

The Fife and Drum

The Newsletter of The Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common

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Contents



- 1 Capt. John Franklin's 1825 Visit to Toronto
- 3 David O'Hara's 10th Anniversary at Fort York
- 4 Fort York Memory, Jeffrey Remedios
- 4 Jennifer Chan Joins Friends' Board
- 5 From the Gallery: An Exhibit from 1934
- 5 What Our Neighbours Are Building
- 6 In Review: *The 104th (New Brunswick) Regiment of Foot in the War of 1812*

- 6 Margaret Machell: Dead at 96
- 7 Manager's Report
- 8 Burying and Burning Trash on Toronto's Military Reserve
- 10 Portrait of Colonel Dwayne Hobbs, CD, Commanding Officer of the Toronto Scottish Regiment from 2005-08
- 11 Upcoming Events

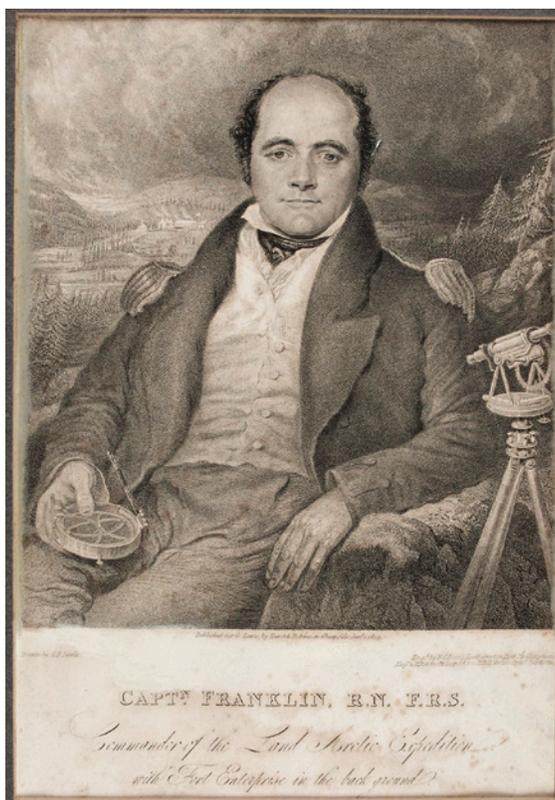


Capt. John Franklin's 1825 Visit to Toronto

by Victor Russell and Stephen Otto

One hundred and seventy years ago, in May 1845, Captain Sir John Franklin led a Royal Navy expedition of scientific discovery into the Canadian Arctic. He was in command of HMS *Erebus* and HMS *Terror* with a total complement of 129 men and provisions for a three-year journey. The explorer and his crew were last seen in July 1845. British, Canadian, and American expeditions searched for them in vain for the next decade. As time passed their fate became an international *cause célèbre* tinged with mystery. Eventually, Lady Franklin's efforts to sustain the search produced good evidence of what had happened. Not until 2014, however, was further proof found.

In April 1825, twenty years before his disappearance, the famed explorer visited York [Toronto], Upper Canada, on what was known as his Second Overland Expedition. He had chosen York as a staging area and departure point because he could travel earlier in the year if he approached the northwest Arctic overland from the south rather than via Hudson's Bay. During a two-day stay in town he and his men secured provisions and assistance. The 39-year-old Franklin was already an experienced Arctic explorer and important operative of the British Admiralty when he arrived here. He had joined the Royal Navy as a teen



Capt. John Franklin drawn by George Robert Lewis in 1823 shows him two years before he visited York. Fort Enterprise, his winter quarters on his first Arctic expedition, is in the background. Courtesy McCord Museum, Montreal, M989.89.1

in 1800 and earned promotion to lieutenant in 1808, participated in a number of noteworthy engagements including the battle of Copenhagen in April 1801, seen action at Trafalgar in October 1805, and was wounded during the battle of New Orleans in 1814. In the peace that followed, Franklin was one of the Admiralty staff intent on laying sovereign claim to the Arctic regions of British North America and charting a Northwest Passage. In 1818 he was in command of HMS *Trent* as part of John Barrow's investigation of the northern regions. In 1819 he led his first overland expedition to explore and chart the northern coast of North America in conjunction with William Edward Parry's efforts by sea. While these exploits may have revealed certain shortcomings he won fame and widespread respect, as Arctic scholar Clive Holland has noted, and was considered "a British hero."

On 16 February 1825 Franklin left Liverpool on his second overland expedition, sailing on the American packet *Columbia* accompanied by his colleagues, Lieut. George Back, Dr. John Richardson, Edward N. Kendall, Thomas Drummond, and four marines. They arrived in New York on March

15 and remained there for eight days. Continuing on to Albany they were wined and dined by New York Governor De Witt Clinton and, interestingly, by the Hon. Stephen Van Rensselaer, a former lieutenant governor of New York and sitting US congressman. Van Rensselaer commanded American forces that had invaded Canada in 1812 but were defeated at the battle of Queenston Heights by Major General Sir Isaac Brock.

Franklin and his party left Albany on 28 March 1825, travelling the rutted roads of northern New York before crossing the Niagara River into Upper Canada on April 2. The next day they visited Niagara Falls and Brock's Monument, then nearing completion. Franklin was reminded that exactly twenty-four years before, he and Brock had been companions in arms at Copenhagen, under the immortal Nelson. Late in the evening of April 4 the party left Fort George for York on the schooner *Richardson*, arriving here the next morning at 10 am.

