



# TRIANGLE TOPICS

Winter 2018 Newsletter Articles

Beach Triangle Residents Association

STAY IN TOUCH

**BeachTriangle.com**

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*Hans Looije*

Happy Holidays to everyone and I hope it was a good year. Thank you, Mary-Margaret McMahon for your eight years of service to the community and welcome to Brad Bradford, our new Councillor.

In June we had a successful Street Fest event that was well attended and thank you to all the volunteers that helped make it happen. Mary-Margaret dropped by our AGM and Vojka Miladinovic, Urban Forestry Planner for the City of Toronto did a presentation on care of trees and the bylaws regarding the city canopy.

By spring we should have a new rugby field behind the skateboard park. Once finished, the city will start tearing up the old field for a new sewage pumping station.

The amalgamation of police divisions 54 and 55 is proceeding. Major Crime and Community Response units have moved to the Div. 54 building and the Primary Response unit has moved to the Div. 55 Building at Dundas and Coxwell. The new building is still in the planning stages.

A thank you goes out to Sue Smart for her service on the BTRA board. She is leaving the board due to heavier work commitments. Welcome to Christy Watt and Jeff Levitt who have joined the board.

## WEBSITE RECONSTRUCTION

*Robert Looije and John Ellis*

The BTRA website became dormant in 2014 due to the webmaster not being able to fully meet requirements of the responsibility, and then moving away. The BTRA Board regards restoration of this site and development of a useful social media site as a high priority, and directors are pleased that Robert Looije has successfully obtained rights to the domain and the files for 2007-2014. Effort will now focus on recovering the Archives, updating the files for 2015 to 2018, updating the ads on the site, and re-establishing the opportunity for public contact with the Board of Directors.

## CONDO REPORT

*Hans Looije*

I had a chance to talk to Frank Riedel about the new condo at 200 Woodbine Ave. or, as some people call it, 'Rainsford II'. The condo owners are moving in. The retail level is beginning to take shape with an expected opening of the Bruno's Fine Foods in February. The new IDA drug store has opened up along with the new Magenta Health clinic. Doctor Cruikshank is accepting new patients.

Across Woodbine, they have started digging for the new Heartwood condo. Anyone standing on the corner of Queen and Woodbine can definitely tell that this site used to be a gas station with its leaking tanks – the smell of Gasoline is quite strong.

The old Orchard Park gas station is also slated for development. It may also have contaminated soil from the old gas tanks. I don't think the site is large enough to support a six-storey condo, but we may see townhouses there.



# THE BEACH TRIANGLE LANEWAYS

John Ellis

On Saturday, September 29, retiring Councillor McMahon hosted a laneway-naming in the Triangle in honour of Rainsford Road resident, Brenden Morrissey. The laneway is west off Rainsford between Columbine and Kingston Road. The declaration was enjoyed by neighbours, friends, and family, and included entertainment by friends of Brenden and a delicious cake.

24 years ago, Brenden contacted his Councillor for advice, involved the neighbours in discussing the advantages of changing a driveway to public ownership, and saw the process through to completion 14 months later. The lane soon gained paving, drainage, and streetlights.

Parents now gather there to chat with each other as they watch their children play basketball, ride their bikes, and enjoy birthday parties.

Brenden is an all-round good neighbour, shovelling snow, bringing out garbage, chopping wood, doing small repairs, and other chores. He helped care for a neighbour during his final illness, as his wife couldn't lift him into bed, even in the middle of the night. For anyone on vacation, he picks up mail and checks on their houses.

He donated the laneway basketball hoop, which is used almost daily, arranges pub nights and hosts neighbourhood events in the house he shares with his wife, Margaret.

33 years ago, Brenden was a founding member of the Beach Triangle Residents Association, and delivers the BTRA newsletter to this day.

