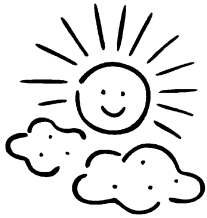




North Toronto Town Hall

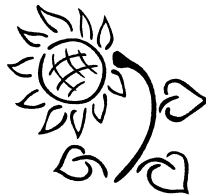
NEWSLETTER



We look forward to seeing you in September for a new series of local history presentations.

Be sure to mark your calendar now, so you don't miss a single programme.

Have a wonderful summer!



Fall Programme

Our local history presentations will continue in the usual location, although the library itself is closed for renovations.

Mark your calendars...



Wednesday, 29 September, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, 27 October, 7:30 p.m.

Celebrate *Trillium's* centenary with **Mike Filey**

Wednesday, 24 November, 7:30 p.m.

Fall Walk

Sunday, 3 October, 2:00 p.m.

More information in the next *Newsletter*.

Happy 100th Birthday, *Trillium*!



Ferry "Trillium" 1913?
City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 744, 1744, 1745-1746

761A

In 1910, the Polson Iron Works Limited built a steam-powered paddlewheeler, *Trillium*, for the Toronto Ferry Company. After nearly fifty years of service as a Toronto Island ferry, *Trillium* was relegated to a garbage scow, then abandoned in a Toronto Island lagoon in 1958. In the 1970s, writer Mike Filey successfully led a campaign to raise and restore the *Trillium*. In 1976, she once more steamed across Toronto Harbour, and Mike wrote a book as a tribute to her rebirth. To celebrate *Trillium's* 100th birthday, he has produced Trillium and Toronto Island: the Centennial Edition. (Toronto: Dundurn, 2010), a revised and expanded reprint of the earlier book.



See heritagetoronto.org for Mike Filey's story about the "Queen of the Fleet."

Mike Filey and *Trillium* will be featured at our October meeting.

The Battle to Save 79 Dawlish Avenue (Lawrence Park)

In 1928, architect Forsey Page, who was living at 12 Weybourne Crescent, designed a house for his own use, nearby at 79 Dawlish Avenue. According to architectural historian Marta O'Brien, Page "skillfully combines Georgian elements (such as the shuttered multi-light sash windows and monochromatic brick) with Cottage Style elements (such as the reduced scale and asymmetrical massing)". This home was featured in a 1929 issue of *Canadian Homes and Gardens* (see below), and is included in the Toronto Public Library publication *Historical Walking Tour of Lawrence Park*.



This rear elevation was drawn by Forsey Page and shows how the property drops off at the rear. NTHS has copies of the original plans in our "archives".



Canadian Homes and Gardens, January 1929, featured architect Forsey Page's attractive Dawlish Avenue home.

Unfortunately, this much-admired house was recently sold, and the new owner plans to replace it with a "monster house". The NTHS opposed some of the variances requested at a Committee of Adjustment meeting in late April, but the majority of variances were approved. Local residents launched an **OMB appeal scheduled for August 4**.

Meanwhile, the North York Community Preservation Panel (NYCPP) passed a resolution on April 21 requesting listing and designation under the Ontario Heritage Act, and on June 30 the Toronto Preservation Board recommended the inclusion of 79 Dawlish on the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties. Thanks to the efforts of local councillor Cliff Jenkins (a new member of the NYCPP), a motion to include 79 Dawlish on the Inventory was passed at the North York Community Council's June 22 meeting and later at the full City Council meeting of July 6-7. Now, if a demolition request is made, Heritage Preservation Services will be notified and Council will have 60 days to indicate intent to designate the property which will give additional protection. So stay tuned for future developments and keep your fingers crossed!

Alex. Grenzbach



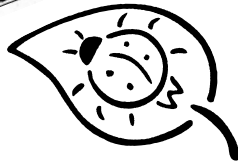
50 Years Ago

Items from the North Toronto Herald, 1960,
contributed by Alex. Grenzebach.

