



- Society's square  
Ward 9 Sesquicentennial Quilt  
Designed by Gerry Burnett

A N N U A L   R E P O R T   1 9 8 3 - 1 9 8 4

a n d

NEWSLETTER NO. 7

OFFICERS

President  
Vice-President  
Secretary  
Treasurer/Membership  
Past President

Barbara Myrvold  
Dawson Lang  
Joan Forge  
Ruth Thorne  
Rod Travers-Griffin

APPOINTMENTS

Archivist  
Telephone Committee  
Chairman  
Photographer  
Programs

Mary Campbell  
Evaline Lang  
Ken Smith  
Gene Domagala



## PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

1983-84 was a very special year for the East Toronto and Beaches Historical Society. The year's highlights included the Society's tenth anniversary; Toronto's sesquicentennial; the completion of one and the awarding of a second government grant; extension of our Society's activities and programmes; special honours for Society members; and a significant increase in our membership.

In 1984 we celebrated our tenth anniversary as an organization, and Toronto marked its 150th year as a city. Both events focussed extraordinary attention on our local history and heritage, and in particular, the Sesquicentennial placed great demands on the energies of our Society. Barbara Myrvold, Rodney Travers-Griffin, and Gene Domagala performed double duties, serving on both the Historical Society's executive, and the Ward 9 Sesquicentennial Committee. The Society's major sesqui projects were the organization of an historical exhibit and local history walking tours. Both were very well received, and did much to increase the profile of the Society and Ward 9 history in the local area and throughout the city.

In 1984, the Society received its second federal grant of \$10,596, which enabled us to hire three researchers for 16 weeks to further investigate the primary sources of the area's history. Both the 1983 and 1984 summer projects have added immensely to the information and reference material the Society can offer to the public, our members and other organizations.

Ward Nine Community News honoured Mary Campbell, a very active member of this Society, as the 1983 recipient of its Doug White Award for her tremendous contribution to the paper. Mary has written articles, mostly on local history, for the newspaper almost from its inception more than ten years ago. She has done much to increase public awareness of Ward 9 history and the Society's activities.

Membership in the Society rose almost 44 per cent - from 68 to 98. No doubt this increase was due in part to the interest in local history generated by the City's sesquicentennial, and by the Society's emphasis on community outreach programmes.

Our regular meetings continued to offer a high calibre of speakers, who offered their services without charge. The Society continues to wrestle with the problem of finding a large enough, centrally-located and rent-free meeting place. Until such space can be found, we continue to be grateful to our two local libraries for providing meeting rooms which, unfortunately, since library renovations, are now actually smaller.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all those who supported the Society during the past extraordinary year, but especially our small but very hard-working executive. This hectic but memorable year placed a great strain on the executive, and I am indebted to them for their great help, support, and extra effort.

Barbara Myrvold, President



## MEETINGS

Monthly meetings were sponsored by the Society from October to May. Except for the March meeting which was held at the Beaches Recreation Centre on Williamson Road, meetings were located more or less alternatively at the Beaches and Main Street branches of the Toronto Public Library. Attendance ranged from a high of 80 to a low of 18, with an average attendance of 43 people.

Donna Ivey, supervisor of library services for the Consumers' Gas Company Limited began the 1983/84 season at the October 18 meeting. She showed slides to illustrate many interesting items from the company's 135-year history.

The Society's president, Barbara Myrvold, and archivist, Mary Campbell, presented slides of pictures and documents gathered from our 1983 Summer Canada project at the November 15 meeting.

On December 5, Gabriella Karadi, curator of historic houses for the Toronto Historical Board, gave members a sneak preview of the restoration of Spadina House, the Board's major sesquicentennial project.

On January 24, the Society marked an important milestone in its history - its tenth anniversary. To celebrate the occasion, Mary Campbell, the Society's first president, charter member and present archivist, gave a slide presentation of changes in Ward 9 in the last ten years and more. The overflow audience was very enthusiastic, and all joined in the celebration with an anniversary cake. Because there weren't enough seats at the small meeting room at Beaches Library for all those who wanted to see and hear the show, Mrs. Campbell repeated "Who Says the Beach Never Changes" on April 3, rescheduled from February 28 because of a snowstorm.

The Society's regular February meeting was held on Valentine's Day. George Rust-D'Eye, a Cabbagetown historian and member of the Toronto Historical Board, showed some spectacular slides of fires in old buildings and discussed the problems of fire prevention in historic structures.

