



TRIANGLE TOPICS

Spring 2019 Newsletter Articles

Beach Triangle Residents Association

STAY IN TOUCH

BeachTriangle.com

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hans Looije

On Sunday, January 6 at 2:40 in the afternoon, there was a shooting in the neighbourhood. At this point, four people have been arrested and three guns recovered. The blood stains on the sidewalk have washed away but the images of four armed gang members running through our streets and lane-ways will not quickly fade.

Businesses along Queen have not been immune to the violence. The Bank of Montreal was robbed and now has a security guard inside. The Rogers store also has a full time guard after a robbery. The Shoppers Drug Mart now has steel gates behind the glass store-fronts because of multiple smash and grabs. Over the winter I must have walked past at least six store-fronts besides the Shoppers that has had their glass smashed in overnight, requiring crews to install temporary plywood.

Many small businesses have been victims of armed robberies, 'mob' shoplifting, and the passing of counterfeit \$50 and \$100 bills. Are we a victim of our own success? Because police concentrate patrolling in high crime areas, are criminals finding easier pickings along Queen?

WEBSITE RESTORED!

BTRA Board of Directors

The BTRA Board is pleased to announce that our Webmaster, Robert Looije, has after considerable effort re-established contact with the association's former Webmaster in order to regain ownership of the website domain. Robert has now created a fresh, new design for BeachTriangle.com. Initial postings include "Who we are", "What we do", and how you can "Get involved".

Major BTRA events will be featured and you are invited to join the Mailing List and communicate with us by means of an e-mail message.

The most recent newsletters will now be added and, over the next few months, former newsletters will be added along with other material from the BTRA archives. There is also a prominent showing of advertisements for our loyal business supporters.

Go to BeachTriangle.com and see for yourself!

**Come out to the BTRA Members AGM and
Public Event: Crime and Community Policing (info on back page)**



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HISTORICAL SOCIETY UPDATE

John Ellis

The Beach and East Toronto Historical Society (TBETHS) is busier than ever!

The Society is raising awareness of historic properties within our area through a number of initiatives. It has submitted several nominations to the Heritage Toronto Register for properties on Danforth Avenue, Main Street, Kingston Road, and Queen Street East. Each nomination has included a detailed history of the site prepared by Board member and renowned local historian Barbara Myrvoid. TBETHS also has participated in community meetings about the TTC Danforth Garage (at Coxwell Avenue) to advocate for the preservation of historical elements.

The Society will also be working with the Toronto Branch of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario to add or revise entries about our area on the TOBuilt website (https://www.acotoronto.ca/tobuilt_new.php). This is a database of images and information about buildings and structures in Toronto.

TBETHS continues to support a nomination for a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) on parts of Queen Street East in the Beach within the framework of needed re-development. The Society has offered to assist Heritage Preservation Services with information about buildings in our area, should its proposed city-wide survey be adopted by City Council this spring.

A TBETHS Facebook page is now available, managed by well-known local historian, Joanne Doucette (History of the Beach and East Toronto). Check it out! It's an amazing collection of Beach and East Toronto images and articles.

Notable local historians make presentations almost monthly at the Beaches Library. January, Joanne Doucette "The Kingston Road Tramway, 1872-1885"; February, Jamie Bradburn "The Spanish Flu Epidemic 1918-1919"; March, Jim Sanderson "Life in Balmy Beach, 1950's and 1960's"; April, Gene Domagala, "Toronto People, Places and Buildings". Gene Domagala also conducted a walking tour of Historic Danforth Avenue on April 27, and on May 18 to celebrate Victoria Day.

And on Saturday, June 29, Gene Domagala leads a walking tour of Historic East Toronto – meet at the northeast corner of Main and Danforth at 1:00 p.m.

On Tuesday, May 21, at the Beaches Library at 7:00 p.m., Barbara Myrvoid will make a presentation on "How to do your own Home History".

On Tuesday, June 11, following the Society's AGM, Camille Begin of Heritage Toronto, on Historic Plaques, preceded by the Society Annual General Meeting commencing at 6:30 p.m. Mark your calendar now!

All presentations are free and open to the public. But please note that attendance at most of the library presentations are now at room capacity. Be early!

