



NORTH TORONTO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

North Toronto Town Hall

VOL. 38 NO. 4

WINTER 2014-15



Mossie May Waddington, Aileen Dewdney and Valerie Dell Waddington in front of Elizabeth Judd's house on Victoria Avenue, now Blythwood Avenue. TPL



Winter Programme

Join us at 7:10 for refreshments.



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

BOOMTOWN SUBWAY - HOW TORONTO BUILT RAPID TRANSIT IN THE AUTOMOBILE AGE

From the 1940s until the 1970s, Toronto built almost fifty-five kilometres of rapid transit. Dr. Jay Young explores the growth of the Toronto subway system during these decades, and the ways in which rapid transit transformed Toronto, from political debates to how subways reflected new identities in the city.

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

Black History Month

MARY MINK: THE MAKING OF A MYTH

Genealogist and historical researcher Guylaine Pétrin will explore the sometimes blurred line between historical fact and historical fiction. James Mink was a successful Black businessman in Toronto in the 1840s and '50s. His story is one of the best known tales of Black Torontonians in the 19th century, told and retold many times in newspapers, books, and a 1990 TV movie. In the screen version, Mink arranges for a white man to marry his daughter Mary, and then stages a daring rescue when her husband sells her into slavery in the American South. The movie is said to be "based on historical records," but as Guylaine Pétrin discovered, records can lie.

NOTE: A brief Annual General Meeting will precede this programme.

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

LAWRENCE PARK: THE GARDEN SUBURB - PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

An illustrated talk presented by Alex Grenzebach, a member of the Lawrence Park Heritage Committee and a director of the North Toronto Historical Society. A life-long resident of Lawrence Park, Alex will discuss redevelopment pressures and possible solutions as Lawrence Park enters its second century. Copies of *Historical Walking Tour of Lawrence Park*, by Barbara Myrvold and Lynda Moon, will be on sale.

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Stall 32 St. Lawrence Market. 144

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.

President's Message

Best wishes for 2015, as the North Toronto Historical Society enters its 40th year.

Our annual general meeting will be held at the beginning of the monthly programme in February. If you are interested in taking a more active role in the Society, please contact a member of our executive committee. We would be happy to welcome new members and ideas.

I would like to thank our executive for their contributions during 2014 - Hilary Dawson, newsletter editor; Bill Dawson, treasurer; Alex Grenzebach, membership co-ordinator; Doug Campbell; Brian Dunfield, who was elected last year as a new director; and Marta O'Brien, and Ken Pon, members-at-large. Special thanks to Janet Dunfield and Elizabeth and John Warrener, who helped with refreshments at our meetings. Librarian Karen Pearce represented Northern District Library and facilitated the arrangements for equipment used by our guest speakers. Thanks also to members who contributed to the work of the Society through their financial donations.

2014 featured many successful programmes including presentations by executive members Hilary Dawson and Marta O'Brien. Our annual Fall walk "Lawrence Park: The Heritage of Toronto's Garden Suburb" was blessed with good weather. In June, as part of an Albertus Avenue street fair, NTHS member Paul Dodington celebrated the 100th anniversary of his family home and of his Model T Ford by giving house tours and automobile rides.

Looking forward to seeing you at our programmes in 2015,.

Lynda Moon, President

Anniversaries 2015



Bedford Park Hotel, 3296 Yonge St, 1920 CTA

<https://fairlawnhistory.wordpress.com/history/>

100th Anniversary of Fairlawn Avenue United Church

On March 15, 1915, the new congregation of Bedford Park Methodist Church met in the top room of the Bedford Park Hotel. Five years later, they moved into a new frame church on Fairlawn Avenue. In 1924, the current red brick building was opened.

Fairlawn Avenue United has a long history of amalgamation with other churches. For more on Fairlawn's "family tree" see NTHS member Gary Schlee's online history:

Happy Birthday, Sir John A.!

John Alexander Macdonald

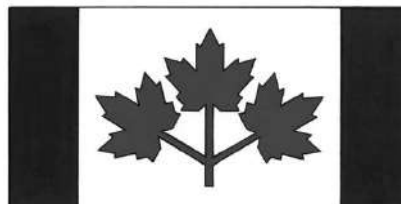
was born in Glasgow in 1815, and celebrated his 200th birthday on 11 January.



