

The Fife and Drum

Newsletter of The Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common

Vol. 22 No. 2 July 2018

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St. John's free clinic served the poor

by Victor Russell

St. John the Evangelist Church was for many years an important spiritual and military establishment in Toronto. First established in 1858 and serving as the main religious base for the British garrisons of Fort York, the church continued after 1870 to be affiliated with various military units active in the neighbourhood. Located on Stewart Street inside the original boundaries of the fort's first cemetery – Victoria Square – the church became known colloquially as “the Garrison Church.” But St. John's was also the hub of an active Anglican parish that through much of the 20th century would be known city-wide for its charitable works. In the early 1920s they began, and then ran for more than 40 years, what became the largest free clinic in the city.

By the end of the 19th century, Toronto's public persona was one of a successful, business-oriented city. This often self-aggrandizing view was the product of massive growth combined with dramatic change driven by industrialization and immigration. From 1880 through to the First World War, Toronto would more than double in area through the annexation of its surrounding suburbs. It would also undergo a population explosion, growing from 180,000 in 1880 to 376,000 in 1911. While prosperity was enjoyed by many, some were less fortunate. The working class, the poor, and a growing immigrant population were artfully ignored by this somewhat smug view of a bustling city.

St. John's parish adjacent to the Old Fort (as it was called then) experienced these changes first hand. Many of the private homes built north and east of the church were disappearing, giving way to factories cheek to jowl with the remaining houses (the results



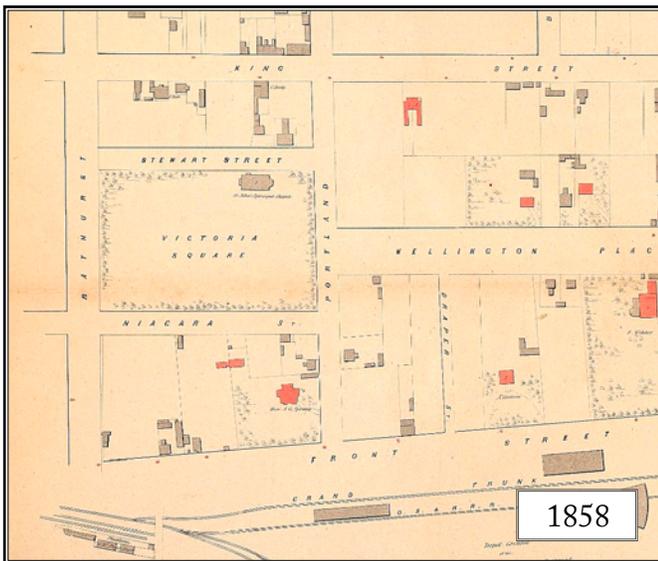
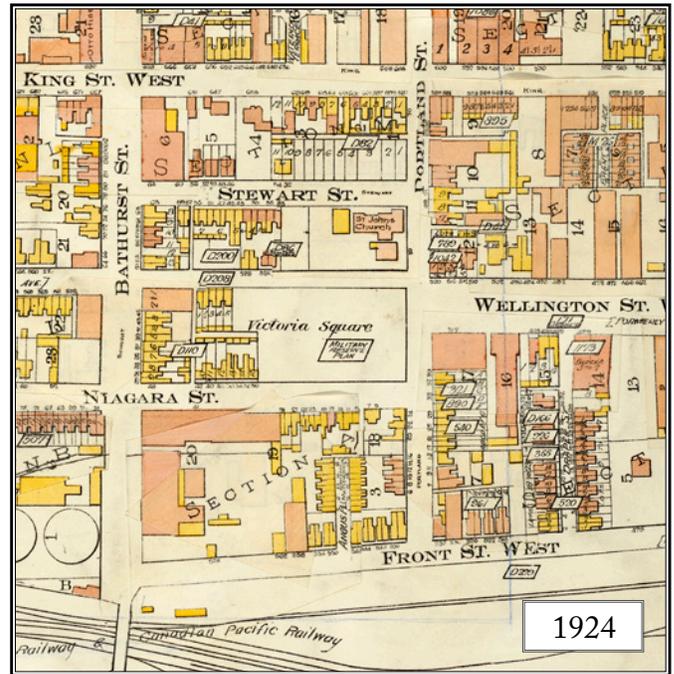
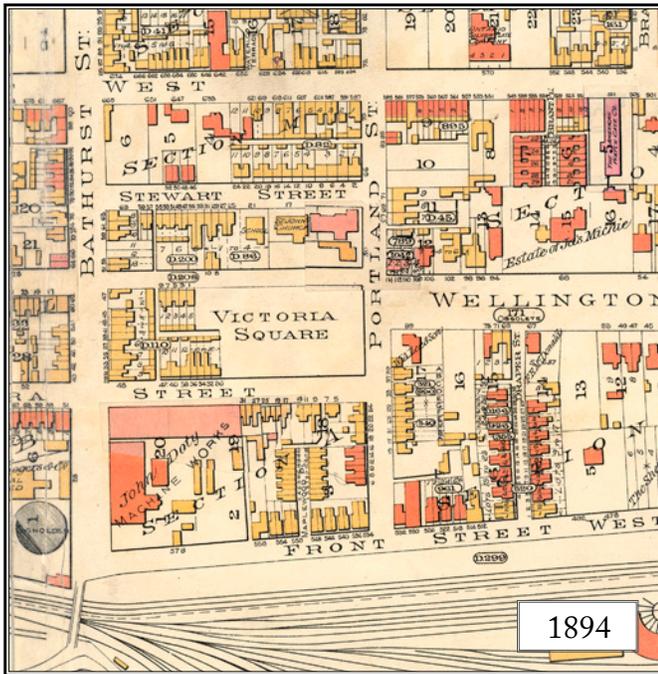
Workers and young families in the crumbling housing of St. John's parish – the city's Niagara District – were the reason for the free outpatient clinic in the church at Portland and Stewart Streets. As part of a campaign to eliminate the slums of Toronto, the Medical Officer of Health sent the new City Photographer, Arthur Goss, out to document living conditions in the wards. This family lived on Wolsley St. in 1916. Photo: Toronto Archives S372 lt0421

By the 1930s, the afternoon and evening clinics were seeing more than 12,000 patients a year

can still be seen along Portland). At the same time, the original middle-class residents of the 19th century parish were being replaced by large numbers of the working poor, living in less-than-ideal conditions and including many from overseas whose

first language was not English.

The proliferation of inner-city poverty prompted the city's Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Charles Hastings, to launch an enquiry in the spring of 1911. For the purposes of his study, Dr. Hastings identified six areas of the city that he felt were the worst of the worst. One of the target neighbourhoods, called the Niagara District, was the area immediately north of the Old Fort – now crowded by industry and the railways – and within the boundaries of St. John's parish. In July 1911, Hastings released a shocking report on the “slum conditions” of these neighbourhoods and



Originally land of the military reserve, the parish of St. John the Evangelist evolved on the western edge of Toronto from the open lots and estates of 1858 to streets in 1894 that were lined with houses. Most were of frame construction (shown in yellow) but already there were substantial brick (in red) homes and commercial buildings.

The first frame church was built in Victoria Square beside the military cemetery just before this map (left) was made. The square's owner – the Crown – severed the lots on Bathurst and Niagara in the early 1870s and extended Duoro St. into the square from the west in 1874. The two acres north of the new street were committed to the use of the parish, which severed the lots toward Bathurst.

When the new St. John's was finished in 1893, the next year's edition of the atlas was updated by pasting a piece of paper (look closely) onto the page. By 1924 commercial and industrial buildings had risen at the intersections and many of the homes – such as the row on the north side of Stewart, built with a view of the square – had been torn down. Sources: Boulton Atlas of Toronto, 1858, Plate 24 (Toronto Public Library); Goad's insurance maps 1894, 1924, Plate 19 (Toronto Archives)

began a long crusade to improve the public health of the city. Many others, including clergymen, were inspired to help.

The Rev. Robert J. Moore of St. George the Martyr church in the autumn of 1912 proposed a meeting of the downtown parishes to see what they could do as a common effort. The Rev. Alex Williams and the Rev. J. Russell MacLean of St. John the Evangelist readily agreed to attend. The result was the organization of the Downtown Church Workers Association (DCWA) to help parishes create their own social assistance programs and to coordinate and train parish volunteers.

By the early summer of 1913 charitable work in St. John's parish included regular clothing and food drives. Later that summer, parish volunteers erected a large tent in what they called the Memorial Park (Victoria Square) to shelter a 'well baby clinic' attended by a City of Toronto Public Health Nurse. Also that

year some 700 mothers and 1,300 children were taken into the country for a one-day picnic.

Summer outings for those who couldn't afford their own trip to the country became an important part of the DCWA's social work. The parish itself in 1922 opened St. John's Rest Home and Fresh Air Camp at Corbett's Point on Lake Ontario near Whitby. The camp was a popular program and by 1928 some 550 people from the parish – which now included the city's new garbage incinerator and a very busy abattoir – were escaping to a week or two in the country each summer.