A daily walker, he shares smiles, chats and jokes with everyone he meets. A dedicated cyclist, he is on the Board of Spokes 32, a chapter of Cycle Toronto to promote safe cycling. Brenden also attends local farmers' markets and councillor's environment days, offering free bike repairs and information on bike safety, and volunteers with Charlie's Freewheels in their Build-A-Bike program in Regent Park for youth at risk.

Finally, Brenden generously supports other good causes and fundraisers. He is a canvasser for the Heart and Stroke Foundation, is currently area captain, and a canvasser for many years.



Margaret and Brenden Morrissey, with their family. Photo by John Ellis

# BTRA STREET FEST – A GREAT SUCCESS

Carolyn Morgan and Laura Inward

On Sunday, June 3, the skies parted, the winds calmed and our Triangle Community came together for fun and festivities on Dixon Ave at our BTRA Street Fest.

We are pleased to report that a few hundred of our neighbours turned out for this event! A blast was had by all, and our strong community spirit was on display for all to see.

Everyone enjoyed Bike Tune Ups, courtesy of Mark and Sue from Velotique and Brendan Morrissey (the namesake of Rainsford's most recent laneway). All the kids loved the Bouncy Castle, Face Painting by Esther, and Balloon Artistry by Tiffany.



A Bike Parade of decorated bikes ran along Dixon; Darren and his students gave a stellar karate performance and our local Police and Fire crews arrived with their vehicles for all the families to check out. The icing on the cake was a performance by the East York Barbershoppers.



Again, many thanks to all of our volunteers who helped plan and execute the event. A special thank you goes out to Brendan Morrissey, Hans and Robert Loojie for their great help and support (and tasty BBQ skills).

Of course, the event wouldn't have been possible without our Sponsors at Velotique, Welbanks Mortgage, the Barrett Inward Real Estate Group, Toronto Kyokushinkai Karate and the BTRA.



Thank you to the following businesses who donated prizes – Aroma Cafe, Beaches Hot Yoga, Burger Priest, Mastermind Toys, and Murphy's Law.

We are excited to make Street Fest an annual event and can't wait to do it again next year!

Please help us make Street Fest even better and send any ideas you have for next year's event to [info@barrettinward.com](mailto:info@barrettinward.com).

# HYDRO POLE REPLACEMENT

Hans Looije

For most of the summer we have seen hydro contractors installing new hydro poles in the neighbourhood. This upgrade project is making its way east out of Leslieville. The new poles, some as tall as 50 feet, will be used for high voltage power transmission. This will be a slow process. First of all, the poles will have new transmission lines strung between the tops. If you look along Dundas west of Coxwell you will see this stage. Next, the existing power lines and street lights will have to be moved over to the new poles and I am sure that some of the old lines will have to be replaced.

The next step will have TTC moving the streetcar power lines to the new poles along Queen. Bell and Rogers will also have to move their cables off the old poles. The moving of the lines could take around three years. Only then can they take out the old poles. In some neighbourhoods, this step has taken two years.

This process will not fix the problem of falling trees taking out power. Only if they spend the extra money and bury the power lines, as they did in the Woodbine Park development, will we be free of that problem.

Just imagine Queen Street without the overhead power lines. After initially being installed, support wires that came down in the middle of the sidewalk along Queen Street have been taken down. (There must have been a need for the extra support so we may see other wires installed that do not block the sidewalk.)



**The BTRA**  
Would like to invite you to an  
afternoon of  
**Caroling in the Park**

Date: Sunday, December 9th from 3-5pm  
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\* We will be collecting donations for Aurora House (shelter)

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# HOME HISTORY: THREE CEDARS #3 52 RAINSFORD ROAD THE DRIVEWAY ADVENTURES

John Ellis

When we moved onto Rainsford Road on November 01, 1973, a street where driveways are rare, the driveway at 52 was a compelling reason for our choice. Beyond being able to park close to our house, it meant that our house has a generous space on the north side for access to roof repairs or cleaning eaves troughs (on the south side, the space between houses is only two to three feet). However, the driveway soon emerged as an issue.

