



NORTH TORONTO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

North Toronto Town Hall

VOL. 41 NO. 1

SPRING 2017



Spring Programme

Join us at 7:10 for refreshments.



Wednesday, 31 May, 7:30 p.m.

FAMILY TIES : ONTARIO TURNS 150

This illustrated talk will focus on stories of four families in Ontario at the time of Confederation, and how their lives intersected with larger historical forces of the era. The presentation will be delivered by **Dr. Jay Young**, Outreach Officer at the Archives of Ontario, and curator of the Archives' *Family Ties* exhibit.

A CULINARY TOUR OF CHINATOWN



A summary of **Chef Leo Chan's** April presentation will appear in the next Newsletter.

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Annual General Meeting

of the North Toronto Historical Society was held on 22 February, 2017. 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.

1907 North Toronto Bank Demolished



In January, the demolition of the Bank of Montreal building at 2444 Yonge Street (at Roselawn) was met with shock by North Toronto residents, and outrage in the wider heritage community. Local politicians were also taken aback. The *Beaux Arts* bank was built in 1907, and was one of the few remaining structures dating from the municipality of North Toronto (1890-1912). Its significance as a heritage building had been identified several years ago, but it had not yet been added to the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties.

This particular failure illustrates two major issues in protecting Toronto's built heritage. Firstly, the huge backlog of buildings under consideration for listing or designating suggests that Heritage Preservation Services (a department of City Planning) is horrendously under staffed. Secondly, City Council did not have the authority to delay the issuing of a demolition permit on a commercial building, even

if it is under consideration for designation.

Commercial buildings (like banks) are not covered by the same legislation as residences. It appears that, lacking a sympathetic developer, the bank was doomed (as are other non-residential buildings).

Council was quick to pass a motion requesting changes to provincial legislation, allowing the City to enact by-laws to streamline the designation process and the issuing of demolition permits. Of course, it takes more than legislation to save heritage buildings: it takes commitment on the part of politicians, backed up in the budget.

Thanks are extended to Lynda Moon (NTHS president), Linda McCarthy (director of the Lytton Park Residents' Organization), and all the other dedicated souls who put in countless hours in an effort to have 2444 Yonge Street protected.

Now it's your turn. Contact your provincial and municipal representatives and let them know that safeguarding our city's built heritage starts with them.



Within a few hours, a 110-year-old building was a pile of rubble.
Photo: Lynda Moon

MORE ABOUT 2444 YONGE & DESIGNATION

Councillor Carmichael Greb (Ward 16), 30 Jan 2017

<http://tinyurl.com/kwco6hg>

Architects' letter to Planning and Growth Management Committee, 3 April 2017:

<http://tinyurl.com/kkwe4x5>

Built Heritage News

http://www.builtheritageneeds.ca/c_newsletter.cfm

Your Yonge-Eglinton Online Mapping Summary

<http://tinyurl.com/lk2yjr5>

2017 Heritage Toronto Awards

Nominations for the annual awards will be accepted until 6 May, 2017. For categories and full details see <http://tinyurl.com/mbtr9a3>

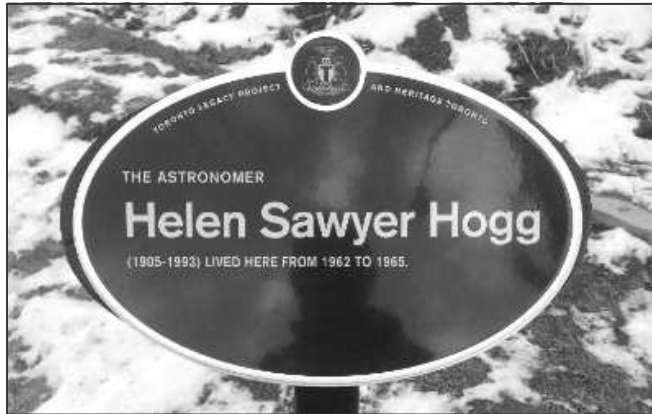
Possible Tax Aid for Historic Properties

A proposed federal tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic properties passed Second Reading in the House of Commons on 23 March, 2017.

More on Bill C-323 see <http://tinyurl.com/n5n5ujm>

Heritage Toronto Legacy Plaque Celebrates Astronomer Helen Sawyer Hogg (1905-1993)

At entrance to Alexander Muir Memorial Gardens.



Helen Hogg was not only an international authority on variable stars and globular clusters, but shared her passion with students at the University of Toronto. After the death of her husband in 1951, Helen continued his weekly column in the *Toronto Star* for thirty years. She believed *The Stars Belong to Everyone*, the title of her 1976 popular astronomy book (available at Toronto Reference Library: 523 S136).

