

NORTH YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER, 2013-JANUARY, 2014

Founded 1960

www.nyhs.ca

From the President

When I hear Kevin O'Leary on CBC pontificating about how wonderful greed is, how it is the driving force in our society, it sets my teeth on edge, because I know it's a bunch of hogwash. Without **volunteers** we would be sadly lacking in culture. Many of the things that make our lives enjoyable would not be available. And most of the things that have value in our history would be demolished by those whose motives are pure greed.

It is for this reason that I want to honour those who volunteer for our historical society. I say honour, rather than thank, because one of our volunteers has passed away, and I am now unable to thank her personally. Miriam Jackson served on the Board of Directors and was a Gibson House Volunteer for more than 20 years. She came to all our events and was a regular at the Monday morning cataloguing and indexing group for years.

Others that I would also like to recognize, as well as honour, for the many hours of work for the society: Edith and Geoff Geduld, Glenn Bonnetta, Ruth Kingma, Linda Gargaro, Anne McIlroy, Susan Goldenberg, John Laraway, Sheryl Adelkind, Dianne Gay, Edward Macdonell, Bob and Betty McQuillan, Doug Wardle, Christopher Blackburn, Mary Ann Cross, Jeanne Hopkins and Ann Rowan. I would also like to thank Andrew Lowe, Librarian, Canadiana Department, who goes beyond his duties to make sure things work smoothly for us at the Library.

....continued on page 4

Sunday, December 8th, at 2.30 p.m.

SEASONAL GATHERING, Gibson House Museum (lower gallery), 5120 Yonge Street (Members only).

Wednesday February 19th at 7:30 p.m.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, and

WORKING FOR FREEDOM, THE STORY OF JOSIAH HENSON

Rona Arato, Author

Wednesday March 19th at 7:30 p.m.

GRACE: A TEACHER'S LIFE, ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS, AND A CENTURY OF CHANGE IN ONTARIO Millie Morton, Author

February & March:

At the North York Central Library, 5120 Yonge Street, Meeting Room #1 (west side of atrium) use the elevator outside the library.

Meetings are co-sponsored by the North York Historical Society and the North York Central Library, Canadiana Department.

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The North York Historical Society is an affiliate of the Ontario Historical Society and a non-profit organization sponsored in part by the Ministry of Culture

NORTH YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES February 20, 2013

North York Central Library, Auditorium.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Bill Aird (President) called the meeting to order, and welcomed members to the North York Historical Society's 53rd Annual General Meeting. He extended thanks to the 2012 Board of Directors, Appointees, and Committees.

Board: Bill Aird (President), Geoff Geduld (Past President), Glenn Bonnetta (Vice President), Chandor Gauthier (Treasurer) Ruth Kingma (Secretary), Vall Alagirisamy, Teresa den Boef, Linda Gargaro, Brian Simms (Directors).

NY Community Preservation Panel appointees: Mary Ann Cross, Linda Gargaro, Edith Geduld, Ruth Kingma.

Committee Chairs and Volunteers: Sheryl Adelkind, Mary Ann Cross, Susan Goldenberg, Jean Hill, Jeanne Hopkins, Miriam Jackson, John Laraway, Anne McIlroy, Lillian Methven, Bob McQuillan, Ann Rowan and Marion Simpson.

The President noted that Teresa den Boef is not returning to the Board because she has moved to Stouffville - the Society has greatly appreciated all the work she has done in running the Speakers Program. Brian Simms is not returning as he is living in Ottawa. Brian was active in the Oral History Project, and did some of the interviews last year. Chandor Gauthier has held the Treasurer position for 2 years, and will not be returning. She is to be thanked for helping us with her accounting skills. The President also congratulated Edith and Geoff Geduld for being awarded the Queen Elizabeth 11 Diamond Jubilee Medal awards which are richly deserved. Special mention was also made of the presence at the meeting of Douglas Kennedy, Director of the O'Connor House. The Society will be introducing a new Membership category, that of Institutional Member, the first of which will be the O'Connor House.

