

The Fife and Drum

Journal of The Friends of Fort York & Garrison Common

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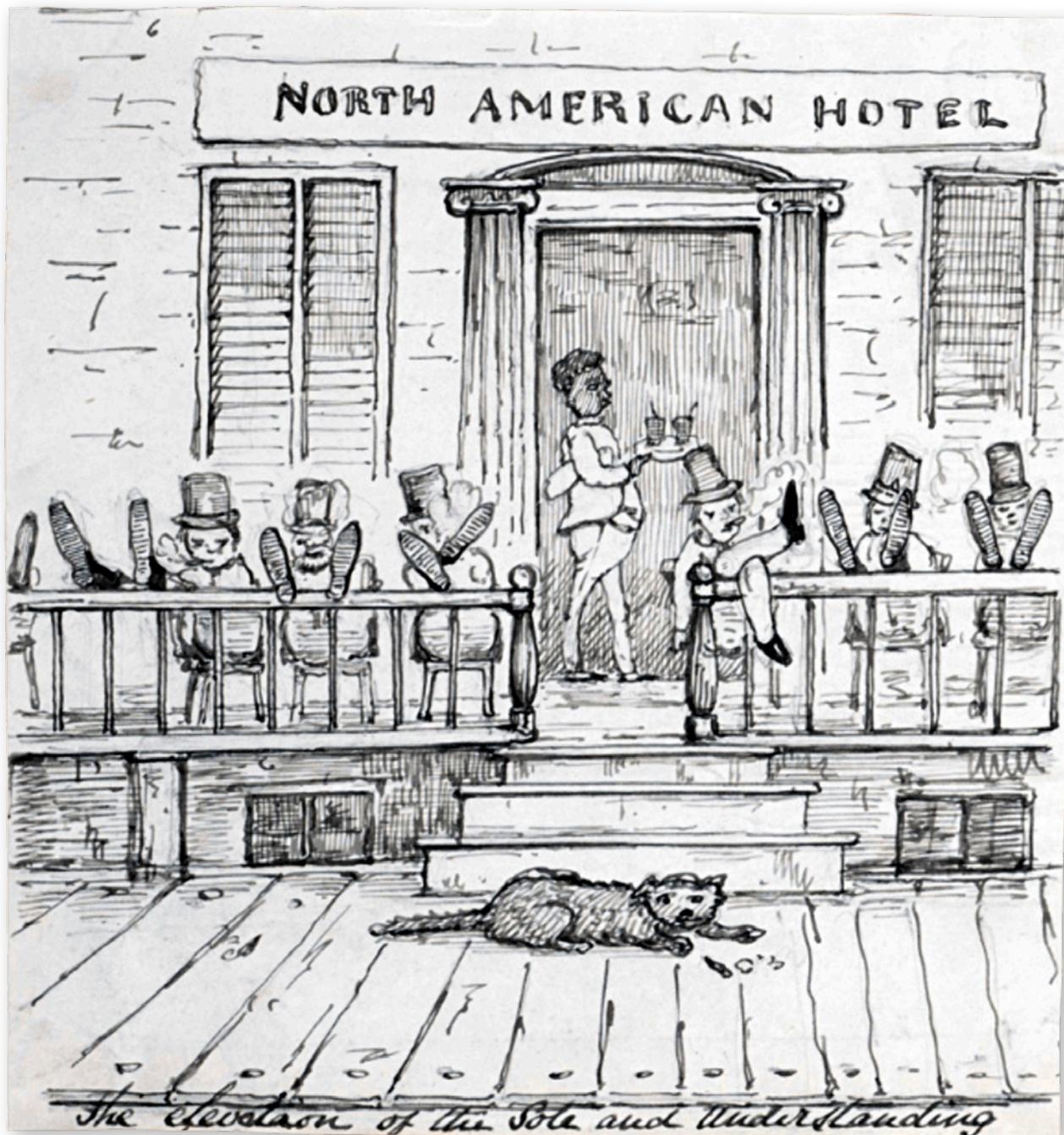
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An album of original pencil drawings and watercolours offers a funny and insightful look at the busy young city of the 1850s. Page 8.

To care for, to protect: Ganawendan (inanimate) and Ganawenim (animate)

Recommendations for Indigenous Collections Management
City of Toronto Museums & Heritage Services
October 2020

by Audrey Rochette

“We are currently living in the Seventh Fire, a time when, after a long period of colonialism and cultural loss, a new people, the Oshkimaadiziig, emerge. It is the Oshkimaadiziig whose responsibilities involve reviving our language, philosophies, political and economic traditions, our ways of knowing, and our culture. The foremost responsibility of the “new people” is to pick up those things previous generations have left behind by nurturing relationships with Elders that have not “fallen asleep.” Oshkimaadiziig are responsible for decolonizing, for rebuilding our nations, and for forging new relationships with other nations by returning to original Nishnaabeg visions of peace and justice.”

Lighting the Eighth Fire – Leanne Simpson

Introduction

As a First Nations woman, my lived experience motivates me to enhance platforms for Indigenous voices, stories and history. As the daughter of a residential school survivor, Indigenous language, voices and ceremonies are the foundations of my worldview and the lens in which I conduct research and my professional work. Building on this foundation, this report and its recommendations will be presented through the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls to Action.

In December 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its Report and Calls to Action asserting that education is “key” to reconciliation. The TRC Report expressly endorses improving access to Indigenous worldviews. Calls 67 to 70 focus on Museums and Archives. Call 67 states:

We call upon the federal government to provide funding to the Canadian Museums Association to undertake, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, a national review of museum policies and best practices to determine the level of compliance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and to make recommendations.

To advance policy changes in City of Toronto Museums & Heritage Services, it is essential to understand that Indigenous Collections Management will require ongoing relationships with Indigenous communities that embody the principle of reciprocity. The outcomes of these relationships can foster an informed approach to the care of the collection and, more importantly, add a rich narrative to the voices of the ancestral objects.

As the TRC is the framework for this report, reconciliation can be embraced in the process. An essential foundation on the journey towards reconciliation is defined in the Mandate of the TRC: “Reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and nonAboriginal peoples in this country. In order for that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, an acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour.” This report can help facilitate that understanding through the themes and recommendations that follow.

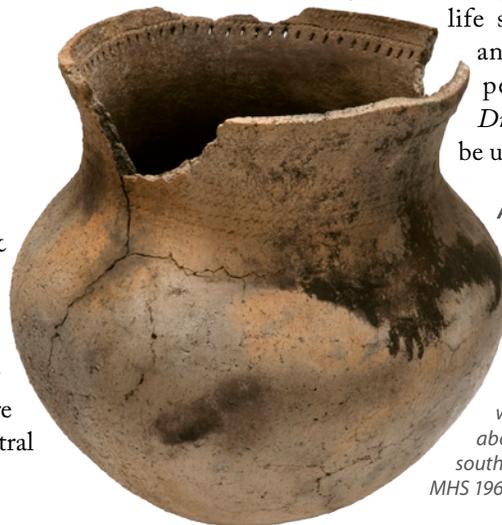
Background Research

Museum Objects and Agency

Material religion explores what objects do, how they are used and what impact they have. Crispin Paine explains that objects become religious if they are used in a ritual. He argues that these objects have duties and lives that stem from their agency. In her book *Naamiwan’s Drum*, Maureen Matthews uses Alfred Gell’s *Art & Agency* as a theoretical approach to repatriation. Matthews states that Gell’s agency theory “is a model that postulates personhood for objects” in a way that is parallel to Ojibwe metaphorical thinking of agency.

To further analyze an object’s agency, Matthews richly depicts the history of animacy linguistically, grammatically, and in museums through the story of a drum. Views on animacy can be a pivotal starting point for a decolonizing agenda within museums and for approaching works of reconciliation in accordance with the TRC.

In the second museum age, curators must consider the role of the object and not just its physical properties. Through the lens of material religion, Paine argues that “objects have life stories as humans do” and they have duties to perform. *Naamiwan’s Drum* is a story that can be utilized by museum staff



A Pickering Iroquoian earthenware vessel dating from about 900 AD. A fine example of the type and time, it was the product of a people in south-central and southeastern Ontario whose experience with agriculture was just beginning. The pot is about 10” high and was found south of Stoney Lake in 1964. MHS 1964.164.4

to approach the complexity and personhood of ancestral objects in their collections. The second museum age shows promise of restoring relationships with Indigenous communities by creating exhibitions that are a collaborative project between museum staff and Indigenous communities.

Ruth Phillips asserts that these new relationships “must modify the western ideals of open access to objects and information on which public museums were founded, in order to respect other systems of knowledge.” Collaboration will be essential as some artifacts are not meant for public knowledge or display. Communities can help museum staff determine the sacredness and purpose of ceremonial ancestral objects. Another aspect of the second museum age is that objects are being re-evaluated to determine their agency.

Collections management is another key aspect of developing a decolonizing agenda within museums. Storage rooms are filled with unique objects that have purpose and spiritual significance. To understand the concept of spirituality, I turn to Cree scholar Blair Stonechild, who states: “Spirituality involves direct engagement and connection with the mysteries of the transcendent.” Stonechild contrasts this definition with religion, which he believes is characterized by written texts that require a mediator to interpret. The potential for ancestral objects to be viewed through an Indigenous worldview that embodies animacy can be a significant contribution to museum studies and practice.

Telling Hard Truths

Indigenous scholar Amy Lonetree, in her book *Decolonizing Museums*, considers some of the challenges museums face when embracing a decolonizing agenda. Most importantly, “a decolonizing museum practice must be in the service of speaking the hard truths of colonialism.” Over a ten-year research process, Lonetree developed a comparative analysis of the Mille Lacs Indian Museum, the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian, and the Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways, examining how these different museums revealed the violence of colonialism.

The hard truth can be uncomfortable and difficult, but as Lonetree reminds us, it can also be healing for Indigenous communities. This *debweewin* (truth) includes not only stories of genocide, colonization, and discriminatory legislation such as the Indian Act, but also stories of resistance, resurgence and resilience. The City of Toronto’s museums can be sites to facilitate these new narratives through collaborative projects and partnerships.

Recommendations

Representing an important step forward in responding to the TRC’s Calls to Action, recommendations have been developed as a living document and roadmap towards decolonizing our sites and collections management. They are outlined here under four key themes: Animate/ Inanimate, Spiritual Care, Repatriation, and Community Relations. Each theme is supported by three recommendations. The implementation of these recommendations will be ongoing and will require further action notably with the Indigenous community.



A projectile point made of chert, about 7” long, whose description in the catalogue says simply “Indian arrowhead from battlefield of Mill House war of 1812.” It’s not clear which battle that was, nor who might have owned the weapon. MHS 1970.42.7.11

While these recommendations may appear to be unattainable in our current circumstances, time, research, resources and partnerships can make them achievable.

Animate/ Inanimate

Call #1

Conduct research on views of Animate and Inanimate objects in Museums Culture and within Indigenous Languages and worldviews.

Call #2

Solicit engagement from external partners such as Indigenous Language experts, Elders and Knowledge Keepers to grasp and embrace this complex worldview.

Call #3

Physically separate and store Indigenous-related artifacts and archaeological specimens (hereafter referred to as “the Collection”) according to two categories: Animate and Inanimate.

Spiritual Care

Call #4

Store for access the Four Sacred Medicines of the Anishinaabe (Sage, Sweetgrass, Cedar and Tobacco) at all Collection sites.

Call #5

Perform an annual Ceremony for the Collection with members of the Midewiwin Society or other Indigenous Spiritual Leaders or Elders.

Call #6

Open access to the Collection for Community Members to perform ceremonies such as smudging, songs, dances and visits as requested.

Repatriation

Call #7

Through the existing partnership with the Midewiwin Society, or with other Indigenous communities as appropriate, repatriate the human remains in the Collection.

Call #8

Adopt and support the recommendation of Aanji Bimaadiziwin Circle–The MHS Indigenous Programming Advisory Circle with regards to the process of community relations and repatriation.

Call #9

Physically separate Ceremonial ancestral objects from the Collection. Ceremonial items may be animate or inanimate objects.

