



NORTH YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

March-May 2017

1960-2017 – 57th Year

www.nyhs.ca

From the President

The Society's 57th year began at our Annual General Meeting held at the Gibson House Museum on February 15th. The 2017 Board and Committees listing and contact information is on page 6. You will see that there are vacancies: Secretary and 2 Directors and we would welcome help on the committees. Do please contact a member of the board.

The North York Central Library is closed for renovations. Initially the plan was to keep the branch open but it became too difficult. Please be sure to check meeting locations.

The remedial work for the water leakage and mould at the O'Connor House is completed and since the second week of February we have been able to access our files.

Also there are a number of furnishing items that are currently in a member's garage which might well be of interest and use to members and friends. See the list on page 2.

On page 4 we devote the page to the Ontario Municipal Board – this is a matter of importance to all of us. If you have questions – do please contact us but please take action.

Glenn Bonnetta

Wednesday April 19, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. (at Fairview Library – see below)

EATON HALL: PRIDE OF KING TOWNSHIP; Kelly Matthews, author

In 1901, Florence McCrea married into one of the most prosperous families in the Dominion of Canada. Her husband, John Craig Eaton, was knighted fourteen years later. Not long after his death, Lady Eaton moved from Toronto to the 72-room, Norman-style chateau she had built on their King City property. She named it Eaton Hall. The estate fueled the local economy and community and supported the Canadian World War II effort. Rediscover an enchanting and bygone age with the life and history of Lady Eaton and her grand Eaton Hall.

Wednesday May 17, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. (Location to be advised)

DROP DEAD: A HORRIBLE HISTORY OF HANGING IN CANADA; Lorna Poplak, author.

From Confederation in 1867 until abolition of the death penalty in 1976, 704 people were hanged in Canada. Hear how trial, conviction and punishment operated then. Profiles of notable individuals: victims, murderers, judges, jurors, the wrongfully convicted - and the hangman.

Meeting Location for April 19th: Fairview Public Library, 35 Fairview Mall Drive (Don Mills Road & Sheppard Avenue) in Meeting Room #3, 4th Floor.

Meeting Location for May 17th to be advised.

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

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DONATIONS 2016

September-December

General Operating Fund Glenn Bonnetta, Andrew Gledhill, Penny Potter

Plaquing Fund: Donald Booth U.E., in memory of Myrna Fox U.E., Mary Ann Cross, Edward Macdonell

Miriam Jackson Memorial Fund: Edward Macdonell, Penny Potter, Friends of Penny Potter, Tony Ricci

ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY Accessibility Improvement Project

The Historic John McKenzie House is a Willowdale heritage landmark and has been used as a community programming space since the early 1990s, when the OHS prevented the demolition and raised over \$500,000. NYHS members will recall that we supported the OHS in their endeavor to prevent the demolition – and undoubtedly will also recall the many, many fund raising events.

Last year, in partnership with the City of Toronto, the Ontario Historical Society replaced the aging asphalt roof with a brand new slate roof protecting the historic John McKenzie House for the next 100 years.

In order to increase accessibility for persons with disabilities, the property requires significant renovations and upgrades. \$37,500 has been raised but an additional \$17,500 is needed to complete the project. They are asking us all to help – all donations over \$10.00 will receive a tax receipt. The project is funded in part by the Government of Canada, the City of Toronto, Heritage Grants and the Ontario Historical Society.

ohs@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca 416-226-9011

34 Parkview Avenue, Willowdale, ON M2N 3Y2

Please make cheque payable to The Ontario Historical Society

MISCELLANEOUS SURPLUS FURNISHING ITEMS AVAILABLE

Filing cabinet (Lateral)
2 Book cases (IKEA)
6 Folding chairs (red)
Vacuum cleaner
Electric fan (small)
Office chair (padded, swivel)
Floor lamp

For more information, call 416-222-3485 or email edith.geduld@sympatico.ca

EARLY EDUCATION IN NORTH YORK

.... continued from page 5, Newsletter: July-September 2016

Teachers after 1847 were better trained since a "Normal" school for teacher training was opened in 1847, three years after Egerton Ryerson, a minister and superintendent of education from 1844 to 1875, developed a more modern education system for the province.