Dr. Hogg lived in Richmond Hill, conducting her research at the David Dunlap Observatory. To ease her commute to the University's downtown campus, she leased one of the apartments at 2875 Yonge Street jointly with Mary Quayle Innis, the widow of renowned historian Harold Innis, between 1962 and 1965.

Thanks to NTHS member Peter Broughton



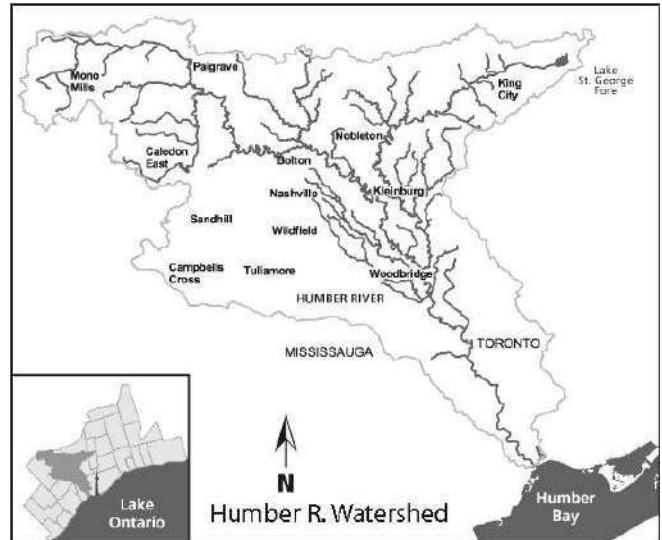
**Dr. Helen Sawyer Hogg,
Companion of the Order of Canada**

Winter Lecture Series

JANUARY: Madeleine McDowell

Humber: the History of a River

The Humber watershed is the largest in the GTA. Its sources are in the Niagara Escarpment and the Oak Ridges Moraine. In 1999 it was designated a Canadian Heritage River. To Madeleine McDowell, however, the Humber is home, and much more.



Madeleine's first close encounter with the river was as a toddler in a canoe, taken by her parents to the Humber Marshes. She was instructed to sit quietly, look, listen, and never to climb the banks and disturb the nesting birdies. Over the decades, she has become the river's advocate and storyteller.

The Humber has witnessed at least 4,000 years of indigenous presence. The river was called "Toronto" - "the place where the trees grow over the water," named for reflections of trees, or perhaps the posts of fishing weirs. The river and its hinterland were busy with hunting, fishing, settlements, trading and travel for thousands of years. There is a drop of 393 metres from the headwaters to Bloor Street, (about 90 km) making the Humber too rapid for a dugout canoe. The vast trading village of Teiaiagon (in the vicinity of Baby Point) was the first place that it was possible to scale the river bank, and was the start of the famous Carrying Place portage, part of the ancient route to Holland Landing that was later adopted by European traders. By the 1720s, French fur traders

Humber continues on page 4

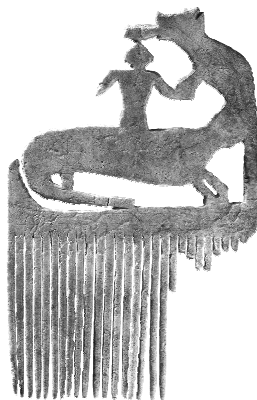
Humber continued from page 3

had built *Magasin Royale* nearby. In 1815 Jacques Bâby moved to a 200 acre lot in the area when he was appointed Inspector General of Upper Canada.

The river may have been too swift for canoes, but it was ideal for powering machinery. York's first industrial enterprise, the King's Mill, was established in 1793 at the location that now houses the Old Mill restaurant. It produced wood for the construction of Fort York, and supplied the Denison (or Dennis) shipyards. In time, there were 27 mills (lumber, grist and wool) between Bloor Street and the village of Weston.

Early in the 20th century, visionary Robert Home Smith saw the potential of the banks of the lower Humber as the site for planned garden suburbs in the English style. He accumulated land, and by 1912 was advertising his Humber Valley Surveys subdivisions, on tree-lined curving streets. Developments included Baby Point, on the site of Teiaiaگون. On the west side of the river, Home Smith opened the Old Mill Tea Room in 1914, on the first day of World War 1.

The Humber as we experience it today was the result of Hurricane Hazel in 1954. The Humber overflowed its banks, leading to the tragic loss of a fire truck and its crew. Fourteen houses on



Moose antler comb, probably Seneca, 1680s. Found during 1999 construction at Baby Point.