"Watch That Last Step"



Metropolitan Chairman Fred Gardiner leaves the radiation fall-out shelter followed by Reeve H.O. Waffle, Chairman of the Metropolitan Toronto Civil Defence Committee.



A "Do-It-Yourself" Family Basement Fallout Shelter, constructed on a flat top vehicle, was put on display at various locations across Metro.



"Now who do I call first?" asks pretty Beverly Platt, a service representative with the Bell Telephone Company. The newest of the many direct distance dialing regions to choose from is South Western Ontario, which joins the DDD network as area "519" August 21. That stack of directories confronting Beverly is a sample of the millions of long distance telephone numbers now at the finger-tips of Ontario telephone users.

SUMMER COOLNESS

Summer, the season which sets Toronto women to planning bare-backed vacations-in-the-sun and brings lusty tans to winter-whitened limbs, spells carefree comfort for this mother and daughter in their cool, matching dresses. Sleeveless, full-skirted and easy to care for due to the fabric's wash-and-wear properties, the dresses are hand made from batiste handkerchief print.



Pioneer Village (Black Creek) was dedicated on June 2.

After a Scottie dog playing in the creek south of Mt. Pleasant Cemetery became covered in thick black oil, it was discovered that an apartment fuel tank was leaking into a storm sewer two miles to the northwest. Oil spills aren't new!

The City's Medical Officer of Health reported that, although "water pollution will exist at Toronto's western beaches until at least 1964," pollution levels will probably drop enough to open the eastern beaches for swimming.

Controller Jean Newman decried the lack of celebration of Dominion Day when "the number of flags flying from our homes were few and far between."

Spring Lecture Series

APRIL Parkdale: the Flowery Suburb by Marta O'Brien (citywalks.ca)

At our April meeting I illustrated Parkdale's rich history through its architecture. While it was part of the Township of York, present-day Parkdale comprised park lots and farm lots, but the original owners did not settle here. After 1851 the entire Parkdale area was subdivided into building lots, although a military sketch map of 1868 shows just 20 or so buildings in the future village.

A NEW SUBURB & VILLAGE

In 1874 land developer William Innes Mackenzie found backers for his Toronto House Building Association (THBA) and bought 50 acres of land from early Parkdale families. Mackenzie became known as the "Father of Parkdale" and it is thought that the THBA named the area. Promotional material mentioned nearness to downtown Toronto and the attractive ground next to Lake Ontario.

Parkdale was incorporated as a village in 1879. At a tree planting event, nursery owner and reeve John Gray referred to it as the Flower Suburb and it was known as The Flowery Suburb well into the 1900s. Many people were attracted to Parkdale. Merchants and professionals from small towns saw business opportunities, company owners and managers from Toronto saw an escape from the bustle and high taxes, railway and factory workers saw affordable housing within walking distance of work.

After seven years the village became the Town of Parkdale. After years of heated debate Parkdale was annexed by the City of Toronto in March 1889.

FEATURES OF PARKDALE

Five railways eventually ran through Parkdale. Although the community raised money to save it, the last Parkdale station was destroyed by fire in the late 1970s. The railways – and the factories built nearby – provided much employment.

Two Parkdale places had names that would make contemporary people cringe. The Magdalen Asylum for Fallen Women (built 1876) occupied land north of Queen on a former estate, while the Toronto Home for Incurables (1879-80) was located on Dunn Ave.

Parkdale has a variety of housing dating back to the 1870s. Townhouse rows or "terraces" were discouraged in favour of single family dwellings. Despite this, some charming rows were built: Trenton Terrace (1883) is a row of small cottages that would probably have been occupied by labourers and railway workers.

A rare wooden house from the 1800s is at 63 O'Hara Ave. More common are the Victorian-era brick houses seen along Parkdale streets including Melbourne and Laxton.

