

# HARBORD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Volume 13, Issue 1



Fall 2013 Newsletter

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF HVRA'S BOARD

### So Much is Going On!

By: Tim Grant

**A**n HVRA board member recently explained that the "busyness" of the proposed design of a new Harbord Village t-shirt was intentional: a reflection of what a busy place our neighbourhood is. As I looked around the table, all heads were nodding. At that moment, we were all sold on the design in front of us.

We do live in a very busy neighbourhood. So many neighbours are involved in community-building projects. Three of those projects – our most successful-ever Fall Fair, our History Project and the Laneway Naming Project – are described in this newsletter. The redevelopment of Margaret Fairley Parkette is at the halfway mark, and led by a very active Friends group. A group of green thumbs keep large flowerpots full of seasonal

greenery on Harbord Street. Plans are now well-advanced for the Harbord Village Pumpkin Festival on November 1<sup>st</sup> and the next Litter and Glitter Clean-Up on November 23<sup>rd</sup>. Literally hundreds of people volunteer their time for these and other neighbourhood projects.

This busy neighbourhood continues to face daunting challenges. Student residences of more than 20 stories in height have been proposed for the west side of Spadina on the former post office site and that of the Waverley Hotel. A Vancouver developer just purchased the "Mirvish block" that includes Honest Ed's, and will develop that site in a few years. Our challenge will be to ensure that whatever development occurs on these sites actually strengthens the neighbourhood, rather than disrupts it.

I've written in the past about the unruly bars that over-



serve alcohol, and landlords who crowd too many students into area houses. Our efforts continue in seeking the reform of the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario so that unruly bars face greater penalties. We're also pressing the city to establish an enforcement system in support of its own noise bylaws. Both of these efforts are frustratingly slow.

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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 St, Bloor St W, Spadina Ave, and College St.**

**See the last page for information about HVRA or visit [www.harbordvillage.com](http://www.harbordvillage.com).**



## FALL FAIR 2013



By Rory Gus Sinclair

**W**ell on September 8<sup>th</sup>, the day dawned bright and sunny and warm. This of course turns out to be the crucial factor in the success of an outdoor event like the HVRA Fall Fair – all the organization and fabulous prep in the world can be trumped by the weather. And in the 21 years I have been involved in this premier event in HV, we have only had to call it off once – in 2008 for Hurricane Hugo. But there were other occasions where the weather was on the cool side and that made a difference both to the bottom line financially and to the general success as people do not linger when it is too cool – and beer sales suffer as well.

For the “perfect storm” where everything, especially the weather, fell into place and where all went if not according to plan, then better than that, you need look no further than the 2013 Edition of the HVRA Fall Fair.

The BBQ's were busy right from 12 noon and we sold out of virtually everything.. We usually take our left over food to the Scott Mission and this year there was only one box of buns and some sausages and a few condiments, The Bake Sale Table set a record and the Beer Sales set a record.

The Silent Auction set a BIG record – nearly \$1000 more than last year which was a record up to that point.

The Raffle set a record but it was not enough that the sales were record breaking, the expense side was way down from last year: The Beer was mostly donated, and the food was entirely donated So we made more money on goods that cost us less. The net result is a profit of nearly \$3500 which is \$850 more than last year – a record profit to that point.

But... But... BUT!!! As good as the money was, the real point of the Fall Fair is a bigger fish.. the great community feeling of being in the park on a warm and sunny day and seeing so many kids dashing around and at times dancing and jumping to the music, hearing such fine musicians participating in our fun by providing superb music and all for a burger and a beer per player. When the Caribbean Band came on, I have never seen so many feetses and tushes moving as one.

There was a terrific amount of help in putting this event on. There was a committee of 15 people who were the core of the organization but they in turn called in friends and neighbours to assist them. Extraordinary really! The community is stronger in so many ways from such an event.

So as you read this, just for a moment, put your hands together and give a short round of applause for these fine neighbours

who put in such time and effort. They will hear you I am sure.

