

The Fife and Drum

The Newsletter of The Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common

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Toronto's First Historical Plaques

by Gary Miedema

This article is an abbreviated version of the original, published in 2005 on the website of the Wellington Place Neighbourhood Association.

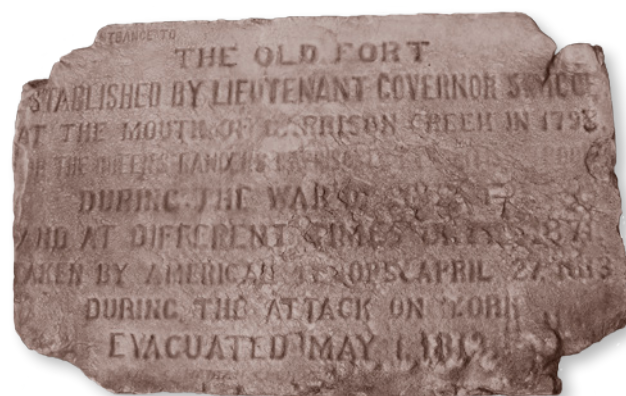
A quiet homecoming of sorts recently took place at Fort York. More than 110 years after it was first installed on the western gate of Fort York, an old marble tablet was removed from the city's storage vaults, returned to the Fort York site, and installed in the Visitor Centre.

Many visitors to Fort York will no doubt see this old marble tablet as just an old engraved marker and will quickly move on to more engaging experiences. But the tablet is well-placed in Fort York's introductory space. This weathered plaque was likely part of Toronto's first effort to formally commemorate historical sites.

The discovery of the stone's significance is tied to Victoria Memorial Square, a short walk up Bathurst Street from Fort York. The square contains the oldest surviving European burial ground in the city, including the remains of at least 400 men, women, and children. All were associated in some way with the fort, including Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe's daughter, Katherine, who was buried there after she died of fever in 1794.

In 2004, a careful examination of remaining gravestones—embedded in concrete at the foot of a monument since the 1950s—revealed a surprise. One badly worn stone was not a grave marker at all. It was, instead, a long forgotten historical plaque, erected to declare for present and future passers-by that this was “the first military burial ground in Toronto, set apart in 1794 by Lieut.-Governor Simcoe and used for sixty years.” Barely legible at the bottom of the plaque were the words, “Erected by The Canadian Club, 1899.”

With the (re)discovery of that plaque, a hunt began to understand its origins. Given the inscription, the starting point was the Canadian Club, but the records from that period of



The marble tablet erected at the fort's western entrance in 1899 is now on display in the Visitor Centre. Credit: Toronto Culture Collections

the Club's history no longer existed. Thankfully, newspapers revealed a remarkable amount of information. A link emerged between the plaque at Victoria Memorial Square and another which referenced Fort York, and which was lying in storage in the city's collections.

The Canadian Club of Toronto was founded in 1897. While the Toronto club would later become famous for its series of luncheon speakers, early on it was clearly interested in local history as well. Within a year of its founding, a committee had been struck to investigate the possibility of marking local historical sites.

Frank Yeigh, the chairman of the committee, was a fascinating man of broad interests and unflagging energy. It was Frank Yeigh who, as poet Pauline Johnson's first manager, arranged for her first public recital in 1892. At about the same time, Yeigh began leading annual “historical pilgrimages” in the Toronto region including later bike excursions to the city's historical sites. In 1893, he authored *Ontario's Parliament Buildings: or, A Century of Legislation, 1792-1892*. A fastidious collector of information, he kept scrapbooks filled with clippings of his articles and notices of his lectures, and edited the annual volume, *Five Thousand Facts about Canada*, for over twenty-five years. Characteristically, when the third Parliament



A near identical tablet to the one at the west gate was found at the fort's eastern entrance on the wall of Matthews-Blackwell's pork packing plant. The Canadian Club of Toronto was responsible for having both plaques funded by the Minister of Militia and erected in 1899. The one at the eastern entrance disappeared after the abattoir was demolished in 1929, but not before good photographs in situ had been taken.



The close-up view of the plaque is dated to 1900 (Credit: TPL, Baldwin Collection, X 64-34); that showing the south end of the 'old' Bathurst Bridge dates to 1916 (Credit: CTA, Fonds 1231, item 2190).

buildings on Front Street were slated for demolition, Yeigh arranged a last tour of the site. The tour ended in the legislative chambers where Yeigh himself recounted the illustrious history of the people and events who had marked that place.

In November of 1898, Yeigh wrote to W.D. Lighthall of Montreal, evidently involved in a recent plaque program in that city, for advice about initiating a similar program in Toronto. Sometime in the surrounding months, the Historical Committee approved a program to mark sixteen sites. The markers were to be white marble with incised lettering infilled with black paint, with wood as a backup. By February 1901, nine tablets had been installed, including two identical plaques at the western and eastern entrances of Fort York, as well as the military burying ground tablet. Further plaques were planned, but whether they were completed can only be confirmed by research on specific locations.