School was open all year in some districts with the teenagers attending in the winter months when farm chores were relatively light, although the boys still had to feed and water the livestock. In the summer when the older boys were needed on the farm, the younger children attended school. This was a practical way of avoiding being caught in snowstorms.

Parents believed that school was not necessary for the older girls, that future housewives did not need to know how to read or write, but rather how to run an efficient household.

Teachers began to be paid more. In 1857 examinations were introduced. Prize books and merit cards were introduced as awards for punctuality, good conduct, diligence and perfect recitation.

As of 1867, the year of Confederation, there were twelve North York schools, some of brick and some still of logs. The largest school, S.S. #3, York Mills had the largest enrolment of any North York school -134 pupils. (S.S. stood for School Section and was used for counting attendance.) At S.S. #14 teacher Emma Wickson reported her school in good condition, the trustees having spent \$2.50 on repairs for the year. That is not a typo; it really was just \$2.50. More money was spent on book prizes - \$6.00.



Elia School S.S. 18

In the 1870s and onward new large brick schools were built, this time with a raised platform at the front of the classroom to provide the teacher a better view of the pupils.



increase of 25 cents per week in pay.

3rd Willowdale School, 1887

Teachers' responsibilities went far beyond teaching. They had to fill the lamps with oil, cleaning the shades or chimneys as they were called and trimming the wicks. After the school day, teachers were expected to read the Bible or other good books. At first, teachers were always men. Women teachers had it far harder than the men because those who married or "engaged in unseemly conduct" were dismissed. Not that the men had it much easier. If they smoked, drank, frequented pool or public halls or had a shave in a barber shop they provided good reason to suspect their worth. Teachers who performed without fault for five years received an

Skipping forward in time, in 1929 the first township school area in Ontario was formed in North York, consisting of the school sections of York Mills, Willowdale and Newtonbrook.

Spelling contests were popular in the 1800s as they are now. Teams were chosen, the teacher gave out the words and the last person to be "spelled down" was champion.

Written & researched by Susan Goldenberg, Director, North York Historical Society

Photo credits: 3rd Willowdale School: Vernon Gibson. Elia School: compliments of Elizabeth McQuillan.

AT THE GIBSON HOUSE MUSEUM
5172 Yonge Street (entrance off Park Home Avenue, west of Yonge Street)
Toronto.ca/gibsonhouse 416-395-7432 gibsonhouse@toronto.ca

Until May 28th: A Canada 150 Event

GIBSON HOUSE: A centennial legacy (A Canada 150 Event)

This exhibit will explore how the Centennial celebrations of 1967 contributed to the creation of Gibson House and other local initiatives in North York.

Saturday, April 8, 1 to 5 p.m.

TARTAN DAY at Gibson House (last tour at 4.30 p.m.)

Come celebrate all things Scottish in recognition of National Tartan Day (April 6th). Make your best guess at the *Which Tartan is Which?* station. Try on a tartan and take a selfie. Sample traditional treats on your tour of the farmhouse and enjoy the Scottish dance demonstrations. Learn about prominent Scottish Canadians who contributed to Canada's confederation, like the Gibsons. Take a turn at the outdoor Scottish games and activities. Regular admission applies BUT wear tartan and get in for half price!

Monday, April 17, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

FUN DAY MONDAY DISCOVERY CAMP (for ages 7 to 11)

Spend time cooking in the historic kitchen, making crafts, playing games and meeting new friends. **Course Code: 2950120** \$38.10 per child. Pre-register online at toronto.ca/torontofun or call 416-338-4386. For an additional fee extended care is available: \$3.00 for 8-9 am (**Course Code 2950142**); \$3.00 for 4-5 p.m. (**Course Code 2950143**)

Wednesday, April 19, public screening at 7:30pm

National Canadian Film Day: SCREENING OF JOHN A. BIRTH OF A COUNTRY

As part of *National Canadian Film Day 150*. Join us for an evening of film and fun on Wednesday, April 19th at 7:30pm. Space limited, so please reserve your space in advance, registration is free: <https://filmdayapril19.eventbrite.com>

Saturday, May 6, 1:00- 2:30 p.m.

JANE'S WALK: WILLOWDALE - 15 decades, 15 stories

Meet at the N.E. corner of Yonge St. & Church Ave and ending at Gibson House Museum. Join Gibson House Museum staff on this FREE walking tour and celebrate Canada 150+ as we explore over 150 years of people and events that have contributed to the community and history. Guided tours through the historic house are available with paid admission.