In February, the Board of Directors appointed John Ellis as Membership Secretary, in addition to his duties as Secretary.

Membership continues to be only \$20 a year and new members are welcome. The TBETHS Board is seeking volunteers to serve on committees: Membership, Website, Social, Plaques and Heritage Preservation. 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).

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VELOTIQUE



HOME HISTORY:

Three Cedars #4 – The Porch and Deck Adventures

John Ellis

On November 1st, 1973, my wife, Beverley and our children, Douglas and Amber, moved into 52 Rainsford Road from a two-bedroom apartment in Forest Hill Village. We determined to make no major renovations – we have left all walls as built. We have made repairs in keeping with the original house and making it even grander than it was when built. For example, we replaced all modern light fixtures with antique reproduction fixtures; we replaced all interior doors with antique glass knobs and brass plates; we repaired cracked lath-and-plaster walls and ceiling with plaster (more about dining room and kitchen restoration later). We renovated as inexpensively as possible and did Do-It-Yourself (DIY) projects as much as possible.

Following is the fourth of several articles regarding our home, chronicling the foibles, adventures, and history of Three Cedars over the 45 years we have lived here. The first article was about the purchase of the home and moving in, the second was about plumbing, basement and garden adventures, and the third was about the driveway adventures.

The Porch Adventure

Having lived at Three Cedars for 18 years, in 1991 the front porch and steps badly needed to be replaced. I decided to prepare a new design.

Three Cedars was a “shotgun house”. When we visited New Orleans in 1988 for our 25th wedding anniversary, we toured the American District and saw 19th century cottages that were labelled “shotgun houses”. The backstory was that property tax laws of the time were designed to not penalize the poor, so it was ordered that a lower tax rate be applied to cottages that had an alignment of the front door, hallway and back door such that someone could stand on the front walk, with the front and back doors open, and fire a shotgun through the house without hitting any part of the house! Clever wealthy people then built really long “cottages” in accord with the shotgun rule.

What bothered me about the Three Cedars layout was, first, that one approaching from the front was required to go straight ahead on a sidewalk, up the porch steps, across the porch, directly through the front door, and down the hallway to the back door (the “shotgun”) – too boring! The second concern was that if one approached the house from the driveway, one had to walk along a sidewalk in front of the porch to the steps on the south side – too unwelcoming! Finally, we wanted the porch to be a place where friends could gather, but the layout didn’t welcome them from either approach.

I decided to place the steps in the centre of the porch, widening to ground level – inviting visitors to the porch from either side. Enthusiasm building, I began application of my Ontario College of Art training to preparing a design that would be sympathetic to the vintage of the home. On Queen Street between Beech and Balsam I studied two heritage properties – summer homes from the early 20th century – that had porch pillars I instantly knew I wanted for our house. They were square posts with wood pieces added to form simulated plinths and capitals. From one of my favourite homes in the Triangle, on the south-east corner of Dixon and Rainsford, I decided on lattice on both side walls of the porch (a bit of privacy without shutting out the summer breezes).

The result:



But who could I trust to build it? I put the word out to friends and neighbours. Good friend and former MP, Neil Young, referred me to Brian Hamilton, an expert carpenter who lived then on Woodbine Avenue. When I showed Brian the design, he was eager to do the job – this was a challenge for his carpentry skills. Once the roof was propped up, the first job was to re-build the brick pillars (the south pillar was rivaling the leaning tower of Pisa!). Brian also poured a concrete pad in front of the porch.

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Next, Brian went to work on building the porch and he followed my design precisely. In a couple of weeks it was ready for painting.



1991: The finishing touch!

The porch has held up very well – it is now 27 years old and is only now needing repair of a few rotting spots (a tribute to Brian’s choice of materials). The steps became badly rotted in 2014 and I replaced them myself – I predict that the new steps will still be standing when I’m not!



2014: New steps

I then turned my attention to the deck on the back of the house. I believe it was built in the 1960’s by a former owner, Peter Sprunt, who I credit with much of the lovely gardens but who made renovations we liked not so well! However, he did a good job with the deck – built of cedar, with a very useful storage shed on one side and with a corrugated Plexiglas roof – it has stood the test of time (over half a century!). In our time, we have jacked up a sagging corner and I have replaced the steps twice.