Community Relations

Call #10

Review processes on Indigenous Partnership agreements. Offering honorariums that take several weeks or months to process while expecting partners to travel and incur out-of-pocket expenses is

unacceptable and not an industry standard.

Call #11

Work with Partners to establish a process that is accessible, timely and reflective of the work.

Call #12

Hold an annual event for all Community Partners to foster stronger relationships reflective of reciprocal gains.

Audrey Rochette is manager of Indigenous Partnerships & Relationships at Woodsworth College, University of Toronto. When she wrote this paper she was a Business Analyst with the City's division of Economic Development & Culture. It was prepared under a Museums Assistance Program Grant, financially supported by the Government of Canada.

Sources & Further Reading

The opening citation is from the introduction to an anthology of essays edited by Leanne Simpson, *Lighting the Eighth Fire: The Liberation, Resurgence, and Protection of Indigenous Nations*, from Arbeiter Ring Publishing in Winnipeg (2008). Dr. Simpson is the past director of Indigenous Environmental Studies at Trent University, the editor of an anthology on the Oka Crisis (also from Arbeiter) and teaches at Athabasca University.

Maureen Matthews is Curator of Ethnology at the Manitoba Museum; her book *Naamiwan's Drum: The Story of a Contested Repatriation of Anishinaabe Artefacts* (UTP 2016) is described by the publisher as “a compelling account of repatriation as well as a cautionary tale for museum professionals.”

Crispin Paine is a British scholar and co-editor of *Religious Objects in Museums: Global and Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (Bloomsbury 2017), an examination of how religious objects are transformed when they enter a museum. Blair Stonechild, a professor at First Nations University in Regina, is cited from *The Knowledge Seeker: Embracing Indigenous Spirituality* (University of Regina Press 2016).

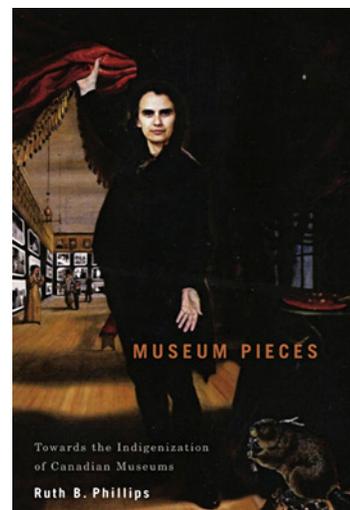
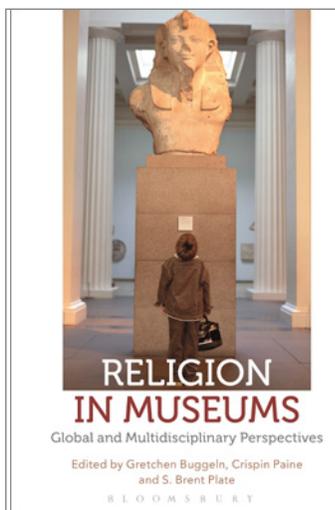
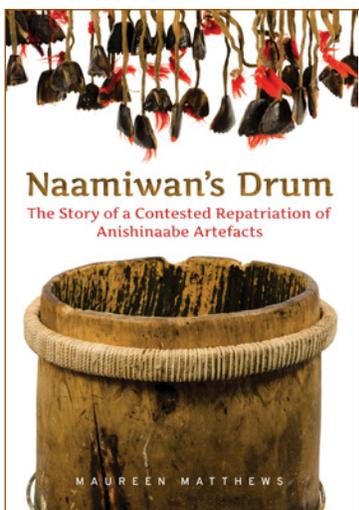
Ruth Phillips is an art historian and the former director of the University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology. She's the author of *Museum Pieces: Toward the Indigenization of Canadian Museums* (MQUP 2011) and is cited here from the *Canadian Historical Review*, “Re-Placing Objects: Historical Practices for the Second Museum Age,” (86/1). Amy Lonetree's book is *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native*

America in National and Tribal Museums (University of North Carolina Press 2012). She is an historian in California focused on the Indigenous peoples of the Americas.

Although no history of the Toronto museums system and its collection (nor its predecessor, the Toronto Historical Board) has yet been published, there are full-length accounts of other Canadian museums with significant Indigenous collections.

Charles Currelly's autobiography *I Brought the Ages Home* (Ryerson 1956, Oxford 2008) reveals, for example, the author's approach to the artifacts he collected; Currelly was the first curator of the Royal Ontario Museum. The ROM's account of itself is *The Museum Makers: The Story of the Royal Ontario Museum*, by Lovat Dickson (1986), while an independent new history is being written now by a leading Toronto historian.

Another Canadian institution with a deep Indigenous collection is the McCord, in Montreal; much about its collection can be found in *The Making and Unmaking of a University Museum, 1921-1996* (MQUP 2000).



Museum system responding to Rochette study

by Bob Kennedy

Toronto History Museums have undertaken a range of work in collections management in response to recommendations made in Audrey Rochette's essay.

"This is obviously a real priority for collections," says Neil Brochu, Interim Chief Curator, "and something we're taking really seriously." Some issues, such as artifact storage, are fairly straightforward and concrete steps have already been taken; others, such as the distinction between animate and inanimate ancestral objects, will need deeper study. And some, especially in cataloguing structure and terminology, will take a lot of work to resolve.

Toronto History Museums cannot, for example, set up a permanent consultative body on its own. "We will be seeking permission from City Council," says Brochu, "to establish a protocol for community consultation, and establish consultative bodies." They would advise on specific artifacts as well as long-term management. This is part of the Indigenous Collections Management Strategy, whose development has begun.

Meanwhile, ceremonial and sacred ancestral objects have been separated from the rest of the collection. So far, not all animate objects have been segregated, but only those identified in the initial study as particularly significant. Brochu says that "we intend to seek further advice on what additional objects should be separated as well as any other considerations for stewardship and care."

It may be that a dedicated room will need to be set aside for the storage, viewing and spiritual care of specific ancestral objects. Sources of the necessary medicines – sage, cedar, sweetgrass and tobacco – have been secured and advice will be sought on what others might be needed to support appropriate ceremony for the First Nations involved. The collection does not seem to include any artifacts (such as a Haudenosaunee false-face mask) that can only be viewed by a select few.

The only human remains apparently left in the City's collection is a human scalp, on display at Fort York until 1987, and a high priority for repatriation – if it can be determined to whom. Its cultural origin is uncertain (although whether it is Indigenous or otherwise, given DNA technology, should not be – except that destructive testing would be contentious) and it's not even clear how it came into the collection. That there are answers to these questions is not a sure thing. "If this information can be found," says Brochu, "it will go a long way to define a pathway to engagement and repatriation."

Among the challenges facing the Chief Curator in the collection is its proper documentation, including its completeness, structure and content (and these are perennial concerns of collections managers in

any case). Most artifacts in storage, of course, have not received the same research and interpretive treatment as those on display, where an item's historical context and function are normally included in the text.

Older descriptions are more likely to only describe what an object is – an arrowhead, a pot, a comb – and, ideally, its provenance, without including the significance placed on the object by its originator. Indeed, there are currently no fields in the database for animate/inanimate or sacred/restricted, but adding this information is relatively easy to do. That aside, many of the original descriptions were written by non-specialists (e.g. a registrar, not a curator) and some, based on handwritten file cards, are more than 60 years old.

old cataloguing will be improved upon ... and Indigenous histories and names will be included

But the problem is recognized: "old cataloguing will be improved upon," says Brochu, "and Indigenous histories and names will be included." It is not clear how much of the collection is of Indigenous origin. Initial research

indicates it is a small percentage of the 150,000 artifacts, more than a million archaeological specimens, and nearly 3,000 artworks held by the Toronto History Museums.

Rochette warns, after Amy Lonetree, that museums must now be prepared to speak "the hard truths of colonialism." In the absence of a related call to action, it's not clear how this applies to Toronto History Museums – what hard truths relevant to Toronto's history are still being overlooked. (Given the *F&D*'s military context, our special hard truth being overlooked is the reality of warfare among First Nations, and the unmitigated violence of the Senecan seizure and colonization of southern Ontario during the mid 1600s.)

Rochette's warning might partly be understood by a look at the museum system's outdated strategic plan for 2016–2021, *Museums and Heritage Services Road Map*. First Nations are absent. The word "Indigenous" or its equivalents appears on exactly one page (out of 87), and that's in relation to Scarborough Museum.

It does not appear at all on the pages setting out the priorities and plans of Fort York National Historic Site, nor on those for any other likely sites of Indigenous interpretation, such as Spadina House.

An entirely new strategic plan for 2020–2022, titled "Laying a New Foundation" and declared to be "grounded in equity, anti-racism and anti-oppression," was released in August and will be explored in a future *F&D*.



Iroquoian collared-ring pipe for tobacco was made of clay and, given its style, by someone early in the 1600s. It's about 4½" long. The pipe was found, though, at Baby Point, at that crucial bend in the Humber River where the Seneca built Teiaagon some 50 years later. MHS 1988.210.2

While the silence of the previous plan may reflect the historical absence of First Nations from the building of the city – the Wendat left the area more than 400 years ago, the Seneca were here only briefly, and the Mississauga reserve was 20 km west of the harbour – it failed to account for the previous 11,000 years of the area’s history.

This vast period is, though, cogently outlined on the City’s own website, where “The History of Toronto: An 11,000 Year Journey,” written by Carl Benn, has been up since 2006. It is also fully explored in a growing number of books on the city, notably *Toronto: An illustrated history of its first 12,000 years* (Lorimer 2008), edited by Ron Williamson, a leading Toronto archaeologist. While both men are life-long scholars of the histories of First Nations in Ontario, neither is Indigenous – and that’s a

factor in the newly politicized atmosphere of Toronto’s history.

Despite the failures of the 2016-2021 *Road Map*, the designers of the permanent displays at the Fort York Visitor Centre, completed in 2016 and led by then Chief Curator Wayne Reeves, fully involved the Mississaugas (although Rochette failed to recognize this). The result was that nearly 20% of the main floorspace is devoted to their story – including their experience with land claims and residential schools – and, importantly, in their own words.

The challenge raised by Rochette is to extend this kind of involvement to the spiritual care and better management of the Indigenous portion of the City’s collection. Only months later, the professionals at Museums & Heritage Services are responding with energy and sincerity.

Another One? The Upper Canada Preserved Medal, redux

by Richard Gerrard

It is not often I have a such a good reason to return to a topic for *The Fife and Drum*. Ten years ago two remarkable medals were donated to Fort York. These were believed at the time to be the last surviving examples of the second design for the Loyal and Patriotic Society’s “Upper Canada Preserved” Medal. In 2021 this pair became a triplet, thanks to the Stephen Otto Acquisition Fund and a generous donation by the Fort York Foundation.

Before I tell the story of this new medal, let me give you a little history of the LPS and its famous medal. The story is well known (and for a less irreverent, and more detailed, version see Carl Benn’s 2007 essay, “The Loyal and Patriotic Society of Upper Canada and Its Famous Medal” [here](#)).

The York chapter of the LPS was founded at the beginning of the War of 1812 by the Reverend John Strachan and other notables of Upper Canadian society. Among its aims was to provide charitable support to people impacted by the war. This would include “deserving people” only, for anyone suspected of disloyalty to the Crown would be denied help. By 1817 they had collected funds from across the British Empire. The LPS accumulated an impressive total of £21,500; they used £4000 of this to establish the Toronto General Hospital in 1819.

In addition to charitable relief, the society wished to honour with a medal those whose military service had helped to defend the colony. For the medal they went to the very best, Thomas Wyon, Jr, chief engraver at the Royal Mint. Fifty of Wyon’s beautiful silver medals duly arrived at York in 1814. (For the collectors, this is the design technically known as LeRoux 866 after its catalogue number in Joseph LeRoux’s *Le Médailleur Du Canada*, published in 1888. It appears from time-to-time as restrikes.)

