



NORTH TORONTO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

North Toronto Town Hall

VOL. 35 NO. 2

JUNE 2011



Bathers & car washers, Humber River, 1920s *City of Toronto Archives*

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Foot of Bathurst St., 1920s *CTA*

New Director of NTHS

At a meeting of the North Toronto Historical Society on 27 April, 2011, Donald Duncan was elected to the position of Director, filling the vacancy left by the death of Joan Sampson. He joins Directors Hilary Dawson, Alex Grenzebach, Lynda Moon, Bill Ramsay.

Have a wonderful summer!

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

Fall Programme



Mark your calendars...

Wednesday, 28 September, 7:30 p.m.

Harvey Low will tell the colourful story of Toronto's several Chinatowns.

Wednesday, 26 October, 7:30 p.m.

Mary Mason, daughter of composer Healey Willan, will talk about growing up in the Deer Park area in the 1920s and 1930s, and read from her recently published book, "The Well Tempered Listener."

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

To be announced.

Fall Walk

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

BEDFORD PARK/TEDDINGTON PARK

More information in the next Newsletter...



Toronto Star, 1 Sept 1911

The Society meets at the Northern District Library, 40 Orchard View Boulevard (one block north of Eglinton, just west of Yonge) at 7:30 pm on the last Wednesday of each month from September to November & January to May. Programmes are free and are open to the public. Our co-sponsor is the Northern District Branch of the Toronto Public Library.

Spring Lecture Series

APRIL: **Marta O'Brien**

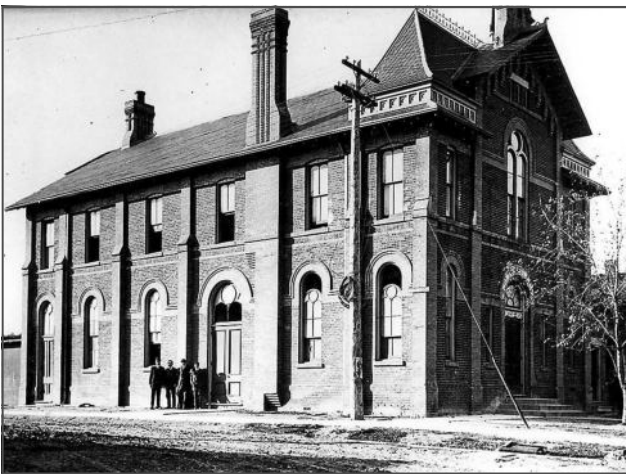
The Architecture of North Toronto

By Marta O'Brien

Far from the Town of York, the area that became North Toronto was farmland until the later 1800s. Its first industries included potteries, dairies, and later James Pears' brickyard.

The Village of North Toronto was established Jan 1, 1890; just four months later it became a Town with a population of 1,000. The boundaries were the railway bridge crossing Yonge near Merton, Avenue Road, the old City Limits (just south of Hogg's Hollow), and a line near Bayview Avenue. In those days, much of the land was subdivided but undeveloped because it was being held on speculation.

Two of the town's most important buildings – Oulcott's Hotel and the Town Hall – stood on opposite sides of Yonge at Montgomery, just north of Eglinton. The hotel had been preceded by one other hotel and the infamous 1832 Montgomery's Tavern, where rebels gathered under William Lyon Mackenzie during the Rebellion of Upper Canada in 1837. Postal Station K – the only Toronto building with the insignia of Edward VIII on it – was built on the site in 1936. The 1884 Town Hall contained municipal offices, police office, and a fire station. In 1909 the first high school classes were held upstairs. By 1932, the Town Hall had been replaced by former Police Station #12 (1932), a streamlined Art Moderne design.



North Toronto Town Hall, 1911

CTA

North Toronto's oldest surviving building is the lovely Snyder House, 744 Duplex Avenue (1828, enlarged 1865). A more unusual house is at 31 Bedford Park Avenue. Clad in wood shingles, its large rounded tower is unique. Another striking house is Treetops at 21 Deloraine Avenue (built 1905). This grand home is now a small private school for children with learning disabilities. During World War I it was associated with the pilot training at North Toronto Flying Station (Armour Heights).



31 Bedford Park

Marta O'Brien

A local drive to save the Elgie House (1914) from demolition in 2003 led to Blythwood Road being designated as a Heritage Conservation District, protecting its many diverse houses. One of the few streets in North Toronto with Victorian-era homes, the street was originally called Victoria Avenue. The 1885 Bay-and-Gable house at 98 Blythwood is an outstanding example. The Elgie House (#56) was home to well-known contractor Herbert Elgie, and is a great example of Cottage Style (influenced by the Arts & Crafts movement).