1927 stamp commemorating the Diamond Jubilee of Confederation

50th Anniversary of the Canadian Flag

Below: The three winning designs of the thousand submitted to the Parliamentary committee in 1964. The current flag was adopted on 15 February, 1965.



Fall Events

FALL WALK

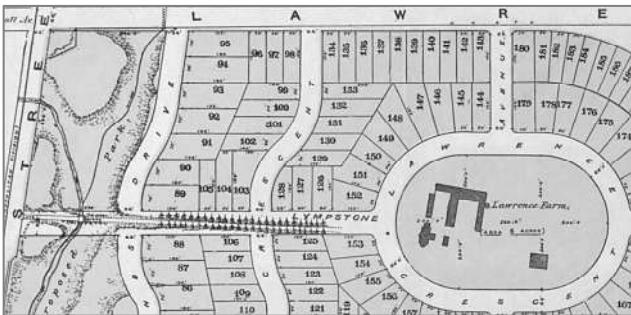
Lawrence Park: The Heritage of Toronto's Garden Suburb

In September, we looked at the heritage of Lawrence Park. Walk leaders were Lynda Moon, Alex Grenzebach, Hilary Dawson, and Bill Dawson.

In 1907, Wilfrid Servington Dinnick, president of the Standard Loan Co., initiated the purchase of the 190 acre Lawrence farm at the southeast corner of Yonge and Lawrence. Dinnick envisioned a “garden suburb” away from the bustle and industry of the city. The property was subdivided into large lots, taking advantage of the natural topography to form curving streets around the original farmhouse.

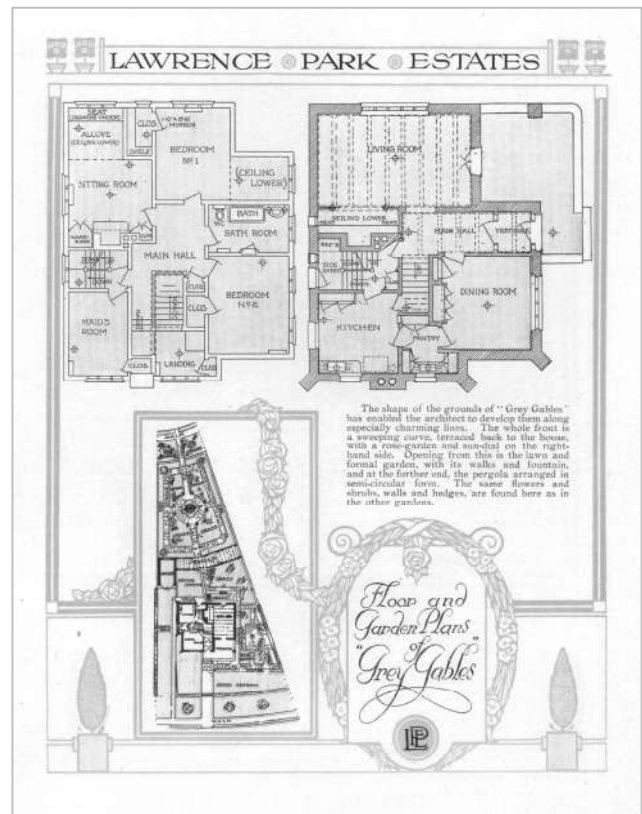


Kingsland, home of the Lawrence family, stood at the top of present-day Lympstone Avenue.



1910 map shows the Lawrence Farm at the centre of the subdivision plan. The remains of *Kingsland's* treed laneway from Yonge St. can be seen on

The subdivision was separated from Yonge Street by enhancing the natural ravine and creating a park. Chadwick & Beckett were Lawrence Park's official architects, but purchasers could employ their own designs provided that the plans were submitted for



Plans of *Grey Gables*, 16 Dawlish Ave,

approval. Restrictions included: houses had to be at least three feet from the side boundaries; less than half of the exterior could be stucco. Architects included Eden Smith, Forsey Page, W. Breden Galbraith, Murray Brown, Mathers & Haldenby and Eric Arthur.

Construction was interrupted by the outbreak of World War 1. Both William Chadwick and Samuel Beckett served overseas, as did most of their employees. Beckett was killed in France in 1917.

Although various interruptions led to several building phases in Lawrence Park, houses continued to fulfill Dinnick's vision of “a formal and artistic grouping of ideal homes” in “a really high-class residential park.” Sadly, our walk revealed that too many of the original houses with “dignity and charm” are being replaced by buildings which have neither.