As you all probably know by now, this is my last go at chairing the Fall Fair Committee. 9 years as a member of the Committee and then 12 years as its chair – means it is time for new blood and new energy. When the new people are identified, I have said I will be willing to provide advice and moral and practical support if requested.

Thanks one and all for the enormous support you have given me in producing this event!



## HISTORY OF THE FALL FAIR IN 1974- 2013



The Sussex-Ulster Residents' Association (SURA) was one of the earliest of the community based RAs that were inspired by the election of Major David Crombie – then dubbed the “Tiny Perfect Mayor”. The atmosphere was dramatically changed, the teachings of Jane Jacobs were then very new, and the watchword was: power has to start locally. SURA was then a force of nature, and aside from being very active in the city in general, also made sure that the locals were consulted as well as entertained.

Celia Denov was one of the early members of SURA, and it was she who organized the first outdoor event in the park in 1974, with the parties ending temporarily when she moved away in 1978.

In 1993 then president of SURA, Catherine Cragg, suggested starting up a new outdoor party

which she wanted to call “Downtown Country”. Celia leapt to the challenge and organized the first of nine such events that set the tone and tenor for what eventually became known as the Fall Fair. She started from scratch, organized the committee structure that we still use today, and lent the enormous energy to make this the premier social event in HV. It is a truly remarkable gift that she presented to her community.

So here is some kind of record that cannot be beaten: Celia organized these wonderful events in three different decades – the 70s, 90s and 2000s! And in 2013 she was chair of the Food Handler Committee – so make that four decades! There is no one like her.

I was a member of Celia's committee right from the start in 1993, so I had a firsthand look at how it should be done and was well-prepared to take over from her as chair in 2002, remaining in that role till 2013.

Over the years the take from the Fall Fair descended from approximately \$2,000 per event to a nadir of \$1,100 in 2010. But with some ingenuity and sponsor generosity, we managed to get the food donated for the last three Fall Fairs. The profit reached a new record in 2012 of \$2,600, a record smashed in 2013 with a profit of approx \$3,500!

These funds go directly to HVRA general revenue and are used for various initiatives such as prizes for public school essay contests, green initiatives like subsidized energy audits for HVRA members, 1,600 copies twice a year of the newsletter that



you hold in your hand right now, semi-annual neighbourhood clean-ups, and much, much more. Visit [www.harbordvillage.com](http://www.harbordvillage.com) to see the full list of activities.

But I feel the financial side is not really the major benefit to the community – as great as that is for the health of HVRA. What really kept us [Celia and me] going and expending this enormous effort is the beauty of the event itself. The members of HV love and support the Fall Fair because it is a “feel good” party, a multi-generational event with kids running circles around their parents with wildly painted faces, and an opportunity to put aside arguments about garbage or parking when folks are making grand dance moves to an Island beat playing full tilt all in an atmosphere of good will and good cheer.



**All Fall Fair Photos were clicked by:  
Eleanor Levine**



## HISTORICAL PROJECTS

By: Nicole Shulman

In 2012 the Harbord Village Residents' Association received a grant from the Trillium foundation to capture the memories of current and former residents of Harbord Village about the neighbourhood and how it has changed from roughly the 1930s to the present. Our goal was to record, transcribe, and index interviews with 100 people who lived or worked in the area between 1930 and 1980. Those interviews, along with the transcripts and index, would be publicly available on our website. They would serve as the basis for a series of "StoryPosts" – locally placed plaques with interactive QR codes, via either their smartphone or the website, allowing people to hear about life in the neighbourhood and how it has changed. The interviews would also serve as the basis for a local

exhibition on *Life in Harbord Village*, which would include elements that could be used by local schools.

We have completed interviews with 100 people, sometimes with two people interviewed at the same time (generally parent and child or couples). Almost everything has been transcribed.

