



NORTH TORONTO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

North Toronto Town Hall

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WINTER 2015



St. Clair car barns, 30 Jan, 1915 CTA

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Group of snowshoers on horse-drawn sleigh, c.1920 CTA

**Buy Your
Victrola Records
at Heintzman Hall**

You will need many new records for your Christmas Victrola. Our Victrola Parlors are the place to get them. Our skilled personnel and comfortable, convenient place in which to make your selection.

The Old Firm HEINTZMAN HALL
Heintzman & Co., Ltd. 193-195-197 Yonge St.

Globe, 28 December, 1915



Winter Programme

Join us at 7:10 for refreshments.



Wednesday, 27 January, 7:30 p.m.
CORKTOWN: BOOZE & BLARNEY

This working-class neighbourhood east of the downtown core was home to many Irish immigrants in the early 1800s. Some of Toronto's oldest buildings are here, including schools, converted industrial structures, and charming houses. Architectural historian **Marta O'Brien** will tell Corktown's story through these buildings and newer developments.

Wednesday, 24 February, 7:30 p.m.
THE INVISIBLE PRESENCE:

The French in Toronto From Brûlé to Today

At the Société d'Histoire de Toronto, founded thirty years ago, historians have done extensive research and uncovered the stories of Francophones who were prominent in the history of the city and the country. **Danièle Caloz**, co-founder of the Société, will present the story of some of these remarkable individuals.

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

Wednesday, 30 March, 7:30 p.m.
THE AERODROMES OF TORONTO:
De Lessep to Downsview and Beyond

In this presentation, originally created to commemorate the centenary of the First World War, speaker **Robert Galway** examines the history of a number of Toronto's early airfields, including Leaside and Armour Heights.

We welcome contributions from members: heritage events and achievements, brief articles and photographs of local history interest. **Submissions for the next Newsletter by 1 March to dawsonbh@rogers.com or call 416-481-6622.**



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 2016, as the North Toronto Historical Society enters its 41st 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 2015 – Hilary Dawson, newsletter editor; Bill Dawson, treasurer; Alex Grenzebach, membership co-ordinator; Doug Campbell; Brian Dunfield; Flo Morson, secretary, who is a new executive member; and Marta O'Brien, and Ken Pon, members-at-large. Special thanks to Janet and Brian Dunfield, and Elizabeth and John Warrener, who helped out with refreshments at our meetings. Kathy Staal, Branch Head of Northern District Library and librarian Zorana Basta facilitated the arrangements for our meetings and booked the equipment used by speakers. Thanks also to members who contributed to the work of the Society through their financial donations.

2015 featured many successful programmes including presentations by executive members Alex Grenzebach and Marta O'Brien. Our annual Fall walk "Glengrove: from Glenview Ave. to Lytton Blvd." was well attended and blessed with good weather.

Looking forward to seeing you at our programmes in 2016.

Lynda Moon, President

Anniversaries 2016

Three Toronto Branch Libraries Celebrate a Century!



23 April 2016 marks the 400th anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare.

In 1916, three new libraries opened in Toronto: Wychwood, High Park and Beaches. Honouring the tercentenary of the death of Shakespeare, architect Eden Smith modeled his design on the style of the grammar school that Shakespeare would have known. All three branches were built to the same plan, which Chief Librarian George Locke described in the *Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada*:

Take away all the unnecessary decorations, over-mantels, over-counters, partitions, mock marble pillars and large hallways and plan a well proportioned room with books on the walls, small and a few tables, a simple charging desk (not a great counter), simple lighting as near the books and the people as possible, and a combination of colours in the walls that make for harmony.

It was an innovative design for a library, and Locke believed, "In such a type of room Shakespeare studied and read."



Wychwood Branch, c.1916 TPL



High Park Branch, c.1916 TPL



Beaches Branch, today TPL

Fall Events

FALL WALK

Glen Grove: Glenview to Lytton

On a beautiful October, about thirty-five NTHS members and friends gathered on Lot 4 Concession 1 West of Yonge, just south of Glenview Presbyterian church, to explore the area's history. Walk leaders were NTHS President Lynda Moon, aided by Doug Campbell, Bill Dawson, Hilary Dawson, and Alex Grenzebach. We looked at houses on Glenview, Glengrove, Alexandra, Lytton and Glencairn.



Detail of 1890 map, showing the Glengrove Park development. Lawrence is the road at the top; Yonge Street is far right. The irregular dark line is the western limit of North Toronto. TPL

This was one of the 200 acre properties fronting on Yonge Street surveyed in 1793 under Simcoe's direction. The initial land grant changed hands several times, until it was purchased in 1802 by John McDougall, grandfather of future Father of Confederation William McDougall. The next owner was Davison Murray, who planted pine trees along his farm lane. This is now Glengrove Avenue, and descendants of these ancient trees may be spotted here and there beside the road.

