

Spring 2009

Volume 7, Number 1

Harbord Village Residents' Association

Contents:

Message from the HVRA chair.....	1
Spring Meeting	1
HERO project	2
Margaret Fairley Parkette	4
Earth Hour in Harbord Village...	5
Spring tree planting at Central Tech...	6
Making use of our village arborist	7
HVRA's new Heritage Conservation District.....	7
Board and membership stuff	8

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 8 for more information about HVRA or visit www.harbordvillage.com where this newsletter can be found in glorious colour.

Message from the Chair of the HVRA Board

Dear HVRA members,

Since you elected your new board last October, it has been beavering away at new projects and following up on older initiatives.



The Robert Street Heritage Conservation District is in its



last stages before becoming a legal reality. At the final public meeting in March, the vote was overwhelmingly in favour of approval (see Page 7).

There has been a rash of appearances at both Committee of Adjustment and the Ontario Municipal Board. Some of the issues:

- The patio at the rear of the Silver Dollar/Comfort Zone. Result: 20 conditions put on the use of the patio.
- An illegal structure on Lower Brunswick. Result: denied.

- An application for overlong house on Spadina south of Willcocks. Result: denied.
- Several applications for additions and buildings on Robert Street. Results: all pending.

The operative words here with respect to HVRA's involvement in these matters? Advisory, consultative, and, in some cases, prescriptive. In other words, we normally advise and assist residents who may be concerned about a project.

/continued on Page 2

HVRA's Spring Meeting

Tuesday, May 26, 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 – 7:30	Area caucuses, and caucus reports
7:30 – 8:00	Councillor Vaughan: State of the Ward and City, and Q & A
8:00 – 9:00	Special topics: 1. The City's new garbage system, good and bad 2. Getting the lead out of your water

The meeting will end promptly at 9 p.m.

Other dates to remember: **May 26, 4-6 p.m.** City provides free compost at Margaret Fairley Parkette
June 27 Adam Vaughan's Environment Day (details to follow)



/Chair's letter, continued from Page 1

But sometimes we become directly involved if we think there are overarching concerns for our neighbourhood.

In this issue, you will read about our newest initiative, the HERO energy audit program instituted by your board. Members of HV can sign up for an energy audit for their houses with advice on how to become more energy-efficient. This is all with a view to making Harbord Village the 'greenest in the city'.

Remember the farmers' market we helped establish in the Green P Parking Lot south of

Bloor between Borden and Lippincott? Of the three markets launched for the first time last summer, ours performed the best. We are delighted to announce that the market will return in June! Opening day will be Wednesday June 3, 3-7 p.m. and then every Wednesday until the end of October. The official opening will be June 24.

We had to cancel the Fall Fair this year for the first time in 16 years because of weather considerations. And as you know, we decided to hold the Silent Auction, which would have been held at the Fall Fair, at the inaugural Pumpkin

Festival. The Pumpkin Festival was a huge success, as was the Silent Auction, and the profit made on the auction completely made up for the cancellation of the Fall Fair.

The Spring Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 26, at Kensington Health Centre 7 to 9 p.m. We will be reporting to you on our first six months in office. Check Page 2 for more information.

With all good wishes. Long Live HVRA!

Your chair guy

Rory 'Gus' Sinclair

HERO project seeks energy heroes

"Sealing air leaks alone will produce significant savings. But the biggest bang for my buck will be insulating the basement walls. This will reduce my household heat loss a further 14%."

What is HERO? HVRA's Home Energy Retrofit Opportunity project.

What's it for? Assess and upgrade 200 homes in Harbord Village.

Idea: Get bargain discounts to reduce energy waste for participants.

HERO saves money, saves energy, saves carbon emissions, makes our homes more comfortable.

During the next nine months, Harbord Village Residents' Association, supported by a grant from Live Green Toronto, will complete the first cycle in a pilot project to reduce carbon emissions in an older neighbourhood.

We want to help make our neighbourhood more energy efficient.

Carson Dunlop & Associates has given us an excellent discounted price for HERO participants, and based on our needs, we will look for discounts on future upgrades.

The first wave of audits is under way.

Sign up. To learn more, go to the HERO page on HVRA's Web site (www.harbordvillage.com).

