

Fall 2011

Volume 9, Number 2

Harbord Village Residents' Association

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This newsletter is produced twice a year by the Harbord Village Residents' Association (HVRA) serving the part of Toronto bounded by Bathurst, Bloor, Spadina, and College. See Page 12 for information about HVRA or visit www.harbordvillage.com where this newsletter can be found in glorious colour.

Message from the interim chair of the HVRA board



Hi wonderful members of this even more wonderful community!

A great six months since the spring meeting – and yes another great year of activity for your local residents' association comes to a close with the expiry of the terms of office for the members of the board and the election of new officers at the AGM, taking place Tuesday, October 18th, at the Kensington Health Centre.

Some highlights of the year:

Heritage Preservation

Often the job of heritage conservation carries a negative

connotation: "Don't do this! You can't do that! The style police are at it again." And, in fact, over the last six months, some home owners inside the two HC districts did begin renovations to the fronts of their homes without a herit-



age permit. All were reported to Heritage Conservation Ser-

vices, and all were successfully negotiated to a satisfactory conclusion.

To be sure, no one likes to be told what to do, but sometimes heritage-sensitive people ask what would be right to do and then proceed to do it right.

This year has seen some excellent projects on the positive side of heritage preservation. Elsewhere in this issue you will see photos of some of those successful heritage projects. These plus others are up for HVRA Heritage Awards to be presented at the AGM.

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HVRA's 2011 Annual General Meeting

Tuesday October 18, 6:30 for 7:00 p.m.

Kensington Health Centre, 25 Brunswick Avenue

6:30 – 7:00	Meet, greet, catch up on your membership dues
7:00 – 7:45	Area caucuses, election of area representatives
7:45 – 8:45	HVRA board reports; election of officers; results of the Laneway Naming Project; Heritage Preservation Awards
8:45 – 9:00	Councillor Adam Vaughan's Q & A



"This has been an excellent project – HVRA is the better in so many ways because of projects like this one."

(Chair's letter continued from page 1)

The Farmers Market

The fourth season is nearly finished. Last market is Wednesday, October 26th, at the Green P Parking Lot south of Bloor at Borden. Great fresh fruit and vegetables, plus bread, beef, pork, maple syrup, honey and cheese.

The Robert Street Field Consultation

As you know, there was a very good response to an excellent online survey. The results were summarized and

in May shared with the University of Toronto. The big survey of their athletic facilities, including fields, has been temporarily put on hold, but should be resumed before Christmas – the time our input will be put on the table.

The Laneway Naming Project

The online balloting where the members of Harbord Village were given the opportunity to suggest names for individual lanes produced wonderful results. In all, we had more than 275 names suggested for

the 23 available lanes.

A jury was struck consisting of Tim Grant, Neil Wright, Bob Barnett and Margie Zeidler, who have held their first meeting. Deliberations are ongoing, and the results will be revealed at the AGM on October 18th. This has been an excellent project – HVRA is the better in so many ways because of projects like this one.

Rory "Gus" Sinclair, HVRA chair (pro tem)

Three Harbord Villagers named to the Order of Canada

"Three outstanding new Order of Canada recipients are living in our midst."

Is there something in the water???

Harbord Village has yet more things about which to be bursting with pride. Three outstanding new Order of Canada recipients are living in our midst.

Terence Macartney-Filgate



Terence Macartney-Filgate of Willcocks Street is a groundbreaking cinematographer and documentary filmmaker

He was made an Officer of the Order of Canada on May 26, 2011 for his contributions to world cinema as a cinematographer whose groundbreaking documentaries have been recognized in Canada and internationally for many years.

The veteran filmmaker's career spans more than 50 years, with his most recent credit as director of the TV documentary *Raising Valhalla* (2007), as well as being the director of the three-part *Canada Remembers* (1995), *The Magical Eye* (1989) and the six-part shorts *Lewis Mumford on the City* (1963), among others.

