



NORTH TORONTO HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

North Toronto Town Hall

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SPRING 2016



North Toronto, Soudan Avenue,
29 March, 1916 CTA

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WILLARD FLIES

The big Scarboro' Beach Aeroplane in action during a recent flight. Most renowned aviator at present in America and his corps of students of aeronautics with

THE GOLDEN FLYER

A craft which skims the clouds. On the ground day and night. Most novel and interesting of all exhibits. One of a hundred special features.

Scarboro' Beach

Globe,
9 Sept 1909
See p. 6

New NTHS mailing addresses!

**283 Deloraine Avenue,
Toronto, M5M 2B2**

Please use this
address for all
membership,
correspondence
and newsletter
submissions.



Spring Programme

Join us at 7:10 for refreshments.



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

MERLE FOSTER: TORONTO'S GIRL SCULPTOR

Merle Foster was one of Toronto's best-known sculptors for nearly five decades. She was the darling of Toronto newspapers and national magazines whose reporters dubbed her "Toronto's girl sculptor." But today, almost no one remembers her. In this illustrated talk, journalist **Terry Murray** will recount the story of Foster's life, and the 10-year search it took to reconstruct it.

Wednesday 25 May, 7:30 p.m.

THE WARD: THE LIFE AND LOSS OF TORONTO'S FIRST IMMIGRANT NEIGHBOURHOOD

For over a century St. John's Ward, which extended from Yonge to University and College to Queen, served as the community where thousands of immigrants began their lives in Toronto. It was a dense vibrant neighbourhood, but the City considered it a slum and it was demolished and redeveloped in the late 1950s. **John Lorinc** and **Tatum Taylor**, editors of *The Ward* will illustrate the legacy of the neighbourhood through stories and images. Their book, *The Ward* will be available for purchase at the meeting for the special price of \$20.

Annual General Meeting

of the North Toronto Historical Society was held on 24 February, 2016. Directors elected: Doug Campbell, Hilary Dawson, Brian Dunfield, Alex Grenzebach and Lynda Moon.

(See back page for contact information.)

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 Toronto Awards: Call for Nominations

Nominations now accepted for Heritage Toronto Awards in the categories of new books, short publications, architecture and craftsmanship, media, and community heritage volunteer efforts. Deadline 13 May, 2016; awards will be presented in October. More information and forms at heritagetoronto.ca

Celebrating 200 Years: St. John's, York Mills

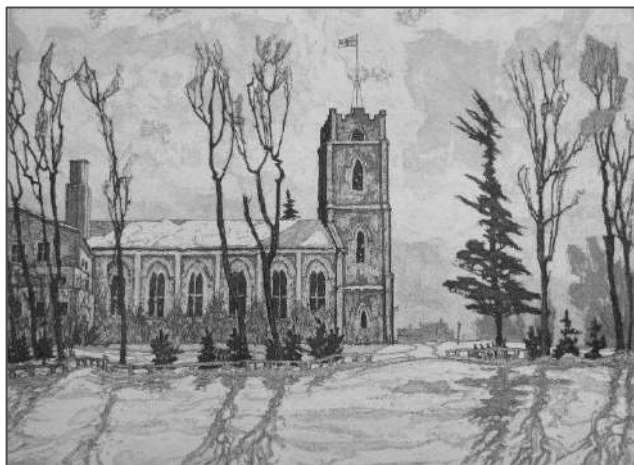
St. John's is the oldest Anglican parish church in York County. It traces its roots to a group of Anglicans who gathered for Sunday afternoon services in Seneca Ketchum's cabin in the area that would become Bedford Park. Eventually, they found a home in York Mills as a mission of St. James Church, York. The first log church was erected in 1816 on land given by Joseph Shepard. In 1844 a brick edifice was designed by architect John Howard. St. John's has seen continuous growth, but renovations and additions have kept to the spirit of Howard's design.



In North Toronto, St. Clements Anglican Church began life as a mission of St. John's.

St. John's will be a featured site for Doors Open Toronto, on Sat-Sun May 28-29.