Architecture continues on page 3



Treetops, 21 Deloraine Ave. *Marta O'Brien*

After 1905, North Toronto's population increased by 500 annually for four years. Many residents went into Toronto for work and entertainment, and wanted the amenities that the Town of 6,000 could not afford. When Toronto annexed the Town in 1912, none of North Toronto's streets were paved and the water supply was inadequate.

North Toronto is fortunate to have several attractive public buildings. I've already mentioned Postal Station K and Police Station 12. Another public treasure is the Locke Library (1949). It's a joy to read in a window overlooking the park. Even North Toronto's fire stations were designed to blend into the traditional architecture of the area. One example is the 1931 Firehall No. 34 (now #131) resembling a Tudor Revival house.

St. Clement's and Blessed Sacrament are two of several traditional church buildings in North Toronto. Designed in the 1920s, they incorporate rough-faced stone and both pointed-arch and rectangular stained glass windows. In contrast, St. Peter's Estonian Church at 817 Mount Pleasant Road, reflects the architecture of the mid-1950s with its steep roof defining the building and nearly reaching the ground.

The 1934 Eglinton Theatre – where a higher-priced ticket could get you into the section where smoking was allowed – still stands in its Art Deco splendour. It was one of the first theatres built specifically with talkies in mind. The less grand Belsize Theatre (1927) opened to screen silent films and some vaudeville, so it included an orchestra. As The Crest in the 1950s and early 1960s, this theatre

nurtured many Canadian actors (including Donald Sutherland and Martha Henry).

North Toronto has many schools. The private Greenwood College School occupies a renovated 1950s office building and other structures at Mount Pleasant and Davisville. Its 350 students enjoy a central atrium with a climbing wall connecting all three floors. In 2010, North Toronto Collegiate Institute left a building with parts dating to 1912 to move into an exciting new structure. The courtyard of the new school incorporates portions of the original.



North Toronto C.I. Heritage Courtyard
Marta O'Brien

North Toronto has a number of fine mid-size apartment buildings typical of those built before the 1950s. The Art Deco style Glen Grove Apartments (1930) near Yonge and Lawrence are just one example.

There are still bad feelings in North Toronto about the controversial Minto Midtown condo development (2007-09) just south of Yonge and Eglinton. Opposed by local residents, the towers are 54 and 47 storeys. More recently, plans to extend the Yonge-Eglinton Centre (1974) into the open plaza on the northwest corner are being opposed by locals who want to keep the open space at this busy intersection. Despite these issues, North Toronto remains a neighbourhood that combines tradition with change, an attractive and appealing community for all ages.

Errata: During my talk I said John Fisher was the first and only mayor of North Toronto. He was the first, but not the only one.

MARCH: Lynda Bottoms & Janet Langdon
Celebrating Education Milestones
Marking the 75th anniversary of Lawrence Park Collegiate Institute and the 100th anniversary of Bedford Park Public School



Bedford Park Public School

Lynda Bottoms, Co-Chair of the Bedford Park Centennial Committee, described the school's history and growth.



Bedford Park Public School, 1920s CTA

Children in the village of Bedford Park had to walk 1.5 kms to Erskine Avenue to school. Parents lobbied for a local public school, and in September 1911, the two-storey four-room school opened on Ranleigh Avenue. The architect was Forsey Page. The first principal—and the only one for thirty years—was Mr. Thomas Lamont.

<i>Bedford Park School.</i>				
Lamon, Thos. A. . .	II	900	B
McKerroll, Bella A. .	II	400	
Dayfoot, Dorothy . .	II	400	

Public and separate schools and teachers in the Province of Ontario for 1911 (published 1912)
 The first three teachers at Bedford Park PS, showing certificate and salary. It was a brick building.

The initial enrolment was of 70 children in Grades 1 to 4. In 1913 a kindergarten class was added. The community grew, and by 1920, twenty-four classrooms had been added to the original building.

The 1920s school has been renovated over the years, and now serves Kindergarten to Grade 7. Grade 8 will be added in September, 2011, bringing the school population to 700.

SCHOOL COSTS MORE THAN WAS EXPECTED

And North Toronto Will Have to Issue \$5,000 More Debentures—Boy Scouts Corps is Growing.

By Our Own Reporter.

North Toronto, Sept. 2.—The North Toronto Public School Board met last night in the Davisville school, when tenders were opened and considered for the erection of the new school on Ranleigh avenue, Bedford Park. The following contracts were awarded: For mason and excavation work, to Mr. Harry Jennings for \$8,192; for carpenter, Baxter and Skipper, \$4,300; plastering, Fred Goulding, \$1,175; heating, Mr. Gray, \$1,355.78; plumbing, Mr. Gray, \$343; painting, Hubbard, \$315; extras—metal sash, \$313; house finishing hardware, \$100; making a total of \$16,256.78.

