

HUME PARK



IHP4101

Established 1912
Size 31.72 acres
location Upper Hume - Columbia & Hoult Streets
 Lower Hume - Kelly & Braid Streets

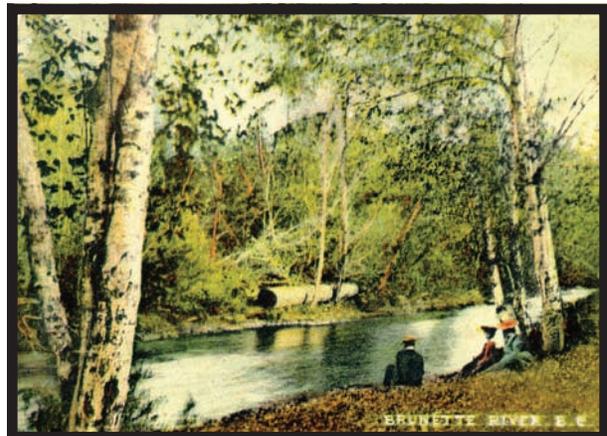
Ammenities

- Three tennis courts
- Spray park
- Adventure playground
- Outdoor pool
- Off-leash dog park
- Three baseball diamonds
- Softball Diamond
- Soccer field
- Lacrosse box
- Trails & greenways
- Picnic shelter
- Picnic tables
- Passive green space
- Forest
- Creek

Hume Park is one of New Westminister’s most treasured park spaces. Located on the outskirts of the city on the banks of the Brunette River, its history is rooted in the founding of the city.

The first trail from the Royal Engineer’s camp, surveyed and constructed as North Road in 1859, skirted the future park site. The trail was a military precaution, built to protect the capital city from potential American attack should the Fraser River freeze solid and the Americans launch an attack from the south. North Road provided a strategic access to Burrard Inlet to forestall such an eventuality.

Fortunately, the feared American takeover of British Columbia never materialized, and the trail eventually proved more suitable for the survey and settlement of suburban lands and district lots. Colonel Moody himself established his own model farm called “Mayfield” on the east side of the road 1860. William Holmes was the first to receive a land title in British Columbia for District Lot One on the banks of the Brunette River on the west side of the road. Here he established his own farm, becoming the first resident of Burnaby.



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Anglican Archbishop George Hills visited Moody's farm in 1860 and recorded in his diary: "Walked with Colonel Moody and Captain Prevost to the farm or clearing belonging to the former, on the way to Burrard's Inlet, about two and a half miles from the [Royal Engineers] Camp. Up to that point all is dense forest. The trail is very rough and not suitable for even a horse, much less a wheel. At the place about seven acres is cleared and a garden made. Pears are growing. Apple trees are planted. The surrounding land has been burned."

The Moody farm site included the portion of land that is now Hume Park. It remained more or less undeveloped for decades, with local farmers using the lower natural grass fields for pasture lands. The open fields beside the picturesque Brunette River became a favoured site for picnics by city residents.

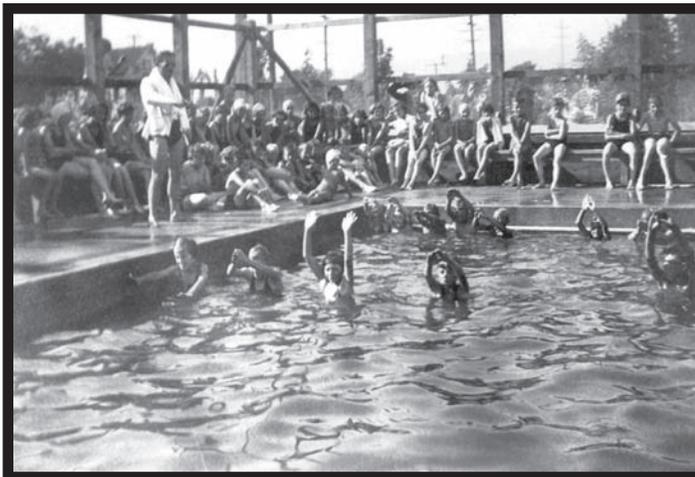
The property was acquired during a land boom by the B.C. Distillery Company for potential factory or residential subdivision development. The land was soon determined surplus to the company's needs, but the threat to their much-loved picnic site so alarmed local Sapperton residents they presented a petition to City Council in March, 1912.

Council sent the matter to the Parks committee, which concluded that the growth of the outer suburbs demanded securing the land for park purposes. A brief debacle ensued when some businessmen proposed selling Sapperton Park to fund the purchase. Council disagreed, and in 1913 a civic bylaw was approved to borrow \$33,000 for the purchase of the 10.69 acre undeveloped parcel initially known as Brunette Park.

The economic depression that ensued during World War I left the City without the financial resources to further develop the park. After the establishment of the Parks Commission in 1927 it was reported: "Sapperton is fortunate in having two parks, though probably there are residents who are not aware of the second one. Until it is properly christened it may be designated as 'Brunette Park' ... At present it is in its original wild state but could be made at little expense, a delightful resort."

However, with little in the way of funding, and too many other priorities, nothing was accomplished by the Commission at this site; with the onset of the Great Depression in the 1930s, it seemed unlikely that the park would be developed for some time.