A list of sites reported in *The Globe* read:

- Old Fort Western Entrance • Old Fort Eastern Entrance
- Old Fort Military Burying Ground
- Block House, Hanlan's Point • Block House, Sherbourne St.
- Block House, Yonge St. • Block House, Gore Vale
- Site of first Parliament Buildings
- Front Street Parliament Buildings
- Castle Frank • The Grange
- Holland House, Wellington Street West
- Beverley House • Bishop Strachan Palace
- Canada Company Building • Old Court House and Gaol

The subjects the Canadian Club chose to commemorate are worth noting. The Club's efforts to remember sites representing a particular history closely align with Gerald Killan's observations in his book, *Preserving Ontario's Heritage*, about the founding of historical societies in the period. The 1880s and 1890s, Killan points out, were decades riddled with debates over Canadian national culture. Tensions flared over the place of the French language and Roman Catholicism in a predominantly British Canada. Raucous debates over free trade and the future relationship of Canada with the United States and Britain didn't help, leading some to question the future of the country as a uniquely British society in a North American context.

Into the breach of the controversy in Ontario, Killan suggests, ran historical societies, determined to help form Canada in their own image. That image was overwhelmingly informed by British imperialism, as distinctly opposed to visions of the nation in Roman Catholic Quebec.

The subjects the Canadian Club chose to commemorate fit into this picture nicely. Over half of the sites were military (with Fort York taking pride of place and the Old Fort Military Burying Ground included) or governmental in nature—representing the key institutions of British imperialism in the city. Next came the homes of the governing elites.

Not everyone apparently saw the value of these plaques. To the Canadian Club's dismay, several members of City Council's Property Committee apparently laughed when it proposed placing tablets on the civic buildings. But plaques were created and installed, thanks to funders beyond the Canadian Club. The Old Fort York plaques, for example, were funded by the Minister of Militia.

Strong evidence points to the fact that the Canadian Club plaque program was the first of its kind in Toronto. In a letter to Yeigh in April of 1898, John Ross Robertson, probably the best known champion of local history in the period, offered his congratulations on the project, including the following note: "I made a similar suggestion [for a plaquing program] years ago, and the *Globe* some years later urged me personally to look into the matter." He wrote that he did not follow through on that idea, however, due to restraints on his time. He was now happy that the Canadian Club was putting the idea into action. If anyone might have known of previous attempts to systematically mark historic sites in Toronto, it surely would have been Robertson.

Today, all that remains of the Canadian Club's commemorative efforts are two very worn marble tablets. The one marking Victoria Memorial Square is prominently installed in the square, near to the gravestones which it so long accompanied. The second, for Fort York, once again marks that site in the Fort York Visitor Centre.

The former chief historian and associate director of Heritage Toronto, Gary has recently joined Museums & Heritage Services as a project manager after working for a couple of years as a heritage planner with City of Toronto Preservation Services.

Who Maintains the Bathurst Bridge?

by Stephen Otto

There are two parts to the bridge on Bathurst Street between Front Street and Fort York Boulevard: the historic steel-truss structure across the rail corridor, and the viaduct portion carried on piers and a solid base from the truss to Fort York Boulevard. The viaduct built in 1929-30 will be rehabilitated in 2017-18 under a current call for proposals by the City of Toronto (No. 9117-16-5036). It is not the focus of this article; the steel-truss is.

Since 1860 three bridges in succession have spanned the rail corridor at the foot of Bathurst. The present one, placed there a century ago, was opened for traffic on 25 August 1916. First erected in 1903 to carry the Grand Trunk Railway's lakeshore line across the Humber River, it soon proved inadequate for heavier locomotives and trains. When the railway offered to move it to Bathurst Street as part of a new streetcar route serving the CNE, the municipality jumped at the offer, having failed in a 1907 plebiscite to get Toronto ratepayers to approve financing for a new bridge.

Railways were of such national importance to Canada, particularly from 1850 to 1950, they were given extraordinary powers and closely regulated in exercising them. The Board of Rail Commissioners for Canada and its successors had to approve almost any action they proposed. Hence, the Board's consent was needed to relocate the Humber Bridge which it gave in an order dated 17 February 1916 directing the Grand Trunk (GTR) to carry the work forward, although the sidewalks, road surfaces, and streetcar tracks were to be owned, paid for, and maintained by the City of Toronto.

Concurrent with moving the bridge, work was proceeding on the new Union Station. The GTR took the lead on designing the terminal, consulting and negotiating with Canadian Pacific and City. After final plans were approved by the Railway Commissioners in 1912, however, responsibility for building the station was turned over to the Toronto Terminals Railway Co. (TTR), a company owned 50-50 by the Grand Trunk and Canadian Pacific. Construction on the building continued through the First World War and was completed in 1920.

How the trains would reach the passenger platforms was the subject of a Board order in 1913. It mandated a viaduct

with road underpasses at all intersecting main streets between John and Berkeley Streets except Spadina, where a bridge was to be built. But numerous objections by the railways and other complications saw a delay of thirteen years before construction on the viaduct began in earnest in 1926. Union Station opened for passenger service in 1927.