Among those who welcomed them ashore were Col. Sir Francis Cockburn and his fellow Canada Company commissioners, Lt. Col. Sir John Harvey, Simon McGillivray, John Davidson, and the famous Scottish author, John Galt. They were meeting in York to look into the value of the land in Upper Canada that the company was buying from the government for settlement. Since both the provincial parliament and law courts were in session too, accommodation was at a premium in a town of only 1700 souls. Cockburn had requested, therefore, a vacant building from the Barrack Department for Franklin's use, and invited the party to stay with the commissioners in another house provided by the military where Franklin had his own apartment. Likely both buildings were on the foreshore just east of Peter Street. As soon as Franklin unpacked he went to Government House, a short distance away on King Street, to pay his respects to Lieutenant-Governor Sir Peregrine Maitland, then returned to the Commissariat Store on the lakeshore to arrange for equipment, supplies, and carts for the first leg of the journey up Yonge Street to Lake Simcoe. Spare moments in the day were taken up with writing reports to the Colonial Office

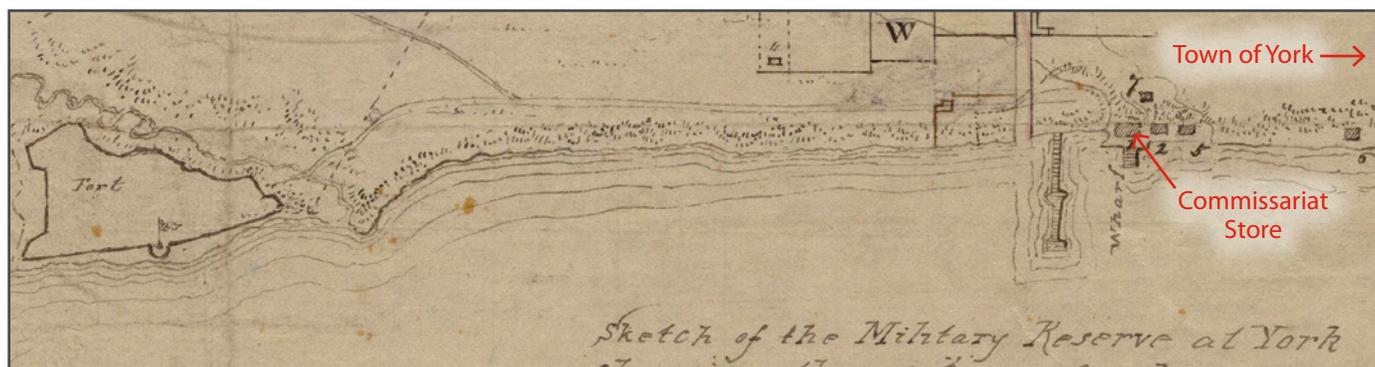


Lieut. George Back, [Wed.], April 6, 1825. Garrison at York, the Capital of Upper Canada. A Native woman carries a baby on her back across a bridge, east of Fort York. The fort is seen in the background, left of the stump. Courtesy Library and Archives Canada, C-093001

and the evenings in accepting hospitality. It is not known if Franklin managed to visit Fort York during his short stay.

The explorers left York in three groups over the next few days. Dr. Richardson and Mr. Kendall set off for Holland Landing on April 6; Franklin followed on the 7th, stopping the first night under William Robinson's roof in Newmarket. Lieut. George Back and the four marines remained in York awaiting a crew of twenty-four voyageurs expected momentarily from Lower Canada. These men arrived April 9, attended Mass, and were given a lunch on the commissioner's lawn before leaving for Lake Simcoe. Travelling via the Nottawasaga and Severn Rivers, they caught up with the others at Penetanguishene on Lake Huron. On April 22 the whole party of thirty-three men set off for Sault Ste. Marie in two great *canots de maitres*.

The voyageurs were bound by contracts drawn up under the civil laws of Lower Canada, for example that which Pierre Parenteau of Sorel, 'front canoe man,' signed 15 March 1825. He began by accompanying the supply wagons up Yonge Street to Lake Simcoe, then continued by canoe over the lakes and rivers to [Great] Bear Lake. He was discharged there on 7 August 1825 and expected to overwinter in the north, fishing



Map of the foreshore at York shortly after Franklin's visit. The whole map by J. Walpole and George Phillpotts may be found at <<http://fortyorkmaps.blogspot.ca/2013/10/1827-walpole-phillpotts-sketch-of-reserve-shewing-government-buildings.html>> Courtesy Library and Archives Canada, NMC 4445

for his food. In spring he made his way back to Montreal with pelts and other goods belonging to his sponsor, the merchant Pierre De Rocheblave. The latter paid Parenteau's wife £300 (old currency) in the autumn of 1825, £600 to Parenteau himself on his return to Montreal in 1826, and a final payment of £1800 a month later.

Franklin's second overland mission to the Arctic regions ended in the spring of 1827 when he and his men returned via Montreal to London. The explorer was knighted in 1829, with the success of his second expedition probably counting for much towards the honour. He never returned to Toronto, although his widow visited here in September 1860 on one of her now-famous world tours. By then, a search conducted by Captain Francis Leopold McClintock had found a few relics of the lost expedition including a written account that confirmed Sir John had died in 1847. Still, his remains, crew, and ships were not found.

Sustained interest in the expedition's fate, and increased concern over Arctic sovereignty, prompted the government of Canada to resume the search. In the summer of 2014 an

expedition led by Parks Canada specialists, and visited by the Prime Minister, made worldwide headlines by announcing the discovery of one of Franklin's lost ships, HMS *Erebus*, 2000 km (1200 miles) northwest of Toronto at a depth of under 11 metres of water just west of the Adelaide peninsula. More discoveries are anticipated this summer as efforts continue to recover the archaeological remains of the lost expedition led by York's famous visitor.

Many of those involved in the Franklin story have entries in the Dictionary of Canadian Biography found on-line at: <<http://biographi.ca/en/index.php>>.

Thanks for assistance with this article are owed to Naomi Boneham, Archivist, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge; Jim Burant, Janice Cavell, John Fleming, James Gorton, Marcel Landry, Jonathan Moore, David Pelly, and David Stevenson.

Victor Russell is the former manager of the City of Toronto Archives and the author of a number of books and articles on the history of Toronto. Stephen Otto is a director of The Friends of Fort York and editor emeritus of Fife & Drum.