The social welfare programs of St. John's continued throughout the First World War. The enlistment, and then loss, of so many men had left many families with little support. Then, right after the war, new health-care issues were added to the social worries of the community, indeed of the whole country. Through all of

1919 and 1920 Canadian soldiers were returning home from Europe, leaving behind nearly 60,000 of their comrades, and preceded by more than 170,000 wounded.

Repatriated soldiers faced growing unemployment, low hourly rates, and – if all that wasn't enough – the city was still suffering the effects of the Spanish flu. The world-wide pandemic had killed some 50,000 Canadians, including 1,700 in Toronto, leaving still more families destitute. Given that health-care services then were strictly pay-as-you-go, basic medical care was beyond the means of many, and especially of many in the Niagara District.

In November 1921, “The Incessant Battle with Want” – as a *Globe* headline put it – led the Rev. MacLean and his more prosperous parishioners to plan a new initiative: St. John's Medical Mission and Dispensary. The mission, held four times a week in the basement of the church, was opened the following March. MacLean dedicated the effort to “the Gallant dead of the parish and congregation, who made the supreme sacrifice in the Great War.”

In organizing the medical mission, MacLean worked closely with two prominent Toronto doctors: John Taylor Fotheringham and Herbert Ernest Clutterbuck. Dr. Fotheringham was the post-war commander, as a major general, of the Militia component of the Canadian Army Medical Corps and, in the civilian world, on the faculty of the University of Toronto. He had joined the Militia as a student at the university and served as Surgeon Lieutenant of the 12th York Rangers and later the Queen's Own Rifles. Fotheringham

went overseas with the 2nd Canadian Division and was appointed the formation's senior medical officer in 1915. The official history of the medical service declares that John Fotheringham “was trusted as a man of fair mind and generous spirit.”

Dr. Herbert Ernest Clutterbuck, a friend and colleague, was chief surgeon at St. John's Hospital, on Major Street just north of College, and later chief surgeon of Toronto Western Hospital, at Bathurst and Dundas. Clutterbuck was a graduate of the University of Toronto and had served as a medical officer with the British army during the war. He also taught at the university. Dr. Alex D. McKelvy, another experienced physician, volunteered to be the ear, nose and throat specialist.

The clinic was attended by the Sisterhood of St. John the Divine and served as an outpatient clinic for their hospital three blocks to the north. Operating expenses were largely covered by the Toronto Garrison Business Men's Association, led by



Arthur Goss took nearly a thousand photographs for the Health Department and today these images are considered brilliant technical and historical documents. Goss's aesthetic and skill are evident in this revealing 1915 image of an entire home life in one small room. Photo: Toronto Archives S372 It0247

**free medical services to anyone
who attended, regardless of race,
religion or denomination**

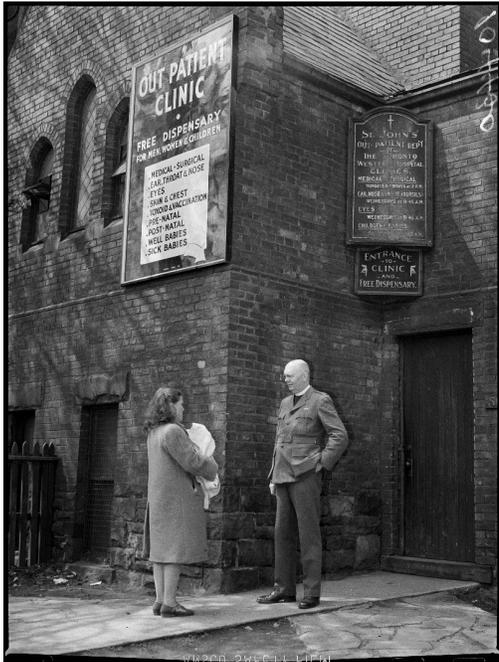
local entrepreneurs such as Edmund Collett and Bartholomew Sproule, principals of their packaging company at 127 Portland, and C.S. Smith, of the Dominion Paper Box Company at 469 King St. West. The hospital itself spent \$2,500 on the initial renovation and equipment of the church basement.

From the day the medical mission opened on Saturday, March 4, 1922, it offered free medical services to anyone who attended, regardless of race, religion or denomination. Available were medical consultations and treatments; pre- and postnatal care; ear, nose and throat treatments; and eye clinics for children. The dispensary provided free prescriptions. Surgical referrals were dealt with by volunteers at St. John's Hospital after normal hours.

By the 1930s, the afternoon and evening clinics were seeing more than 12,000 patients a year.

For the next three decades the clinic endured continuing challenges. In November 1931 the church's leadership changed when the Rev. Joseph T. Robbins became Rector of St. John's after the death of the beloved J. Russell MacLean. The Depression put a severe strain on the mission's resources, forcing parishioners to increase their fundraising and to apply for more financial support from the City. The Fresh Air Camp near Whitby had been scaled down by 1933 and soon after was closed. Robbins also reorganized the clinic's staff in 1937 when the Sisters of St. John the Divine moved to their new convalescent hospital in far-away North York. He soon secured a new affiliation with Toronto Western.

Long the destination of church parades (meaning organized, mandatory attendance) from the nearby garrisons, St. John's broadened its relationship with the armed forces during the



Patients are welcomed to the clinic by Reverend Robbins. This picture appeared in the Globe on May 16, 1946. Photo: Toronto Archives F1266, It104430.



St. John the Evangelist Church was designed by Toronto architect Eden Smith and was opened on May 4, 1893. Although the address was 56 Portland St., it actually fronted on Stewart. This photo is from the late 1940s. The medical mission was in the basement, entered through a side door under the small conical roof. Photo: Toronto Archives S380 It0111

ST. JOHN'S HOSPITAL, 56 Portland Street
OUT PATIENT CLINIC AND DISPENSARY
THIS CARD TO BE BROUGHT TO CLINIC AT EACH VISIT

EMpire 3-2703 - During Clinic Hours Other Times - WALnut 1-3969

<p>SICK CHILDREN and INFANTS Medical, Surgical, Heart, Skin, Chest, Etc. Saturday 9:30 a.m. Monday 3:00 p.m. Wednesday 4:00 p.m.</p> <p>Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat Wednesday 9:00 a.m.</p> <p>WELL BABIES Weighing and Feedings Saturday 9.00 a.m. Monday 2:00 p.m. Wednesday 3:00 p.m.</p> <p>Toxoid and Vaccination Saturday 9.30a.m.</p>	<p>MATERNITY Pre Natal — Post Natal Monday 3:00 p.m. Wednesday 4:00 p.m.</p> <p>MEN and WOMEN Medical and Surgical Monday 3:00 p.m. Wednesday 4:00 p.m.</p> <p>Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat Wednesday 9:30 a.m.</p>
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Name No.

A patient registration card showing the medical services offered. Records based on these cards were kept according to provincial regulations by the volunteering nurses and doctors. The front desk was usually occupied by the Rector's wife, Myrtle Robbins, who acted as the clinic's administrator. Courtesy of Molly Robbins



***Captain Reverend Joseph Thomas Robbins** (1893–1957) Born in England, Robbins was brought to Canada by his family in 1906, settling just west of Montreal. He was educated in Quebec and at the University of Toronto. Married in 1918 and ordained the following year, he worked at two other Toronto churches before becoming Rector of St. John's in 1932. During the war Robbins enrolled as a captain, served as a padre to nearby units, and was promoted major in 1943. Courtesy of Molly Robbins*

Second World War. Robbins commissioned as a captain (later major) in the army's Chaplain Service – becoming a “padre” to the units – and St. John's received the colours of the Royal Canadian Dragoons, who had long been stationed at the Stanley Barracks. The soldiers and aircrew of the wartime Little Norway camp at the foot of Bathurst declared St. John's their official church and attended services there in strength.

The Medical Mission and Dispensary sustained itself throughout the war as the local industrial workforce grew sharply. During the 1950s the basement clinics were being attended by some 18 volunteer doctors and a comparable number of Registered Nurses. By the end of the decade the mission was advertising a psychiatric department. Even as church-service attendance declined after

the war, St. John's medical mission was reporting 15,000 patients per year, many from outside the parish.

Joseph Robbins passed away in 1957 – after serving the parish as rector for 26 years – and the hard decision was made in 1962 to demolish the aging church (its 1892 cornerstone survives in Victoria Square). Anticipating the loss, the wardens of the church had a modern secular building put up next door. St. John's House included worship space, a gymnasium, a kitchen and a rector's apartment, serving a dwindling parish until 1985. But the ambitious clinic could not be kept up and it closed soon after being re-established. The final service at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church was held on November 11, 1963, with the pipes of the Irish Regiment of Canada, of Fort York Armoury, playing the lament.