- 2. MINUTES: Annual General Meeting, February 15th 2012 these were provided in the November 2012 - January 2013 Newsletter.
- **3. REPORTS:** (Also in the Newsletter)
- (i) President's Report Bill Aird
- (ii) Appointees/Representatives: NYCPP Edith Geduld
- (iii) Committees: Archives (Ruth Kingma), Heritage Resource Centre (Glenn Bonnetta), North York Minute (Linda Gargaro), Oral History Project (Linda Gargaro), Plaquing (Glenn Bonnetta), Programs (Teresa den Boef), Webmaster (Bill Aird)
- Motion to adopt the above Minutes and Reports approved. (D. Booth, L. Methyen)
- 4. TREASURER'S REPORT: The Statement of Financial Position as of December 31st 2012 produced by Chandor Gauthier was distributed to the membership. Edith Geduld was available to answer questions. Motion to accept the report was approved. (Edith Geduld, Vall Alagirisamy)
- **5. NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT:** Geoff Geduld assumed the Chairmanship of the meeting and presented the report of the Nominating Committee (Board: Linda Gargaro. Member at large: Robert McQuillan). 2013 Slate - Board Officers and Directors - President: Bill Aird, Past President: Geoff Geduld, Vice President: Glenn Bonnetta, Treasurer: Edward Macdonell, Secretary: Ruth Kingma, Directors (5) Valluvan Alagirisamy, Andrea Demchuk, Linda Gargaro, Dianne Gay, Susan Goldenberg. The position of auditor is still vacant. The names of the society's Appointee/Representatives and Committee Chairs and members were listed on the Agenda. Edith Geduld gave a short report as Coordinator of Committees.

2013 AGM Minutes continued

- **6. ELECTION OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2013-14**: There were no nominations from the floor. Motion on the above listed Board membership was approved. (Donald Booth, Edith Geduld)
- **7. PRESIDENT** Bill Aird resumed the Chair. He noted that in 2012 a considerable amount of effort went into the process of vacating the Society's rooms on the 3rd floor of the Miller Tavern. He gave special thanks to Ruth Kingma, Geoff Geduld, Glenn Bonnetta, Edith Geduld and Anne McIlroy. Most of the heritage material has gone to the Canadiana Department, NYCL, and considerable use of that material is already starting. We are still in the process of working out the final MOU with the Library. Much else was accomplished during 2012, and this year we have the opportunity to develop our programs and outreach. New and returning members of the Board and Volunteers were welcomed. He urged the members to get the message out that history is not only interesting and educational, but also essential if we want to know how our community came to be what it is. The NYHS will succeed through the efforts of its volunteers.
- **8. PROGRAM:** Rethinking Black Identity and Black Spaces, Speaker, Rosemary Sadlier, author and President, Ontario Black History Society. Ruth Kingma, Secretary



IN MEMORIAM Miriam Jackson

February 17, 1929-October 30, 2013

Member since 1990, Served as Executive Director of the Gibson House Volunteers, NYHS Director, Secretary and Heritage Resource Centre Volunteer.

Our condolences to her family. She will be missed.

Memorial gathering will take place on Sunday, December 1st at 2.00 p.m. in the lower gallery of the Gibson House



IN MEMORIAM Reta Wardle 1924-2013

Long time life member.

Our condolences to Doug and the family.

She will be missed.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT continued from Page 1

I would also like to thank Ruth Kingma, Linda Gargaro and Edith Geduld for their long and dedicated service on the North York Community Preservation Panel.

My thanks also to Edith Geduld (Newsletter), Miriam Jackson and Marion Simpson (Phone), Lillian Methven (Sunshine), Jean Hill (Social Convenor).

I have enjoyed researching, preparing and presenting two heritage presentations to a number of groups this year: *Memories of North York* and *The History of Willowdale*.

Below are some of the events, lectures, etc., that we co-hosted, attended, etc., that are not covered in the annual reports.

Seasons Greetings Bill Aird, President

<u>Consulted</u> with Councillors John Filion (Ward 23), Denzil Minnan-Wong (Ward 34) and David Shiner (Ward 24), with regard to space for the Heritage Resource Centre.

Co-hosted and partnered

Loyal They Remained, Dr. Jane Errington's lecture at North York Central Library. Spire Stelae, Artist Peter Powning's public art commission of bronze sculptures: plaster mould pattern gatherings at various locations.

