



North Toronto Town Hall

NORTH TORONTO HISTORICAL SOCIETY *NEWSLETTER*

VOL. 38 NO. 3

FALL 2014



Bob Middleton, Frank Pearson, & Edward Martin, April 1917. *TRL*
See page 6



Fall Programme

Join us at 7:10 for refreshments.



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

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE HURON-SUSSEX NEIGHBOURHOOD

Nancy Williams and Marie Scott-Baron invited their neighbours to write about life in Huron-Sussex, next to the University of Toronto, which survived development threats in the 1960s. Designer Anne Vellone took 150 photos of the area's glorious architectural heritage for *Recollections of a Neighbourhood: Huron-Sussex from UTS to Stop Spadina*. She and publisher John Parry will talk about how the volume emerged and read excerpts from its recollections of the "community that almost wasn't."

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

READ ALL ABOUT IT! TORONTO'S NEWSPAPER HERITAGE

Toronto has long enjoyed a competitive field for journalism, hosting no fewer than three major dailies since the 1870's. Discover the colourful characters and editorial viewpoints which rolled off the city's presses and shaped our history in this illustrated talk presented by Jamie Bradburn.

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

CORN FLOWER PATTERN GLASS:

A TRULY CANADIAN BUSINESS SUCCESS STORY

Betsy McDonald discovered something surprising about her Toronto house and in the process learned first hand about the family who created this beloved design. She will include a video and samples of Corn Flower glass in her presentation.

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Fall Walk

LAWRENCE PARK: THE HERITAGE OF TORONTO'S GARDEN SUBURB

Sunday, 28 September, 2:00 p.m.

Meet at the McDougall Plaque, southeast corner of Yonge and Lawrence near St. Edmunds Drive.

Our fall walk will take us through the "garden suburb" of Lawrence Park, still set apart from Yonge Street by a ravine and park. We will highlight century homes, and the architects who designed them: like Forsey Page, who designed at least six houses in Lawrence Park, two of them for his own family.

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.

Heritage News

“Heritage Matters” Mayoral Debate

Mayoral candidates were given the opportunity to discuss their heritage views and plans on 21 August at The Cathedral Centre behind St. James Cathedral. Just three candidates participated: Olivia Chow, David Soknacki and John Tory. The event was well-attended, with more than 280 people in the audience and almost 300 unique Twitter users participating.

<http://heritagetoronto.org/mayoraldebate/>

For a quirkier account of the event see Jeremy Woodcock’s *Toronto Life* article:

<http://tinyurl.com/ketaha6>

New *Discover the Don* Website

This comprehensive site has everything you need to explore this great river system: history, trail guides, ecology, conservation, etc.

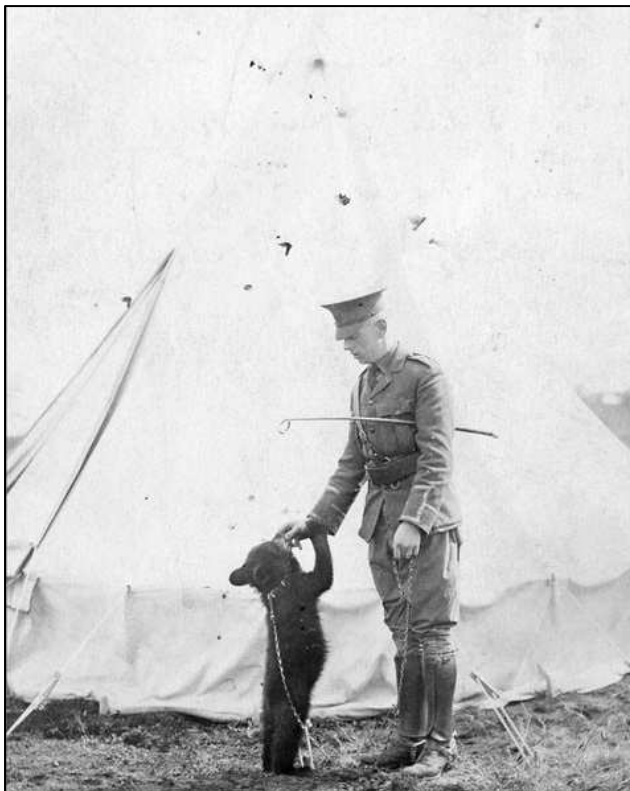
<http://www.discoverthedon.com/>

Toronto Star Donates Entire Photo Archive to Toronto Public Library!