The coffee shop at Queen & Roncesvalles was once the Scholes Hotel. Thomas Scholes already had a downtown hotel at Queen & Dundas, and built this in 1882 as a "summer hotel." Decades before the Gardiner Expressway, the successful hotel had a wonderful view of Lake Ontario.

Parkdale has some lovely old churches. St. Mark's Church on Cowan Ave. (1881) is a charming small Gothic Revival church that looks as if it came from an English village. In contrast, the Church of St. Vincent De Paul (1915-1924) towers over Roncesvalles Ave. with its grand classical portico.



Church of St. Vincent de Paul, Roncesvalles Avenue
Photo: Marta O'Brien

King Street still has some of the large homes of early Parkdale, although most appear in need of some maintenance. Faulkner House at King & Dunn (1889) was built for a real estate broker. Other examples are along King east of the Queen & Roncesvalles intersection. They're across from the pleasant linear park on the south side of King.

Parkdale continues on page 5



Detail of the former Smith & Hutt store, 1408-10 Queen Street West *Photo: Marta O'Brien*

Queen is Parkdale's main commercial street. It would be great to see some of the Victorian facades restored because some elaborate brick, terra cotta, and metal details are somewhat hidden beneath peeling paint.

The Gardiner Expressway cut Parkdale off from the lake and contributed to its decline in the 1960s and 1970s. Developers assembled large land tracts in south Parkdale. Once lined with homes, Jameson Avenue is now crowded with highrise apartment buildings and traffic from the Gardiner exit.



45 & 47 Macdonnell Avenue *Photo: Marta O'Brien*

RENEWAL IN PARKDALE

The fine Art Moderne building at 1313 Queen Street West was Police Station No. 6. North Toronto residents will find it familiar: the same

architect designed the former Police Station No. 12 at Yonge & Montgomery. The Parkdale station is now Gallery 1313, providing live/work spaces for artists and offices for community groups.

Two old Parkdale elementary schools have new buildings. Parkdale Public School was built in 1995 and Queen Victoria School in 1999. The latter school was named to honour the Queen's Golden Jubilee when it was established in the 1880s.

As in the rest of Toronto, manufacturing has left Parkdale. The Sterling Actions & Keys building, built in 1912, had its own CPR railway siding out of Parkdale Station. In 1998 it was converted to residential lofts.

Although this former village has had some difficulties, in my many trips to photograph and research the area I observed a neighbourhood of very friendly people of all ages. It's worth a visit.

MAY **Memories of North Toronto**

A delightful evening of local reminiscences was moderated by Lynda Moon, at our May meeting. Recollections spanned a century, and included voices from the past in recorded oral history interviews from the 1970s and '80s, and contributions by members.

Lynda interviewed Francis Powell when he was in his late 90s. He had been born in Eglinton in 1897, the son of Thomas Wesley Powell, rector of St. Clement's Church. Francis remembered soldiers marching down Yonge Street – then a dirt road – to fight in South Africa.

Alexander McMillan was born in the 1880s, and Lynda interviewed him when he was 98. Once, walking alone along Yonge Street, he heard terrible groans in the area of Merton Street. Terrified, he forged on, anxious to meet his girlfriend. Passing the cemetery he realised it was not some supernatural manifestation, but the creaking of the windmill! He summarised what he learned from this experience: i) everything can be explained; ii) with an object in view, you'll go through anything!

Donald Duncan's family settled on the Davisville Clergy Reserve in the 1860s. Donald told us about the businesses that were on Mount Pleasant when

Memories continues on page 6

Memories continued from page 5

he was a lad. At Piccinini's (a banana importer) you could fill a six-quart basket with overripe bananas for 10 cents. Uplands Dairy had excellent ice cream and milk shakes, and the stable was a favourite with small boys who liked to feed carrots to the horses. At Lefevre's Chocolates, 5 cents would buy a quarter-pound of chocolate bits and chocolate brittle. You could eat it at the movie matinee next door. The two local theatres were the Mount Pleasant Theatre and the Belsize Theatre.