Macartney-Filgate got his start with the NFB as a scriptwriter in 1956 and directed his first film the same year. Ever since, he has been a director, cinematographer and producer of many films, and was perhaps the most important single influence on the development of direct cinema in the *Candid Eye* series with responsibility for seven of the 13 films made for that series.

His characteristic observational style can be seen in *The Days Before Christmas*, *Blood and Fire*, *Police* and *The Back-Breaking Lear*. In the mid-'70s he made several major documentaries as well as dramatized documentaries, including *Lucy Maud Montgomery: The Road to Green Gables*, *Grenfell of Labrador*, *Dieppe 1942* and *Fields of Endless Day* (on Canada's black population).

(Continued on page 3)

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Mary Lou Fallis of Borden Street is a renowned performer and broadcaster

She was made a Member of the Order of Canada in June 2011 "for her contributions, as a performer and broadcaster, in making classical music more accessible to Canadians across the country."

Fallis holds a unique position in the music scene as "Canada's foremost musical comedienne." Known to thousands of viewers and listeners across the country for the Bravo! television series *Bathroom Divas*, her CBC Radio series *Diva Diaries*, and to hundreds of theatregoers for her *Primadonna* series of one-woman shows, Fallis in her inimitable way has reinvented the classical music comedy genre.

A favourite of the late great Anna Russell, Fallis made her operatic debut at 16 years of age as the second spirit in a CBC Television production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. Since obtaining the first Masters degree in Performance and Literature from the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto, her career has encompassed performances of major oratorios and choral works with leading orchestras, as well as opera, with roles ranging from Despina in *Così fan Tutte* to Zerbinetta in R. Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos*. In addition to her North American engagements Fallis has toured the United Kingdom extensively, appearing in London's West End, Covent Garden International Festival, the Wexford Opera Festival, and

the Edinburgh International Festival. More recent seasons have included appearances in Japan and Iceland.

Her grandfather was minister of Trinity St. Paul's United Church on Bloor in the 1930s, and besides her travelling and performing she maintains an office and voice studio there. She is married to Peter Madgett, and with their dog Percy, they remain on Borden, their two grown children having flown the nest.

Patricia 'Patsy' Aldana of Major Street is the publisher of Groundwood Books.

She was appointed as a Member of the Order of Canada for her contributions to children's publishing in Canada and around the world.

Aldana founded Groundwood Books in 1978 in response to the perceived lack of a children's literary tradition in Canada. Incorporated into House of Anansi Press in 2005, Groundwood is committed to publishing books that feature representations of marginalized voices and experiences that are not often heard. Groundwood Books has won 17 Governor General's Literary Awards to date.

Internationally, Aldana has just completed a term as the president of the International Board on Books for Young People. She was most recently named the 2011 recipient of the Ontario Library Association Les Fowlie Intellectual Freedom Award.

An op-ed from the January 3, 2011 edition of *The Globe and*

Mail is excerpted below:

"Adults sometimes forget what reading means to children. Patsy Aldana of Toronto, publisher of Groundwood Books, who was named a member of the Order of Canada last week, has made children's reading her life's work. Reading is healing, she says. Reading is a window into oneself and others. Reading is a bulwark of democracy. And we don't do enough, she says, to nurture our children's love of reading.

"Each child, Ms. Aldana says, should have access to books that are right for him or her. She is distressed that, in Ontario surveys, children and teenagers report that they are getting less pleasure from books than they used to. She blames that on an education system that in her view puts too much emphasis on literacy as a skill for future workers, and not enough emphasis on reading pleasure. Reading 'talks to you about who you are, or it tells you something about who the other is. So they're windows and mirrors.' And it's essential to becoming a free person in a democratic society. 'If you become a reader, you have a chance to become a critical thinker, to be a person who has some power over your life.'"

Congratulations to these wonderful people who have accomplished so much and been recognized with the Order of Canada. Harbord Village is the richer for their presence.