## Driveway Adventure #1

The driveway was paved with asphalt from the street back to about one car length behind the front wall of the house. The front yard at 54 Rainsford is about 18" higher than our yard and an old maple tree on that lot had grown to encroach on our driveway (this projection almost cost us a long-time friendship when our guests wrinkled their car's quarter panel on it!).

The real problem emerged with the first heavy rainfall, with water creeping across the basement floor from three sides – the east, north and west sides (the south side was not a problem because the Chan's had laid down asphalt between the houses). I saw that: Our downspout was dumping water near the front of the house; there was a low spot along the north side just beyond the end of the asphalt where water pooled; and a low point on the west side created a miniature swamp. Although the basement walls are triple brick, after such a long time, leaks were inevitable.

I set out to fix this myself, adding an extension to the downspout into the front garden and collecting sandy soil from the garden to fill the low spots, to effect drainage from the asphalt through the back gate, across the patio, and into the back yard. Next, I cruised the area for evidence of sidewalks being replaced. When I saw such a site, I would stop and ask if there was any objection to me hauling away their broken cement pieces, no doubt persuading neighbours I was insane. These pieces I fitted together in an imitation flagstone walkway along the north side of the house and a 'flagstone' patio in the back yard.

Problem solved! There was never a basement water problem again (well, not until my son helped clean the eaves troughs and downspouts... and forgot to re-connect the front down spout to the extension!).

## Driveway Adventure #2

I'll bet I'm the only person you'll ever know who got a ticket for parking in his own driveway!

On a pleasant Sunday afternoon, there was a knock on the door. It was a police officer advising me that there had been complaints on the street about people parking in front of the front walls of their houses. No question that there was a problem – these homes were built for people who didn't own a car, so there were few driveways. But now that everyone owned a car, there was a parking crisis. The solution? Homeowners began to drive their cars over the city sidewalk to park on their front lawns!

The police officer on my porch pointed out that this was a by-law violation and all such cars would be ticketed the next day. I pointed out to him that I could squeeze my car into the space behind the front wall but it was so tight that it was impossible to get out of the car without pressing the driver-side door against the brick wall. The police officer agreed with me that the ticketing was unfair without giving residents a chance to investigate alternatives, and he would ask his superiors to postpone ticketing.

When I went out the next morning on my way to work, there was a big, yellow parking ticket under the car windshield wiper (also on all of the other cars so parked). I was furious. At work, I phoned the police to demand cancellation of the ticket and was told there had been many complaints. Imposition of fines would be postponed while police and the city considered what could be done.

Next, I called the office of my alderperson ("Councillor" today) and got hooked up with her Executive Assistant, Angus Palmer – a local political buddy. Angus rolled up his sleeves and dug into dusty old volumes of city by-laws, finally finding the "Front-Yard Parking" By-law. The city had at some point recognized this problem and adopted the by-law to enable people to park in front of the front wall of their home if there wasn't sufficient room for them to park behind it.

There were other limitations regarding the driveway but I lucked out with a city inspector who said "Well, I think that tree doesn't really infringe on the driveway"... and "That garden you have along the walkway could be moved, couldn't it?"... and "You could drive to the back wall if the garden in the driveway was moved, couldn't you?" (I answered "Yes", knowing that wasn't altogether honest) and he said "I'm going to approve your application." (Thank you Lord)

As quickly as possible, I obtained a licence (still proudly tacked to our porch support post. But don't think you can still do this – these licences expire with sale of the house).



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### Driveway Adventure #3



The 'Bob Cat' and Ambrose – excavating the driveway.