For more information about 200th celebrations:
tinyurl.com/guc2xje



St. John's, York Mills, by Nicholas Hornyansky

17th Annual Doors Open Toronto

The Doors Open Toronto 2016 theme of *Re-used, Re-visited and Revised* will explore the adaptive re-use of buildings throughout Toronto's architectural history.

Take the opportunity to visit some remarkable buildings not usually open to the public on Sat. 28 May and Sun. 29 May, 2016.

For more information: tinyurl.com/phdzo7o



Top Ten Heritage Conversions in Toronto

tinyurl.com/hfz35jg

Posted on blogto by Derek Flack. Flack's favourites include the Summerhill LCBO (see North Toronto CPR anniversary below), the Distillery District and 1 King West.

A photo tour of 15 projects giving new life to Toronto heritage buildings

tinyurl.com/jl27x84

From buzzbuzzhomenews "the world's hottest real estate stories," selected by Josh Sherman and James Bombales.

100 Years Old!



North Toronto C.P.R. Station, 1916

One hundred years ago, the North Toronto C.P.R. Station opened on Yonge Street (between Price St. and Shaftesbury Ave.). It has been beautifully restored and sympathetically adapted for use as an L.C.B.O. shop (south side) and Brewers' Retail shop (north side).

Winter Lecture Series

JANUARY: **Marta O'Brien**

Corktown: Booze & Blarney
by Marta O'Brien

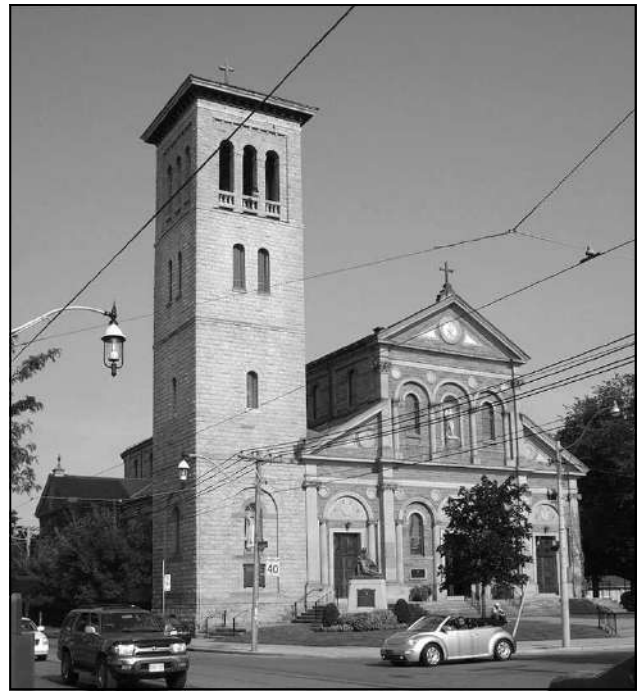
At our January meeting, I told the story of one of Toronto's oldest neighbourhoods by showing photographs of its architecture. Corktown is located between Berkeley St., River St., South Shuter St., and the lake.

Industries -- including breweries, Consumer's Gas, and the Gooderham & Worts Distillery -- were a big part of Corktown. The Don River provided water and the lake and railways transportation. Land near the marshy Don was undesirable and cheap. Consequently, it was a working-class neighbourhood and famous as a home to many Irish immigrants in the mid-1800s. The area was part of St. Lawrence Ward when the City was incorporated in 1834.

Corktown has some incredible historic sites. It includes the oldest Catholic parish in Toronto (St. Paul's), the oldest school building (Enoch Turner Schoolhouse), and the oldest church building in Toronto (Little Trinity Anglican). Even the Parliament Buildings of the late 1700s were here. The Ontario Heritage Trust has acquired the Parliament site and is working to provide proper interpretation and use of the land.

Before 1822 there was no Catholic church between Kingston and Detroit, and many of the Irish immigrants were Roman Catholic. James Baby, a prominent French-Canadian Catholic, bought 10 acres south of Queen Street for the church. St. Paul's was designed by John Ewart in the Gothic Revival style. Sisters of St. Joseph came and established a convent called the White House. Their House of Providence served as old age home, orphanage, home for the disabled, and hospital until the buildings were demolished in the early 1960s for expressway ramps. St. Paul's remains, in a larger Renaissance Revival building (1887 Joseph Connelly). It's now a Basilica: a great honour bestowed by the Pope on an old parish with a record of good works.