David O'Hara's 10th Anniversary at Fort York

Good civil servants often go unheralded but Toronto is blessed with more than a few, and one of them is Fort York's own Dave O'Hara. On January 4 the fort passed a milestone when Dave marked his tenth anniversary as its Manager. It's a title that does not do justice to the role of "holding the fort," a job that involves being true to the site's history, but also ensuring it's very much relevant to twenty-first century Toronto. Throw in a massive construction project, intense neighbourhood development, special events, thousands of visitors, and even a functioning cannon, and it's a job description that few could fill, but Dave does so wonderfully.

He came to the site from the Parks Department where he had been a Parks and Recreation Planner for twelve years. A special interest in heritage landscapes and conservation issues had drawn him into several fort-related projects previously, including the Fort York & Garrison Common Parks & Open Space Design and Implementation Plan, development of Fort York Boulevard, and re-landscaping for Victoria Square, so he was no stranger to the job's challenges when he took it.

He has a degree in Landscape Architecture and a Master of Science in Planning that complement his practical experience. Over the last decade Dave has emerged as one of the city's most respected, collaborative, and indefatigable administrators as he has led the extensive efforts to plan and develop the 43-acre National Historic Site and its stunning centrepiece,



David O'Hara is seen at the opening of the Fort York Visitor Centre in September, 2014. Courtesy of Sid Calzavara

the new Visitor Centre where he got to add "construction expediter" to his resumé. The job is one that continues to evolve and there's more to be done, of course, including the reworking of the landscape on the Garrison Common, building of the pedestrian-cycling bridge over the rail corridor, reconstruction of Bathurst St. south of the steel-truss bridge, and creating the parks flanking Bathurst and beneath it. May Dave's hand continue to be felt for good in these and other projects in the fort's precincts. Toronto is lucky to have him.

Fort York Memory

by Jeffrey Remedios



I am continually amazed by how something small, planted in the mind of a young person, can leave lasting impressions throughout adult life. As the third annual Field Trip Music & Arts Festival—held at Fort York & Garrison Common—draws near, I'm pleasantly reminded of my first experience at these special historic grounds.

It was the mid-80s. I was eight or nine years old.

When I wasn't going to

St. Ursula's Catholic grade school in Scarborough my life consisted of soccer, tennis, Cub Scouts, and a heavy dose of Michael Jackson records. One particularly warm summer, my Cub Scout group arranged a trip for us to spend a weekend living in the barracks of Historic Fort York. I was excited at the idea of bus rides and bunk beds, and stayed up nights imagining faux battles on the field. My excitement took over our house when my parents got in on the preparations. My mother helped sew my very own Fort York guard outfit while my father built me a replica Brown Bess musket out of wood. Given the group efforts put into planning, uniforms, and accessories, momentum saw to it that my weekend lived up to all my expectations. We spent mornings learning royal guard drills, told ghost stories by flashlight in bunk beds, and learned how soldiers lived during the War of 1812.

Jennifer Chan Joins Friends' Board

Jennifer Chan has joined the board of The Friends of Fort York. She was appointed in January by the Friends' board using its power to name new directors between annual meetings of the organization. Raised in Toronto, Jennifer is a graduate of the University of Toronto Schools (UTS) and the University of Toronto (BA, MA in Social-Cultural Anthropology). After graduating, and serving two years as Director of Research & Policy Analysis for the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, she joined the office of Councillor Adam Vaughan as his constituency assistant in 2007. When she left there in 2014 she was one of the better-known and respected figures around City Hall. Currently Jennifer is a Senior Associate in the Ontario Growth Secretariat, Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing in Queen's Park.

Fort York made a lasting impression and I would always recall the historic grounds with a sense of awe and wonder. Fast forward twenty-five odd years and I'd find myself weighing potential locations to host the inaugural Field Trip. It was to be a celebration of the tenth anniversary of Arts & Crafts and we intended to showcase as many label artists as possible in an environment as special as the event itself. Downtown. Green. Ideally with a story of its own that we could showcase. And so, in 2013 at Fort York, it would begin. Our love letter to Toronto held at the site built to defend and protect our city at its founding.

Much of my first childhood visit to the fort would influence Field Trip's festival philosophies—prioritizing community and discovery, inviting and integrating children's programming, and putting the fort on display as a headliner on the billing. Perhaps Field Trip is now the catalyst to a child's first visit, or is cause for a parent's first return after some time, but in any event it's a joy to witness the smiles the fort continues to bring.

In choosing Fort York all those years ago an indelible special connection was formed. It's a thrill to now play a small role in the special connection of the fort with others. That seed of excitement and curiosity was planted in my mind all those years ago at the fort, and I hope Field Trip does the same in the hearts and minds of young people who visit it now.

Jeffrey Remedios is managing partner of Arts & Crafts Productions, the music-related media and artist services company he co-founded in 2003. A&C has organized the very successful Field Trip festival at Fort York annually since 2013; this year it takes place June 6-7. Tickets are available online at <<http://fieldtriplife.com/>>



Jennifer Chan (right) is seen with former director of The Friends of Fort York and Spacing publisher, Matt Blackett (left), and Sandra Shaul, project manager for Toronto's commemoration of the Bicentennial of the War of 1812 (centre).

From the Gallery: An Exhibit from 1934 when Fort York Opened

Yet another image in the Gallery section of The Friends' website <www.fortyork.ca> shows one of the exhibits in the South Soldiers' Barracks when Fort York opened as a museum on 24 May 1934. There's little that can't be known about the display thanks to a note in the *Canadian Historical Review* for June 1934, detailed records kept by Toronto Culture, and the sharp eyes of the Supervisor of Collections, Alex Avdichuk, and Registrar Lisa Buchanan. It was curated by the Women's Canadian Historical Society. The mannequins—the man dressed as an officer of the 15th Regiment of Foot which was at the fort in 1834-37, and a child—were made by a Toronto sculptor, Merle Foster. Several of the artifacts in the picture, including the long-case clock, bedwarmer, and copper kettle, are still found in Toronto Culture's collections. The latter two remain on display—eighty years later!