Toronto Star, 2 Sept 1910

Bedford School Community Honors Principal



Retirement of first principal of Bedford Park PS

Globe & Mail, 8 Nov 1941

T.A. Lamon, J.D. McNish, K.C. and Dr. William Keith "one of the original pupils." The portrait of Mr. Lamon presented on this occasion still hangs at the school.

Education continues on page 5



Bedford Park PS Band, 1981

Some Bedford Park Public School alumni shared their memories. Doug Atkinson (whose family ran Atkinson's store at the corner of Yonge and Bedford Park) started kindergarten in 1939. He was only able to attend for 26 days because of sickness, so had to endure an additional full year with the scary Miss Dorrien.

In Grade 1, Doug's teacher was Miss White, Grade 6 was Miss Reynolds (who was keen on penmanship), Grade 7 Mr. McAdam, Grade 8 Mr. Cantelon ("Herbie"). The Grade 8 graduation was held at Bedford Park United Church.

Doug's schoolday memories include: BP's active music programme, but he was only allowed to play the triangle; collecting change for the war effort; the ice rink with boards in the playground; a fire caused by a glue pot in Mr. Pomeroy's manual training room.

Alex Grenzebach's academic career began at BP in 1948, with the notorious Miss Batson as his kindergarten teacher. For Grade 7, his teacher was Miss Reynolds (who seems to have been at BP for a long, long time), Grade 8 Mr. McAdam who recited poetry, and Mr. Cantelon who taught French.

Al Navis attended BP between 1957 and 1965, and also had Miss Evelyn Reynolds in Grade 7.

All the alumni had fond memories of Bedford Park Public School's annual Christmas Concerts.

Celebrate 100!

BPPS events include an Open House on Friday 9th Sept and a Family Funfair on Saturday 10th.

For more information:

<http://www.bedfordpark100.ca/>



Lawrence Park Collegiate Institute

The story of LPCI was presented by alumni committee chair, Janet Langdon.



As people moved north to the burgeoning town of North Toronto, the need for a secondary school was addressed by the opening of North Toronto Collegiate in 1912. The population continued to increase, and through the 1920s it became more common to complete high school. In 1930 Northern Vocational School was built, but the need for an additional collegiate was evident.

There were lengthy debates about the best location for this new school. Finally, the Chatsworth site was selected, and the school opened officially on 30 October, 1936, with principal Charles Robb. A parents' association was founded soon after the school opened, and their first effort was to fill in the steep, garbage-filled ravine to the west of the school. In the 1950s, this became the school playing field.



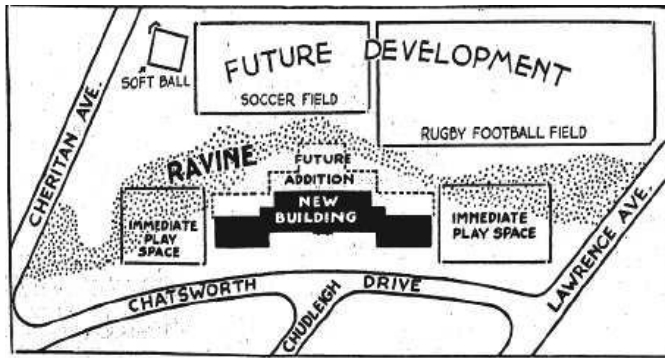
Celebrate 75!

LPCI anniversary events take place on the weekend of October 28-30, 2011.

For more information:

<https://www.lpcialumni.ca/index.asp>





How School Officials Plan to Use Eight Acre Site For New Collegiate

A site such as no other collegiate in Toronto enjoys is likely to be the location of the new north end high school, the sketch shown above outlining the eight-acre property, with its large ravine, which the board of education has decided to buy for \$60,000. The price was cut from \$64,000, and the property is assessed at \$50,275. There is enough fairly level land on Chatsworth Dr. frontage for the school itself, and the ravine curves behind it. The drop is as much as 50 feet in some places and over a period of 15 or 20 years it is planned to grade and terrace and develop the site so that it may all be used. Filling may be used to a level of 25 feet, and the rest terraced and sodded. On the other side of the proposed building there is a large play space almost immediately ready for use. Other playing fields in the rear will be developed. When complete the school grounds will have fields for baseball, rugby, soccer and hockey. There is room at the rear of the building for additional class rooms and at the back for a future gymnasium. "We are planning for 20 years from now," says C.H.R. Fuller, business administrator. "It is by far the best available site for the district."

