

INTELLECTUAL PROFITS

THE IRREGULAR NEWSLETTER OF THE COMMUNITY HISTORY PROJECT

Mail: c/o Spadina Road Library, 10 Spadina Road, Toronto, Ontario M5R 2S7

Membership: \$20 annually for the period 31 May to 1 June of the following year

Meetings: 7:30 pm on the fourth Thursday of each month except June, July, August



Late Spring Issue

11 May 2007

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: 7:30 pm Thursday 31 May

This will be the final AGM to be held at 719 Yonge – in fact, it will be the final CHP meeting to be held at this address! Our next regular monthly meeting will be held in *September* at our new home – once that has been determined.

But this meeting will see some other changes as well. M.C.Mayo is no longer able to continue as Secretary and Gee Chung has volunteered to carry this responsibility. Treasurer Ann Gilbride has had emergency triple bypass heart surgery recently, so her care of our financial affairs is being taken over by Diane Robinson, just in time to do a Financial Statement and assist in preparing the annual Heritage Organization Development Grant application. The funds we are raising at present must help with the cost of moving, but Board member Terry Marescaux has arranged for the donation of over 100 bankers' boxes and about 20 photocopy paper boxes to help with the move, which is a cost saver along with the more than 200 big boxes donated by Cliff Collier. All members should be grateful for the services provided by M.C. and Ann, and wish for them improved health and less stress. Membership fees of \$20 are now due and should be paid prior to the AGM by those who have not already paid. Paid members vote at the AGM.

.....

TRADITIONAL AFTERNOON TEA ON THE LAWN

An admission charge allows you to sample sandwiches, relishes and assorted dainties while sipping tea and browsing among the crafts, home baking, preserves, culinary magazines and books. Proceeds will support the Tollkeeper's Cottage restoration. What is so special about this is that the tea is on the lawn of Life Member Dorothy Duncan, and if you have been to one of her teas before, you will know what *that* means!

Saturday June 9 from 2 to 4 pm
Sunday June 10 from 2 to 4 pm
155 UPPER CANADA DRIVE

Tickets purchased by June 1: \$10 per person. Purchased after June 1: \$15 per person.
In case of rain on Saturday, guests may attend on Sunday. If it rains on both days then an income tax receipt will be issued for the price of the ticket
Tickets will not be available for purchase at the door!

BERTRAM STURRUP 1912-2007

We have lost another valued member who died just before Easter from a massive stroke. After his wife Dorothy died, Bertram lived alone in their Etobicoke home. From there, he came to work with CHP in the period when we were trying desperately to prevent damage to the Gooderham and Worts Distillery site by its owners at that time. We lost the battle but gained a friend in Bertram and, as a direct descendent of William Gooderham, Bertram assisted us in developing a history of the site and family, a large exhibit in our offices at the time in Cumberland Terrace, and put us in touch with other family members. In this period, Bertram was working as a volunteer at archaeological digs directed by the Archaeological Resource Centre of the Toronto Board of Education and continued in this work for fifteen years. When CHP was actually engaged in salvaging the Tollkeeper's Cottage from the redevelopment site in 1996, Bertram came every day during the month of June with his toolbox and helped us cut the building loose from its additions, basement, pipes and wires. After it was moved, he came again and helped to strip away some of the weight threatening to collapse the building. When we moved to 719 Yonge, he bought a brass mail slot and came with his toolbox to install it. Into his mid-eighties by this time, he was no longer able to assist with the heavy labour at the Tollkeeper's Cottage so, instead, helped with fundraising by going through his house and cleaning out all of his sterling and silverplate for us to sell. A loyal supporter of all heritage matters, and a loving, gentle, and thoughtful friend, Bertram will be sorely missed.