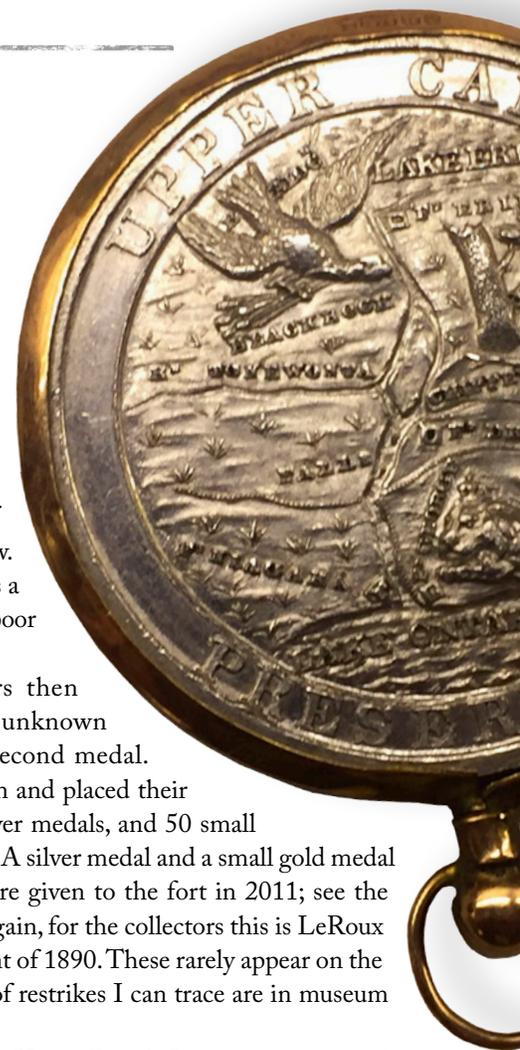
For some unexplained reason, these were rejected by the LPS

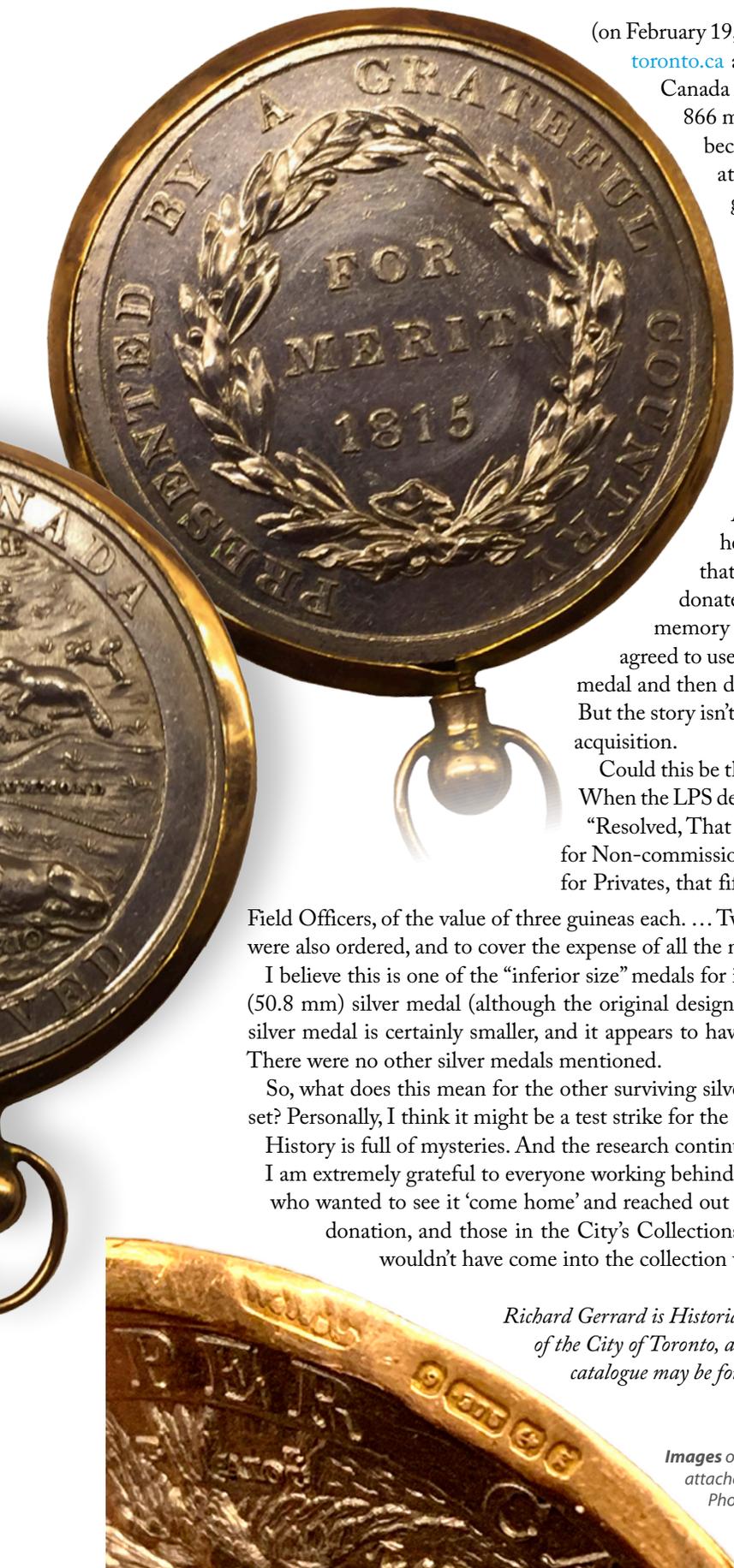
directors. Whether from a lack of taste on the part of the directors or the fact that the flow of the Niagara River was reversed on the front of the medal, we do not know. It appears that Wyon was a wonderful engraver but a poor geographer.

In 1817 the directors then commissioned another unknown engraver to produce a second medal. They approved the design and placed their order for 500 smaller silver medals, and 50 small and 12 large gold medals. A silver medal and a small gold medal of this second design were given to the fort in 2011; see the *F&D* of March 2011. (Again, for the collectors this is LeRoux 866a, from his supplement of 1890. These rarely appear on the market and the handful of restrikes I can trace are in museum collections.)

A select committee of the Upper Canada Legislature was struck in 1840 to determine why the medals had not been issued. The result was that all the medals were defaced and sold for bouillon to two Toronto silversmiths. But the math indicated three had escaped destruction: 61 gold and 548 silver medals were destroyed, but two silver and one gold medal were unaccounted for. Two were donated in 2011 (one silver and one gold) and the last silver medal is the subject of the rest of this essay.

Just before the COVID-19 pandemic arrived I was at my desk





(on February 19, 2020) when I received an email forwarded from the fortyork@toronto.ca account. Subject: The Loyal and Patriotic Society of Upper Canada Medal. I immediately assumed it was a restrike of the LeRoux 866 medal. The attached photographs made me fall out of my chair because it wasn't – it was the LeRoux 866a medal. I was looking at a 1¼-inch (32 mm) diameter silver medal, set in a 9-carat gold frame with a loop suspension as a watch fob (hallmarked for Birmingham, 1906).

In February and through March, a trans-Atlantic correspondence ensued between the owner (in Poole, Dorset, UK) and the curator (in Toronto) trying to establish provenance and, ultimately, a possible purchase price. A figure was agreed to by March 10. Then, three days later, our offices were closed and we were all sent home. I am still working from home as I write this in July 2021.

Before agreeing to buy the medal, though, I needed to see it. Fortunately, the owner agreed to ship it to Canada for inspection. And the City agreed to let me into my office, following all public health protocols, to see it. After close examination, I determined that it was struck with the same dies used to strike the gold medal donated in 2011. We agreed to make the purchase. At this point my memory gets a little hazy. Suffice it to say, the Fort York Foundation agreed to use funds from the Steve Otto Acquisition Fund to purchase the medal and then donate it to the City's collection.

But the story isn't over, yet. There are still outstanding questions about this new acquisition.

Could this be the third (and last) example of this medal from the 1817 order? When the LPS decided to acquire a new medal in 1815 they passed the following: "Resolved, That the medals received from Lieut. Governor Gore, be reserved for Non-commissioned officers, and to order five hundred Medals of inferior size, for Privates, that fifty Gold Medals be ordered for the present, For general and

Field Officers, of the value of three guineas each. ... Twelve large [gold] Medals of the value of five guineas ordered, were also ordered, and to cover the expense of all the medals, one thousand pounds sterling was appropriated."

I believe this is one of the "inferior size" medals for issue to privates. The first design (LeRoux 866) was a 2-inch (50.8 mm) silver medal (although the original design called for a 2½-inch diameter medal). A 1¼-inch (32 mm) silver medal is certainly smaller, and it appears to have been made from the same die set as the small gold medal. There were no other silver medals mentioned.

So, what does this mean for the other surviving silver medal that was struck from a larger 2-inch (50.8 mm) die set? Personally, I think it might be a test strike for the dies that would be used to make the twelve large gold medals. History is full of mysteries. And the research continues.

I am extremely grateful to everyone working behind the scenes who helped to make this happen, from the owner who wanted to see it 'come home' and reached out to Fort York, the Foundation for their support and generous donation, and those in the City's Collections & Curatorial Unit who managed the logistics. The medal wouldn't have come into the collection without all their support under trying circumstances.

Richard Gerrard is Historian, Collections & Curatorial, at Museums & Heritage Services of the City of Toronto, and a frequent contributor to the F&D. The Joseph LeRoux 1888 catalogue may be found [here](#) and its 1890 supplement [here](#).

*Images of the obverse, reverse, and Birmingham hallmarks attached to the initial email from the owner in England.
Photos by Gary Wife, 2020*

A visitor's sketchbook: Toronto in the 1850s

The North American Hotel was a big four-storey building on Front Street, at Scott, built in the 1830s by a man named George C. Horwood. It soon became “the principal hostelry in the city” (wrote Edward Guillet) but, from the appearance of things in the sketch on our front page, things were sliding downhill by 1855 or 1856, when the drawing was made. The hotel was right across the street from the docks of the harbour.

That satirical look at the locals having a smoke – with a Black waiter, about whom more below – is from a remarkable album of pencil drawings and watercolours bought last year at a Maggs & Allen auction in England by the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library.

It's apparently the work of James Graham, a British surgeon in the Bengal Army who, with his wife Sarah, were visiting her relatives (the Maitlands) in Guelph. They arrived in September 1854 and returned to England in July 1856, having spent much of their time travelling around southern Ontario, then called Canada West.

There are 170 works in the album and they include about 40 landscapes, 45 street scenes or buildings, 10 interiors and lots of renderings of ships and – this must have been a favourite subject – sleighs and sleighing mishaps. There are cartoons, maps and even one showing Dr. Graham being presented to the Lieutenant-Governor: the artist's head is turned away, so that we see the incipient bald patch on the back of his head. None of his subjects is treated with much reverence, and in works like “Coach to Weston,” there's a whimsical sense of humour on display.

The album contains pictures of Guelph, Galt, Hamilton, Burlington, Bradford and Newmarket, among others, while 58 of them are of scenes in Toronto. These latter were exhibited online by the Fisher library to celebrate the city's 187th birthday.

At the front-page North American Hotel, meanwhile, the most dignified figure on the scene is clearly the Black waiter. In mid-century Toronto, he was not nearly alone: Dalhousie University historian Karolyn Smardz Frost estimates that in 1850, about 1,000 of the city's 47,000 residents were Black.

The heart of the community was St. John's Ward, north of Queen St. between Yonge and University. While the first African-Canadians to arrive in York were slaves owned by Loyalist refugees – slaves whose children were promised eventual freedom by one of the province's first laws – they were soon joined by others, both free people and escaped slaves.

“Like the rest of Toronto's residential districts,” writes Frost in *The Ward: the life and loss of*

Toronto's first immigrant neighbourhood, “St. John's Ward was never segregated, nor were the city's churches, schools or institutions of higher learning. Unlike most of Upper Canada, the Town of York was an usually integrated place.”