Isaac Devin's Boat Livery, Humber River, 1910 CTA

Raymore Avenue were washed away, and thirty-six people died. This was the catalyst that led to the amalgamation of conservation areas, and authorities were given the power to expropriate land in the flood plain. The legacy of Hurricane Hazel is Toronto's wonderful network of parks and ravines.

MORE ABOUT THE HUMBER

Aggie's Wildflower Walk (Ontario Field Naturalists)
<http://www.torontofieldnaturalists.org>

Madeleine McDowell's annual spring tour in the footsteps of Agnes Dunbar Moodie Fitzgibbon, daughter of Susanna Moodie and illustrator of *Canadian Wildflowers*, 1867.

Sun. 14 May 2017, 1:30 p.m.

Meet Lambton House, 4066 Old Dundas St.

Teiaiaگون Archaeological Report

<http://tinyurl.com/l3ol6e6>

Toronto & Region Conservation Authority

<http://tinyurl.com/kxugea5>

Current archaeological projects listed by watershed.

FEBRUARY: Hilary Dawson

Finding 19th Century Black History in Toronto

Toronto's rich black history has been sadly neglected. People of colour (both free and enslaved) lived in the Town of York from its founding in 1793: about one in thirty was identified as black, in a total population of about 670. Some of these people were considered "property" by such upstanding citizens as William Jarvis.

Black soldiers defended the country during the War of 1812. In fact, it may have been tales of these free, patriotic fighting men, told by returning enslaved servants of Kentucky officers which attracted fleeing African Americans to Canada. Men of colour were quick to enlist to defend the city during the turbulent Rebellion days.

By the 1840s, Toronto's population had risen to 16,000, and the proportion of black people was still one in thirty. The passing of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law in the US brought a flood of black refugees to Canada. Black churches and community groups willingly offered support and advice.

Black History continues on page 5

Black History continued from page 4

Slowly, evidence of the long presence and contribution of Toronto's black residents is appearing in the form of plaques and street names. On these fine spring days, see how many you can find!

MORE TORONTO BLACK HISTORY

Online Exhibits

Freedom City: Uncovering Toronto's Black History

(TPL) <http://tinyurl.com/ltnk4dy>

In the section "Uncovering the Stories of Freedom" is a great map of where many of Toronto's black residents lived in the 1840s.

Caribbean Connection: One Man's Crusade

(City of Toronto) <http://tinyurl.com/l7k3af3>

About Donald Moore, civil rights activist.

Do-it-yourself Trips

On Alan Brown's <http://torontoplaques.com> website, go to the Search page and enter <African> to find the black history plaques in Toronto.

For a more ambitious trip, visit Alan's provincial page <http://www.ontarioplaques.com> where he has a Black History category under Subjects.



Peter Russell and his half-sister Elizabeth were slaveholders. They lived in "Russell Abbey," at Palace Street (now Front) and Princess. The house burned down in 1856, but its location is marked by Abbey Lane, which parallels Front and King running between Sherbourne and Princess.

Here Peggy and her children Jupiter, Amy and Milly worked for no pay: they were human chattels of Peter Russell, who treated them with disdain, and often cruelty.

The children's father, Pompador was a free man. He has recently been commemorated in Pompador Lane, running south from Adelaide East just west of Berkeley.



William Peyton Hubbard (1842-1935) was born in Toronto, the son of former slaves from Virginia. He trained as a baker at the Toronto Model School, and ran a successful business selling his patented ovens.

In 1894, W.P. Hubbard became Toronto's first Black alderman, representing Ward 4. He served on the city council for 15 years, often working as Acting Mayor. Hubbard left his mark on many important issues, including the publicly owned water supply and hydroelectric company.

In 2016, a new park at the revitalized Old Don Jail was dedicated to W.P. Hubbard.



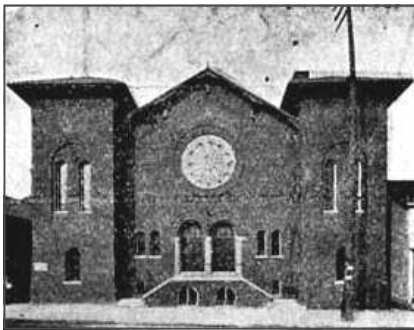
MARCH: Bill Gladstone

Reconstructing a Lost World from a Photograph: Agnes & Terauley ca. 1910

About 1910, freelance photographer William James stood at an upper window in a T.Eaton Co. warehouse, and took a picture overlooking the Agnes-Terauley intersection (now Dundas and Bay) and the northern part of The Ward. Using this image as his guide, Bill Gladstone took us on a fascinating tour of this busy district.

