



# NORTH YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER, 2015

1960-2015 – 55<sup>th</sup> Year

[www.nyhs.ca](http://www.nyhs.ca)

## **From the President**

Welcome back after the summer!  
On Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, the North York Historical Society is partnering with the Gibson House Museum and bringing back the **Fall Festival**. See below for information. And be sure to tell your friends and neighbours and we'll see you there!

Check out the **build...build better- A Gifts + Occupations Collective Exhibit Project** in Historic Zion Schoolhouse – you have never seen the school look like this. More information on page 4.  
Lastly an update: unveiling of the John Bales House plaque took place at Dublin Heights School in April. Installation at the house in Earl Bales Park was scheduled for this summer, but has had to be postponed due to roof repair. Installation will take place sometime in 2016.

*Glenn Bonnetta*

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Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup> from 11.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. (Rain or shine)

**FALL FESTIVAL** at the **Gibson House Museum** and **Gibson Park** (at Yonge Street & Park Home Avenue): Vendors, Community and

Heritage Groups, Children's Activities, Quilting & Spinning Demonstrations, Tours of the Museum and Gardens, Lionel's Farm Animal Petting Zoo. Admission is free – donations of non-perishable food items encouraged.

Wednesday October 21st at 7:30 p.m.

**A TALE OF TWO SISTERS: THE HISTORY OF THE ATLANTIC EMPRESSES**

Ian Kinder, author. The steamships from construction to collision.

Wednesday, November 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m.

**SECOND TO NONE: THE FIGHTING 58<sup>TH</sup> BATTALION OF THE CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE:** Kevin R. Shackleton, author

Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 2.30 p.m.

**SEASONAL GATHERING** at the Gibson House Museum (lower gallery) Members only.

Meeting Location (Oct & Nov): North York Central Library, 5120 Yonge Street, in Meeting Room #1, (west side of atrium) use elevator outside library.

Meeting is co-sponsored by the North York Historical Society and the North York Central Library's Canadiana Department

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## ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY LAUNCHES NEW ONTARIO HISTORY REFERENCE LIBRARY

In January 2014, the Ontario Historical Society (OHS) began an exciting volunteer project to take stock of and organize the Society's considerable and valuable printed resources on Ontario's history.

In the historic John McKenzie House, headquarters of the OHS at 34 Parkview Avenue in Willowdale, the upper floor of the coach house, formerly a recreation room houses the majority of the collection. Now containing over 4,000 items, the OHS library catalogue is searchable online at [www.librarything.com/catalog/OntarioHistoricalSoc/yourlibrary](http://www.librarything.com/catalog/OntarioHistoricalSoc/yourlibrary). Particular strengths include Toronto history, First Nations history, Black history, built heritage and biographies of prominent Ontarians. The library also contains a complete collection of issues of OHS' scholarly journal *Ontario History*

from 1899 to the present.

The OHS thanks the North York Historical Society for its donation of *The Mirror Presents the People and Events of North York ...Past, Present and Future on Their 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday* (1972). Other recent donations include *North York's Modernist Architecture* (2009), a *Revisited* edition (2010) and the *City of North York's Directory to The Inventory of Heritage Properties, 1996 (reprint)* from the North York Community Preservation Panel.

To make an appointment to visit the library, please email [ohs@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca](mailto:ohs@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca) or call 416-226-9011. More information about the library may be found on the OHS website at [www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/index.php/services/library](http://www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/index.php/services/library)

*Provided by Sarah McCabe, who as a newly graduated librarian looking for a volunteer opportunity, was delighted to lead the project. Sarah is now Project Manager and Librarian of the OHS – and she's also a director of the NYHS. (Edited)*

### ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY: PETITION

This is an online petition only: ***Make Canadian History mandatory for Grade 12 students in Ontario.*** Go to <https://www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/> click on where it says "Petition Grade 12 History" or use <https://www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/index.php/petition>

### DONATIONS to the North York Historical Society.

Current funds for which tax receipts are provided:  
General Operating Fund

John Bales House Fund is now completed.

Golden Lion Hotel Fund is our current project. Our next newsletter will include more information.

Miriam Jackson Memorial Fund is in memory of a long time member, who served on the NYHS board and was also a Gibson House Volunteer. At her family's request, supported by the Gibson House Volunteers' Crafts Committee, initially the fund was to buy an artifact for the Gibson House Museum. However, following discussions with the GHM management, there is now a more ambitious project under consideration. We will provide more information soon.

## THE TAYLOR BROTHERS

John Taylor, Senior, a Methodist, (1773-1868), his wife, Margaret Hawthorne, and seven children emigrated from Uttoxeter, County of Staffordshire, England, in 1821, settling initially in Cherry Valley, near Albany, New York. In 1825 they moved to Vaughan Township in Upper Canada and pioneered there for about nine years before coming to the forks of the Don River.

In 1839, three sons, John, Thomas and George, purchased land from Samuel Sinclair (1797-1852), except for a portion Sinclair gave to the Primitive Methodist Connexion in 1851. In 1859, George provided funding for the construction of the first brick church, Don Mills Primitive Methodist Chapel, later replaced by the Don Mills United Church building.