MORE ABOUT LAWRENCE PARK

Download the 1910 promotional booklet from TPL: <http://tinyurl.com/ma2t63u>

Read *Historical Walking Tour of Lawrence Park*, Barbara Myrvold and Lynda Moon (2007)

Hear Alex Grenzebach speak: *Lawrence Park: The Garden Suburb-Past, Present and Future* (see p.1)

SEPTEMBER: John Parry & Anne Vellone
*Recollections of a Neighbourhood:
Huron-Sussex from UTS to Stop Spadina*

Huron-Sussex is a tiny neighbourhood located between Harbord and Bloor, from Spadina to St. George. Its history has been captured in a new book, which was described by publisher John Parry and designer Anne Vellone.



**Huron-Sussex lies between Harbord and Bloor,
from St. George to Spadina**

In 1987, Washington Avenue resident Nancy Williams had the idea of preserving the neighbourhood she loved so much by collecting the memories of residents. Her vision expanded to include the history from the first land grants to the present day. She was soon assisted by Marie Scott-Baron. They consulted archivist Harold Averill about finding documents, and publisher John Parry about consolidating their finds into a book. Designer Anne Vellone joined the team, and took photographs to add context. Nancy and Marie did not live to see the completion of their dream, but John and Anne finished the project, and turned a bag of memoirs and research notes into an award-winning book.

The Huron-Sussex neighbourhood stands on the north part of Park Lots 14 and 15. The Park Lots were given by Simcoe in 1793 to members of his government to entice them to move from Newark (Niagara-on-the-Lake) to York (Toronto). These 100 acre lots stretched from today's Queen Street to Bloor. Lot 14, between Beverley and Huron Street, was awarded to Peter Russell; Lot 15, between Huron and Spadina, to William Wilcocks.

By the 1870s, this was an area of market gardens, separated from the city by the parkland of the University of Toronto and Queen's Park. Some houses had been built along Harbord, but when the Toronto Street Railway began to run along Spadina and Bloor in the 1880s, this became an accessible and affordable suburb. From time to time, the area has been a profitable rental investment. At one time Washington Avenue was nicknamed "Mr. McCann's street" as George McCann owned most of the houses, starting in the 1920s. Now, U of T is the principal landlord in the area. Over the years, residents have included tradesmen, businessmen, professors, students, authors and architects.

Central to the area is the fine arts and crafts style church of St. Thomas at 383 Huron Street, designed by parishioner architect Eden Smith in 1892. The congregation is older than that, having established the church in Seaton Village in 1874.

The University of Toronto is a major presence. In 1910, University of Toronto Schools was built as a model school (or laboratory) for the Faculty of Education. The three storey brick building still stands at 371 Bloor West. There have been many illustrious pupils, including J.J. Robinette. As a boy, he enjoyed exploring the area on his bike. As a student at the University of Toronto, he found local soda fountains were a good destination on a date.

Late in the 1950s, U of T nibbled away at the edges of the neighbourhood, replacing old houses with new facilities. A major blow came in 1966 when an entire block was demolished for the construction of the Robarts Library. But the worse was to come: in the 1960s the proposed Spadina Expressway would have obliterated the neighbourhood. Now a distinguished lawyer, J.J. Robinette successfully represented ratepayers in their bid to save their neighbourhoods, and quashed the expressway plan.

This book is a nice model for anyone wanting to capture the colour and history of their neighbourhood.

Recollections of a Neighbourhood: Huron-Sussex from UTS to Stop Spadina, editors Nancy Williams and Marie Scott-Baron. Toronto: Words Indeed, 2013

<http://tinyurl.com/paf4xks>

A winner of the 2014 Independent Publisher Book Award!

OCTOBER: Jamie Bradburn
Read All About it!
Toronto's Newspaper Heritage

Jamie Bradburn is a regular contributor to *Historicist*, the weekly history column on *Torontoist*: <http://torontoist.com/tag/historicist/>
His presentation looked at Toronto daily newspapers from the late 19th century.

When the Conservatives lost the 1871 provincial election, many felt that one cause was the lack of a good solid Conservative newspaper. Liberal ideas were articulated persuasively in the *Globe*, but there was no equivalent Conservative mouthpiece. So on 30 March, 1872, Toronto's *Mail* first appeared.