Waves of decidedly un-British immigrants at the end of the 19th century and into the 20th made the Ward an area teeming with unfamiliar sounds, smells and customs. There were many pockets of terrible poverty, and the Ward was generally a neighbourhood to be avoided by “old-stock Canadians.”

In the large photo, the roof of the Ontario Legislature breaks the horizon. In the centre foreground, facing Terauley, is the 1907 synagogue of the



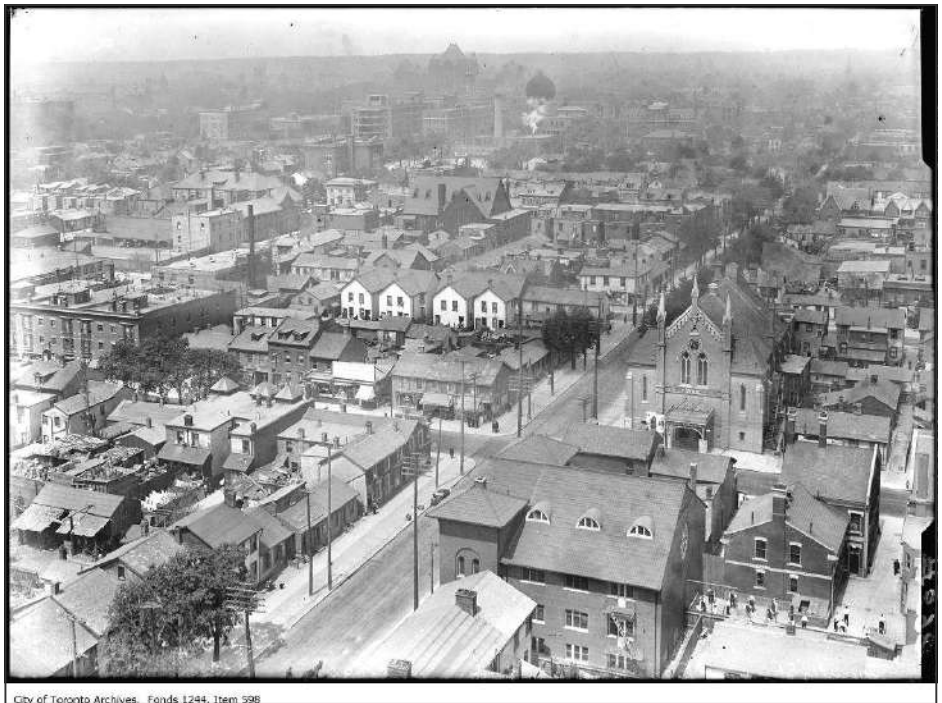
Machzikei Hadas congregation. They were Galicians, from eastern Poland.

Behind it is the rear of Agnes Street Police Station No. 2. The upper storey housed a dormitory for the night shift. Police officers were instructed to patrol this neighbourhood in pairs.

On the other side of the road is the former Agnes Street Methodist Church, built in the

1870s. It reopened in 1909 as the Yiddish Lyric Theatre. Today, this is the location of The Atrium on Bay.

Not so easy to see in this small picture are the many little shops and businesses which changed hands as the neighbourhood evolved. According to the 1913 city directory, on the north side of Agnes Street, in the block west of Terauley (Bay) are a general store (at the corner), two fruit stores, bicycle repair shop, butcher, barber, plumber, two fabric stores, grocer,



City of Toronto Archives. Fonds 1294. Item 598

**Looking north from the top of T. Eaton factory, c. 1910.
Photographer William James. CTA**



Goad's Atlas, 1910

Agnes & Terauley continues on page 7

Agnes & Terauley continued from page 6

confectioner and a billiard hall. Businesses on the south side included a Chinese laundry.

Bill's presentation gave us a real feeling for the bustling, noisy neighbourhood below William James, as he looked through his camera, out of that warehouse window over a century ago.

MORE TIME-TRAVELLING

Bill Gladstone's Webpage
<http://www.billgladstone.ca>

Plan your own adventure

Goad's Atlas

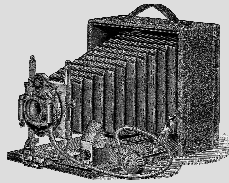
<http://goadstoronto.blogspot.ca>

City of Toronto Archives: search for photos by William James and others.