Amongst official York there existed this heightened predisposition to misanthropy. Remembrance of the things past settled into easy conjunction with the reluctant acceptance of present circumstances in a colonial backwater. At the same time, such acceptance animated and unwholesome regard for rank and a jealous guarding of one's place on the ladder of preferment. Narrowness of situation, as well as contentious familiarity, could so easily invite contempt among one's neighbours

John Lownsbrough, 1980, The Privileged Few

At the time of Confederation there were approximately 760 licenced physicians in Ontario. They were outnumbered at least 2 to 1 by the unlicenced, who were referred to in such terms as healers, steamers and quacks. But in addition to these battalions, a great deal of medicine was practised in the home, usually through the wife and mother who used her herb garden to great effect. It was the housewife's work to grow, gather and prepare different medicinal plants for tisanes, poultices, and liniments. Many of these recipes were drawn from different parts of Europe, brought to Ontario by the new immigrants with the result that the brew on the kitchen stoves in most settlements was a melting pot of varied remedies. The leaves, petals, flowers and hips of native roses were used to make medicines. The petals produced a soothing lotion for application to inflamed eyelids; rose honey could be applied to ulcers or wounds, and a tea of rose hips was useful for indigestion.

Charles Godfrey, 1979, Medicine for Ontario

SOME GREAT FUNDRAISING!

Sunday 6 May proved to be impressive. Bruce Ferreira-Wells brought in the first of his walking tours, complete with a new member. The Environment Day at Wychwood was mainly organized by Marion O'Sullivan of Councillor Mihevc's office and she ran to hotdog stand which raised \$729.21 for the Tollkeeper's Fund. To this was added \$346.00 revenues from the Bounce Tent which was run by two young volunteers found by Marion. The junk tables were piled high by 8 am in the morning and we never quite caught up. CHP helpers were: Catherine Watts, Dave Hanna, Marilyn Spearin c/w two gorgeous grandchildren, Jane Sacchetti, Peggy Kurtin, Bill Kindree for a bit, and Jane B. The junk sales brought in \$837.01 and there was quite a pile of junk left over. Within that total was a \$20 contribution from George Smitherman, Minister and MPP

EARTH DAY PARK CLEANUP

In the past two years this cleanup expended energy in collecting garbage (mattresses, old refrigerators, car batteries, insulation, building debris) and dragging it to pickup points in the park. This year was intended to clean our unwanted growing things preparatory to a long-term planting/naturalizing programme. The announced time was from 2 to 4 pm, but work actually began at 8 am and was derailed somewhat by the fact that an old tree had fallen across the whole park. Rolande Smith had all the real garbage collected in an hour (including one needle and a few beer bottles). Paul Federico and his son Jeremy arrived and set to work sawing and chopping all the branches off the fallen tree (with only one axe and one hand saw), but they had to stop at the trunk and heaviest branches as the equipment was not equal to the task. Peggy Kurtin and Catherine Watts arrived in the late morning and began to haul and stack the branches and detritus and drag debris away from the northernmost slope. That was hard work and involved wrestling with some vines that were taking over the park. At 2 pm, new member Ed Janiszewski arrived and set to work, relieving the ladies of the heaviest loads. At 3 pm, Bruce Ferreira-Wells brought his heavy clippers and cutters and the work was somewhat easier as a result. The piles grew bigger. The ladies left, and Bruce and Ed moved to clear the northeast corner where men have been peeing in the bushes and vines there. (The Parks Department had agreed that this corner could be cleared out and replanted with prickly raspberry bushes to discourage the abuse.) As Ed and Bruce cut away the strangling vines, they uncovered two little cedar trees lying flat on the ground under the weight of the matted vines. We saved these as they seem to be the only cedars in the park. In all, 31.5 hours were spent on the cleanup that day – but it was not over!

Ed said he would come back and deal with the piles of leaves that some unknown angel had raked together. Another day and Ed had the leaves in bags supplied by Larry Priestman, and said he would come back and cut out the suckers and saplings along the fence closest to Davenport if Catherine would mark which ones to take out. Catherine did so the next day, and on the day after that the unwanted items had been cut out and added to the piles for pickup. Ed was not finished yet! He has been raking out all of the dead goldenrod stalks and making the little hill pleasant to look at. Bravo All!