In March, the Society marked Toronto's sesquicentennial by inviting Anne Kovacs, chairman of the Ward 9 Sesqui Committee, to outline sesqui celebrations in the area. Barbara Myrvold filled in at the last moment for an ailing Mike Filey. She showed slides of the Riverdale and Leslieville areas of Toronto.

Mike Filey was able to be with us at the April 28 meeting. The large crowd greatly enjoyed slides from his wonderful picture collection and his entertaining lively remarks on Toronto's history.

In May, the Society continued its annual tradition of inviting long-time area residents to share their recollections. Bert Dewar, long-time resident of Kimberley Street, remembered East Toronto in its heyday; Bob Henderson, who moved to the Beach at the age of two, recalled the 1920s in that area; and Don Snider traced his family through five generations of Beachers.



## SESQUICENTENNIAL PROJECTS

### a) Historical Display

The Historical Society's major Sesquicentennial project was the mounting and touring of an exhibition on Ward 9 history. The twelve-sided display illustrated through pictures, documents, and newspaper clippings various facets of life in the area from the 1830s to the 1920s.

Putting the exhibit together was a real community effort. Ward 9 Sesquicentennial Committee contributed \$1000 and Ward Nine Community News \$300 towards purchase of display panels, accessories, and picture reproduction. A committee of Society members, local residents and librarians, headed by Barbara Myrvold and Mary Campbell, researched and gathered material on the seven subject categories making up the exhibit.

This committee was composed of Mary Miller (religious institutions); Vivian Cushing and Diane Paddages (politics and civic services); Helen Travers-Griffin and Diana Taschereau (houses and hotels); Merille Brand (schools); Ray Corley (transportation); Laurie Richardson (industry and commerce); Barbara Weismann and Nicki Lawrence (recreation). Joan Forge, the Society's secretary, typed the picture captions and introductory material. Dennis Campbell cut the protective plexiglas panels. Kathi Baker designed invitations for the opening, and Rod Travers-Griffin distributed them. Toronto Public Library Publicity and Publications Department helped with photo reproduction. The major task of organizing the exhibit's touring schedule and booking it into various locations around the city was coordinated by Rodney Travers-Griffin.

His Worship Mayor Art Eggleton officially opened the exhibit at Beaches Library on February 4, 1984. The opening reception was the first event in Ward 9's sesqui celebrations. Ken Smith, the Society's photographer, took pictures of the event. It received excellent media coverage, including a segment on CITY-TV news. Local film director Mike Fuller used many pictures from the display for still shots on a 30-minute TV show on the Beach to be aired in October, 1984. This programme will be part of CBLT's neighbourhood series.



Historical Society President Barbara Myrvold, Past President Rodney Travers-Griffin and Mayor Art Eggleton officially opening the Ward 9 Sesquicentennial Exhibit at Beaches Library on February 4, 1984





## SESQUICENTENNIAL DISPLAY SCHEDULE - 1984

<u>Location</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Beaches Library 2161 Queen Street East	February 4 - March 3
Greenwood Racetrack Boot & Bridle Lounge	March 4 (for Ward 9 Sesqui Gala)
Bowmore Road Public School 80 Bowmore Road	March 5 - 19
Malvern Collegiate Institute 55 Malvern Avenue	March 19 - April 6
Glen Ames Senior Public School 18 Williamson Road	April 9 - 13
Market Gallery City of Toronto 95 Front Street East	April 14 - 28
Postal Station "H" 2315 Danforth Avenue	April 28 - May 4
Shoppers World Plaza 3003 Danforth Avenue	May 14 - 19
Bank of Nova Scotia Kingston Road and Main	June 15 (for 25th anniversary)
Toronto Board of Education 155 College Street	September 10 - October 5
Main Street Library 137 Main Street	October 9 - November 2
Toronto City Hall Rotunda	November 26 - 28



## Sesquicentennial Projects cont'd

b) Walking Tours

Gene Domagala undertook the coordination and leading of an ambitious programme of walking tours around Ward 9 for Toronto's sesquicentennial. The series began on April 15 with an historic and nature walk through St. John's Norway Cemetery and Church. Naturalist Fred Bodsworth, Society member Dawson Lang and church archivist Dorothy Dinsmore provided additional commentary, which increased the walkers' enjoyment. The mothers' group at the church served refreshments afterwards.