Here's what happened with my energy audit. I had resisted having one for years. Spurred by the

HERO project, I bit the bullet, had one done, **and flunked!**

I got a 41 rating, which of course sounds like a fail! Turns out, it's average for a Victorian downtown neighbourhood.

The stunning—and very welcome news—is the second largest component of my household heat loss is caused by drafts and ventilation, which can be knocked back 8% by a guy or girl with a caulking gun!

I have the equivalent of one 30" x 16" window open to the cold and heat year round.

If I fix it, that's 8% off my heating bill FOREVER for the lowest-tech, least labour- and material-intensive work on the planet!

The big story in my recent energy assessment comes from the results of the blower test, which, as it pulls air out of the inside of the house,

/continued on Page 3



The HVRA residents who make up the advisory committee for the HERO project: From left to right, back row: Susan Dexter, Leslie Thompson, Ana Silva, Mairin Wilkinson, Eva Janecek, Richard Gilbert; front row: Tim Grant, David Booz, Carmen Gauthier.



/continued from Page 2

draws air in through the cracks in walls, ceilings, around windows, through the fireplace damper and along baseboards.

Other than the spiders building their webs, who would have thought the north corner of my basement has eddies of outside air infiltrating?

Who would have thought the trim around the upstairs windows, where it's chilly in winter, admits a direct blast of winter air?

And who would have believed the Niagara of air currents coming through the bathroom crawl space and that ceiling fan have a direct line to the sky?

There is no longer any mystery where the drafts are coming from, and where to point the caulking gun: I have seen it with my eyes.

Sealing air leaks alone will produce significant savings. But the biggest bang for my buck will be insulating the basement walls. This will reduce my household heat loss a further 14%.

So I can save one dollar in every four for heating — and a further saving on air conditioning -- about \$50/month forever by doing a minor amount of work now. And my house will be more comfortable!

Other changes suggested are as simple and low tech as putting baby guards on electric plugs or as high tech as installing a solar hot water system.

Now I await Phase II of the HERO project — getting bulk bids on upgrading participating houses in Harbord Village.

To qualify for government grants on this work, upgrades

must be complete within 18 months, and Carson Dunlop will return to certify what I've done.

HERO program details

Phase I: a home energy assessment

Phase II: HERO price breaks for selected retrofits

Phase III: final energy assessment to access grants

Your energy assessors: Carson Dunlop and Associates (Contact

Ryan Haffner: ryan@carsondunlop.com, tel. 416.964.0437

Project leader for HVRA: David Booz, hero@harbordvillage.com

All their recommendations will not be done in this cycle. Instead, their report is a working blueprint of how to make savings, decrease energy costs and reduce greenhouse gases.

Sue Dexter

Shots taken during Sue Dexter's and David Booz's energy audits



Sign up for HERO today. Contact David Booz at hero@harbordvillage.com



Margaret Fairley Park: the heart of Harbord Village

“Despite its modest size, the park is intensively used and loved – in fact, it is hard to imagine this community without it.”

Margaret Fairley Park, at Brunswick and Ulster, is a treasured green space within Harbord Village.

The playground, wading pool and grassy area are highlights of the local landscape for neighbourhood children.

Despite its modest size, the park is intensively used and loved – in fact, it is hard to imagine this community without it.

If you have ever contemplated the stone monument and portrait bust of Margaret Fairley in the park, you may have wondered about its history and the reason for its name.

Who was Margaret Fairley?

Née Keeling, she was born in Yorkshire, England in 1885 and educated at Oxford.

She met her husband, Barker Fairley, at the University of Alberta, where he was a lecturer and Margaret was Dean of Women.

Barker was perhaps best known as a critic of art and literature, co-founder of the *Canadian Forum*, and champion of the Group of Seven.

He was also a painter in his own right and a world-renowned German literature scholar, who taught for many years at University College, University of Toronto. The Fairleys lived on Willcocks Street.

