

The Birthplace of Toronto

The Newsletter of Historic Fort York ~ Vol. 1, No. 1 ~ Summer 2003



LEFT: Mercury Trek team flanked by Fort York Drums' Andrea Bouma, (left) and Ewan Wardle. RIGHT: The Honourable James K. Bartleman speaks with the captain of the Mercury Trek Team. (photos courtesy: Military Communications Centennial Organizing Committee)

Welcome to the first issue of *Birthplace!*

Welcome to **Historic Fort York** – the birthplace of Toronto! Our plan is to publish this newsletter quarterly, giving visitors, patrons, volunteers, staff and the community brief but informative insight into daily life at “the old fort”. You will read about special events, volunteer activities and opportunities, and staff news. You'll learn some interesting facts about artifacts, buildings, and exhibits. You'll get advance notice of special events and how you can become more involved in this National Historic Site.

The last few months have been the usual mixture of excitement, activity and recovery: January danced with *Queen Charlotte's Birthday Ball*; the *Storytelling Festival* stopped by on a snowy Sunday in February; miserable weather meant low attendance for the *March Break Time Machine*; the 1813 *Battle of York* was remembered in April; in May, many first time visitors came for *Doors Open*, the free, city-wide celebration of built heritage.

Also in May, the honourable James K. Bartleman, Lt. Gov. of Ontario, stopped by for a brief ceremony to officially welcome the *Mercury Trek Team* (pictured above) to the province. These soldier-cyclists are part of celebrations marking 100 years of military communications in Canada. *Exercise Mercury Trek* has them cycling from B.C. to Newfoundland, (averaging 140 km per day!) and Historic Fort York was honored to be the host site for their official welcome to Ontario. Check out the whole project at: www.commelec2003.ca

In June the Buffalo Jump Peace Walk wound its way from Nathan Philips Square and finished up at the fort. Music and dancers entertained in the west moat for the afternoon.

Perhaps you weren't aware that the fort is open all year round? During the winter and spring, most of our visitors are students on class trips. Some stay all day and even over-night for intensive “living history” experiences. This is repeated on weekends for cubs, brownies, guides and scouts. May and June are usually even busier with end-of-the-year class trips - a scheduling challenge to book as many groups each day as want to visit. Yes, the SARS issue has caused many cancellations from out-of-town groups. Add to that a short work-to-rule restriction for some Toronto schools and some days were not as busy as they could have been. However, most days during the last few weeks of June saw the familiar clusters of students touring the site and descending upon the canteen for their assault on the candy sticks, chocolate bars and ice cream!

Repair and restoration projects this spring and summer included a re-working of the modern “bunker” kitchen. Walls and public washrooms were removed; facilities upgraded and much needed storage space was created. The final stage of the Blue Barracks project is **almost** finished, and will provide a brand new archaeology lab/office and another set of public washrooms to replace those removed from the “bunker”. Anyone who has been at a function in the Blue Barracks and had to trek halfway across the site to the washrooms will be very pleased with these new facilities. Other capital upgrade projects include replacement of the wooden gun platforms, and repairs to porches, gates both east and west, and the windows of the North and South Soldiers' Barracks.

The newly restored Brick Oven in the Officers' kitchen is almost ready to be fired up. It won't be long now before staff and volunteers are baking cakes, pies and breads for visitors to enjoy!

Garrison News ~ A Staff Report by Karen Crisp



Ellen rings in her last sale! A Cash Register cake was a fun and fitting way to say good-bye to Ellen.

Goodbye: On May 28th, Fort York hosted a retirement celebration for our much loved “canteen lady” **Ellen Johnstone**, (pictured at left with the cash-register cake). Ellen has been the full-time, friendly face behind the counter for 21 years! Ellen is now kicking back and enjoying the life of retirement. First order of business? a cross-Canada trek in a camper van with husband, Eric. All of us at the fort wish Ellen the very best in her new adventures!