We have three indexers working their way through the transcripts, and we are currently developing the StoryPosts (both editing the audio files and designing the actual plaques). In addition, our website will be finished in November, and our show will take place at the Miles Nadal JCC through November 20th to December 16th, 2013.

We still welcome the

opportunity to digitally reproduce photographs of the neighbourhood for possible use in the show and on the website, and may continue to conduct interviews for inclusion on the website. You can contact us at

[history@harbordvillage.com](mailto:history@harbordvillage.com).



There are 14 concrete planters placed by the city at various intersections of our residential streets. Most are cared for by anonymous neighbourhood gardeners who have quietly taken on the job of keeping them planted, healthy and watered.

## A HARBORD VILLAGE MYSTERY who are our concrete planter GARDENERS?

**We thank you!** We'd like to know who you are. And we'd like to know if you would like some help: maybe with the watering, maybe with additional plants harvested from neighbours' gardens.

If you have any information about our mystery gardeners — or would like to offer help with watering or planting — please contact HVRA board member Wendy Smith at [wendy@wendysmithtoronto.com](mailto:wendy@wendysmithtoronto.com)



## LANEWAY LORE



### Tribute to Great Grandfather Albert Jackson

By: Rochelle (Jackson) McDowell

**M**y name is Rochelle (Jackson) McDowell and I am a great-granddaughter and just one of the many, many ancestors of Albert Jackson, Toronto's first black postman.

The recent July

2013 unveiling of the street sign and lane naming in Toronto in honour of great-grandfather Albert by the Harbord Village Residents' Association was a proud day, but also one of reflection and great reverence.

This day held much meaning for my family not only for the historical value it holds in the city but also because the lane is located in the vicinity of Brunswick Ave. and Borden St. where Jackson ancestors permanently settled, came to own many properties, and still hold residence today.

After arriving via the Underground Railroad, a treacherous journey from Delaware, USA, his mother Ann Maria, a runaway slave, struggled to make a living and send her children to get the education they most certainly would have been denied in the United States. Their brave journey and struggles thereafter in Canada paved the way for us, their ancestors, and left a legacy and impression unparalleled in our family history.

I have been researching our Jackson family history (Canadian and American roots)

for my father Lawrence Jackson, Albert's only surviving grandson, as well as two granddaughters, Priscilla and Juney, since December 2000. Never did I anticipate that one of our ancestors would have such a colourful and fascinating story. The discovery and documentation of great-grandfather's story by others has unearthed many interesting and amazing facts. This previous research has helped me in my search to find and piece together even more of our family history.

Since I live in the United States, I now feel compelled to find and visit some of the areas in Virginia, Ohio and Delaware where my ancestors lived as freemen as well as slaves. It is wonderful that the story of Albert, his treacherous journey to Canada as a baby, and proud struggle to make a living like any other man, is now written down for posterity. Our family is also very fortunate to have photographs of this proud and stately man who changed the face of the Toronto Post Office forever.

All the events and festivities have been a long time coming but have all culminated in many honours and recognition for the man we call great-grandfather. The many organizations and people who have recognized, honoured and written about the importance of Albert's struggle as a black man settling in Ontario, Canada is not lost on the Jackson family. Words cannot express the deep and heartfelt appreciation we have for all of you. We humbly thank you for all of the honours bestowed upon our beloved ancestor now and in the future.

### Boys of Major Lane

By Neal Wolk

**I**t was quite the honour for me and my family to be part of your community's effort to name the laneway behind Major Street at Harbord "The Boys of Major Lane". For me personally, it was an honour to speak to the relatives and friends of these boys to notify them of your efforts and of course endeavour to get them to come to the cere-

mony on July 7, 2013 to unveil the name of the laneway. The ceremony itself was very moving and was very well attended, just adding to the importance of this area and its history.