Toronto Star, 6 April 1935

COLLEGIATE GIRLS VOTE TO WEAR SCHOOL UNIFORM

They All Wear This

Here's the costume that the girls at Lawrence Park collegiate are now wearing, with full approval of their parents, who pay for it. Unlike the custom in other schools where some similar costume is worn on physical training days, the Lawrence Park lasses wear this outfit every day, and they have another outfit for their gym classes. The picture shows Phyllis Turner, demonstrating the neatness of the tunic-blouse-bloomer and long black stocking costume.

Toronto Star, 3 Oct 1936



Notable LPCI alumni include Wendy Mesley, Neil Young, Amanda Marshall, Lois Maxwell, Don McKellar.

50 Years Ago

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

In January, Northern Secondary School started an experimental Saturday program for 300 grade 12 and 13 students who wished to “broaden their outlook before entering university.”

On March 1, the Crest Theatre celebrated its 100th production with the opening of “The Heiress,” starring Frances Hyland and Norman Welsh. The “only fully professional, full-time theatre in English-speaking Canada,” the Crest had been attended by over 500,000 people since its opening in January 1954.

While Loblaws advertised “beautiful free gifts” with lucky green stamps, Steinberg’s competed with its pinky stamp program.

The Mall—Ottawa’s Answer to The Shopping Centre.



“No, Madam, Mr. Diefenbaker does NOT give away trading stamps every Wednesday at 3 o’clock.”

East York was chosen “over strong competition” as the site of the 1962 Games Trials (for the British Empire and Commonwealth Games) and the Canadian Track and Field Championships.



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Dr. Murray G. Ross, president of the new York University, announced university scholarships (worth \$1,350 over three years) would be awarded to all first year applicants who were Ontario Scholars (at least 80% average on eight grade 13 papers).

A number of car-less retirees were moving into Harvey Keith’s Holly Towers in order to have good access to the subway.

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BAMBOO INTERIORS

2800 YORK STREET (at Sheppard) Eglinton, Toronto, Ont. M2H 1P1

Heritage Calendar

Ontario Jewish Archives Walks

A Sense of Spadina

<http://www.ontariojewisharchives.org/spadina.html>
August 7 and September 25, 11:00 am.

Tickets: \$15 per person; \$12 for students and seniors.
Info: ojal@ujafed.org or 416-635-2883 ext. 5170.
Register online at: <https://www.ujaevents.com/login.asp?destinationid=391>

Pape Avenue Cemetery

<http://www.ontariojewisharchives.org/pape.html>
August 28, 11:00 am.

The Pape Avenue Cemetery is Toronto's oldest Jewish cemetery and was established in 1849. The tour will examine Jewish burial customs as well as the artistic imagery that was engraved on the gravestones to represent the deceased. It will therefore provide a glimpse at early Jewish Toronto history through the lens of one cemetery.

Tickets: \$20 per person; \$15 for students and seniors
Info: ojal@ujafed.org or 416-635-2883 ext. 5170.
Register online at: <https://www.ujaevents.com/login.asp?destinationid=418>

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



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

Heritage Toronto Walks

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

Lawrence Park: the Garden Suburb 10 Sept. 2011, 10:30 am

Meet at William McDougall Heritage Plaque, SE corner of Lawrence Ave E and St. Edmund's Dr.

This special tour will be led by **Barbara Myrvold**, TPL, and **Lynda Moon**, NTHS. It will end with the presentation of a Heritage Toronto plaque celebrating the George H. Locke Memorial Branch library.

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

Citywalks with Marta O'Brien

<http://www.citywalks.ca/>
416-699-9838

Lost River Walks

<http://www.lostrivers.ca/WalkSchd.htm>
416-781-7663

ROMwalks

http://www.rom.on.ca/programs/rom_travel/
416-586-8000

Enoch Turner Schoolhouse

106 Trinity Street (King and Parliament)
<http://www.enochturnerschoolhouse.ca/>
416-327-6997



Corktown Walking Tour

Thurs. 4 August 2011, 7:00-8:30 pm

Reservations recommended.
Meet at Enoch Turner Schoolhouse.

Toronto's Corktown neighbourhood has been home to many new Canadians since the mid-19th century, and some of the city's busiest industrial operations. Join us as we explore the homes, factories, churches, businesses and sites that made this area the centre of home and work life for several waves of immigrants. The tour will start at the Schoolhouse, and wind through Corktown as we explore the human and commercial history of this corner of the city. **This walk is wheelchair accessible.**

Tickets: \$10 for adults, \$8 for students, seniors and ETSF members. If space is available, tickets will be sold at Enoch Turner Schoolhouse until 6:30 on 4 Aug.
Doors open at 6:30pm for sign-in.

Harvest Home at the Schoolhouse

Thurs. 22 Sept 2011, 6:00-9:00 pm

Check website: enochturnerschoolhouse.ca

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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