Photograph by Charles A. Williams, Courtesy Toronto Public Library, T-34680

What Our Neighbours Are Building

The view from Fort York east across Bathurst Street will change substantially in the next year or two as three properties between Lakeshore Boulevard and Niagara Street are redeveloped. Already, foundations for two residential towers (1524 units) have been excavated on Fort York Boulevard between Bathurst and Dan Leckie Way, opposite the new Fort York branch library. Next, on Bathurst between Front and Niagara streets, north of the rail corridor, Minto Communities Inc. is now marketing the 'Westside,' a 1200-unit condo building. A few years ago several workshops among neighbourhood stakeholders and the developer's architects, chaired by then-Councillor Adam Vaughan, helped refine its design to lessen the impact of the building's great mass on

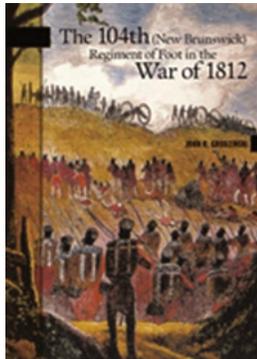
Victoria Memorial Square and the view from Fort York. The third major project on Bathurst is Wittington's reworking of the historic 1928 Loblaw's Groceteria warehouse at Lakeshore Boulevard and Bathurst for retail and office uses. <<http://heritagetoronto.org/the-loblaw-groceterias-building/>> The walls of this heritage structure are being numbered, taken down, and stored for re-erection around a new core topped by a couple of stories of office space. To the north of this structure two striking new condo towers (851 units) are proposed that, like the Fort York Visitor Centre, turn the area under the adjacent Gardiner Expressway to their advantage as a courtyard and entrance to the retail uses at the base of the towers.



Sketch of Minto's 'Westside' from the west gate of Fort York. Courtesy of Wallman Architects.

In Review: The 104th (New Brunswick) Regiment of Foot in the War of 1812

by Roch Legault



John R. Grodzinski. *The 104th (New Brunswick) Regiment of Foot in the War of 1812*. Fredericton: Goose Lane Editions, 2014. 219 pages, maps, illus.

In this small book John Grodzinski, a well-established Canadian historian of the War of 1812, undertakes the story of a Canadian colonial regiment turned imperial, the only one of its kind during

a war spanning the years from 1793 to 1815 (the French Revolution continued by the Napoleonic Wars). With skill and passion Grodzinski recreates the past of the 104th Regiment as comprehensively and objectively as possible. His vivid descriptions of military actions include the glory as well as less glorious moments.

The idea for a regiment of volunteers in New Brunswick came from London in February 1793, on the eve of war against revolutionary France. The instruction was to deploy the King's New Brunswick Regiment in the colony and its vicinity to replace a British regiment of the line. Although the peace of Amiens, in 1802, saw the regiment disbanded it was soon resurrected in the form of a fencible regiment in 1803. This unit was made up largely of colonials, including a proportion of Black soldiers, raised in different parts of British North America. After several efforts, the officers succeeded in having the regiment transformed from a fencible unit to a regular regiment through an unusual channel, bypassing the North American command to apply directly to London. This began an adventure (brief since the unit was disbanded in 1817) that saw the 104th become a distinguished regiment of the line and play a prominent role in safeguarding Canada.

The regiment became famous in the winter of 1813 for its snowshoe march from Fredericton to Quebec City (a 700-mile journey), and then on to Upper Canada, by six companies of the 104th and the accompanying artillery detachment. These companies would soon be thrown into most of the major battles to keep the Americans at bay. One of these actions was the not-so-successful raid on Sackets Harbor where the unit took a third of the casualties suffered by the British raiding party. In war, accidents are bound to happen and in one of the most difficult battles, Lundy's Lane in the Niagara Peninsula, the 104th volleyed upon friendly troops by mistake. Casualties

were not limited to the rank and file: the 104th lost its commanding officer while assaulting Fort Erie in 1814 in the most tragic and bloodiest siege in the history of North America prior to the American Civil War.

There is another side of the regiment's history that Grodzinski highlights. He speaks of destinies without the unnecessary heroic tone. Take for example the cases of John Winslow, who joined the unit and showed brilliant conduct under fire after a complicated story of redemption, and of John LeCouteur, who participated in so many engagements and events. Their stories make for excellent reading. Desertions, a plague for British regiments serving in North America, and from which the 104th suffered very much, in particular while soldiering in Niagara, are well documented. But then, what soldier would not be tempted by the gorgeous setting and the quality of its lands?

Because of fighting, illnesses, and competition in recruiting from provincial units, the rank and file of the 104th dropped to 384 in April 1814, well below the authorized strength of 1000. In his conclusion, John Grodzinski justly claims that the regiment was "a microcosm of the Empire, drawn from the Canadas, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, England, Ireland, Scotland, and other countries." (p 145).

Overall, this is a very engaging, entertaining, well-researched, and informative book that offers a very good read for all interested in the history of Canada.

Roch Legault, a member of the History Department at Royal Military College of Canada since 1995, researches and teaches on Leadership, Strategy, and French Canada before Confederation. His most recent book, Général de la guerre froide et de la paix, Richard Evraire (Kingston: Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2015) will be released in English later this year.

Margaret Machell: A Trooper in the Museums Field Dead at 96

Margaret Machell had no close links with Fort York except as someone active in Ontario museums from an early date, in her case since the 1930s. She was a colleague of Dorothy Duncan, Ruth Keene and George Waters, among others at the fort, but made her mark instead at the Art Gallery of Ontario as co-ordinator of the Women's Committee in the late 1960s and eventually Keeper of the Grange House Museum where she worked closely with Jeanne Minninnick and Peter Stokes. Marg died at Belmont House on February 18, aged ninety-six.

News From

The Birthplace of Toronto

Contributions from the Staff at the Fort

Manager's Report

by David O'Hara, Site Manager

Although the new Visitor Centre officially opened to the public back in September, finishing touches on various interior and exterior components of the building are still ongoing. Bringing the new facility on line as part of overall museum operations is also a major change for both staff and visitors alike. As reported in the December issue of *Fife and Drum*, a significant amount of landscaping work will be undertaken in 2015. The work that can't be completed prior to our summer season will likely wait until the fall.