Over a million images dating from 1900 to 1999 have been given to the Toronto Public Library. *Star* publisher John Cruickshank has selected his favourites, which can be seen on the TPL website. <http://tinyurl.com/nvg78z3>



Former prime minister Pierre Trudeau seems reluctant to share Queen Elizabeth’s umbrella during a 1977 royal visit in Ottawa—one of the iconic photos from the *Star*’s recent donation to TPL.



Harry Colebourn feeding Winnie, Salisbury Plain, England, 1914
The Colebourn Family Archive
Ryerson Image Gallery

Remembering the Real Winnie, see Exhibits, page 7

Do you have family stories about World War 1 in North Toronto? What was life like here on the home front? Do you know the story of a North Toronto veteran?

Contribute your recollections to *North Toronto Memories*, an occasional series written by you, our members.

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



Men at the recruiting tent, Toronto Armouries

Spring Lecture Series

MAY: **Marta O'Brien**

Yorkville: Counter-Culture to Haute Couture

by Marta O'Brien

Yorkville was once a self-governed village north of Toronto. It's now home to expensive shops and residences, and in between was the base for 1960s counter-culture. At our May meeting, I showed that Yorkville retains some of its original character despite incredible changes.

Sheriff William Botsford Jarvis and Joseph Bloor began laying out lots east and west of Yonge north of Bloor circa 1836. Bloor and John Severn each established breweries east of Yonge, and members of the Pears, Townsley, and Nightingale families ran brickyards. The village thrived with people who worked in Toronto and in Yorkville. Shops and services were established—primarily along Yonge and Davenport.

Yorkville comprised 557 acres (225 ha) between Sherbourne, Bloor, and Bedford Rd., with a jagged northern boundary near Walker Ave. The population was approximately 800 in 1853 when the first council meeting was held. The Coat of Arms reveals the occupations of the original five councillors: brewer, brickmaker, builder, blacksmith, and butcher. Look above the firehall door to see this stone; it was rescued when the Town Hall was demolished in 1949.

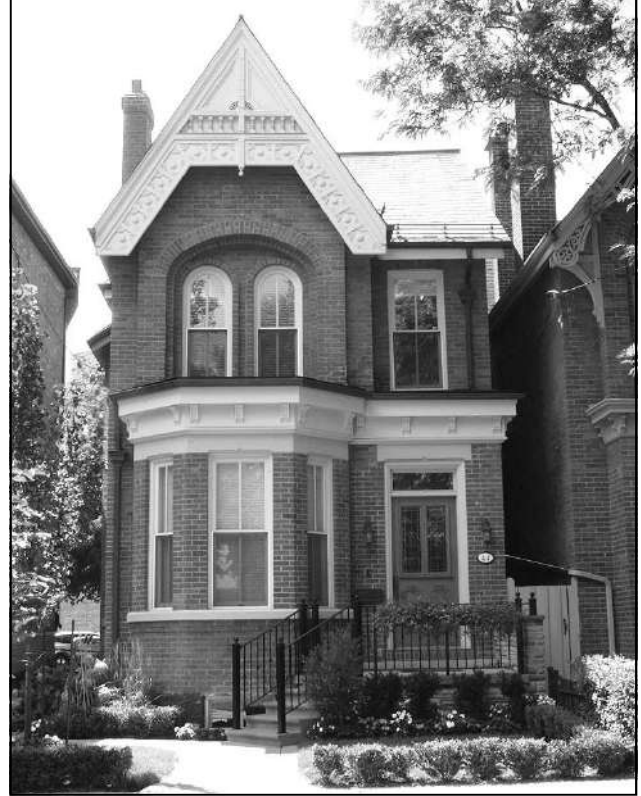


Public transit in Toronto began in Yorkville with an omnibus line in 1849. Twelve years later, the street (or horse) railway connected Yorkville Town Hall down Yonge to the St. Lawrence Market. The line was electrified in 1892.