Meanwhile, after the Grand Trunk became bankrupt in 1919 it was absorbed into the Canadian National Railway system, which inherited GTR's duty to maintain the Bathurst Bridge. CN continued to honour this obligation; for example in 1998-99 it replaced top chord bracing angles, which it considered routine maintenance. It did not consider scaling and painting in the same category.

In 2000 the city purchased Union Station from TTR so it could undertake its complete refurbishment. At the same time, GO Transit acquired from TTR the so-called Union Station Rail Corridor, which included responsibility for the *north* part of the truss bridge. In 2010, after GO Transit had become a division of Metrolinx, the latter acquired CN's Oakville subdivision and assumed its duty of keeping up the remainder or *south* part of the truss bridge.

Because the bridge lies within the Fort York National Historic Site and features prominently in views from the fort, The

Friends have a substantial interest in its next rendezvous with a paintbrush. Moreover, the truss will shortly be much more visible when the landscaping of The Bentway under the Gardiner and Lower Garrison Creek Park are completed. Metrolinx will say only that "standard refurbishment (painting) is anticipated within the next 10 years."

Neither CN nor Metrolinx can say from any maintenance records they have when the bridge was last scraped and painted. Almost certainly, it pre-dated 1994 when The Friends of Fort York came on the scene. If the next 'standard refurbishment' is still ten years off, this could place it beyond the upper limit of the range of 'best practices' followed by other bridge-rich cities. The people who maintain London's Thames bridges try to paint them every 25 years, although the Millennium Bridge got a new coat of paint after only fifteen. Pittsburgh's bridges are painted every 25-30 years.

Let's hope this isn't another example of Toronto's 'water-fountain' syndrome: a wealthy city that can afford neither to maintain nor replace its aging infrastructure.



Credit: Courtesy of Bronwyn Krog

Thomas Kelly: A Drum Major at the Battle of York

by Eamonn O'Keeffe

The Battle of York is among the most storied and best-studied episodes in Toronto's early history. Two centuries on, new information about this dramatic event continues to emerge.

In a recent article for *The Napoleon Series*, entitled "Fops under Fire", I explored the experiences of British drum majors in action during the early nineteenth century. These princes of pomp and circumstance were often ridiculed for their battlefield truancy, and indeed drum majors were not expected to risk their skins by actively participating in combat. Rather than leading the band in stirring renditions of patriotic music under fire, most drum majors occupied themselves with unglamorous yet essential tasks behind the lines, from aiding the wounded to haranguing would-be shirkers. However, a handful of brave (or reckless) drum majors refused to confine themselves to such unadventurous auxiliary roles and were instead celebrated for their valour under fire.

One newly-discovered instance of drum majorly daring took place close to home at the Battle of York on 27 April 1813. Having failed to check the invading American army on the beach or in the clearing at Fort Rouillé, the British fell back to the Western Battery near the site of the modern-day Princes' Gate at Toronto's Exhibition Place. Supported here by three artillery pieces, the defenders hoped to make a stand against the advancing enemy column. However, the accidental explosion of a portable powder magazine within the battery caused mayhem, dismounting all but one of the British cannons and killing or maiming dozens of men. The guns were abandoned as the enemy drew near, but according to an anonymous eyewitness account, in the form of an 1833 letter to the editor in the *U.S. Military and Naval Magazine*, the "gallant Drum Major of the 8th or King's Regiment" returned in "full costume" to the stricken battery. At the very moment of "raising the linstock" to fire a parting shot from the remaining 18-pounder into the advancing American column, this "brave soldier" was brought down by a skilled rifle shot from Second Lieutenant David Riddle of the 15th U.S. Infantry. The drum major was captured but was treated with "marked attention" in hospital on account of his courage and happily made a full recovery.

Yet regimental pay lists prove that the drum major in question was not William Ankers of the 8th King's, who was also present at the battle, but Thomas Kelly of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment. The American confusion is, however, understandable given that the two corps, both royal regiments with blue facings, sported near-identical uniforms. Kelly, born at St. John's in Newfoundland and approximately twenty-five years of age at the Battle of York, first joined the army in 1798 and had served for a dozen years as a drummer before his appointment as the regiment's



Drum Major of a Regiment of the Line by Charles Hamilton Smith. Drum majors, notorious for their extravagant attire, took centre stage in the early nineteenth-century British military spectacle, but also occasionally distinguished themselves in battle. Credit: Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library, Providence, RI, USA. Photo René Chartrand

drum major. Described as having grey eyes, brown hair, and a fair complexion, he was wounded and taken prisoner at the Battle of York but was soon released in a prisoner exchange. Kelly served as drum major until the Royal Newfoundland Regiment was disbanded in 1816.

