



Spring Fashions, 1912. Ontario Jockey Club. *City of Toronto Archives*

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Spring Programme

Join us at 7:10 for refreshments.



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

THE ARCHITECTURE OF NORTH TORONTO

The former Town of North Toronto has attracted many people and businesses over the past century, yet retains a desirable mix of heritage and contemporary buildings. Join architectural historian **Marta O'Brien** for an illustrated lecture exploring our own neighbourhood's architecture.

Wednesday, 25 May, 7:30 p.m.

CELEBRATING EDUCATION MILESTONES:

Marking the 75th anniversary of Lawrence Park Collegiate Institute and the 100th anniversary of Bedford Park Public School

Illustrated presentations by **Lynda Bottoms**, Co-Chair of the Bedford Park Centennial Committee, and **Janet Langdon**, who is heading the search for Lawrence Park Collegiate's almost 20,000 students and staff. Followed by a panel discussion with reminiscences.

Anniversary celebrations for Bedford Park P.S. are Sept. 9 & 10 and LPCI Oct. 28-30.

Celebrating a Century of Service: Balmoral Fire Station

20 Balmoral Avenue, Deer Park (Yonge, south of St. Clair)

Designed by architect Robert McCallum, and built in 1911, the Balmoral Fire Station has been recognised as a National Historic Site. Opened as Fire Station No. 24, it is now Station 311.

A celebratory Open House will be held during Doors Open, on 28th and 29th May. *See Heritage Calendar, p. 8, for Doors Open information.*

Happy 100th Birthday, Knights of Balmoral!



Heritage News

Lawrence Park Collegiate Institute at 75. Liz Bolton Smith & Liz McFarland (alumni)

Lawrence Park Collegiate Institute celebrates its 75th anniversary this year. Since its opening in the Fall of 1936, North Toronto's second collegiate high school has consistently provided area students with an outstanding academic and extra-curricular experience, producing some of the city's brightest minds, athletes and musicians. All student and staff alumni are invited to join the current school community in a weekend of festivities on October 28-30, 2011. Attendees will have the opportunity to visit their old classrooms and teachers at the Open House, share an evening reminiscing with old classmates at the cocktail party, and enjoy a Sunday afternoon concert at the school featuring some of LPCI's talented music alumni. Renowned Canadian journalist and LPCI grad, Beverley Thomson, will be hosting the concert.

As early as 1931, documents show that the city recognised the need to construct a new collegiate in north Toronto, but the location of the new school was a major issue. The preferred site was west of Avenue Road and south of Lawrence Avenue and only irreconcilable issues related to building restrictions prevented the school from being built there. When this first choice was not possible, the eight acre Chatsworth Drive site was quickly approved. But another problem to be dealt with was the ravine to the west of the proposed building. In places, this land fill site had a drop of as much as 55 feet. This issue was addressed over the years and

when the ravine was filled, the new sports field was officially opened in 1950. A major addition to the original Neo-Classical building was begun in 1953, providing the burgeoning school community with a 1000 seat auditorium, an art studio and a swimming pool.

The selection of a name for the new collegiate proved almost as difficult as determining its location. The Trustees discussed, debated, argued, voted, reconsidered and voted again. They held their final vote the day before the official sod turning. Rejected names included King George V, Chatsworth, Chudleigh, and Lord Tweedsmuir: the majority voted for Lawrence Park. This satisfied the established practice of naming schools after the street they were on or near, or a district close to the school. Lawrence Park seemed to be a logical compromise.

Building and growth, in all possible contexts, have continued at LPCI over the ensuing decades. Come to the reunion and see what is new and what is still as you remember it.

Visit www.lpcialumni.ca for more LPCI 75th anniversary information, registration, photos, memories and more!

Annual General Meeting

of the North Toronto Historical Society was held on 23 February, 2011.

Directors elected: Hilary Dawson, Alex Grenzebach, Lynda Moon, Bill Ramsay, Joan Sampson.

(See back page for contact information.)