The serene Belmont House retirement residence is on the site of the 1873 Magdalene Asylum and Industrial House of Refuge. Its original mandate was the care of women released from prison, but it was transformed and expanded to care for aged women (and—eventually—men).

Hazelton Avenue remains one of the most attractive and pleasant in Yorkville. The houses on the southern portion have been converted into

commercial uses, but further north most have been beautifully preserved. Hazelton is the spine of the Yorkville-Hazelton Heritage Conservation District, which protects the public faces of the homes. It's easy to forget that the oldest houses in Rosedale were built when it was part of the Village of Yorkville. Rosedale is also protected.



44 Hazelton Avenue

Photo: Marta O'Brien

The Olivet Congregational Church has had two homes on Hazelton Avenue. Its 1876 wooden building was moved when the congregation outgrew it, and is now the Heliconian Club. Next to it stands the imposing Romanesque Revival structure erected in 1890. It was renovated for commercial use in 1973. Another Yorkville church is still a place of worship: Church of the Redeemer at Bloor & Avenue Road. The church survived by selling land and air rights to the developers of the Renaissance Centre. One of the greatest losses in the city was St Paul's United Church on Avenue Road—destroyed by arson in 1995. It had a beautiful Art Nouveau ceiling painted by Gustav Hahn.

Yorkville residents grew tired of their inadequate water supply and poorly-maintained streets. Many

Yorkville continues on page 4

worked in Toronto and saw the superior infrastructure just south of Bloor. At the same time, the City wanted access to Yorkville's tax base. In 1883, Yorkville joined the City as St. Paul's ward.

Toward the middle of the 20th century, Yorkville—with its downtown location—became less desirable than neighbourhoods such as North Toronto. By the early 1950s, artsy types were attracted by the low rents and growing arts scene. The former village became "The Village" and one of Toronto's most creative arts communities. Joni Mitchell, Gordon Lightfoot, and many others started their careers in the coffee houses. I remember cars slowly cruising the streets of Yorkville so that outsiders could stare at the hippies.

Redevelopment happened quickly after that: many houses were demolished or hidden behind contemporary additions. The principle developer was Richard Wookey, who eventually owned 70 houses on Hazelton, built Hazelton Lanes, and arranged a land deal for the Four Seasons Hotel. Escalating property values drove out the bohemians.

Many of the changes in Yorkville have been positive. Remember the controversy surrounding the huge rock? A former parking lot on Cumberland St. was converted into a stunning park with 13 zones including shade garden, herbaceous border garden, and Canadian shield clearing. The latter has the rock which cost \$3 million to ship and place. It's now a landmark and favourite meeting spot.

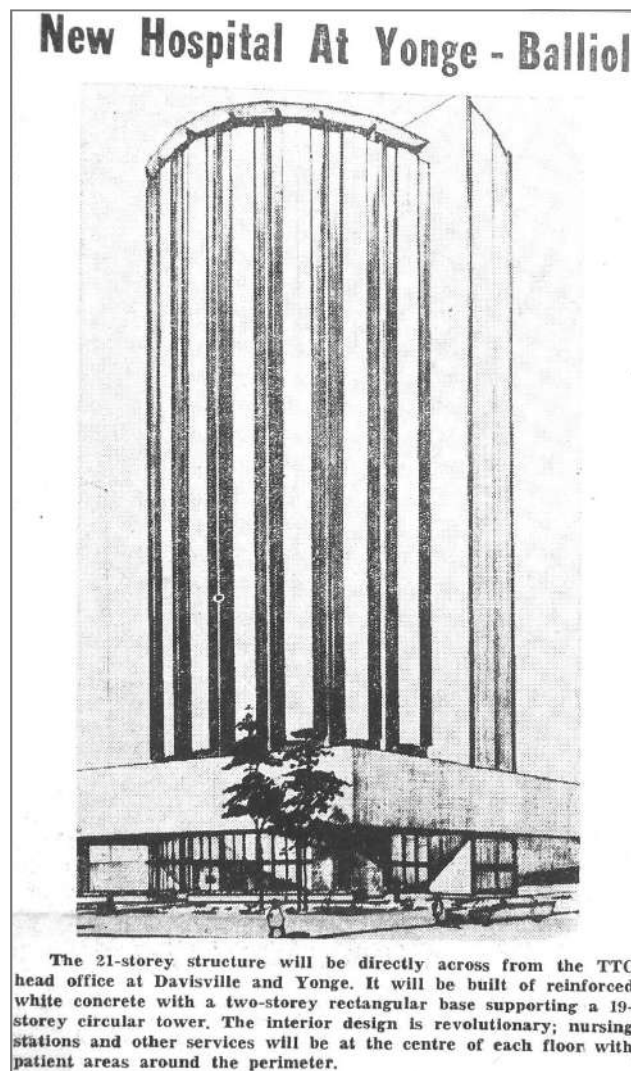
Recent controversies have centred on condo developments. People didn't seem to mind condo towers on the edges of the old village, but developments such as that connected to the original Mount Sinai Hospital met with resistance. Not all condos in Yorkville are in towers. The Century Baptist Church on Macpherson Ave. has been converted into 5 multi-level units.