They operated paper, grist and flour mills in the Don Valley, and also worked together farming, breeding cattle and horses. Their three paper mills were known as the Upper, Middle and Lower Mill, spaced a mile apart. The raw materials (rags, straw and jute, flax was probably used, an experiment with esparto grass failed), were cooked with soda and lime, washed, drained on an "agitated stuff chest", pressed, dried, emerging in various forms of newsprint (for George Brown's *The Globe* and other newspapers), book paper and manila wrapping paper. Paper bags were also made by hand. By 1877, the mills were described as operating around the clock (except for Sundays) and supplying goods to "all parts of the Dominion (of Canada) from Newfoundland to the Red River (Manitoba)".

John provided the organizing leadership and technical mill working skills, Thomas managed the office and George looked after the farming. John was a pioneer in the technical development of Canada's paper industry, being the first to develop and later patent a method of making paper from wood pulp instead of rags in response to an 1854 English contest offering a reward of £1,000 to anyone who could find a substitute for rags as a raw source for paper.

William, one of George's sons, discovered, while digging fence post holes, that the clay in the Don Valley was good for making red bricks. He founded the Don Valley Brick Works in 1880 (now Evergreen Brick Works) with his brothers, John F., and George A. It was one of the oldest and largest brick works in the province and the longest operating facility, remaining in operation until the 1980s. The bricks were of such good quality that they won prizes in the 1893 *Chicago World Fair* and the 1894 *Toronto Industrial Fair*.

According to the North York Historical Society's archives, the Taylors "earned a name not always to be found among paper manufacturers, namely that of always putting the full count of sheets in every ream (viz. 480) and for the accommodation of printers will when ordered, put up 500 sheets to the ream".

The Taylor family houses, such as Thorn Cliff (hence the street Thorncliffe of today) were estates with well kept gardens, orchards and stables, as well as bush land and tree-bordered country lanes.

## CALENDAR – SOME UPCOMING EVENTS

**CITY OF TORONTO HISTORIC Highlights** To sign up for the **GoTO Historic Sites e-newsletter** go to [www.toronto.ca/e-updates](http://www.toronto.ca/e-updates) - below is only a sampling:

**HISTORIC ZION SCHOOLHOUSE**, 1091 Finch Avenue East (e. of Leslie) 416-395-7432

Now to October 3: **build...build better: A Gifts + Occupation Collective Exhibition Project** – a site-sensitive exhibition that re-animates the schoolhouse and engages in a conversation about the legacies of modernism, architecture, creativity and the teaching methods of Frederick Froebel, creator of the Kindergarten concept.

Exhibition with daily tours by the Artists: Sat/Sun 1/4.30 p.m. Fri/Mon 2/6 p.m.

**FORT YORK**, 250 Fort York Blvd 416-392-6907

**Small World on Common Ground**, September 26 & 27, 1/8 p.m. daily. Enjoy a free weekend festival of music, arts and community on the grounds of historic Fort York, with a superb array of artists. Activities include powwowFit session, collaborative art making, spoken word artists and performances by Turkwaz, KC Roberts & the Live Revolution and many more. Combine food, beverages, crafts and more for a family-friendly feast of culture.

**Magna Carta** – Law, Liberty and Legacy at the Fort York Visitor Centre, Oct. 4 to Nov. 7. On loan from Durham Cathedral, U.K., the Magna Carta and its companion document, the Charter of the Forest, are touring Canada for the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary. These documents set the groundwork for many concepts that define democratic life today. As symbols of justice, they also act as powerful reminders that those who govern do so only by the consent of the people. See the world's most well-known historical documents for the first time in Toronto.

Tickets: \$20 adults, \$15 seniors, Youth/Child \$10. Tickets now available.

**TODMORDEN MILLS HERITAGE SITE**, 67 Pottery Road  
The Official Unveiling of **The Gathering of the Clans Mosaic** on Sun. Sep. 27 2/4 p.m. Opening remarks at 2.30 p.m. Special celebration honouring the rich history, contribution and worldview held by the Anishnaabe. RSVP 416-396-2819 or [todmorden@toronto.ca](mailto:todmorden@toronto.ca)

### LOCAL HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

**NORTH TORONTO HISTORICAL SOCIETY:** Northern District Library, 40 Orchard View Blvd (a block n. of Eglinton, w. of Yonge, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor [www.northtorontohistoricalsociety.org](http://www.northtorontohistoricalsociety.org)  
Wed. Oct. 28 at 7.30 p.m. **How we change Toronto:** David Crombie and John Sewell were both on Toronto City Council in the 1970s, played different roles – complementary and opposing. They will talk and debate about what was important and what we can all learn from the 1970s. John Sewell will have with him his new book: *How We Changed Toronto: The Inside Story of Twelve Creative, Tumultuous Years In Civic Life 1969-1980.*

Wed. Nov. 25 at 7.30 p.m. **Holiday Treats in North Toronto**, a journey of memories of holidays past presented by culinary historians: Liz Driver, Fiona Lucas and Mary Williamson.

**SCARBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY:** Bendale Library, 1515 Danforth Road [www.scarboroughhistorical.ca](http://www.scarboroughhistorical.ca)  
Tues. Oct. 27 at 7.30 p.m. **The Girls Behind the Guns**, Barbara Dickson, author. The story of thousands of young women employed by General Engineering Company, a secret WWII munitions factory between Birchmount Road and Warden Avenue.

Tues. Nov. 24 at 7.30 p.m. **The History of the Toronto Police Service Marine Unit**  
P.C. Richard Baker, Community Service Officer.