Many of the new arrivals found work as ordinary labour in households, taverns and construction. Others established their own firms and worked for themselves: grocers, barbers, seamstresses, a hat maker, a fishmonger, restaurant owners, the city's first taxi business, and Toronto's most fashionable emporium for “ladies' accessories.”

Wilson Abbott and his wife Ellen Ward – to cite an outstanding example – arrived in 1835 after jealous White competitors destroyed their store in Mobile, Alabama. He set up a tobacco shop, joined the Militia during the 1837 Rebellion and set about buying

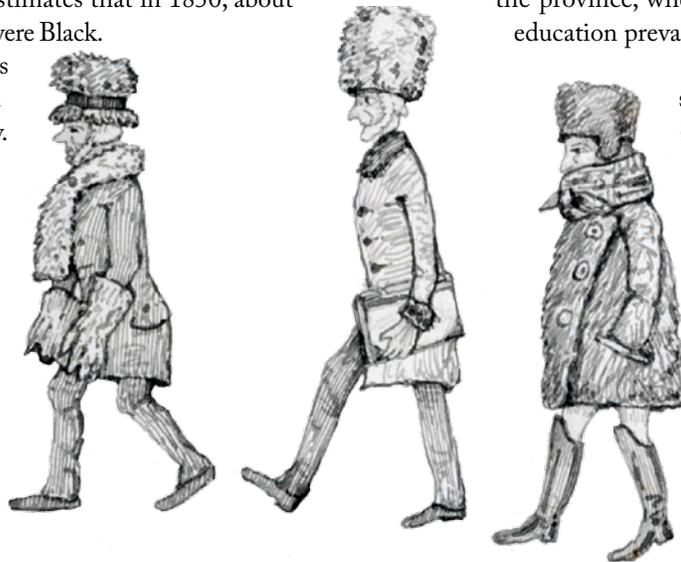
real estate, slowly becoming quite wealthy. One son attended Upper Canada College while another went to medical school here, served as a surgeon with the U.S. Coloured Troops during the Civil War, and returned to Toronto to establish a successful practice. Ellen Abbot created the Queen Victoria Benevolent Society to support Black communities across the province.

The development of the Underground Railroad and the growing prospect of war among the States swelled Toronto's African-Canadian population with both immigrants and refugees. The city's half-dozen Black churches were community hubs as well as thriving centres of abolition, hosting British and American activists to advance the cause in the southern United States.

“While prejudice and racial discrimination were pernicious facts of African-Canadian life,” continues Frost, “census and tax records show that white homeowners had black tenants, and African Canadians shared homes with European immigrants. Inter-marriage was common: young men found wives among the local Irish, German and English girls. Black and white children attended the area's public schools, unlike the rest of the province, where segregated – and inferior – education prevailed.”

Many Black children got their start in Toronto's Normal School (established in 1847 by Egerton Ryerson for training teachers) and its associated Model School, and some were later awarded scholarships to King's College. Among those enrolled at the Model School was William Peyton Hubbard, who would become Toronto's first (and so far only) African-Canadian deputy mayor.

none of his subjects is treated
with much reverence





Coach to Weston. The company was named for St. Andrew.

R. Don near Toronto. Is that a bison in the foreground?



Osgood Hall. Law court. The grand iron fence with its wonderful "kissing gates" – their angular design enforcing a mild intimacy in well-timed passers-by – was completed in 1867. Cows had nothing to do with it.



Pastor of the Episcopal Methodist (coloured) Church. Center St. Toronto. Nattily attired, the Pastor is walking past a rooming house on what's now Centre Avenue.



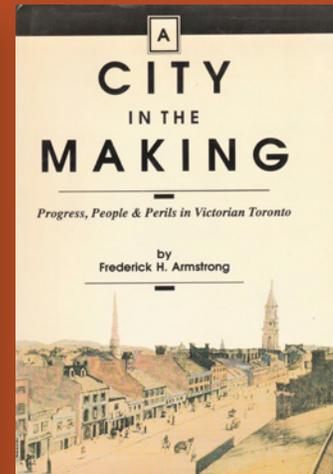
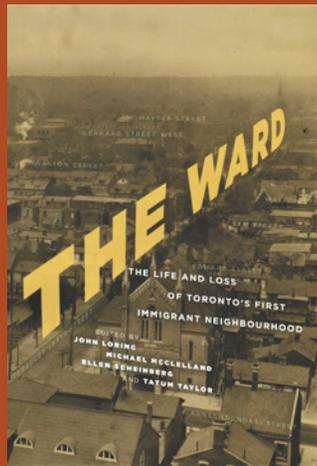
Yonge Street.

Sources & Further Reading

Karolyn Smardz Frost's chapter in *The Ward* (Coach House 2015) is titled "A Fresh Start: Black Toronto in the 1850s." Edited by John Lorinc and others, the book is a rich collection of short essays and available at spacing.ca. Frederick Anderson's work (Dundurn 1988) contains a granular analysis of the 1846 and 1850 city directories in terms of the Black population. Both essays are indebted to a substantial 1963 paper in *Ontario History* titled "Negroes in Toronto, 1793-1865" (Vol.55, No.2). The author was Daniel G. Hill, a sociologist who was then director of Ontario's new Human Rights Commission and later a founder of the Ontario Black History Society.

For a survey of works on Black communities across the province, see *Ontario's African-Canadian Heritage: Collected Writings by Fred Landon, 1918-1967*, with many editors (Dundurn 2009). Landon, who died in 1969, was a prolific professor of history at the University of Western Ontario. The collection contains a lengthy contribution by Karolyn Smardz Frost outlining "Sources and Resources" of Black history. The Ontario Black History Society (a member of the Ontario Heritage Trust) maintains a library and resource centre at its offices on Adelaide St. in Toronto; see blackhistorysociety.ca to make an appointment.

Fort York's annual "Hungry for Comfort" program was focused in 2019 on "the myriad foodways of Black communities in Canada." The *F&D* of April that year includes several reports and an essay by Natasha Henry (then president of the OBHS) titled "Many traditions blend to keep us warm." For students wanting to further explore the nineteenth-century Black communities of Toronto, ask any Toronto Public Library branch librarian about Thornton Blackburn, John Tinsley, Ellen Abbott, Joshua Glover, Dr. Alexander Augusta or his fashionable wife, Mary Burgoin.



History goes awry in Liberty Village



Some lovely new little parks have been installed on Liberty Street by the City and the local Business Improvement Association. Designed by PLANT Architects, they include congenial benches and carefully selected plantings, all in a shady row on the south side of the street. The project was built by CSL Group for a construction cost of about \$540,000.

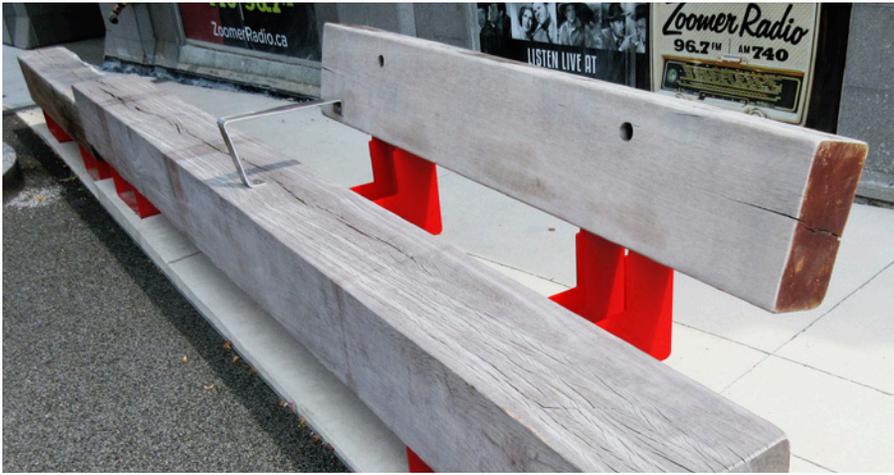
Its defining feature is the Timeline (p.13), a set of 19 granite blocks each engraved with two lines about an aspect of the history of Liberty Village. They're an expensive lesson on how useful it is to actually read a book or two before literally carving nonsense into stone (more on this below).

The hefty benches are made of reclaimed European hardwood salvaged from ports in the Netherlands. About 200 years old, they were originally mooring posts. The timber is bolted to the sidewalk through powder-coated steel brackets.

The plantings are a deft mixture of evergreens (for the winter) and perennials that bloom throughout the spring and summer. Matthew Hartney, the designer, explains they were chosen "for their resiliency in an urban environment, pollinator attraction, salt and shade tolerance, and maintenance." Most species are native to Ontario and will, he hopes, "mature to create dense, verdant gardens."

The stone used for the Timeline is Picasso

Plantings are a mixture of perennials and evergreens arranged with all four seasons in mind. Mostly native to Ontario, they were chosen for their attractiveness to bees and butterflies and their tolerance of shade and salt.



The benches are reclaimed hardwood from ports in the Netherlands, where they were used as moorings. These are outside 79 Liberty Street. Photos by F&D

granite with a flamed finish, quarried in Quebec. HGH Granite of Dundas, Ontario, did the engraving, and it is beautiful.

It's a shame that so many of the assertions of the Timeline are wrong.

Before committing the work to stone, the architects were assured by the City's project manager that the Timeline had been vetted by the City historian. That never happened and it's obvious that no other professional historian saw it either. The project manager involved – lucky for him – no longer works for the City.

"We didn't have a single guiding source," explains the author, who generously provided his research to the *F&D*. By this, we understand him to mean that he did not actually read a book on the history of Toronto. Much of the industrial and railway history of the area was reliably taken from articles (many by Steve Otto) in the *F&D* and from period plates of Goad's insurance atlas.

The rest was cobbled together from BIA pamphlets, Wiki articles, fragments of reports and a few journal articles. Scouring the internet – rather than visiting the library and getting some guidance – only works if one discriminates among the sources and already has an outline knowledge of the subject. Although one fine account of the city's history, particularly for prehistoric times – Ron Williamson's *Toronto: An Illustrated History of Its First 12,000 Years* – appears among the author's sources, it clearly had no effect.

The very first entry of the Timeline is a case in point. Reaching back to 7,000 BCE, it says "The Toronto Carrying

Place trail is established by the Wendat, linking Ouentironk (Lake Simcoe) to Ontari'io (Lake Ontario)." Nine thousand years ago, the shoreline of Lake Ontario was about five kilometres south of its present location and Lake Simcoe did

**the architects were assured
... that the Timeline had
been vetted by the
City historian**

not exist. The geological reasons for this are explained in the beautifully designed *HTO: Toronto's Water from Lake Iroquois to Lost Rivers to Low-flow Toilets*, edited by Wayne Reeves and Christina Palassio (Coach House 2008).

As for the Wendat (the Huron), scholars agree that they began to emerge as a distinct people, along with the Neutral, Petun and, south of Lake Ontario, the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida and Mohawk, around the year 1300. Even an author fully sympathetic to their story – Kathryn Magee Labelle, in *Dispersed But Not Destroyed: A History of the Seventeenth-Century Wendat People* (UBC 2013) – begins her chronology of the Wendat in 1400. And the source cited by the author, which is an informal account by an Ottawa high school teacher, prudently concedes – writing of the ancient makers of the trail – that "we have no way of knowing who these people were." He's right.

The next entry for 1650 is true enough, although "conflict" understates what was essentially genocidal warfare: literally

thousands of people were slaughtered or captured, and the rest – perhaps 8,000 more – were forced to either flee or be absorbed into one of the nations of Haudenosaunee. Diseases from Europe devastated all of the First Nations around the Great Lakes and were one of the causes of the fighting (see "Competing Pasts: Narratives of Haudenosaunee warfare in Ontario during the 1600s," *F&D* July 2020).

Both of these entries to the Timeline reflect the need to include the history of the area before the arrival of the French. Indeed, the author tells the *F&D* that "consultations with Indigenous elders ... informed the content." But the Humber River and its portage trail are about ten kilometres from Liberty Village.

The Wendat, when their Confederacy was destroyed in 1649, were living between Georgian Bay and Lake Simcoe in what we call Huronia.