On May 13, Gene led an historic walking tour along Queen Street East between Corpus Christi Church and the Beaches Hebrew Institute. He was assisted by Society members Dorothy Gordon, who spoke about the Kew Beach Fire Hall; and Mary Campbell, who discussed Bellefair United Church. Arie Nerman provided commentary on the synagogue.

A Danforth Avenue walk led by Barbara Myrvold on June 17 had a small attendance because of a severe rainstorm. The few hardy souls who braved the elements were given an abbreviated tour, including a description of the Grand Trunk Railway yards by transportation expert Ray Corley.

Gene Domagala conducted a tour through the old Town of East Toronto in the Gerrard-Main area on July 15. His August 5 tour along the Boardwalk was co-sponsored by the Society and the Toronto Planning Department. This was part of a special city-wide "Tourific T0" series undertaken for Sesqui. An attractive brochure was issued for this walk. Additional commentary was provided by Alderman Tom Jakobek, who gave a history of the Leuty Avenue lifeguard station (where he had worked during his teens); by Alderman Dorothy Thomas, who described the fourplexes on Wineva Avenue constructed during the 1920s by Price Brothers; and by Balmy Beach Club historian Ken Bingham, who gave a history of that organization, and showed various canoes.

The Historical Society was involved with other walks, which it conducted at the request of various local and outside groups. Gene Domagala led two walking tours of the Beach area for Beaches Library, on June 16 and September 15. He also conducted walks for groups from the Baycrest Home for the Aged; the Annex area of Toronto; and various school classes. Barbara Myrvold took students from Glen Ames School and their guests from John Christian Erhardt Memorial School in Makkovik, Labrador on a tour of historic Beach sites on May 3.



## Sesquicentennial Projects cont'd

### c) Quilt

Gerry Burnett contributed a square for the Ward 9 Sesquicentennial quilt on behalf of the Society. With beautiful colours and stitchery, she depicted the Society's logo. The quilt was unveiled by Mayor Art Eggleton at Ward 9's giant Sesqui Gala at the Boot and Bridle Lounge at Greenwood Racetrack on March 4. The quilt will be on permanent view at Main Street Library.

### d) Parade

Gene Domagala organized a Ward 9 sesqui parade along Danforth Avenue and Main Street on June 24. Society president Barbara Myrvold rode in an open car with MPP Marion Bryden and Tom Howat, president of Ward Nine Community News.

### e) Scrapbook

The Ward 9 Sesqui Committee is assembling a documentary and photographic record of local sesqui activities, which it will deposit in the Historical Society's Archives at the end of 1984.

## OTHER OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

There were many requests for speakers from the Historical Society to address school, church and other community groups during Sesquicentennial year. Fortunately, many pictures in the Society's archives were reproduced on slides, greatly assisting speakers and making more interesting presentations.

Mary Campbell and Barbara Myrvold showed the slides to the Malvern Collegiate Home and School on November 7, and to a women's group at St. Paul's United Church in Scarborough on February 21. Barbara Myrvold was the guest speaker at Kew Beach United Church on May 14, for its women's group's special sesquicentennial dinner. She also showed slides to a Pathfinders group at Balmy Beach school on April 25.

Mary Campbell appeared on the Bryden Report, a Rogers Cable TV programme, on May 27. MPP Marion Bryden interviewed Mary, who showed slides of the area's history. The show was so well received that it was repeated four times over the next few months.



## PUBLICITY

Ward Nine Community News continues to be a great disseminator of information about the Society and local history. Notice of our meetings are listed in the paper's community calendar, and follow-up accounts of the meetings themselves are always published. Mary Campbell's ten-year review of the Historical Society's activities was the headline story on the front page of the January 17, 1984 issue. Without a doubt, this prominent coverage contributed to the very large crowd at the Society's tenth anniversary meeting. Scarcely an issue of the paper is published without some article or picture about the area's history. Once again, the Society must thank Joan Latimer, Sheila Blinoff and all the Ward Nine Community News staff for their great support.

Posters and telephone calls are the other major publicity activities of the Society. Ruth Thorne makes the posters announcing Society meetings and places them in our local libraries. Evaline Lang took over chairing the telephone committee, which faithfully informs members about upcoming meetings. The increase in the Society's membership increased the workload of the phoners, and we appreciate the extra time they had to devote to this. Such personal service is what makes our Society special.