Rory "Gus" Sinclair, HVRA chair (pro tem)



Mary Lou Fallis



Patsy Aldana



Harbord Village: hot for heritage

61 Brunswick Avenue saved from demolition

"A house that was dying a slow death has been saved, and restored to its original status as the finest among its neighbours."

61 Brunswick, before restoration (left) and after (right)



61 Brunswick Avenue is something of a mystery. One of the finest houses in Harbord Village, it was designed by an unknown architect and completed in 1895, in the Queen Anne style, which makes it unique in the neighbourhood. Its first owner was Martha Fortune, widow of John Fairburn Scott, but its notable owner was Rabbi Solomon Langner, who arrived in Toronto from Poland in 1923 and moved into 61 Brunswick Avenue in 1924. Solomon Langner was rabbi of the Kiever Synagogue on Denison Square, south of Kensington Market, from 1929 until his death in 1973, and his brass plate remained attached to 61 Brunswick until the house was sold in 2010.

Lobbying of the Department of Buildings and Inspections to save 61 Brunswick Avenue from demolition by neglect began around a decade ago, before Brunswick Avenue, from College to Ulster, became part of the first phase of the Harbord Village Heritage Conservation District. But all that could be done in those pre-HCD days was to make the house safe. Its decay continued, and its eventual demolition seemed inevitable. Pressure to save the house was renewed when the HCD was established in April 2005, but even then, nothing happened, until, in the fall of 2009, the file was taken up by Georgia Kuich of Heritage Preservation Services. Thanks to her efforts, the logjam broke.

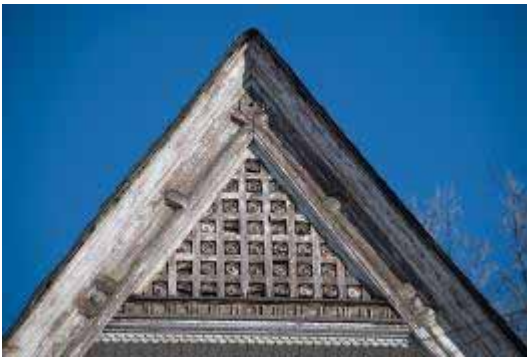
In the spring of 2010, 61



Brunswick Avenue was acquired by restoration contractor Alberto Merelles of A Custom Spaces and Carpentry. Many of us were worried with what might now happen to this still beautiful but seriously dilapidated house, but Alberto assured us it would be restored. To convince us, he pointed to his beautiful restoration of another house in Harbord Village, 139 Brunswick Avenue. Now, in the fall of 2011, the restoration of 61 Brunswick is almost complete. It has a new slate roof with eavestroughs, downspouts and flashing in copper, and its brickwork has been entirely restored – a process that required the removal, reversal and replacement of hundreds of bricks and the replacement with recycled antique brick of hundreds more that were so deteriorated by water damage they could not be saved. Most important, 61 Brunswick's spectacular decorative woodwork has been entirely and faithfully restored and painted, in a colour scheme that is appropriate for a house built in Toronto in the 1890s.

The debt owed by Brunswick Avenue and Harbord Village to Alberto Merelles is incalculable. A house that was dying a slow death has been saved, and restored to its original status as the finest among its neighbours.

*Richard Longley,
68 Brunswick Ave*



Detail of 61 Brunswick, before restoration (left) and after (right)

Good neighbours make good porches

Rene and Elizabeth Roy teamed up with Stuart and Joan Schoenfeld to carry out their façade and porch renovation at 208-210 Robert Street as part of HVRA HCD Phase II.

They consulted the HVRA heritage study architect Cathy

Nasmith. Acting on her advice, they engaged Leigh Bamford and Assoc. (stoneangels.ca) to restore the brickwork. Repairs were made using reclaimed bricks from demolished houses. The restoration also encompassed stripping, cleaning, and repointing. The porch was repaired. Now trim colour

matches that of Peter Klavara at 212 Robert, so the houses will blend.

The best part has been for Joan and me to work on it with Rene and Liz, who are good neighbours.