Closer to home, the Mississaugas had a council grounds on what is now the site of CAMH – a story told in the previous *F&D* – and, given the proximity of the lake and Garrison Creek, the likelihood of ancient villages or campsites in or not far from Liberty Village is fairly high. For some insight into the possibilities, see *A Master Plan of Archeological Resources for the City of Toronto* (August 2004), highlighted in the summer 2021 issue of *Spacing* magazine and available at www.toronto.ca.

The Timeline's entry for 1793 is wrong in one important detail: the fort was built first, and the town then grew up on the harbour to the east. A subtler point is the author's misunderstanding of the many meanings of the word "garrison." It is, first, a body of troops permanently stationed somewhere; second, what the townspeople of York called the collection of buildings that became Fort York; and third – how it's used here – a corruption of Military Reserve, sometimes called the Garrison (or Ordnance) Reserve, which was the open land mostly west of the fort that now includes Liberty Village.

The Battle of York was, yes, in April 1813, and fought largely on what's now the CNE grounds, but the rest of this entry is nonsense. The Military Reserve had long since been cleared of trees, for many reasons, and there was no shipbuilding to speak of – except for one sorry attempt, reduced to charcoal on the day of the battle.

We can skip ahead to the First World War. That “most industries in Liberty Village are adapted for the production of armaments, weapons, and bombs” is also nonsense. “Armaments” is a fancy word for weapons; none were made in Liberty Village during the first war; and “bombs” – understood to be munitions that are dropped from aircraft – have never been made here.

During the first war Inglis began making artillery shells, with indifferent success; a nearby plant made components for them; and the Toronto Carpet Factory is said to have made blankets and greatcoats.

The memorable phrase “armaments, weapons and bombs” originates in a paper written in 2007 by a German masters student working on an environmental studies degree at York University. The essay by Thorben Wieditz (which is about the neighbourhood's gentrification) is also the apparent source of the entry for 1939-1945, which says local factories were “converted once more for wartime defence production.”

The new parkettes, designed by PLANT Architects, are on the shady side of the street. The original occupant here was S.F. Bowser & Co., Toronto's first maker of kerosene fuel pumps. Now it's a co-working space called The Fueling Station.

The production of arms and munitions in Liberty Village during the Second World War was orders of magnitude greater than 30 years earlier, famously including the Bren light machine gun. Inglis, workplace of the Bren Gun Girl – the original of America's Rosie the Riveter – made 186,000 of them, nearly a third of the needs of Commonwealth armies worldwide. It also made a similar number of 9 mm pistols and during the war was

Massey-Harris was left out

among Toronto's proudest contributions to victory. (For more about this, see “Second World War industry surrounded Fort York,” *F&D* December 2019.)

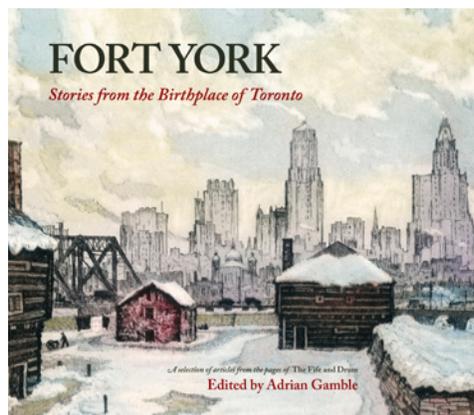
Finally, we may note what is missing from the Timeline: Massey-Harris, once the greatest producer of farm equipment in, as they said, the British Empire. Its factories sprawled across eleven acres in

the north-east corner of Liberty Village and its head office building still stands on King Street. How could it be left out?

“We looked at this,” explains the author, “but the old Massey-Harris buildings are not actually within the Liberty Village BIA limits.” A more vivid example of the influence of business on public history could hardly be found.

As lame as the author's research was, he and PLANT Architects were assured by a City official that their work had been seen by professionals and was good to go. And so they had these wonky fragments of history engraved in stone and installed in the parks. The Timelines are right at the feet of everyone resting on a bench.

Some of these stones need to be replaced, and the BIA Office of the City is on the hook for that. But first, the text needs to be thoroughly reworked by a professional Toronto historian.



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The Liberty Village Timeline

c.7000 BCE The Toronto Carrying Place trail is established by the Wendat, linking Ouentironk (Lake Simcoe) to Ontari'io (Lake Ontario)

Nine thousand years ago, the edge of Lake Ontario was five kilometres south of the present shoreline and Lake Simcoe did not exist. Who lived here then is impossible to say, but the Wendat (the Huron) as a distinct people only emerged after 1300 CE.

c.1650 The Wendat diaspora begins, a result of conflict with the Haudenosaunee and devastation from European diseases

1750 The French establish Fort Rouillé as a trading post along the Carrying Place trail, south of present-day Dufferin Street

1793 The British military garrison is established west of the Town of York and includes the area now comprising Liberty Village

The blockhouse and barracks were built first; the town subsequently grew up east of the fort, along the shore of the harbour.

c.1810 The Town of York begins its westward expansion into the military garrison with the first issue of private land grants

1813 The Battle of York is fought on the shore of the garrison; all the reserve's great trees were felled to build ships and palisades

The Battle of York was fought in April 1813

but the trees of the Military Reserve had long since been felled, for many purposes. Only one warship was attempted, in a yard at the foot of the present Bay Street.

1853 Toronto's first railway, the Ontario, Simcoe, & Huron, begins operations; it would merge with the Grand Trunk Railway in 1892

1856 The Grand Trunk Railway begins operations between Sarnia and Toronto, running diagonally through east Liberty Village

1872 The Andrew Mercer Reformatory for Women opens on the current site of Allan Lamport Stadium; it was closed and demolished in 1969

1873 The Toronto Central Prison for Men opens near the Grand Trunk Railroad; the prisoners became a work force for local industry

1884 John Inglis & Sons opens adjacent the Central Prison; in 1991, Inglis would be the last major manufacturer to leave Liberty Village

c.1890 Road surveying and property subdivision of the garrison lands is completed and the transformation into an industrial zone begins

1900 Diamond Park baseball grounds are built at Fraser and Pardee for the Toronto Maple Leafs baseball club; the stadium closed in 1908

1901 The cornerstone is laid for the Anthes Iron Foundry at Jefferson and Liberty, one of the earliest manufacturers in Liberty Village

1910 The S.F. Bowser & Co. opens at 147 Liberty Street, Canada's first manufacturer of kerosene fuel pumps

1914–1918 The First World War is fought; most industries in Liberty Village are adapted for the production of armaments, weapons, and bombs

"Armaments" means weapons and none were manufactured in Liberty Village during the First World War. Inglis made several varieties of artillery shells, but "bombs" – munitions dropped from aircraft – have never been made here.

1915 The Toronto Central Prison is closed; all but the Roman Catholic chapel and paint shop buildings are demolished in 1920

1923 The Grand Trunk Railway is absorbed into the Canadian National Railway, along with other lines serving Toronto and Liberty Village

1939–1945 The Second World War sees the factories of Liberty Village converted once more for wartime defence production

This effort hardly compares to that of the first war: the output of machine guns and pistols alone was on a world scale, and Torontonians were hugely proud of it.



Bentway proposal would destroy Fort York's shoreline landscape

by Bob Kennedy

The Bentway is proposing a heavy cycling and pedestrian bridge over Fort York Boulevard that would land only metres from the fort's southern rampart, occupying a large part of the original shoreline and blocking north/south views of the fort. Although given conditional approval by the design review panel advising Waterfront Toronto – which paid little attention to the heritage aspects of the site – the proposal raised serious concerns for a volunteer committee that provides advice to The Friends of Fort York & Garrison Common.

The Precinct Advisory Committee (PAC) of The Friends was briefed in June by Melanie Morris of Waterfront Toronto, which is managing the project, and its designer, Marc Ryan of Public Work. Their aim is to complete documentation of the project by the autumn in order to begin seeking funding. Construction, however, cannot begin until remediation of that portion of the Gardiner Expressway is complete, estimated to be about five years away.

The PAC's main objection is to the occupation, by the bridge's massive north landing, of much of the open space immediately below the fort's south rampart. That open space reflects the original shoreline of Lake Ontario and explains why the fort was built where it was. It's a crucial feature of the city's "founding landscape" – considered the topography of the fort, the lower reaches of Garrison Creek and the plain of Garrison Common – that was carefully preserved by locating the boulevard as far away from the ramparts as it is. The north-south streets of the Fort York neighbourhood (Gzowski, Bastion, Grand Magazine and Iannuzzi, along with June Callwood Park) were themselves intentionally aligned with the Gardiner's bents to preserve views of the National Historic Site from the south as well as views toward the lake from the fort's ramparts.

Although an initial Environmental Assessment was done, its terms were tightly limited: how to safely cross Fort York Blvd at that location – that is, at the bottom of a curving slope. Only two options there are safe: a tunnel (not realistic) or a bridge. There is, meanwhile, a new traffic light for safely crossing Fort York Blvd at June Callwood Park, a two-minute walk to the west. Here, the road is straight and flat.

Ryan was given a difficult problem. His original design was of a bridge suspended from beneath the Gardiner, a light structure that did not require the heavy columns, steel beams and bulky earthworks of the revision. That unobtrusive flying design was



Drones-eye view of the West Landing The decks and the curving ramp are higher than the fort's southern rampart, and the massive masonry wall sits on the old Lake Ontario shoreline. The red blotch in the foreground represents the Magazine Crater, while Fort York Blvd can be seen in the distance beneath the Gardiner Expressway. Rendering by Public Work



The Switchback set of ramps and landings, looking west from Iannuzzi St. The grass of the fort's southern rampart can be glimpsed through the structure of steel and concrete, an intentional echo of the expressway above. Rendering by Public Work

nixed by the City's powerful roads department, which argued that the Gardiner was not engineered for that kind of additional load and that maintenance of the highway would be impeded.

The new bridge and its ramps are organized into three parts: the East Switchback, the Elevated Rooms, and the West Landing and its approach. The switchback is itself a three-part ramp whose considerable length is determined by the height needed to clear the road at the 5% maximum allowable slope. It is within the bents on the south side Fort York Blvd and its heavy steel structure and concrete columns reflect the materials of the expressway (that members of the Waterfront Toronto panel called it "a mini Gardiner" is telling). Landings along the switchback are treated as rest points and lookouts.

The middle section of the bridge widens into three platforms overlooking the fort. The first is right above the road; the second is above the north sidewalk and on the earthworks positioned beneath the Circular Battery; and the third (the West Landing) is an extension of the bridge.



The observation decks and the earthworks of the West Landing are seen looking north from Grand Magazine St. The structure is more imposing than the Circular Battery it overlooks. Rendering by Public Work



The same view today. On the left is the great maple at the Magazine Crater; in front of it can just be seen the roofline and chimneys of the south barracks. On the right is the top floor of Blockhouse No.2 and the Circular Battery flag. The crane is on the National Casket project north of the tracks. Photo by F&D

It is joined to a long ramp that curls toward the Visitor Centre. The bulk of the West Landing is adjacent to the Magazine Crater, the buried remnant of the great explosion in 1813, and its solid wall sits at the very toe of the rampart.

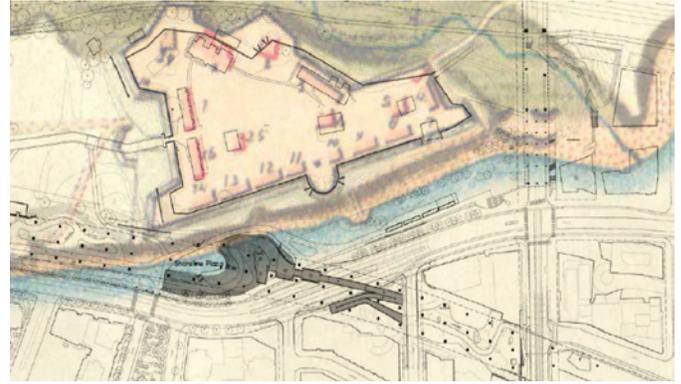
“The West Landing threatens to overwhelm and diminish the fort,” observes the PAC. “The solid earthwork and masonry structure and berms ... and the long, meandering pathway ramp are collectively higher than the fort’s ramparts and more massive and imposing than any historic construction on the National Historic Site.” The similarity of the proposed grassy berms to the defensive embankments of the fort “trivialize the historic artifacts.”