Eventually, all good asphalt goes to Asphalt Heaven. As the maple tree roots began to break up our driveway, coincidentally the tree itself was declared to be dangerous and was cut down in 1988. One of my problems was solved – the north side of the driveway could now be straight back from the city sidewalk, with no 'bulge' caused by tree roots. Another happy coincidence was that our daughter, Amber, was dating a chap named Ambrose (yes, 'Amber and Ambrose' – 'the two Am's'), who was working in the building construction trades.

Ambrose was eager to work for me – he was a perfectionist who was always pushed onto other jobs when he really wanted to finish the last one properly (don't we wish all contractors were like Ambrose?), and he knew I would let him work on my projects to his heart's delight. Another bonus was that because he was a close friend and so enjoyed working for us, he was prepared to work for much lower payment. What more could I ask?

Ambrose ordered delivery of a dumpster and a rental 'Bobcat', a little tractor with a scoop on front. When it was delivered, I asked him if he knew how to drive it and he said "Sure". I watched as he went to the machine and started it up. He experimented with the controls and steering. At one point, I was horrified to see the tractor almost tip over backwards due to moving the bucket too rapidly! But he was soon roaring in and out of the driveway, hauling out broken asphalt and then earth (I thought he was going to excavate into the bowels of the earth but he assured me that a deep base would last longer).

On a bright, sunny Sunday, Ambrose banged on the door, saying "We have a problem". When I joined him in the driveway, he pointed to a vertical pipe in the middle of the driveway that was connected to the natural gas line. His steering had been off just enough and his speed just great enough to break it off!

Now, I had visions of our home exploding, the whole block becoming a towering inferno! I called the gas company emergency line and was told that they would send a supervisor to inspect. Meanwhile, the agent said to shut off all electrical appliances.

I waited fretfully for about an hour. Finally, the supervisor drove up. He was wearing a Hawaiian short-sleeved shirt, white chino slacks, and mirror sun glasses. He had been at a backyard barbecue in Mississauga, and was eager to get back. He said "Yup, he's broken off the pipe all right" (not very reassuring or helpful!) and then said "I'll get a crew out here to repair it this afternoon. There's no danger – this is just an access pipe to a valve below" (very reassuring and helpful!). And about an hour later, a couple of guys showed up to replace the broken pipe with a 'floating' pipe that could be adjusted to the final surface of the driveway.

Ambrose drove a lot more carefully after that.

Later, Ambrose firmly tamped down the sand base (I thought he'd never stop), a load of interlock brick was delivered and he laid a grand new driveway for us. We reached agreement with our neighbours at 54 Rainsford on 6"x6" stacked wooden beams for a retaining wall, to complete the job. The Driveway Adventures were over!



Almost done – pavers are going down, retaining wall is going up.

Next... The Porch Adventure



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## AGING TREE CANOPY AND MAJOR STORMS: OLD TREE BLOWS DOWN

John Ellis

During a violent wind storm this summer, an old maple tree was blown down at the home of Chris and Sherry Bagnato on the south-east corner of Rainsford and Dixon, damaging the house roof, second floor and main floor porches, and flattening part of the chain-link fence around the corner property. Remediation has begun. Unfortunately, equipment brought in to repair the second floor balcony has ruined the front yard gardens.

Due to a combination of age and increasingly violent wind storms, more and more trees are being blown down. Major branches were blown down on Brookmount and a major branch blew off a century-old Black Maple at 54 Rainsford Road, ripping loose part of the eaves trough and fascia at 52 Rainsford.



Photo by Edythe Gerrard

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY UPDATE

John Ellis

On the evening of October 29 following a splendid Heritage Toronto reception in The Carlu at the historic Eaton's College Street building, The Beach and East Toronto Historical Society (TBETHS) received The Members' Choice award in the Community Heritage category, including a \$1,000 cash prize.



TBETHS Directors who accepted the award: Clyde Robinson, Barbara Myrvold, John Ellis, and Glenn Chadwick (directors Mary Campbell, Uwe Sehmrau, and Deborah Livingston-Lowe were unable to attend).