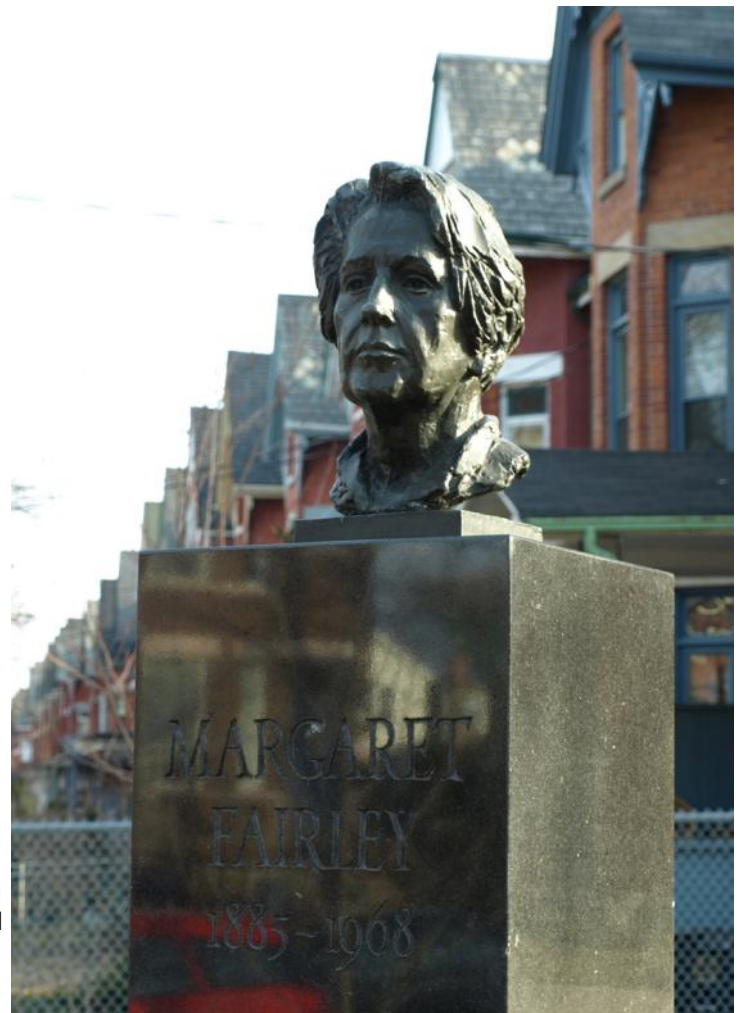
Choosing marriage and having a family effectively made a full-time academic career impossible for a woman of her generation, a circumstance which

makes Margaret's intellectual achievements all the more impressive.

She was the editor of many books, including *The Spirit of Canadian Democracy* and *The Selected Writings of William Lyon Mackenzie*, and the progressive quarterly magazine *New Frontiers*. On her death, she was working on an anthology of writings by Canadian pioneers, *With Their Own Hands*.

Margaret was also an active member of the communist Labour Progressive Party. These sympathies dated from a period in the 1930s during which the Fairleys moved to England and encountered working-class poverty and activism.

She maintained her affiliation on their return to Canada and expressed her ideas through scholarly and journalistic writing.



“Choosing marriage and having a family effectively made a full-time academic career impossible for a woman of her generation, a circumstance which makes Margaret's intellectual achievements all the more impressive.”



Her party membership led to an infamous incident when the Fairleys were attending the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace (aka the Waldorf Conference) in New York in 1949.

The American government, suspicious that the conference was a hotbed of communist activity, was on the lookout for a scapegoat.

Barker and Margaret were called away from the opening banquet and interrogated by the US Immigration Service. Margaret, then a 65-year-old grandmother, was rapidly deported as a "threat to national security".

The Fairleys were banned from life from entering the US, a restriction that seems not to have hindered their respective careers.

Margaret's connection to our neighbourhood park dates from 1965, when she began to agitate for a park space for

children in the community.

According to the Harbord Village District Plan, several houses at the corner of Brunswick and Ulster had been demolished in 1960.

Although I would need to do more research to confirm the fact, it seems the land was the site of a proposed apartment development that would have dramatically changed the character of the neighbourhood.

Margaret collected hundreds of signatures on a petition in support of turning the land into a park, achieving success in 1967.

She died the following year at the age of 82, so she would have lived to see the park in use but still nameless.