Moreover, the West Landing contradicts the nature of the place: it introduces a hill where there’s never been one, and where a hill emphatically doesn’t belong.

“It builds,” notes the panel, “where the landscape design emphasis should be a flat and open ground-plane that resembles or somehow references Lake Ontario’s original shoreline.” The brilliant design of the Visitor Centre – which is built into the escarpment to avoid impinging on the historic landscape – interprets that original topography as a “liquid landscape” of waving grass and a boardwalk (the Wharf) as an event space.

In the absence of the intruding earthwork, “there is an opportunity to fully realize a unified and open shoreline landscape that extends from west of the Visitor Centre to below the Bathurst Street bridge and the mouth of Garrison Creek.”

This is considered Toronto’s most important heritage landscape, because it’s the only place where the original shoreline of the harbour can still be imagined.



The proposed Bentway bridge (in grey) is superimposed on the historic shoreline (in blue) and the contemporary street grid. The structure would occupy or obscure the shoreline landscape from June Callwood Park to Iannuzzi St. The black dots are Gardiner bents while the lowland of the ravine (east of the fort, crossed by the Bathurst bridge) is the site of the coming Lower Garrison Creek Park. Illustration by Jeff Evenson

“There is a strong feeling,” concluded the PAC, “that the values of Fort York National Historic Site are not being given sufficient weight in the attempt to find balance between conserving cultural assets and exploiting them.”

Five recommendations – all endorsed by The Friends of Fort York & Garrison Common – were made to Waterfront Toronto. The first three note that the original light design was preferable; urge a reconsideration of whether a pedestrian bridge is the best use of public funds at all; and recommend re-evaluating crossing strategies five years from now when the Gardiner work is complete. The final two recommendations are the most important:

Request refinements to the Updated Bentway Bridge design in terms of scale, context, form and views to better consider their relationship to Fort York National Historic Site.

Request a Heritage Impact Assessment to be completed prior to finalization of the design with particular focus on the impact on the National Historic Site and shoreline landscape.

The other critique was given by the Waterfront Toronto Design Review Panel in April. Although occasional reference was made to the shoreline landscape, its focus was on the detail of design in relation to the Gardiner Expressway and the ambition, as Ryan said, to “create a beautiful echo of the structure.”

The panel discussed items such as the choice of materials and colour, natural plantings, the circulation and mingling of cyclists and pedestrians, and the need for lighting. Although the Waterfront Toronto panel included urbanists of the stature of George Baird, Claude Cormier and Brigitte Shim, the heritage aspects of the site and the profound impact of the bridge on Fort York – that is, the context – were essentially ignored. Of the dozen panel members, eleven voted for Conditional Support and one voted Non Support.

Both Waterfront Toronto and the Bentway argue that a bridge over Fort York Blvd extends the east-west continuity of the Bentway. The switchback on the south side of the street lands on a Privately Owned Public Space behind a condominium and

leads, across Iannuzzi Street, to another – both of them now largely deserted hardscapes and very much in need of animation. This is the need and the opportunity seen by the programmers of the Bentway.

But the east-west continuity of movement under the Gardiner comes to a dead halt only 80 metres from the Switchback, at the dangerous obstacle of Bathurst Street. Here it's four lanes of traffic with two streetcar tracks wide (broadening to six lanes a few metres south) presenting pedestrians with three choices: walk north, uphill, and safely cross at Fort York Blvd; walk a block south to the risible intersection of Bathurst and Lake Shore, one of the most unfriendly to pedestrians in all of downtown; or risk dashing straight across the street, which – given the new LCBO, Loblaws and Shoppers Drug Mart on the far side – is what people are doing all day long.

Under the Gardiner on the east side of Bathurst, what might have been a striking plaza behind the new towers is being used as surface parking for the LCBO. Further east, the space under the Gardiner blends into another dusty POPS, this one graced with the enveloping “Mitosis Courtyard,” an area artwork by Pierre Poussin commissioned by Concord Adex, the developer, in 2010. Concord recently announced plans to fully redevelop the space behind the Panorama condominium with four two-storey retail buildings and an underground food court. “The space is not seen as a destination,” argues Concord. But it will be, and there's a better way to get here. It's from the north.

A more congenial route than this dangerous dash across Bathurst under the Gardiner is already planned: trails under the Bathurst bridge (properly Sir Isaac Brock bridge) from north and south of the fort to the projected Lower Garrison Creek Park. Also designed by Marc Ryan – with an entirely different aesthetic – it embodies the important shoreline landscape and leads, around the library or a short way down Dan Leckie Way, to Canoe Landing and its built-in bicycle route south.

At the foot of Douglas Coupland's park, under the Gardiner and across Dan Leckie Way, is where Concorde plans to animate the space. At this point we're in clear sight of the harbour and the Waterfront Trail, and the crossing of Lake Shore Blvd here actually feels safe. The short, wide stretch of Dan Leckie Way that links to Queens Quay is itself ripe for an aesthetic upgrade.



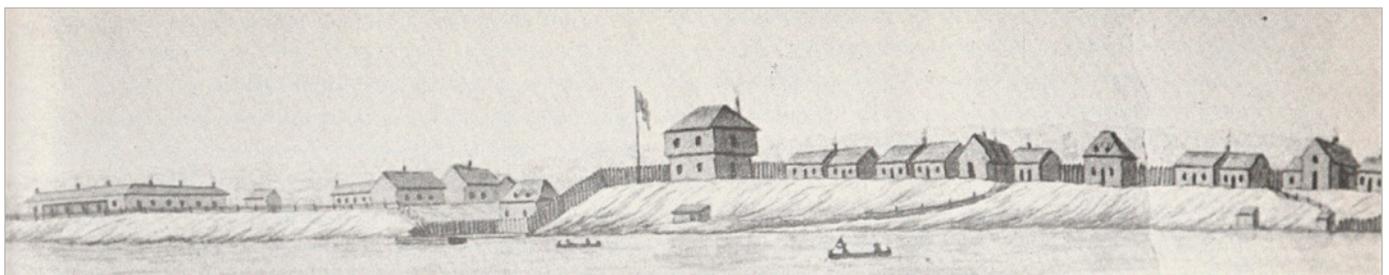
Looking under Bathurst toward Lower Garrison Creek Park from the trail on the north side of the fort. Although fully designed and fully funded, the park has suffered from repeated delays. Designed by Marc Ryan, it will provide a route through the Garrison ravine to Canoe Landing and south to the waterfront, taking advantage of the orphan space beneath what is now named the Sir Isaac Brock Bridge. Its restoration was completed last year. Rendering by Public Work

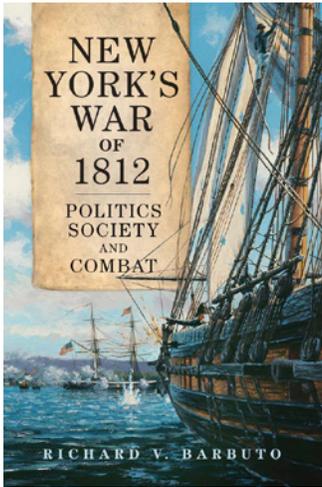
The Gardiner runs from here along the south bank of the park, creating an empty and continuous vaulted space all the way to Spadina – exactly the sort of orphan linear space the Bentway was created to solve and exploit.

The irony of the Bentway's heavy bridge proposal is that it would largely destroy the very landscape it purports to celebrate. And it overwhelms Toronto's most important historic site by erecting huge platforms to peer into it. It's a vivid illustration of a problem common in physics: the disturbance of a system by the very act of observing it. Scientists, however, always strive to minimize the disturbance, knowing that failing to do so is likely to undermine the very point of their work.

The members of the Precinct Advisory Committee of The Friends of Fort York & Garrison Common include Pamela Robinson, director of the School of Regional and Urban Planning at Ryerson; Lisa Rochon, former architecture critic of The Globe and Mail; Robert Allsopp, Partner Emeritus at DTAH (the original developers of the Fort York National Historic Site plan); Melanie Hare, Partner of Urban Strategies; and Rick Merrill, Senior Advisor at The Planning Partnership. It's chaired by Jeff Evenson, VP Partnerships & Strategy at Options For Homes. Bob Kennedy is the Editor of the F&D and lives just down the street from the fort.

The shoreline on March 11, 1805, essentially unchanged – but for the trees that became these buildings – from the time of the Wendat. On the left is Government House, where Simcoe put up his barracks in 1793 and where the present fort, as rebuilt by 1815, has stood ever since. The ravine in the centre is the mouth of Garrison Creek (imagine Bathurst) while the blockhouse stands about where the library is now. Drawing attributed to Sempronius Stretton; courtesy William L. Clements Library





REVIEW

Richard V. Barbuto *New York's War of 1812: Politics, Society and Combat* (Volume 71, Campaigns & Commanders Series) University of Oklahoma Press, 2021
364 pages, hardcover, 10 illustrations, 6 maps

Delivering less than promised on the War of 1812

by Tanya Grodzinski

American historian Richard V. Barbuto, an emeritus professor of military history at the U.S. Army Command & General Staff College and author of three works on the War of 1812 introduces *New York's War of 1812*, as not a “conventional history of the war, with balanced coverage of all participants.” Instead, his attention rests with New Yorkers and the “Native Americans residing in the state.” His book promises “balance in its coverage of the tensions between civilian and military; various ethnic groups, Federalist and Republican; army, navy and privateer; federal and state forces, federal and state governments; and urban and rural residents.”

While contemporary historians acknowledge how central New York State was to the American effort in the Northern theatre of war, few have examined how that was accomplished. Unlike the New England states that obstructed the war effort, and Tennessee, Ohio, and Kentucky, which actively supported military operations – but were distant from the heaviest fighting – New York had “an active front along hundreds of miles of border.” That frontier demanded a unique approach to this “first major test of war as a joint venture between the federal and state governments.”

The results of that venture were mixed, as are the results of this book. Beginning with an overview of the origins of the Anglo-American War of 1812, subsequent chapters examine the war chronologically. They are interspersed with chapters describing events in New York City and

how state and local officials harnessed state resources and influenced federal strategic plans. Separating the contributions of the federal government and New York state governments, which “underwent parallel mobilizations,” is a complex task that Barbuto handles deftly. His emphasis that combat at sea and on land was “the ultimate test of policy and strategy,” however, limits the discussion to military topics at the cost of other themes.

The result is undeveloped discussions of Native Americans, African Americans,

there was a thriving culture of smuggling on the state frontier

state demography, urban and rural differences, and economic matters. We learn, for example, that when the federal government “ran out of money,” the New York Common Council provided “some emergency funding.” The role and membership of the Council is unclear, and the amount of funding and where it was spent are not given. Citizens of Irish origin, several Indigenous peoples and Blacks are mentioned, but *en passant*.

The condition of the militia, its leadership, funding, pay, and arming appear throughout the narrative, as do the interactions among several state and federal officials. There is much on state funds for the construction of fortifications, equipping the militia, and the acquisition of weaponry. There was a thriving culture of smuggling on the state frontier with the Canadas that proved unstoppable, but Barbuto is silent on the

effects this had on state revenue and the overall war effort.