HERITAGE SEEDS PROGRAMME

This is a long-term project which involves heritage plantings around the Tollkeeper's Cottage and – eventually – a kitchen garden, plus restoration of the entire area of Davenport Square Park. Work began last year with a major cleanup of the grounds and park area, removing bedsprings, old refrigerators, car batteries, bottles and cans, broken branches and garden waste from the houses above the park. Since then, Catherine Watts has been mapping what is growing in the park so that we can decide what does not belong there and what we want to save, and she is working on a sun-shadow study. We are clear on what has to be done within the area we have leased (soil improvement, landscaping, appropriate plantings) and are working on what has to be preserved or planted in the park and are working in cooperation with the Parks Department. Using historical records we are attempting to restore what is indigenous to the escarpment and the introduced species which quickly became common in the 19th century. It may take five to ten years to complete this programme and we go into this year with a plan for a further, detailed cleanup in preparation for actual planting. Everyone – simply everyone – can help with this on Sunday 22 April, working all day with a major focus from 2 to 4 pm. Bring work gloves and sunscreen.

The next phase involved members making selections from Richter's catalogue, putting together those choices into a manageable outlay of funds, and putting in our order with that of Grassroots Albany so that we can benefit from a 40% discount. GAs focus is on plants while CHPs primary focus is on seeds. GAs neighbourhood sale takes place on Saturday 19 May at a location TBA and what they do not sell, they will donate to us. Our sale is at the Tollkeeper's Cottage and at Dorothy Duncan's house at 155 Upper Canada Drive, both on Saturday 26 May (which is also one of the two days of the Doors Open Weekend). Our sale is intended to offer for planting the seeds of wild plants to establish in home or cottage gardens in the hope that the public will appreciate the beauty, virtues, and usefulness of plants that used to be regarded as weeds. And it is also intended to raise funds for the restoration of the Tollkeeper's Cottage. Nothing will be lost since whatever is not sold can be planted in the park area or Tollkeeper's Cottage site.

Donations for our overall programme have come forward: Marie O'Connor – old-fashioned hollyhocks and sweet peas; Brian Narhi – Jack-in-the-Pulpits, Day Lilies, Mayapples; Amanda McConnell – various ferns, wild strawberry plants; Catherine Watts – Morning Glories; Don Lister – rhubarb if we want it; Terry Marescaux – lilacs, raspberries; Peggy Kurtin – a variety of trilliums. We hope that there are donors for the Trumpet Vine loved by hummingbirds, Wild Grape Vines (which will last for a century), and funds to purchase some plants of the *Rosa blanda* (the Rosedale rose) which was once common to the entire escarpment.

At our sale on 26 May, you will be able to purchase seeds of the: New England Aster, Lemon Balm, Wild Bergamot, Bittersweet, Bloodroot, Wild Chicory, Feverfew, Wild Ginger, American Ginseng, Jewelweed, Horehound, Sweet Marjoram, Parsley, Queen Anne's Lace, Summer Savoury, Solomon's Seal, Sunflower, Tansy, Milk Thistle, White Yarrow, Woolly Yarrow, Echinaceae, Spearmint, Golden Sage, and Lemon Thyme, plus whatever is left over from the Grassroots Albany sale which all should watch for as their plants are different from ours and are mainly plants, rather than seeds.

LOST TREASURES

At one time the Don River was large enough to supply power to operate 21 mills from its point of origin around King and continuing south to Todmorden. The mills gave rise to the name “Don Mills” coming into being. They were mostly small saw mills which disappeared once the local timber was cut. Originally the trees in the Don Valley were large and plentiful. White pines a hundred feet high and four-and-a-half feet in diameter were common. One white pine in the valley yielded 5000 board feet of lumber and the tree was hollow twelve feet from the ground.

