

# The HVRA Laneway Naming Project

## Harbord Village laneway names and the stories behind them

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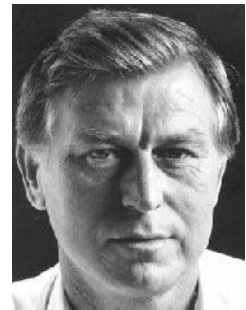
### 1: Loretto Lane

is named for the school that occupied the property immediately to the west for nearly 50 years.

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### 2: David French Lane

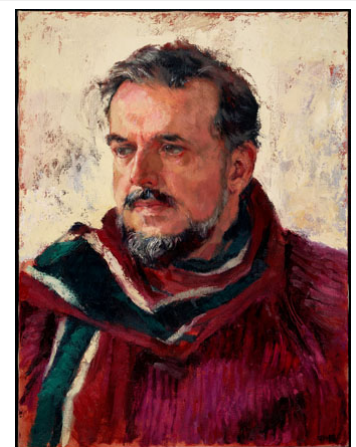
David French was one of our great Canadian playwrights. He lived at 254 Brunswick and died in 2010. Neighbours who knew him relate that he would sit at the back of his house overlooking the lane — he typed most of his plays there over his last forty years.



### 3: Alan Powell Lane

Alan Powell lived for many years at 200 Brunswick Avenue and his garage was situated on east side of this laneway. He was a University of Toronto professor, a promoter of the arts in Canada and a social activist. From 1969-1971, he worked with Jane Jacobs as Chairman of the Committee to "Stop Spadina" — an expressway through the heart of downtown Toronto which would have destroyed any remaining affordable artists' studios in the downtown core. With artist Vera Frenkel, Alan was instrumental in the setting up of an art gallery at Erindale College. He mounted over 35 exhibitions there and founded a collection of contemporary Canadian art.

Alan also founded the Hepatitis C Society of Canada in 1994. He was a major witness and presenter before the Commission of Inquiry on the Blood System in Canada, also known as the Krever Commission (1993-1997).



Alan Powell (1938- 2002)  
painted by Justin  
Mortimer, 1988

*Library and Archives Canada*

Alan believed passionately in local city politics, and in both the right and obligation of citizens to work together for a better city. He also opened a restaurant on Harbord Street

called Major Roberts, after the streets that flanked it. Regrettably, Alan died far too young in 2002.

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#### 4: **James Hales Lane**

is named after James Hales, George Phillips and Thomas Baldwin, who were all carpenters or joiners and who built houses on Brunswick Avenue, Borden and Lippincott Streets circa 1900.

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#### 5: **Albert Jackson Lane**

was a child slave whose family escaped from the US in the 1850s. Albert Jackson became Toronto's first black postman around the end of the 19th century. He is mentioned in Karolyn Smardz-Frost's Governor General Award-winning book *I've Got a Home in Gloryland* (Thomas Allen 2007):

The entire Jackson family had reached freedom...Albert Jackson grew up to become the first African Canadian postal worker in the city, and his appointment caused some friction because it elevated a black man over white postal workers in lesser positions such as mail sorting. Albert was kept as an inside worker, despite being hired as a postman to deliver mail, until the people of St. John's Ward launched a public inquiry. Eventually Albert was assigned to deliver mail rather than simply sort it at the post office.

Albert Jackson's name was suggested for this laneway by Patrick Crean, publisher of *I've Got a Home in Gloryland*. He subsequently discovered, to his astonishment, that he and his wife, the novelist Susan Swan, were living in the Jackson house on Brunswick Avenue.

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#### 6: **Lewis Family Lane**

Harry and Mary Lewis moved to Major Street in 1964 and raised three sons. They were hard working immigrants and one of only two families of Chinese descent in this community at the time. The house is still occupied by one of the sons and his family.

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## 7: Galvao Lane

Abilio Galvao immigrated to Canada from Portugal in 1954, leaving his small village of Arcos de Valdevez and his young family. Like many of the immigrants to Canada at this time he arrived in Halifax knowing no English and very little about Canada.

He worked for a few years on farms in western Canada, and then decided to settle in Toronto where he worked very hard to bring his family to Canada in just four years. In 1960 he purchased his home at 86 Major Street and shortly after he started his own roofing business Arcos Roofing Ltd., which is still managed by his son Manuel. The Galvao family hosted many Portuguese families coming to Canada looking for a better life — many of them generously sponsored by Abilio.