Under editor Thomas C. Patteson, the paper's editorial policy was Conservative, although reporters could be impartial. After the defeat of the federal Tories in 1873, circulation dropped and the *Mail* went into debt. It was taken over in 1877 by newsprint merchants John and Charles Riordon. By the mid 1880s, the *Mail* was editorially independent of Tory principles.

Two regular columns were particularly popular. "The Flaneur" was Henry Horace Wiltshire, whose commentary on current events was a sort of Victorian blog. "Woman's Kingdom" by "Kit Coleman" (Kathleen Blake Watkins) covered more than home hints and beauty tips. "Kit" discussed important issues of the day, and even travelled to England for a firsthand view of social conditions.

The Conservatives found themselves again in need of a mouthpiece, and established the *Empire* in 1887. This went to absurd lengths to toe the party line: even the daily joke had to be approved! By the 1890s, both the *Empire* and the *Mail* (which had rediscovered its Tory roots) were struggling. In 1895 they merged as *The Daily Mail & Empire*. Most of the *Empire*'s employees were laid off, and management was from the *Mail*, with Charles Riordon as owner. The paper continued the Tory

MORE ABOUT KIT COLEMAN

See Jamie Bradburn's online article at *Torontoist*:
<http://tinyurl.com/n2r6rrm>



bias, but also encouraged good columnists regardless of politics. An investigative series that uncovered the exploitation of the city's immigrants, and conditions in slums and sweatshop, was written in 1897 by young William Lyon Mackenzie King. Specialist reporters covered police, courts, and other "departments." In 1927, reclusive millionaire Izaak Walton Killam bought the paper, and appointed a new editor: John Scott (formerly of the *Montreal Gazette*). Over the years, the *Mail and Empire* absorbed the *Times* and the *World*. By the mid 1930s, Toronto had only two morning papers.

In 1936, the *Globe* was purchased by William H. Wright and George McCullagh. Within weeks, they had also bought the *Mail and Empire*. The combined *Globe and Mail* first appeared on 23 November 1936. The new paper promised a politically independent editorial policy. By World War 2, it had returned to the Conservative fold.



In 1881, a new evening paper appeared: *The Evening News*. It was founded by the Riordon brothers as a companion to the morning *Mail*. Circulation was poor, so in 1883 they hired Edmund Edward Sheppard. "E.E." was a colourful character, who aped the dress of a Texan cowboy. Printed on pink paper, the *Evening News* revelled in digging up dirt and sensationalizing stories. At the same time, it printed strong investigative articles, and supported improving labour conditions. After some controversial decisions, Sheppard was forced to step down in 1887. He immediately started a new weekly, *Saturday Night*, which ran until 1906.

The *Evening News*' treatment of its own employees fell short of what it printed about other labour issues. In 1892, new typesetting equipment led to disputes between management and labour at the *News*. In October, the printers threatened to strike, and were immediately locked out. The company brought in scab printers. Strike pay was limited, so the printers started their own newspaper. John Ross Robertson of the *Telegram* offered them equipment, as did Billy Maclean of the *World*. The first

Newspapers continues on page 6

Newspapers continued from page 5

Evening Star was sold on 3 November, 1892. When the dispute was resolved at the end of the year, many printers returned to the *News*.

In 1902 the *Evening News* was bought by Joseph Flavelle, co-owner of Simpson's, in partnership with John Willison, formerly of the *Globe*. The new paper was simply called the *News*, and was to be non-partisan and civic-minded. Dropping advertisements deemed inappropriate seriously affected the paper's revenue. High-brow editorials did not attract new readers. In 1907 Flavelle sold the paper to a Tory syndicate, and it limped along until 1919. It was sold, and rebranded *The Toronto Times*. However, it could not compete with the other five dailies and soon closed



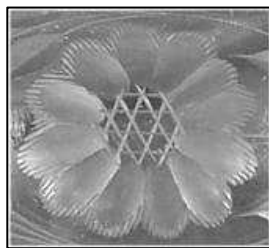
The World was originally conceived as a promotional tool for federal Liberal candidate Peter Ryan. Its first issue was in August 1880, under former *Globe* editor William Findlay "Billy" Maclean. Although Ryan was defeated, Maclean continued the paper. *The World* claimed to be non-partisan, but clearly expressed Maclean's personal opinions, which ranged from public ownership of utilities to construction of the Bloor Viaduct. Aimed at a working class readership, it contained sensational stories and an irreverent attitude to the Establishment. Maclean despised Toronto's plethora of restrictions on Sunday activities, and published a Sunday edition. It was printed and distributed before midnight, but successfully raised the ire of Toronto's moralisers. Maclean also promoted Sunday streetcar service, which was finally approved in 1897. A poor businessman, constantly in debt, Maclean published puff pieces about his biggest advertisers. The paper struggled along, but was eventually forced into liquidation in March 1920. The *Sunday World* continued until 1924, when it merged with *Star Weekly*.