In 1885, Toronto *Leader* publisher James Beaty bought the property as a summer retreat, and named it Glen Grove. In 1886 the field on the north side of the avenue was incorporated as a race course by horse-racing aficionado E. King Dodds. The venture was short-lived, but for many years the park was used as a recreational area by residents.

About this time, the idea of suburban development was making its way up Yonge Street. In 1887, John Sheldrake Stibbard laid out a subdivision on his land east of Yonge and north of Eglinton. Beaty, too, sold parts of his Glen Grove land from time to

time, but development was hampered by poor transportation. By 1886, a five-cent fare would take a traveller on the Metropolitan Street Railway's horse car from the CPR at Summerhill to Glengrove Avenue, but the single-track service had "little, close, stuffy cars," according to one passenger, and commuting to Toronto was unreliable.

In 1888 the MSR purchased most of Beaty's remaining property, and registered subdivision plans, but building was slow. On the south side of Glengrove, two houses were built in 1889: modern numbers 53 (later known as "Leptis Magna," now demolished), and 173. Property speculator Nicholas Garland (who lived on the Strathgowan Farm, east of Yonge) built 23, 89, 97 and 117 about 1890.

The Metropolitan Street Railway line was electrified starting in 1890, and by 1895 it had reached the top of Hogg's Hollow, improving access to the city. Just south of Lawrence Avenue, Wilfrid S. Dinnick developed plans for Lawrence Park in 1909; and at the North Toronto town limits, Robert Dack and Nicholas Garland laid out Teddington Park in 1912. Development in the Glengrove area took off, too. The 1913 street directory lists nine houses on the south side of Glengrove. There were now thirteen on the north side, but six were vacant. Much of the surrounding area, and the land between North Toronto and the city, remained agricultural for decades.



Yonge Street, looking north to Glengrove in 1922 CTA
There was still plenty of vacant land for building.

In these days of tear-downs and brash builds, it was a refreshing treat to stop at 117 Glengrove and meet the dedicated owners. They have lovingly restored

Glengrove continues on page 4

Glengrove continued from page 3

the front of their home to its 1890s glory, even sourcing curved glass to replace leaky windows in the tower. A large addition to the rear has been so carefully designed that it is only evident when comparing today's house with an old photo.



117 Glengrove Ave. W. In 1905 the tenants were the Keith family. Pictured are George A. Keith, and his boys Haddow (age 6) and William (3). TPL
Haddow enlisted in 1915, at the age of 18, and served with the Royal Naval Air Service. On his return, he studied medicine at the University of Toronto. Dr. H.M. Keith was a renowned pediatrician. His brother William became a pediatric neurosurgeon at



117 Glengrove today

SEPTEMBER: Mike Bryan & Keith Wright *History of the Phonograph and Recorded Sound*

Mike Bryan (President) and Keith Wright from the Canadian Antique Phonograph Society (CAPS) brought passion and enthusiasm to their talk. Both have done extensive research on the subject, and Keith is particularly interested in Canadian-made phonographs, gramophones and talking machines.



Mike Bryan and Keith Wright with Nipper, the famous HMV dog.
Photo: Alex Grenzebach

They traced the evolution of recorded sound from the early experimentation of Thomas Edison in the 1870s with sound recording through the golden age of the early 20th century up to the 1950s, just before solid-state electronics led to the digital age. It is a fascinating history of inventors, entrepreneurs and corporate consolidation, and the rising insatiable public demand for recorded music.

The mid-19th century saw rapid scientific and technical advancement, and rising incomes, which made possible such inventions as the telegraph, the telephone and typewriters. In the 1870s, Thomas Edison first demonstrated the recording and playing-back of sound using tin foil to record the vibrations of a stylus. (The first recorded sound was of Thomas Edison saying "Mary had a little lamb.") Throughout most of mankind's existence sound could only be heard live. Imagine the excitement of hearing a voice recorded and played back for the first time ever! Using a reproduction of Thomas Edison's original apparatus, Mike and Keith made and played back a recording for us. Edison's initial

Phonograph continues on page 5

Phonograph continued from page 4

patent identified possible applications for “business dictation” and for people who are blind, but made no mention of recording music.