Attended

Ontario Historical Society (OHS) AGM & Awards Ceremony at Hagersville; Willowdale MPP's Community BBQ, Mitchell Field Park; Aurora Historical Society's 50th Anniversary celebration; Heritage Toronto Awards; OHS 125th Anniversary Reception at Queen's Park; Museum Volunteers' Appreciation Reception at Fort York; Toronto Historical Association AGM; *Layers of Leaside* 100th anniversary archival exhibit unveiling; Ontario Volunteer Service Awards ceremony.

Participated in

Discussion on future plans for Parc Downsview Park; met with Dorie Billich, Curator, Gibson House Museum; Heritage Toronto's Walk *North York Centre – Then & Now;* THA Website Toronto Museums listing http://www.torontohistory.net; Offical Plan Review Heritage Advisory Committee.

Outreach

Help is here, community information fair, at Earl Haig Secondary School; Past and Present, Sheppard Centre Heritage Event; Active Living Fair, at North York Seniors Centre; Heritage presentations: Memories of North York, at Thorne Mills and Canterbury Place Senior Residences; The History of Willowdale, Young at Heart Clubs; Childhood in Newtonbrook at R.S. Lang School.

<u>Nominated</u> (Heritage Toronto Award/Short Publication Category): Historic Walking Tour of the North York Centre booklet.

New Affiliation

Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN): http://www.rcip.gc.ca/index-eng.jsp

<u>Awards</u>

Volunteer Service Award: Sheryl Adelkind, 15 years' service.

HISTORIC STONG FAMILY

Stong College, at York University, is named in honour of the loyalist family, whose land provided a significant portion of the university, and of nearby Black Creek Pioneer Village. The college provides courses in liberal arts, health services and creative writing, in what the university describes, as the "enriched pioneer spirit" of the Stongs.

The Stong family came to Upper Canada from Pennsylvania as part of the loyalist migration from the U.S., following the American Revolution. According to a January 1976 story in the Toronto Star, by historian Donald Jones, the Stongs were representative of the loyalists who came to Upper Canada in that they were of "humble origin".

In his article, Jones drew a distinction between capital "L" Loyalists and small "I" ones. Capital "L" Loyalists, he said, were United Empire Loyalists who "joined the Royal Standard" before 1783 when the war officially ended. Small "I" loyalists did not fight in the war and risked losing their land because they hadn't fought for it. These loyalists came to Canada because of its offer of free land and to escape persecution.

"Many people still believe the loyalists who came to Upper Canada were the province's first teachers, doctors and lawyers but in fact, there wasn't a single lawyer among them and only two doctors," Jones said. "Few could write. Many of those who could were too busy with their farms. Those who could write and had the time couldn't afford the paper which was scarce and expensive".

"These families of loyalists were British. Few of them were Scottish or Irish. Of the 5,000 loyalists who came to Upper Canada, the largest single group was the Pennsylvania-Germans." Instead of being called Pennsylvania-Germans, they were known as Pennsylvania Dutch because Americans found it difficult to pronounce "Deutsch," German for the word "German".

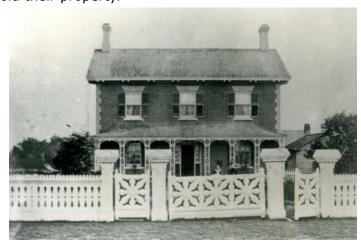
The Stongs, originally named the Stangs, were among the Pennsylvania-Germans who headed for Upper Canada. The Stongs first settled north of Toronto, near what is now Black Creek, in an area that would become the north west corner of Toronto.

In 1812, Daniel Stong fought on the government side when the Americans attacked Canada. In the 1837 Upper Canada Rebellion, however, he fought against the government. He was one of the hundreds of farmers who sided with William Lyon Mackenzie in the uprising.

In 1850, Daniel's son, Jacob built a large farmhouse at Steeles Avenue and Keele Street. He became a justice of the peace, a judge at the local country fair and when the Canadian National Exhibition opened in 1879, he was one of its first judges and directors. For almost a century and a half, generations of Stongs continued to farm their land. It was in 1952, after century of residence they sold their property.

