

THE BEACH AND EAST TORONTO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Annual Report

April 1 2021 to March 31 2022



Panoramic photograph of Benlamond Avenue, south side, near Glen Oak Drive, ca. 1918

[Toronto Public Library Digital Archive](#)

THE BEACH AND EAST TORONTO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2021-2022 Board of Directors

Director	Position
Jonathan Bradshaw	At Large (Board appointment approved, October 13, 2021); Vice-President (appointed March 24, 2022)
Mary Campbell	Treasurer
Glenn Chadwick	Event Coordinator, Web Committee
John Ellis	Secretary and Membership Secretary (until June 2021), President (appointed June 6, 2021), Web Contact Responder, Heritage Conservation District Committee Chair
Deborah Livingston-Lowe	Facebook Manager, Secretary (appointed June 2021), Web Committee
Barbara Myrvold	Card Index Automation Project Lead; Web Committee Chair
Clyde Robinson	Vice-President, Web Committee (resigned from the Board, April 9, 2021)
Julita Tyszewicz	At Large (Board appointment approved, October 13, 2021), Membership Secretary (appointed March 24, 2022)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to have a major impact on The Beach and East Toronto Historical Society (TBETHS). Adhering to government restrictions, we held no in-person event programs or an Annual General Meeting. (The Government of Ontario adopted easing of the *Corporations Act Ontario* to permit postponement of AGMs.)

Nevertheless, TBETHS prepared and posted on our [website](#) annual reports for the 2019-'20 and 2020-'21 fiscal years. We are now pleased to release the 2021-'22 Annual Report. We will schedule an AGM covering all of the years in which none was held as soon as possible.

Using the strategies that we learned during the previous fiscal year, we continued to use digital technology not only to present events and hold board and committee meetings but also to improve communications and reporting during this challenging time.

The results have been very successful and heartening. While some were not able to participate in our presentations due to an inability to use digital methods, overall attendance at our public events equalled and, in some cases, exceeded the earlier non-digital events. Thanks are extended to Event Coordinator Glenn Chadwick for organizing six events during the year, and Directors Deborah Livingston Lowe and Jonathan Bradshaw for providing technical assistance on our Zoom presentations, working with a growing field of digital presenters.

Excellent progress was made on automating the card index in TBETHS Archives, which will contribute to making the history of our area more accessible around the world. Phase One of the inputting project was completed in March 2022 with more than 15,417 entries from hand-written cards and other sources transcribed into a software package. Once again, we thank the Card Automation Project Team volunteers for their time, hard work and diligence to this work. Special recognition is due to the Project

Leads (Irena Lewycka, Barbara Myrvold and Katherine Vice), who have shared their professional expertise and devoted countless hours to the work.

A serious concern for the board was regarding the City's plans through Housing Now to construct a complex of eight-, ten- and 17-storey buildings at 1631 Queen Street East (Coxwell and Eastern Avenues), which would be in contravention of the six-storey height limit defined in the Queen Street East Urban Design Guidelines (UDG). The board appointed a Project Team of Uwe Sehmrau, Jeffrey Levitt, Birgit Siber and, briefly, Clyde Robinson to lead in addressing our concerns. Their work produced strongly favourable results. The city confirmed that the UDG continues in full force and effectiveness. Housing Now reported in summer 2022: "Based on community feedback, the development concept has been revised to ensure the components of the building along Queen Street East are six storeys and in keeping with the goals and objectives of the Design Guidelines." Moreover, through this initiative, TBETHS developed a stronger working relationship with Councillor Brad Bradford and Toronto Heritage Planning staff. Proof of the benefit of that closer relationship came later in 2022 with the addition of several local buildings to the Heritage Register.

We also had to deal with the challenges of Board changes, which are detailed in the list of 2021-2022 Board of Directors at the beginning of this annual report. Personal priorities led to resignation of Clyde Robinson from the Board in early April 2021. Clyde joined the Board during the 2017-18 fiscal year, and during his tenure, he served as the vice-president and on the Website Committee, assisted with events and was diligent in encouraging having historic buildings and important local residents recognized. We welcomed two new members, Julita Tyszewicz and Jonathan Bradshaw, both appointed in October 2021. Julita became the membership secretary and Jonathan the vice-president in March 2022.

Congratulations to Barbara Myrvold, who was named as Beach Citizen of the Year for 2021 in recognition of her heritage work and other volunteer activities in the community.