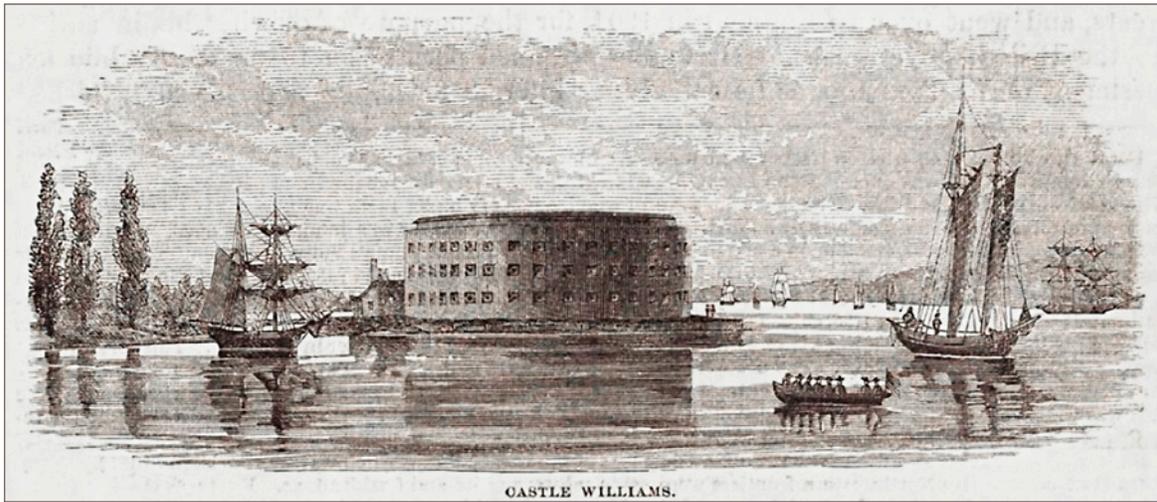
There is only passing mention given to the disruption the war caused to the state's economy and its effect on the livelihood and living conditions of thousands of its residents and farmers. I wanted more from a book with ‘society’ in its subtitle. In 1810, New York State alone had nearly one million residents, a total that outnumbered the entire population of British North America by about 400,000. Some ten percent of the state's population lived

in New York City, another 10,000 lived in the capital at Albany, and the rest lived in smaller towns or in the countryside. Free Blacks or slaves and Indigenous peoples made up a small percentage of the population. The ethnic composition of the Caucasian population is unexplored.

The anti-war and divisive sentiments held by some residents and the “intensely partisan condition” of state politics are mentioned several times, but how these divisions were overcome is not revealed.

The constitution did not artfully arrange the authority granted to the federal and state governments. Control of the regulars, the navy and privateers, and most importantly, strategic direction, resided with Washington.

As Barbuto explains, “[Governor] Tompkins, the state government, and legislature had done a credible job in acquiring muskets and positioning them along routes leading to the frontiers,” but the federal government “was entirely unable to provide for the thousands of



Castle Williams was a big part of the defences of New York harbour. Named for the army engineer who designed it, the fortress had eight-foot-thick walls of red sandstone and was finished in 1811. From Lossing, *The pictorial field-book of the War of 1812*, p.237.

detached militia brought into service,” leaving them unpaid and poorly equipped. Washington was “unprepared to wage war” and that led to “major shortcomings in manpower, money, warships, weaponry, skilled leadership, training, equipment, and transportation.” As Captain William Hawley of the militia of New York dared to write in an order: “we condemn the administration for their weakness and folly in plunging us unprepared into this Quixotic war.” (Hawley was cashiered after a superior officer overturned his acquittal by a court martial.)

With so comprehensive a list of shortfalls, one wonders how the federal leadership could seriously wage war, especially against an opponent who had been doing exactly that for 20 years.

I enjoyed learning about New York City during the war. Britain had no plans to attack it, but Tompkins and the local leadership thought it would and they worked diligently to improve the city’s defences. They proved less capable of interfering with the British blockade, which once established resulted in a rapid diminishing of the supply of foodstuffs. Nonetheless, patriotic banquets and parades honouring military heroes, along with a score of privateers operating from the harbour, kept morale high. This boosted recruitment for the militia defending the city. The squabbling between federal and militia officers is not surprising, nor is the tempest that arose over whether an officer of the corps of engineers, responsible for

the fortifications, could also command line units of the garrison.

Barbuto credits Tompkins and state civilian and military officials with overcoming many of the difficulties faced by their federal counterparts. The state militia offered a vast pool of recruits for volunteer and regular units, and while their combat performance may have been mixed, it provided a large contribution to the national war effort. Of the 410,603 ‘periods of service,’ a term approximating

**I wish the author had
consulted an
Indigenous historian**

man-days – with the qualification that a period of service could last several days and that an individual could fill more than one period – New York militiamen accounted for 19% of the total, or 76,668 periods of service.

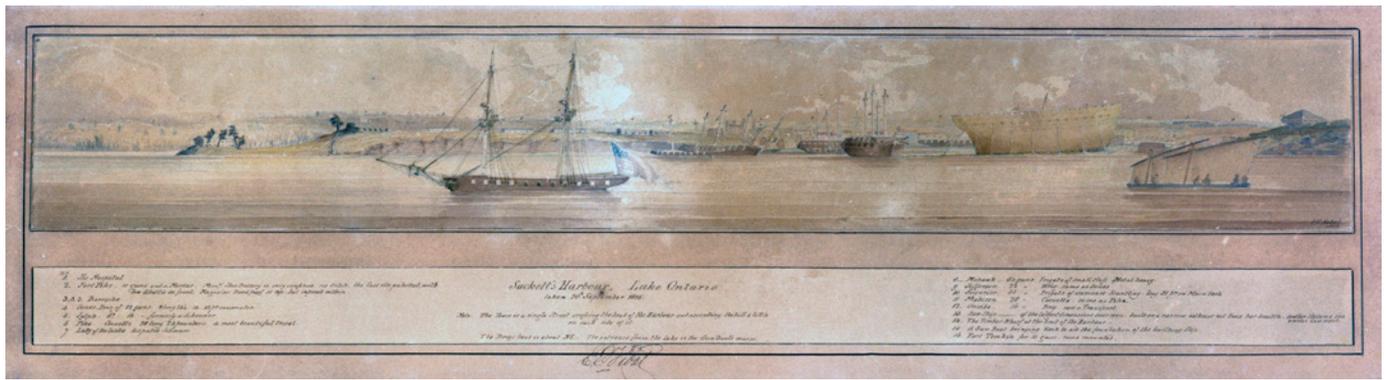
This impressive number is surpassed only by Virginia, whose militiamen served 88,584 periods, or 22% of the total. The distinguished service of several officers from New York State is summarized, although a lengthy list of brevets (spanning three pages) is more suitable for an appendix, as are the ten pages devoted to the post-war activities of selected wartime figures.

The book concludes with a summary of the contribution by New York State to the national war effort. Barbuto credits the safety of New York City, the retention

of the state’s borders with British North America, and the cooperative spirit of state officials as its greatest achievements. But the claim that the “immense contributions of the local residents of all races, ethnicities, and genders had created a fortress of America’s largest city” is unsubstantiated, and they are barely mentioned.

We are told that 370 Blacks served in the regular army, and “thousands more” with the navy or on privateers. Barbuto argues that the absence of records makes it “impossible to say how many ... come from New York,” yet a quick online search reveals that there were, in 1810, 1.3 million Blacks and slaves in America, of which 186,000 were considered free men. As Lauren McCormack found in her paper on Black sailors, British records reveal that of the 6,000 American prisoners at Dartmoor, 1,000 were from privateers, warships, and letters of marque. Surely more could have been said about these men.

Similarly, the prominence given to the story of the Indigenous peoples of New York State in the introduction is not found in the text. It hardly matters that the Tammany Society, a New York political club named after an Indigenous leader, dropped its use of Native-inspired symbols of office and dress after learning that warriors allied to the British had killed wounded American soldiers following the Battle of the River Raisin. More useful would have been a chapter devoted to the Iroquois pledge of an alliance with the United States in 1813; the arrangements regarding the supply of



Sackett's Harbour, Lake Ontario was painted by Lt. Emeric Vidal of the Royal Navy on Sept. 20, 1815. This was the main American base on Lake Ontario and Vidal's detailed work was valuable intelligence. It notes every ship in the harbour and their guns, the town's layout (in script) and the warship under construction (extreme right) "of the largest dimensions ever seen." Watercolour approx. 36" x 9" Courtesy Massey Library, Royal Military College of Canada

money, provisions, clothing and weaponry to Indigenous groups; the workings of the transfer of prisoners of the Six Nations of Canada to the New York Iroquois; and their embargo of liquor.

I wish the author had consulted an Indigenous historian as readily as he did an authority on naval matters. There are summaries of warrior involvement in specific actions, and another of the work of Seneca Chief Red Jacket after 1815, but the conclusion that Native Americans "lost the war" falls flat, it having been repeated in so many works.

Several general statements throughout the book do not stand up to scrutiny. For example, it's simply inaccurate to claim that when Congress declared war in 1812, "British resources were focussed on defeating France." During 1810 and 1811, France had imposed a peace in Europe. In Iberia, a British field army, supported by the Royal Navy, campaigned alongside Spanish and Portuguese allies against the

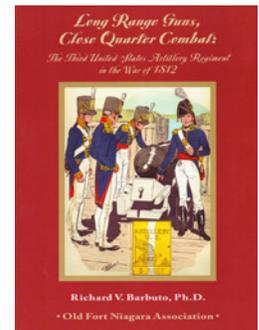
occupying French army.

British fortunes there were aided by Napoleon's siphoning of troops from Iberia during the assembly of his *Grande Armée* for the campaign against Russia. The French withdrawal from Russia – nearly coinciding with the American defeat at Queenston Heights – rekindled the European war as the allies pursued the French across Germany. During 1813, the British effort in Europe expanded as it sent 100,000 muskets and aid worth £4 million to Russia, even as it sent reinforcements to British North America.

Despite its shortfalls, *New York's War of 1812* is a welcome book. It contributes to our understanding of the important wartime interactions among federal and state governments. Barbuto also offers a valuable examination of state-related naval and military topics and the defence of New York City. Unfortunately, the promise of its sub-title – *Politics, Society and Combat* – is only partially kept.

Dr. Tanya Grodzinski is Emerita Associate Professor of History at the Royal Military College of Canada in Kingston and author of several books on the War of 1812 as well as a forthcoming history of The Royal Canadian Regiment. She is a former editor of the War of 1812 Magazine, hosted on the Napoleon Series Website.

Barbuto's definitive account of the artillery regiment that fought at York was published in 2010. As a senior U.S. Army officer, he has written extensively about enemy operations in the War of 1812. His "Staff Ride Handbook" for the Niagara campaigns belongs in every Canadian militiaman's library (Combat Studies Institute Press 2014).



Fort York Visitor Centre and Canteen are open!

Wednesday to Sunday, 11:00 to 4:30

Tours of the fort itself still need to be booked for 11 am, 1 pm or 3 pm here

In the Canteen, find a wonderful selection of no-battery-needed toys, Blue Willow china, calligraphy materials, military models and the city's best selection of local and military history books.



DIANNE GRAVES (1947–2021)



In early June, historian Dianne Graves passed away from complications of cancer.

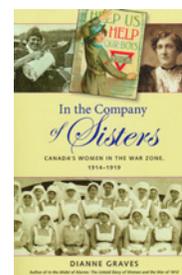
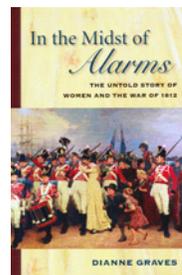
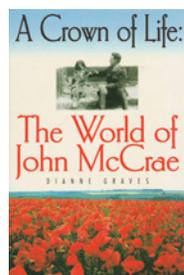
Dianne Graves (nee Burton) studied languages and began working in marketing and public relations in Britain. She always had a strong passion for history and travel and these interests were combined when she was hired as the marketing manager for Holts' Battlefield and Historical Tours, the largest firm of its kind in the English-speaking world during the 1990s. She became interested in John McCrae, the Canadian doctor who wrote the famous poem "In Flanders Fields," and decided to write a book about him. On a research trip to Canada she met Canadian historian Donald E. Graves and the two were married in 1996.

Dianne wrote four books. Her biography of McCrae, *Crown of Life*, was published in 1997 and revised in 2014. It gained favourable notice; historian Jonathan Vance wrote that Dianne had done "a wonderful job of recreating the milieu in which he moved." Her next book, *Ellen and the River Pirates*, was a children's adventure book centred around the Battle of the Windmill in 1838. Her third project was *In the Midst of Alarms*, a study of the experiences of American, British, Canadian and Indigenous women during the War of 1812. It proved very popular – remaining the definitive account of a broad subject – and was adapted for the stage by the senior drama students at Sheridan College in 2012.