There are several heritage school buildings in Corktown. The Enoch Turner Schoolhouse was a



St. Paul's Basilica, 83 Power St. Photo: Marta O'Brien

gift from wealthy brewer Turner in 1848 at a time when school was not free. It became a Board school when public education came in, then was a Sunday School and later served theatre workshops and similar activities. It was saved from demolition in the early 1970s by the Enoch Turner Foundation, and is now owned by the Ontario Heritage Trust. Toronto schoolchildren can experience the schoolhouse museum and our own Hilary Dawson is a schoolmarm there. The former Palace Street School (1859 Joseph Sheard) was later a hotel and home to the famous Canary Restaurant. Park Public School opened in 1853 and was later replaced with a larger building. Since Mandela's 2001 visit, it's been Nelson Mandela Park Public School.

Big change came to Corktown in the 1990s. It shared a problem with the King and Spadina area: the City had zoned these districts for manufacturing, but globalization and other factors had caused most factories in Toronto to close. In 1996, Mayor Barbara Hall worked with people including Jane Jacobs to develop a solution called "The Kings." The industrial zoning was eliminated to allow residential and commercial uses in the areas around King & Parliament and King & Spadina. Soon, buildings which had housed Corktown's Aluminum & Crown Stopper Co. and

Corktown continues on page 4

Corktown continued from page 3

the Adam Beck Cigar Box Manufacturing Co. were repurposed as offices and residences. One old Consumer's Gas Purifying House became a police station.



Aluminum & Crown Stopper Co,
334 King St. E. *Photo: Marta O'Brien*

The most recent transformation in Corktown is the development of the West Don Lands. The PanAm Games Athletes' Village will soon be housing for Torontonians, and there's already a YMCA near Front & Cherry streets. Corktown Common is a 7.3 hectare (18 acre) park at the foot of Lower River Street and Bayview Avenue. It includes a marsh, lawns, urban prairies, paths, playgrounds, and places for eating with a permanent barbeque and picnic tables.

Corktown is not immune to the condo boom, but here the new buildings are mid-rise (5 or 6 storeys) and townhouses rather than towers. One exception is the towers on the edges of the Distillery District. Like former working class neighbourhoods such as Cabbagetown, Corktown is a great place to live close to the downtown.

TAKE A CITYWALK WITH MARTA
citywalks.ca

Are you interested in exploring some of Toronto's most distinctive neighbourhoods and districts? Our city has many intriguing and diverse buildings dating from the 1820s to the 21st century, and there are often engaging stories behind the architecture.



FEBRUARY: Danièle Caloz

The Invisible Presence: The French in Toronto From Brûlé to Today

Danièle Caloz, co-founder of the Société d'Histoire de Toronto, told the story of four hundred years of French presence in the Toronto area, from the earliest European explorers to recently arrived francophone Syrian refugees.

The Humber & Baby Point

Étienne Brûlé is acknowledged to be the first European to venture into what is now Ontario. He was sent by Samuel de Champlain in 1608 to explore and make alliances with native groups. In 1615, he travelled the Toronto Carrying Place route, which connected Lakes Simcoe and Ontario by way of the Humber River. In the area that is now Baby Point was the native village of Teiaiagon, which became a place of meeting with First Nations groups for Europeans like Father Hennepin and Cavalier de la Salle.

The French built a couple of trading forts on the Humber, and in 1775 a more defensive structure, Fort Rouillé was erected on the lakeshore, a little further east. After 1763, this continued as a trading area when fur-trader and merchant Jean-Baptiste Rousseau built a residence on the site of one of the old French forts on the Humber. Rousseau met the Simcoes when they arrived, and proved a very useful interpreter. Eventually he moved his family and his business into the fledgling Town of York. Like many French residents of the future GTA, he served in the militia on the British side during the War of 1812. Rousseau was at the Battle of Queenston Heights, and died soon after of pleurisy.