Stuart Schoenfeld

208 and 210 Robert Street after restoration





Kensington Health supports heritage revival

"This summer, the Kensington Foundation and Health Centre unveiled the fully restored building, which is now home to the Kensington Hospice for the provision of palliative and end-of-life care."

In 1892, the Chapel of the Sisters of St. John the Divine was built at 38 Major Street. From 1969 to 1998, it became adjunct to Doctors Hospital. For the last 10 years, the chapel was unused and deteriorating.

This summer, the Kensington Foundation and Health Centre unveiled the fully restored building, which is now home to the Kensington Hospice for the provision of palliative and end-of-life care.



Below left and centre: the front of 38 Major in 2000 and now. Above right: conserved original hammer beam roof, showing new stained-glass windows in the south (left) and north walls. Below right: detail of one of the windows.

The Mother Foundress of the Anglican Sisters overruled the chief architect Frank Darling and insisted on the magnificent hammer beam roof. (He favoured solid buttresses. She thought them unappealing.)

The original stained glass was removed by the Sisters when they left the site in 1969. Those windows have been

replaced with ones honouring the purpose of the hospice, while respecting the design of the originals.

Kensington Health Centre has been nominated for the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario's Peter Stokes Restoration Award for the restoration of the former Chapel of the Sisters of St John the Divine at

38 Major Street, through its transformation into the Kensington Hospice (which was to welcome its first residents this fall).

The award will be presented at ACO's awards dinner at the Arts and Letters Club on November 11. Since HVRA is an associate member of ACO, members of HVRA will be welcome to attend the dinner, which is a wonderful occasion.

Richard Longley





How to heritage

WHERE is Harbord Village's Conservation District?

Phase I: Brunswick below Ulster, Willcocks and flanking properties on Spadina and Robert.

Phase II: Robert Street, from College to Bloor, Russell to Spadina, Spadina Circle north to St. Vlad's, Sussex east of Robert to Spadina. Check har-

bordvillage.com for links to History and Heritage.

WHAT do you need? A heritage permit from the City of Toronto's Heritage Preservation Services for work on façades, including windows, trim, porch details. Remember, fixing porches can require a building permit! For heritage information, go to <http://www.harbordvillage.com>.

WHO can do the work? Check HVRA's restorer's guide at the website.

If your house is outside the conservation district, remember HVRA is committed to extending the district's boundaries. Please don't miss an opportunity to restore your house and help ensure the whole of our neighbourhood is restored to its Victorian past.

"HVRA is committed to extending the district's boundaries. Please don't miss an opportunity to restore your house and help ensure the whole of our neighbourhood is restored to its Victorian past."

Is your front door a treasure?

In 1980, the red painted doors on 97 Willcocks were stripped by hand. Ghost shadows of the original mouldings were revealed, suggesting the doors had once been a handsome feature of the house.

In 2011, Alan Stacey of Heritage Mill (info@heritagemill.ca) recreated the original trim, building out from the tracing of the original mouldings. He refurbished the doors, rationalized the welter of locks and bolts and custom-fitted weatherstripping to create the first, tight, seal. Handsome doors, indeed.

Susan Dexter



Right: doors removed for restoration. Left: detail during restoration work. Centre: restored doors





No grant, but history project continues

"If every reader identified just one person who holds memories of our social past, we would be able to assemble a perspective of neighbourhood social history ..."

HVRA has been unsuccessful in securing support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (which disburses lottery money) to hire a coordinator for its history project — described in the last newsletter. We'll return to securing support for such a position in 2012.

In the meantime, our work continues with volunteer coordination — more slowly and less professionally, but with at least as much enthusiasm.

HVRA's History Group would like to interview seniors who have had a long history in Harbord Village. Maybe it's you. Maybe your parents, or your next door neighbours? Maybe they grew up here decades ago but now live elsewhere. Or, maybe they're still quietly in the same house near you where they were born in the 1920s.

Perhaps they were among the first Portuguese or Chinese arrivals and saw remarkable

social transitions in our neighbourhood firsthand. Can you help us locate those who hold the living memory of Harbord Village?

