower

We have long list of occasional volunteers and a strong committee of regular volunteers. This year Barry Moerkerken has taken a leadership role managing our trail work groups. Danenhower thanked all the volunteers that help with trail work, some acting independently of the official committee.

- **Trail construction and improvement:** re-routed Haven Woods licensed trail and Tin-can Alley to Church St connector. Improvements to the Seymour Rd to Lackehaven Drive connector. New trails developed in Cox Park and connecting east and west Chichester Rd.
- **Trail, boardwalk, and bridge maintenance:** at Evans Rd Murray Rd, Merlin’s Trail, Haven Woods, Wilkinson Way, Central Island between Tait and 707, Elder Cedar.
- **Wayfinding posts installation in 707 Park**
- **New Boardwalks:** in Elder Cedar and on the MacDonald-Paterson Rd connector trail
- **Invasives removal:** broombash with Community Engagement Committee and Lions; Tansy ragwort and English ivy removal in Robinson Woods.
- **30 volunteer-hours of painting markers** for Gabriola’s public beach accesses, currently stored while the accesses are located and assessed by the new ad hoc committee.
- **Power tools:** GaLTT developed a new power tools policy and waiver to ensure volunteer safety. All volunteers must be trained, authorized and properly equipped to be covered by our insurance. We currently have 5 authorized volunteers. We have purchased a chainsaw and two cordless hedge trimmers.

c. ACQUISITIONS, COVENANTS, & TRAIL LICENCES COMMITTEE—Chair Nola Johnston

Other committee members: Rob Brockley, Tom Cameron, Peter Danenhower, Norm Harburn, Anne Landry, Jim Ramsay.

- Began developing a Conservation Strategy Initiative in accordance with the strengthened emphasis on conservation in our new Strategic Plan.
- Continued to monitor private properties for sale to assess their conservation values.
- Performed annual monitoring of Elder Cedar Nature Reserve, Robinson Woods, and the Bachman Property according to their conservation covenants.
- Expressed willingness to participate in provincial discussions on the impacts of climate change on covenants.
- Monitored our 15 trail licences and investigated possible new routes, including negotiating with owners and collecting data.

- Liaised with the Trail Operations Committee and the Accessibility committee.
- Completed a detailed planning map for internal use
- Digital cloud data storage and access to a suite of programs. Moved the ACTL database on line.
- Liaised with the map committee re the new printed trail-map edition.
- Formed a new ad hoc committee to investigate beach accesses, chaired by Hugh Skinner.
- Developed an assessment tool for the shore access to record the status of each shore access and its importance to the community.

d. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE—Chair Lou Skinner

Other committee members: Peter Danenhower, Kerry Marcus, Libby Gunn, Sally Bulas (new), Paula Gray (new), Laura Boulton, Derrill Shuttleworth. There are also many volunteers.

- **GaLTT table at summer markets** and other community events selling maps and giving information about GaLTT, parks, trails, and work with invasive plants. The display was streamlined and enhanced with a new banner and sandwich board. After rolling out a new data collection sheet, we had over 300 conversations with locals and visitors in August alone.
- **Supervised sales and distribution of the new trail map** at the market and through our vendors.
- **Broom-bash:** Successful community-wide spring broom-cutting effort, kicked off in Drumbeg Park. Disposal of cut broom was the hardest part to organize. We were supported by BC Parks, and partnered with the Lions Club. Over 300 volunteer-hours participated in GaLTT sponsored broombash events, and hundreds more on their own. This year we:
 - Recruited neighbourhood “broom stewards” and greatly expanded our Thursday night neighbourhood cuts.
 - Had “group adopt a spot” with the Wednesday Walkers, the Chess Club, the Cubs, and the Gabriola Players.
 - Two volunteers brought their own dump trucks to help transport cut broom to the disposal location on Chernoff.
- **Participated in the place-based, intergenerational education and reconciliation project at the elementary school.**
- **Guided walks and other events:**
 - Cross-Island trek in early June attended by over 30 people walking from Whalebone to the Golf Club—the last section using some of the new trails in enlarged and newly signposted 707 Community Park. The entire route was on public trails except for a brief road walk from Elder Cedar Nature Reserve across North Road and partway up Degnen Road North to the Kensington lands.
 - Cobble geology—beach rock collection and analysis with Nick Doe
 - Night walk in Cox Community Park with Libby Gunn
 - Night cycle in 707 Community Park with Derrill Shuttleworth
 - ABC monthly trail walks guided by various board members, exploring routes labelled ABC... on our new trail map.

e. INVASIVES COMMITTEE—Chair Libby Gunn

Established in December 2019, the committee’s other members are Linda Hellenius, Lou Skinner, and Jewel Walker. Its Mission Statement is *“To take a role in a collaborative effort to preserve native ecosystems on Gabriola Island and to eradicate, limit, or prevent the establishment of invasive species with methods that have the least detrimental impact to other organisms.”*

f. TRAIL MAP COMMITTEE— Chair Nola Johnston:

This ad hoc committee’s members were Cameron Murray, Jenni Gehlbach, Rob Brockley, and Anne Landry.

- The map's fourth edition was printed in August 2019. It was a major redesign because of the much enlarged 707 Community Park with over 40 new wayfinding posts. There had also been several new trails developed in parks, on rights of way, or under licence across private land.
- By year's end we had sold over 1000 of the new maps. We appreciate our vendors: Visitor Info Centre; North Road Sports, Mid Island Co-op, Page's Resort and Marina, Gabriola Museum, and Q Cycle, who all sell our map without financial gain.