Goodbye and Congratulations: Mike Putnam, part-time interpreter and former Drum Major of the Fort York Guard, left at the beginning of June to start a new job in Kingston. It was a very eventful month for him, as he also got married! He and Fort York Drums’ Drum Major **Andrea Bouma** tied the knot in June. They met at Fort Henry a few years ago and had even planned to honeymoon at Colonial Williamsburg. Alas, employment got in the way, and they will take that trip some other time. We wish them both the best in their new life together.

Welcome back: We also gladly welcome back another member of our part-time staff, **Paul Maka**, who went to England to study for a short time, but has joined us again. **Congratulations:** part-time interpreter **Brian Rawding**, his wife Cindy, and their son Ted, welcomed a new baby boy to their family in June. Brian is also moving on to a new teaching job in the fall. **Good Luck!** Bilingual part-time interpreter **Anna Shea** has also decided

to move on to other adventures. A brand new crop of part-time interpreters will be joining us in the fall. **Welcome:** With that, the fort would like to welcome **Valerie Wakil** as our new full-time Museum Store Attendant. Valerie starts on July 14th and we hope she soon feels at home, continues the tradition, and sticks with us for twenty or more years!

Karen Crisp is a part-time museum store attendant.

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Retired Canteen Ladies: (l to r) Bette Saunders, Ellen Johnstone, Stella Waldron and Ruth Koffler pose for a picture at Ellen’s retirement celebration.

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FORT YORK SUMMER GUARD ~ DRUMS & SQUAD ~

By David Juliusson

Over the last few weeks, signs of summer have been drifting in at Fort York. It began with a solitary drum roll. Someone came into the staff room asking if we knew where to find extra neck stocks. Under the tree first one soldier began practising loading procedures. He was soon joined by others until there were almost a dozen marching around. The summer guard had arrived.

The Summer Guard Programme is a tradition that dates back to the 1950s. In 2000, **The Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common** revived the tradition. **The Friends** are a non-profit, volunteer organization who have been advocates, supporters and benefactors of the fort since 1992. One of their major initiatives is the Summer Guard. They raise money through donations, grants and fundraising events such as the annual Georgian Mess dinner. There is a Fort York Drums CD for sale in the canteen. The funds raised go towards salaries, uniforms, equipment and the training of the guard and the results have been impressive. Winning the major awards at the annual Fort George competition has become a Fort York Summer Guard tradition.

This year there are 16 members of the Guard. There are soldiers and musicians who practise their individual craft but also perform together. They are an interesting bunch:

In her fourth year at Fort York, the sergeant of the Guard is **Keiko Twist**. Keiko comes from a family with long-term connections to the fort. Her father, Peter, is an active member of both **The Friends**, and the **Fort York Management Board**. Her mother, Miyoko and Aunt Amy are both members of **The Fort York Regency Dancers**, her brother Mark is a former Fort York Guard commander. Keiko is attending the University of Toronto, is an accomplished musician and plans to see what her future holds when she gets there. Watch for Keiko and the Guard on Much Music in August.

Andrea Putnam is the Drum Major and leads the Drum Corps. She has recently married and is eager to begin her teaching career. The image of her firing the cannon in her wedding dress has already passed into Fort York lore.

Although he plays the drum, **Ewan Wardle** is the Fife Major of this year's Drums. In the British Army, the Fife Major was the title given to the second-in-command of the drums. Ewan brings many years experience as a drummer and private to the drums.

The rest of the Guard is an eclectic group: **Boon-Hau Teh** has had his art displayed at the McMicheal Gallery and has multiple interests; on the other hand **Jessica Hanna**, who

started out as a volunteer and is now on staff, claims she has no interests! In 2002, **Ned Gallagher** won the Ontario Heritage Foundation's *Young Heritage Leader Award* for his volunteer efforts with the Fife and Drum Corps. After two years as a volunteer, this year Ned is actually being paid! **Alex Myers** likes to be called Whitebox. – there must be a story in there somewhere; career plans vary from **Ian Biggar**'s dream to be a Police Officer to Jeff Colden wanting to be an Engineer; Some have lived in interesting places: **Niroshan Arumugam** was born in Sri Lanka and lived in Saudi Arabia and England. As he says "I have been practically everywhere." **Brendon Gray** has lived in Halifax, **Andrew Ng** in Normandy, **Edward Bell** in London England. Others dream of future travel: once he graduates, **Michael Ramsay** plans to visit Japan; **Matthew Wickson** will also travel (anyone who lists his hobbies as baseball and geography has no choice).