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## 8: Antonio Fernandes Lane

The Fernandes Family owned a house on Lippincott but lived on Borden, later on Brunswick. Antonio was a Toronto Subway Tunnel Worker and a Pioneer CN Rail Worker.

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## 9: Cyril Lane

honours longstanding residents of the community whose generosity of spirit and kindness have impacted on so many in the neighbourhood.

*Photo: Jane Donald & Cyril Greenland in the 1970s.*



## 10: Chapel Hospice Lane

Honours the Sisters of St. John the Divine. In 1889 the sisters built on Major Street the historic St. John's hospital and their Chapel of St. John the Divine, now reborn as the Kensington Hospice.

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## 11: Dairy Lane

Memorializes the Grimsby Dairy at 108/110 Robert Street. John Locke (ca. 1888-1929) founded and operated the Dairy from this laneway in the early part of the 20th century.



*Pure Clean Milk*

# The Grimsby Dairy

(J. H. LOCK, Proprietor)

110 Robert Street

TAKES THIS OPPORTUNITY of announcing to the Medical Profession that Grimsby Dairy Milk is *pure* and contains a percentage of butter fat *in excess* of what the Health Department demands.

We guarantee every pint that is sold. Physicians need, for that reason, have no hesitation in prescribing it for any patient.

Telephone, College 2158

Source: *The Hospital World*, Jan 1923

**Milk and Cream** Our milk is best, proven by test. Why not buy the best?

ORDER A TRIAL BOTTLE FROM

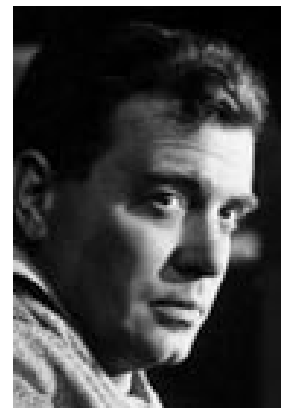
**GRIMSBY DAIRY** 110 Robert St.

TELEPHONE COLLEGE 2158

Source: *Canadian Jewish Review*, August 25, 1922, P. 13

## 12: Douglas Campbell Lane

Douglas Campbell with Sir Tyrone Guthrie founded the Stratford Festival in 1952. He was a hugely talented actor and lived for 30 years on Brunswick Avenue. He raised several children there, including Tom Campbell (an important contemporary Canadian painter), Torquil Campbell (rock star and leadman for *The Stars*), and Ben Campbell (also an actor and leading man at Stratford and Shaw). Douglas was not only the Great Detective, but Canada's Lear, Canada's Oedipus, and much more.



### 13: Sappers Lane

is named after the Royal Corps of Engineers whose club house was located at 578 Spadina Avenue from 1964-1997. Members accessed the club via this lane from the parking lot at the back.

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### 14: Greenberg Lane

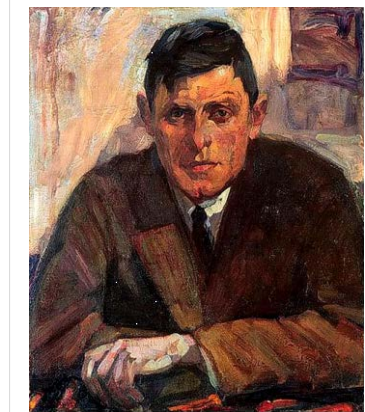
is named for the Greenberg family of Major Street and other addresses in Harbord Village. Aaron and Sophia immigrated to Toronto in the early part of the 20th Century and settled in what is now Harbord Village. Dr. Joe and his son David together practiced family medicine for approximately 60 years. Mort still lives in the original family home in which he grew up and is known as the Jewish Santa Claus due to his work on the Star Fund.

### 15: Barker Fairley Lane

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(May 21, 1887 – October 11, 1986) lived on Willcocks Street. Born in Yorkshire, he came to Canada in 1910, and in 1915 became a professor at U of T. He was a writer, poet and professor of German studies — one of the foremost scholars of German literature of the century. He also created the university newspaper. He painted portraits and landscapes, and was a friend of the Group of Seven.

Barker received an order of Canada in 1978, and died in his 100th year.



Portrait of Barker Fairley, painted in 1920 by Frederick Varley of the Group of Seven, now hanging at the National Gallery of Canada.

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## 16: Boys of Major Lane

memorializes several young men of Major Street who fought in the Second World War, at least four losing their lives. They spent their youth in the city playgrounds, Jewish immigrant kids too poor to afford a bat and ball, never dreaming they'd own a baseball mitt. These boys were among the earliest to enlist, some lying about their age, 17-year-olds going to war.

