



ANNUAL REPORT 1981 - 1982 AND

NEWSLETTER #5

OFFICERS

President	Rod Travers-Griffin
Vice - President	Barbara Myrvold
Secretary	Helen Travers-Griffin
Treasurer/Membership	Ruth Thorne
Past President	Mary Campbell

APPOINTMENTS

Archivist	Mary Campbell
Chairman Telephone Committee	Phyllis Davidson
Photographer	Ken Smith
Official Greeters	Bill and Helen Porter

President's Remarks

This is my fifth and final report as President as I have relinquished the office to Barbara Myrvold. I welcome her to the office and I know that the Society is in good hands. It will be something new for me to be a Past President; I know I will enjoy it.

During my term of office I have been lucky to meet so many interesting people who have a similar goal - the furtherance of local history. I have also been surprised and pleased at the high calibre of guest speakers we have had at Society meetings. The range of their topics was wide, but all had an historical basis. Best of all, they gave their talents without charge.



President's Remarks Cont'd.

I would like to thank those who have assisted me in running the Society: Helen, my wife, who has held the offices of Treasurer/Membership and Secretary; Barbara Myrvold who has been learning the ropes this year; Ruth Thorne who is our efficient Treasurer/Membership convenor and also our illustrious sign maker. Mary Campbell, Helen and I have held office since the inception of the Society in 1974. I would also like to thank Phyllis Davidson and her excellent telephone committee, and those friendly greeters Bill and Helen Porter.

My special thanks to Gene Domagala. He is a tireless worker for the Society, and his historical walks have put us on the map throughout the city.

Guest Speakers

1981-82 was another outstanding year for the high quality of speakers who were guests at our meetings. We are grateful to them for giving up their valuable time to talk to us.

Our October 1981 speaker was Col. Charles Dalton who gave us a history of The Most Venerable Order of St. John of Jerusalem (St. John Ambulance Society and the Crusaders). His keen wit made the topic most interesting.

In November we shared the speaker with Beaches Library. Elizabeth Willmot, author of Meet Me at the Station and Faces and Places Along the Railway, was in tip-top form and gave us the grand tour of Ontario railway stations.

In January, 1982, Janis Barlow, theatre consultant for the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture gave an excellent slide presentation on the proposed restoration of Loews Wintergarden Theatre on Yonge St. We are happy that the Ontario Government will rejuvenate this landmark.

Gene Domagala, one of our own members, arranged the February meeting. It was in the Church of Jesus Christ on Swanwick Ave. Originally this building was the old Morton's Hall, the first town hall of East Toronto. Church members were most hospitable and even provided refreshments after the meeting.

Joan Horvath, research curator of the Guild Inn, spoke at the March meeting. She showed interesting slides and films of the architectural artifacts and antiques housed at the Guild. This collection is the lifelong work of Mr. Spencer Clark and his late wife. Mr. Clarke also started the Guild of All Arts for artists and craftsmen during the depression.



### Guest Speakers Cont'd.

In April, Charles Cooper, author of Rails to the Lakes drew an overflow crowd. He traced the development of railways in Southern Ontario. It was a thoroughly researched and detailed presentation.

The Eaton's of Canada archivist, Judith McErvell, spoke to the May meeting. Her slide illustrated talk gave us a good idea of how history influenced fashions and furnishings. It was refreshing to see pages from Old Eaton's catalogues from the 1890's and the prices then - or was it depressing?

### Historical Walks

The Society sponsored two historical walks this year, one on September 20, 1981 and the second on June 6, 1982. Both were conducted by Gene Domagala, our walk specialist.

The first walk was from St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church on Kingston Rd., down Kingston Road to St. John the Baptist Church, Norway. 82 hardy souls braved the blustery weather and the noisy traffic to take part. At the start of the walk Helen Travers-Griffin gave a brief history of St. John the Evangelist Church and pointed out architectural and artistic details of the interior and exterior.

Gene then led the group on the walk stopping at various points along the way. The Ames house on Glen Stewart Cres., the Benlamond Hotel, the Phelan house and the old Norway Post Office plus other sites were pointed out and discussed amid the Sunday traffic.

The walkers were greeted at St. John's Norway by the chimes ringing out. Dorothy Dinsmore gave a short talk on the church and everyone was free to wander and look.

The second walk was from St. Aidan's Anglican Church on Queen St. E. at Silverbirch Avenue to the Beach Hebrew Institute on Kenilworth Avenue south of Queen St. The Rev. Robert Mackie greeted the 80 walkers and pointed out interesting details in St. Aidan's.

Then Gene led the group along Queen St. E. in a misty rain. The Fox Theatre, the site of the Masonic Hall on Balsam Avenue and the old Bell telephone building on Lee Avenue were some of the points of interest.