When medical care and hospital stays are only available to those who can afford them, a lot of needs will go unmet. These needs were among those, for housing and sanitation as well as for medical care, so dramatically revealed by the Medical Officer of Health in 1911. St. John's Medical Mission and Dispensary, begun in 1922, was part of the answer. By the time it expired there were new winds of change in the air.

In the 1960s, governments were no longer discussing whether Canadians should have open access to health care; rather, they were talking about how to build a national health-care system. The introduction to Parliament of the Medical Care Act in 1966 was a harbinger that we would indeed have universal health care. At last, the medical care provided to so many by local charities like St. John's church was no longer needed.

A note on sources

The author appreciates the generous help of Barbara Putnam, niece of Major Rev. Robbins, and especially of Molly Robbins, his daughter, who provided valuable insights and photographs. The original report on the slums of Toronto is available as Dr. Charles Hastings, *Report of the Medical Officer of Health, dealing with the recent investigation of slum conditions in Toronto 1911* (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 200, Series 365, File 14). Paul Bator's unpublished PhD thesis on public health in Toronto up to 1930 is also available in the archives as Fonds 92, Item 13. For a history of the Downtown Church Workers Association, see John F. Hayes, *The Challenge of Change 1912-1962*. For more on J.T. Fotheringham, see Sir Andrew Macphail, *Official History of the Canadian Forces in the Great War 1914-1919: The Medical Services*, published in 1925.

The web site of the Canadian Museum of History has an excellent short account of health care in Canada since 1914, while a charming story of the 1892 cornerstone's trowel, by historian Richard Gerrard, can be found in Vol.22, No.1 of *The Fife and Drum*. The definitive story of St. John the Evangelist (Garrison) Church remains Stephen Otto's account for the Wellington Place Neighbourhood Association, at www.wellingtonplace.org/history/church.php.

Victor Russell is the former Manager of the City of Toronto Archives and author of a number of books and articles on the history of Toronto.

Art as evidence of history: two paintings by Robert Irvine

by Stephen Otto

The earliest view of the capital of Upper Canada following the War of 1812 is Robert Irvine's grand oil painting "View of York," of about 1816, now at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Masterfully impressive in scope and accurately detailed, it depicts Fort York, then recently rebuilt, as part of a broad panorama of the town and its harbour.

Irvine, an Orkneyman, was born Andrew Cruikshank in 1792. He changed his name in 1810 when he arrived in Canada and entered the service of the North West Company on one of its supply ships on the Great Lakes. By 1812 he was captain of the *Caledonia* owned by Angus Mackintosh of Moy, near Windsor, freighting trade goods and furs between Sault Ste. Marie and Fort Erie. When war broke out he placed his ship at the disposal of Captain Charles Roberts at Fort St. Joseph, who used it to great advantage in staging a surprise assault on the American fort at Mackinac. The result was a stunning

victory for the British.

Later that season the *Caledonia* and its cargo of furs was seized at Fort Erie by an American party from Black Rock (Buffalo) who attacked under the cover of darkness. Irvine was captured but released a few days later in an exchange of prisoners following the Battle of Queenston Heights. The authorities in charge of the Provincial Marine, however, were not about to let his valuable experience go to waste. He was soon made a Second Lieutenant and posted to Amherstburg.

In January 1813 he fought on land at Frenchtown (now Munroe, Michigan), where he distinguished himself and was wounded. Promoted then to First Lieutenant, he was given charge of the brig *General Hunter* and saw action in May at Fort Meigs (now Perrysburg, Ohio). By September 1813 he was serving aboard the *Queen Charlotte*. After its captain was killed during the Battle of Lake Erie and the next in line knocked unconscious by

It is to the everlasting benefit of Toronto historians that he passed the time by sketching and painting

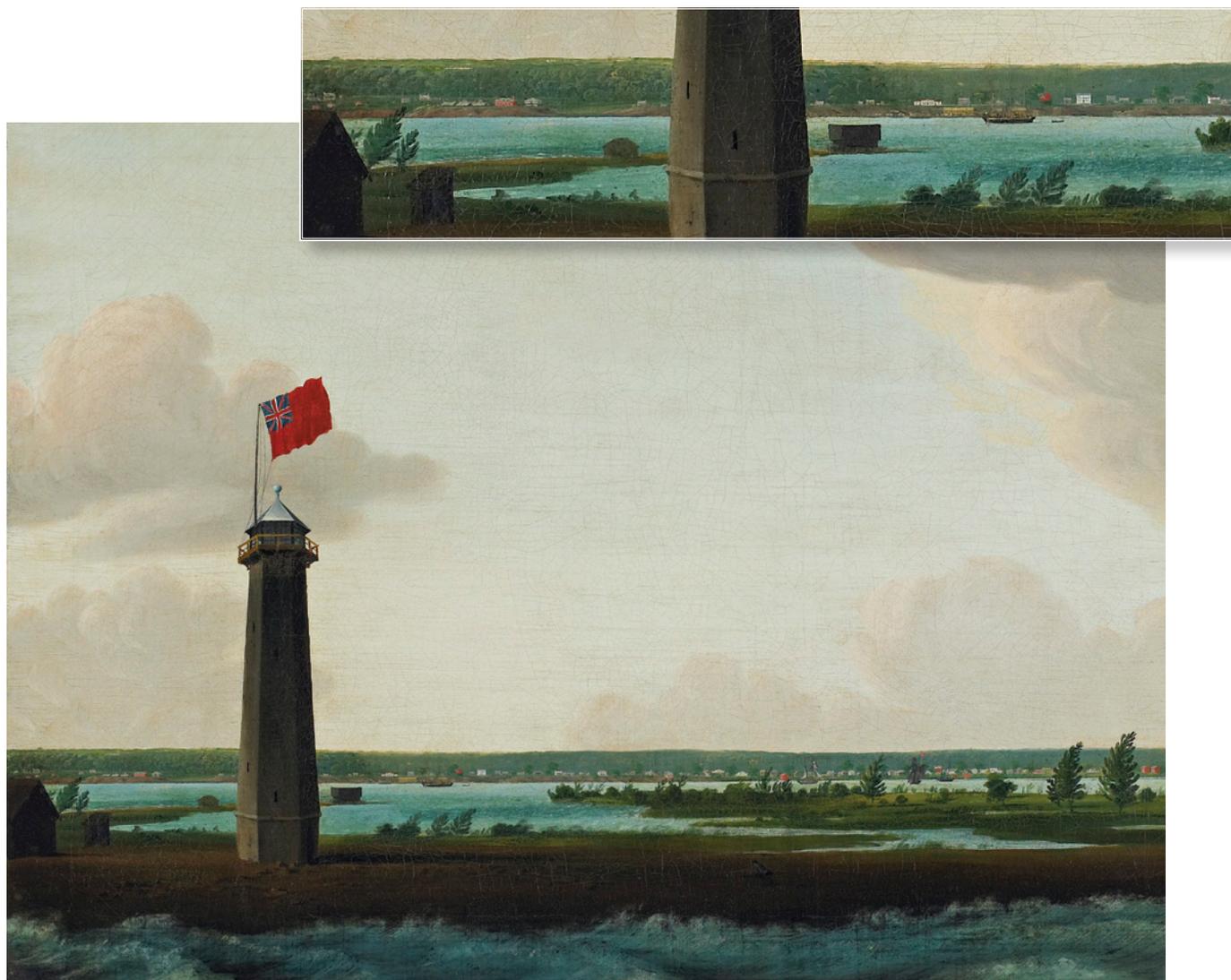
a splintering timber, Irvine assumed command. Unfortunately, his lack of fighting experience was telling and he was forced to surrender his ship to the Americans.

Taken first to Sandusky with 300 other prisoners, and then to Ohio, in the early spring of 1814 he and 77 others were marched to Frankfort, Kentucky, and locked up in the state prison there. Because the jail was overcrowded, the terms of their confinement were liberal, but this respite did not last long.

The Americans and British agreed in April 1814 on an exchange of prisoners which saw Irvine set out on a forced march northward to York. The march lasted three and a half months and was attended by fever and starvation. When Irvine finally arrived during the summer of 1814 he was able to recuperate at the home of his cousin, George Crookshank (as he spelled it), the Assistant Commissary-General. It is to the everlasting benefit of Toronto historians that he passed the time by sketching and painting. The whereabouts of all but about 15 of his works are unknown. Recently come to light is his small painting of the Garrison Common looking east from in front of Crookshank's house toward the town of York, whose house-gables appear in the distance.

His grand oil-on-canvas view of York from across the harbour was clearly one of his major paintings, judging by its size and medium. It shows in some detail the buildings at the west end of the fort, including the Central Blockhouse, the Commandant's House, completed in late 1815, the roofs of the Splinterproof Barracks, and of the Brick Soldiers' Barracks, begun in the autumn of 1815. Clear also is the line of boulders and the shingle beach of Lake Ontario below the ramparts – just in front of where the Visitor Centre sits today. HMS *Montreal* sits at anchor on the right of the Gibraltar Point lighthouse (built in 1809) in its configuration as a troopship undertaken in early 1815. Because the deciduous trees in the painting are in full leaf, it seems likely that Irvine made the view in the early summer of 1816, about the time he was given command of the provincial government schooner *Toronto* on Lake Ontario. Although this appointment lasted less than a year before the *Toronto* was scrapped, it gave Irvine the opportunity to execute important documentary paintings at Queenston and Kingston.