But Mayor Fred Hume had a vision for the development of the park site. In June, 1934, he appeared before the Parks Commission to outline the plan he had developed with the Board of Works committee: "His Worship the Mayor explained that the representatives of Council wished to lay before the Commission a plan to improve that area of land lying in the vicinity of Brunette River on Columbia Street East. The plan prepared by Mr. Lutley, Gardener – Royal Columbian Hospital, was laid before the meeting for examination. Mayor Hume stated if carried out, this scheme would afford the opportunity of supplying relief men with considerable labour



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and very little expenditure would be required for material. It was planned to lay the land out in paths, playgrounds, a number of artificial ponds and generally to beautify the Park and make it accessible to the public. This scheme would lessen the present congestion at Sapperton Park ... Park Commissioner Hutton explained the Board had this matter under consideration some time ago and the reason no progress had been made was on account of the scarcity of funds. He heartily endorsed the plan, provided that suitable provision was made for maintenance after completion and suggested that control of the whole of the ground be turned over to the Board of Works Department to develop, after which the some could be placed under the jurisdiction of the Parks Board for administration."

The park's development then proceeded with speed over the next three years. Every aspect of the original plan was completed. The quality of craftsmanship and attention to detail by city relief workers exceeded everyone's expectations. The playground and gardens carved out of the woods beside the Brunette River became a matter of civic pride, during the Great Depression.

The addition of a civic swimming pool at a cost of over \$9,000 completed the park's development in 1936. In recognition of his leadership and vision, Sapperton's St. Mary's Church membership suggested naming the park after Mayor Hume.

Outsiders were also impressed with the park's transformation. One Vancouver reporter wrote: "As a civic achievement, Hume Park will take first rank because it utilized the distress of unemployment in a practical and prideful manner. To our way of thinking that was an achievement in itself. That it brought into recreational uses thirty acres of scrambled nature and evolved from that hodge-podge of ravines, gullies and rock piles on of the most beautiful natural park in the Province of BC and to the citizens of New Westminster the visitor and the tourist, it has provided a Centre of attraction and amusement, which will endure as an everlasting tribute to Mayor Hume and his Council of Alderman."

The park was administered by City Council until 1940, when it was passed over to the Parks Board, which directed continuous improvement over the years. Two tennis courts were constructed in 1949. In 1958, the swimming pool was enlarged and remodeled, and a larger picnic area was established; the following year, restrooms and dressing rooms were built, and the caretaker's house was constructed by high school students. A picnic shelter and playground were installed in 1960, completing the lower section of the park. A newly-filled ravine gave sufficient area to provide a soccer field, softball diamond and lacrosse box in the upper section in 1961.

In 1972, the establishment of an Adventure Playground, further development of trails and bridges in the ravine, and a new concession provided further improvements to the park. A Memorial Garden dedicated to Fred Hume was completed in 1976 with a donation provided by his sister Mrs. M. Corrigan.

The Neighbourhood Improvement Program provided the funds in 1977 to modernize the recreational facilities of the park and convert the outdoor swimming pool to a family pool. The Hume Park Pool was officially opened by Mayor Muni Evers on May 18, 1978. In 1991, the wading pool in Hume Park was transformed into a new spray pool with funding assistance of the Kinsmen Club of New Westminster.

Behind the Name...Hume Park:



IHP1484

Behind the name...Hume Park

Frederick J. Hume

Born: May 2, 1892

Died: February 17, 1967

Fred Hume's personal charm contributed to the almost rags-to-riches story of his life.

Hume was born in New Westminster, a descendent of two of the original Royal Engineer families that settled in Sapperton. Young Hume left school early and began working in a classical way by selling newspapers. He later worked in a variety of jobs, including store clerk, fisherman, teamster, mill worker, fireman, and telephone lineman.

It was his work as a telephone lineman that propelled Hume's transformation to employer from employee. He was listening in on a line when he overheard telephone officials talking about transferring him to Victoria. The impending threat of being transferred made the young married man with two children quit his job with B.C. Telephone Company.

With a tool kit and fifty dollars cash Hume set up a small electrical repair business with his brother in New Westminster. Soon the brothers opened Hume and Rumble, a retail electrical store that quickly became the largest electrical contracting firm in Western Canada.

Hume also started one of the first radio stations in B.C., partially to sell radio sets, then a comparative novelty. The station was CFXC in New Westminster, and it was here that Hume acted as a joint owner, manager, and disc jockey. The station was not a profitable venture, one of its evident disadvantages being that it had no commercials. It was eventually sold, and evolved into today's CJOR.

Hume entered politics in 1924. He was elected alderman at the age of 29 and served for nine years before being elected mayor in 1933, proving to be one of the City's most popular. Hume retired from civic government in New Westminster 1942 and moved to West Vancouver. In 1951 he was recruited to run for mayor in Vancouver; he was elected by an overwhelming majority, serving that city from 1951 to 1958.

Hume played with the New Westminster Salmonbellies as a young man and became president of the club in the 1930s. He went on to break a nine year slump for the 1937 Salmonbellies Mann Cup team (the first BC team to win the Cup since the arrival of box lacrosse) by augmenting the team with eastern lacrosse players.

Hume's love of sports led him to ownership of the New Westminster Royals hockey club, where he helped found the Western Hockey League. He operated the team with Ken MacKenzie in the Pacific Coast League from 1954 - 1961, but never won a championship. Hume finally sold his players to Portland and folded his franchise when mounting costs made professional hockey in New Westminster an unrealistic venture.

Hume went on to establish the Vancouver Canucks hockey team with the Western Hockey League from 1962 - 1966. He later investigated the building of the Pacific Coliseum and played a large role in bringing the National Hockey League (NHL) franchise to Vancouver.

Hume always believed that the Vancouver area could support large scale sporting events. In 1954 he brought the British Empire games to Vancouver, and helped land a minor professional baseball franchise in 1955.

Much of the growth in amateur and professional hockey in the Pacific Northwest was attributable to the efforts of Fred Hume. His drive and leadership won him countless admirers throughout the West Coast. The Western Hockey League honoured his many contributions by naming a trophy after him, presented annually to the league's most gentlemanly player; he has also been inducted into both the Canadian Lacrosse and the Canadian Hockey Halls of Fame.