Although the American correspondent claimed that "no one who witnessed the occurrence will forget" the sight of Drum Major Kelly's fall, no other accounts of his battlefield bravery have been found to date. Even had Kelly managed to fire a parting shot from the Western Battery, it is unlikely to have wrought much damage as the artillery piece was aimed too high to inflict serious injury on the advancing enemy column. Indeed, another American eyewitness recalled that the round shot fired from this gun failed to do more than clip the tops of their pikes and bayonets.

Nonetheless, the heretofore unsung bravery of Drum Major Kelly during the Battle of York is worthy of our belated recognition. Although some drum majors may have made themselves scarce under fire, as the sneers of contemporary memoirists suggest, Kelly certainly proved himself worthy of his eminent office and lavish regalia on the battlefield as well as on the parade square.

Eamonn O'Keeffe is drum major of the Fort York Guard, having volunteered and worked in the site's fife and drum corps for more than a decade. When not leading daily summer demonstrations at the fort he studies at Merton College, Oxford, the alma mater of John Graves Simcoe. He has an article appearing shortly in the Fall issue of Canadian Military History entitled "Such Want of Gentlemanly Conduct."

The Terrace of Small Bow-Fronted Houses on Niagara Street

by Marzieh Azad Armaki and Stephen Otto

On the south side of Niagara Street between Tecumseth St. and Wellington St. W., backing on the former but now shuttered Quality Meats pork packing plant stands a remarkable row of nineteenth-century brick houses. It is notable partly because of its extent: originally twenty-seven units numbering from 111 to 163 Niagara, it was possibly the longest terrace in Toronto when constructed. But the dwellings are unusual also because they have two-storey bow fronts instead of the more common Toronto form, the 'Bay-n-Gable.'

This terrace was a residential beachhead among some markedly industrial uses. To the southwest across Garrison Creek, not yet buried in a sewer, stood the Western Cattle Market where livestock were watered and fed before being slaughtered or shipped onward. To the east on the south side of Niagara between Tecumseth and Bathurst, most of the block was occupied by a planing mill, foundry, some coal sheds, and a gasholder.

The land where the houses were built was owned by James Mooney who lived opposite on the north side of Niagara Street. Presumably it was he who he retained George R. Harper to design the units and call proposals for their construction in *The Globe*, 7 September 1886. Unfortunately Mooney died in late November, 1886, so never saw his scheme completed.

Harper was active from 1882 to 1910 as an architect of more than forty ecclesiastical, institutional, commercial, industrial, and residential projects in Toronto. His choice of bow fronts for the Niagara Street houses was unusual for this city, but less so for places like Boston and New York. The style was a variant on the 'Bay-n-Gable' that was the more common domestic style here. The latter term was first used by Patricia McHugh in her *Toronto Architecture: A City Guide* (1985). She explained it as the choice for speculative builders because it made the most of the narrow lots common throughout the city. Writing more recently in *Architecture in Canada*, v. 41, no. 1 (2016) Scott Weir has said, "the semi-detached bay and gable house type proliferated in Toronto from 1870 to about 1900 and is essentially comprised of a few common elements. The two and one half-storey front façade is clad in brick and vertically oriented, each side including a ground floor bay window fronting the principal room and an entrance usually sheltered by a small porch."

There is a break in the terrace today from 121 through 135 that dates from about 1940 when a small factory was built for the Button Sales Co. In recent years it housed the Human Resources department for Quality Meats. Still, with redevelopment planned for not only the industrial loft building at 89-109 Niagara, and for the Quality Meats site, new residents may be expected to carry on the traditions of this historical neighbourhood.

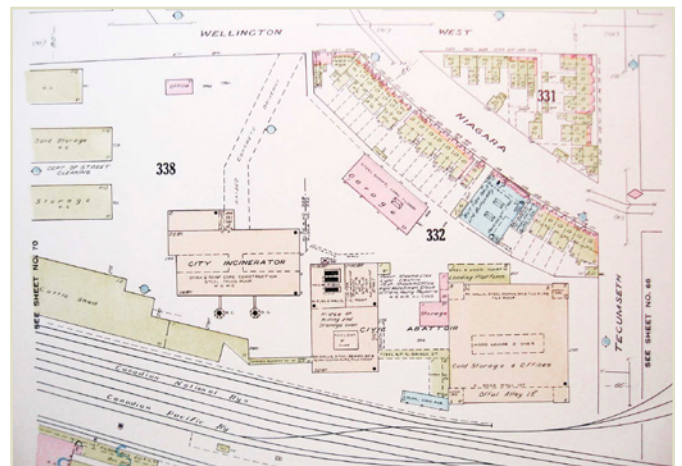
Dr. Marzieh Azad Armaki is an architect and professor trained in Paris and Shahid Rajaee University, Iran, doing research in Canada. She was encouraged to undertake this article by Prof. Masha Etkind of Ryerson University. Stephen Otto is an editor of this newsletter.