In 1954, the log cabin was almost destroyed by Hurricane Hazel. Four years later, the Metro Toronto and Region Conservation Authority bought it along with the family's later farmhouse, smoke house, piggery and grain barn. They were left on their original site and became the nucleus of Black Creek Pioneer Village, which recreated the early days of settlers in the Toronto area. Today, the log cabin is used by York University to store gardening equipment.

Researched and written by Susan Goldenberg, NYHS Director, (edited)



ARCHIVES COMMITTEE REPORT

The Memorandum of Understanding and Letter of Agreement with the North York Central Library's Canadiana Department are yet to be finalised. In the meantime, the NYHS Collection is in a secure place in that department. The search for office space continues. Archives Committee: Ruth Kingma, (chair), Glenn Bonnetta, Edith & Geoff Geduld, John Laraway and Bill Aird (ex officio)

HERITAGE RESOURCE CENTRE REPORT

The "Monday Group of Volunteers" have continued to meet regularly at a temporary location. We are still accepting materials, and in 2013 there have been a number of donations from members: Doug Wardle and the McQuillans.

Request for photographs include the following: McKenzie family photos, early schools in North York, World War I in North York, Maple Leaf School, the Thompson family and more. Heritage Resource Centre Volunteers: Sheryl Adelkind, Bill Aird, Susan Goldenberg, John Laraway Sarah McCabe (new member), and, of course, Miriam Jackson – we all miss her. Glenn Bonnetta, Vice President

NORTH YORK COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PANEL REPORT

As of November 1st, a new panel has been appointed to November 2018. Mary Ann Cross is the only NYHS member now serving on the panel. Linda Gargaro, Edith Geduld & Ruth Kingma did not reapply in November 2010.

Wynyates/Colonel Phillips Estate, Buchan Court: basic repairs have been completed. Owners, North York General Hospital are planning future use; 2384 Yonge Street (Postal Station K), partial designation confirmed; Parc Downsview Park (65 Carl Hall Road, etc.): participated in discussion.

Special Heritage Events: *Downsview Heritage: Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow* at Downsview Library and *Layers of Leaside* archival exhibit (partnered).

NYHS Panel Members: Mary Ann Cross, Linda Gargaro, Edith Geduld, Ruth Kingma

PLAQUING COMMITTEE REPORT

<u>Cummer Family Plaque</u> (previously Jacob Cummer 1767-1841): Initial application revised. Funding complete thanks to Gunild Spiess, her family, friends and members of the NYHS.

<u>John Bales House</u> in Earl Bales Park. NYHS funding contribution complete. Additional funding to be determined.

<u>200 Years Yonge Plaque (replacements)</u> unveiled at local schools: Lansing & Newtonbrook plaques unveiled. Installatiion locations not confirmed. *Glenn Bonnetta, Vice President*

WEBMASTER REPORT

http://www.nyhs.ca

The website has seen a steady growth usage during the past year, with an increase in requests for information from non-members and others who do not live in North York.

The Society has had two offers to update the website, but the Board of Directors have declined the offers until additional resources are available. Currently the website is easy to update with information about current events of the Society and other heritage organizations .

Bill Aird, Webmaster

CONGRATULATIONS TO JOHN

LARAWAY, longtime member of the NYHS, past president and director, continuing volunteer. He was one of 15 volunteers receiving an award from Cheri DiNova, M.P.P., Parkdale-High Park, at her 2013 Spring/Summer Levy. He was recognized as one of the most valued volunteers for his tireless dedication to preserving the history of the Junction and for the countless hours minding the archives at the Annette Street Public Library. He is a lifetime member of the West Junction Historical Society.



DONATIONS 2013 (March/November)

General Operating Fund: Isabel Davey, Gwendolyn Kane, Marion Kinch, Lillian Methven, Jennifer Morgan, Christina Peterson, Kathleen Reader, Norma Richardson, William Whitehead

John Bales House Plaque: Glenn Bonnetta, Isabel Davey, Gwendolyn Kane, Marion Kinch, Jennifer Morgan, Christina Peterson, Lillian Methven, Kathleen Reader, Norma Richardson, William Whitehead

Cummer Family Plaque: Carole Carruthers

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY ON THEIR 125TH ANNIVERSARY

Established in 1888, as a non-profit educaional corporation, registered charity, and publisher; a non-government group bringing together people of all ages, all walks of life and all cultural backgrounds interested in preserving some aspect of Ontario's history.