We were pleased to learn in early 2022 from staff in Special Collections, Toronto Public Library that the panoramic picture of Benlamond Avenue, which TBETHS donated to the Library in November 2019, had received conservation treatment (mold removal), been digitized, and made available on the Digital Archive. The digitized image was chosen for the front cover of this year's annual report. A detailed story about [THE BENLAMOND PANORAMIC PHOTO](#) is on our website

With the commitment of our directors, members and supporters, the year also was one of great opportunities as we increased our virtual presence, enlisted new volunteers to assist with automating our historical card index and found other ways to reach out to our community, to share its history and advocate for the preservation of its historical integrity.

John Ellis, President

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

January 1 - December 31 2021

The 2021 membership campaign was a great success, resulting in 66 members. This was an increase of 27 percent from 2020 when we had 52 members.

John Ellis, Membership Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT

April 01, 2021-March 31, 2022

	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>
Cash Balance as of April 01, 2021	3,751.28	
<u>INCOME</u>		
Membership Fees	740.00	
Donation	<u>80.00</u>	
Total income		820.00
<u>EXPENDITURES</u>		
Online Communications	998.67	
Card Index Project	79.43	
Bank Charges	125.06	
Toronto Historical Association Membership	30.00	
Ontario Historical Society Membership	60.00	
Speaker's Gift	20.00	
Postage	<u>13.45</u>	
Total Expenditures		<u>1,326.61</u>
Cash Balance as of March 31, 2022		<u>3,244.67</u>

Mary Campbell, Treasurer

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

Made significant progress on the project to automate the Society's historical card index

- Between June 28, 2019 and March 12, 2022, when inputting of data in Phase 1 was frozen, 15,417 entries had been transcribed by members of the volunteer Card Automation Project Team from the index cards and other sources and inputted into Google sheets, the software that TBETHS uses to store data
- Phase 1 included inputting all of the index cards in TBETHS Archives (except for pictures, directories and maps), as well as information from other selected sources, notably the bibliographies of the Beach and East Toronto areas that university students prepared in the 1980s.
- Sixty-five percent (9,970 records) of the entries were inputted into Google sheets from April 1, 2021 to March 12, 2022, compared to 35 percent (5,448 records) entered during the previous period, June 2019 to March 2021.
- From January to mid-March 2022, the Project Leads resolved and inputted "problem" cards flagged by the Project Team transcribers, verified sources, added data to required fields, and began preliminary edits.
- By the end of March 2022, data had been sorted by date and title fields, with duplicate entries removed.
- Work also continued on adding entries to the bibliography of sources used in the index, along with starting a bibliography of maps of the local area. Irene Lewycka was the lead on preparing both bibliographies, which eventually will be made available on the TBETHS website as supplements to the on-line index.
- Next steps will be to clean up the data, prepare requirements for building a database to store existing records, add new records, and provide an interface for users to browse and search for data on the Internet. We anticipate the database will be created and available by early 2023.
- During Phase 1, a total of 26 volunteers worked on TBETHS Card Index Automation Project Team. Listed below are the 20 individuals who volunteered during 2021-2022. Volunteers in 2020-2021 are listed in that annual report. A huge thanks to all of the volunteers.

Thanks to TBETHS Card Index Automation Project Team Volunteers, April 2021-March 2022!

Yvonne Butorac*, Mary Campbell, Ursula Eley, Norm Holman, Aaron Katzsch, Rob Kee, Janice Lavery, Irena Lewycka*‡, Anne Livingston*, Donna MacLeod, Sam Martin, Ann Menheere*, Tom Middleton, Barbara Myrvold‡, Sheila O'Connor, Karen Pederson*, Rob Rohr, Molly Saunders,* Andra Sheffer, Kathy Vice‡

* Transcribed information from more than 1,000 cards and other sources by March 2022