Dianne's final title, which appeared in March of this year, was *In the Company of Sisters*, a study of the personal experiences of Canadian women in the combat zone during the First World War. It was praised in *The Fife and Drum* (by Debbie Marshall) as being "a fascinating, brilliantly researched, and often poignant book that adds much to our understanding of the Great War." It should, she added, "be on the shelf of anyone who wants to have a deeper understanding of the experience of Canadians in that long-ago conflict."

In addition to her own work, Dianne served as the skillful and dedicated copy editor and indexer – and sometimes the photographer and translator – of the 16 books written or edited by her husband from 1999 onward. She was also a partner in their consulting firm, Ensign Heritage Group, which specialized in military historical work.

Dianne Graves made a very positive contribution to the study of Canadian history and she will be sorely missed. Consideration is being given to establishing an award or book prize in her name for publications concerned with the experiences of women in Canadian wars and conflicts.



MARY ALLODI (1929–2021) M.C., F.R.S.C.

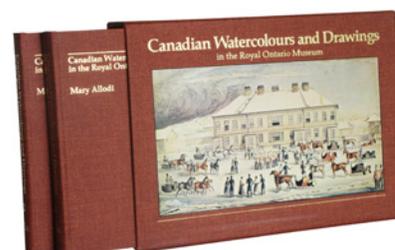


Mary Macaulay Allodi was a senior art historian and a pioneer of the study of early Canadian art who retired as Curator Emeritus (Early Canadian Painting & Prints) of the Royal Ontario Museum. Her "intellectual rigour was accompanied by a distinct warmth,

generosity of spirit, and beautifully dry wit" (in the words of *The Globe and Mail*) that left a lasting impression on Canadian art history and on everyone who knew her. She died on May 31.

Mary grew up in Ottawa, earned an MA in Art History from New York University and began her career at the National Gallery of Canada under Donald Buchanan. One of the first Canada Council grants sent her to Europe for a year to visit the great museums of the Continent. Eventually broke and working at a travel agency in Madrid (she was fluent in Spanish), she met – through a mutual friend, the artist Jack Chambers – Federico Allodi. In due course they married and moved to Toronto, where Mary began her work at the ROM.

The death of a 15-year-old son in a canoeing accident left grief that did not ever lift but was only mitigated by a renewed passion for her work at the museum. The culmination of her curatorial work was the beautiful two volumes of *Canadian Watercolours and Drawings in the Royal Ontario Museum*, published in 1974. "It is unfortunate that the liveliest aspect of cataloguing, the process of tracking down authorship, date and place for each watercolour and drawing," she wrote in the Introduction, "cannot be incorporated into the final product." It's the work she excelled at. "Her curatorial files are a goldmine of information and insights," said her successor at the ROM, Arlene Gehmacher. The artworks in the book, Mary wrote, were nothing less than "a painted history of Canada."



At the Birthplace of Toronto

Notes from the Staff

Update from the Fort

by Kaitlin Wainwright

Acting Manager, Fort York National Historic Site

Another summer at Fort York has come to a close, and while it still looks a bit different than pre-pandemic times, we are delighted to have been able to offer a strong selection of programs. We began with an online Indigenous Peoples Month program in June, celebrating Indigenous histories, arts, and stories through four calls to action: Explore, Feast, Watch, and Shop. More than 25,000 viewers tuned in and supported Indigenous artists and storytellers. Select merchandise from Indigenous Peoples Month remains available in the Museum Shop.

Under the banner of HistoricTO, the 66th season of the Fort York Guard provided educational performances to hundreds of local, regional and even international visitors, and employment opportunities for youth in the community. We're grateful to the Friends of Fort York for their continued partnership.

Fort York was delighted to be given the 2021 Campbell's Award for our "Hungry for Comfort" foodways program, cited for "bridging Asian and non-Asian communities." This year's version in May was part of Asian Heritage Month and featured, as it does every year, interviews, conversations and cooking demonstrations with some of Canada's most talented and knowledgeable chefs, culinary historians, and food writers. Congratulations to Bridget Wranich and Melissa Beynon, Fort York program officers, on being recognized for a job well done!

Fall at Fort York will feature several programs and events, including HistoricTO outdoor and indoor programs, new Awakenings installations, and a weekend of First World War animation on September 25 and 26. The site will also welcome installations as part of ArtworxTO: Toronto's Year of Public Art. Stay tuned to [Toronto.ca/museums](https://toronto.ca/museums) or [@TOHistoryMuseums](https://twitter.com/TOHistoryMuseums) ([@TOHistory](https://twitter.com/TOHistory) on Twitter) for the latest details.

Acting Manager moves on

Kaitlin Wainwright has left Fort York National Historic Site after 20 months as the Acting Manager. She'll be taking up a new challenge in the world of Parks, Forestry & Recreation.

Although her time in the leadership role was short, it was intense, navigating the impacts of the global pandemic on the site, its programming and its staff. The fort adapted to the changing circumstances and continued to offer critical services and modified programs.

Her legacy of good will, hard work and cooperation will not be soon forgotten. The Friends of Fort York thank Kaitlin for her service and wish her all the best. For the time being, Tamara Williams, the new Site Coordinator, is looking after things.



This Smoked Venison Frenched Rack was one of the two meals available for pick-up at Fort York (and quickly sold out) for National Indigenous Peoples Day in June. Created by Chef Billy Alexander, this dish included blueberry sweet grass chutney, red skin and sweet potato mash with roasted garlic and sage, three sisters (corn, beans and butternut squash) honey beet noodle stack, and microgreens. Butter, lime juice and olive oil were also part of the recipe. The other dish was Smoked Maple Salmon with the same sides. Chef Alexander is the Executive Chef of the Three Fires restaurant at the Caldwell First Nation in Leamington, Ontario; a founding member of the Ontario Indigenous Food Table; and winner of the Canadian Culinary Excellence Award.

Leaders of the Guard turn in their uniforms

The two young women who have been leading sections of the Fort York Guard for the past few years, Sally O’Keeffe and Holly Benison, retired at the end of this season.

Drum Major O’Keeffe, who began volunteering at the fort when she was ten, spent a total of 14 summers in the uniform of the notional Canadian Regiment of Fencible Infantry. She led and rehearsed the fort’s musical Drums.

“More than half my life was spent here,” she marvels. “I’ve grown up here.” The last few winters were spent at Harvard University, where she completed a joint major in Honours English and Art, Film and Visual Studies. Her plan is to pursue a Master’s in poetry and she knows that skills picked up from her experience here will last a lifetime.

“I’ve learned how to better advocate for myself and others,” she says. “It will be sad to move on because my time here was really meaningful and a huge part of my identity and life, but,” she adds, “I’m ready to let the next leaders take over.”

Her colleague Sergeant Benison, leader of the award-winning Infantry Squad, has been at Fort York since volunteering in high school. She was hired in 2017 and since then, she says, “I’ve seen myself grow into a leader.” Holly graduated from Bishop’s University in Honours History with minors in music and French.

She knows that her work in the Guard “has been a meaningful engagement with the past.” Holly is completing a certification in museum management this fall.

We wish them both the best, absolutely certain they’ve a bright future ahead of them – built on their education and their experience every summer in the Fort York Guard.



Sergeant Holly Benison (left) and Drum Major Sally O’Keeffe outside the Stone Powder Magazine of Fort York on August 28, 2021. It was the day after their last demonstration for the public of the music and tactics of the Canadian Regiment of Fencible Infantry. Photo by Sid Calzavara

Skirmishers advance across the parade ground of Fort York in a demonstration of tactics on Simcoe Day, 2021. Along with a small return of tourists, the growing numbers of people on Garrison Common this summer added to the audience of the Guard’s daily displays. The new Garrison Crossing that leads south from King Street has made a visible difference to the crowds.



But in another season cut shorter by the pandemic, the Fort York Guard could employ 14 students for only eight weeks up to the end of August. Another reduction was to the cartridges they were firing.

They were made smaller (and hence quieter) in the wake of a complaint from one person this summer – one from among the thousands who live in condominiums just beyond the Gardiner Expressway – about the noise of the muskets. And, suggests her petition, their relation to gun violence on the streets of Toronto. In another gesture of goodwill, the Guard abstained from firing their cannon while the fort’s leadership, during the winter, thinks it through.



Former Guardsman Michael Locksley-Hebib – the one in the muddy boots, just in from the field – is seen here graduating as the top infantry officer from a year-long series of courses at the Combat Training Centre of CFB Gagetown, NB. He’s being handed the General Allard Sword on July 26 by the centre’s commander. On one of the toughest courses in the Canadian Army, Mike’s class began with 120 candidates and finished with about 60. Now a lieutenant with the best job in the army – Platoon Commander – he’s been posted to 1st Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment, at CFB Petawawa. Photo by Kevin Hebib



Graduates of the Graphic Design & Illustration Program at OCAD University had their work on display all summer on the south and west fences of the fort. The colourful boards displayed a selection of works by nearly 100 graduating students. Photo by F&D



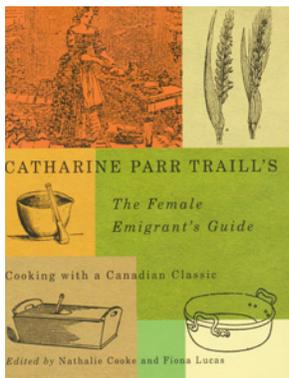
Mrs. Traill's Advice BOILED CORN

TThis is a favourite dish in Canada and the States. When the grains are sufficiently swollen and beginning to harden, but not to become hard, break off the cob, and boil for two hours or till they become tender (about 15 minutes in this editor's kitchen!). Some like corn best boiled with salt at meat, but that is a matter of taste or convenience. As a vegetable it is much admired, especially the sweet garden corn: the grain of this is of milky whiteness, and is very nice even in its corn state, being full of rich, sugary milk. It is of green sweet corn that the preceding dishes are made (i.e. hominy and supporne).

Some people cut the grains from the cob and boil them like peas, with butter and pepper for seasoning; this obviates the ungraceful mode of eating corn so much objected to by particular persons.

Green Corn Fritters

One tea-cupful of milk, three eggs, one pint of green (sweet fresh) corn grated, a little salt, and as much flour as will form a batter. Beat the eggs, the yolks and whites separate. To the yolks of the eggs add the corn, salt, milk, and flour enough to form a batter. Beat the whole very hard, then stir in the whites, and drop the batter a spoonful at a time into hot lard, and fry them on both sides, of a bright brown colour.



From Catherine Parr Traill's **The Female Emigrant's Guide** originally published in 1855 by a printer in Toronto. "Mrs. Traill's Advice" appears regularly in *The Fife and Drum*, sampling this attractive new edition from McGill-Queen's University Press. An indispensable Canadian reference, it's available in the Canteen of Fort York.

It's a great time to catch up on past issues of
The Fife and Drum
 Click on the covers to download these stories of Toronto!

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Journal of The Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common
 Vol. 24, No. 1 April 2015



Silver, brass and parchment: the American history of York in April 1812

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Journal of The Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common
 Vol. 25, No. 4 Dec 2015



A warship is launched from Spadina Quay

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Journal of The Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common
 Vol. 25, No. 1 Oct 2015



A Mohawk warrior at Queenston Heights

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Conversation Peck is being restored

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Fort York's brick masonry restored

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St. John's fire clinic served the poor

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A Canadian rifeman in the summer of '44

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Rensselaer State Trail Opens @ Fort York on January 6

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The Invicta Games at Fort York

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Fort York Guard Features for Canada

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The mystery of Toronto

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New Exhibit Introduces Historic Fort York

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Toronto's First Historical Plaques

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CityPlace Schooner built for shallow water

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Competing Plaque Narratives of Handmaiden warfare in Ontario during the 1660s

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For King and Country: WW I and the Mayors of Toronto

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Not Taking Freedom for Granted

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The New Fort and the origins of Hockey in Toronto

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