Demonstration Schedule for Summer 2003:
(Weather permitting and may be subject to change.)

Mondays and Tuesdays – Drum Corps only

Flag Parade at 10:30 and 4:30
Music at 11:30 and 2:30
Artillery (Cannon) Firings at 12:30 and 3:30
Drill at 1:30

Wednesdays and Thursdays Squad Only

Flag Parade at 10:30 and 4:30
Musket at 11:30 and 2:30
Artillery (Cannon) Firings at 12:30 and 3:30
Musket Firings at 1:30

Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays - Drum Corps and Squad

Flag Parade at 10:30 and 4:30
Musket at 11:30
Artillery (Cannon) Firing at 12:30
"The Show" at 1:30 is not to be missed. The artillery, infantry and musicians work together to give a sense of how they performed in battle
Music at 2:30
Drill (Training) at 3:30



David Juliusson is a full-time program officer and has been with the fort since 1989.

~ From the Officers' Mess Kitchen ~

To make Ice Cream

This is one of our favourite summertime recipes. The hardest part of making this recipe is stirring - and waiting until its set before you eat it!

Historic Information:

Ice cream was initially referred to as *iced cream*. These early iced creams or iced puddings would typically include cream or custard and were flavoured with fruit purées, dried fruits, jams, nuts and liquors. The British first learned of ices from French translations. The earliest British recipe appears in *Mrs. Eales' Recipes*, 1718, and in 1751 Hannah Glasse adds ices to a new edition of *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy*. The following recipe is from one of her later editions.

Cookbook:

Glasse, Hannah. *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy*, London: facsimile of the 1796 edition, (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1971, with an introduction by Fanny Craddock), page 323.

Original Recipe:

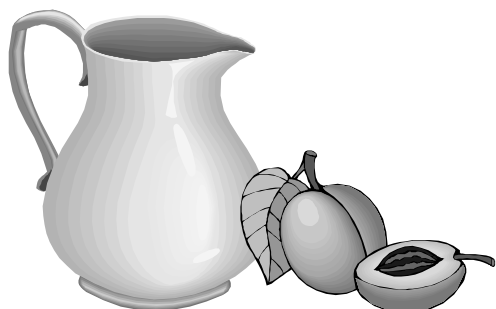
Pare and stone twelve apricots, and scald them, beat them fine in a mortar, add to them six ounces of double-refined sugar, and a pint of scalding cream, and work it through a sieve; put it in a tin with a close cover, and set it in a tub of ice broken small, with four handfuls of salt mixed among the ice; when you see your cream grows thick round the edges of your tin, stir it well, and put it in again till it is quite thick; when the cream is all froze up, take it out of the tin, and put it into the mould you intend to turn it out of; put on the lid and have another tub of salt and ice ready as before; put the mould in the middle, and lay the ice under and over it; let it stand four hours, and never turn it out till the moment you want it, then dip the mould in cold spring-water, and turn it into a plate. You may do any sort of fruit the same way.

For your Modern Kitchen:

2 cups	fresh fruit	500 ml
¾ cup	fruit sugar *	175 ml
2 cups	whipping cream	500 ml
12 cups	crushed ice	2 L
3 cups	rock or kosher salt	750 ml

** or white granulated sugar worked in a food processor.*

Clean and pare fruit. If using fruit that is firm, scald the fruit to allow for easy pounding. Pound fruit in a mortar with a pestle or purée in your food processor. Add sugar to fruit and stir until sugar is dissolved. Add cream to sweetened fruit mixture. (It is not necessary to scald the cream because of modern pasteurization.) Sieve or strain fruit mixture to remove seeds, pulp, etc. and create a smooth creamy fruit purée. Place in a tin or metal container (this allows for easier freezing) with a lid. Put ice in a larger bowl than the one used for the ice cream and layer crushed ice and rock salt. (Salt lowers the temperature at which the iced mixture freezes so it produces a smoother ice cream. You can substitute kosher salt. A ratio of 3 or 4:1 parts of ice to salt is used.) Immerse metal container filled with ice cream into the ice and salt. (or into refrigerator freezer.) Stir ice cream as it begins to set along the sides of the container. It's important to stir regularly to prevent ice crystals from forming. Stir every 20 minutes. It will take 1 – 2 hours for the ice cream to set. To mould the ice cream, remove the mixture from the metal container and transfer it to a decorative mould making sure to fill the mould completely. Let ice cream set for several hours either in fresh ice and salt or in freezer. (This is referred to as mellowing) To remove ice cream from the mould simply dip in slightly cool water, and as Glasse mentions *never turn it out till the moment you want it*.