Preoccupied with electric lighting, Edison did not immediately pursue sound recording. Alexander Graham Bell began the commercialisation process by replacing the foil with a wax cylinder for recording vibrations in 1886. A competing approach of recording on a flat disc was developed by Emile Berliner in 1890, using a device he called a “Gram-o-phon”. The three companies initially formed by these individuals eventually evolved into Edison Records, Columbia Records, and Victor Records (later RCA Victor) respectively, and they monopolised the industry until 1920.

The flat disc was easier to produce on a commercial scale than the cylinder, and by 1910 discs became the most common arrangement for phonographs. The first discs were made of shellac, and designed to operate at 78 rpm: a 12-inch disc provided 4 to 5 minutes of recording. Before 1898, phonographs were hand cranked with no consistent speed. In 1898, Edison developed a clockwork mechanism with an internal governor which provided a consistent playback speed, and eventually allowed for the addition of an electric motor drive. This resulted in a large improvement in sound playback quality and led to massive sales of phonographs and records between 1900 and 1915.

To record sounds, words were spoken, or music was played, into a horn which captured the vibrations, which moved a stylus on a wax recording surface. This recording technology was used until the invention of the microphone in 1927. This method had significant limitations, requiring all of the musicians to crowd around a single large horn to make a recording. It was difficult to pick up low sounds, and for this reason string basses were often replaced with tubas in early recordings.

MORE ABOUT PHONOGRAPHS:

Canadian Antique Phonograph Society:

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

The Virtual Gramophone. Canadian Virtual Sound Recordings:

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/gramophone/index-e.html>



The first decades of the 20th century were the “Golden Age” of phonographs. These large pieces of furniture were proudly displayed as a status symbol (especially the size of the horn, although these went out of fashion in the 1920s). As the patents of the first three companies ran out, the industry expanded. After WW1 many factories were converted from military manufacturing to the production of phonographs: in Canada there were forty-eight phonograph manufacturers. In 1929, because of the economic crash, sales dropped dramatically and the industry collapsed. Even with the advent of longer-playing plastic 33rpm and 45rpm records in the 1940s, overall sales never returned to their former levels.



Gramophone manufactured by Victor, and “Graphophone” by Columbia Photo: Alex Grenzebach

Our presenters brought ten examples of antique phonographs and treated the audience to samples of early recordings from a number of the machines. Hearing early voice recordings, brass bands and the Andrews Sisters truly brought the sounds of a bygone era to life.

Bill Dawson

OCTOBER: David Crombie & John Sewell
How We Changed Toronto

The society had the privilege of hearing two past mayors of Toronto share their thoughts about the city past, present and future. David Crombie grew up in Swansea, and served as mayor from 1972 to 1978. John Sewell grew up in the Beaches, and served as mayor from 1978 to 1980. He has recently written a book entitled *How We Changed Toronto* (for more information see page 6). Although of different political stripes, both men believe in community consultation and

Crombie & Sewell continues on page 6

Crombie & Sewell continued from page 5

collaboration, rather than the traditional top-down decision-making that City Hall practised in the past.

Crombie began his professional life as a lecturer in politics and urban affairs at Ryerson. In the 1960s, he became involved in the urban reform movement, disturbed that the City's plans for a "modern city" were not adequately protecting existing communities, and that politicians and planners were not involving residents in decision-making. A pivotal example was the demolition of a working-class Cabbagetown neighbourhood for the construction of Regent Park. In 1966 Sewell, a fledgling lawyer, became involved with the residents of Trefann Court, just south of Regent Park, whose homes were threatened by further "urban renewal." He organised an extensive set of meetings of the residents with City officials, a revolutionary idea at the time, and they successfully prevented the demolition of their community.



John Sewell and David Crombie, 2015

Photo: Lynda Moon

Mayor Crombie created the Core Area Task Force to take a broader view of downtown development, and frame principles to ensure Toronto retained its character, and did not follow the

American model of suburban living, expressways and decaying or abandoned cores. The 1973 report suggested a two year hold on further development while policies were established for controls on size, use, access, urban design and historical preservation. This is when the famous temporary height bylaw was enacted, limiting new structures to forty-five feet. Crombie says the number was chosen when an advisor of Scottish ancestry quipped that this idea was as revolutionary as the Scottish '45 - the Jacobite Rising of 1745 - and might have the same explosive effect among developers!

Another milestone was the development of the massive St. Lawrence neighbourhood. Utilising old railway land and abandoned industrial properties, it mixed affordable and mid-priced housing,

achieving high density in a liveable neighbourhood. Its 1970s design was collaborative, and developed by a Working Committee established by Crombie, chaired by Sewell, and composed of local residents and councillors. The plan was based on downtown Toronto's 19th century plan, the new development's alignment and scale reflecting the existing grid of downtown streets and houses. It tested common practice by putting both the public and separate schools in the same building, for example, and successfully avoided the mistakes of inward-looking low-income high-density developments so common in the 1960s and '70s in North America and Britain.