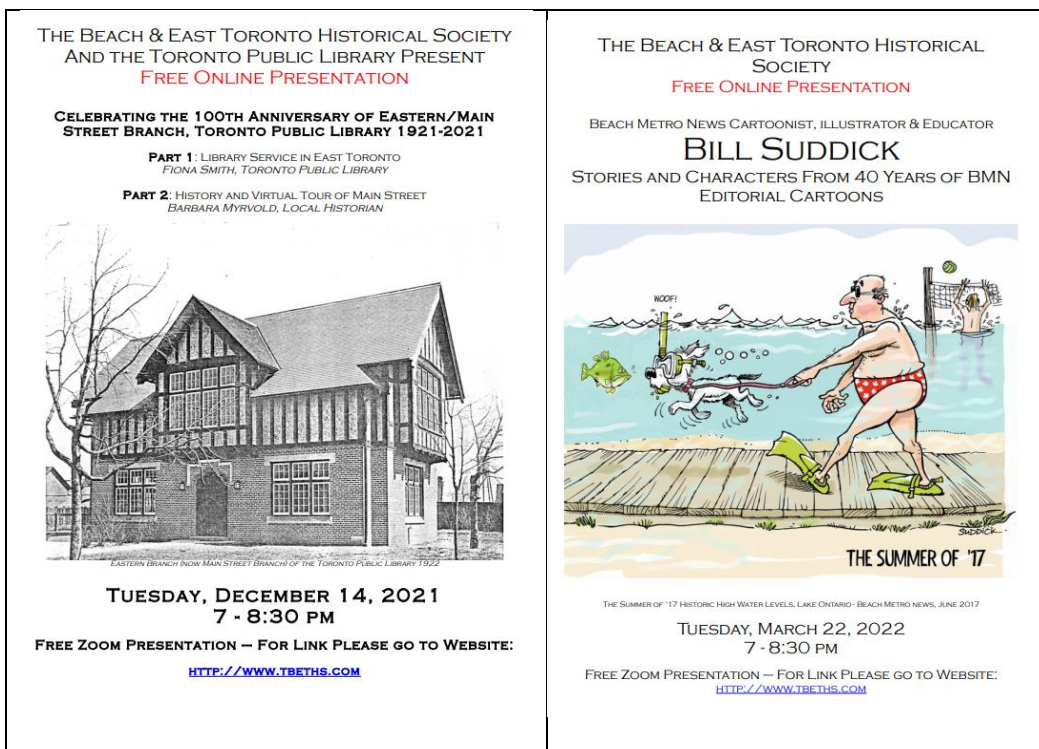
‡ Project Team Lead

Used Zoom to hold virtual meetings and provide six online public events

- The Board met seven times and the Card Index Automation Project Leads eight times
- An average of 45 people attended each of our six public events. Most events were recorded and are available to view on our [website](#). Our recorded presentations of earlier events continued to garner interest. The one most frequently visited is "[Wally Floody and The Great Escape](#)," given by son Brian Floody on March 23, 2021.

2021-2022 Events

- April 20 2021: Adam Bunch - Stories from The Toronto Book of Love
- June 1, 2021: Paul Warner - The Price Brothers and Building the Beach
- November 16, 2021: Jim Sanderson - From Wards Island to Balmy Beach; Growing up in Toronto in the 1950's & 60's
- December 14, 2021: Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Eastern/Main Street Branch, Toronto Public Library 1921-2021. Part 1: Fiona Smith - Library Service in East Toronto. Part 2: Barbara Myrvold - History and Virtual Tour of Main Street. (Co-sponsored with Toronto Public Library) (Poster below)
- February 15, 2022: Mike Clare - The Spanish Flu Epidemic 1918-1919; Stepping Out with the Spanish Lady)
- March 22, 2022: Bill Suddick - Stories and Characters From 40 Years of Beach Metro News Editorial Cartoons



Posters for two events held virtually during 2021-2022

Participated in several in-person outdoor events

- Four walking tours led by Gene Domagala, our indefatigable and ever popular local historian:
 - October 9, 2021: Kew Gardens area.
 - October 23, 2021: St. John's Norway Cemetery
 - November 6, 2021: Main and Danforth area
 - March 19, 2022: Glen Stewart Golf Club area
- The ceremony to induct Barbara Myrvold as Beach Citizen of the Year, Millennium Garden, Woodbine Park, September 18, 2021
- The Remembrance Day ceremony at the cenotaph in Kew Gardens, November 11, 2021, where a TBETHS representative laid a wreath



Barbara Myrvold beside her 2021 Beach Citizen of the Year plaque at the induction ceremony, Millennium Garden in Woodbine Park, September 18, 2021.
Courtesy Beach Metro News



Gene Domagala at the monument to Canadian soldiers buried in the St. John's Norway Cemetery, included in his cemetery tour, October 23, 2021.
Courtesy Beach Metro News

Images from two outdoor events

Expanded our online presence

- Regularly posted content on our [FaceBook page](#)
- Added two new “Local Stories” to our website <http://tbeths.com/>



Olympians from the Beach and East Toronto, 1908-2020/21.
By Erik Malmsten and Barbara Myrvold



The Cox and Hinds Families – Five Generations in East Toronto
By Ken Cox

Images from the two new “Local Stories”

- Added information to the Resources section of TBETHS website, for example, a list of Heritage Buildings in the TBETHS catchment area designated by Toronto City Council under the Ontario Heritage Act, Part IV, with links to the individual designation bylaws.

