



The famed bridge-building trio ruins yet another family photo in a failed attempt to toss the nearly complete bridge across the Capilano River. Photo: North Vancouver Museum and Archives.

EXTRA MANLY TRIO CONSTRUCTS BRIDGE

The fantastical Capilano Suspension Bridge has been welcomed with irrepressible excitement and jubilation. But even though this wonder has made Vancouverites pleased as punch, it has also caused citizens to ask questions such as, "How did it get there?"



It was a challenge for Mackay to find brave handymen to help construct the bridge. This chicken livered trio only offered to hold the saw. Photo: City of Vancouver Archives



A synchronized swim team of webbed-hoofed stallions swam the cedar bridge across the river.

the bridge from one side of the monstrous canyon to the other. How you say? With a manly throw

Surprisingly, the bridge was completed with a minimal crew...

and crossed fingers? No! Perhaps a mythical flying machine of some sort? Poppycock!

According to sources, Mackay completed the bridge with the



450 feet of hemp rope was hand-woven by Mackay himself.

help of two Squamish native men and a team of synchronized swimming horses. This trusty trio of bridge suspensioners, while risking a good soaking of the trousers, swam their horses across the river rapids with the bridge in tow, then in a feat of manful strength, hauled the hemp rope up the far side of the canyon to be attached to some sturdy trees. Huzzah! The bridge was complete, but its story will be told...

THE MAN BEHIND THE BRIDGE



Photo: City of Vancouver Archives

How many minds does it take to construct a 450-foot bridge? Several – unless you're George Grant Mackay.

In the jiffiest of jiffies, Capilano bridge-building genius, George Grant Mackay, has most certainly built himself a reputation in our city as a man who lives life on the edge. After all, he lives in a house on the edge of a canyon – a canyon that splits his property.

And what a property! It was reported that Mackay paid the princely sum of \$6000 or a whole \$1 per acre for 6,000 acres of

George Grant Mackay suspended a footbridge made of hemp rope and cedar planks across the canyon.

untamed North Vancouver wilderness. What to do with so much land and trees? "Build!" he said. "Build a bridge!" he said. "Golly!" we said.

Amidst these shocking words surrounding Mackay's mammoth bridge, concerns have mounted about its safety. However, Mr. Mackay's experience as a surveyor and civil engineer should surely instill confidence in even the most

namby-pamby of bridge observers.

Despite his experience and the overwhelming evidence of his qualifications hanging above Capilano River (and framed on his wall), some still believe that any man that crosses this bridge is a madman. Mackay's response to these accusations: "I am

"I am certainly no madman. I cross the bridge every day. I welcome anyone to try it."

certainly no madman. I cross the bridge every day. I welcome anyone to try it." And many are making plans to do so. Soon you won't know your onions if you have not crossed the legendary bridge and met its masterful maker.



Thanks to his cedar suspending skills, Mackay has been named Vancouver's "Wobbliest Strongman".

CAPILANO WALK OF FAME

Vancouver's vertiginous venue has become a cedar-planked stage of sorts, bearing witness to some of the world's most famous celebrities of today and tomorrow.

One such celebrity is Canada's hockey-loving Governor General, Lord Frederick Stanley: the very man who gifted the hockey world with its shiniest silver punch bowl.

The world-famous author of the Jungle Book, Rudyard Kipling, has also graced the bridge that spans Capilano Canyon recently. When the master storyteller was asked whether the bridge would be mentioned in his next short story, the author replied, "I'd have to write a novel to do such an experience justice."

But what wondrous bridge-bound stars will tomorrow bring you ask? Predictions are most certainly uncertain, but it has been foretold that the original Tramp himself, Charlie Chaplin, will one-

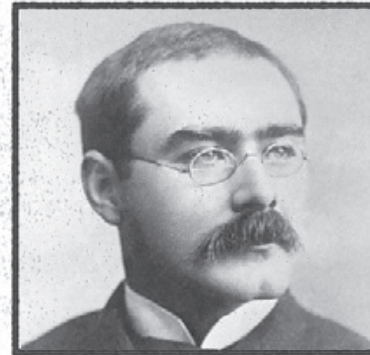
day humorously tramp his way across the colossal canyon – tiny hat and all.