While much of the landscaping will take place in the fall, demolition of the Garrison Road Bridge is scheduled to be completed this April/May. This work will require that staff and visitors begin to use the parking lot at Strachan Avenue and Fleet Street until our full lot in front of the Visitor Centre is ready.

The Fort York Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge will continue to move through the next steps of design in 2015. Build Toronto, who is leading the project, has short listed three teams to continue in the preparation of design submissions. The deadline for submissions is 30 April 2015. For more information visit fortyorkbridge.mmm.ca

Fort York kicked off the 2015 season with what is usually our first event of the year, Queen Charlotte's Ball, on January 17. This was followed by our 6th annual "Mad for Marmalade, Crazy for Citron!." Done in partnership with the Culinary Historians of Canada again this year, it was sold out. A huge thank you to the organizing committee, presenters, sponsors, judges, and all the volunteers who made Mad for Marmalade such a success.

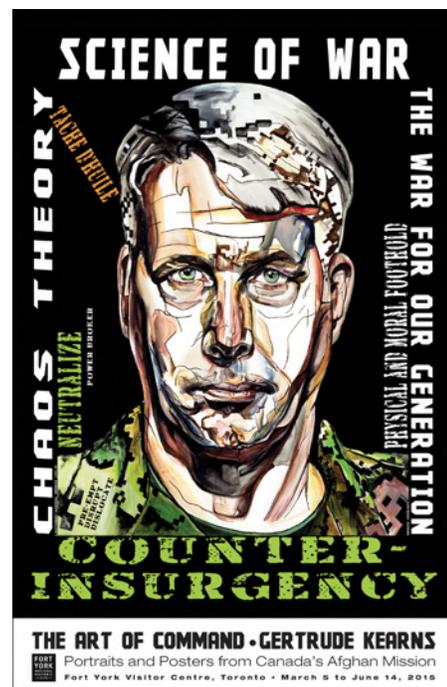
On March 5th after only two months of planning, we opened an exhibition titled *The Art of Command* by Gertrude Kearns. Kearns has worked officially and unofficially as a Canadian war/military artist for over two decades in large format drawings, paintings, and texted fine art prints, and has participated in various Canadian Forces exercises through

the Canadian Forces Artists Program from 2003-2005. She was the official war artist with Task Force Afghanistan in Kandahar in 2006.

Described by the *Toronto Star's* Peter Goddard as "unquestionably the country's leading active contemporary war artist," Kearns has constantly pushed the boundaries of Canadian war art for the past quarter century. Many thanks go out to Gertrude Kearns, Chief Curator Wayne Reeves, Robert Kerr, and our entire Program Design & Development team for pulling together the exhibit in such a short period of time.

Please come and visit *The Art of Command* on show in the Fort York Visitor Centre until June 14. Visit www.toronto.ca/artofcommand for more information.

Our 2015 season promises to be a very busy one. Check the Upcoming Events section and our website for more information on the Indigenous Arts Festival and other activities.



Burying and Burning Trash on Toronto's Military Reserve

by Wayne Reeves

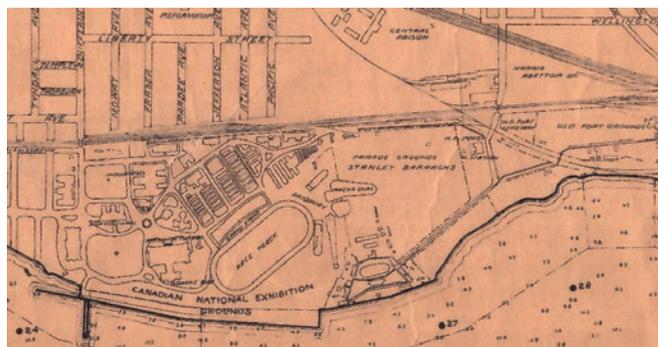
"A giant causeway, edged with huge square blocks and an immense railing leads up to a massive building with two high towers. In the midst of a great park in an old world setting it would be taken for a castle. But in Toronto... it is only the new 'destroyer' that will burn up the city's garbage."

So wrote the *Toronto Daily Star* in January 1925, days before the city's second high-temperature incinerator opened at Wellington and Niagara streets. The Wellington Destructor represented the most dramatic – and last – use of Toronto's Military Reserve as a solution to the city's solid waste woes and as a catalyst for thinking about how to deal with garbage disposal in Toronto.

Until the 1870s, waste disposal in the Reserve (bounded by Peter, Queen, and Dufferin streets and the lake) and the rest of Toronto was largely a private matter. Garbage was burned in fireplaces and furnaces, dumped in privy pits and nearby gullies, or fed to hogs. But as volumes increased, the municipal government organized refuse collection and disposal more systematically. Low-lying areas became targets for disposal. Some cinders went into road potholes, but most refuse was hauled to Garrison Creek. As the largest watercourse between the Don and Humber rivers, the Garrison was ideally located as a dumping ground. Filling went hand-in-hand with the lower creek's burial in a combined sewer in 1884-86. Ash-rich dumps would continue to operate around Fort York until the 1950s.

Ash was a by-product of incineration, which the city first experimented with in 1890 by the Don River. A second low-temperature facility, the Western Crematory, opened in 1893 east of Strachan Avenue in the centre of what is now called the Ordnance Triangle Lands and what was then part of the city's Cattle Market Annex. Expected to burn 92 cubic metres of garbage a day, the Western Crematory was, like its eastern counterpart, a failure. Despite operating fitfully and intermittently, its performance highlighted Toronto's reliance on dumping and pushed the civic government toward new waste disposal technologies.

Crucial to this story of sanitary reform is the Canadian National Exhibition of 1910 and the construction of a new seawall at Exhibition Park. The seawall, running from Bathurst Street to the Humber, had been proposed by Mayor William McMurrich in 1882, detailed by the City Engineer in 1901, and formed part of civic improvement schemes from 1906 onward.