The Founding of the Donalda Club, 1984

One of the great white pine planks in the Tollkeeper’s Cottage is 36 inches wide, but as it is on the present north side it had to be covered by the clapboard. But Jim Orr looked at it and said that if the tree was that big, it not only supplied all of the lumber for the Tollkeeper’s Cottage but also had enough wood in it to build two more cottages. He concluded from the evidence supplied by the planks themselves, that the Tollkeeper’s Cottage was built with wood from a single tree, felled on the site, and cut up with a muley saw. Those saw marks are clearly evident in the planks of the wall we are leaving exposed to the modern addition. We want people to look at that wall and imagine the great white pines of the escarpment from Scarborough westward. The planks of our building only hint at the lost treasures of the forest.

.....

DO THINGS REALLY CHANGE?

Few things cause people to get more upset than feeling that some or all of their life savings are at risk, or even that they have been charged too much for a small transaction. Later on, in my version of the battle over bank service charges in the 1980s, that point is examined. The service charge issue generated more political heat for the banks than perhaps any other issue in recent years, although it could not compare in importance with more fundamental questions.

Robert MacIntosh, *Different Drummers, Banking and Politics in Canada*, 1991

Robert MacIntosh spent more than twenty years in the head office of the Bank of Nova Scotia, and for ten years was the first full-time president of the Canadian Bankers’ Association. He kindly donated a copy of his book to CHP in 2000 and spent some time with us in discussing Toronto’s history. Now he has delivered another book to the public in which he takes a new look at the whole range of Toronto’s history. Called “Earliest Toronto”, it contains some illustrations in colour but its biggest attraction is the author’s concise and direct way of examining history and presenting the facts. It is an easy read compared with his book on banking.

SOME MUSICAL HISTORY

Here are some extracts from the Preface from *The Brothers Hambourg* by Eric Koch. The Hambourgs were mainly residents of the Annex or Yorkville, but should be known and admired by every Torontonians.

The Brothers Hambourg illuminate the relationship between performer and society in England and Canada in the period between the 1890s and the 1960s. The four sons of an adventurous and engaging musician, who left Russia for the West near the end of the nineteenth century, were characteristic of the wave of enterprising artists who fled first from the Tsars then from the Soviets, and enriched our world with their special brand of cosmopolitan creativity. . . The pianist Mark, the most celebrated of them and a child prodigy who in Vienna was toasted by Brahms, brought classical music to the far reaches of the British Empire before the First World War. He married the daughter of a member of the aristocracy. . . The second, the violinist and bon vivant Jan, made a significant but largely forgotten contribution to Bach scholarship. . . Boris, the third brother, was director of the Hambourg Conservatory, the unorthodox alternative to the Toronto Conservatory, which brought a worldly flavour to a still largely provincial city and society. For twenty-two years he also played the cello in the Hart House String Quartet. . . In the second half of his life, in the late 1940s and the 1950s, the fourth brother, the pianist and promoter Clement, made an important contribution to the musical life of Toronto. An amiably eccentric personality, he gave an opportunity to talented young jazz performers to perform in the House of Hambourg. He managed this with little money but with great style and high spirits when nobody else showed such flair. . . There are a handful of eminent musical dynasties, but can there be four other brothers who achieved comparable distinction in the world of music in Europe and North America?

.....

A MUCH-LOVED MUSICIAN

Loew's Uptown Theatre had an auditorium 120' x 145' accommodating 3,000 seats. Its acoustics were excellent and of importance to the performer on its big theatre organ. On a day in which disaster was unsuspected, Kathleen Stokes made her debut there, only to find that mice had chewed through the wiring of the organ and got into the console. "While she was playing they scampered across the keyboard causing some frantic fingering by the diminutive organist, and certainly not augmenting the music. Then, at the finale, she pulled out all the stops and as the organ reached a great crescendo, many of the footlights shattered with a great crash sending flying glass all over the stage (courtesy of a short circuit caused by the hungry mice.)"

Big theatre organs were built to produce a huge range of musical sounds but also the sound effects called for in the script of a play, such as galloping horses. The big organs had real percussion instruments built into them. Organ pipes varied in size from a 52 footer big enough to crawl into, to a tiny one no bigger than a pencil. When the air pressure used to operate them was faulty, the little pipes could be set off like a rocket.

(from *Palaces of the Night* by John Lindsay).