

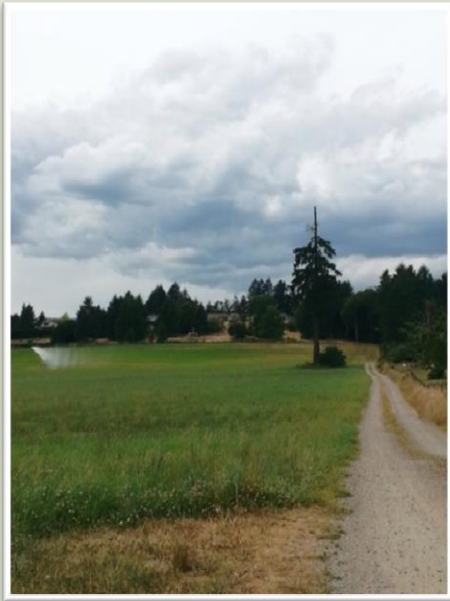
The Shearing Tree

Location: Telegraph Road, Cobble Hill, BC

Formally Recognized: 2015/08/12

Other Names: Shearing Eagle Tree, Shearing Big Tree

Construction Dates: Not applicable



View of the Shearing Tree from Telegraph Road (East)



View of the Shearing Tree from the West

Statement of Significance for the Shearing Tree

Description of Historic Place

The Shearing Tree is a seventy foot tall old-growth solitary Douglas fir tree protected under a Conservation Covenant. This tree has visible evidence of past damage to its top and is surrounded by open farmland at all sides, with mature shrubs and grass at its base. It is centred on the northern most side of the property. The tree is located on a large farm directly off Telegraph Road in Cobble Hill, British Columbia. This historic place includes the Douglas fir tree and the land surrounding its base.

Heritage Value

The Shearing Tree has significant heritage value in its direct association with one of the early settler families in the Cowichan Valley. This site also has value in its use as a final resting place for Shearing family members. Lastly, there is significant value to the community in the multi-generational impact the tree has had on the cultural landscape.

The Shearing Tree is located on the first farm in all of Cobble Hill, the Shearing Farm. The original owner of the Shearing Farm, William J. Shearing, settled on the property in 1862. This association with the first Cobble Hill settler and one of the first H.M.S. Hecate European settlers gives the Shearing Tree significant cultural heritage value. To the people of Cobble Hill, this tree represents the beginning of their community.

Several descendants of William J. Shearing have chosen the Shearing Tree as their final resting place. As such, there is significant value in the ground surrounding the tree where the ashes of these family members have been spread.

The Shearing Tree was left standing as a reminder of the importance of forests by William H. Shearing's son, Ted Shearing. As the Cowichan Valley was logged extensively during its early development, this tree remains as a symbol of the mighty forests that once dominated this landscape.

Standing tall over the farms of Cobble Hill, the Shearing Tree has greatly influenced the cultural landscape for many generations of Cobble Hill and Cowichan Bay families. This old-growth giant has towered above the rolling farmlands since the area's first farmstead was built. To the local community, this tree is an iconic natural feature of their landscape.

Character-Defining Elements

Key elements that define the heritage character of the Shearing Tree include:

- The height and width of the old-growth tree
- The untouched quality of the tree and the site beneath it
- The unobstructed view of the tree from Telegraph Road and the surrounding properties
- The Shearing family ashes spread on the ground below the tree



Close View of the Shearing Tree

Historical Information

Timeline

1862. Pioneer settler William J. Shearing came to Cowichan Bay upon the *H.M.S. Hecate* and settled on a large property, a portion of which the Shearing Tree still resides upon.

Important Facts

- William J. Shearing's son, Ted, was the individual who decided to leave the large Douglas fir tree standing on the Shearing farm.
- Ted maintained that he had left the tree as a reminder of the mighty Douglas fir forests that once dominated the Vancouver Island landscape.
- Several Shearing family members had their ashes spread at the base of the Shearing Tree.



The Base of the Shearing Tree

Current Information

Function

- The Shearing Tree remains standing on private farmland

Construction

- No recent construction

Heritage Status

- The Shearing Tree is formally protected under a Conservation Covenant