JOAN SAMPSON

It is with sadness that we announce the death of Joan Sampson on March 21, 2011. Joan was a long-time member of the North Toronto Historical Society and one of its Directors. She served on the Executive as Publicity Co-ordinator, and, in addition to promoting the Society to media and local businesses, Joan was a gracious presence at our monthly meetings, welcoming people at the door, serving refreshments, and handing out program flyers. Joan also had a great passion for reading and for many years owned and operated the *Seagull Bookshop* which was located first at Ranleigh Avenue north of Lawrence, and then on Yonge Street near Sheldrake. Her volunteer work included co-founding, with life-long friends, Mothercraft and the Natural Childbirth Association in Canada. Joan's pride and joy were her children and grandchildren. Our deepest condolences to Joan's daughters Heather and Fiona, son Patrick, and their families.

Joan Sampson will be greatly missed and we are grateful for her many years of dedicated service to the North Toronto Historical Society.



Winter Lecture Series

JANUARY: Bill Gladstone

The Jews of Old Toronto: From the 1850s to the 1950s

The earliest recorded Jewish residents of Toronto were the Hart family, who came from Montreal in the 1830s. The Jewish population grew, and in 1849 a cemetery was established on land purchased by businessmen Judah G. Joseph and Abraham Nordheimer, just outside Leslieville (Pape south of Gerrard). It was the first Jewish cemetery west of Montreal, and has about 300 burials.

Toronto's first Jewish congregation met in 1856, over Coombs drugstore at Yonge and Richmond. This became the Holy Blossom congregation and took over responsibility for the little cemetery on Pape. In 1875, the first purpose-built synagogue in Ontario was constructed at Richmond Street East. By 1897, the congregation had outgrown this building, and moved to larger premises on Bond



Only the façade remains of the first Mount Sinai Hospital, now part of a condominium development at 100 Yorkville Avenue.

Dorothy Dworkin (Henry's wife) was a trained nurse and midwife. She recognised that Jewish patients did not thrive in Toronto hospitals, as kosher food was not available, and it was forbidden to bring in food from outside. With other Jewish women, Dorothy established the Toronto Jewish Convalescent and Maternity Hospital in Yorkville in 1922. This endeavour became Mount Sinai Hospital.



Street (now St. George's Greek Orthodox). The current building on Bathurst, south of Eglinton, was dedicated in 1938.

The first Jewish immigrants came from Germany or England. From the 1840s, Germans Marcus and Samuel Rossin ran a "Jewellery, Watch and Fancy Goods Establishment" on King Street East, and built the magnificent Rossin House Hotel at York and King Streets in the 1850s and 60s.

From the 1880s, waves of Yiddish-speaking people fled pogroms in Eastern Europe. York Street, the arrival point for immigrants, led to St. John's Ward, which became the major area of Jewish settlement.

Toronto merchant Jacob Cohen came to Canada in the 1860s, and acted as translator for those who only spoke Yiddish. He became a magistrate, and was later appointed Justice of the Peace. His son, Arthur, became a lawyer.

Mutual benefit and other support societies were established. Some helped newcomers adjust to their new country, some provided financial assistance, and others gave practical help.

The Dworkin brothers came to Toronto in the early 1900s. They established a wholesale tobacco business, and an advertising bureau, stationers and print shop, which distributed Jewish newspapers.

Jews of Old Toronto continues on page 4



The Primrose Club - now Faculty Club, U of T.

Excluded from other social clubs in Toronto, Jewish businessmen established the Primrose Club early in the 1900s. Their building at 41 Willcocks Street was designed by Benjamin Brown (one of the first Jewish architects) and Arthur W. McConnell, and opened in 1920. In 1959 it was acquired by the University of Toronto, and is now the Faculty Club.

This last became an unofficial employment agency, and Henry Dworkin personally assisted anyone in financial trouble.

Hundreds of Jewish tailors and garment workers were employed by the T. Eaton Company. After a bitter strike in 1912, the Jewish workers were displaced by imported British labour. The Jewish workers opened their own businesses west of the Ward, along Spadina and in the Kensington area. In the 1930s, the Jewish community moved north to Forest Hill and Bathurst Street.

MORE ABOUT JEWISH CANADA

The Jew in Canada, 1926

A “who’s who” of Jews across Canada, now reprinted

The Rise of the Toronto Jewish Community, Shmuel Mayer Shapiro

A History of the Jewish Community of London Ontario From the 1850s to the Present Day, Bill Gladstone (2011)

One Hundred Years in Canada: the Rubinoff-Naftolin Family Tree, Bill Gladstone (2008)

Roots and Remembrance: Explorations in Jewish Genealogy, Bill Gladstone (2006)

All available from Now & Then Books:
<http://nowandthenbookstoronto.com/>



SEE ALSO

NTHS Newsletter Vol.33 No.2 June 2009:

“Toronto’s Foreign Quarter: the Jews and Other Immigrants of St. John’s Ward After 1900,” Bill Gladstone.