BATHURST STREET BRIDGE 1903 - 2003

The Bathurst Street Bridge celebrates its 100th birthday this year!

By David Spittal

The present Bathurst Street Bridge crosses the railway lands east of Fort York and links Bathurst and Front streets to the Lakeshore Blvd. and Fleet St. The elevated pedestrian walk-way leading from the bridge to the East Gate of Fort York provides one of the two entrance points for visitors to the fort.

Access between Front St. and Fort York was originally via a road which descended down into the ravine of Garrison Creek from Front St. A small wooden bridge carried the road across the creek where it rose again to the East Gate, historically the main entrance to the garrison.

Another road led south to the Queen's Wharf. In the 1850s, the railways extended their new lines east and south-east of the fort. This necessitated the construction of a wooden bridge to carry traffic over the tracks. This original elevated bridge was built by the Hamilton and Toronto Railway Company (the Great Western Railway Company) and the Ontario, Simcoe and Lake Huron Railway Company (the Northern Railway Company) at the insistence of the British Ordnance Department. In 1860, men employed at the excavation for the bridge uncovered the remains of 15 soldiers just east of Bathurst St. The remains appeared to be those of both British and American soldiers killed in the Battle of York in 1813. The bodies were collected and reburied, we believe, at Victoria Square Cemetery. This bridge existed until a steel truss bridge was constructed across the railway lands, sometime in the late 19th century.

The present overhead steel truss bridge was built in 1903 by the Canadian Bridge Company Ltd. The bridge weighs 750 tons and is 198 feet in length. Originally located at the Humber River and Lakeshore Rd. it was moved to its present location in 1916 to replace the older truss bridge. Like the old roads, the original wooden bridge and the first steel truss bridge, this steel truss bridge was angled west towards Fort York from the south end of Bathurst Street which then ended at its intersection with Front Street. Access to Fort York and the Road to the Queen's Wharf (as it was called) was via these bridges.

At the same time that the present structure was moved in 1916, street car tracks of the Toronto Railway Company were laid across the bridge. These double, open tracks extended west from the bridge on a trestle along the north side of Fort York and then across the Garrison Common to provide the eastern entrance to the Exhibition Grounds. The Bathurst Street Bridge and this street car route were officially opened on August 25, 1916.

In 1930, Toronto City Council approved the extension of Bathurst St. south from Front St. The 1903 bridge, moved in 1916, was lifted in 1931 and realigned 22 degrees east to extend directly south from Front St. A long sloping viaduct carried Bathurst St. south to the new Lakeshore Blvd. At the same time, the existing street car track route across the north side of Fort York was closed and new tracks were laid south to Fleet St. The bridge was finished in 1931 and the new streetcar route opened on June 22, 1931. The pedestrian bridge leading from Bathurst St. to the East Gate of the fort was constructed at the same time. The streetcar stop at the pedestrian bridge to Fort York operated from the summer of 1931 until the opening of Fort York Boulevard in August of 2002.

The deck of the Bathurst Street Bridge was replaced in 1995. In the winter of 2002, the bridge was lifted a few millimetres and placed on new bearings; crews reported that the condition of the bridge was "excellent".

The bridge was listed as a historical structure in 1985 by the Toronto Historical Board (now the Culture Division of the City of Toronto) the same year Fort York was designated a Heritage Conservation District.



David Spittal is Archaeologist-in-residence at Fort York and works under the Cultural Affairs office of the City of Toronto's Culture Division

UPCOMING EVENTS

July, August & September