Today, Yorkville is an affluent community of carefully preserved old houses, expensive shops and restaurants, and contemporary condominiums and hotels. Even if living and shopping there is outside your budget, it's still a fascinating place to explore. Window shopping and people watching are free!

50 Years Ago

Items from the North Toronto Herald, 1964, contributed by Alex. Grenzbach. The Herald is available at Northern District Library.

The first portion of the Toronto By-pass section of 401 (Weston Road to Yonge Street) was opened in 1952 and in 1953 the Annual Average Daily Traffic was 15,000 vehicles per day. Traffic engineers predicted a volume of 30,000 vehicles per day by 1963, but by 1959 the volume was approaching 70,000 vehicles per day. The new 12-lane section was designed to handle 164,000 vehicles per day.



At its inaugural meeting, the board of directors of Fenway General Hospital decided that work would begin early in 1965. The \$11 million, 567-bed public general hospital was to be built at Balliol and Yonge Streets.

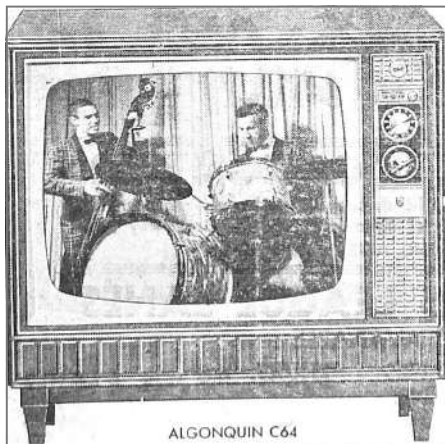
50 Years Ago continues on page 5

Six buildings were under construction at the new Keele and Steeles campus of York University which was to open in the fall of 1965. The Glendon Campus at Bayview and Lawrence was to reach capacity enrolment in the fall of 1964. By 1970, York was planning "to serve the higher education needs of approximately 12,700 students."

**5 BEDROOMS—
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\$42,500 — Solid brick family home on height of land in this popular and convenient area. Large living room, separate dining room, panelled. Bright breakfast room, off large kitchen. Master bedroom ensuite. Recreation room, broadloom. Landscaped garden. This is an honest-to-goodness family home. Call Lang Evans, HU. 1-6161.

The Toronto Real Estate Board reported that house buyers wanted more space and that there were more two-storey houses as well as more four and five-bedroom houses. The average new house price in Metro was \$21,312.



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The Youth Choir of St. George's United Church, as part of its 28-day tour of England and Scotland, was invited to sing the Evening Service and a pre-service recital at Westminster Abbey.



**OVER 1000
FALL HATS**

Chapeaux galore — a wide and wonderful array of the newest fall millinery is now at Madeleine's.

The soft feminine look features brims, profiles, pill-boxes, draped turbans . . . large and small . . . very flattering, very elegant.