MORE ABOUT TORONTO NEWSPAPERS

See Jamie Bradburn's online articles at Torontoist:
<http://tinyurl.com/nu4hbb6>
<http://tinyurl.com/ltabwbk>
<http://tinyurl.com/mqt7936>

NOVEMBER: Betsy McDonald

Corn Flower Pattern Glass: A Truly Canadian Business Success Story



Betsy McDonald's interest in Corn Flower glass began shortly after she and her husband, Ken West, moved into 212 Wychwood Avenue. The house had caught Betsy and Ken's attention when

they saw its lovely interior wood panelling, ornamented with small geometric mirrors. The bathroom mirror, they noticed, had initials scratched into the corners. After they moved there, Betsy and Ken took down a large old shed. Betsy has found that this is the location of an annual crop of glass sherds!

One day, John Gilchrist of Wychwood Park knocked on the door, and told them that this was the former home of W.J. Hughes, a well-known glasscutter who had developed the Corn Flower pattern. Betsy checked in old city directories and, sure enough, W.J. Hughes was listed, living in her house. Not only had the glasscutter lived on Wychwood Avenue, but he had established his business there. Betsy shared her discoveries.

William John (Jack) Hughes and his twin brother were born in Dufferin County in 1881. Their mother died when they were young, and life on the farm was hard for the six children and their father. When he was 16, Jack left for Toronto, where he worked for a company that produced silver and crystal objects. Jack showed a flair for cutting crystal. In 1912 he began cutting his own designs in glass in the basement of his Wychwood Ave. house, which became the home of the W.J. Hughes Corn Flower Company. The cutting was done with sandstone wheels and carborundum powder. Corn Flower became his most popular pattern, and eventually Jack employed eight men. There were five steps to cutting a cornflower, and each man had his specialty, e.g. "leafing," "petalling," etc.

It was truly a family business, and Jack's wife Hazel washed and packed products for shipping all over Ontario. Eventually, Hughes' glass could be found in Eatons' and Simpsons' catalogues, and in Ostranders stores. Corn Flower was popular

Corn Flower continues on page 7

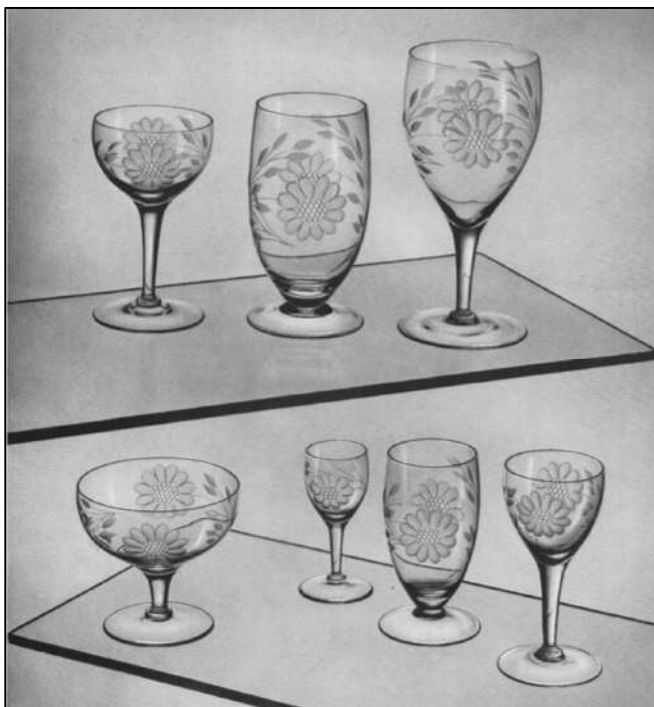
Corn Flower continued from page 6

because it was good quality, but not as expensive as crystal. In its heyday, it was a popular wedding gift. The design was cut into plain glass pieces, and Jack found high quality blanks at a good price. At first they came from West Virginia, and later from Hungary. The inventory was stored in the shed in the garden of 212 Wychwood.