Having assumed his sinecure to be more or less permanent, Irvine sought other recognition for his wartime service and was



Robert Irvine's View of York, ca.1816. Credit: Art Gallery of Ontario, ID 2946. Gift of the descendants of the late Mrs. Stephen Heward

This small painting, about 10" x 16" and oil on paper, is a late-afternoon view of the west end of Front Street, probably in the early summer of 1815. It will be published in the forthcoming third volume of the Royal Ontario Museum's catalogue of pictures. Source: ROM 2004.85.2, bequest of Mrs. Helen S. Heward



Front Street, just after the war



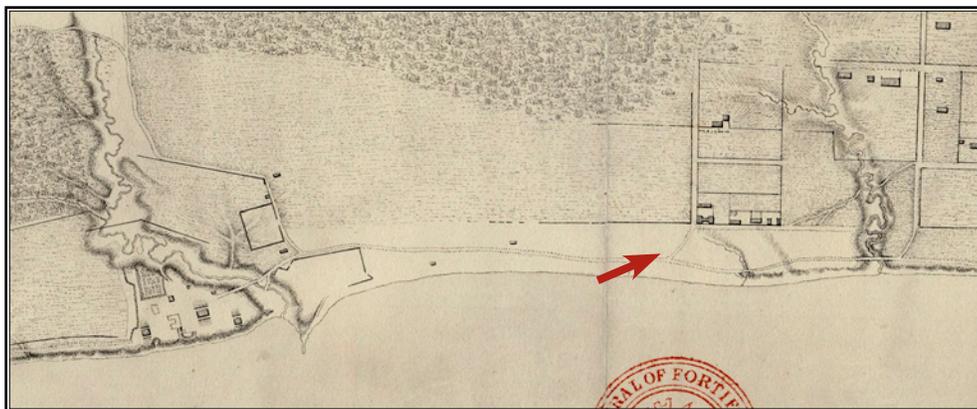
The big white house on the left, built in 1801, belongs to George Crookshank, then the senior supply officer of the army in Upper Canada and cousin of the artist. Dismissed as "a colonial cottage building" by John Ross Robertson, it was the scene of much drama two years earlier on the day of the Battle of York.

Crookshank, who was not married, fled on April 27, 1813, with General Shaeffe toward Kingston. His house that afternoon became the scene of the acrimonious negotiations for York's surrender and was thoroughly looted. Two years later, Irvine painted a woman standing in the front doorway.

Next along Front, at Windsor St., is the home of John Beikie, who was then the Sheriff. He and his son Donald were in the thick of the fighting

west of the fort but were back in time to see the departure of the general, who "left us all standing in the street like a parcel of sheep" (as he later wrote). His wife Penelope famously shooed away some hopeful looters but her husband complained that soldiers stole his chickens.

Further east on Front, two men stand outside the Half-Way House, "a resort for soldiers from the garrison," as Robertson described the tavern. Sadly, it did not earn an entry in Guillet's encyclopedic directory of such establishments. The barn-like structure beyond was a military storehouse, its jagged roofline suggesting, perhaps, that attempts to burn it down failed in the steady rain that drenched York in the days after the battle.



This is a detail of a thorough map of York made in November 1813 by military surveyor George Williams. On the left is the fort being rebuilt (after the American attack in April) in the shelter of Garrison Creek. The arrow marks the place of Irvine's easel at the fork in the road, the northern branch leading to the corner of Peter and Front Streets. To the east is the long-vanished Russell Creek. Source: "Sketch of the ground in advance of and including York Upper Canada" LAC NMC 22819 via www.fortyorck.ca.

granted 1200 acres in three widely separated townships, though he never developed his lands. By December 1817 he was captaining a merchant vessel sailing between Saint John, N.B., and the West Indies carrying lumber, rum, sugar and coffee. His last recorded voyage was in September 1821. He died in Bridgetown, Barbados, in March 1823, of unknown causes, aged only thirty-one.

Stephen Otto, a founding editor of The Fife and Drum, passed away in April; see Andrew Stewart's commemoration below. Steve wanted to thank the following for their help in bringing Robert Irvine, his remarkable art and career to life: Mary Allodi, Gary Gibson, Michael Korn, the late Robert Malcomson, Tom Malcomson, Jonathan Moore and Peter Rindlisbacher. For a fuller account of Irvine's life, see Allodi and Otto, "The Art of the Unknown Mariner" in Rotunda, the magazine of the Royal Ontario Museum, Vol. 36, No. 2 (Winter 2003/2004) pp. 13-21.

Governor General's Medal in Architecture awarded to Fort York Visitor Centre

by Bob Kennedy

Praised around the world for its dramatic conception and brilliant design, the Fort York Visitor Centre has been acknowledged by Rideau Hall as one of the finest new buildings in Canada. Every two years, twelve Medals in Architecture are awarded by the Governor General, and the most recent announcement was on May 7.

“Strategically situated along the edge of the site, the centre is fortified and defined,” reads the citation, “by a series of monolithic weathering steel panel walls.” That deep red steel never fails to impress and was a feature of the original review in the December 2011 edition of *Canadian Architect* magazine. Their anonymous writer, like the architects themselves, anticipated the realization of the Bentway:

“The Centre constructs an escarpment of weathering steel,” asserts the reviewer, “an extended wall to the site, one capable of joining with the scale of the Gardiner Expressway above to form the wall and roof of an extra-large new urban space for Toronto.” Alluding to the bluff that once rose from a narrow beach to the ramparts of the fort, *Canadian Architect* argued that “the steel escarpment re-establishes the original sense of a defensive site.”

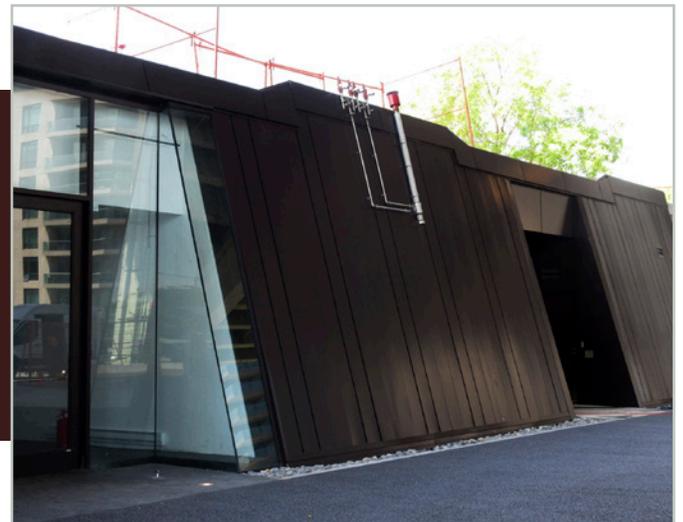
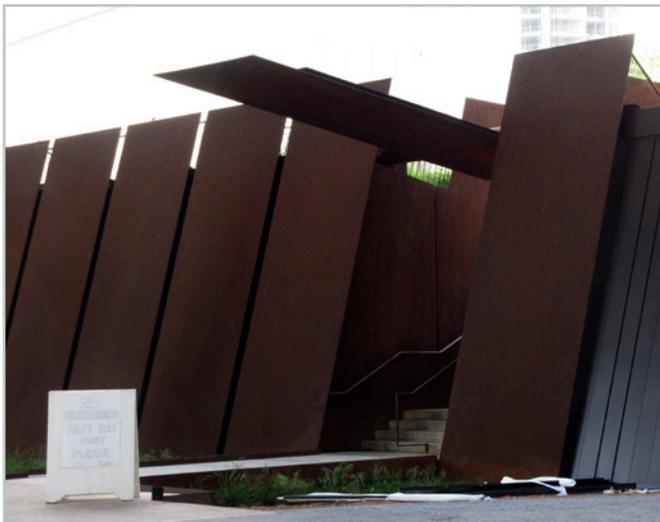
The celebrated designers of the Visitor Centre, built with a budget of less than \$15 million from the City of Toronto, the Fort York Foundation and others, were Patkau Architects of Vancouver and Kearns Mancini Architects of Toronto.

the steel escarpment re-establishes the original sense of a defensive site

Arrangements were made more than a year ago to carefully extend the eastern end of the new building to house machinery and public washrooms for the skating trail of the Bentway Conservancy, launched in 2015 with a \$25 million commitment from philanthropists Judy and Wilmot Matthews. The City has since committed another \$10.5 million, partly from developer contributions, spread out as far as 2023. (Divisions among capital, operations and maintenance contributions from the City are outlined in a staff report to the mayor's Executive Council on June 20, 2016; see also the *Toronto Star* of Feb. 8, 2018). As the first capital projects wind down, programming is expected to assume a greater share of the conservancy's effort.