Nola Johnston paid tribute to Cameron Murray's hard work and professional expertise which he has volunteered since 2012, going well beyond the call of duty in our 2013, 2016, and 2019 map updates. She presented him with a small gift in appreciation.

g. COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE—Co-chairs Jenni Gehlbach and Nola Johnston

- Wrote and designed promotional material including posters, newspaper articles, advertisements, and our AGM slideshow presentation.
- Wrote and designed the annual GaLTT newsletter in print and digital formats.
- Designed a new display banner for the market table.
- Electronic and print record-keeping: minutes, correspondence, legal documents.
- Digital (cloud) data storage.
- Email communication with members and volunteers
- Updated and expanded our website as needed
- Kept our Facebook friends in the loop about activities and achievements, and joined relevant discussions on the Community Bulletin Boards—this year's hot topic was accessibility
- Posted some neat pictures to our *gabriolatrails* Instagram account.
- Liaised with other groups and represented GaLTT's concerns to political and First Nations representatives.
- *Special projects:*
 - Participated in the development of text and graphics for the new Trail Map
 - As part of the ad hoc Accessibility Committee, designed a survey to investigate the accessibility of our beaches and trails to those with restricted mobility.
 - Began developing a digital trail atlas linked to the main website. It will alert walkers to interesting historical, social, geological, and ecological features along trail routes.

PHOTO CHALLENGE: We had issued a challenge to GaLTT members to send us photos of "FEET on TRAILS" and got lots of entries, mostly from board members! We declare the winner to be Sarah Kopjar with her picture of several waterproofed lower legs standing on a boardwalk over an alarmingly high stream in Elder Cedar. She was presented with a small gift (a lens brush).

h. MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE—Chair Rebecca Furnell

Committee members: Frank Shoemaker (Treasurer) and Jenni Gehlbach (Communications). Rebecca was unable to attend due to her work but made her report via Frank who works closely with her to track membership dues and donations, issuing receipts as needed

- We give a huge thank you to our members and donors who are our main source of revenue.
- The streamlined digital membership application process is working smoothly, as is the new process for tracking changes and issuing receipts. These changes have reduced workload and paper wastage.
- As of February 22, 2020, we have a total of 200 members: (6 honorary lifetime members; 33 monthly donors; 28 annual individual memberships; 43 annual family memberships; 36 five-year individual memberships; 54 five-year family memberships.).

4. TREASURER'S REPORT:

Frank Shoemaker presented the 2019 Financial Statement, which were also distributed at the AGM to members as printouts. Highlights were:

- Current assets: \$151,699 (2018 \$151,357)
Of this, major portions are:
 - \$74,190 is an unrestricted fund
 - \$55,056 is for land acquisition
 - \$6,500 is for accessibility improvement
 - \$15,953 is for land stewardship (covenant-related)
- Receipts: \$31,132 (2018 23,882)
Of this, major portions are:
 - \$11,755 donations
 - \$7,884 special project funds
 - \$4,580 membership fees
 - \$5,481 market (mostly map) sales
 - \$1,337 bank interest
- Disbursements \$32,420 (2018 \$17,008)
Increases chiefly due to one-time costs of
 - accessibility survey consultation fees
 - strategic planning consultation fees
 - new edition trail-map printing costs
 - trail maintenance equipment purchases.

5. VOLUNTEER ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Our successes are the result of valuable volunteer time and labour on the trails—470 volunteer hours were worked in 2019 and 62 individual volunteers attended at least one work party. Peter Danenhower acknowledged and thanked the most noteworthy, awarding each with a Mad Rona gift-card.

- 1st Barry Moerkerken (most volunteer hours recorded)
- 2nd Hugh Skinner
- 3rd Lars Hulstein

Peter reported thankfully that Barry has now taken over the management of work parties.

6. **BOARD ELECTION:** Gehlbach noted that five board members have stepped down from the board: David Boehm, Laura Boulton, Tom Cameron, Chris Hills, and Derrill Shuttleworth. She then presented the 2020 slate of Board candidates.

SLATE of candidates for 2020:

- Current Directors continuing for one more year of their term (7):
 - Rob Brockley
 - Peter Danenhower

- Rebecca Furnell
- Jenni Gehlbach
- Libby Gunn
- Nola Johnston
- Lou Skinner
- Current Directors standing for re-election to a 2-year term (3)
 - Anne Landry
 - Kerry Marcus
 - Frank Shoemaker
- New Nominations for a 2-year term (2)
 - Barry Moerkerken
 - Allan Posthuma

Gehlbach called for further nominations from the floor. There were none.

GaLTT's by-laws allow the board to have between 5 and 15 members, therefore:

ELECTION: There being no other candidates, and no objections from the floor to the slate presented, the 12 directors and candidates listed were unanimously acclaimed as GaLTT Board Directors for 2020.

Brockley welcomed the two new board members and thanked the retiring directors for their service.

HONORARY LIFE MEMBER: Brockley paid special tribute to retiring **Tom Cameron** who has served on GaLTT's board since 2005, including serving terms as Treasurer and as President. His energy and his vision have inspired the board and reminded us of the actions required by our mandate. On behalf of the Society, Brockley awarded Cameron an Honorary Life Membership. The meeting was very pleased to hear that Tom intends to remain on some of GaLTT's committees, bringing his long view to our decision making.

7. **QUESTIONS from the floor** —there were none.
8. **DOOR PRIZE:** The draw for the door prize (a basket of items donated by the board members) was won by GaLTT member John Gardiner.
9. **ADJOURNMENT:** Jenni Gehlbach proposed adjournment of GaLTT's AGM and the meeting was concluded by Rob Brockley at 9:45pm.

Minutes recorded by Jenni Gehlbach.