



NORTH YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
AUGUST 2014
1960-2014, 54th Year

From the President

History is not only something we remember, it is also something we make. We need to remember so we do not repeat the mistakes of yesterday and we make a future that is better than the past. We have a tendency to remember selective aspects of our past – often filtering out the worst experiences and remembering the good times more clearly. People who cannot forget the worst experiences are said to have ‘post-traumatic stress disorder’, a kind of mental illness.

When we draw lessons from the past, we should remember both the good and the bad. Otherwise we are like ‘pseudo-scientists’ who discard any experimental results that fail to agree with their hypothesis.

Heritage preservation requires a scientific approach. We should not just remember our successes because that will make us complacent. And we should not just remember our failures because that will make us pessimistic. If we examine why we succeeded in certain cases and why we failed in others, we can learn some valuable lessons about how to go forward.

Bill Aird

Wednesday, September 17th at 7:30 p.m.

EDWIN ALONZO BOYD: Life and Crimes of Canada’s Master Bank Robber - Nate Hendley, author

Wednesday, October 15th at 7:30 p.m.

INSIDE THE MUSEUMS: Toronto’s Heritage Sites and Their Most Prized Objects - John Goddard, author

Wednesday, November 19th, at 7:30 p.m.

CANADIANS AT WAR: a Guide to the Battlefields of World War I - Susan Evans, author

Tuesday, September 23rd at 6.30-8.30 p.m.

NORTH YORK: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON COMMUNITY BUILDING AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE Professor Don Smith, University of Alberta; Victoria Freeman, York University; Steve Logan, York University; Carolyn King, Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation.

All meetings are at the North York Central Library, 5120 Yonge Street. Sep. 17th, Oct. 15th & Nov. 19th in Meeting Room #1, 2nd Floor (west side of atrium) use elevator outside library. Sep. 23rd only Concourse (lower level) use elevator inside library or take stairs.

Meeting are co-sponsored by the North York Historical Society and the North York Central Library, Canadiana Department. Sep. 23rd meeting also co-sponsored by The Ontario Historical Society.

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NORTH YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
In partnership with the Canadiana Department
Meeting Room #1, 2nd Floor, North York Central Library

Wednesday, September 17th at 7.30 p.m. - ***Edwin Alonzo Boyd: Life and Crimes of Canada's Master Bank Robber***
Nate Hendley is a Toronto-based freelance writer and author. He has written a series of books, primarily in the true-crime genre. His presentation to the North York Historical Society will focus on Toronto bank robber subject of his first book. Flamboyant Boyd headed a notorious gang that robbed banks in Toronto and escaped twice from the Don Jail in the 1950s. www.natehendley.com.

Wednesday, October 15th at 7.30 p.m. - ***Inside the Museums: Toronto's Heritage Sites and Their Most Prized Objects***
John Goddard is an author, magazine writer and former *Toronto Star* reporter with a specialty in exploring little-known Ontario wonders. His books include *Rock and Roll Toronto*, with TV's Richard Crouse, a cheeky guide to the city's rock-and-roll historic sites. *Inside the Museums* tells the stories of ten of the City's heritage properties.

Wednesday, November 19th at 7.30 p.m. - ***Canadians at War: A Guide to the Battlefields of World War I***
Susan Evans Shaw, author, follows the route of the Canadian Expeditionary Force from its first encounter with German forces at Neuve Chappelle to the site of the 1915 gas attack at St. Julien, from the Somme to Vimy and Passchendaele. This informative guide provides an historical overview of each battlefield as well as maps, photographs, and information on the memorials and cemeteries. This book fills a gap in heritage travel literature that has existed since the Armistice. The author made her first visit to the battlefields of World War I in 2004. In collaboration with photographer, Jean Crankshaw, she created this book as a tribute to her grandfather, who was killed in action in 1918.

THE ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY in partnership with the
North York Historical Society and the North York Central Library, Canadiana Department
Concourse, lower level, North York Central Library

Tuesday, September 23rd at 6.30 p.m. - ***North York: New Perspectives on Community Building and Cultural Exchange***
Join us for a special evening of historical exploration and discussion about Toronto's cultural roots with an emphasis on the impact of First Nations' peoples.