While the Bentway's innovative Strachan Gate nears completion at the far end of Garrison Common, just south of Liberty Village, many neighbours are also looking forward to the eastward extension of the skating trail (reformatted for summer skate-boarding) toward Bathurst, as well as a full realization of the Visitor Centre's award-winning architecture. That means (to repeat the citation) “a series of monolithic weathering steel panel walls” to complete the addition and confirm the conception of this brilliant new urban space.

Bob Kennedy, recently retired from careers in journalism and the Canadian Army, is Managing Editor of The Fife and Drum. He lives a short walk from the Visitor Centre.



The dramatic weathered-steel façade extends (left) to the canopy over stairs leading up to Garrison Common, where the Bentway's addition begins. The still-unfinished extension (right) to the Visitor Centre houses ice-maintenance equipment and washrooms for the skating trail. Photos: Bob Kennedy

The principled legacy of Stephen Otto

by Andrew Stewart



Steven Anderson Otto, CM 1940–2018

Stephen Anderson Otto, who died this past April, was the founding and managing editor of *The Fife and Drum* from 2003 until 2017. His life-long work in fostering heritage, architectural history and conservation in the Province of Ontario and his founding role in the Friends and the Fort York Foundation are well known.

Perhaps less widely appreciated was his skill in forecasting problems and opportunities for the fort and the neighbourhood. His concerns always arose from first principles: define and protect Fort York's interests; strengthen its historic assets; and diffuse knowledge about Toronto's founding site across the city. These principles inspired his choice of topics for *The Fife and Drum*.

Over the years they included building projects (especially the Visitor Centre) along with site and precinct planning issues, examining their threats and opportunities (the Armouries, development proposals and pedestrian connections). Stories acknowledged the work of staff and volunteers at the fort and in the city's museum departments and broadly explored the history of the neighbourhood (Fort Rouillé, the strangling of Fort York by railways and meat packers). For the War of 1812 bicentennial he commissioned

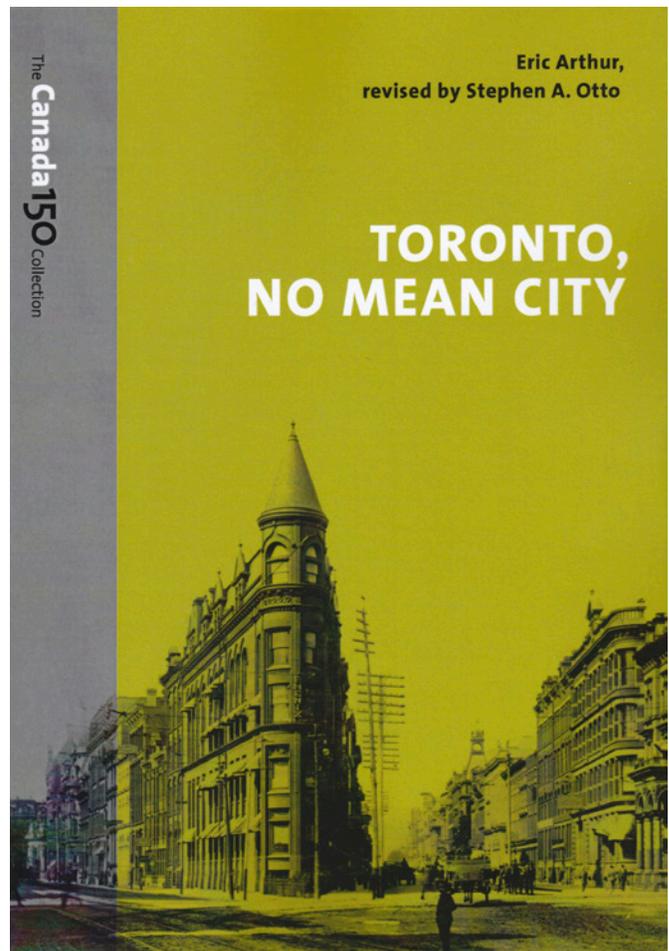
a series of articles and reviews from accomplished authors and familiar names: Carl Benn, Richard Gerrard, Bob Malcomson, Chris Moore, Don Graves and many others. Art and archaeology were combined in erudite reports on 19th-century fort drawings, excavations and collections. There were stories about opportunities seized (York Militia Colours and the names of nearby streets) and missed (Battersby portrait). Sometimes – such as the Thomson family's role in the building of the fort – the stories were researched and written by the editor himself.

Many of the best will be published in an anthology of *The Fife and Drum* in the autumn by the Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common. This writing and so much more was persuaded into existence by Steve with a relentless focus on agenda, an eye for detail, and a firm congeniality. As he once in December emailed to our board: "Eggnog, mandarins, shortbread and maybe a cake will help the agenda pass that much more quickly too."



For two engaging summaries of Steve's life and accomplishments, see his obituary in *The Globe and Mail* by John Lorinc and Alex Bozikovic on April 27, 2018, and a profile by Christopher Hume in the *Toronto Star* on March 21, 2010. Andrew Stewart is Board Chair of The Fort York Foundation.

This book by Eric Arthur, originally published in 1964, has been described as "the most significant book on the fabric of the city to appear since John Ross Robertson's *Landmarks*" was published at the beginning of the 20th century. The assessment is by Stephen Otto in his own Preface to the Third Edition of Arthur's work, which he comprehensively revised and saw published in 1986. Adding four newly commissioned essays, the University of Toronto Press includes this edition in its *Canada 150 Collection*. It's a new series reprinting what they regard as "classic works of cultural, historical, legal, and literary scholarship that have informed and shaped Canada as a nation."



It Can't Last Forever

The 19th Battalion and the Canadian Corps in the First World War

David Campbell



IN REVIEW

David Campbell *It Can't Last Forever: The 19th Battalion and the Canadian Corps in the First World War*

(Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2017), 655 pages, \$49.99

From the CNE to Vimy Ridge

by David Roberts

It Can't Last Forever is the third volume in WLUP's Canadian Unit, Formation, and Command Histories series. The preceding volume, *Toronto's Fighting 75th in the Great War, 1915–1919*, was reviewed in the April issue of *The Fife and Drum*, and like that volume, this history of the 19th Battalion is a hefty, exceptionally well made book. Credit should also go to the Argyll Regimental Foundation, which commissioned it and broadly supports the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada, the Hamilton reserve regiment that perpetuates the historical legacy of the 19th. It was the Argylls, as the 91st Highlanders, that provided the battalion's command structure, its pipes and drums, and one of its four rifle companies.

Drawing as well from regiments in Toronto, Brantford, St Catharines and Sault Ste Marie, the 19th was one of the numbered battalions formed in 1914 for the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Histories of the Argylls in 1928 and 1953 were written to celebrate anniversaries; they wanted one on the battalion

in the Great War for its 100th anniversary. A search among the new generation of military historians led to David Campbell, then preparing a thesis on the Canadian Corps' 2nd Division, which included the 19th. Now a history professor in Nova Scotia, he has also written a handful of articles on Canadians in the First World War.

The series aims to blend "traditional operational history with innovative approaches in military scholarship." Campbell achieves this admirably, drawing heavily from the 19th's war diary (a daily log of its activity) at Library and Archives Canada, which he calls "one of the most complete and extensive war diaries" he has ever seen (page xviii). The operational detail, meticulously researched and presented, may be overly exhaustive for some readers. At the same time, other new scholarship has been effectively absorbed.

The result in *It Can't Last Forever* is 22 chronological chapters on the battalion's service in Europe within the 2nd Division, from September 1915 until the 19th's official disbandment in 1920. Regrettably no battalion veterans remained to be interviewed. Enlivened wherever possible by wartime letters, later newsletters and useful asides – for instance, on trench life, mustard gas, fear and heroism, and death in the "wasteland" of mud – these chapters are supplemented by 23 colour maps, almost 200 illustrations (only some of which are specific to the 19th) and the usual appendices on casualties and injuries, discipline, commanding officers, and honours and awards.

In readable, sometimes dramatic fashion, Campbell takes us into the thick of the division's telling participation in such notable battles as the Somme, Vimy Ridge, Passchendaele, Amiens and Cambrai, with a firm focus on the 19th and a knack for clear-headed assessment. Canada's success at Vimy, for example, nevertheless revealed the weakness of "set-piece tactics" (page 253). The operation was a "subsidiary one" tied to Anglo-French offensives, the failure of which meant Canada's victory had "little more than a purely local impact." Campbell's explanations of overall organization and how battalions interacted and operated as part of a corps are welcome and necessary, in part to reduce the narrowness of viewing the war through the prism of just one infantry battalion (out of the 48 that served in the



The battalion's last day at CNE camp in early May 1915. The men were formed up with their kit and then dismissed – leaving bags in place – for a final farewell. When formed up again they would march to a train and head for Montreal, boarding RMS Scandanavian for their trip to England. Source: Toronto Archives F1244 It955A

Canadian Corps). The exemplary indexing of divisions, brigades and battalions on pages 652-54 is decidedly useful.