The Exhibition seawall west of Stanley Barracks, seen as a heavy line on this map, 1912. University of Toronto Map Library, G3524.T621.24.1912

The seawall combined several objectives. Rock-filled timber cribbing capped with concrete would be built offshore; the area behind it would receive refuse and then be topped by a waterfront boulevard. In 1906, the Ontario Association of Architects billed the project as a "filling-in job."

The city built the first section of the seawall off Exhibition Park in 1909-10. A second section was tendered in 1911. By 1913, the CNE grounds featured a handsome new front. But further work would rely on hydraulic dredging rather than garbage dumping.

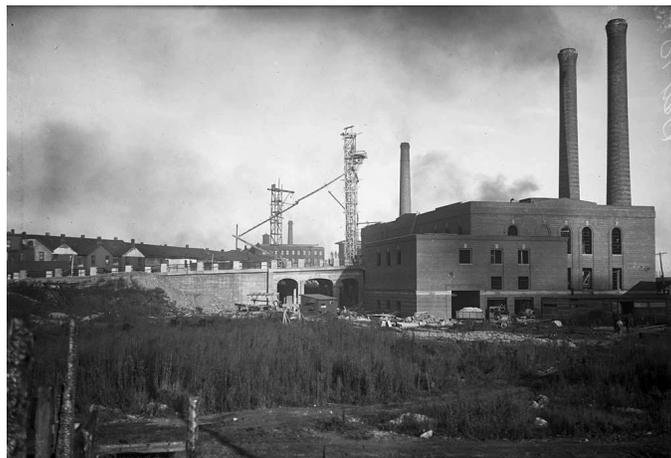
The change was spurred by R.C. Harris. Already the city's Property Commissioner, Harris also became Street Commissioner in 1910. Reporting that October to the Works Committee, he attacked Toronto's "unsanitary, unjustifiable and culpable" approach to waste management.

Toronto operated nine dumps, which Harris called "immense sponges of putrefaction." During the CNE's 17-day run, waste heading to the Exhibition seawall went instead to the Western Crematory. The 1,178 loads of garbage, 24 barrels of fish, 24 cases of eggs, 188 mattresses, 75 dogs, 110 cats, and 59 chickens burned there represented one-quarter of the city's wastes. "The only rational and sanitary mode of destroying city refuse is by the process of incineration," said Harris. "This system should be adopted at once."

For Harris, making progress on water supply and sewage treatment was moot if the present system of dumping was perpetuated. In the modern city, effective waste disposal was the essential third leg of civic sanitation. After being promoted to Commissioner of Works (but retaining his post as Street Commissioner), Harris tendered a plan in November 1912. While favouring a network of five high-temperature incinerators, their high net operating costs

made him recommend a system of smaller incinerators and transfer stations linked by rail to a reduction works outside Toronto. Organic waste would be “cooked” to produce marketable grease, fertilizer, and perfume base.

In January 1913, Toronto ratepayers approved issuing \$1 million of debentures for garbage disposal. With a policy in place, Harris asked to be relieved of his garbage collection duties. The Department of Street Cleaning was established under a new Street Commissioner, George B. Wilson. One of his first reports to Council concerned the destruction of the Western Crematory by fire in December 1913.



The Wellington Destructor under construction, October 1924. The short stack at centre right belonged to the Toronto Civic Abattoir and still survives. City of Toronto Archives, series 372, item 165

This was the warm-up to a garbage debate that raged throughout 1914. Facing a disposal crisis, the city rebuilt the Western Crematory as a temporary facility. Council rejected Wilson’s permanent solution – a variant on Harris’s plan which located the smelly reduction works at Ashbridge’s Bay. Choosing lower initial capital costs, Council settled on “Total incineration of all Garbage, Rubbish and part of the Ashes, in two, three or four disposal plants.”

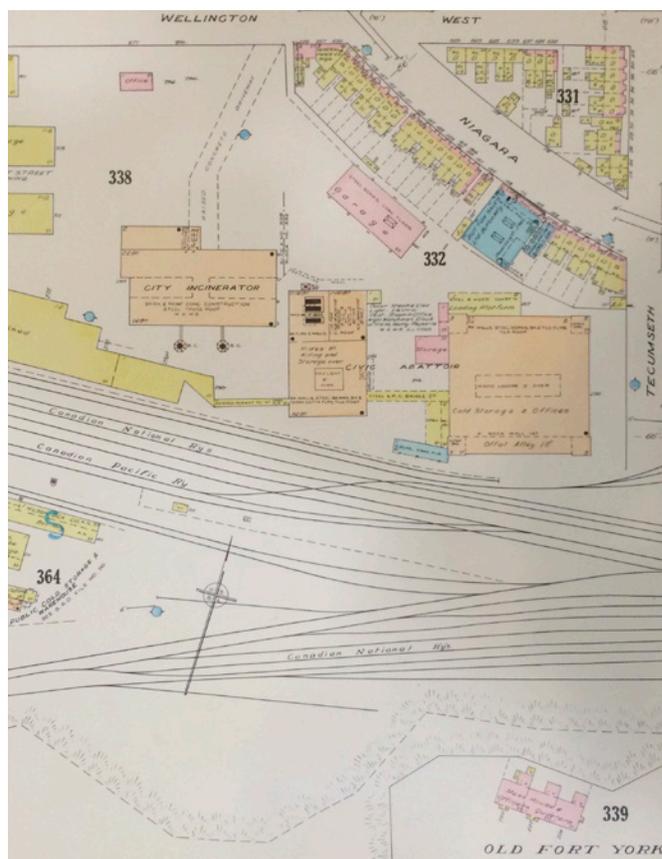
Three incinerators would be built during Wilson’s tenure, beginning with a small 18-tonne plant on Toronto Island (1915). Siting the larger facilities would be controversial, but the 275-tonne Don Destructor opened to acclaim in 1917. It was modelled after North America’s first high-temperature incinerator in Westmount, Quebec (1906).

The Great War and the postwar slump delayed action on the westerly incinerator – the largest and most expensive unit – until 1922. Rather than buy a site at Dufferin and Dupont, Council decided to use the old Western Cattle Market lands abutting the Civic Abattoir. Construction took place over the long-buried course of Garrison Creek. The first contract was awarded that December; the last came in 1924.