Speakers

Don Smith, University of Alberta: ***The Marathon Aboriginal Methodist Camp Meeting at Cummer's Mill, 1828.***

Victoria Freeman, York University: ***First Story, a Knife and a Cradle: Remembering North York's Indigenous History.***

Steve Logan, York University: ***Willowdale's Suburban Imaginary: the John McKenzie House and the Kingsdale Subdivision.***

Carolyn King, Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation: ***Moccasin Identifier Project: an Initiative to Recognize First Nations' Impact on Toronto's Landscape.***

For more information call: North York Central Library 416-395-5623 - Ontario Historical Society 416-226-9011

HERITAGE STREET NAMES IN THE NORTH YORK COMMUNITY AREA

GOULDING AVENUE

Goulding Avenue, west of Yonge Street between Steeles Avenue West and Drewry Avenue, and nearby Goulding Park and Goulding Community Centre, are named for the Thomas Goulding family. The family owned land in the area in the 1800s.

Thomas was the first to purchase property. He had served in the Peninsular War as a veterinary surgeon and was able to practice over a wide area in Upper Canada. One son, Robert, purchased adjoining property. William, the next son, was a prominent local preacher and for some years was Sunday-school superintendent in Newton Brook and served on the York Township Council in 1878. Thomas Jr. lived for some years on his father's farm.



John Duncan's House.

John, the youngest son, lived in Downsview, in the Keele Street area, south of Wilson Avenue. He was a busy man; a temperance worker, served on York Township Council from 1894 to 1901, taught Sunday school and sang in the Downsview choir. He made over \$100 a winter, cutting wood at 40¢ a cord – split and piled. He later went into the cattle business and did well in dairy farming.

Written and researched by Susan Goldenberg, Director, NYHS (edited)

ANN O'REILLY ROAD

2205 Sheppard Avenue East (new development)

Ann O'Reilly married Patrick O'Sullivan, and in 1860, they opened a hotel on her father's property, on the north-west corner of Victoria Park and Sheppard, near the proposed street. Patrick died the following year and his wife carried on the business. Their son, Michael, opened the O'Sullivan's Corners Post Office in the hotel and became its first postmaster in 1892. Dinner at O'Sullivan's Hotel was very popular until the building was demolished about 1954. Ann O'Reilly, was a strong woman who continued to run the hotel even after her husband died a year after it was opened.

Current City of Toronto Street Naming Policy states that "The City shall not grant a naming without the informed written consent of the named party ... or the named party's representative." The great-great grandchildren of Ann O'Reilly: Margaret O'Sullivan, Denis O'Sullivan and Darlene Hall were located, and Margaret Sullivan gave her written consent.

NOTE: This new street name was approved by North York Community Council on August 12, 2014. Above information has been provided by Mary Ann Cross, North York Community Preservation Panel & NYHS member.

SPIRE STELAE: Impressions of a community **Peter Powning, sculptor**

Unveiling of the two public sculptures at the Cranbrooke Village condominium, Bathurst Street and Saranac Boulevard, took place on Friday, June 6, 2014.

Through research and meetings with community groups, Mr. Powning assembled a broad range of impressions from materials offered by the public, school children, members of the North York Historical Society (NYHS), Gibson House Museum (GHM) and from the archaeological inventory by Archaeological Services Inc. (ASI)

The material was gathered in 7 casting sessions: one was sponsored by the NYHS and was held at the GHM, three at the Barbara Frum Library and two at local schools. 112 individuals brought items to include in the "cultural mulch"; some personal and a few of historical significance.



The seventh session was held at ASI offices, as a total of 1,627 artifacts were collected at the site of the Asbury and West United Church, 3180 Bathurst Street, part of lots 6 and 7, Concession 2 West.

The NYHS President, Bill Aird, wrote the introduction to a book which was circulated at the unveiling. He was recognized and thanked as being instrumental in organizing meetings and the participation of our members. As members know, he is also our Webmaster, and he has posted the book on our website:
<http://nyhs.ca/CranbrookeSculptures.pdf>

Pictures (clockwise from top right): School class participating in a casting session; Searching for a personal item in the mulch; Participants at the unveiling ceremony.



DONATIONS 2014

Plaquing Fund: Christopher Blackburn, Jack & Margaret Cameron, Isobel Davey, Myrna Fox, Andrew Gledhill, Gordon Hawkins & family, Lillian Methven

General Operating Fund: Sheryl Adelkind, Christopher Blackburn, Betty Brannen, Jack & Margaret Cameron, Isabel Davey, Myrna Fox, Gordon Hawkins & family, Pat MacNaughton, Lillian Methven, Eleanor Pyke, Bob & Penny Richardson

Miriam Jackson Memorial Fund: Sheryl Adelkind, Bill Aird, Jack & Margaret Cameron, Lillian Methven

WILLOWDALE WOMAN FIRST CANADIAN TO SWIM ENGLISH CHANNEL

The recent brave attempt by five women to swim Lake Ontario length-wise by relay, brings back memories of a Willowdale woman, Winnifred "Winnie" Roach Leuszler, who was the first Canadian to swim the English Channel, doing so August 16, 1951.