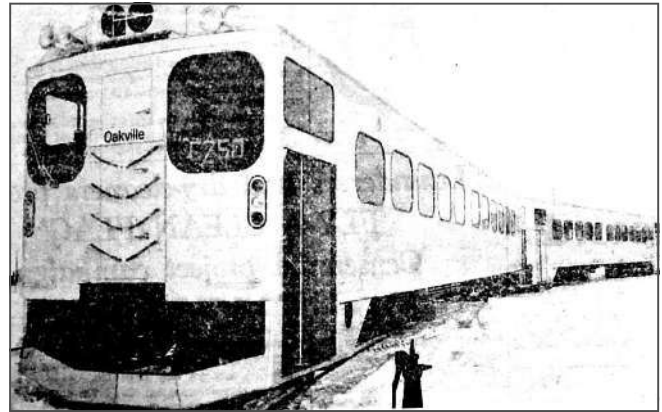
<http://tinyurl.com/ph15p6n>

Toronto Street Directories

Toronto Public Library website: go to Digital Archive and search <directory>



The Government of Russia donated 100 "Moscow Morn" rose bushes to the City of Toronto. They were planted in Alexander Muir Memorial Gardens.



Highways Minister George Gomme announced that GO trains were to "start rolling along 60 miles of C.N.R. line between Hamilton and Pickering on May 23," with full service in effect by September.

50 Years Ago

Items from the North Toronto Herald, 1967, contributed by Alex. Grenzebach. The Herald is available at Northern District Library.

Centennial projects were underway. In the City, "Toronto architects and builders on their own hook are restoring the old St. Lawrence Hall." In North York, the borough is "finishing restoration of the David Gibson House...It will be used as a museum."

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"93" Years in Business

2599 YONGE STREET
HU 9-5986

Attendance figures on the Confederation Train, which started its coast to coast tour in January, are "far beyond the range of the Centennial Commission's predictions."

Miss at home '67



Casa Loma provide a proper setting for the throne of Northern Secondary's Miss At Home '67, Marjut Heikkila, 19. Her attendants are, left, Helen Pappas, 17, and Vicki Taylor, 18. The boys, both members of the De La Salle Drum Corps, are left, Andrew Walker, 19, and John Burns, 20.

50 Years Ago continues on page 8

50 Years Ago continued from page 7

The Centennial Voyageur Canoe Pageant teams were to start on May 24 at Rocky Mountain House in Alberta and to paddle the 3,283 miles to Expo 67 in Montreal by early September.

Do you remember 1967 Centennial celebrations? Did you have a family project? Did you visit Expo 67?



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 Ave. Toronto M5M 2B2.



Heritage Calendar

17th Annual Doors Open Toronto

Fifteen Decades of Canadian Architecture is the 2017 theme. Take the opportunity to visit some remarkable buildings not usually open to the public.

DATES: 27-28 May, 2017

INFO: <http://www.toronto.com/events/doors-open-toronto/>

Local Architecture Talks by Marta O'Brien

Free, at Toronto Public Library branches

Toronto's Old City Hall: a Private Tour

DATE: Tues. 9 May, 6:30-8:00

PLACE: Forest Hill Library, 700 Eglinton Ave. W. (between Spadina & Bathurst)

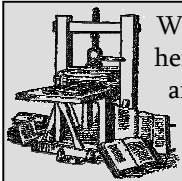
Corktown: Booze & Blarney

DATE: Mon. 29 May 7:00-8:00

Toronto Island: A Unique Community

DATE: Mon 26 June

PLACE: 3rd floor, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge St.



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

Submissions for the next *Newsletter* by June 20 to dawsonbh@rogers.com or call 416-481-6622.

Exhibits

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

Settling in Toronto: The Quest for Freedom, Opportunity and Identity

DATES: 25 March to 15 July, 2017

INFO: 416-392-7604

TD Gallery, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street

Destination Canada

Diverse experiences of migration, arrival and finding a place of belonging in Canada from early settlement to present day.

DATES: 20 May to 30 July, 2017

INFO: 416-395-5577

<http://tinyurl.com/klv9rb8>

Walks



Jane's Walks

So many to choose from! Housing, Architecture, Environment, Rail, Writing...

DATES: 5-7 May, 2017

<http://janeswalk.org/canada/toronto>

Heritage Toronto

Pre-registration required.

DATES: May to October

BROCHURE: 416-338-1338

<http://heritagetoronto.org/programs/tours/>



Downtown George Brown

Special HT Canada 150 tour.

DATE: Thurs. 4 May, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Meet at St. Lawrence Hall, 157 King St. E.

Lost Rivers

Discover lost rivers, lost neighbourhoods, lost ecosystems in Toronto

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

ROMwalks

BROCHURE: 416-586-8000

<http://tinyurl.com/kbhzru4>

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 M5M 2B2

www.northtorontohistoricalsociety.org

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

2017 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

Plaques: Doug Campbell