Since June, the Society has sponsored five public events. Three walks were led by Gene Domagala: Historic Kew Gardens, Historic Danforth Avenue, and St. John's Norway Cemetery. Public events at Beaches library (co-sponsored by the library): September: Richard Gerrard (New Archeology at Fort York & 19th Century Schooner Excavation); October: Jean Cochrane (Local Public Schools and the Beaches Library); November: David Fuller (The First Armistice Day and the End of the Great War).

Upcoming Events at Beaches Library (7:00 p.m.): **Tues., Dec. 11: Gene Domagala, Mayors of Toronto 1834-1978; Tues., Jan. 15: Renowned Leslieville Historian Joanne Doucette.**

The July Board meeting resulted in some changes in the Executive: Former Vice President, Uwe Sehmrau, became President; former President, John Ellis, became Secretary; former Secretary Deborah Livingston-Lowe became a member-at large; former member-at-large Clyde Robinson became Vice President. Continuing in former roles: Mary Campbell as Treasurer and Barbara Myrvold as Membership Secretary.

Effort continues to bring about adoption by City Council of a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) on Queen Street in the Beach. TBETHS has also filed an applications to designate as historic or heritage sites: the 19th century house at 292 Main Street, the Home Bank building at Danforth and Main (now Hakim Optical), the Ritchie's Dairy building on Kingston Road at Hannaford Street, and is serving on a committee to save the TTC garage at Coxwell and Danforth.

Membership continues to be only \$20 a year and new members are welcome. The TBETHS Board is seeking volunteers to serve on committees: Website, Social, and Heritage Site Selection. If you have an hour or so a month to contribute to a worthwhile cause, please contact John Ellis (ellisjohn@rogers.com or 416-694-3288). Check out the Society's website: [www.tbeths.com](http://www.tbeths.com)



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# RESEARCH ON USE OF WOODBINE BIKE LANES

John Ellis

Bike lanes installed on Woodbine in 2017 triggered controversy, including complaints that traffic congestion on the street was causing congestion in surrounding neighbourhoods. Subsequently, adjustments have been made to turn lanes and on-street parking spaces north and south of Danforth. Traffic counts were conducted by the city over a 12-hour daytime range in two one-week periods in May 2016 to establish a benchmark and again in 2017. Results of the study:

Item	2016	2017	Change
<b>Number of cyclists</b>	70-80/day	220-230/day	+150/day
<b>Motor Vehicle travel time:</b>			
<b>7 a.m.-10 a.m.</b>			
Southbound	8.36 min.	9.05 min.	+1.09 min.
Northbound	8:23 min.	8.41 min.	+18 sec.
<b>11 a.m.-1 p.m.</b>			
Southbound	8.19 min.	8.20 min.	+01 sec.
Northbound	7.33 min.	8.48 min.	+1.15 min.
<b>4 p.m.-7 p.m.</b>			
Southbound	8.20 min.	10.32 min.	+2.02 min.
Northbound	9.16 min.	11.57 min.	+2.41 min.
Surrounding neighbourhoods: No noticeable change			

In summary, although vehicular travel time increased in every category, it ranges from as little as one second to 2.41 minutes, not a major delay considering that bicycle traffic increased by three times. Also, there is no evidence of drivers significantly choosing residential neighbourhoods rather than travelling on Woodbine.


## WELCOME TO OUR NEWLY-ELECTED MUNICIPAL PUBLIC SERVANTS

Elected for Ward 16 in the October 22 Municipal Election were Brad Bradford, Councillor; Michelle Aarts, Trustee on the Public School Board; Angela Kennedy, Trustee on the Catholic School Board (re-elected).




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**THE BTRA BOARD:**

Elected at the 2018 Annual General Meeting Executive and Committee Chairs appointed at the June 2018 Board Meeting

**Executive:**  
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**Vice-President: Jeffrey Levitt**  
**Secretary/Treasurer: John Ellis**  
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