Civic leadership changed over the course of the project. Wilson and City Architect G.F.W. Price died early in 1924, and were succeeded by George W. Dies (as Street Commissioner) and J.J. Woolnough (as City Architect). Design continuity was provided by Kenneth Stevenson Gillies, who had joined the Building Department as a junior draftsman in 1906.

Besides leading the Wellington project, Gillies likely had a hand in all five Toronto incinerators built between 1915 and 1955. He became City Architect (1932) and Commissioner of Buildings (1932-54).

Like many public works of its time, the Wellington Destructor followed the Modern Classical style. Built of steel and concrete clad with brick and stone, it was austere from a distance, though its bulk was reduced by a 75-metre setback from Wellington Street West. Details were revealed close-up: brickwork that was channelled at the base and in multi-coloured courses above; a molded stone stringcourse separating the first and second storeys; two-storey corbelled brick window surrounds, enclosing round-arched and flat-headed window openings with oversized keystones and stone sills; and low parapet walls



The Wellington Destructor at its height of development, 1954. Toronto Public Library, 912.13681 I56, no. 42, v. 1, plate 71

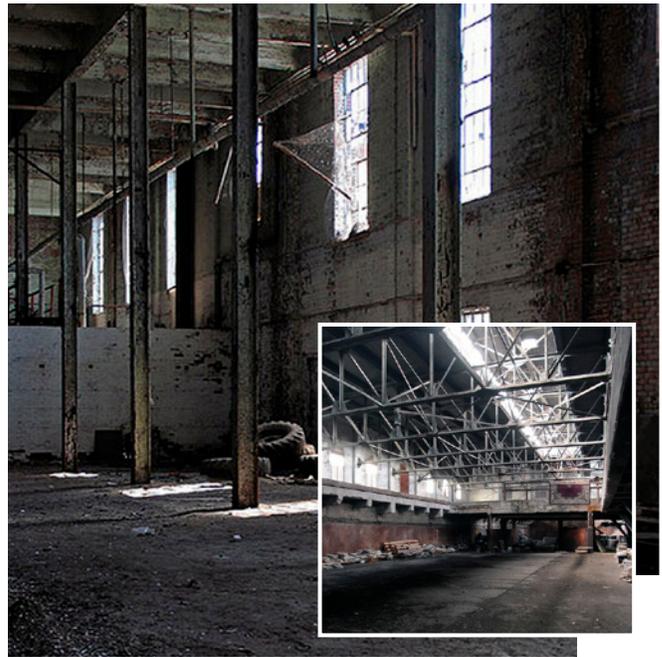
and central pediments, both capped by coping tiles, rising above a flat roof.

When Toronto's 365-tonne incinerator opened in 1925, the *Daily Star* pronounced it "the finest of the world." San Francisco's city engineer, M.M. O'Shaughnessy, was equally enthusiastic in a 1929 report. After a North American tour, he concluded that "[t]he most notable accomplishment in garbage collection and disposal is at Toronto." Only a much smaller plant in Oregon was cheaper to operate than the Wellington Destructor. The Toronto and Portland plants gave "the best results in reference to cost of operating, appearance of the interior and exterior... and absence of nuisance..."

The plant technology so admired in 1929 was obsolete within forty years. The Wellington's four Sterling continuous grate furnaces lacked emission controls. As concerns mounted about the health impacts of air pollution, the province demanded action. Metro Works responded in 1972 by decommissioning two furnaces and using the structure as an "interim" transfer station for waste heading mostly to sanitary landfills.

Though incineration ended at the Wellington in 1973, the transfer function remained until 1 January 1986. The small volume of refuse handled, the poor configuration of the tipping floor and loading facilities (designed for small horse-drawn wagons), and local truck-traffic complaints conspired against the facility. As Metro Works Commissioner Frank J. Horgan put it: "From a structural standpoint, the plant is aging and difficult to maintain. The modern large collection vehicles are not permitted to use it. The working conditions and facilities for the staff are poor, and the worst of any facility this Department now operates."

The trashing of Toronto's Military Reserve was over. Despite losing its waste management roles and its twin 55-metre



Interior views of the Destructor by Chris Smart show the impressive spaces it contains that might be adapted for a variety of purposes.

chimneys, the Wellington Destructor remains a symbol of the rapid growth of public works in the 1910s and '20s. Modernizing municipal services resulted in projects of unprecedented type and scale, including the Toronto Civic Abattoir, the expanded John Street Pumping Station and the new Island Filtration Plant, the Prince Edward Viaduct, the TTC's Hillcrest Yard, and the CNE's Coliseum. These works – along with the Don and Wellington incinerators and a host of smaller facilities – helped forge Toronto's reputation as a progressive urban centre.

Wayne Reeves is Chief Curator for City of Toronto Museums & Heritage Services.

Colonel Dwayne Hobbs, CD, Commanding Officer of the Toronto Scottish Regiment from 2005-08,

stands next to his portrait by Gertrude Kearns that is part of the exhibit, *The Art of Command: Portraits and Posters from Canada's Afghan Mission*, on display currently and through June 14 at the Fort York Visitor Centre. The Toronto Scottish are our neighbours at the Fort York Armoury. *Courtesy of Stephanie Lake for City of Toronto Culture.*



2015 | Upcoming Events Historic Fort York

Compiled by Richard Haynes and Robert Kerr

Gertrude Kearns, *The Art of Command: Portraits and Posters from Canada's Afghan Mission* Until Sunday, June 14

Since 1991 Toronto artist Gertrude Kearns has explored the engagement between Canada's military and conflicts around the world. In 2005-6 she was embedded with Canadian Forces in Afghanistan while on contract with the Department of National Defence. Between 2006 and 2015, Kearns created the forty-six portraits and posters appearing in *The Art of Command*.