Another loyal member of the military during the War of 1812 was Jacques (James) Baby. Born to a French merchant family in Detroit, he was a member of the Upper Canada Legislature through the 1790s. In 1813, he was taken prisoner at the Battle of Moraviantown. He moved his family to York, where one of his sons took part in the Types Riot in 1826, when the irate offspring of Family Compact members reacted to William Lyon Mackenzie's editorial criticism of their fathers by throwing his printing equipment in the lake. Jacques Baby built a country house on the site of

The French in Toronto continues on page 5

The French in Toronto continued from page 4

Teiaiagon and the old French fort on the Humber. This huge property would be developed by architect and developer Robert Home Smith in 1910, as the Baby Point neighbourhood.

Quetton St. George was another French merchant who settled in the Town of York. He fled the French Revolution after his father and brother were imprisoned, moving to England. A group of these émigrés was sent to British North America. St. George was very successful in trading with native groups and merchants. He built a store in York, but was never accepted by the colonial aristocracy because of his French accent, and his suspected questionable (and not aristocratic) background – and, of course, the fact that most of York’s elite owed him money. He returned to France in 1815.



Laurent Quetton St. George built the first brick house in the Town of York in 1809. It was at the northeast corner of King and Frederick Streets. Photo c.1885 TPL

Lower Cabbagetown

The late 19th century saw the migration of French workers from the US and Canada, seeking jobs in the large Toronto factories growing in the east end. Many were bachelors who lived in rooming houses with the reputation of being “more strict than a convent.” These French workers and their families lived south of Queen Street. In 1887 the parish of Sacré-Coeur was established to serve Roman Catholics who wanted to worship in French. The following year, the congregation purchased a former Presbyterian church on King near Sackville Street. Sacré-Coeur was not just a place of worship, but also a vital community centre.

For many of these families life was a struggle, and they joined other Toronto poor in scavenging coal

from Consumers’ Gas yards and along the railway tracks. They encountered hostility from other Torontonians, particularly the Irish Protestants living north of Queen Street. The French also found themselves caught in the middle of altercations between Irish Protestant and Catholic groups.



Gendron Manufacturing Company, 411 Richmond Street East

Gendron opened its first Toronto establishment on Wellington St. E. in the 1880s. The firm hired mostly French Canadians. In 1895 the Richmond St. factory was designed by J. Winston Siddall. It is designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

World War 1 brought skilled French migrants to Toronto from major Quebec industrial centres to assist with wartime production. Most of these people returned to their Quebec homes. During and after World War 2, many francophones settled in the city.

A notable son of Lower Cabbagetown was Charles Sauriol, the naturalist and early conservationist, was born at Gerrard and Sumac Street in 1904, and attended Sacré-Coeur School. He co-founded the Don Valley Conservation Association and also the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

MORE ABOUT THE FRENCH IN TORONTO

Étienne Brûlé: Paris Bourgeois, by Danièle Caloz
Interesting article about this elusive man; includes digitised 17th century articles.
champlainsociety.ca

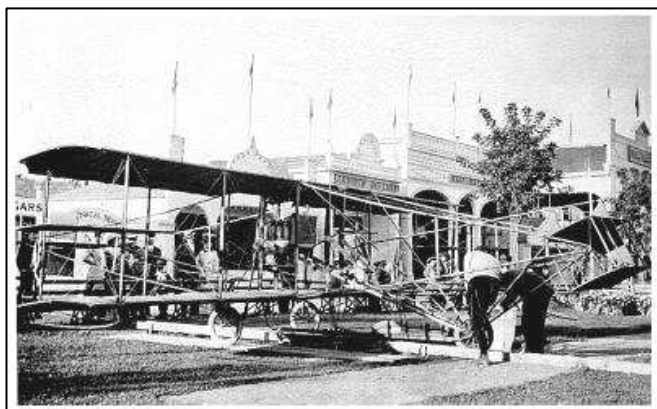
The Shared Path Discovery Walk

Walk back through time to experience the Humber River as an ancient corridor of Aboriginal settlement and trade, a route for the fur trade with Europeans, and a reason for the founding of the modern City of Toronto. Download the map which shows where you can find “Story Circles” which relate the history of this Canadian Heritage River.
tinyurl.com/z2u4tqg