Imagine, if 75 years ago, the elders of our community had been systematically interviewed about their experiences in Harbord Village! Their recorded voices would have described daily life in the same houses we occupy today, but in ways many of us can barely imagine: horses and coal deliveries in lane-ways, outdoor kitchens, and the monumental social and economic impacts of the Great War and the Great Depression. Imagine what we could learn about our history from those recordings, had they been made.

Imagine, if 75 years from now, our heirs to this community could listen to *our* voices, stretching back to when our community was only half its

age. What would we tell them about? The boys who went to fight in Europe in the 1940s? The social transitions brought by waves of Jewish and then Portuguese settlers? The defeat of the Spadina Expressway? The rise of environmental consciousness and sustainable living?

There is one way to find out! Please nominate current or former community members you know who might share their experiences of living in Harbord Village. Oral histories will be collected through quiet interviews with an empathetic interviewer, at a convenient time and place. If every reader identified *just one person* who holds memories of our social past, we would be able to assemble a perspective of neighbourhood social history that we believe would be unprecedented anywhere in Toronto, if not beyond. Please send your suggestions to history@harbordvillage.com.

Fall Fair photos on this and the next page by Mario Cupido



Early on Sunday morning, September 11, Margaret Fairley Park was bathed in warm sunshine that lasted in its full glory all day. As we say in the business of holding outdoor events, "You pick a day and then you pray." What a great day it was!! Having done 18 Fall Fairs to date, I have to say that this was one of the very best.

Fall Fair 2011

We made more money this year than we have for the previous three years, and even more if you consider that those editions of the fair had little or no security expenses. We seem to have solved the problem of the approximately \$700 security deficit by reducing the expenses, and Marco Cupido has been brilliant in scrounging free or heavily discounted beer and food. Congrats Marco!

We had very little food left over, so Rita Elias Faria hit it

right again. The music was about 50 percent new this year and was outstanding in variety and liveliness. Well done Paul Bagnell, our music co-ordinator!!! The four groups of shift volunteers came through like clockwork, so thanks to Marco for the alcohol shifts, James Murdoch and Margaret Beare for the burger-flipping contingent, Carmen Gauthier and Bettina von Lieres for the ticket-selling, and Jess Humphreys

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for the fabulous volunteers at the silent auction-raffle table.

None of this would have happened without the pleasant persistence of Laura Bradbury on the permits. She worked a Sisyphean task against the inertia of the various city departments and came out the winner. Jan Muszynski brought in enormous quantities of swag for the raffle and silent auction. I dunno how he does it, but the revenue from the raffle and S/A was nearly \$2,100. Mary Newberry and Colleen Whyte phoned neighbours and had them bring baked goods and produce to sell, and brought in \$400+.

And for setup...many of you showed up and pitched in, but

there were some other volunteers who helped both with setup and the takedown. Bryn Jones was tireless and fast in putting up the stage and taking it down.

This is the very essence of community building -- for those who set it in motion as well as for those who attend. There were a ton of new faces helping out this year. That always bodes well as these new people have now entered the gaping maw that is volunteering in future for HVRA or perhaps even taking a position on the board!!! The attendance was steady and full throughout the day. Many times I heard people say that they were coming for just a few minutes and ended up lingering for a few hours. This means our members are lov-

ing what we do. Ye all do so much, so well for your community. See ya next year!

Rory 'Gus' Sinclair





Commemorating William James, photographer

William James is the best-known photographer of Toronto during the first half of the last century. He lived at 250 Major Street from 1913 to 1921. His residence there is commemorated by a plaque on the house, where a small celebration of his work was held on June 20.

The following is written about him at the City of Toronto's website:

William James emigrated to Canada from England in 1906. Shortly afterwards he established himself as a commercial photographer.

news photographers in Toronto, supplying images to the seven or eight dailies and weeklies. The Daily Star was James' best customer, buying his photos until 1938.