The walk concluded in sunshine at the Beach Hebrew Institute where a Toronto Historical Board plaque was unveiled. Details of the unveiling are all in another section of this newsletter.

Gene is now planning a walk for next September. It will start at Kew Gardens go to the Boardwalk and then to Balmy Beach Club. Look for details in Ward 9 News.





Seated from left to right:  
Arie Nerman  
Mayor Art Eggleton  
Andrew Gregorovitch,  
Chairman of the  
Toronto Historical  
Board  
Marion Bryden M.P.P.  
Alderman Dorothy  
Thomas  
Alderman Pat Sheppard  
Cyrel Troster, Vice  
Chairman Archives  
Committee, Canadian  
Jewish Congress

Photograph:  
Courtesy Ward 9 News

President Rod Travers-Griffin bids welcome to everyone at the Hebrew Institute Plaque unveiling on June 6, 1982.

#### Beach Hebrew Institute Plaque

On Sunday June 6, 1982 the Beach Hebrew Institute on Kenilworth Avenue was designated an historical site by the Toronto Historical Board. The event was co-sponsored by our Society and the Institute congregation.

A short ceremony at the Institute took place at the conclusion of a religious meeting in the building and the historical walk. Rod Travers-Griffin was Chairman of the event which was attended by our local M.P. Neil Young, our M.P.P. Marion Brydon and our Aldermen, Pat Sheppard and Dorothy Thomas. A Toronto Historical Board plaque was unveiled by Mayor Art Eggleton.

Arie Nerman, a member of our Society and President of the congregation, worked with Rod on the arrangements.

After the unveiling everyone enjoyed the refreshments provided by the congregation. This is the third historical plaque that the Society has had an interest in. The others are the St. John's plaque and the Dr. W. D. Young plaque.



### Wintergarden Theatre Tour

Members were so interested in Janis Barlow's talk on the Wintergarden Theatre restoration that she agreed to take them on a tour of the building. 20 members in running shoes, with flashlights in hand were taken back in history. Every nook and cranny of the theatre was examined, from washrooms to dressing rooms, from backstage to balcony. This tour was a first for the Society, and we thank Janis and the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture.

### Sesquicentennial Celebrations

As you know, the City of Toronto celebrates its 150th Anniversary on March 6, 1984. Our Society has formed a Committee of five persons to start planning activities in our area. We held a meeting on February 1, and the following suggestions were made:

1. Picnic at the Boardwalk with a competition for the best historical costume.
2. Canoe races in conjunction with the picnic.
3. Open air band concerts in conjunction with the picnic.
4. A parade similar to the Easter Parade.
5. Fireworks.
6. Tour of houses of historical architectural interest in the area.
7. Special edition of Ward 9 News on March 6, 1984.
8. Display of old photographs in selected front windows of shops.
9. Series of historical walks.
10. A memorial service to the area pioneers.

None of these events can take place unless we have your help and your ideas. Be prepared to help celebrate this great occasion.

Enclosed is a copy of the City's leaflet on the Sesquicentennial to whet your appetite.

### Malvern History Prize

This year the Society again sponsored a history prize at Malvern Collegiate. The prize book 'Practising History' by Barbara W. Tuchman was presented by President Rod Travers-Griffin to Aneurin Thomas at Commencement on November 6, 1981.



President Rod Sets The Record Straight

The Norway Post Office, those tumbledown, neglected buildings at 314 - 316, 320 - 322 Kingston Road have been a source of concern to me and to the Society since 1973. Here is the sequence of events about it by year:

