

## Gambier Fire Equipment Group

# GFEG Newsletter



## New Fire Pump at the Hall

The WWII era fire pump that has been standing by to protect our Hall has finally retired. Originally, it was used by the Gibsons Volunteer Fire Dept. Next it became a portable unit at Port Mellon Mill. Then, in 1992 it was loaned to us for use at the Gambier Hall for as long as we needed it. Now it goes into honorable retirement as a GVFD museum piece.

To replace it, GFEG contributors have saved up \$5,000 to acquire a modern 18hp Honda-powered CET electric start high pressure pump that is capable of supplying two 50gpm, or four 30gpm foam or water nozzles simultaneously. To install it we need to modify the intake piping from the well; add a custom welded exhaust pipe; and build a custom 4-port outlet manifold for our hoses.

Whilst operational for just one hose since mid-June, the full 4-hose functionality feature should be ready for use in early July.

## Brigade Bay sets up a GFEG equipment trailer

Brigade Bay, on our east coast, is about as far away from the south west peninsula's community owned fire equipment trailers as one can get. There are no connecting roads that would allow these communities to come to each other's aid in time of need anyway. Loading fire equipment into a flotilla of boats to make the long trip would consume a great deal of time and all this adds up to a sense of isolation.

So Jim Petroski and his Brigade Bay neighbours decided they would make an effort to find out what was involved in building some local fire protection capability for themselves. After visits to Gambier Harbour and valuable hands-on practices at the Community Centre last year, Jim and his colleagues arrived at an action plan that is now becoming reality along the lines of our GFEG model.

Brigade Bay was developed as a strata and as such could vote strata income to be applied to acquire fire equipment. So, an aluminum trailer has been ordered and new foam and draught pumps were purchased. Hoses, intakes, forestry and camlock fittings, plus nozzles, foam equipment and the foam

itself will round out this ambitious acquisition plan.

*Below:* Stu Watson assembles and commissions Brigade Bay's draught & foam fire pumps to meet GFEG's standards for fittings so that intakes and fire hoses on the Island will all connect — assuming our roads will too one day.



*The red foam pumps are Gorman Rupp's model OTC-5265HC. The smaller aluminum draught pumps are Honda's model WH15XK1C1*



2,000 US gallon water tanks can be fitted with 1-1/2" full-port ball valves and camlock couplers to match standard GFEG pump fittings. We recommend frost resistant full-port ball valves made from stainless steel to withstand freezing pressure if heat-wrap tape is not a practical option on less expensive valves.

## Do you have enough water storage?

The absence of community water supplies in most neighborhoods presents challenges in gaining access to enough water for fire fighting. Water conservation prompted GFEG to adopt foam firefighting equipment because foam's effectiveness is rated as 2-3 times better than water alone. So when water is scarce, the addition of foam may enable you to knock down a fire before your water runs out.

Seawater makes excellent foam and is an ideal source for low-bank waterfront properties. However, permanent pump installations close to seawater require a high level of maintenance.

High-bank waterfront homes require

specialized high "head" pumps to push sea-water up the cliff and still have enough power to fight a fire at the top.

Natural fresh water storage in ponds, streams and surface wells is ideal if they do not dry out in summer. The best option to combat that is a static water storage tank. Drilled wells are typically used to fill static water storage tanks. They come in one, two or five thousand gallon sizes.

A 2,000 gallon storage tank will keep one 30gpm fire nozzle supplied for one hour. Two tanks are better than one.

Do you have enough water storage at your place?

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*Gambier Island is not a "protected area" as insurance companies define it.....*

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## Fire insurance premiums

We get a few calls each year asking about the fire insurance rating for homes on Gambier. The answer is that we are in the BC Forest Service Coastal Zone and that Gambier Island is not a "protected area" as insurance companies define it. We lack the key requirements of a population of

young people able to act as volunteers; a road system to connect the communities; and the tax base for a budget to pay for a Volunteer Fire Department with 24/7/365 coverage.

Like high transportation costs, another of the prices we pay for the quiet isolation, peace and serenity of

Gambier is high fire insurance premiums.

Access to community owned fire equipment can help us to protect ourselves from fires spreading onto or from our properties. But it does not help to reduce the cost of our fire insurance coverage premiums.



## Do you have a 2-inch tow-hitch?

Years ago, we stored our fire equipment in a shed. If a fire occurred, such as the 1986 fire at ANAVETS Hall in Gambier Harbour, locals loaded fire equipment into a truck and dashed off to help contain the blaze. But if we forgot to bring a particular piece of equipment along, someone had to go back to the shed and fetch it.

Today, our portable equipment trailers ensure that everything we might need at a fire will arrive at the fire site together -- **if** the person who goes to fetch it has a vehicle fitted with a suitable size tow hitch.

Our trailers are quite light and can be pulled by most island vehicles if fitted with a two-inch tow hitch/ball.