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at The 8th Annual
PIONEER FESTIVAL
SATURDAY, SEPT. 26th, 1964.

10 A.M. — 8 P.M.
PIONEER VILLAGE,
CK CREEK CONSERVATION AREA
Jane Street and Steeles Avenue

SPONSORED BY THE
METROPOLITAN TORONTO AND REGION
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Residents surrounding Lawrence Park at Yonge and St. Edmund's complained that "cars from all over the province stop there to let children out to play." Alderman Ken Ostrander, who originally requested the installation of the colourful equipment, argued that it should be removed. City Council voted to "take a poll of the neighbourhood, and re-study an order for removal."

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Remembering World War One



War declared! Scene outside Star office, midnight August 4th, 1914 *Queen's University Archives*

When war was declared in 1914, patriotic posters fuelled youthful bravado. The young soldiers pictured on the front page enlisted in the 12th York Rangers (the local militia unit). Many boys lied about their age to serve overseas with the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF).



One of many propaganda posters produced by the Central Recruiting Committee in Toronto.



Robert Middleton, on the left of the photo, lived at 33 Erskine Avenue. He was born in 1900, according to his birth registration. However, when he enlisted in the

CEF in March, 1916, he claimed that he was 19 years 4 months, born in 1896. When he re-enlisted in 1919, he was miraculously still aged 19 years 4 months, now born in 1899. By this time, he had served for nearly three years in the 124th and 176th Battalions of the CEF.

Frank Pearson (in the centre of the photo) was born in Toronto in 1896, and lived at 113 Hazelton Ave. He does not seem to have enlisted in the CEF. His older brother, Lt. W.D. Pearson was killed in France in 1918, just before his 24th birthday.



Ed Martin (on the right of the group, and pictured above) lived at 18 Keewatin Ave. He was seventeen in 1917, when these photos were taken. He worked as an orderly at the North Toronto Military Orthopaedic Hospital in Davisville. He grew up to become a member of NTHS!

World War 1 Online

Library & Archives Canada: Soldiers of the First World War

Searchable database of Canadian Expeditionary Force attestation papers.

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/l4jdx7c>

Canadian Great War Project

Searchable. This is a huge project, still in progress, and only 160,228 individuals have been entered. If your soldier doesn't come up, maybe you could volunteer a little "input time" to speed things along! Deceased soldiers link to Canadian Virtual War Memorial and Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

URL: <http://www.canadiangreatwarproject.com/index.asp>

Mapping Toronto's First World War Dead

A collaboration between the Canadian Great War Project and folk at Global News, who geocoded the Toronto next-of-kin addresses of nearly 3,000 casualties. The result is a fascinating interactive map.

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/q249c5w>

City of Toronto Archives

John Boyd's World War 1 Photographs

Boyd's carefully labeled album of CEF training activities between August 1914 and November 1917 is now online. Most images are from Toronto.

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/l4m7yxq>



"Battle of the Humber" training exercise John Boyd, CTA

Exhibits

Ryerson Image Centre, Ryerson University *Remembering the Real Winnie: the World's Most Famous Bear Turns 100*

Making use of the Colebourn Family Archive, this exhibit tells the story of Canadian soldier and veterinarian Harry Colebourn (1887–1947), who, at the onset of the war, purchased a pet bear he named Winnie, after his hometown of Winnipeg. (See photo p. 2) When his regiment shipped out, Harry took Winnie with him, depositing the bear in the London Zoo when he was called to the front. It is then that AA Milne and his son encountered the bear and the world famous Winnie the Pooh books were born.

LOCATION: Student Gallery, Ryerson Image Centre, 33 Gould Street

DATES: 6 November to 7 December, 2014

INFO: <http://www.ryerson.ca/ric/exhibitions/TheRealWinnie.html>
416-979-5164

Market Gallery

Toronto Does Her "Bit": The Home Front in the Great War

During the First World War, Toronto was headquarters for a military district that spanned central Ontario. Toronto's largely pro-British population eagerly mobilized for war in 1914, from military recruiting to knitting socks; raising funds to producing munitions. By war's end, Torontonians were facing food and fuel shortages, Spanish flu, and the realization that thousands would never return.