Her many friends in the community recognized the chance to pay a fitting tribute to her memory, and on the evening of June 23, 1972, the City

dedicated the park to Margaret Fairley.

The portrait bust in the park is the work of Margaret's friend, sculptor Pauline Redsell-Fediow. Its installation in 1973 was organized and paid for by a group of friends and supporters.

There seems to be renewed community interest in caring for the park, which although well-loved, is maintained only minimally by the City. It's good to keep in mind that neighbourhood activism lies at the historical roots of this cherished green space. The investment we may make in caring for the park builds on the legacy of Margaret Fairley.

I would be glad to hear from anyone in the neighbourhood who remembers Margaret Fairley and the establishment of the park – contact me at amy.furness@gmail.com.

Amy Furness

"Margaret collected hundreds of signatures on a petition in support of turning the land into a park, achieving success in 1967."

Earth Hour in Harbord Village

As we did last year, the HVRA registered with Earth Hour (<http://www.earthhour.org/home/>).

Our chair, Rory Sinclair, sent an email to all members, reminding us to turn out the lights for an hour on Saturday, March 28th.

It felt as if there were more participants this year than last. A (very) unofficial survey of the neighbourhood estimated that about 55% of the homes were darkened.

Some residents were out walking to see how many others had participated, too.

One HVRA member was at a party, and every time someone tried to turn on the lights,

that person was booed!

Another HVRA member reports that when she left home, she struggled with a moral Earth Hour conundrum. Normally, she leaves one light and the radio (CBC?) on for her dog. She went out before Earth Hour and was not returning home until late. Rather guiltily, she confided that she followed her usual custom and left one light and the radio on during Earth Hour. Dogs rule!

Some of the restaurants along College Street were dimmed, and it was fun to peer into the windows of local pubs like The Cloak and Dagger and Free Times Café and see the flickering candles.

What about the carbon emissions from the vast number of candles? We learned that pure beeswax candles are healthier, smell nicer and last longer than the processed ones. Good to know for any time of the year!

Despite lowering the grid on Saturday night (the media reported a 15% dip), there was a power outage in the area the next morning. It lasted for about three hours and was frustrating for many. Once again, we were reminded that we need alternatives. After all, isn't that the point of Earth Hour?

Jane Perdue

"It felt as if there were more participants this year than last. A (very) unofficial survey of the neighbourhood estimated that about 55% of the homes were darkened."



Trees please!

Support spring tree planting at Central Tech

HVRA promotes tree planting to increase the city's tree canopy, green our neighbourhood and clean the air

The Central Tech tree crew stands by for action, depending on your donation.

As the City of Toronto reminds us, trees also reduce water run-off that overloads storm sewers, make our neighbourhood more attractive, and increase property values. Last year, some residents received from HVRA's tree committee a backyard tree worth \$100-\$200 for only \$20.

the parking lot: white spruce spaced between existing hardwood trees.

- Lennox and Borden: white spruce and white cedar.

Central Tech is enthusiastic, and HVRA will contribute up to \$1,000 to buy trees. The number we purchase will depend on the funds we can raise.

With a cost of roughly \$250 per tree, we need to raise \$4,000 to purchase the trees needed for this project.

To make a donation, fill out the form below, or something like it, and send your cheque and information to Tim Grant, HVRA Tree Committee, P.O. Box 68522 360A Bloor Street West, Toronto, M5S 1X1.

Thanks to Toronto Central Lions, those donating than \$30 or more will receive a charitable tax receipt. We thank you in advance for any contribution you can make!

\$150 grants to replace backyard pavement.

Over the years, many residents have paved some or all of their backyards to provide parking.

Now that many residents no longer own cars, unused park-

ing pads are raising temperatures on hot summer days and preventing nearby trees from absorbing the rainwater they need.

We are offering \$150 grants to the first five homeowners in 2009 who remove 100 sq. ft. of pavement for space to plant a backyard tree.

Depending on the access to your backyard, a contractor is likely to charge \$400 to \$500. But if the five recipients employ the same contractor, the price per backyard should be half this amount. (And we'll provide and plant the tree for only \$20!)

For more information, contact Tim Grant, 416.960.1244 or tim@greenteacher.com.