If you pull a trailer that needs the less common 1-7/8" size, Canadian Tire sells a hitch with two exchangeable ball sizes. Please do not attempt to pull a fire trailer with a 1-7/8" hitch. I tried it once and it came adrift onto the safety chains at the first bump. Use **only** a 2" hitch with your fire equipment trailers.



## Your SW Peninsula Trailer locations



Our G.Hbr trailer is located at the Watson home: 398 Dulcie Rd. Our house is up for sale. So now we seek a new Gambier Harbour Coordinator to help look after this equipment in future. Volunteer needed!



Our New Brighton Trailer is located at the 3-way junction with West Bay Rd and Shawanabe Rd, near the Store. Joe Wright is our NB Coordinator who looks after this trailer and leads New Brighton practises.



West Bay's fire equipment trailer has moved from the mail boxes. You'll now find it parked at 890 The Grove Rd under the care of WB Coordinator Bob Ostiguy who also leads West Bay practises.

## Oil Spill Kits



Oil spills are so much in the news these days. It seems timely to remind ourselves that we do have a basic level of readiness to cope with small scale local oil spills — perhaps in one of our harbours.

Donated by Burrard Clean, these kits are intended as first responder resources to protect our beaches and wildlife. One kit is located in the Pump House at the Gambier Community Centre and the other is in the Gambier Harbour Fire Equipment Trailer.

They contain oil absorbent "socks" for forming a boom around a small spill. Also included are absorbent pads for soaking up oil floating on the water, plus a bag of oil absorbent granules. We also have Tyvec suits to protect clothing, plus nitrile gloves.

Basic instructions are to be found inside the lid of the large yellow bins.

## Intake Foot Valves



Our red cast iron foot valves, for mounting on the bottom of an intake, have a leather flap that is supposed to act as a one-way valve to hold the pump's prime when switched off. But experience shows that as leather ages, it cracks and leaks like a sieve. The holes are also too big to prevent sand and gravel from being ingested by the pump and thus damaging its impeller.

The black strainer type intake lying behind it has no valve, but is better at preventing gravel from being ingested should the water level drop such that the attached float bottle allows it to touch bottom by mistake. (Float bottles keep intakes just below the surface.)

Experience has shown that the best type of foot valve is the one mounted on the intake hose at the top of the picture. This is a stainless steel fine-mesh screen on a brass spring loaded foot valve to hold the prime and to keep sand/gravel out. All our intakes are being modified to adopt this design with your contributions in 2010.



This newsletter was produced by:  
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*The Gambier Fire Equipment Group was established in 1980 by Gambier Island neighbours for the purpose of acquiring and training in the use of fire suppression equipment and to which we contribute money and/or time for that purpose. Out of our equipment fund we acquire equipment that ordinarily we would not be willing, or able to acquire individually.*

*Our aim is purely to be a self-help group and we do not either individually or collectively undertake or hold ourselves out to be available for, or to respond to, calls for fire, accident or health related incidents either within the GFEG or to the Gambier Island Community at large. In other words, we are not either individually or collectively, trained firefighters, or a volunteer fire department.*

*The purpose of our equipment is to provide each of us with access to fire suppression equipment that we can operate ourselves. Our equipment is comprised of pumps and hoses intended for our own use. It does not include flame resistant clothing, protective gear, or breathing apparatus. We recognize that the most likely application and value of our communally owned equipment will be to provide us with tools that may help us to contain a fire from spreading to or from the forest, or to other property. We are each of us responsible only to our self for being familiar with the function and use of our equipment and the current state of its condition and maintenance.*

**We're on the Web at**  
[http://  
 www.gambierisland.org/  
 Fire%20Protection.htm](http://www.gambierisland.org/Fire%20Protection.htm)

Check out <http://bcwildfire.ca/hprScripts/WildfireNews/Bans.asp> to determine what type of burning is presently permitted on Gambier Island (BC's Coastal Zone).

**Check for Forest Service Burn Bans before you burn....**

BC Forest Service is responsible for determining just what it is safe to do with open fires on our island. They tell us when we are allowed to have small, medium or large open fires; to cook over camp fires; and if it is safe to venture into forested areas. They can and do ban such activities whenever dry conditions are a threat to public safety and property. Between May and October, be sure to check out the BC Wildfire web page. This year, restrictions are tighter than usual to help prevent human-caused wildfires and limit the impact of smoke.

## Fire Equipment Practise Schedule

Date	Location	Focus
<b>July 4, Sunday 11am</b>	<b>Community Centre, 721 Andy's Bay Rd, New Brighton</b>	All welcome
<b>July 11 Sunday 11am</b>	<b>Bob Ostiguy &amp; Judy Weiser, 890 Grove Rd, West Bay</b>	All welcome
<b>July 18 Sunday 11am</b>	<b>Watsons' Wells, 398 Dulcie Rd, Gambier Harbour</b>	All welcome
<b>Aug 8 Sunday 11am</b>	<b>Watsons' Wells, 398 Dulcie Rd, Gambier Harbour</b>	<b>Women</b> of West Bay, New Brighton & Gambier Harbour
<b>Aug 15 Sunday 11am</b>	<b>Community Centre, 721 Andy's Bay Rd, New Brighton</b>	<b>Parents, Teens &amp; Children</b>

This practise schedule includes only locations in Gambier's S.W Peninsula. Neighbourhood practises including a Fire Smart assessment will also be held by invitation at homes of GFEG contributors who request one.