Sunday, May 14. Two Sitzings: 12:00 and 2:30 p.m.

Mother's Day Tea at the Gibson House Museum

Treat Mom to a lovely Victorian-inspired tea. She will enjoy being pampered with delicious teas, sweets, finger sandwiches and fresh-baked scones, in the setting of an elegant 19th century farmhouse. Includes a special gift for Mom to take home. Pre-payment is required. Seating limited. Tickets can be purchased online at www.toronto.ca/gibsonhouse or by calling 416-395-7432. \$25 per person plus tax; not recommended for children under 6 years of age.

Saturday and Sunday, May 27 & 28, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

DOORS OPEN TORONTO

Gibson House Museum participates in this city-wide celebration of Toronto's architectural heritage with self-guided tours through the historic house, some behind-the-scenes access to artifact storage areas and an opportunity to learn how the museum documents conserves and manages its collection of artifacts. The 2017 theme is: *Fifteen Decades of Canadian Architecture*. Gibson House will be among the buildings in the Pre-Confederation Cluster. Admission is FREE.

THE ONTARIO MUNICIPAL BOARD (OMB)

is an independent adjudicative tribunal that conducts hearings and makes decisions on matters that have been appealed to the OMB under specific provincial legislation. OMB deals mainly with appeals from minor variances to Official Plan Amendments (OPA). It should be noted that appeals dealing with heritage (listing and designation) are heard by the Conservation Review Board (CRB) a sister agency of the OMB.

The article below was prompted by the recent demolition of the BMO Bank in North Toronto. Submitted by Geoff Kettel, Chair of the North York Community Preservation Panel to *Built Heritage News*, Editor: Catherine Nasmith, Architect.

EXTENDING PROTECTION TO BUILT HERITAGE IN TORONTO



BMO Bank site following demolition photo by Linda McCarthy

The tragic demolition of the BMO Bank building in North Toronto was followed by intense media interest and public outrage. But it also led City Council to waste no time in passing a Motion calling for changes to Ontario legislation in order to speed up the listing and designation process. It happens that Bill 68, Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act is in Second Reading in the Legislature, and therefore there is an opportunity for the City to request amendments when it goes to Standing Committee for public hearings.

The Motion directs that any City of Toronto submission to a Standing Committee on Bill 68 include the Ontario Heritage Act as a listed Act under Section 21(2) of the City of Toronto Act (COTA), which would permit delegation to a standing committee (like the Toronto Preservation Board) or a City Official (like the Chief Planner) of the powers to list and designate property under the Ontario Heritage Act. In addition, the Motion requests that the Province enact a provision that allows the City to enact by-laws that provide for control of demolition of non-residential buildings. Right now in the case of non-residential property there is no requirement for a replacement building that has planning approval before demolition is permitted.

In order for these changes to be approved two things are required: (1) Toronto's request for amendment of COTA must be accepted by the Standing Committee of the Ontario Legislature as part of Bill 68, and (2) Bill 68 must be passed by the Ontario Legislature (if part of a government bill it is quite likely that this would happen) These changes are vitally needed to ensure that the BMO building is the last building to be unceremoniously demolished in this manner. So what next?

Here's what you can do: (1) write your MPP to ask for their support for the City of Toronto requested amendment to Bill 68, and (2) when Bill 68 goes to Committee, consider registering as a deputant in support of the amendment being accepted by the government and passed by the Legislature.

Article reprinted from *Built Heritage News*. Issue No. 257. February 22, 2017

NORTH YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
2017 Board of Directors, Representatives & Committees

www.nyhs.ca

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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, Tourism & Sport

NORTH YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Membership 2017 – 57th Year

Name
(print).....Phone.....

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Address.....
.....

Email address..... May we email newsletter to
you?.....

Family \$25.00..... Individual \$15.00..... Senior \$10.00 Student \$5.00..... Institutional
\$20.00.....

Donation: \$.....

Dedicated Funds: General.....Plaquing.....Miriam Jackson Memorial.....

Please make cheque payable to the North York Historical Society, 5845 Yonge Street,
POB 45045, Willowdale, ON M2M 4K3