

The Fife and Drum

The Newsletter of the Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common
Vol. 1, No 1, May 24, 1996.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

On April 18 two organizations each of which had worked diligently and effectively for the betterment of Fort York came together under the banner of The Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common. The details of the new organization and its structure are described in greater detail elsewhere in this first news letter.

I wish to express to all members of the Friends and other supporters my commitment to helping our group of volunteer citizens, along with the Toronto Historical Board, make this National historic site a vital and dynamic centre where visitors can experience the living history of our founding peoples. Their struggles are an important part of the origin of our uniquely Canadian traditions and culture.

Our goals will not be achieved without some disappointments and even failures as we strive to forge an effective organization and positive working relationships. However with the dedication, hard work, patience and tolerance of many willing hands we shall see our vision fulfilled.

Welcome to "The Friends" . Now on with the task.

Don Gibson, Chair

FRIENDS ARE PART OF FORT YORK BUSINESS PLAN TEAM

Geordie Beal, Joe Gill and Don Gibson have been named to the THB Working Committee which is developing a comprehensive business plan for Fort York. Other members of the committee have been appointed from the THB board of directors and senior staff.

The Business Plan is being developed from:

- (1) 1990 Fort York Master Plan for Redevelopment.
- (2) 1995 Economic Planning Group of Canada's Option # 4 Business Plan Proposal.
- (3) Current Capital and Operating Plans for Fort York.

The new Business Plan will include:

- * Recommendations for a major new Visitor Centre.
- * Improved access.
- * Upgraded exhibits.
- * New archaeological projects.
- * Significant new programming and marketing plans.

The "Aggressive " Option #4 Business Plan was approved in principal by Toronto City Council in November of 1995.

Working committee members expressed confidence that implementation of the new business plan will enable Fort York to become one of Canada's prime historic sites. They noted that it will generate revenue sufficient to ensure its future preservation and economic well being.

FORT YORK FESTIVAL RE-SCHEDULED

At the April 29 meeting of the newly elected Board, it was decided that the Fort York Festival, featuring a major re-enactment of the 1813 Battle of Fort York, planned for the Canada Day weekend, be suspended and rescheduled for 1997.

The re-enactment committee which has been working diligently since February, determined that the campaign to enlist major financial and media sponsors needed much more lead time to produce results. It was agreed that the Friends alone did not have the financial resources this year to mount a publicity program sufficient to draw the crowds necessary to make the event a success. Nevertheless the Board commended the committee for its good work and instructed them to continue their efforts to organize a bigger and better Fort York Festival for next year. At press time the committee had already met three times to begin the 1997 Festival planning.

FRIENDS ACTIVE IN THE 200 YEAR YONGE LECTURE SERIES

Three members of our organization are featured in THB's 200 Years Yonge, Summer lecture series:

- * On May 2 Board Member Dr. Mima Kapches, Department of New World Archaeology at the ROM delivered a lecture titled Native Trails before Yonge.
- * On May 9 Dr. Carl Benn, Curator of Military History at the THB described the birth of Yonge Street.
- * On July 11 Mike Filey, columnist, author and lecturer will tell the TTC Story. "75 Years of Public Transit.

The lecture series are held every Thursday at 12 Noon at the THB offices at 205 Yonge Street and run until August 29. General admission is \$4.00. Further details can be obtained by calling the THB offices at 416-392-6827.

SYMPOSIUM CHARETTE SEPTEMBER, 1996

"Have you ever been to Fort York" ? " I think so. Where is it?"

We hear this statement all too often. In this period of change, Fort York provides the 4 million residents of GTA with a special opportunity to reflect on the City's and Province's History. It is part of all of us.

We have agreed to hold a symposium, Charette, date in September to be decided, to bring together all the community interests who may wish to contribute to the rebirth of Fort York.

Great things are planned around our Old Fort.

- * A new golf course to the East.
- * The redevelopment of the Molson lands to the South.
- * The possible relocation of the Cement batching plant.
- * The rebirth of the Garrison Creek.
- * The redesign of a new road providing a " Front Door".
- * The residential and commercial redevelopment of the lands to the East and South.
- * Improved new vistas to the lake.
- * An eventual new community of 7000 persons over the next 35 years.

We need your input. There is an amazing amount of Historical, Operational, Cultural, Social, Architectural, Visual and Environmental information in the heads and files of all of us. This *Charette* will be a defining moment in the evolution of Fort York and the Fort York Development Program.

Your participation in this interactive community building, around one of most important and treasured sites, is needed and will be appreciated. We will let you know the date and place as soon as possible. Be there.

THE NEW "FRIENDS OF FORT YORK AND GARRISON COMMON

Throughout 1994 and 1995, the Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common, under the leadership of Stephen Otto, protected the interests of Fort York during the negotiation of various Bathurst-Strachan development agreements. Meanwhile, in November 1994 the Historic Fort York Volunteer Committee was formed under the guidance of Don Gibson. It became evident late in 1995 that a single entity to encompass all of the citizen volunteer activity in support of Fort York's future was essential. The decision was made to merge the two groups. As the Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common had incorporated, it was decided to use that corporation for the merged organization.

The first Annual Meeting of the Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common (The Friends) was held on April 8, 1996 in the Officer's Mess of #709 Communications Regiment at Fort York Armoury. At this meeting the new Board of Directors was elected and is set out below.

John Barclay	Bronwyn Krog
Geordie Beal	Rollo Meyers
Chris Bovaird	George Rust-D'Eye
Don Brydges	Martin Silva
Don Gibson	Peter Twist
Joe Gill	George Waters
Ian Keith	John Wasteneys

We are very fortunate to have such a strong Board with wide ranging experience and areas of competence. Over the next few issues of the Fife and Drum we shall provide brief biographical notes on each.

At the first meeting of the Board of Directors on April 18th the following officers were elected.

Chair	Don Gibson
Vice-Chair	Joe Gill
Treasurer	Rollo Meyers
Secretary	Murray Philp

Stephen Otto serves as Past-Chair.

At the next meeting of the Board on April 29, a committee structure was agreed upon and chairs for each of the committees appointed.

Committee	Chair
Audit	Chris Bovaird
Nominating	Don Gibson
Finance	Joe Gill
Programing and Publicity	Don Brydges
Garrison Common	Ian Keith
Membership and Fundraising	John Barclay

The Executive Committee will be chaired by Don Gibson and include members John Barclay, Joe Gill and Ian Keith.

In subsequent issues we shall ask the chairs of the Committees to report on their activities and plans.

For further information call:

Don Gibson	922-7622
Joe Gill	969-8644
Don Brydges	247-1377
Ian Keith	222-3870