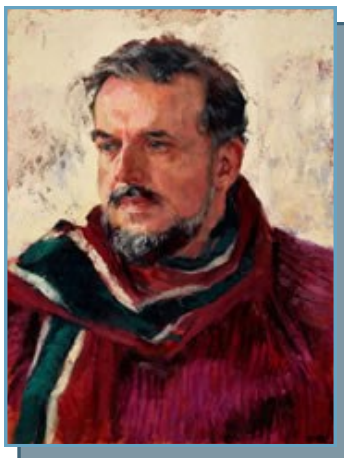
It is quite refreshing for me to see a neighbourhood come together and recognize the history of the very area that the current residents work, live, and play in. Yes, adding names to these laneways for security purposes was your primary aim and goal. But to go back into the annals of time and pick out significant names in your neighbourhood's history and

apply them to these previously unmarked and unnamed laneways is truly sensational.

All of your endeavours have made it possible for these boys, who went overseas to fight for this great country in World War II, to be forever etched into Toronto's history with a street sign in their honour in the very neighbourhood that they too lived and played in. Without your efforts in putting forward the necessary applications to the City of Toronto, the naming of this laneway would not have been possible.

To the Harbord Village Residents Association, on behalf of my family, including my Great Uncle Pilot Solomon Kay, God bless and many thanks for The Boys of Major Lane.

## LANEWAY LORE



**The Alan Powell Laneway**

By Helen Breslauer

I was a close friend of Alan Powell's, as well as his colleague, and spoke at the naming of his lane. He was a man of letters, in many ways. His whole name was Alan Thomas Rees Powell, and many of his friends referred to him as "ATR." The degrees he attained represented other letters: B.A. (Leicester), M.A. (Alberta), Ph.D. (Toronto).

The lane naming was a lovely event, and those who knew Alan in different ways spoke movingly about him. We spoke about his contributions to the neighbourhood and the city, to people – his students, colleagues, friends, and others who suffered from Hepatitis C, which was the disease that he so unfairly acquired from tainted blood, and which eventually caused him to die far too young. He would have loved

the occasion, although, had he been there, there would have been lots of wonderful food and drink – including champagne and strawberries!

When Gus asked me to write something for the newsletter about the lane naming, I was hurriedly preparing to leave for a trip to Europe. Since he wanted the copy relatively quickly, I took the text of my talk along with the intention of using it as the basis for this article. As I write now, I am in Wroclaw, Poland, which, before all the treaties and land shifts after WWII, was in Germany, and it was called Breslau – it was the city of my parents, grandparents, and their parents before them.

While here, I saw an exhibit at the Stork Synagogue, which has been rebuilt. It highlighted the many Jewish luminaries and Nobel Prize winners who hail from Breslau. Among them was Norbert Elias, who attended the University of Breslau, became a famous sociologist and taught at Heidelberg and at the University of Leicester. He was a much loved mentor of Alan's! And so I decided that I had to begin this article by telling you about Alan's erudition and about his admiration for Elias, who came from Breslau!

You all know that Alan was one of the key players in stopping the Spadina Expressway. Because of the festivities surrounding that victory, Alan arrived late for

the Learned Societies meetings we were attending at Memorial University in Newfoundland. During a drive around the outports after that meeting, we visited a kennel, and it was love at first sight when Alan met an English spaniel whom he named Clementine. We took her home with us by plane, and she became one of his best friends.

Alan was a devoted son, nephew and brother, and took good care of his family whether they were in England or on extended visits in Canada. He was particularly wonderful with children, and with elderly family members – his own, mine and others.

Alan loved parties. We would joke that he would have a small party, just 45 of his closest friends. Many times he heard people say, "You should open a restaurant." So he did, and that's when Major Roberts came into being.

When Alan got Hepatitis C, he did what he had done with the Spadina fight: he organized, started the Hepatitis C Society of Canada, and got it working to provide information on the disease, to be a support group for those suffering from it, and to become heavily involved in fighting against the bad blood practices that had infected him in the first place.