Former Mayor David Crombie with future Mayor John Sewell, November 1978

There was popular support for the reform council of the 1970s, as all the reformers served at least two terms. Their success relied heavily on the commitment of active citizens, and regular meetings of community groups with Councillors and City staff. The pre-amalgamation Council of the City of Toronto was much smaller than the current amalgamated City Council, and it was possible for Councillors to prepare comprehensive presentations on important topics, and for their peers to do in-depth evaluations of proposals. Now that the amalgamated City Council is so big, there is much less opportunity for members of the public to hear and be heard, and for Councillors to develop relationships and allow ideas to evolve. Let's hope ways can be found to scale-up the consultation-based, reform-minded successes of the 1970s to be effective in our larger amalgamated city.

JOHN SEWELL'S LATEST BOOK

How We Changed Toronto: the inside story of twelve creative, tumultuous years in civic life, 1969-1980. (Toronto: Lorimer, 2015)

Meet the author

Weds. 9 March, 2016, 7:00 pm
Leaside Library Community Room



NOVEMBER: Liz Driver, Fiona Lucas & Mary Williamson

Holiday Treats of North Toronto

Three culinary historians presented a delicious programme with a seasonal slant. Liz, Fiona and Mary found that many of their vintage cookbooks originated in North Toronto, so they could share recipes with a local flavour. The generous trio presented all attendees with a booklet of heritage recipes, and brought treats for us to sample.

Cookbooks have long been used as fundraisers, from Mrs. E.J. Powell's high profile and grandly titled *Toronto, Queen City of Canada, Cook Book* (sold to assist those "financially embarrassed" during World War 1), to smaller booklets produced by local churches and synagogues.

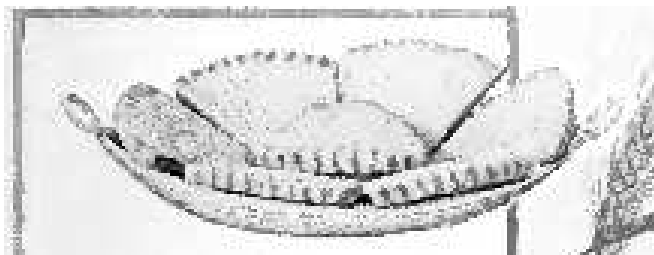
In 1877, the Ladies Committee of the Hospital for Sick Children produced *The Home Cook Book* to raise funds for the new hospital. This seems to be the earliest community cookbook, and is also the earliest Canadian reference Liz Driver has found to her family's Christmas favourite, carrot pudding, which is brought to the table flaming. This is a less expensive version of the rich English plum



pudding, with root vegetables replacing some of the expensive dried fruit. Carrot pudding seems to have been particularly popular in Ontario. Three recipes were included in Mrs. Powell's 1915 *Toronto Cook Book*, produced at her home at 53

Glen Grove Avenue, at the corner of Duplex.

Another Christmas staple is shortbread. In its earliest form, its flavour would be unlike today's, as it was not until the late eighteenth century that wheat flour and sugar became affordable. Mrs. Powell included a recipe in the *Toronto Cook Book*.



Shortbread

One pound flour, ten ounces butter and lard, quarter pound brown sugar, one egg. Mix all together on board till firm enough to roll. Then cut in squares and bake in moderate oven.

Shortbread recipe in Mrs. Powell's *Toronto Cookbook*.

Turkish delight was a favourite Christmas treat. It originated in Persia, and by the eighteenth century had become a popular sweetmeat for the wealthy in England. Made of gelatine and sugar flavoured with lemon, orange or rosewater, it was much easier to make at home when gelatine became commercially available in 1891, and housewives no longer had to boil hooves. It appears in recipes in local church cookbooks like Eglinton Methodist Mission Circle's *Tested Recipes* (1915) and Glebe Road United Church's *The Joy Givers' Cook Book* (c. 1928).

For local historians and genealogists, it is particularly interesting when the recipes are attributed to the contributors. *Tested Recipes*, for instance, contains favourites from Mrs. Forsey Page, Mrs. Robert Stibbard and Mrs. W. G. Ellis.

CINNAMON APPLES—

Mrs. Forsey Page.

8 or 10 apples.

3 cups water.

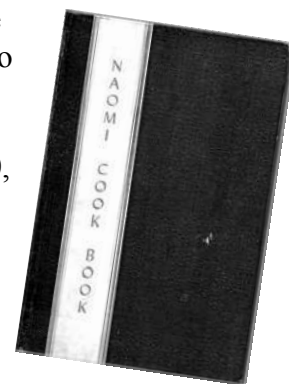
1 cup sugar.