125th Anniversary Project is to digitize *Ontario History*, which has been in print since 1899. Send contributions to The Ontario Historical Society, 34 Parkview Avenue, Willowdale, ON M2N 3Y2 www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca

SMART ADDRESS: Art Deco, Style Moderne and Their Contemporaries in Toronto – an exhibition that reveals and explores the city's architectural history through some of its most innovative buildings. The exhibit features Toronto buildings of the 1920s and 30s, which reflect Art Deco and Style Moderne.

In partnershipwith the Toronto Architectural Conservancy.

Until January 25th at the Market Gallery, 2nd Floor, South St. Lawrence Market, 95 Front Street East 416-392-7604 <u>marketgallery@toronto.ca</u>

PHOTOGRAPH CREDITS

Page 5 **STONG HOUSE** (York University website)

Page 8 **BULL HOUSE,** 450 Rustic Road, Downsview 1830 Bartholomew Bull bought Lot 8, Con. 4W, and gave it to his son, Perkins Bull, at the age of 2. In 1844, John Perkins Bull married Caroline Amelia Carpenter and their house and farm were known as Downs View. (North York Historical Society)

EARLY DOWNSVIEW PERSONALITIES

Downsview derives its name from prominent Downsview early settler John Perkins Bull's farm, Downs View. The Perkins home was the location for many civic activities. After his

marriage in 1844, John opened his house for religious services. As a Justice of the Peace for over thirty-five years, he was known as "Squire Bull" and court was held in his house and the jail was in the cellar. Later, Bull built a courtroom on the southwest corner of his verandah. It was in Bull's orchard that parties were held following school tests. He entertained generously, serving cakes, pies, sardines and poultry. He joked that "If a keen appetite be peculiar to children, we might infer that second childhood was overtaking many adults." After the feast, races and games were held in the orchard.



There were a number of other interesting early Downsview personalities. James Carruthers built his house on the southwest corner of Dufferin Street and Wilson Avenue, calling it Petherhill Farm, after the family home in England. It was noted for its large living room, 32×27 feet (9.75 x 8.22 meters). The huge fireplace was equipped with a crane to hold iron kettles used for cooking.

Three Griffith brothers from Ireland, Matthew, Thomas and Joseph and their brother-in-law Abraham Welsh, created farms west of Jane Street near Wilson. Each built a log cabin. Later Matthew built a 12 room house with bricks made in the Humber Valley just north of the house. The walls were 2 feet (61 cm.) thick. Thomas built an 11 room "rough cast" house and Joseph a house of stone hauled from Black Creek, also with 11 rooms. His house was later replaced by Workmen's Compensation Board buildings. All told, between 1823 and 1878 the brothers owned 1,000 acres (404 hectares).

James Stewart, an Irishman, farmed on the east side of Dufferin above Wilson, starting in 1831. He contracted with other settlers to cut wood on their property, haul it out of the woods and pile it near the road. In winter, he supplied fuel to King's College(later known as the University of Toronto), Osgoode Hall and Upper Canada College. In this way his hired help, oxen and horses, used on his farm in the summer, were also gainfully employed in winter.

Askelon Raynor, a blacksmith by trade, leased the toll-gate at Wilson and Dufferin. His wife was responsible for collecting the toll, while he ran his blacksmith business. People who lived north of the gate, and were unhappy about the toll, evaded it by tying their horses up the road, then walking through the gate without charge, carrying any equipment that needed sharpening or repairing to the shop. Mrs. Raynor had her own rules of business. She refused to collect tolls on Sundays because she wanted that day to herself and refused to stay up past her bedtime. The toll-gate was closed in 1891 because the plank roads were in a bad state and the railways provided an easy means of transportation.

During the 1830s more people settled in Downsview. It was often difficult. For example, when William Jackson and his wife, Jane Duncan, set out for their farm on the west side of Keele, their wagon became mired in the mud crossing a small creek just north of Lawrence Avenue West. They were extricated by local residents, the Clarkes and Gouldings. Not long after John Boake and his new bride Rebecca Bull, became stuck in the mud with an oxdriven wagon filled with bedding, dishes, utensils, sugar, soap, salt, flour, hammer and nails, and other supplies. Once again the Clarkes and Gouldings came to the rescue. Mrs. Goulding brought a frying pan, buckwheat flour and maple syrup to make pancakes for eating after the men pulled out the wagon.