- 1973 In a chance meeting with an old-timer, I learned that the Norway Post Office building was still in existence. I called the Toronto Historical Board and then wrote a letter suggesting some form of historical recognition such as a plaque, as preservation seemed doubtful. I also called the Toronto Post Office about the buildings, but they had not heard of them.
- 1974 The Toronto Historical Board added the buildings to their latest list of buildings of architectural/historical interest. The matter of a plaque was referred to a sub-committee for consideration. The Toronto Post Office employee paper published an article about the buildings from details I supplied. As a result of this article, the occupant of 320 gave me the owner's name, Mr. Harry Mort, 475 Woodbine Ave. His late wife was Fidelia Segriff, Post-Mistress from 1905 to 1923. I had a visit with Mr. Mort. I also wrote a long article about the Norway Post Office which was published in Ward 9 News on June 11.
- 1975 I wrote to Donald Jones, the newspaper columnist, and suggested he do an article for The Toronto Star. I heard nothing in reply from Mr. Jones.
- 1980 I wrote to the Toronto Historical Board again about the buildings. I suggested three options: save the building on the spot; move and restore it on another spot; erect a plaque if it is demolished. I also wrote another article which was published in Ward 9 News, "Should it be preserved. Century Old Post Office to Go". This article resulted in 4 phone calls, one of which was a tirade about wasting taxpayers' money restoring old buildings. At the May meeting of the Society I drew attention to the article. No one made any suggestions as to a course of action.
- 1981 The Toronto Historical Board informed us that a demolition order had been received from Cedarcrest Holdings Ltd. for the buildings. I wrote to the company regretting the destruction and suggesting that at least they could supply funds for a plaque as the Society lacked the necessary funds. Copies of my letter went to Alderman Pat Sheppard and the T.H.B. Cedarcrest agreed to our request for a plaque; however this was contingent on the attitude of any new owner. I informed Society members of the situation at the October meeting. They were unable to suggest a further course of action.
- 1982 The City of Toronto notified us of an Ontario Municipal Board hearing concerning the demolition permit to be held on June 17. A letter was sent to the City legal department at the behest of members protesting the demolition and the deterioration of the buildings. Two members attended the hearing which was held over until July as Cedarcrest had not issued proper notification.



TREASURER'S REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR

JUNE 1, 1981 to MAY 31, 1982

	<u>DR.</u>	<u>CR.</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>
Cash on Hand June 1, 1981			\$363.84
<u>Receipts</u>			
Membership		\$107.00	
Private Donations		35.00	
Ministry of Culture and Recreation Grant		219.50	
Bank Interest		8.41	
		<u>\$369.91</u>	
<u>Expenditure</u>			
Printing of Annual Report	\$100.89		
M.C.I. History Prize	21.50		
Membership In Ont. Hist. Soc.	12.00		
Postage and Office Supplies	21.92		
Filing Cabinet for Archives	200.09		
Files and Filing Supplies	47.90		
Inventory of Historical Buildings	5.00		
Donation to Beach Hebrew Institute	25.00		
Reproducing Pictures for Book	15.00		
Gift for Caretaker, Main St. Library	<u>12.95</u>		
	<u>\$462.25</u>		
Cash on Hand May 31, 1982			<u>\$271.50</u>

Ruth Thorne  
Treasurer

Archivist's Report

This year we invested in a four-drawer, legal-size lockable filing cabinet to house our expanding archival collection. We continue to receive additions to this collection from members of the Society and other interested members of the community. These contributions usually take the form of old photographs, publications of local interest or results of private research. We are always very pleased to be offered such treasures, whether they are to be added to our Archives "as is", or copied and returned to their owners.

Mary Campbell  
Archivist



### Book Committee Report

The current project of the Book Committee is progressing well. This takes the form of several reminiscences of long-time local residents, carefully edited and foot-noted by members of the Committee, and lavishly illustrated with photographs from local sources.

We now have a committment from Ward 9 Community News to help us with funding up to a maximum of \$1,300.00, subject to the following conditions:

1. their approval of the final mock-up,
2. their having first rights to all monies on the sale of the book to the extent that their costs are recovered, and
3. their dividing the subsequent profits equally with us.

We also have a very reasonable expectation of getting an equal amount from the Ontario Heritage Foundation. Since current estimates for printing exceed \$2,000.00, we will obviously need this additional backing.

Committee members are now putting the finishing touches on the basic manuscript and working on the research necessary to complete the footnotes. We expect to have this manuscript in the possession of the Ontario Heritage Foundation for its approval by the end of July 1982.

Mary Campbell  
Chairman  
Book Committee

### The Enoch Turner Schoolhouse Foundation

The schoolhouse is offering "Victorian People", an evening course in their popular History of Toronto series. The cost is \$50.00 and starts on September 23, 1982 from 7:30 - 9:30 pm and runs for four sessions.

On Saturday, September 11 and again on September 18 members of the Royal Ontario Museum's volunteer touring staff will guide participants in rediscovering the history and architecture of early Toronto. The walks begin at 11:00 am at 252 Adelaide St. E., (Bank of Upper Canada).

For further details on any of these events please call Lynne Kurylo, Curator of the Schoolhouse at 863-0010.



New Executive 1982 - 1983

OFFICERS

President	Barbara Myrvold
Vice President	Dawson Lang
Secretary	Joan Forge
Treasurer/Membership	Ruth Thorne
Past President	Rod Travers-Griffin

APPOINTMENTS

Archivist	Mary Campbell
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Photographer	Ken Smith
Official Greeters	Bill and Helen Porter
Speakers Committee	Gene Domagala

Have a good Summer. See you all in September.

Rod Travers-Griffin  
Past President