½ cup small cinnamon candies.

Make syrup of water, sugar and candy, add the apples, peeled and cored. Cook gently so that apples will remain whole.

Katherine Caldwell Bayley was Food Editor of the *Canadian Home Journal* from the 1920s, until it merged with *Chatelaine* in 1958. She wrote for various newspapers, and in the 1930s had a programme on CFRB using her pseudonym: "The Ann Adam Cooking School of the Air." Recipes were tested in her home kitchen at 42 Roselawn.

In the Jewish community, the Naomi Chapter of the Toronto Hadassah produced four editions of the *Naomi Cook Book* between 1928 and 1960, and included contributors' names. In the 1940s the *Jewish Standard* newspaper produced the *Book of Jewish Recipes*.



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Treats continued from page 7

North Toronto Cooking Schools

The North Toronto branch of Consumer's Gas (Yonge and St. Clements) offered cooking classes by home economists from the 1920s. There was also a series promoted by the Women's Committee of the Art Gallery of Ontario which featured celebrity chefs like James Beard. These were very popular - even with men!

Mrs. Lillian Kaplun (who published six cookbooks) had a cooking school upstairs at 502b Eglinton West from 1964 into the 1970s. Her students regarded her as "the First Lady" of Jewish cooking in Toronto.



We have something that is only imitated in Canada

Sultana Rahat Lokoum

This is the **GENUINE** Turkish delight.
Put up in 1 lb. boxes, and is a very ready seller.
It is one of the lines you should have for Xmas trade.

~~~~~

**THE EBY, BLAIN CO., LIMITED**  
WHOLESALE GROCERS, Etc. TORONTO.

Even in 1901, some knew Turkish delight by its original name, Rahat Lokoum. *Globe*, 5 December, 1901

### MORE ABOUT HISTORIC COOKING

Culinary Historians of Canada  
<http://culinaryhistorians.ca/digest>

*Culinary Landmarks: A Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks, 1825-1949*, Elizabeth Driver (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008)

*Hearth and Home: Women and the Art of Open Hearth Cooking*, Fiona Lucas (Toronto: Lorimer, 2006)

Find vintage cookbooks online at [archive.org](http://archive.org)

### 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](mailto:alexg@alumni.uwaterloo.ca) and I will add you to the distribution list. *We will not give out your email address.*

Alex. Grenzebach

## Heritage Calendar

### Market Gallery

2nd floor South St. Lawrence Market, 95 Front Street East

### *Framing Toronto: City of Toronto Art Acquisitions 2010 to 2015*

Featuring a wide variety of works in the City's collections.

**DATES:** To 6 Feb, 2016

### *Tunnel Visions: The Story of Toronto's Subway*

in partnership with the Toronto Transportation Society.

**DATES:** 13 February to 11 June, 2016

**INFO:** 416-392-7604

<http://tinyurl.com/odh2xeo>

### Toronto Postcard Club: 35th Annual Show

Japanese Cultural Centre, 6 Garamond Court (Don Mills & Wynford Dr)

Pursue your interest in history with vintage postcards! The Toronto Postcard Club is pleased to present its 35th annual show. There are likely to be some century old postcards about your subject in the thousands offered for sale. If you like historical images, this show is for you!

**DATE:** Sunday, 21 February, 2016, 10:00-5:00

**ADMISSION:** \$5

**INFO:** [torontopostcardclub.com](http://torontopostcardclub.com)

### **FREE!**

Member Gary Schlee has copies of the Ontario Genealogical Society's journal *Families* back to 1997, available to anyone who is interested. Check out the topics online at [https://www.ogs.on.ca/pdfs/FamiliesIndex\\_1962-2007.pdf](https://www.ogs.on.ca/pdfs/FamiliesIndex_1962-2007.pdf)  
Contact NTHS Newsletter editor for information.

## North Toronto Historical Society

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

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[www.northtorontohistoricalsociety.org](http://www.northtorontohistoricalsociety.org)

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

### 2015 Executive (\*Directors)

*President & Programmes:* \*Lynda Moon

*Membership Co-ordinator:* \*Alex Grenzebach, 416-483-8475

*Newsletter Editor:* \*Hilary Dawson

*Treasurer:* Bill Dawson

*Members-at-large:* \*Doug Campbell, \*Brian Dunfield, Ken Pon

*Past President:* John Hutchinson

*Publicity:*

*Secretary:* Flo Morson

*Research:* Hilary Dawson

*Walks:*