Researched and written by Susan Goldenberg, NYHS Director (edited)

PROGRAM REPORT: February-December 2013

February 20, 2013

Annual General Meeting & RETHINKING BLACK IDENTIY AND BLACK SPACES

Rosemary Sadlier, President, Ontario Black History Society and author

March 20, 2013

HOW THE WAR OF 1812 DEFINED ONTARIO

Janis Philip, author, landscape architect and urban planner

April 17, 2013

POLLY OF BRUDGEWATER FARM, AN UNKNOWN IRISH STORY BOOK

Catherine McKenty, author

May 15, 2013

THE RESULTS OF REBELLION: NORTH AMERICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS IN VAN DIEMEN'S LAND

Dr. John Carter, author and historian

June 8, 2013

DOWNTON ABBEY TOUR of the SPADINA MUSEUM

September 18, 2013

HOW THE RAILROAD SHAPED TORONTO

Derek Boles, author and historian

October 16, 20, 2013

HANGMAN'S GRAVEYARD: on the discovery of a graveyard beneath the Don Jail Property

Alexis Dunlop, Anthropologist & John Dunlop, Archeologist (documentary)

November 20, 2013

FROM HANDS NOW STRIVING TO BE FREE: a talk on the prisoners of the 1837 Rebellion and the boxes they made while in prison

Darryl Withrow, author and volunteer wood right at the Pickering Museum

December 8, 2013

SEASONAL GATHERING at the Gibson House Museum (members only)

Linda Gargaro, Director of Programs

NORTH YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY - PROXY

Solicited by the Board of Directors of the Society for February 19, 2014

The undersigned paid up member of the North York Historical Society hereby appoints Ruth Kingma, Secretary, as proxy holder, with full power of substitution to attend, vote and act on behalf of the undersigned at the Annual General meeting of members of the Society to be held on Wednesday, February 19, 2014 at 7.30 p.m.

The proxy holder is here instructed for:

- 1. The election of persons nominated as Officers and Directors of the Society for the year 2014.
- 2. The appointment of an auditor named by the Board of Directors or Nominating Committee.

And hereby revoke any proxy previously given	And	hereby	revoke	any	proxy	previously	given
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Name:	Date
Signature	

FALL & WINTER AT THE GIBSON HOUSE MUSEUM

www.toronto.ca/museums

Saturday, November 30, 7- 9.30 p.m.

ST. ANDREW'S DINNER & STORYTELLING EVENING

Celebrate all things Scottish at the St. Andrew's Day Dinner. Share a hearty meal of haggis and other national dishes of Scotland and Canada. Pre-registration required. \$47.00 + tax.

Friday, Saturday & Sunday, December 27, 28, 29, 7.00 p.m.

TO THE NEW YEAR: A HOGMANAY DINNER

A special evening inspired by the Scottish traditions of Hogmanay. Enjoy a scrumptious dinner, be lulled by the fire and moved by the music. Welcome the First Footer, celebrate 2013 and bring luck and best wishes for 2014. Preregistration required. \$50 + tax.

COMMUNITY CRAFT AND SOCIAL GROUPS

Community Quilt Group Get-togethers

Thursdays, 6 - 8.00 p.m.

Open to all ages. Join the informal evenings of learning and sharing.

Work on a group project or pay a small fee for materials and make your own piece.

All ages and skill levels are welcome. FREE

Are you interested in Weaving?

Tuesday afternoons from 12.30-3.30 p.m.

There's a dedicated group of weavers who have been making textiles for the Gibson House Museum for years. They need more help ---- if you have basic weaving experience and are interested in joining them - please call 416-395-7432.

Gibson House Museum, 5172 Yonge Street - please contact them for up to date directions during construction.

Email: gibsonhouse@toronto.ca 416-395-7432

NORTH YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY Membership 2014				
Name(print)	Phone			
Address				
Newsletter by email: Yes No				
Family: \$25.00 Individual \$15.00 Senior \$10.00 Student \$5.00				
Donation: General Plaquing Program				

Email: nyhs@bell.net

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