

# neighbourhoods

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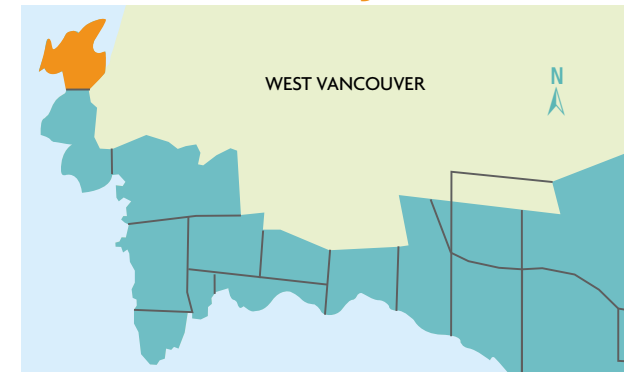
Next week's  
neighbourhood:

**Norgate/  
Lower Capilano**



A weekly profile of 12 neighbourhoods that help form the North Shore.

## › Horseshoe Bay



**CHRIS SLATER**

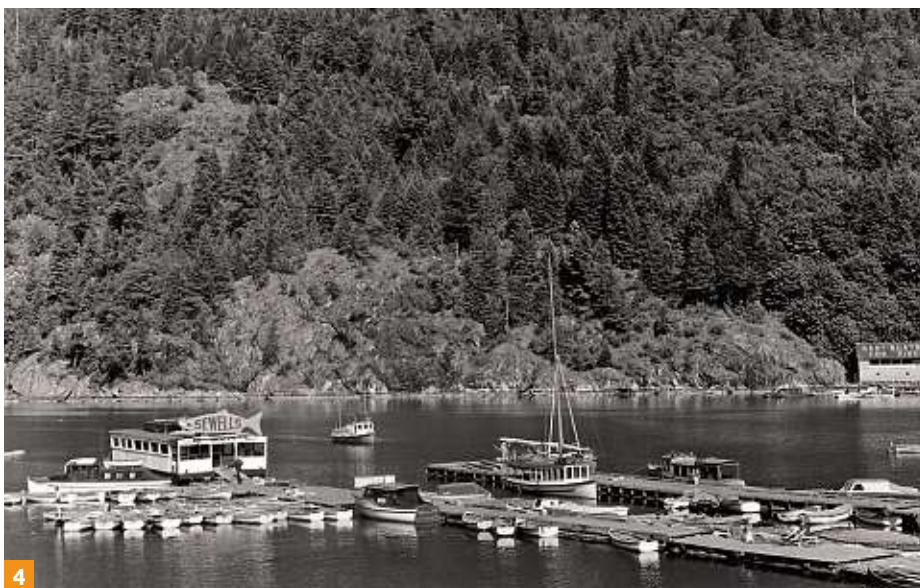
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Nestled among the Coast Mountains at the entrance to Howe Sound, the quaint village of Horseshoe Bay feels a lot farther away than just 20 kilometres from the bustling streets of Vancouver.

Horseshoe Bay is a transition point if there ever was one. The mainland portion of the mighty Trans Canada Highway comes to an end at the bay. Same with the scenic Sea-to-Sky Highway that runs north to Whistler and the Baden Powell Trail that goes east to Deep Cove. Although there are only 1,000 permanent residents that live in the bay's pleasant older homes, nearly seven million passengers a year pass through the Horseshoe Bay Ferry Terminal, which provides ferry service to Nanaimo, the Sunshine Coast and nearby Bowen Island.

It was in the early 1950s when Black Ball Ferry Lines decided to set up their first runs from Horseshoe Bay to the Sunshine Coast, Nanaimo and Bowen Island,





1. Family fun at Horseshoe Bay Park. 2. Motorcycles parked along Bay Street. 3. A stroll down the pier. PHOTOS KEVIN HILL 4. Horseshoe Bay in the 1940s. PHOTO SUPPLIED WEST VANCOUVER ARCHIVES

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according to records kept by the District of West Vancouver. During that time, Black Ball provided 31 trips per day to these destinations, including service linking the lower Sunshine Coast to Powell River. The Black Ball line operated in the area until provincially run B.C. Ferries took over service in the early-1960s. Today, the Horseshoe-Bay-to-Nanaimo route is the second most travelled connection from the Lower Mainland to Vancouver Island, after Tsawwassen to Swartz Bay, providing service for nearly 3.3 million passengers in the past year alone, according to statistics kept by B.C. Ferries.

Nearly any Lower Mainland local has some sort of fond memory of sitting in a sun-cooked car, waiting for the ferry to make an appearance and whisk them away to some beautiful rural destination. Down in the village, waiting tourists can browse the funky shops or stop in at one of the many restaurants to gorge on juicy hamburgers or fresh battered fish and chips. The sound of screaming seagulls accompanying the authoritative blast of ferry horns blends perfectly well here. One of those such restaurants is Troll's, a longtime staple of Horseshoe Bay that has been feeding hungry locals and ferry travellers alike for nearly 70 years.

First erected as a fish and chips shack on the Horseshoe Bay waterfront in 1946 by Joe and Dorothy Troll, the restaurant grew significantly with the arrival of ferry service in the 1950s and '60s, according to Holly Kemp, manager of Troll's and president of the Horseshoe Bay Residents Association.

"The ferries have always been a mainstay for Troll's. That ferry traffic even today is

the bread and butter of the business," says Kemp.

Kemp explains that even in the 10 years she's been working in the area, the village has seen changes.

"The village has grown. We've had, since I've been here, the Galleries, which is the new building right across the street from us, which brought in 16 new residences and some newer business retail space."

Kemp says she's been working with the residents association for the past decade to try and make Horseshoe Bay more of a destination as opposed to just a stopover location. Part of the association's efforts have been to create events and festivals to draw more visitors to the area, including a beer festival in June, a movie night in August and Christmas Caroling in December. One successful event held each April is called Taste of The Bay, where visitors purchase passes that allow access to free products in the village's many businesses.

"Everybody buys a passport and they can go to each and every location and they can get free wares and free food and wine and that goes on in April. We've done that for eight years in a row."

Kemp explains that the area's location makes it an easily accessible getaway, even for Metro Vancouver residents who need a day or two to catch their breath from the big city.

"It's a great little getaway even from the City of Vancouver if you go to Whytecliff Park or Lighthouse Park or get a little boat and go over to Gambier or Bowen Island," she says. "It's just an absolutely stunning environment to be in regardless of what the weather is. It's kind of my own little getaway."