LOCATION: Market Gallery, South St. Lawrence Market, 95 Front Street East

DATES: 26 July 2014 to 17 January 2015

INFO: <http://tinyurl.com/k8vrsm2>
416-392-7604

Archives of Ontario

Dear Sadie – Loves, Lives, and Remembrance from Ontario's First World War

The stories of four ordinary Ontarians faced with an extraordinary event. In poignant personal accounts, a soldier in the trenches, a surgeon in the field, a pilot in France and his sweetheart in Toronto tell of the compassion and the frustration, the horror and the heartbreak caused by the Great War.

LOCATION: Archives of Ontario, 134 Ian Macdonald Boulevard on York U campus.

DATES: "coming soon"

INFO: <http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/en/explore/gallery/gallery.aspx>
416-327-1600

An online version of this exhibit is available on the AO website.



Bata Shoe Museum

Fashion Victims: The Pleasures and Perils of Dress in the 19th Century

Picture the fashionable lady or gentleman of the 19th century. The elegant exterior covered a multitude of perils: constricting corsets, impossibly narrow footwear, poison-laced dyes and flammable materials. There were dangers, too, for those involved in clothing production. This exhibition provides insights into what it means to be a *fashion victim*.

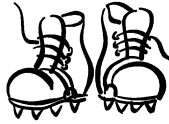
LOCATION: Bata Shoe Museum, 327 Bloor Street West

DATES: 18 June 2014 to 30 June 2016

INFO: <http://www.batashoemuseum.com/>
416-979-7799

Heritage Calendar

Walks



North Toronto Historical Society Lawrence Park:

The Heritage of Toronto's Garden Suburb

DATE: Sunday, 28 September, 2014, 2:00pm

MEET at the McDougall Plaque, southeast corner of Yonge and Lawrence near St. Edmunds Drive.
(See front page)

Lost Rivers

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

Walk the Don! Riverdale Rain Gardens.

DATE: Sunday, 28 September, 2014, 10am-11:30am

MEET outside The Rooster, 479 Broadview Ave.

NOTE: this 3km guided walk is free, but **pre-registration is required.** See website.

Rain gardens are a beautiful and planet-friendly way to conserve water and nature in your garden. Join the Don Watershed Regeneration Council and Toronto and Region Conservation for a tour of seven fabulous rain gardens in Riverdale.

Heritage Toronto

<http://heritagetoronto.org/tours/>
416-338-1338

Walks continue to 26 Oct. 2014.

HT Digital Tours and Toronto in Time, app:

<http://heritagetoronto.org/tours/digital-tours/>

ROMwalks

<http://tinyurl.com/o3zacx7>

Walks continue to 12 Oct. 2014.

Additional walks are offered to ROM members:

<http://tinyurl.com/pg62q4r>

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

Events

40th Annual Heritage Toronto Awards and William Kilbourn Memorial Lecture

The William Kilbourn Memorial Lecture speaker is **Jack Diamond**, principal at Diamond Schmitt Architects. His lecture will be *Toronto 1974-2014: A Challenge from the Field.*

The Heritage Toronto Awards will be emceed by **Garvia Bailey**, Senior Arts Editor at JazzFM91.

DATE: Tuesday, 21 October, 2014. General Programme starts at 7:30 pm. *See website for details.*

LOCATION: Koerner Hall,

The Royal Conservatory of Music

TICKETS: start at \$15

INFO: <http://tinyurl.com/pvzejzd>

Chorley Park Plaque Presentation and Hidden Treasures in North Rosedale Tour



Constructed between 1911 and 1915, Chorley Park was Ontario's fourth and last official residence of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

DATE: Saturday, September 27, 2014

1:00pm plaque presentation. **Please Register:**
<http://heritagetoronto.org/event/chorley-park-plaque-presentation/>

1:30pm walk led by Kim Moritsugu & Ed Freeman

LOCATION: Chorley Park, 245 Douglas Drive

INFO: <http://heritagetoronto.org/>
416-338-1338

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



Submissions for the next Newsletter by 20 Dec. 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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