In 1949, it was decided that the business should expand out of the Wychwood basement, and a factory was purchased at Kenwood Ave and Vaughan Road. Later, the company moved to Tycos Road. Several members of the Hughes family were involved in the Corn Flower business, but after Jack died in 1951, it was daughter Lois and her husband Pete Kayser who took the lead in modernizing the company.

In their odyssey, Betsy and Ken have met Hughes family members. Lois (Hughes) Kayser was surprised that the mirror she and her brothers had embellished still hangs in the bathroom of 212!

Dufferin County Museum & Archives celebrates its son, Jack Hughes, at an annual Corn Flower Festival in June. Lois and Pete Kayser attend, and assess the authenticity of pieces brought by collectors. Pete even recognises the work of specific glasscutters, on occasion!



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 stories 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.

50 Years Ago

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

"Where The Whole Family Likes To Bowl"

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East York Reeve True Davidson told delegates at the annual conference of the Association of Ontario Mayors and Reeves that "creeping socialism, increasing permissiveness in the home and the mounting welfare demands on the public dollar are depleting the vitality of Canadian life."

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MORE ABOUT CORN FLOWER GLASS



Wayne Townsend, *Corn Flower: Creatively Canadian*. Toronto: Natural Heritage/Natural History Inc., 2001

Krista A. Taylor, *Canadian Identification and Price Guide to W.J. Hughes Corn Flower Glass*. Grand Valley, Ont: Taylored Heritage, 2003

Dufferin County Museum & Archives
Corner Hwy 89 and Airport Rd
Annual Corn Flower Festival:
<http://tinyurl.com/ookutmh>

Heritage Calendar

Fort York, 250 Fort York Blvd

INFO: 416-392-6907 fortyork@toronto.ca

Exhibits at the new Fort York Visitor Centre

<http://tinyurl.com/q8etlme>

The Great War - in Your Cellar, Closet or Storage Locker! Typical Canadian Objects from the First World War

This exhibit tells the story of typical small objects reflecting Canada's participation in the Great War. They represent war decorations and souvenirs from countries who were Canada's allies or enemies. They remind us that "the war to end all wars" was truly global, affecting every continent except Antarctica. Canada's rich pattern of immigration means that your attic, cellar or closet may hold objects similar to the ones displayed here, but with quite different national origins.

DATES: to September 2015

Charles Pachter's "1812: The Art of War" Series: Pop Art Perspectives on Conflict

The series includes contemporary portraits of Sir Isaac Brock, Tecumseh and Laura Secord, plus wry observations on Canadian/U.S. relations, mass culture and Canadian identity.

DATES: to September 2015

Outfitted for War: Canadian Uniforms and Weapons of the First World War

Uniform representing different forms of service by Torontonians during the Great War: a private and a lieutenant from the Canadian Expeditionary Force, a nursing sister from the Canadian Army Medical Corps, and a private from the Royal Flying Corps. Also contemporary weapons.

DATES: to September 2015

Art and the Great War: A Toronto Perspective, Featuring works from the City of Toronto's Artifact, Fine Art & Archival Collections

Drawn from City of Toronto collections, all 15 works on display are tied to interesting Toronto stories relating to the First World War. Each section focuses on a different artistic endeavour: painting, photography, graphic design and three-dimensional decorative objects.

DATES: to September 2015

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

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

INFO: 416-392-7604

http://www.toronto.ca/culture/market_gallery

Toronto Observed Through Three Generations: Photographs by Harry Joy, Doug Hemmy and Andy Brooks

The works of three generations of photographers who have documented the city at different times and in different ways. Subjects include Kensington Market in the 1950s, back lanes and graffiti, and classic Toronto landmarks.

DATES: to 9 May 2015

Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street TD Gallery, Main Level

INFO: 416-395-5577

Freedom City: Uncovering Toronto's Black History

Through original paintings, drawings, photographs, manuscripts and broadsides, this exhibit covers the history of black Toronto – from the days of early settlement to the end of the 19th century.

DATES: 31 January to 28 March 2015

NEW online exhibit at Archives of Ontario

<http://tinyurl.com/onwg6kd>

Eaton's Goes to War

Showcasing the contributions made by the T. Eaton Company and its employees to the war effort during World War I.

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



Submissions for the next Newsletter by 15 March to dawsonbh@rogers.com or call 416-481-

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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