For a time his sons Joseph, William Jr., and Norman worked in the business with him.

James was particularly noted for his technical expertise and sense of composition. He was one of the first photographers to recognize the value and potential impact of unposed, human-interest snapshots. This immediacy and informality resulted in candid, often humorous and sometimes dramatic documentary photos.

Archives acquired the William James collection of 6,000 photos and negatives. Another 5,000 lantern slides, many hand-coloured, were acquired later. James' images remain some of the most popular and frequently published of the Archives' collections.

Several of his photos taken in and near Harbord Village are shown on this and the next pages. These photos are in the Archives' Fonds 1244. The relevant reference number is given with each one. When viewed at the HVRA website, all can be massively expanded to reveal fascinating detail.

William James Sr. died in 1948.

Carmen Gautier

He was one of the first

In 1976, the City of Toronto

Clockwise on this page from the top: William James binding lantern slides in 1922 (3514). College Street looking west in 1911 from the Bellevue Fire Hall clock tower (2424). Milk-bottle shaped water tower on the building between Russell and Bancroft on Spadina Crescent when it was the Borden Dairy, in about 1916 (2544). Installing the front-yard fountain at Gage House in 1912, now the site of the Shoppers Drug Mart store on Bloor (3091). View in 1910 of the Spadina-Harbord intersection from the roof of Knox Church (10028).





Spadina Ave 1906 looking N on east side (Knox North #634 from below Dundas St. above in distance)

Clockwise on this page from top left: View of Major Street in 1913, looking north.; the two youngest of William James' seven children are on the steps of 250 Major (7104).

Spadina Avenue in 1906 looking north from below Dundas (634). Location of Central Technical School before its construction in 1913-14 (7030). Gates of Knox College on Spadina Crescent in 1908; they were removed about 10 years later (324). Composition entitled Children Living In Slums, likely taken near Harbord Village in about 1911 (8033). College Street from the Bellevue Fire Hall clock tower looking east in 1908 (2460).





This issue of the HVRA Newsletter
has been edited by Jane Auster.
Layout: Richard Gilbert.

HVRA Board 2010-11

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UofT	Sue Dexter	964-9527	susan.dexter@rogers.com
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SE	Bettina von Lieres	923-5840	bvonlieries@sympatico.ca
SE	Angie Andreoli	830-5340	angieandreoli@hotmail.com

Membership stuff

- **Already a member?** Thanks. In particular, sincere thanks to all of you who have honoured us with your Supporting and Fanatic memberships, which have supported many of the new initiatives we've undertaken.
- **Haven't had a chance to renew?** Now's the time. Simply fill out the renewal slip below and mail it with your cheque.
- **Not yet a member?** Now's the time! Meet your neighbours, have some fun and perhaps devote a few hours to something you want to improve. No time to spare? We understand. But by simply joining, you'll add your name to our ever-growing roster and help make HVRA's voice even better heard at City Hall.
- **Ideas for how to grow our membership, and strengthen connections?** Please contact membership secretary Katrina McHugh at kmchughc521@rogers.com.

HVRA Membership & Renewal Form

Not a member yet? Know someone who should be a member?
Please join – to help us continue building a great neighbourhood!

2012 HVRA Membership

(Membership renewal period for 2012 is September–December 2011;
new members joining for 2012 between September 1 and October 18, 2011 are
eligible to vote and stand for office at the October 18, 2011 general meeting.)

Please mail to: Harbord Village Residents' Association

P.O. Box 68522
360A Bloor Street West
Toronto, M5S 1X1

Please check one:

- ☐ Voting Member (individual) \$5/one year; \$10/two years
- ☐ Supporting Member (to support HVRA activities)..... \$20/one year; \$40/two years
- ☐ Fanatical Member (to really support HVRA activities!) \$50/one year; \$100/two years



Payment can be made via PayPal or credit card at our website: (www.harbordvillage.com) or mail a cheque payable to the Harbord Village Residents' Association, and include:

Name.....New?.....Renewal?.....

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