

Walking Tour Four: Memorial & Highrock Parks

Note: This walk has some steep climbs.

Begin the walking tour at the new Esquimalt Municipal Hall. The building designed by Architect Vic Davies opened in 2003. The Esquimalt Branch of the Greater Victoria Public Library is also located in this building. Take time to view the public art.

The original Municipal Hall at the corner of Esquimalt Road and Park Place was designed by Architect Ralph Berrill and completed in 1929. This was the first public building constructed by the Township. The Hon. Robert Pooley, a lifelong Esquimalt resident, laid the foundation stone.

Visit the memorials – The Sailors’ Walk in memory of all Canadian Warships lost in the Battle of the Atlantic WWII, The Totem honouring the Canadian Navy’s 75th Anniversary and the Cairn dedicated to the memory of those sailors who lost their lives when *HMCS Esquimalt* was torpedoed and sunk in the approaches to Halifax Harbour 16 April 1945. It was the last Canadian warship sunk in WWII.

Cross Esquimalt Road and enter Memorial Park. Memorial Park was created through the efforts of the Esquimalt Chapter of the Independent Order of the Daughters of the Empire (IODE) and the Wardens of St. Paul’s Church under the direction of Rev. Canon Harry Stocken. The park officially opened 8 September 1927. Esquimalt assumed responsibility for the park 28 January 1928. Architect Hubert Savage designed the Cenotaph. The Esquimalt Millennium Time Capsule was buried at the foot of the Cenotaph 1 July 2001. In 1995 Memorial Park became the first parcel of public land to be given heritage designation in Esquimalt.

The WWI German field guns were given to Esquimalt as War Prize in 1921. In 1941 the guns were officially made a part of the War Memorial. This saved them from becoming scrap metal during WWII.

In 1848 the area was home to the first Mission of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and was called St. Charles Mission after Father Charles Pandosy.

Later it was called St. Joseph’s Mission and by local residents, The Chapel (civic address today is 1230 Esquimalt Road).

Walk through the park to Park Terrace. On the northeast corner of Park Terrace and Drake Avenue observe the small cement survey marker that marks the boundary line between the Suburban Lots, Viewfield Farm and Constance Cove Farm. Joseph Despard Pemberton, surveyor for the Hudson’s Bay Company, surveyed Esquimalt in 1851. A brass plaque to mark the boundary is mounted on the rock at 1230 Old Esquimalt Road.

Walk up Old Esquimalt Road, the oldest planned road in the west, built in 1852 by the sailors of *HMS Thetis* under the direction of Lt. John Moresby, later Admiral Moresby.

At the top of the hill – the three Moderne style or Art Deco houses, 1214, 1218 and 1221 Old Esquimalt Road were designed in the 1940s by Arthur Stelck, a well known hardware merchant who had stores in Esquimalt and Victoria. 1221 Old Esquimalt Road was designated heritage in 1994.

“Longston” the half-timbered Tudor Revival style home at 1211 Old Esquimalt Road was built in 1908 for Colonel John A. Hall, a chemist by profession and a founding partner in the Victoria Chemical Company. Architect Samuel Maclure was his friend and it is thought that this house is a Maclure design. No plans exist. Col. Hall owned one of the first cars in the area. The garage at the front of the house is original.

Col. Hall began his military career in the 5th Regiment and was in command when the British Army left in 1906. In 1908 he organized the 88th Fusiliers. In 1913, while in command of the Civil Aid Forces, he took troops to Nanaimo to control striking coal miners at the Dunsmuir Mines.

Continue east. On the north side 706 Warder Place the Percival Redout Brown house “Lyndhurst” designed by Architect Thomas Hooper – built in 1913. Robert Pooley purchased the house in 1928. Although the house has changed hands many times, Esquimalt residents still call it the “Pooley House.” The house was designated heritage in 1985.



Memorial Park (left, top right) and **1221 Old Esquimalt Road** (bottom right)

Harry Pooley was prominent in B.C. politics. He was MLA for Esquimalt from 1912 to 1937 and served as Attorney General from 1928 to 1933.