Any restriction of focus can be an asset or a drawback, depending on what the reader wants from *It Can't Last Forever*. As operational history, it sets a golden standard; in the story of Ontario at war, it merely contributes. The regiments beyond Hamilton – Toronto produced half the 19th's personnel – receive scant attention, although the author is on stronger ground during his examination of motivation within the ranks.

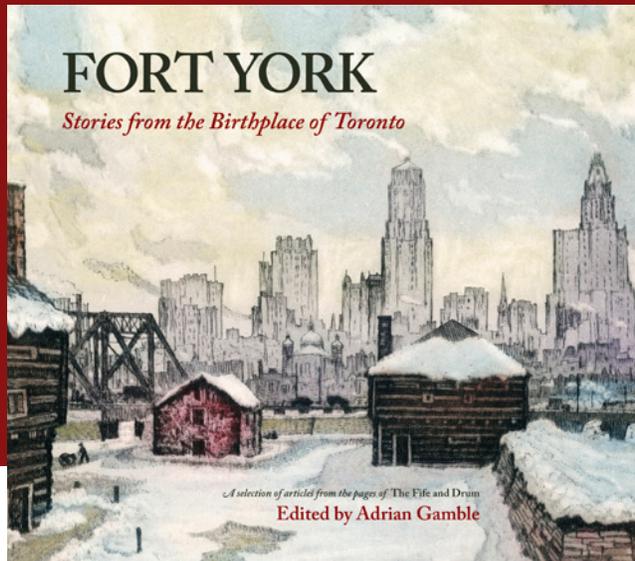
Newspapers from the towns and counties of the constituent regiments are absent from the author's research, a shortcoming given the series' professed aim to address the "societal" theme. Some reinforcements to the battalion were from Hamilton's 91st, but many more, including conscripts, came from elsewhere. What can we know about them? John Gaetz, whose hopeful letter to his sister in October 1918 provided the title, "It can't last forever," was a farmer from Alberta.

It is from the archives of the *Toronto Star* and the *Globe* (not Campbell's book) that we learn the 19th Battalion Association was organized at the Toronto Armouries on May 6, 1919. In a minor revelation from 1937, the *Star* noted that the "battalion historian" was gathering material for a 19th Battalion history. What happened there? we can wonder. And one final grumble: the book's epilogue, which does salute the 19th's veterans, is nonetheless a hurried, disappointing kind of conclusion. The book's editors let the author off the hook there.

Yet all things considered, *It Can't Last Forever* is an outstanding work. We should thank WLUP and the Argyll Regimental Foundation for making it happen.

David Roberts is a former editor of the Dictionary of Canadian Biography and a resident of Toronto. He is currently working on a book-length study of how Canada financed, including through extensive public engagement, our role in the First World War.

Coming in September is this comprehensive anthology of some of the best articles from the past 20 years of *The Fife and Drum*.



Covering, in five chapters, each era of the history of Fort York and its immediate neighbourhood, the anthology includes more than 80 illustrations in full colour.

On the cover is a winter view of the fort during the 1930s by Nicholas Hornyansky.

Fort George getting a new plan

Parks Canada wants your opinion on a new draft plan for the Niagara National Historic Sites, which they describe as "at the epicentre of the primary land battles of the War of 1812." They are also sites of thousands of years of Indigenous activity. These are Fort George and its battlefield, Fort Mississauga and the lighthouse, Queenston Heights with Brock's Monument, Butler's Barracks and Navy Island. They're holding an open house at Navy Hall in Niagara-on-the-Lake on July 18, from 1-4 pm and 5-8 pm. There's also an online survey, which you can find through Fort George's web site at Parks Canada.

At the Birthplace of Toronto **Notes from the Staff**

Manager's Report

by David O'Hara, Site Manager

The January opening of The Bentway's skating trail here at Fort York made for a quick start to the year and we've barely slowed down since. Spring is the favourite time of year for school groups to visit the fort, and all that excitement lasts well into our season of major events – which begins with an annual milestone.

On Friday, April 27, we had a full day of student groups here for the 205th anniversary of the Battle of York. Throughout the weekend there was a terrific series of walking tours led by Richard Haynes and Ewan Wardle tracing the events of the day's battle. Our historic kitchens were busy making tasty samples and there was a full slate of Kids' Drills, re-enactors and interpretive booths. The Royal Canadian Sea Cadets took care of the garrison flag on Sunday.

On Saturday, May 12, some 3,000 people met at Fort York for the 17th annual Meagan's Walk fundraiser. Mayor John Tory, in his opening remarks, proclaimed Pediatric Brain Tumour Day in memory of Meagan Bebenek, who died as a little girl from a tumour. A round of musket fire was the signal for the walkers to set out for Sick Kids hospital. The next day was the annual Sporting Life 10K, which ended at Fort York Boulevard and Fleet Street almost on the doorstep of the Visitor Centre. That event raises funds to send kids with cancer to Camp Ooch.

The following weekend included the Victoria Day holiday and started, on Saturday and Sunday, with the Beerlicious Spring Sessions on Garrison Common. More than 3,000 people, including the Mayor, were here for that. On May 24 Fort York and the Bentway together held an Open House to give the neighbourhood an overview of ongoing and upcoming site changes and events.

Attendance at Fort York during the Doors Open weekend,

May 26 and 27, tripled this year over last. We also held our own Artillery Day on Sunday, adding modern guns to the fort's collection of original artillery from the War of 1812 and the days of Queen Victoria (see page 13). [Transit Bricks](#) delighted visitors all weekend, displaying a whimsical set of TTC buses, streetcars and stations all made of Lego. We could also enjoy "Sifting Through the Pages: Behind the Scenes of *Mixed Messages*" from the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library at the University of Toronto. The displays were a peek at the library's current exhibition in culinary history and a chance to chat with the curators.

It's a thrill to report that on the last Monday in May, public archaeology was welcomed back to Fort York National Historic Site. That's when a team of nautical archaeologists, led by Caroline Kennedy and Julia Herbst from Texas A+M University, arrived to begin work right outside our front door. Their focus was the "CityPlace schooner," the small ship whose anonymous

remains, deposited outside the Visitor Centre in 2015, were unearthed during the building of a condominium 300 metres east of here. It was on a site which, in the 1830s, was at the foot of the old Queen's Wharf. Active on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and appearing in television news, they shone a spotlight on Fort York and Toronto's original shoreline. The results of their investigation of the schooner's build, purpose and fate will be seen in a future *Fife and Drum*.



Here's a Great War Cake ready to enjoy with a cup of tea. The recipe is from an upcoming collection from the time of the First World War being readied for the press by staff and volunteers of Fort York's award-winning culinary history program. Look for it in the autumn. Photo: Melissa Beynon

Arts and Crafts Field Trip, headlined by Metric, returned for a sixth year in a row on the first weekend in June, bringing thousands of music fans down to Garrison Common for the two-day-long series of concerts (but temporarily closing the fort itself). And about 400 people were here on Sunday, June 17, for the Toronto Outdoor Picture Show screening of Spike Lee's *Do The Right Thing*.

Our Indigenous Arts Festival, produced in partnership with the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, began with a flag raising for National Indigenous Peoples Day on Thursday, June 21. It continued through to the end of Sunday with more

than 30 performances by Indigenous artists from across Canada. The festival included traditional and contemporary music, dance, theatre, storytelling, visual arts, crafts and food. On the weekend was Na-Me-Res Toronto's Annual Traditional Pow Wow, "Indigenous Day Live" hosted by the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) and performances on the TD Main Stage presented by the Red Ride Tour (highlights are at www.toronto.ca/IAF). A special thank you to Kristine Williamson, Erica Roppollo, Leslie McCue and Lindy Kinoshameg for all their hard work in making the festival such a success despite the dampening effects of the rain.

The summer of 2018 is shaping up to be another stellar season for the Fort York Guard. This year we had several experienced members return to the guard who were able to hit the ground running with daily demonstrations of musketry, artillery and music. Special thanks are owed to Friends of Fort York volunteer and former guardsman Anton Degiusti for sharing his encyclopedic knowledge of 19th-century drill. The aim of the Fort York Guard, with Anton's help, is totally authentic drill.

We're finally nearing the end of much of the construction that has plagued the site for the past several years. The Bentway's Strachan Gate is almost finished, landscaping is proceeding on several fronts, and Garrison Crossing – the footbridge over

the railway tracks – is scheduled to open this fall. On the east side of the fort, the building of Lower Garrison Creek Park under and beyond Bathurst Street will begin in the autumn.