FEBRUARY: **Natasha Henry**

The Celebration of Freedom in Canada: Understanding Emancipation Day Commemorations as an African-Canadian Cultural Tradition.

Every August First since 1834, when the *Abolition of Slavery Act* came into effect in the British colonies, African Canadians have celebrated freedom from slavery. The Act freed one million slaves in the British colonies.

The first Emancipation Day celebration recorded in Canada took place in Montreal in 1834, on the very day that the Act came into effect. The festivities began with a Bible reading and prayer. Community

leader Anthony Grant thanked Great Britain “for the noble act she has performed,” and upbraided the United States for continuing “slavery and the trade in blood.” The formal part of the day was followed by feasting, toasts and musical entertainment.



Provincial Freeman, 29 July 1854

Features of this first celebration were repeated year after year, in more and more places across Canada. Often, the festivities would start with a parade to the church, accompanied by bands and banners. Then there would be a church service of thanks, followed by speeches that reflected the issues of the day. A banquet with toasts, expressions of loyalty to Britain, concerts and dancing would complete the occasion. The cakewalk was a very popular addition to the entertainment. Originally an outrageous parody dance performed by those in bondage to mock the slaveholder, the cakewalk developed into a competition of intricate dancing for the prize of a cake. Outdoor banquets developed into picnics, with activities like races and baseball.

The first public celebration of Emancipation Day in Toronto was in 1838. A service was held at St. James Anglican church, with the sermon by Archdeacon John Strachan. The following year, celebrants met for a service at the African Methodist Episcopal church at Richmond and York

Emancipation Day continues on page 5



Toronto Negro Band, 1961

Streets and paraded to Toronto City Hall in the market building. There were speeches by Mayor John Powell and Rev. H. Grasett, minister of St. James Church (who participated in Emancipation Day events for over 20 years). The parade continued to the Commercial Hotel at Front and Jarvis for the concluding banquet.

Emancipation Day events were celebrations and reunions, but could also address concerns of discrimination and racism. For instance, discrimination in Chatham in the 1870s was felt to



Port Dalhousie Dance Hall, 1950

Emancipation Day: Celebrating Freedom in Canada, Natasha L. Henry. (Dundurn, 2010)



be so bad that Emancipation Day gatherings became more like political rallies than community celebrations. More traditional festivities resumed in the 1880s, but by 1891 the issue of segregated schools and other inequalities occupied most of the Chatham programme.

Civil rights issues continued to have a central part at many Emancipation Day gatherings. African Canadian and African American activists and civil rights leaders were invited to Canadian celebrations from the mid-1940s. Martin Luther King, Jr. attended the Windsor Emancipation Day Celebration in 1956.

Toronto's Caribana has its roots in freedom celebrations brought by immigrants from the West Indies.

EMANCIPATION DAY CELEBRATIONS, 2011

Windsor: 178 Anniversary of Emancipation Day Celebration.

<http://www.emancipationday.ca/press.php>
29 July to 1 Aug, 2011

Dresden: Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site
<http://www.uncletomscabin.org/homepg.htm>
30 July, 2011

Owen Sound: 149th Emancipation Celebration Picnic
<http://www.emancipation.ca/>
30 July, 2011: 1pm—8 pm

MARCH: John Bessai

C.W. Jefferys: Picturing Canada

The works of C.W. Jefferys have been viewed by more people than any other Canadian artist: his pictures illustrated history textbooks for generations of Ontario school children. Film-maker John Bessai of *CineFocus Canada* commemorates the artist in his new documentary, *C.W. Jefferys, Picturing Canada*. The words of Jefferys himself are spoken by actor Eric Peterson, there is footage of Jefferys (who died in 1951), and interviews with his daughters and grandson. The evening's presentation was dedicated to C.W. Jefferys' daughter, Betsy Fee, who died in 2010.