Ralph and Martha Stephens built 1165 Old Esquimalt in 1912. Ralph was the Master Mechanic at the Yarrow's Shipyard. He came from England in 1893 to work in the Bullen Shipyards and stayed on when Sir Alfred Yarrow purchased the yard in 1914. This house is similar to 1010 Arcadia Street. (See Tour #6)

The first Lampson Street School was a four room brick building constructed in 1903. Architect William Ridgeway Wilson was hired to supervise the construction. In 1909 the building was deemed too small and plans were put in place to add a second story. Architect Maxwell Muir was hired to prepare the design. The 1903 walls were found to be unsafe and the building was torn down. A contract was awarded to Thomas Ashe to build a new eight-room school. In 1913 the plans of Architect W. Ridgeway Wilson were selected for two new wings and an addition. The school officially reopened 9 April 1914. It closed in 1976, received heritage designation in 1990 and reopened in 1993 after being completely restored by the Greater Victoria School District. Architect and Engineer Paul Smith supervised the work. It closed again as a public school in 2007.

Take Cairn Road, cross the field and take the path to the top of the hill. Cairn Park, at 232.25 feet, is the highest point in Esquimalt. The Cairn was dedicated in 1962 during the Golden Jubilee year. Municipal Engineer

John Graeme designed the stone Cairn and directional dais.

Highrock Park is one of the hidden jewels of Esquimalt. Enjoy the 360 degree view!



706 Warder Place (top)
View from Cairn Park (bottom)



Lampson Street School

Return to Old Esquimalt Road using the back path to the right off Cairn Road. This path is the border between the two Puget Sound Agricultural Farms Viewfield Farm and Constance Cove Farm.

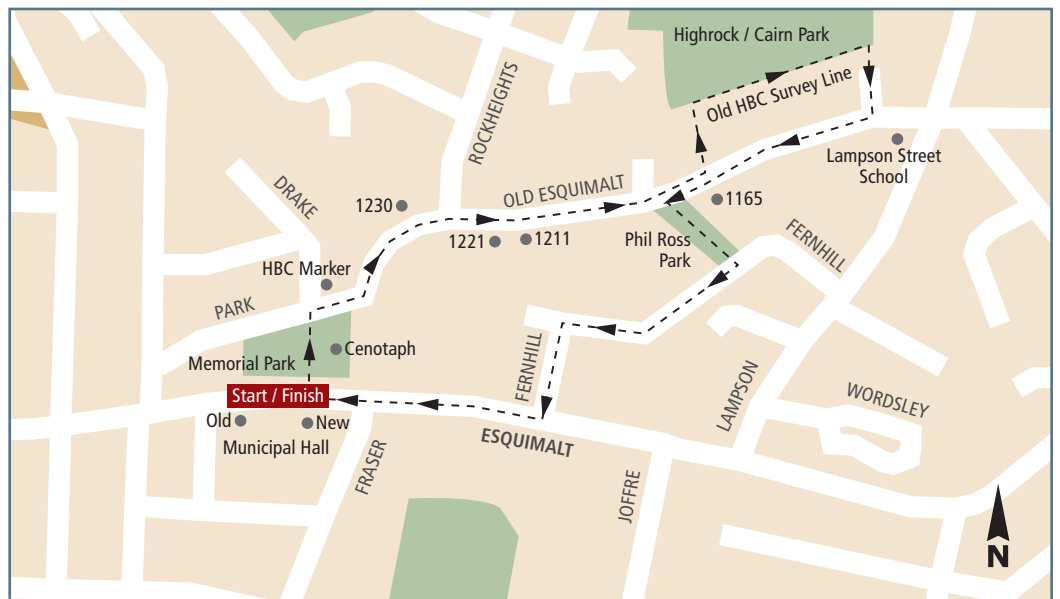


Take the path through Phil Ross Park named to honour the late Rev. Philip Ross, a United Church Minister and Esquimalt Councillor from 1983 to 1990.

Turn right on Fernhill Road named after "Fernhill," the home of pioneers Charles and Elizabeth Fisher Pooley that was located on 26 acres in this area (now Norma Court).

Continue down Fernhill Road to the Esquimalt Shopping Plaza. Stop for tea or coffee and the best cinnamon buns or jelly donuts in town at the Esquimalt Bake Shop. Buses are available.

Return to the Municipal Hall. The walk concludes here.



Written by Sherri K. Robinson. Photos: Esquimalt Municipal Archives and Josh McCulloch.