But the deck simply didn’t stand up to the splendour of our new porch. Energized and inspired, I got out my drawing implements and came up with designs for a rear addition.

Three Cedars, with only three bedrooms, seemed somewhat crowded when Doug and Amber lived at home but, as they moved on with their lives, it is plenty big enough for an aging couple. (No, wait, that’s not strictly true – in over 45 years of living here, we have accumulated a lot of “stuff” and, having made the front bedroom into an office/den, we don’t have much room for guests to stay overnight.)

We initially decided on a three-storey addition – a basement extension for a

workshop; a kitchen extension to include a badly-needed powder room and a sun porch; and a sunny second-storey arts and crafts space, library, and ensuite bathroom. The addition would need to be compact to avoid damaging the root system of the 150-year-old black maple on the north property line.

The result:



Although Brian Hamilton was again eager to build our addition, the usually-eager credit union mortgage company felt it was time for restraint! Over time, other priorities emerged, and Brian Hamilton moved to Peterborough and retired. All we have left are the design drawings and hope for the lottery win (well, someone has to win, and you can’t win if you don’t enter, right?).

... Who are those people on the driveway with balloons and a bouquet?

Next: *The Skylight Adventure*

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QUEEN STREET BUSINESS CHALLENGES

Hans Looije

It has been a tough winter for many businesses along Queen this year.

Many are in money-losing situations and are waiting for business to pick up in the summer. Method Fitness, the gym that many of us in the Beach Triangle went to, has closed its doors. It was the third gym to try to make a go of it in this location. Looks like the beach cannot support a large gym in a high rent location – small specialty locations (yoga, kickboxing, etc.) do seem to survive longer.

Structure and other businesses in the condos benefited from cheap 10-year leases, but when leases tripled, they could not stay. The Rainsford One condo seems to be able to lease all of its space. Aroma closed because the franchisee has cancer and could no longer run it (but the franchisor says they will keep this branch open). Bruno's has water and accessibility issues to resolve before opening.

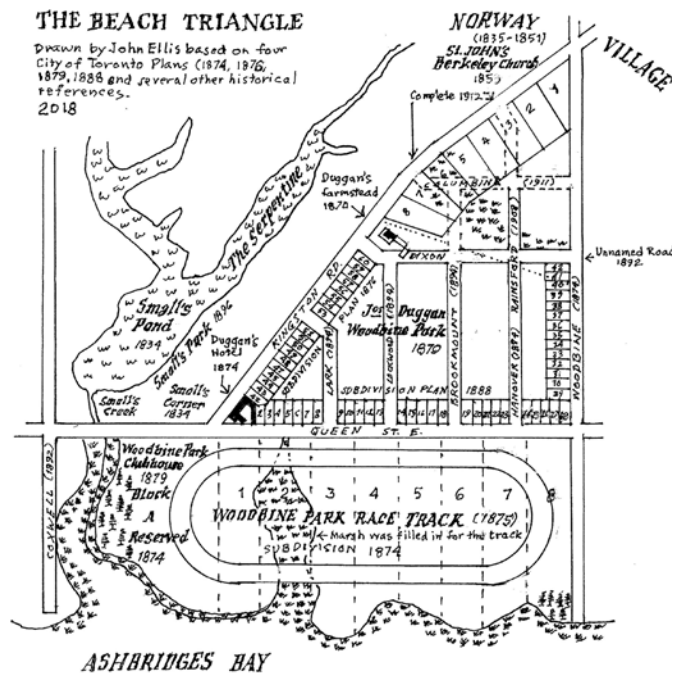
Other businesses along Queen have closed down recently (Brick Street Bakery, Beach House Bar), and other locations are slow to get the new businesses open. There has always been a steady churn of retail.

But the population will only support a limited number of restaurants, bars, and fast food.

In the 40 years I have been here, there has been an increase in nail salons and pet food stores, while the antique and second hand book stores are mostly all gone, along with convenience stores on every corner.

If you see a store that has little traffic, it is probable that they survive because they own the property. Although the cancellation of the tax benefit for owners who have no tenants will help generate new businesses, another factor is all of us shopping more locally.