Patrick Cummins, a recorder of Toronto streetscapes par excellence, photographed the buildings from 111 to 117 Niagara on 30 April 1988. The unit at the corner of Tecumseth differed in design to reflect the fact it was intended to be a shop. Credit: Patrick Cummins



The west end of the terrace from 155 to 163 Niagara Street was photographed by Patrick Cummins in December 1985. Credit: Patrick Cummins



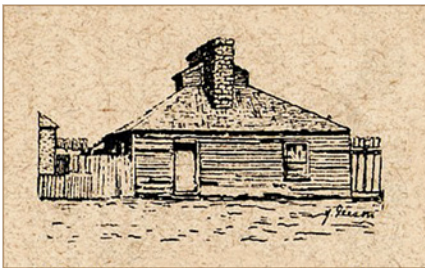
Fire Insurance Underwriters' Atlas, of 1954, volume 1, plate 19. The Button Sales building is shown in blue. Credit: Robert Hill Collection

How Jean Geeson Saw the Fort

In the July issue of this newsletter, The Friends proposed that the future public school in the Fort York neighbourhood be named for Jean Earle Geeson, an early champion of the fort's preservation. Often she advocated it through booklets and articles in newspapers illustrated by her own charming sketches. Her training as an art teacher made these drawings something of an historical record too. Four of them made just after the turn of the twentieth century appear here.



The Western Entrance shows the two 1815 Brick Soldiers' Barracks, then housing non-commissioned officers and their families. Posted on the building on the right and clearly visible is a newly-installed historical plaque sponsored by the Canadian Club of Toronto and paid for by the Minister of Militia. Today it is on display inside the Fort York Visitor Centre. The whereabouts of an identical tablet mounted at the Eastern Entrance of the fort are unknown. Credit: The Globe, 4 July 1903

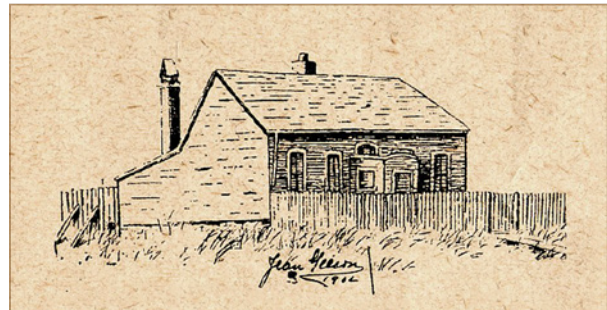


The rebellion-era **Cook House** stood northeast of the Brick Officers' Quarters. Photographs show it more dilapidated than Geeson depicts in

her sketch made on the eve of its demolition in autumn 1902. It was built ca. 1840 to serve an expanded population at the garrison following the civil unrest of the late 1830s. Credit: Geeson, The Old Fort



The East Blockhouse, more properly called the No. 1 Blockhouse, and its mate, the No. 2 or central blockhouse, were the two first structures erected in 1813 when Fort York was rebuilt after being destroyed in the War of 1812. Today the schools' overnight program is located in the No. 1 Blockhouse; it is also used for storage. Visible in the left background is a structure of uncertain purpose that replaced the original 1814 Guardhouse and 'Black Hole' just inside the east gate. Credit: The Globe, 4 July 1903



Off duty soldiers found their social centre in **The Canteen**. At Fort York the last in a series of canteens was built in the late 1860s just before the British Army withdrew from Canada. It stood west of the Blue Barracks. When days as a canteen ended it was used as a private residence until demolished ca. 1930. The lilacs in the bastion in the north ramparts survive from its dooryard. In her sketch Geeson took some liberties with the window-heads and transom. Credit: Geeson, The Old Fort

John Bentley Mays is Remembered at Fort York

Fort York has had the honour at least twice of falling under the critical gaze of John Bentley Mays of *The Globe & Mail* who died in Toronto on 16 September 2016, aged seventy-five. Once was in 1994 when Mays declined to join the emerging Friends of Fort York in our first battle with officialdom over the fort's place in the city. <http://www.fortyork.ca/images/historical-essays/fort-will-endure-1994.pdf>

He deemed the fort resilient enough to not need his

help; it was the city's future he was worried about. More recently Mays looked at Fort York last March when he found things had turned out better than he had expected. <http://www.fortyork.ca/images/newsletters/fife-and-drum-2016/fife-and-drum-mar-2016.pdf>

The Friends of Fort York are grateful for his encouraging thoughts, and offer to his wife, daughters, and their families our sincere condolences in their loss of a generous and wise man.

Rail Deck Park

by Christopher Moore

Rail Deck Park should make us (even more) grateful for Garrison Common. Twenty-eight hectares of new parkland in the heart of the city. Who would not be thrilled?

Mayor John Tory unveiled the proposal early in August: To create a new park out of thin air by putting a roof over the rail corridor south of Front Street from Blue Jay Way to Bathurst Street. Presto: a brand new park and plaza amid the residential towers to the south and north.

Head city planner Jennifer Keesmaat set out three ways Rail Deck Park would heal what she called a gap in the city fabric. “By covering the rail corridor, it takes away a barrier from north to south. ... It stitches together our fastest growing neighbourhoods: CityPlace, Liberty Village, King and Spadina. ... It provides desperately needed recreational and amenity space for the families that live in the surrounding condos.”