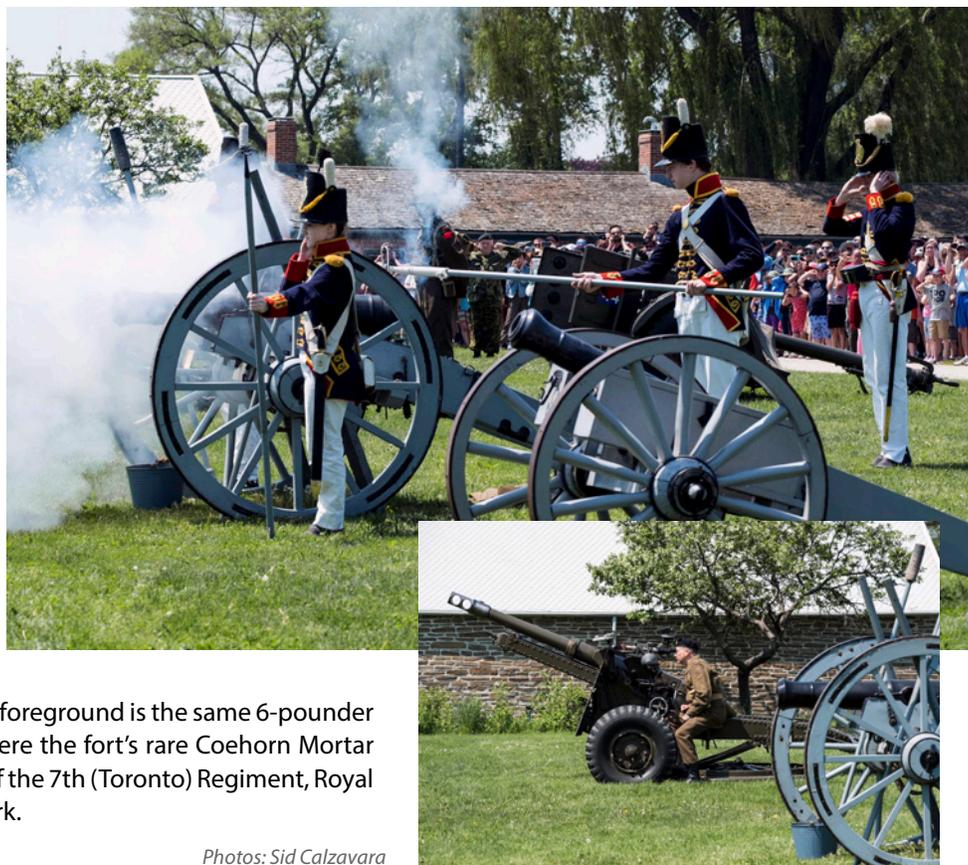
Our masonry restoration work on the historic brick buildings continues apace (and a comprehensive report on this will come in October's *Life and Drum*). And we were happy to get the news that Fort York is receiving \$100,000 from Parks Canada's National Historic Sites Cost-Sharing Program to help with restoring the aging cedar roofs on two of our buildings.

Finally, on May 7 we learned that the Fort York Visitor Centre is being awarded a Governor General's Medal in Architecture as one of the finest new buildings in Canada. It was unfortunate that this great news came too late to be enjoyed by our good friend Steve Otto, who passed away in late April. Steve was instrumental in working with us to make the Visitor Centre a reality. Although engaged on many projects right up until his passing, a priority was the completion of the Visitor Centre's weathered-steel façade. Steve had reached out to steel suppliers and fabricators himself in order to secure a good price on the work yet to be finished. We'll continue to work with Councillor Layton's office and the Bentway Conservancy to complete the Visitor Centre as envisioned by the architects and as championed by Steve.

Big crowds, big guns

A vintage 1776-pattern smooth-bore field gun is fired by a well-rehearsed Fort York Guard gun crew. They're wearing uniforms just like those of the modest Royal Artillery detachment – 16 officers and men – that was unlucky enough to be here in April 1813 to fight the Battle of York. This year's Artillery Day was spread over May 26 and 27 during the weekend of Doors Open Toronto. The weather was fine and thousands of people turned out.

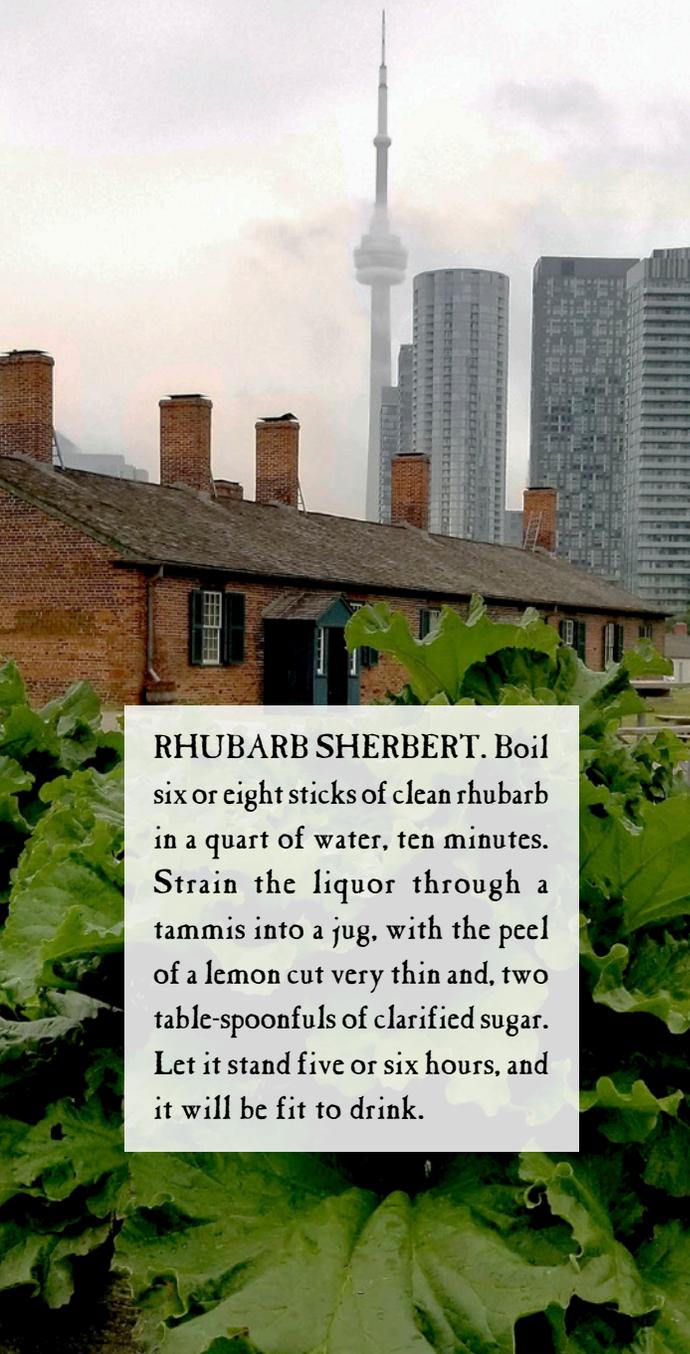
A gunner (lower right) leans into his instrument. Both his uniform and the gun – a 25-pound howitzer, the standard field piece of Commonwealth armies – are vintage Second World War. They belong to the volunteer Limber Gunner Association, volunteers who keep their guns and tractors operational. In the foreground is the same 6-pounder seen firing above. Also on display were the fort's rare Coehorn Mortar and a modern C3 105 mm howitzer of the 7th (Toronto) Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery, based at Moss Park.



Photos: Sid Calzavara

Our favourite rhubarb recipes

by Bridget Wranich and Melissa Beynon



RHUBARB SHERBERT. Boil six or eight sticks of clean rhubarb in a quart of water, ten minutes. Strain the liquor through a tammy into a jug, with the peel of a lemon cut very thin and, two table-spoonfuls of clarified sugar. Let it stand five or six hours, and it will be fit to drink.

Rhubarb Tart.

Cut the stalks in lengths of four or five inches, and take off the thin skin. If you have a hot hearth, lay them in a dish, and put over a thin syrup of sugar and water, cover with another dish, and let it simmer very slowly an hour— or do them in a block tin sauce-pan.

When cold, make into a tart, as codlin.

Every spring, rhubarb and sorrel (close relatives, botanically speaking) are the first treasures harvested from our heritage kitchen garden. All of the food grown in these gardens is used for demonstrations and testing in the fort's own historic kitchens.

Rhubarb, originally from Asia, was first known in Europe in the 16th century (or even earlier) as a medicinal plant. It's not clear why it didn't begin showing up as an ingredient in cookery books – it is, after all, a pleasure as well – until a few centuries later.

One of the earlier English recipes, and one of our favourites, is Rhubarb Tart from Mrs. Maria Rundell's *A New System of Domestic Cookery*, 1806. We don't know when cooks began adding strawberries to their rhubarb pies, but it was enjoyed for many years in Canadian households on its own – so much so that it was nicknamed “the pie plant.” (Codlin was an English term for hard apples that were only edible when cooked.)