MARCH: Robert D. Galway

Early Airfields of Toronto: de Lesseps to Dowsview and Beyond

Dr. Robert Galway gave a fascinating presentation on the history of aviation in Toronto, from the 1909 one-man airshow at Scarborough Beach to the 1930s selection of Malton for Toronto's international airport. His information was illustrated with photographs from private collections and various public archives.



1909 Scarborough Beach: Charles' F. Willard's Curtiss Golden Flyer.

Notice the wooden guide rails to keep the plane on track

One of the first air shows in North America was presented at the Scarborough Beach Amusement Park in September, 1909. It featured only one plane, a Curtiss Golden Flyer with pilot Charles F. Willard. Space at the park was cramped, so Willard had a wooden track constructed for more even, straight take off. Fascinated onlookers crowded the beach as he returned, shortening his runway. He landed in the lake, and had to swim back to shore.

The following year, a more successful show was mounted at the Trethewey Model Farm near Weston. It featured the famous Count Jacques de Lesseps, the first man to cross the English Channel in a plane. He flew his Bleriot bi-plane in a wide loop over the city. While in Toronto, he met railway magnate Sir William Mackenzie (owner of Benvenuto). The eldest Mackenzie daughter, Grace, fell in love with flying, and with de Lessups, too. They were married in 1911.

The Donlands airfield near Todmorden Mills was the site of a record-breaking flight from Hamilton to Toronto in 1911. Charles F. Willard's Curtiss was beaten by J.A.D. McCurdy's Gnome bi-plane.

With the outbreak of World War 1, the plane acquired a new purpose as a military tool. A Royal Flying Corps was established in Canada in 1916, with its first unit at Long Branch. The following year, it moved to Armour Heights, on the former property of Col Frederick Robins. Meanwhile, under the guidance of J.A.D. McCurdy, the Curtiss Aviation School was established at the Long Branch airfield.

Armour Heights also provided pilot training. The mortality rate for student pilots was horrendous. A new training regimen was adopted, known as the Armour Heights System, which resulted in a tremendous decrease in student crashes. In 1918 a School of Special Flying was established at Armour Heights to train instructors.



JN4 "Canuck" Trainer over barracks at Armour Heights RFC Aerodrome, 1917 placesandplanes.ca

Armour Heights has another claim to fame. In 1917 a young American volunteer nurse at the Spadina Military Hospital spent as much time as she could around the Armour Heights airfield. Her name: Amelia Earhart.

While not a flying school as such, the University of Toronto ground-school programme deserves as much credit as other WW1 air force training facilities. It was established in 1917 for RFC and RAF cadets, and trained observers, mechanics and riggers.

The history of aviation is, of course, intertwined with the history of airmail. In June 1918, Capt. Brian Peck, an air force pilot stationed at Leaside,

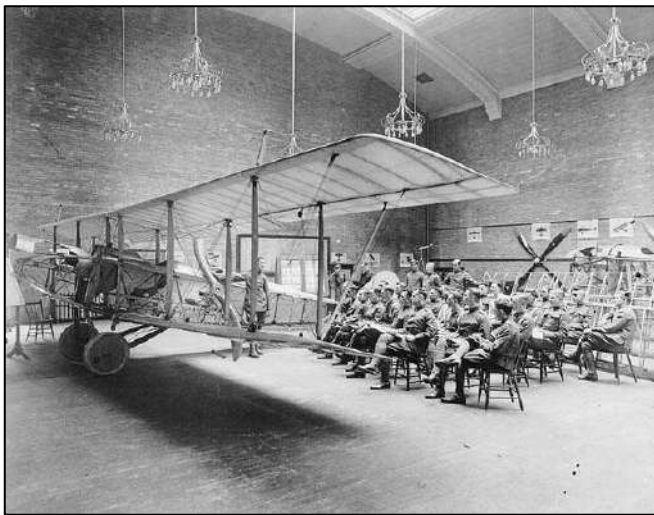
Airfields continues on page 7

requested permission to fly to Montreal. There, he picked up a sack of mail for delivery to Toronto (and beverages for his friend's wedding). The event is commemorated by a plaque in the parkette at Brentcliffe Rd. and Broadway Ave.