Belsize Theatre, about 1942 Archives of Ontario

Muriel McConnell grew up in Lawrence Park in “the Dutch House” before moving to Dawlish. When she was about 14, parents arranged parties for their young people to learn the social accomplishment of dancing. To begin with, there were maybe six girls and six boys. Although there was adult supervision, and formal programmes had to be filled, these became such popular events that sometimes as many as sixty attended.

Don Ritchie remembered that in the Roaring Twenties there were more horses than cars – and a corresponding abundance of flies!

Kathy David grew up in a brand new house her family rented on Keewatin, where they raised chickens. The children played in the fields that are now Sunnybrook and the McLean Estate. Keewatin was not paved, nor very well graded. On wet mornings, Kathy's sister would wear boots to cross to the drier side of the street, then throw them back to her mother before heading off in her good shoes to her job at GE.

In a 1982 interview, May (Coomber) Riseborough described the tiny Snowdon Avenue home which was built by her father. May's father died young, leaving her mother to raise five children. The penniless could apply for “relief,” but Mary's mother regarded that possibility as “a disgrace.” Many neighbours helped the family out, including the local physician, Dr. Jeffs, who never charged them for his services.

Bill Dawson delivered the *Globe & Mail* in Lawrence Park in the 1960s. It was a morning paper and lighter than the competition. Bill would start at 5:30am on his red CCM bike, accompanied by faithful Duke the dog, and be finished by 7:00. He was pretty good at rolling and throwing newspapers, although the occasional milk bottle on the front step may have suffered.

Alex Grenzebach's family bought eggs from “the chicken lady” across from Uplands Dairy. His earliest skiing experience was in Sherwood Park, tucked under his father's arm! Alex enjoyed reading magazines while sitting on the mechanical horse at Loblaws. In kindergarten at Bedford Park P.S. he was bitten by a little girl. His mother wrote a note to the teacher, and the assailant was spanked. Alex, too, was a paperboy, and was featured in the *Globe & Mail's* “Carrier” magazine for his exemplary service..

At the end of the meeting, several veteran paperboys gathered to commiserate about the difficulties of collecting money from customers! So the evening was not only informative and entertaining, but also supportive.



Sherwood Park, 1925 City of Toronto Archives

North Toronto Memories. Presenting the first in an occasional series written by *you*, our members. Many thanks to Susie Weiss for getting the ball rolling.

Did you deliver newspapers in North Toronto? Tell us about your ups and downs. How did you spend your summers? What childhood adventures did you get up to in our neighbourhood?

Please email your anecdotes to dawsonbh@rogers.com, or mail to 283 Deloraine Avenue, Toronto M5M 2B2.



Newsboy on a street corner, Toronto c.1910 AO

Wartime Memories of North Toronto ***by Susie (Schreiber) Weiss***

In 1942 our Dad was overseas, and Mom moved my two older brothers and me from College Street West to 35 Craighurst Avenue. With the wartime housing shortage, we rented the upper three bedrooms in this two-storey house. In September, I started Grade 2 at my new school – John Ross Robertson.

During that winter, the young mother in the family living on the first floor suddenly became sick, and died at home of spinal meningitis. The Toronto Department of Health posted a large yellow quarantine notice on our front door. Our Mom was not allowed to go to her job at the *North Toronto Herald*, and neither my brothers nor I were allowed to go to school for a month. (It felt like a month, but maybe it was only two weeks, or could have been just one.)

We were restricted to our front porch or the backyard, where there was a huge frozen puddle. The three of us played two-on-one shinny ice hockey for endless hours. We regularly lost our hockey pucks in the snow over the back fence. Naturally, because of the quarantine, none of our neighbours would risk going near the pucks to toss them back. My brothers had to sneak over the back fence late at night to look for them. Following the quarantine all-clear, our friends and neighbours still avoided us.

