Re:Locating the orchards of Victoria, BC
Engaging with the past to impact the future

daniel Brendle-Moczuk
Contents

• Why?

• What? / How?

• Lessons learned / limitations of data

• Future
Hawaii

“To know a place is also to know the past. Place...is the past and the present...Every row of trees...”

Yi-Fu Tan, 1975. Place: An Experiential Perspective. *Geographical Review* 65(2)
“...the general public, planners, politicians, land managers, ecological modelers, and restoration ecologists are just some of the potential users of landscape history.”
“...landscapes, and their attendant agricultural and food systems, are a common heritage to us all.”

Jules Pretty (2002)
framework (con’t)

“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”

George Santayana, *The Life of Reason*, Volume 1, 1905
But...

If we insist that “...the history of geography must be explored in order to throw light upon the contemporary...[this] is a way of avoiding looking in the most obvious places.
The best place to start is...here and now.”

framework (con’t)

“...previous experience suffuses all present perception. We need to be sure that we are dealing with the actual past, not with a modern simulacrum. All the lineaments of the present are historical, yet they are continuously reborn in the minds of every culture and of every generation.”


The past I have re-constructed is through my eyes.
some have written about Vancouver Island’s native vegetation landscape


McCune, J. L. (2013). *The long-term history of plant communities on southeastern Vancouver Island based on vegetation resurveys and phytolith analysis*. PhD diss, UBC.
some have written about Vancouver Island’s **native food plants**


some have written about Victoria’s native vegetation


Schaefer, V. Ed. Biodiversity in Greater Victoria, 1993
Why? Curiosity...

UVic CJVI lands (dog park)
Why?

- provide sense of past
- community engagement
- 20 yards local food
- food bank
- tree pruners

- loss of trees and forests
- planting new fruit trees
- Fruit Tree Project
"regular spacing and alignment of trees..."

Shelbourne Valley from Mt. Tolmie (1908)
Saanich Archives Photo 1989-008-175

“...near human occupancy...”
*Aerial Photography and Image Interpretation* (Paine & Kiser, 2012)
1934 map Gordonhead, Saanich neighbourhood
How? Hundreds of aerial photos: 1926 and 1928

A227-65 1928

1934 map
some fieldwork

A229-24, 1928
Canada Census of Agriculture

1881: Victoria (also included Esquimalt & Metchosin)
   Gardens & Orchards: 484 acres; 13148 bushels of apples
   344 acres in Okanagan; 1711 bushels of apples

1891: Victoria (also included Esquimalt & Metchosin)
   Gardens & Orchards: 999 acres; 13257 bushels of apples
   334 acres in Okanagan; 8728 bushels of apples
Canada Census of Agriculture

(“It is not possible to make an accurate comparison of the...area of land occupied in 1891 and 1901 for agricultural purposes...” 1901 Census of Canada)

1901: Victoria (also included Esquimalt & Metchosin)
   Orchards: 424 acres; 12,806 Apple bearing trees;
           2136 acres; 46,413 trees in Yale-Cariboo (included Okanagan)

1911: Victoria & Saanich (Saanich part of Nanaimo Electoral District)
   Orchard and Nursery: 1357 acres
           12,262 acres
Canada Census of Agriculture

1921: Victoria & Saanich
Orchards: 757 acres (no vineyards)
15,692 acres in Okanagan

1931: Esquimalt, Saanich & unorganised areas (North Saanich?)
Orchards and vineyards: 1350 acres
22,444 acres in Okanagan-Similkameen

1941: Saanich & unorganised areas (North Saanich?)
Orchards and vineyards: 378 acres: 72% decrease from 1931
26,297 acres in Okanagan-Similkameen
2001: Capital Region District (CRD): apples, apricots, cherries, peaches, plums
120 acres (producing and non-producing)

2011: Capital Region District (CRD): apples, apricots, cherries, peaches, plums
346 acres (producing and non-producing)
65% increase from 2001
Make public?

At minimum, want users to be able to click on / off layers of the:
- historic air photos

- 1934 Victoria map

- current roads / streets
Remember UVic lands...

UVic CJVI lands (dog park)
...limitations of using earliest air photos

UVic CJVI farm land: BC2042-55, 1956

no orchard yet in 1956
UVic CJVI farm land: BC5091-266, 1964

orchard planted between 1956 & 1964
UVic CJVI lands (dog park)
Feb. 22, 2014
Fruit tree pruning clinic
Royal Roads University
“...You always said people don’t do what they believe in, they just do what’s most convenient, then they repent...”

*Brownsville Girl*

Bob Dylan, Sam Shepard
community partnership

LifeCycles Fruit Tree Project

Thanks to hundreds of volunteers and a couple of ladders, the Fruit Tree Project harvests apples, cherries, pears, and other fruit from privately owned trees that would otherwise go to waste. We then share the harvest among homeowners, volunteers, food banks, and community organizations within Victoria. A unique aspect of this project is that a portion of the harvest is set aside to make value-added products that help defray our costs.

Last season our fantastic volunteers and tree owners made it possible for us to collect and redistribute over 39,000 lbs of fruit that would have otherwise gone to waste.

Another season is upon us! Please join us again

If you are a TREE OWNER with fruit to share, please use our online form to register your fruit tree(s) for picking from July 1 until October 31.

PLEASE NOTE: We do our very best to accommodate and meet everyone's needs but are not always able to pick every single tree. We will call homeowners to confirm our arrival time if and when a picking team has been arranged to pick your fruit. Thank you for your patience and support for this important and innovative project!

If you are a VOLUNTEER with a few hours a week to spare between July and the end of October, we will need Fruit Pickers (lots), Tree Assessors, and Office Volunteers (4 max.).

New volunteers: Use our online form to sign up.
Registered volunteers: Sign up for Picks
Must use these browsers: Firefox, GoogleChrome, IE10+, Opera, Safari
“Place...is sustained...by the quality of human awareness.”

Yi-Fu Tan, 1975. Place: An Experiential Perspective. Geographical Review 65(2)
Selected References