## HERITAGE PRESERVATION

Two buildings from Ward 9 were added to the Toronto Historical Board's Inventory of Buildings of Architectural and Historical Importance during 1983/84:

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| 21 Swanwick Avenue | Emmanuel Presbyterian Church; 1893; addition 1914                                |
| 2 Willow Avenue    | Leuty Avenue lifesaving station; 1920; original owner Toronto Harbour Commission |

THB member Gene Domagala and Ward 9 alderman Tom Jakobek mustered considerable public support to have the Leuty Avenue lifesaving station listed on the Inventory. The frame building, now owned by the Metropolitan Toronto Police Department, Marine Division, is a lakefront landmark. It has been the subject of scores of paintings and photographs, and was threatened with demolition.

The Society's request that two sets of row housing - 31-45 Norwood Terrace and 41-65 Swanwick Avenue - be placed on the THB's Inventory was deferred pending further historical information.

Gene Domagala and Rodney Travers-Griffin worked with the THB on the text of a plaque to be placed by the Board on the site of the demolished Norway Post Office, Kingston Road near Woodbine Avenue. The official unveiling will take place in September 1984.



MALVERN HISTORY PRIZE

Andrew Williams was awarded the Grade 13 History Prize for Canadian History at Malvern Collegiate's commencement on November 4, 1983. Rodney Travers-Griffin presented the Society-sponsored award, a copy of Donald Creighton's Canada 1918-1945: The Age of Transition.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

for the fiscal year June 1, 1983 to May 31, 1984

Cash on hand and in the bank, June 1, 1983 \$488.38

Receipts

Memberships	\$165.00
Ministry of Culture & Citizenship grant	112.79
Bank interest	11.48
	<u>\$289.27</u>

Expenditures

Ontario Historical Society membership	\$ 12.00
Newsletter	42.15
Postage and office supplies	43.51
Malvern Collegiate history prize	24.95
Gifts to speakers	13.10
Refreshments for meetings	7.51
Bank charges	.40
Photocopying	8.07
Slides and photographs	92.02
Cake for 10th anniversary	20.00
Project overdraft	57.67
Sesqui display	152.61
	<u>\$473.99</u>

Cash on hand and in the bank May 31, 1984 \$303.66

Ruth Thorne, Treasurer



## ARCHIVIST'S REPORT (1983-4)

We successfully completed our 1983 summer research project (see last year's newsletter) with Nye Thomas, a University of Toronto student entering his third year of a History and Philosophy B.A. programme, replacing Paul Drum, who left the project to take another job. At the end of the summer, we had a quite comprehensive card file which indexes sources of local history information both in our archives and around the city. The pictures we collected in the course of the project were made into slides, which were often put to good educational use during Toronto's Sesquicentennial year.

The heightened awareness of local history also put our archives in great demand, and we received many requests for historical information. Some local students spent time looking through our archival material for school project information. We also used these resources for our own very successful travelling photo display.

We continue to receive historical material from members and non-members alike, so we feel that our influence is expanding, and our archives is growing and becoming more useful all the time.

This year we received a grant of \$10,596 from the Federal Government under the Summer Canada programme, to hire three university students to do research for us from May 14 to September 7. Barbara Myrvold and I worked closely with the students throughout the project.

We hired Grant Van Iderstine, an architecture student at the University of Toronto (with nine years of study and experience in his field) as project manager. This position involves all the bookkeeping for the project, as well as research work. The other researchers were Joanne Badali, who has her Master of Library Science from U. of T., and Hugh Garrett, a fourth year U. of T. student specializing in history, geography and cartography. (Joanne's family ran the well-known Badali's fruit store at the Beach for many years.)

These students took up the research tasks begun last summer, and added significantly to our information and material on this area. Grant's main work consisted of meticulous research into individual properties and early development areas, which led to his production of a series of maps, and a paper on "Historical Building Research in East Toronto and the Beaches." Joanne's work was mostly in the thorough indexing of newspapers and other printed sources for local content, and in the organization of this material. Hugh was assigned to the miscellaneous sources, and searched for specific information in deeds, statutes, wills, theses, minutes, magazines, picture collections, directories and assessment rolls.

Our present publication plans are for a Local History Handbook to be printed by the Toronto Public Library Board in 1986.

Mary Campbell, Archivist