The Daily Mail of London, England had invited the top 20 swimmers from around the world to compete in a cross-channel swim from France to England. The conditions were daunting – the temperature was only 9° C and the waves were high. The 25 year old Winnie made the crossing in 13 hours and 25 minutes.

She was instantly world famous and a heroine to Canadians.

The Globe and Mail wrote on August 30, 1951, "The moment she arrived in Toronto yesterday she was swept along in a tide of greetings, ticker tape and cheers, everywhere she went. Winnie had come home".

"The modest Willowdale housewife, mother of three children, stepped out of Union Station in the morning to be the centre of attraction at two civic welcomes." *The Globe* went on to say Winnie helped unite the city albeit short-term, "For once, the city and suburban North York dispensed with boundary troubles to unite for a day and extend greetings to Winnie."

The tribute to Winnie included a ticker tape parade. She went slowly up Bay Street in a 12-car motorcade as ticker tape tumbled from business offices and cheers resounded from the crowds along the way.

On the steps of city hall, Mayor Hiram McCallum presented her with an inscribed silver tea set. Winnie told him she would rather swim the Channel than make a speech, but she said a few words of thanks. After the city reception, the entourage moved on to North York. Led by the band of the Queen's Own Rifles, Winnie drove in a parade from Finch Avenue to the Willowdale Memorial Community Hall.

That evening residents on her parents' street held a street dance in her honor. There was a juke box providing music for the dancing and firecrackers.

In 1957, Winnie achieved a first in another sport, baseball, becoming Canada's first female baseball umpire.

Winnie Roach Leuszler died in 2004.

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



ONTARIO VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS 2014 **Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration**

Congratulations to
Linda Gargaro - 5 year award
Jean Hill - 20 year award
Penelope Potter - 40 year award

CITY OF TORONTO HISTORIC SITES

www.toronto.ca/e-updates

GIBSON HOUSE MUSEUM

Tea and Tour Sundays from 1.00 to 5.00 p.m. - There's a seat for you at the harvest table in the historic kitchen on Sunday afternoons. Relax over tea and homemade cookies. Enjoy a tour of this lovely, 1850s farmhouse.

Memories of the Future, an art installation, from September 21st to November 9th. - The Gibson House Museum story re-interpreted through the artists' eyes. The exhibit pairs sculptures, audio pieces, and photography with artifacts from the museum, making this a dynamic and stirring exhibition. This is a partnership between the Toronto Arts Council and Toronto Historic Sites.

Regular admission applies. 5172 Yonge Street (during construction please call 416-395-7432 for access details).

HISTORIC ZION SCHOOLHOUSE

Saturday, August 23rd, 11.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. A retro-futuristic community festival celebrating all things **Steampunk!** Family fun for all ages. Enjoy entertainment, demonstrations, hands-on activities, learn about Edwardian style technologies and visit the outdoor merchant arcade. Admission is free. 1091 Finch Avenue East 416-395-7435
Facebook-com/gibsonzion or call 416-395-7435

Saturday, September 27th from 1.00 to 5.00 p.m. Bring your WWI stories and artifacts. Learn how the war affected residents in North York. Make a wartime craft with your family and participate in recruitment demonstrations. Costumed interpreters in military/period dress and experts in the Great War's artifacts will be on site.

The MARKET GALLERY

"Toronto Does Her Bit": The Home Front in the Great War - Now until January 17, 2015

During WWI Toronto quickly became a focal point for recruiting, training and fundraising. What was required from citizens to support the war effort? What were the consequences, both positive and negative, of that support? Using archival photographs, artworks and artifacts, this exhibit explores the texture of life on the Toronto home front during 1914-18.

TODMORDEN MILLS HERITAGE SITE - Until September 21st - Wed/Thurs/Sun 11.00 a.m.-8.00 p.m. Fri/Sat 11.00 a.m.-11.00 p.m.
Eco-Art-Fest continues. This 3-month-long festival includes 8 public art installations, workshops for youth and families, walking tours and weekend concerts. Visit www.no9.ca/ecoartfest for details and full schedule.
67 Pottery Road, 416-396-2819

North York Historical Society is an affiliate of
The Ontario Historical Society
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