The delivery of mail by air to remote locations, forestry and mining camps was an obvious development. At first private companies were authorized by the government, and were even allowed to issue their own stamps. One such service was that of Jack V. Elliott of Hamilton.



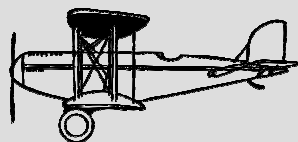
Jack V. Elliott carried mail to our speaker's home town of Red Lake



Lecture on rigging, School of Aviation, Royal Flying Corps Canada, University of Toronto

MORE ABOUT AVIATION

Visit Robert D. Galway's website about *Places, Planes, People and Pilots*, and more: placesandplanes.ca



The Early Airfields of Toronto From de Lesseps to de Havilland and Beyond
blurb.ca/b/6804211-the-early-airfields-of-toronto

50 Years Ago

Items from the North Toronto Herald, 1966, contributed by Alex. Grenzbach. The Herald is available at Northern District Library.



In the great Northeast power blackout on November 9, 1965, over 30,000,000 people were affected. The Herald reported that "Downtown bars were filled to capacity. There were, of course, no cocktail bars for North Torontonians to pause in."

North Toronto's "dry" bylaw was ended by a decision of the Ontario Supreme Court which ruled that the former Town of North Toronto's bylaw, passed in 1905, was no longer in effect.

The North Toronto Memorial Arena in Eglinton Park finally opened in February.



50 Years Ago continues on page 8

50 Years Ago continued from page 7

The Bloor-Danforth subway opened between Keele and Woodbine on February 26. The service was to be fully integrated with the Yonge-University line for a trial period of six months.

The Bedford Park Home Owners Association opposed a developer's application to build high rise apartments on Ranleigh Avenue.

Muir Park
HOTEL
(Formerly Glenview Terraces)
Completely renovated hotel rooms and furnished suites
2904 YONGE STREET HU 8-1193

North Toronto C. I. student Garth Drabinsky won a public speaking competition sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of North Toronto. He spoke on "The Bible in History" and asked "Is Toronto A Swinging City?"

Order Delicious
HOT CROSS BUNS
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and
CHOCOLATE NOVELTIES
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SHOPPE**
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HU 5-6393

Heritage Calendar

Enoch Turner Schoolhouse Foundation

106 Trinity Street
enochturnerschoolhouse.ca

Annual General Meeting and Special Lecture with Ted Barris: *Fire Canoe*

The story of how and why steamboats, or fire canoes as they were called by aboriginal people, brought about Canada's rapid expansion.

DATE: 26 April, 2016, 6 p.m. AGM; 7 p.m. lecture

Shining a Light on the Forgotten: The British Home Children in Canada. Lori Oschefski

DATE: 1 June, 2016, 7 p.m.

TICKETS & INFO: 416-327-6997

dkeffer@enochturnerschoolhouse.ca

Walks



Jane's Walk

This year, the Jane's Walk festival is on May 6th, 7th & 8th!

janeswalk.org/canada/toronto

ROMwalks

416-586-8000

rom.on.ca/en/whats-on/romwalks

Heritage Toronto

This year, all tours require pre-registration.

416-338-1338

heritagetoronto.org/programs/tours/

Lost Rivers

lostrivers.ca/WalkSchd.htm

Toronto Discovery Walks

Do-it-yourself with downloaded maps

tinyurl.com/jaluufw

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



Submissions for the next *Newsletter* by

10 June to dawsonbh@rogers.com or call 416-481-6622.

North Toronto Historical Society

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

NOTE NEW ADDRESS % 283 Deloraine Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5N 2B2

www.northtorontohistoricalsociety.org

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

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