Planners and critics gave widespread assent. Indeed they began to talk of Rail Deck as Toronto’s Central Park, its Millennium Park, its new civic jewel. At *BlogTO*, planners Alex Josephson and Nicola Spunt called Rail Deck Park “one of the most visionary ideas to come out of City Hall in our lifetimes. ... an unparalleled city-building moment.” John Lorinc at *Spacing* called it “smart and far-sighted.” Jennifer Pagliaro of the *Star* found it “a progressive, city-building idea.” Gabriel Eidelman of the University of Toronto saluted “21 acres of new parkland -- that’s about the size of 21 soccer fields! -- within walking distance of thousands of Torontonians. The planning rationale is rock solid.”

But at once traditional planning conundrums returned. Pagliaro noted that the city does not own the air rights over the rail lines. They would be hugely expensive, and a city attempt to zone the space about the rails as parkland would be resisted by the owners. Would the city pay for Rail Deck Park by giving much of it over for development in exchange for funding—as at Downsview and Harbourfront?

Financial challenges also emerged quickly. Larry Richards, U of T’s former dean of architecture, observed, “It would be a shame if its realization negated the urgently needed repairs, upgrades, and maintenance for the public realm. ... A new grand park should not overwhelm and prevent the upgrading of the ‘everyday’ public spaces throughout the entire city.” Mayor Tory attached no costing to the proposal. (On September 15, the city released a preliminary cost estimate of \$1.05 billion, not including the cost of air rights.) Would



Artist's impression of the proposed Rail Deck Park looking east from Bathurst Street toward downtown Toronto. Credit: Image courtesy of the City of Toronto

Rail Deck Park simply be added to the city’s \$22 billion list of unfunded capital projects?

The politics also began to look forbidding. Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti promised war “tooth and nail” against Rail Deck Park, “for the suburbs that don’t have an ability to get a play structure for their children in their parks. Yet we keep adding parks to downtown.” Would a conservative, suburban-centred City Council ever invest the political capital—and political courage—required to secure the zoning, raise the revenues, and launch the design initiative that a truly visionary Rail Deck Park would require? Rail Deck Park’s support may turn out to be as wide as the rail corridor—but as thin as the air.

Considering all the obstacles faced by Rail Deck Park, Torontonians should be grateful once again to the heritage-minded citizens who first preserved Fort York and Garrison Common from destruction, and to those who drove its recent revitalization. Garrison Common is farther from the centre of town than Rail Deck Park, but it provides an increasingly dense population with the largest expanse of green space around. The impressive new Visitor Centre, the redeveloped Common, the new footbridge, The Bentway, and all the new linkages south, west, and north make Fort York and the Common indispensable to the new city. They are delivering the heritage-preservation dividend: green space, cultural space, civic space—all at comparatively minimal cost.

Rail Deck Park would be a tremendous addition to the city fabric. If it proves to be only a castle in the air, Toronto will still have the park that heritage preservation provided.

Writer and historian Christopher Moore is a Friend of Fort York.

Tyler Wentzell Appointed to The Friends' Board

At its regular monthly meeting in September the Board of Directors appointed Tyler Wentzell to the board to serve until the next annual general meeting. A native of the Maritimes, Tyler is a graduate of the Royal Military College, Kingston, and a veteran of service in Afghanistan with Canada's regular forces. He now practices law with a large firm and is a reservist with the rank of major in the 48th Highlanders Regiment. He is a published author of several articles having historical themes and currently is completing a book on the life of Edward Cecil-Smith, the commander of the Canadian volunteers in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939).

Members Only Reception

Members of The Friends of Fort York in good standing will be invited to a reception on October 20 to view the new permanent exhibits in the Visitor Centre and to hear a talk about them by Dr. Wayne Reeves, chief curator for Toronto Culture Museums. If you are not a member of The Friends currently there's still time to join and attend the reception. A small additional charge will be levied for refreshments and appetizers. For information on joining The Friends go to <http://www.fortyork.ca/join-us/become-a-friend-of-fort-york.html/>



Call for Help Editing

The Fife and Drum



The small group of editors and designers responsible to the directors of The Friends of Fort York for putting out *The Fife & Drum*, a quarterly publication about the history, people, and landscape of the fort, is expanding and renewing its focus.

Could you see yourself contributing *pro bono* to the newsletter's editorial direction, production, and wider distribution?

If so, please let us know with a brief description of your qualifications to info@fortyork.ca

News From

The Birthplace of Toronto

Contributions from the Staff at the Fort

Manager's Report

by David O'Hara, Site Manager

After beginning our 2016 event season with Field Trip and the Indigenous Arts Festival, we moved on to Taste of Toronto, Lakeshore Ribfest, Panorama, TIME, Vegan Fest, Mad Decent Block Party, One Walk to Conquer Cancer, Toronto Urban Roots Festival (TURF), the Sick Kids Great Camp Adventure, On Common Ground, and many more events—big and small.