A more recent addition to our rhubarb repertoire is Mary Eaton's pink Rhubarb Sherbert from *The Cook and Housekeeper's Complete and Universal Dictionary*, 1823. Sherbert was then a cooled, non-alcoholic drink made with fruit juice, popular among the demure at garden parties.

It's also a popular feature of the spring session of Kinder-Gardeners, one of our new educational programs. The little ones learn about the science of kitchen gardens and get to harvest a few of the plants. Even more fun is sampling the historic recipes, especially the tarts! An important aspect of the program is teaching the kinder-gardeners which part of the plant is edible, and which part is not (the oxalic acid in rhubarb leaves, for example, makes them toxic).

Our rhubarb is grown from heritage seed. But was rhubarb actually cultivated in the officers' kitchen garden during Georgian times? We know, first, that “tart rhubarb” is listed for sale in William Custead's remarkable seed catalogue. This valuable resource – a list of plants available in York – was printed by none other than the firebrand William Lyon Mackenzie, rebel and first mayor of Toronto, and given the beautifully long-winded name *Catalogue of fruit & ornamental trees, flowering shrubs, garden seeds and green-house plants, bulbous roots & flower seeds, cultivated and for sale at the Toronto Nursery, Dundas Street, near York, 1827.*

We also know that popular writers like Mrs. Traill recommended rhubarb as a welcome early addition to the spring table (and sweetened hers with abundant maple syrup). It thrives under the right conditions in many gardens within a day's march of Fort York, and it certainly thrives in ours. Plus, it's delicious.

Visitors to the historic kitchen are delightfully surprised each spring when we serve these compelling historic recipes. Our goal is to reintroduce old favourites like rhubarb to modern tables and palates. Try these recipes for yourself, and don't be surprised when rhubarb begins making ever more frequent appearances among your early summer desserts.





A new monument is unveiled on the lawn of Fort York Armoury on June 10 by the Chief of the Defence Staff, General Jonathan Vance (left), to honour the 162 Canadians who died during operations in Afghanistan. Members of the Royal Regiment of Canada are in their ceremonial scarlets. Several hundred soldiers of Toronto reserve regiments – including many from the Royals, The Queen's York Rangers and 32 Signal Regiment, all based at this armoury – served in Afghanistan between 2003 and 2014, where they got to know these machines well. It is a LAV III designed and built by General Dynamics in London, Ontario, and regarded as the best light-armoured personnel carrier in the world. It weighs about 14,000 kg, has a 25 mm cannon, and carries three crew with seven passengers. These monuments are being placed across the country by Canada Company, a private organization that supports military families. Photo: Canada Company's LAV III Monument Program (Kayce Photography)

Ice cream added to the Canteen's delights



Already a reliable source of Toronto's finest historical baking – we mean those fresh and authentic butter tarts, brownies and fine cakes – Fort York's modest Canteen has just added a further delight: Frederick Nutt's original ice cream. Prepared from the genuine 1789 recipe, perfected through trials by the culinary historians

of the fort's own kitchen, it is available (most days) in six very Georgian flavours: Lemon, Fresh Strawberry, Ginger, China Orange, Red Currant, Burnt Cream. Frederick Nutt's original ice cream is only here for the summer, so bring your favourite parasol and indulge!



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Fort York

Membership in The Friends includes a subscription to *The Fife & Drum* newsletter and updates about what's going on at the fort and in its neighbourhood. Your membership strengthens advocacy with donors, developers, politicians, and others having sway over what's happening at Toronto's premier historic site. There are additional perks such as invitations to exclusive activities and exhibitions.

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<http://www.fortyork.ca/join-us>

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2018 | Upcoming Events Historic Fort York

Compiled by Richard Haynes

SUMMER AT FORT YORK

Daily throughout July and August, 10 am to 5 pm

Thrill to the booming cannon, the firing muskets, the vibrant colours of the uniformed guard and the lively music of the Fort York Drums, a fife & drum corps, all summer long. Visitors will enjoy hourly demonstrations of military music, drill, musketry and artillery performed by students representing the Canadian Regiment of Fencible Infantry, the unit that garrisoned the fort at the end of the War of 1812. The program varies daily, so please call (416) 392-6907 for the details. *Regular admission applies.*

JULY

All Day I Dream

Fort York Garrison Common

Saturday, July 14, 12 pm - Ticketed Event

This will be a special afternoon of music at Fort York. All Day I Dream's magical vibes enchanted everyone who attended last year's party and this year promises to continue inspiring the smiles and hearts of all who dream. <http://embracepresents.com>

Please note: This is a third-party event. Fort York will be open to the general public from 10 am to 5 pm. *Regular admission applies.*

Toronto Summer Music Festival: Canadian National Brass Project The Bentway Skate Trail and Fort York Sunday, July 29, 2 pm to 5 pm - Free Admission

Join Toronto Summer Music Festival for a full afternoon of events with a feature performance by the Canadian National Brass Project at the Visitor Centre. The project includes the best brass players in Canada who join forces each summer from orchestras across North America. Concert goers will also be treated to military music by the Fort York Drums (a fife & drum corps) and given complimentary admission to Fort York after the concert. www.torontosummertime.com

AUGUST

The National

Saturday, August 4, Gates at 2:30 pm

Fort York Garrison Common - Ticketed Event

Collective Concerts presents The National with Father John Misty, Jenny Lewis, Julien Baker and Dan Edmonds. This event is all ages. Children 10 and under (maximum two) are free when accompanied by an adult. <http://ntl.collectiveconcerts.com>

Please note: This is a third-party event. Fort York will be open to the general public from 10 am to 5 pm. *Regular admission applies.*

Simcoe Day

Monday, August 6, 10 am to 5 pm - Free Admission

Fort York comes to life in honour of the first Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Upper Canada (1793-96) and founder of Fort York and the Town of York – John Graves Simcoe. Walk the historic grounds and thrill to demonstrations of musketry and artillery. There will be

music by the Fort York Guard and as well as the Guards from Fort George at Niagara-on-the-Lake and Old Fort Erie. Visit the working kitchen in the 1815 Officers' Brick Barracks.

Vegan Food and Drink Festival

Saturday, August 11 and Sunday, August 12, 11 am to 7 pm

Fort York Garrison Common - Ticketed Event

Entering its fourth season, the Vegan Food and Drink Festival brings curated vegan comfort food and craft brews back to Toronto for another round.

Please note: This is a third-party event. Fort York will be open to the general public from 10 am to 5 pm. *Regular admission applies.*

Camp Wavelength Music & Arts Festival 2018

Saturday, August 18, 1 pm to 11 pm

Sunday, August 19, 1 pm to 10 pm

Fort York Garrison Common - Ticketed Event

Camp Wavelength Music & Arts Festival 2018 offers an intimate alternative to the typical summer music festival experience by creating an inclusive, community-oriented atmosphere. Camp Wavelength will feature Canadian indie musicians Chad VanGalen, SUUNS, and Mauno, among others. www.wavelengthmusic.ca

Please note: This is a third-party event. Fort York will be open to the general public from 10 am to 5 pm. *Regular admission applies.*

SEPTEMBER

The Rexall™ OneWalk to Conquer Cancer™

Saturday, September 8, 10 am to 6 pm

Thousands of walkers will take to the streets of Toronto and challenge themselves to walk and raise funds for the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, one of the top five cancer research centres in the world. <http://toronto.onewalk.ca>

Please note: This is a third-party event. Fort York will be open to the general public from 10 am to 5 pm. *Regular admission applies.*

Canada's Hundred Days: A Great War Living History Weekend

Saturday, September 22 and Sunday, September 23, 10 am to 5 pm

Free Admission

Discover the remarkable Canadian contribution made in the final days of the First World War. Take in the martial sights and sounds of 100 years ago through military displays and real-time demonstrations of drill and tactics by accurately uniformed First World War re-enactment units. Sample authentic foods from the front line and the home front. Watch ten short films from Toronto's Great War Attic and learn about the amazing contributions made by all Canadians to what they called The War To End All Wars.

GetLoud: Rally, March and Celebrate for SickKids Foundation

Fort York Garrison Common

Saturday, September 29, 12 pm to 4 pm

The SickKids Foundation 5 km walk culminates in a festival at Fort York featuring chart-topping bands on the main stage, an amazing BBQ-style spread featuring Toronto's best food trucks, and a beer tent for a post-march pint. Family activities include pony rides, rock climbing, arts and crafts, a Kids' Stage, and much more. <http://web.sickkidsfoundation.com>

Please note: This is a third-party event. Fort York will be open to the general public from 10 am to 5 pm. *Regular admission applies.*



A new collection of realistic models of artillery are now available in the Canteen. On the right is a British long gun (18, 24 or 32-pounder) on a Garrison carriage, like many of those around the fort today. Centre is a typical European field gun of the late 18th century, and on the left is a cast-iron mortar on a cast-iron base. A fine 19th-century example in real life can be seen on Garrison Common. Photos: Brigitte Neilson