Even Hollywood's future leading lady, Marilyn Monroe, will presumably sashay Capilano Canyon's myriad of suspended planks. But according to the most virtuosic clairvoyants, Monroe will unfortunately cross unnoticed. As it turns out, gentlemen only prefer blondes when they are not swinging hundreds of feet above a colossal canyon floor.

**"I'd have to write a novel to do such an experience justice."
– Rudyard Kipling**



Lord Frederick Stanley



Rudyard Kipling



Charlie Chaplin



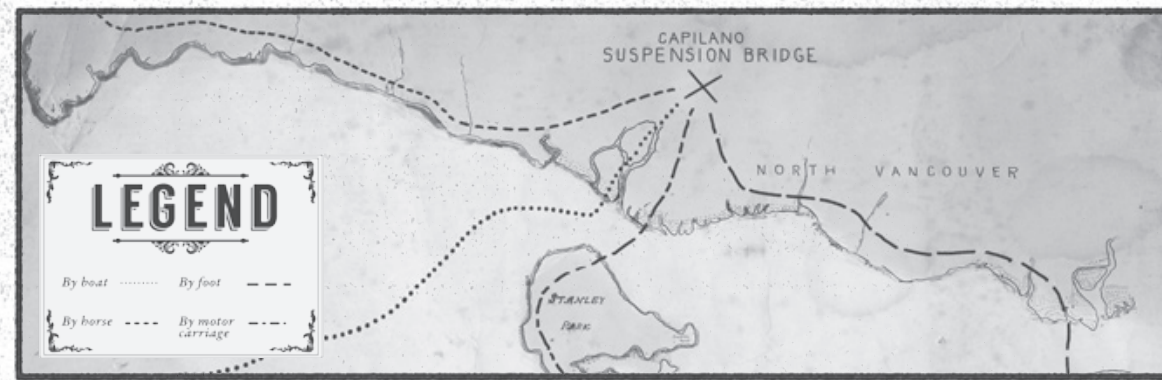
Marilyn Monroe

A TRAMP'S GUIDE TO CAPILANO

The most fervent of suspensioners will tell you the journey across our city's famous wooden wobbler is no cakewalk, but neither is the peregrination to its pattering planks.



The road to the bridge is no cakewalk, but there are a handful of places to grab some cake along the way. Photo: City of Vancouver Archives.



It's a transcendental pilgrimage that, needless to say, has no place for your Sunday dress (unless it is Sunday, of course). The most experienced of bridge excursionists, known as Tramps (the trail tramping sort), say, "pack light, pack a lunch, and bring an extra pair of pantaloons. You'll need them."

Good advice, but how does the savvy swashbuckler reach the

lofty edge of Capilano Canyon? Simple! State-of-the-art electric trolleys and steamboat ferries will effortlessly carry you through the city streets and across Vancouver Harbour to the place where fear itself was constructed.

There's no need to worry about racing the sunset. These marvelous-mobiles will transport you so quickly your cheeks and eyelids

will clap louder than a standing ovation.

Soon enough you will be face-to-face with the dusty road that leads to the marvelous wooden wonder. Watch your step as you approach the towering cliff to glance over the edge. In this terrifying moment, you will most certainly be pleased you brought extra pantaloons.

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A bridge suspended through the ages. From Marvelous Present-day to the Fantastical Future.

1889 George Grant Mackay constructs the first bridge.

1892 Bruno Steltzer buys the bridge and charges 10 cents to cross.

1910 Edward Mahon becomes owner and builds the Tea House.

1935 Mahon sells the bridge to "Mac" MacEachran.

1953 Rae Mitchell rebuilds the bridge in 5 days encasing the cables in 13 tons of concrete.

CAPILANO
SINCE **125** 1889
SUSPENSION BRIDGE PARK

1983 Nancy Stibbard purchases the bridge and makes it a destination attraction.

2006 A 46-tonne, 300-year-old tree falls onto the bridge. The bridge holds strong, the tree breaks in half.

2007 Treetops Adventure opens to the public. Squirrels are not amused.

2011 Cliffwalk opens to an amazed public.

2014 The Bridge celebrates 125 incredible years of rich history.

