SULLIVAN PARK

Established   **1939, 1972**
Size   **0.67 acres**
location   **Oliver Street & Third Avenue**
Ammenities

- **Open green space**
- **Benches**
- **Grassy areas**

Sullivan Park is the former home site of New Westminster pioneer Alexander McDougall, who came to New Westminster with his wife and family from Kincardine, Ontario in 1873. They originally established a homestead known as "Alderbank" at Elgin in Surrey.

However, by 1882 the family decided to relocate back to New Westminster, and built a house at 220 Third Avenue. The grounds of their home included a large street frontage, as well as all the land included in Sullivan Park today; it was developed as a small estate, with fruit trees, vegetable gardens, chickens and a barn for the family's horses.

The McDougall family home was occupied by three generations of the McDougall family when their daughter Barbara Sarah married Alexander Lamb and moved into the house with two sons. Their son William Kaye Lamb loved to roam the estate and play in the old orchard. He excelled at his studies and went on to university; he would become head of the B.C. Provincial Archives and later was appointed the Dominion Archivist of Canada, establishing the National Library of Canada.

The original McDougall home was demolished in 1925 when the estate was purchased by Edward A. Riddle, the managing director of the Westminster Trust Company. Riddle replaced the farmhouse with a beautifully designed arts and crafts-styled home which still stands at 221 Third Avenue today. In the 1930s the property owner lost the estate for non-payment of taxes to the City. City Council decided that the parcel would be too expensive to service if subdivided into residential lots, and turned the land over to the Parks Commission in 1939.

The park's hidden location and cozy relationship to the surrounding homes has always characterized its history. Neighbourhood kids playing baseball often terrorized the owners of the properties backing onto the park with wayward home run hits. In the 1950s teenagers created their own fun by driving through the park at night with their cars to 'hang out' in its open playfield. Adjacent residents responded by taking over portions of the lane and park with fences to incorporate the land into their own gardens. Finally, the Parks Commission ordered the fence encroachments removed, installed barriers to keep out the cars and a children's playground was developed.

Behind the Name…Sullivan Park:

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A mystery surrounds the name Sullivan Park. When Council transferred the park land to the Parks Board in 1939 a name for the park had not yet been selected. For many years the park was unofficially known as Oliver Park, since Oliver Street which provided access to the park from Fourth Avenue.

In the 1950s the name Sullivan Park was first used, but it has not been established who the park was named after or why. A likely candidate is Henry ("Harry") J. Sullivan, who was a city councillor from 1934 to 1939, during the time the land was dedicated for park use.