19th Century in the Beach Triangle



Duggan's Farm Home was quite large, with a wrap-around porch on three sides and an attached coach house and stable. There were other farm buildings (not illustrated). He was a horse breeder and racer.

Duggan's Woodbine Hotel in 1874 also appears to have been large, with a wing, an attached coach house, stable, and courtyard.

Woodbine Park Riding and Driving Club (later Woodbine Race Track) was established in 1875 by Howell and Pardee. A few years later, Duggan took back ownership. In about 1879 he built the **Woodbine Park Clubhouse**, a swell venue for the Jockey Club, of which he was a founder. The Clubhouse hosted the Governor General's lunches during the Queen's Plate races.


Streets in the Beach Triangle were first of all, a laneway opened in 1892 that would later be named Dixon Avenue. Lark, Lockwood, Brookmount and Hanover laid out in 1894 (Brookmount only to Dixon, and Hanover only to what was later to be Columbine). Hanover was re-named Rainsford in 1908. Columbine was laid out from Woodbine to Rainsford in 1911, and completed to Kingston Road in 1912. Brookmount was completed to Columbine, and Rainsford was completed to Kingston Road in 1912.

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Some Images from 19th Century Woodbine Beach Precinct



Queen's Plate Race:
Woodbine Park Race Course,
1876. Sketch by William
Cruikshank. Canadian
Illustrated News



First St. John's Berkeley
Church, 1853. Beach Living



G.T.R. freight staff,
Woodbine, 1897. John Boyd
Photographer



Orchard Park Hotel, Small's
Corner, 1897. Courtesy Beach
Metro News and Ron Chemijj
(Day's Inn)

CAROLLING IN THE TRIANGLE A SUCCESS

Christy Watt

Despite the cold temperatures on December 9th, the neighbourhood felt warm and cozy after an afternoon of carolling in Jeff Sloane Parkette. Donations were collected for Aurora House, which is a not-for-profit organization that provides services such as shelter and counseling for victims of human trafficking.

The event was a success with approximately 30 carolers, big and small, in attendance. I was able to get some of the items for the event donated from local businesses. The carolling books were generously printed by The Mail Slot and we had a large vat of coffee donated by our Starbucks on Brookmount. I provided the sugary confections as well as the hot chocolate to keep our smaller carolers going! Some neighbours also brought eggnog to the park for all to share.

It was my pleasure to lead the neighbours with an afternoon of singing. Please follow my Beach Triangle Events Facebook Page to stay in the know on upcoming activities that I host in the parkette. I look forward to an even bigger turnout at next year's carolling event!





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Beach Triangle Residents Association Annual General Meeting and Public Event

Wednesday, June 5th, 2019.
Corpus Christi Church Hall (Basement)

AGM: 6:30-7:00

AGENDA

- Reports of the President, Treasurer, Committee Chairs
- Election of directors for the 2019-2020 year
- Seeking Election? Please contact:
 - » Hans Looije, Nominating Committee Chair
BTRAbord@gmail.com 416-454-8891
 - » Edythe Gerrard, Nominating Committee Secretary
edythegerrard@rogers.com 416-694-1383

THE BTRA BOARD

Executive:

President:
Hans Looije

Vice-President:
Jeffrey Levitt

Secretary/Treasurer:
John Ellis

Directors at Large:

Dawn Barbieri, Edythe
Gerrard, Laura Inward,
Christy Watt

Contact:
BTRAbord@gmail.com

Committee Chairs:

**Community Association
Liaison:**

Hans Looije

Community Connections:
Laura Inward

Environment/Waterfront:
Dawn Barbieri

Greenery:
Skye Vandenberg*

Newsletter Advertising:
John Ellis

Newsletter Editor:
Robert Looije*

Webmaster:
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Zoning:
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Public Event following the AGM: 7:00 p.m. Crime and Community Policing in the Beach

Vandalism, Robbery, Home Security

Community Safety Officer PC **Richard Santos-Vicentino**

All Welcome!



Shooting on Queen Street at Woodbine, Jan. 2019
Photo courtesy of Edythe Gerrard

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