For more information visit www.toronto.ca/artofcommand

APRIL

Everything Easter @ Fort York Sat. April 4, 10 am to 3 pm

Here is Toronto's newest egg hunt! Join us for a day of fun and games, including an Easter egg hunt, arts and crafts, meet and greet with the Easter Bunny, and egg races. There will be food and beverages on site, not to mention great raffle prizes to be won. All proceeds go towards Ronald McDonald House and the George Brown College Foundation which benefits scholarships, bursaries, and awards for students. Recommended for families and children aged 3-10.

Save 25% by purchasing your tickets in advance:

<http://www.everythingeasterto.com/#tickets/cd5f>

Community Cleanup Day Sat. April 18, 10 am to 12 noon

Help us with spring cleaning of the Garrison Common. All equipment will be provided. Please contact David Juliusson @ 416-392-7150. A free Family Pass will be offered to all volunteers.

Commemoration of the Battle of York Sun. April 26, 10 am to 5 pm

Explore the history of Toronto and Fort York. Visit the historic kitchen and sample baking from the hearth. Hot chocolate and a roaring fire will make this a heartwarming and memorable visit. Kids can try an 1812 drill class, officers' sword drill, and some old-fashioned games, as well as a fun-filled kids' activity book.

Regular admission

MAY

Ontario Model Soldier Society Show and Sale Sat. May 2, 10 am to 5 pm

All ages will enjoy the Society's annual show and competition. Demonstrations of casting and painting; displays of connoisseur figures, dioramas, and tableaux of more than a thousand pieces. Many vendors will be offering toy soldiers for sale.

Free with regular admission

Ah, What an excellent thing is an English Pudding! Historic Cooking Class Sun. May 10, 10:30 am to 3:30 pm

Sweet or savoury, baked, boiled or fried – discover the diverse array of 18th and 19th century puddings and cookery methods using cloths, pans, basins or plates in the 1826 Officers' Mess Kitchen. Lunch and recipe package included.

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

To register, please call 416-392-7503

World Fiddle Day in Toronto Sat. May 16, 10 am to 6 pm

Fort York welcomes a daylong celebration of bows on strings as players from several traditions teach and perform, leading up to our community "Around-the-World Jam" where players bow their way through forty tunes from twenty-five countries.

See www.worldfiddledaytoronto.ca for music, practice sessions at Long & McQuade, and more information.

Victoria Day Mon. May 18, 10 am to 5 pm

What better way to celebrate Victoria Day than to visit the birthplace of Toronto. Tours, kids' activities such as soldier's drill, demonstrations of Georgian-era cooking, and English country dancing. *Regular admission*

Sound of Dragon Music Festival Wed. May 20, 8 pm

Showcasing the very diverse styles of Chinese music from ancient folk and classical repertoire to contemporary compositions and creative improvisation, this festival promotes creativity and innovation. Sound of Dragon is an international collaborative project with musicians from Vancouver, Toronto, and Taiwan.

Check www.toronto.ca/fortevents for details. *Regular admission*

Doors Open Toronto Sat. and Sun. May 23 and 24, 10 am to 5 pm

Fort York will open its doors for an annual celebration of history and architecture. Enjoy special tours of some of Toronto's oldest architecture and original War of 1812 buildings or stroll the grounds of this National Historic Site.

Don't miss 200 Years of Firepower: Artillery Day at Fort York on Saturday only.

Free admission all weekend

JUNE

FIELD TRIP Sat. and Sun. June 6 and 7

Toronto's downtown community music and arts festival will be headlined by internationally celebrated rock acts Alabama Shakes and My Morning Jacket. Other highlights include UK pop sensation Marina & The Diamonds, indie favourites The War On Drugs and Father John Misty, Hamilton royalty Arkells, the dark synths of Purity Ring, the alluring R&B of Rhye, hip hop hall of famers De La Soul, the feel good soul of Lee Fields & The Expressions, UK psych upstarts Temples, Arts & Crafts mainstays Dan Mangan + Blacksmith and Hayden, and many more.

<http://fieldtriplife.com>

INDIGENOUS ARTS FESTIVAL @ FORT YORK Thurs. to Sat. June 18 to 20

A celebration of traditional and contemporary music, dance, theatre, storytelling, visual arts, crafts, and food by Indigenous peoples. Energizing Fort York with powerful traditions and contemporary creations, including Mistatim by Red Sky Performance, alternative folk artist Diyet, 2014 Polaris Music Prize winner & 2015 JUNO Award winner Tanya Tagaq, and much more. Hosted by the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation.

Check www.toronto.ca/fortevents for details *Most events are free*

Na-Me-Res Traditional Outdoor PowWow Sun. June 21

Native Men's Residence Traditional PowWow is held to recognize National Aboriginal Day, June 21st, the Summer Solstice. The event features traditional dancing, drumming, feast, giveaway, kids area, and craft vendors. Seven Aboriginal drum groups will be on hand, including host drum Smoke Trail Singers and co-host drum Eagle Flight Singers. Over 100 traditional dancers are expected to participate including head dancers Stephanie Pangowish and Lee Benson. The day begins with a sunrise ceremony and will end with a gala concert. The Grand Entry takes place at 12 noon, with traditional dancing and drumming until 4:30 pm.

Check www.toronto.ca/fortevents for details

Regular admission

Bicycle Tour: The Forts of Toronto Sat. June 27, 11 am to 1 pm

Since bicycling is a unique and exciting way to view Toronto's early history, Fort York and Heritage York's Lambton House are conducting a Bike Month event. Lambton House, 4066 Old Dundas Street, is a good starting point at the edge of the Carrying Place trail. From there, we will ride to Teiagon, site of the 17th century Seneca Village and the Magasin Royal of 1720. Following the Humber Bicycle Trails, we will stop to explore Toronto's second French fort. Continuing along the Martin Goodman Trail takes us to the site of Fort Rouillé, the last French fort. The tour ends at Fort York, site of the founding of British York which replaced the French era at Toronto.

The ride is of moderate difficulty. Lambton House will be open at 10 am before the tour begins and participants may visit for free.

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



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TORONTO Culture
www.toronto.ca/culture



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

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