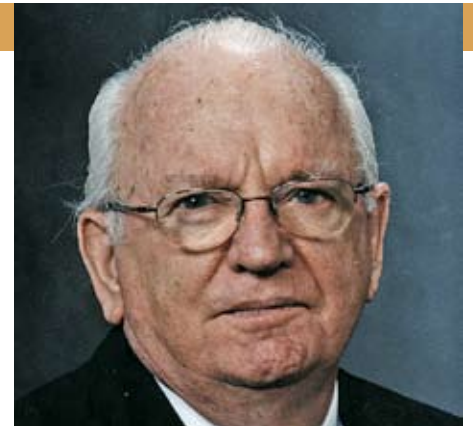


Charles Ellington



# Déjà Vu for the Stanley Park Windstorms

**T**he recent strong windstorm reminded me of a similar event in October 1962.

My wife Kathleen and I were in the throes of moving house in Victoria. While we were packing our goods and chattels, the power went out. We chose to move to a motel because our new home was not quite finished.

That same evening, one of my clients—an elderly lady who lived in the Uplands area of Victoria—had accompanied her son to a West Vancouver hotel to show a film to BC Hydro executives. The film was about bridges he had built in Eastern Canada and he was hoping Hydro would employ his services to build bridges in BC.

The lights went out there, too, so they called off the film and left for home. My client, her son, and his wife drove over the Lion’s Gate Bridge en route to the couple’s home in Richmond. As they progressed through the Stanley Park Causeway, traffic was stalled by parks crews attempting to clear downed trees from across the road.

**If she had gone with her grandmother, she would have suffered the same fate when the tree fell.**

Suddenly, a tree fell on their car. My client was in the back seat and died instantly. Her son and daughter-in-law escaped injury.

Many years later, one Wednesday morning, I was sitting on the chesterfield

in front of the fireplace at the Oak Bay Beach Hotel in Victoria when a young woman sat down beside me. It was my habit to be at the hotel every Wednesday with a group of men for a Bible study around the breakfast table.

During the conversation, I discovered the woman was the granddaughter of my client who had died in Stanley Park.

She told me that just as she was just getting into the car in West Vancouver with her grandmother that fateful night, a friend asked her to stay the night at her house and she did. If she had gone with her grandmother, she would have suffered the same fate when the tree fell. ▲

**Charles Ellington** was commissioned as a BC Notary in Victoria in 1958 and retired in 1997. His son Robert Ellington carries on the Notary practice.



Photo Credit: Vancouver Park Board

2007 in Stanley Park, when approximately 3000 trees blew down



Vancouver Park Board. Photo courtesy of: Rene Lemckert