My last visit with Alan was both poignant and funny. He was bedridden. I brought a bouquet of flowers – he loved flowers. I found a vase and put them in. He gave instructions from his bed about how they should be arranged, and then he pointed to some greens among the flowers and said – "get rid of those, they don't go with the flowers; I don't like them."

Until the end, his aesthetic sense never left him, his enjoyment of beauty never left him, and his intense loyalty and love of friends never left him.

Alan was unforgettable, and this laneway ensures that he will never be forgotten.





**"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act but a habit."**

**-Aristotle**

## Planning Zoning Updates

By: Susan Dexter

**Y**et another University of Toronto high-rise is proposed for adjacent neighbourhoods -- this time, the corner of Sussex and Spadina. The site includes Donald Smith's found garden, the Tenth Edition Bookstore and apartments, a second building to the north and the old post office building-- 698-706 Spadina.

The University will be submitting its plan to the City to build a 22-25 storey student residence on the site, with retail at grade. With permitted heights along Spadina of 15 storeys, this plan may meet with opposition from the community.

The news that Honest Ed's site on Bloor at Bathurst is up for sale has our Councillor dreaming.

Adam Vaughan is joining forces with fellow councillor Mike Layton, to envision the types and massing of buildings on all four corners of Bloor and Bathurst Streets, when they come up for redevelopment.

By itself, Honest Ed's is a huge parcel of land. But its sale can

be seen as an opportunity to look all four corners. This includes significant land holdings of the TTC on Markham and on Bathurst. There are also a number of public laneways which could come into a new design-- on Croft, mid-block on the north side of Lennox, and leading off Bathurst south of the station. With a bit of work, these could form a green network as the four corners are developed.

It also represents a chance for the four communities-- Harbord Village, Seaton Village, Palmerston and the Annex to work toward a common vision and could change the HVRA geographic framework west.

The Councillor led a walk-around with architects, urban

designers, planners and the four community associations in mid-September, and hopes to vault a 'Four Village' concept into the planning discussions of Bathurst after a public charette or planning session Oct. 5 at Central Tech.

Under the leadership of HVRA Treasurer (and tree lover) Carmen Gauthier, a number of privately-held ash trees have been given a life-saving injection to defend against the Emerald Ash borer. In addition, the City has been injecting ash which are otherwise in good shape on public lands. Their trees are marked with a green dot.

Thanks to those who have injected their trees!



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### HVRA AGM

October 15, 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

45 Brunswick Ave.

Guest speakers: MPP Rosario Marchese and Councillor Adam Vaughan

### HARBORD STREET PUMPKIN FESTIVAL

November 1, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

### FALL LITTER AND GLITTER CLEAN-UP

November 23, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. (start & finish at Bloor Cinema)

Rain Date: November 30th, 10:00—2:00 pm

For more details, visit [www.harbordvillage.com](http://www.harbordvillage.com)

### October 2013

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

### November 2013

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## Membership Information

- **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 Gail Misra at [g.misra@me.com](mailto:g.misra@me.com)

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## HVRA Board 2012-2013



This issue of the HVRA Newsletter has been edited by Jane Auster.  
Layout by Mark Treleaven.

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Secretary	Eva Janecek		<a href="mailto:evajr@rogers.com">evajr@rogers.com</a>
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## HVRA Membership & Renewal Form

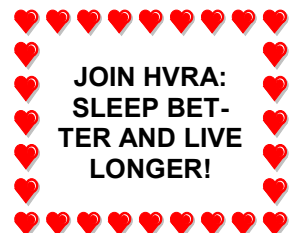
Not a member yet? Know someone who should be a member?  
Please join – to help us continue building a great neighbourhood!

### 2013 HVRA Membership

Please mail Please check one:

- ☐ Voting Member (individual) ..... \$10/one year; \$20/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](http://www.harbordvillage.com)) or mail a cheque payable to the Harbord Village Residents' Association, and include:



Name.....New?.....Renewal?.....  
Address.....  
Telephone .....Email.....