Such work can qualify for the new federal Home Renovation Tax Credit (HRTC).

If you are doing other work on your property during 2009, the cost of removing a backyard parking spot may qualify.

For more information, visit <http://www.budget.gc.ca/2009/pamphlet-depliant/pamphlet-depliant3-eng.asp>.

Douglas Mason



This year, working with Central Tech students, we hope to plant trees this spring here:

- NW corner of Harbord and Borden: a mix of coniferous and deciduous trees.
- East side of Borden next to

I would like to make a donation for trees to be planted at Central Tech campus and enclose a cheque for:

\$20___ \$30___ \$40___ \$4,000___

- cheques under \$30 are to be made out to "HVRA".

- cheques of \$30 or more, for those wishing a tax receipt, are to be made out to: "Toronto Central Lions"

(Toronto Central Lions will kindly help us process these requests, and provide receipts for tax deductions.)



Treeing the Village

Making use of our village arborist

After interviewing several tree care companies last fall, HVRA's Treeing the Village committee selected Bruce Tree Care Experts to become our 'village arborist'.

They were selected because of their overall experience, good customer relations and integrity for providing ecologically-sound tree care.

Among other qualities, they will not recommend work that will inflict unnecessary damage to trees.

Since that time, they have visited 20 homes in the neighbourhood.

When it comes time for you to obtain quotes from various tree companies for pruning or removal of trees, do consider

calling our own village arborist. You can reach them at:

Bruce Tree Care Experts
142 Islington Ave., Suite 147
Toronto, ON M8V 3B6
Tel. 416.252.8769
E-mail: contact@brucetree.com.

Tim Grant

HVRA's new Heritage Conservation District

Heritage architect Cathy Nasmith at the March 24 meeting

On Tuesday, March 24, approximately 40 residents attended the final community consultation to discuss the establishment of the 'Harbord Village Heritage Conservation District—Phase 2' encompassing Spadina Avenue, Sussex Avenue, and Russell Street. Heritage architect Cathy Nasmith presented the plan, which was the culmination of three years of work by volunteers.

There was a question-and-answer session in which Cathy Nasmith, along with City of To-

ronto Heritage Preservation Services staff, explained the benefits of heritage designation and addressed concerns. Councillor Adam Vaughan expressed his appreciation for the efforts of the research team.

The meeting concluded with an overwhelming vote of approval. The plan will now be presented to the Toronto Preservation Board, Community Council and City Council. We expect to receive approval by the end of 2009.

Julian Kitchen



Cathy Nasmith, Tamara Bukhanov, and Julian Kitchen

Cathy Nasmith and Debby Black





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

HVRA Board 2008-2009

Chair	Rory 'Gus' Sinclair	966-1523	rory.sinclair@rogers.com
Treasurer	Leslie Thompson	924-6393	lthompson@lesrisk.com
Secretary	Eva Jancek	923-3538	Eva_Jancecek@camh.net
Membership	Katrina McHugh	934-0295	kmchughc521@rogers.com
UofT	Sue Dexter	964-9527	susan.dexter@rogers.com
Communications	Richard Gilbert	923-8839	mail@richardgilbert.ca
NW	Samiha Sayed	531-8651	Samsayed@aol.com
NW	David Booz	806-2669	dbooz@boozengineering.com
NE	Stuart Shoenfeld	964-3223	schoenfe@yorku.ca
NE	Margaret Beare	926-8984	mbeare@osgoode.yorku.ca
SW	Colin Furness	539-5426	colin.furness@utoronto.ca
SW	Jane Perdue	923-7065	jperdue@sympatico.ca
SC	Mairin Wilkinson	929-8242	mairinw@sympatico.ca
SC	Bachir Rabbat	921-3831	berber@sympatico.ca
SE	Tim Grant	960-1244	tim@greenteacher.com
SE	Wendy Duff	929-1488	wendy.duff@utoronto.ca

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 on our back page and post 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 the 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

Thanks to everyone who renewed for 2007-8. Not a member yet? Know someone who should be a member? Please join – to help us continue building a great neighbourhood!

2008-9 HVRA Membership

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



Please make your cheque payable to the Harbord Village Residents' Association and include:

Name.....
Address.....
TelephoneEmail.....