Once again one of the highlights of our summer program was *First World War Comes to Life*, curated by the Victoria County Historical Society and funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage and Veterans Affairs. The fully-animated exhibit provided an opportunity to explore the wartime contributions of Canadian men and women who served beyond the trenches, both at home and overseas. It also provided an opportunity to profile Toronto's Great War Attic. For more information on the Great War Attic and to view the documentaries, visit www.toronto.ca/ww1

The Fort York Guard provided another summer highlight when they returned from Fort George in August having won the annual drill competition at the Soldiers' Field Day—congratulations to all involved!

Moving into autumn, we're very pleased to now have the exhibits within the Visitor Centre complete and open. Aside from some finishing touches to lighting and a few additional artifacts to be installed, the new orientation film and theatre, the Exhibit Gallery, Vault, and the immersive Time Tunnel are now all open and accessible to the public.

Work on the Gardiner Expressway deck reconstruction, which has severely constrained access to Fort York over the last year, is expected to be complete at the end of October. Restoration of the Garrison Common, which will include the removal of the gravel parking lot, will also occur in October. Removal of the parking lot will return a significant portion of the original Common to open space, allowing

for a more coherent visitor experience from Visitor Centre to Common to Fort. Henceforth visitors will be required to park in front of the Visitor Centre or at the corner of Fleet Street and Strachan Avenue to access the site. Additional improvements to these parking areas, including better connections between them, will be implemented in early 2017 as part of The Bentway.

Construction is well underway on the Fort York pedestrian and bicycle bridges. Dufferin Construction finished driving twenty- three piles for the Fort York landing in mid- September. Fabrication of the actual bridges will be completed off-site and delivered for installation at some point in 2017. The Bentway—formerly known as Project: Under Gardiner, continues to move along with Fort York staff heavily involved. The first phases of work planned for The Bentway will land directly within the National Historic Site from Strachan Avenue east along the Visitor Centre frontage. The delivery of a first phase for July of 2017 will include completion of the Visitor Centre parking lot, the 'Events Dock' (the boardwalk extending across the Visitor Centre frontage), and other landscape improvements. Fort York staff will also continue to collaborate with those working on the establishment of The Bentway Conservancy on issues related to programming, operations, and maintenance.

On the staffing front, we're pleased to welcome Kristine Williamson to the role of Supervisor, Special Events at Fort York. Since joining the fort in 2011 as Museum Outreach Officer, Kristine has worked to strengthen the site's ties to the community and its place as a hub of cultural activity and engagement for residents and visitors alike. We're also delighted to announce that Melissa Beynon is our new full- time Program Officer. Melissa has been with the city museums for fourteen years, in a number of roles, and brings a wealth of experience to the site.

While 2016 shows no signs of slowing down, we do continue to plan for 2017, which certainly promises to be an even busier year.

Construction Started on Fort York Bridge

In the week following Labour Day work began on the pedestrian and cycle bridge linking the Garrison Common at Fort York with the Stanley Park Extension south of Wellington Street. This bridge is essential to creating an off-road system of cycling paths in the west downtown. With the recent announcement that the West Toronto Railpath would be extended southward three kilometres as part of upgrading the Kitchener GO Transit corridor, the lower end of Railpath soon will be separated from Strachan Avenue and the Fort York Bridge by only a kilometre where bicycles must share the road with motor vehicles.

A screening for archaeological materials having occurred earlier in 2016, the bridge building at Fort York began with the driving of deep piles to a depth of 20-25 feet at the four points where the two-span bridge touches down. The project schedule calls for the construction this autumn of a retaining wall along the north edge of Ordnance Park; the piling and pouring of concrete bridgeheads in Ordnance Park, Stanley Park Extension, and the Garrison Common;

and the placing of fill in Ordnance Park to facilitate final landscaping there. Work will resume in spring 2017, towards an opening of the bridge later next year. See the project's website for updates and more information.

<http://fortyorkbridge.mmm.ca/#/home>



Fort York Pedestrian Bridge looking east toward downtown Toronto. Credit: Image courtesy of DTAH

The Bentway Update: Turning Vision into Reality

by Kasia Gladki

Things are moving along at a rapid rate—The Bentway is quickly becoming a reality.

The design has advanced in preparation for a phased series of openings in 2017. The area to be completed 1 July 2017 will include: preliminary connecting trails and landscaping; the platform in front of the Fort York Visitor Centre; the initial stages of the large performance space adjacent to Strachan Avenue. A second stage to be completed in winter 2017 will include: the skating trail and building, and a third, to be completed in summer 2018, will finalize the last pieces and complete the full vision for the space including the final trail connections and landscaping, and the full development of the performance space adjacent to Strachan Avenue.

Incorporation of The Bentway Conservancy, a new not-for-profit organization that will maintain, operate, and program The Bentway, is almost finalized and a hiring process has begun for key staff positions including the CEO and Director of Fund Development. Working with Artscape, a board is being formed and governance structures, organizational

systems, and a programming and curatorial plan are being developed. A close collaboration with Fort York National Historic Site will be essential to successfully realizing The Bentway vision and discussions are underway with the City of Toronto and FYNHS staff to plan for this partnership.