Soon afterwards, Mom moved us north to 35 Alexandra Boulevard. We still had to share accommodation, but this was a much classier neighbourhood. Many of the elegant homes had third-floor apartments, meant for the live-in help. Mom was smart and lucky to find those affordable quarters. This was the best part of town, and we

could still go to school at John Ross. It was simply *super* living there.

We found our own fun (without much adult escort). On Saturdays we went to movie matinees at the *Capitol*, or the *Circle Theatre*. We took the Yonge streetcar downtown to Eaton's Santa Claus Parade, or got free tickets from school for Ringling Brothers Circus at Maple Leaf Gardens. We also got free tickets for the Ex.



York Mills Skating Rink, 1960s

CTA

We often took the Yonge streetcar north to the City Limits Loop, and caught the rickety old Willowdale trolley car which rocketed down the valley at Hogg's Hollow. In the summer, we would go to the *Jolly Miller* swimming pool, or the skating rink in winter. The adventure always included exploring for hours in the dangerous wilderness of the Don River ravine running through York Mills.

During our wonderful snowy winters, we trekked as far away as Pears Park at Eglinton, to go tobogganing or ice-skating. There was a warm-up hut with a coal-burning stove we could huddle around, to dry our frozen mitts and boots before the long trudge back home after the streetlights came on.

Heritage Calendar

Cruise: 100th Anniversary of Trillium Ferry

<http://www.torontoharbour.com/toronto-boat-cruises/trillium.php>

Fridays July 23 and 30 2010

Departs Toronto Ferry Dock, noon to 2 pm

Enjoy a special two-hour cruise of Toronto Bay with a stop at Centre Island on the Trillium during the month of July, 2010. **Mike Filey**, author of *Trillium and Toronto Island* provides a commentary. See the 100 year-old engines turning the side wheels. Bring a lunch.

Price is the same as a regular ferry to the islands.

Information: 416-392-8194.



Toronto Ferry Company S.S. Trillium loaded with passengers including Scottish pipe band AO

We welcome contributions from members: heritage events and achievements, brief articles and photographs of local history interest.

Submissions for the next Newsletter by 10th Sept to dawsonbh@rogers.com or call 416-481-6622.



York Pioneer and Historical Society

<http://www.yorkpioneers.org/>

Annual Bus Trip

Saturday 18 September 2010

Sites & Sights: A full day excursion to points east of Toronto will include Parkwood Estate and Gardens, the Oshawa Community Museum, Pickering Museum Village, Scarborough Historical Museum and Thomson Memorial Park, and more. Please join York Pioneers and their friends for a fun-filled day.

Members \$69, Non-members \$72.

Reservations: Diane Reid 416-483-0907

dreid@couttscrane.com

Walks



Citywalks with Marta O'Brien

<http://www.citywalks.ca/>

416-699-9838

Discovery Walks

<http://www.toronto.ca/parks/>

Printout a Discovery Walks guide from the Parks & Rec website, and discover Toronto's many ravines at your own pace.

Heritage Toronto

<http://www.heritagetoronto.org/discover-toronto/walk>

416-338-0684

Lost River Walks

<http://www.lostrivers.ca/WalkSchd.htm>

416-781-7663

ROMwalks

http://www.rom.on.ca/programs/rom_travel/

416-586-8000

Email Addresses, please!

Email me at alexg@alumni.uwaterloo.ca and I will add you to the distribution to receive heritage reminders. We will not give out your email address.

Alex. Grenzebach

North Toronto Historical Society

An affiliate of the Ontario Historical Society, and a non-profit charitable organization.

% 129 Blythwood Road, Toronto, Ontario M4N 1A5

www.northtorontohistoricalsociety.org

Annual Memberships: Seniors & Students \$5, Adults \$7, Families \$10

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Newsletter Editor: *Hilary Dawson

Treasurer: Bill Dawson

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Publicity: *Joan Sampson, 416-488-0939

Secretary: Donald Duncan

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Walks: *Bill Ramsay