If other Gambier communities would like to invite us to visit and demonstrate or discuss local options for fire equipment, do please give us a call. Such an event is planned to be held in Brigade Bay this summer.



## Gambier Fire Equipment Group

### Summary of financial operations for the 12 months 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2008

	Acquisitions & Expenses	Contributions & Donations	Cash Reserves
<b>Opening Bank Balance</b>			<b>\$ 1,830.25</b>
Member Contributions		\$ 4,315.00	
Equipment acquired by Members through GFEG for own use		150.90	
Regular Equipment Purchases and Maintenance Expenses	2,857.52		
Liability Insurance for Parked Trailers	153.00		
Bank Interest		1.14	
<b>Closing Bank Balance</b>			<b>\$ 3,286.77</b>

### Summary of financial operations for the 12 months 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2009

	Acquisitions & Expenses	Contributions & Donations	Cash Reserves
<b>Opening Bank Balance</b>			<b>\$ 3,286.77</b>
Member Contributions		\$ 4,035.00	
Equipment acquired by Members through GFEG for own use		279.40	
Equipment Acquisitions and Maintenance Expenses	1,345.15		
Liability Insurance for Parked Trailers	138.00		
Bank Interest		0.99	
<b>Closing Bank Balance</b>			<b>\$ 6,119.01</b>

## Budget Projects

Since we did not publish a newsletter last year, here are the highlights of our financials for both 2008 and 2009, with budget plans for 2010. Fifty two families contributed an average of \$84 each in 2008 and fifty three families contributed an average of \$75 in 2009. Thank you all so much. We cannot do this without you!

During 2008 we equipped and fitted out the new Gambier Harbour trailer acquired in the prior year. We also added hand trucks and emergency tools for all of our trailers. Printing expenses, fuel and minor repair costs were also met.

In 2009 our focus was to save as much money as possible from your contributions in order to acquire the new pump we needed at the Community Centre in 2010. Expenses were incurred for hose repairs, fire extinguisher replacements/re-tests; stale gasoline replacement; and repairs to tires, including the vandalism incident.

So we opened 2010 with a strong financial position and have now been able to purchase an excellent new fire pump for the Community Centre with \$5,000. To install it we will need some custom equipment such as a 2-1/2" intake, a four-port outlet manifold to connect up to four hoses at a time, plus a special custom welded exhaust pipe. In addition we want to replace all our hose intake foot valves. These budget items will exceed our remaining balance from last year. So we ask our contributors to come forward again this year to help us with operating funds for 2010. If everyone donates \$50 each, we should be able to meet our modest ongoing operating costs.

# Gambier Fire Equipment Group

## Registration & Contribution Form - 2010

The purpose of this form is to provide information that will enable Group coordinators to keep you informed of equipment practises; to generate a Call-Out Tree; to identify each other's property; and enable us to contact you, or your alternate, if a problem occurs while you are off-island. **Please mail this to us with your contribution.**

Names of Property Owners/Residents	Gambier Phone	Cell Phone	Other Phone
1.			
2.			
Alternate Emergency Contact			

Gambier municipal address(or Lot #s) : \_\_\_\_\_

CANADA POST MAILING ADDRESSES	E-MAIL ADDRESSES

*By signing below I acknowledge that the Gambier Fire Equipment Group has been established by neighbours for the purpose of acquiring and training in the use of fire suppression equipment and to which we contribute money and/or time for that purpose. Out of our equipment fund we acquire group-owned equipment that ordinarily we would not be willing, or able to acquire individually.*

*Our aim is purely to be a self-help group and we do not either individually or collectively undertake or hold ourselves out to be available for, or to respond to, calls for fire, accident or health related incidents either within the GFEG or to the Gambier Island Community at large. **In other words, we are not, either individually or collectively, trained fire fighters or a volunteer fire department.***

*The purpose of our equipment is to provide each of us with access to fire suppression equipment that we can operate ourselves. Our equipment is comprised of pumps and hoses intended for our own use. It does not include flame resistant clothing, firefighters' turn-out gear, or breathing apparatus. We recognize that the most likely application and value of our group-owned equipment will be to provide us with tools that may help us to contain a fire from spreading to or from the forest, or to other property. We are each of us responsible only to our self for being familiar with the function and use of our equipment and the current state of its condition and maintenance.*

For 2010, it is suggested that an equipment fund contribution of \$50 each would help us achieve our equipment and maintenance goals. Any other amount, great or small, will be equally appreciated!

Contribution Amount
\$

**Please make cheques payable to “Gambier Fire Equipment Group”, or to “GFEG”, and send it, with this form to the address below.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Gambier Fire Equipment Group, C 14 Gambier Harbour, RR#3 Gibsons, BC V0N 1V0