Initial conversations have been held with major arts and culture organizations across the City to be followed by a broader Request for Expressions of Interest to organizations in arts and culture, recreation, environment, science and technology, youth and community activism, and more, in the middle of October. Organizations are sharing more about how the community would like to use the space and how they want to be involved. This community engagement and involvement will help make The Bentway a truly great cultural attraction for Torontonians and tourists alike.

Finally, a new website (with a new brand) will be launched in the middle of October. It's an exciting time for The Bentway. Construction on the Gardiner restoration project is coming to a conclusion and work on The Bentway itself will shortly follow, bringing a new vision and future to this neglected and underused space. Stay tuned—there is so much more to come!

Kasia Gladki is project co-ordinator, Creative Placemaking Lab, at Artscape.

Fort York Guard Wins Annual Fort George Fife and Drum Muster and Soldiers' Field Day

For the second consecutive year the Fort York Guard beat all comers at the Annual Fort George arms drill, marching, and perfect volley competitions on August 13-14. The other guards present were from Fort George, Fort Erie, and Fort Malden.



Credit: Brayden McCullagh / ©Parks Canada / Fort George National Historic Site

2016 | Upcoming Events Historic Fort York

Compiled by Richard Haynes

OCTOBER

Historic Cooking Classes in the 1826 Officers' Mess Kitchen

Sun. October 23, 10 am to 3:30 pm

Hannah Glasse was the best known British cookery writer of the 18th century. Using recipes from *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy* (1747) and *The Complete Confectioner* (1760) you will learn to create delicious historical dishes.

\$75 + HST. Lunch and recipe package included.

Pre-registration and payment required.

To register please call 416-392-7484.

Fort York after Dark: Lantern Tours

Wed. Thurs. Fri. October 26, 27, 28, 7:30 to 9:30 pm

Tour the grounds of Fort York at night to hear stories about this national treasure and the history that surrounds it, from the haunted lighthouse to the bloody Battle of York. The tour will also visit two military cemeteries. This event is not recommended for children under 8 yrs. Complimentary refreshments.

\$12.50 + HST. Pre-registration is required.

Please call 416-392-7484 for more information or to pre-register.

NOVEMBER

Remembrance Day Commemoration

Fri. November 11, 10:45 am

Fort York National Historic Site and the Toronto Municipal Chapter IODE (Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire) are proud to present one of this city's most evocative Remembrance Day Services on Garrison Common. Commencing at 10:45 am from the west gate of Fort York, a processional, led by period uniformed military staff and standard bearers of the IODE, will make its way to the Strachan Avenue Military Cemetery, where the public will be gathered. There, at the eleventh hour, all soldiers of the Toronto Garrison who fell in the War of 1812, the Rebellion Crises, the Crimean War, Northwest Rebellion, South African (Boer) War, the two World Wars, and recent conflicts around the globe will be remembered and honoured.

Historic Cooking Classes in the 1826 Officers' Mess Kitchen: Mince Pies

Sun. November 27, 10 am to 3:30 pm

Learn how to make the pastry and rich filling for these traditional fruit and meat-based pies. Recipe package and mince pies to take home are included.

\$75 + HST. Pre-registration and payment required.

To register please call 416-392-7484.

DECEMBER

Frost Fair

Sat. December 3, 10 am to 4 pm

Celebrate the festive season. Stroll through historic buildings where merchants will be selling heritage inspired products and reproduction pieces. Shop with local artisans to find unique holiday gifts for family and friends. Enjoy many activities throughout the day, including children's drill workshop, military exercises, demonstrations by the Culinary Historians of Canada, and printing a souvenir on the Mackenzie House 1845 proof press.

Regular admission.

Gingerbread Make and Bake

Extra fun for kids at Fort York (ages 4 and up)

Tues. to Sat. December 27 to 31, 11 am and 2 pm

While you enjoy a tour of Fort York your kids can join the cooks in the Officers' Mess kitchen to create traditional gingerbread cookies. In this hands-on workshop, kids will use period cooking utensils and tools to sift flour, crush cinnamon, cloves, or allspice, pound sugar and grate nutmeg and ginger as they prepare an 1800s gingerbread recipe. Samples may be taken home—if they last that long! Workshop is limited to 15 participants.

Included with regular admission, sign up in the Museum Store when you arrive.

Visit our website at: www.fortyork.ca. Learn more about Fort York, subscribe to the [free newsletter](#), become a [member](#), [donate](#) or browse our [historical image gallery](#).



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Toronto Culture
www.toronto.ca/culture



Regular Admission to Fort York (all prices include taxes)
 Adult: \$9.00, Senior (65+) & Youth (13-18): \$5.50,
 Children (6-12): \$4.25, Children (5 and under): FREE

The Fife and Drum is a quarterly publication of the The Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common