We had a tantalizing taste of *C.W. Jefferys, Picturing Canada*, before gremlins sabotaged the

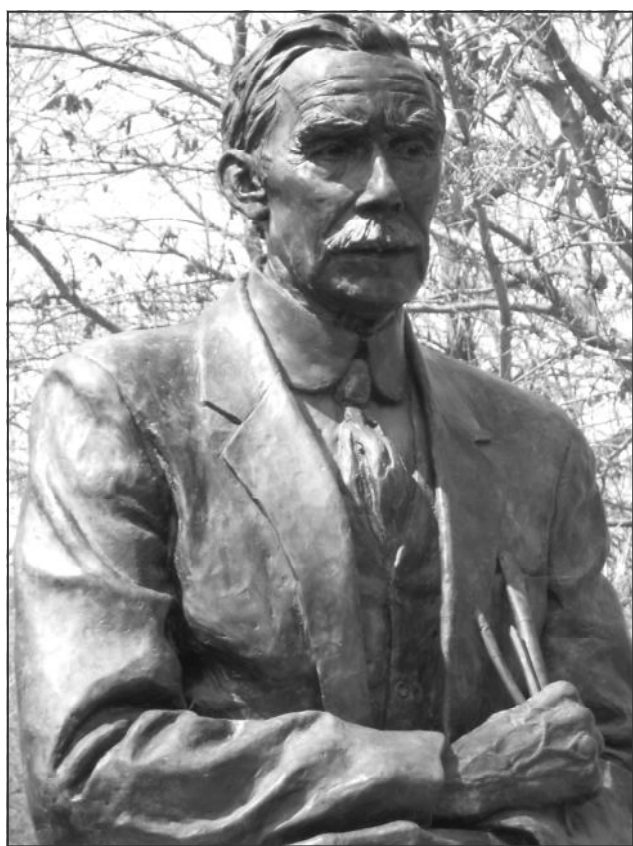
C.W. Jefferys continues on page 6

C.W. Jefferys continued from page 5

screening. Mr. Bessai stepped into the unfamiliar spotlight, and gave a lively and informative account of the man he has been studying through the lens.

Charles William Jefferys was born in England in 1869, and came to Canada with his family as a child. At school in Toronto, he sketched historical scenes for his classmates, selling English subjects for 2 cents each, and Canadian for 1 cent. As a newcomer to Canada, Jefferys was fascinated by both the country's diverse landscapes, and its interesting history. He studied at the Ontario College of Art, and joined the Toronto Art Students League. His work appears in the League's annual calendars, alongside friends and colleagues who would become members of the Group of Seven.

Jefferys worked for newspapers in Toronto and



**Charles William Jefferys, R.C.A., O.S.A., LL.D.
1869-1951 Canadian Artist and Historian**
Sculpture by Adrienne Alison.

Commissioned by the artist's daughter Elizabeth Fee and erected with contributions from the Jefferys' Family and Friends, the North York Historical Society, the York Mills Valley Association and Toronto Culture.

Location: York Mills Valley Park, Hoggs Hollow, not far from the artist's home on the east side of Yonge street, north of York Mills Road.

MORE ABOUT C.W. JEFFERYS

Archives of Ontario www.archives.gov.on.ca/
Search Visual Database for <Jefferys>

Historical Perspectives on Canadian Publishing
<http://hpcanpub.mcmaster.ca/>

Under "case studies" is an interesting article by Eric Weichel of Queen's University:

An "Artist of standing": C.W. Jefferys and Historical Illustration in Canada.

New York, and illustrated some of John Ross Robertson's history articles in the *Telegram*. In the 1920s, he was selected by the Ontario Department of Education to illustrate the Ontario public school history text book. This was a book of English history, and Jefferys believed that Canadians should know more of their own fascinating story. In 1930 he wrote and illustrated *Dramatic Episodes in Canada's Story*. In reaction to the "frozen-faced old codgers" who stared blankly from the history books he had grown up with, Jefferys peopled his illustrations with everyday Canadians actively involved in moments in history. He saw his pictures in narrative terms, so each tells a story.

In 1942, 1945 and 1950 Jefferys published his three volume *Picture Gallery of Canadian History*. In addition to "dramatic episodes," these volumes document the everyday life of ordinary people. Jefferys carefully researched household objects, leaving an invaluable record of artefacts (axes, tinware, chairs, etc.) used by early settlers.

We were delighted to have Nancy Baines, C.W. Jefferys' granddaughter, at the meeting. Nancy had fond memories of visiting her grandfather's York Mills home, where his studio was in the barn. He kept butterscotch on hand, to treat his grandchildren.