Special thanks to Deborah Livingston-Lowe for managing our FaceBook page and to Pete Richardson, President of Tayson Information Technology, for his work as our Webmaster.

Received 30 new queries or comments about local history to the “Contact Us” section of our website.

Recognition is due to John Ellis for his consistent work in managing this section, including recording queries and responses, providing quick and often detailed responses to most queries, or forwarding them to other Board members for their input.

Developed criteria for and reformatted an inventory of prominent people associated with the Beach and East Toronto.

- TBETHS members Erik Malmsten and Glenn Chadwick were the driving force behind the creation of this inventory, which includes prominent people who at some time have resided, worked or attended school within TBETHS catchment area.
- By March 2021, more than 300 names were on the inventory, and criteria for inclusions and for ranking individuals had been developed.
- Although the inventory of individuals was created primarily to recommend names for local lanes, it has been the source for Facebook posts providing brief biographies and pictures of local residents on their birthdays. It also could also be a reference for other purposes such as plaques, house history/research, walking tours and signs of famous people of the Beach and East Toronto.

Made significant progress with heritage preservation endeavors.

- In addition to the favourable results achieved by TBETHS Project Team regarding the Queen Street East Urban Design Guidelines and the proposed development at 1631 Queen Street East mentioned in the President’s report (page 3), progress was made in other heritage preservation efforts
- At our request, staff in the City of Toronto Heritage Planning Services, provided us with a document listing 427 properties within TBETHS catchment area that had been included on the Toronto Heritage Register, as of May 5, 2021:
 - 163 properties were designated under the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA)
 - 131 properties were part of a heritage conservation district, Part V of the OHA. These included 65 properties on Kingswood Road South (adopted by City Council on August 27, 2010) and 66 properties on Lyall Avenue (enacted by City Council on July 27, 2006).
 - 32 properties were designated under Part IV of the OHA
 - 265 properties were listed. These included 163 properties identified through the Danforth Avenue Phase 1 Planning Study (2018), part of the Danforth Avenue (Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue) Historic Context.
- Submitted nominations to Heritage Planning Services (HPS) that two properties on Queen Street East (QSE) be added to the Toronto Heritage Register:
 - 2273-2275 Queen St. E. (Price Brothers double duplex) co-nominated with Ed Wilson, owner of no. 2275; submitted with revisions on September 9, 2021. Following a

conference call on September 24 among representatives of the three parties, HPS determined that the pair could not be added to the Heritage Register because they did not meet the Ontario Heritage Act's criteria for context – the adjacent buildings did not have heritage value – although they met the other two criteria of architectural merit and historical importance. However, our goal to preserve the integrity of the building will largely be achieved because the proposed renovation at no. 2273 must be in compliance with the Urban Design Guidelines for Queen Street East.

- 1899 Queen Street East (Albert Brooks House), submitted in January 2022. (The adjacent Henry Hogarth House at 1903 QSE was included on the Register on at May 28, 1990; TBETHS nominated the James Smith House at 1897 Queen Street East on January 16, 2019.)
- Had encouraging discussions with Heritage Planning Services staff at meetings on May 25, 2021 and February 16, 2022. TBETHS representatives and city staff reviewed extant nominations submitted by the Society for the Toronto Heritage Register, discussed having additional heritage buildings, particularly on Queen Street East, considered for the Register, and developed a better understanding of the most efficient way that we could continue to work together to protect the built heritage of TBETHS catchment area.
- Supported a request that a large red oak in Kew Gardens be recognized as a heritage tree by Forests Ontario

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c/o Three Cedars, 52 Rainsford Road, Toronto, Ontario M4L 3N6

www.tbeths.com

Working to highlight and preserve the natural, built and documentary heritage of the Beach and East Toronto area