John Bessai is to be congratulated not only on the completion of his film, but also on the interesting spontaneous presentation he gave us.

C.W. Jefferys: Picturing Canada

To see a trailer of the documentary, or to purchase a DVD:

<http://www.cinefocus.com/public/television/jeffry.htm>

If you purchased a faulty DVD at the March meeting, please contact McNabb Connolly at 1-866-722-1522 for a replacement.

50 Years Ago

Items from the North Toronto Herald, 1961, contributed by Alex. Grenzebach. The Herald is available at Northern District Library.

It was announced that the new building at the south-west corner of Yonge and Eglinton (2200 Yonge) would be the first to utilize TTC air space. A Loblaws store, described as "one of our finest" by Loblaws president George Metcalf, will occupy the first floor and basement.

Remember when licence plates expired on a certain date, not your birthday? March 15 was the expiry date in 1961 for 1960 plates.

Controller William Allen told the Board of Control that a proposal to make Yonge St. into a one-way street running south from St. Clair would result in "general chaos of traffic in that vicinity."



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This lady is set for Spring...
...are you?

North Toronto Memories will return in the next issue, with extracts from the 1869 diary of Mary Wickson Armstrong.

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

Martin Snider Family History

Among the early residents of what became North Toronto were the Martin Snider family, who built the house that is now 744 Duplex. (Originally, its driveway led to Yonge Street.) Descendant N. Patricia (Snider) Armstrong's ebook will be released in 2011- *Geneamania: Would the right Christian Schneider please stand up?* Visit Patricia's blog, which links to Snider genealogy sites.

<http://www.geneamania.com>
pat@geneamania.com



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12 Sensational Acts

Miss Supertest III, which won the world's top award for unlimited power boats in 1959 and 1960, was on display at the third annual Canadian Boat Show in February.

Heritage Calendar



Doors Open Toronto 2011 theme is Photography. 150 buildings of architectural, historic, cultural and/or social significance will open their doors to the public. Admission is FREE.
<http://www.toronto.ca/doorsopen/about.htm>

Balmoral Fire Station 311, 20 Balmoral Avenue, Deer Park (Yonge, south of St. Clair) celebrates 100 years at Doors Open, on 28th and 29th May.

Receive the *NTHS UPDATER* by email!

Would you like us to remind you of upcoming meetings and heritage events with an electronic newsletter?

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

Alex. Grenzebach

2011 Anniversary Celebrations

100: Balmoral Fire Hall, 28-29 May

100: Bedford Park P.S., 9-10 Sept.

75: Lawrence Park C. I., 28-30 Oct.



Market Gallery, South St. Lawrence Market, 95 Front St. E.
http://www.toronto.ca/culture/the_market_gallery.htm
416-392-7604

Dancing Through Time: Toronto's Dance History 1900-1980
To July 2, 2011

Heritage Toronto Walks

<http://www.heritagetoronto.org/discover-toronto/walk>
416-338-3886



Launch of 2011 Heritage Toronto Walks season with presentation by Derek Boles, Toronto Railway Historical Association

How the Railways Shaped Toronto

28 April 2011, 7:00 pm

St. Lawrence Hall, 157 King Street East (at Jarvis), Great Hall

Free walking tour celebrating **Bedford Park Public School's Centennial** and **Lawrence Park Collegiate's 75th anniversary.**

11 June 2011, 11:00 am meet by the front steps of Bedford Park school, 81 Ranleigh Avenue.

Leader, **Janet Langdon.**

"Do it Yourself" Walks

Toronto's Downtown Heritage

http://www.toronto.ca/heritage-preservation/to_downtown_heritage.htm

This guide to Toronto's Downtown Heritage has been arranged by neighbourhoods or "themed areas" to highlight some of the most significant heritage buildings in downtown Toronto. Take a walk around the downtown neighbourhoods and see how our heritage buildings form an integral part of this City.

Toronto Art Walk

http://www.toronto.ca/culture/pdf/artwalk_nov4_03.pdf

The Art Walk brochure highlights 22 public works of art within the area of Roy Thomson Hall, the Rogers Centre and the CN Tower.

ROMwalks

http://www.rom.on.ca/programs/rom_travel/
416.586.8097

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



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

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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