Harold Fromstein, known as Red, lived at 117 Major St. He used his older brother's name to enlist in 1940. Wounded in France in 1944, and decorated for his service, he survived the war.

Joe Greenberg enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1940 and survived the war to become the legendary Dr. Joe Greenberg.

Flying Officer Irving "Porky" Lindzon was shot down over the Bay of Bengal in 1945.

Flight Sgt. Harold Sobel lived at 5 Major St. and Flight Sgt. Solomon (Solly) Kay next door at 3 Major St. The two were friends and competitors, pitching against each other in rival baseball teams at the Lord Lansdowne playground. They formed a club and carried their membership cards as good luck charms. A third friend, Charles (Chucky) Males, joined them in the air force. None returned from the war.

Joe and Murray Sonshine also served. Murray died; Joe was taken prisoner and sent to Buchenwald, though he did survive.

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## 17: Immergluck Lane

Sam and Bela Immergluck owned and lived above the tailor shop on the west side of Spadina just north of Harbord Street for nearly 40 years. They were a heroic and remarkable couple. Bela was a Czech Jew who survived more than four years in the Auschwitz concentration camp. She and her husband were targeted initially for their politics and imprisoned. He was shot by firing squad and she was deported to Auschwitz.

Sam was a very active Bundist (Socialist Jewish Worker) organizer in Poland before the war. Sam's entire family were murdered during the Holocaust. Sam was especially devastated, as his only child, a boy, was due to be shipped out on the last Kinder transport to England; the Nazis stopped it and his son subsequently was murdered on Yom Kippur.

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## 18: **Barbara Godard Lane**

Barbara Godard was a Harbord Village resident until her recent demise. Her property backed onto lane #18. Barbara was a stalwart community supporter, including an active involvement in the earlier Residents' Association SURA. She was also a successful author and was internationally recognized for her literary scholarship in her field, earned through long professorial tenure at York University.



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## 19: **Katharine Hockin Lane**

Katharine Hockin was a missionary in China at the time of the takeover of the Chinese Mainland by the Communist Forces. She was outspoken in her belief that China was better off under the new regime and that Western powers would do well to work with it. The Lane itself is a dead end, ending at Trinity-St. Paul's church, which has been there since the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

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## 20: **William James Lane**

William James lived at 250 Major Street. He photographed Toronto streets and city life in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There are approximately 10,000 photos and slides in the Toronto Archives, all taken by William James.



*Right: Photographers Bill James, William James Sr., and Norman James, 1936. City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, Item 3509*

[http://torontoist.com/2009/09/historicist\\_anonymous\\_players\\_on\\_the\\_stage\\_of\\_history/](http://torontoist.com/2009/09/historicist_anonymous_players_on_the_stage_of_history/)

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## 21: Leah Cohen Lane

Leah Cohen lived and worked in Harbord Village from 1976 until her untimely death from cancer in 2007. Leah was one of the earlier generation of Canadian feminist writers, authoring two books: *The Secret Oppression: Sexual Harassment of Working* and *Small Expectations: Society's Betrayal of Older Women*.

Because she was a self-employed writer and researcher, Leah worked at home, on Major Street between Harbord and Sussex, and was a regular presence in the cafes and shops and streets of the neighbourhood. She believed that the laneways of a community were its soul and she recognized many of the area houses better from the back lanes than from the front streets.

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## 22: Barbara Barrett Lane

Barbara Barrett was founder of the Toronto School of Art. She moved her expanding school to Brunswick and Sussex in 1972 where it stayed until 1984 when it needed even larger premises. Under her guidance the school provided independent but classically oriented art instruction to hundreds of students, as well as employment to encourage many now well known artists as teachers. The school Barbara founded continues to this day near Spadina and Adelaide.



Barbara was honoured by the federal government when she was awarded the Lescaobot Medal for patronage of Canadian artistic endeavours. She died in 2001.

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## 23: Bagpipe Lane

For many years this lane has been used as a staging area for the piper at the Bloor Borden Farmers' Market to tune his pipes.





## THE 3 LANEWAYS NAMED JUST PRIOR TO THIS PROJECT

**Louis Laki Lane** was officially unveiled by the city on June 12, 2010. Louie Laki arrived in Toronto from Slovenia in 1957 and lived on Major street from 1960 until his death in 2002. Well-known in the neighbourhood for his commitment to his community and his generous, hospitable nature, Louie Laki exemplifies the tremendous contribution that immigrants have made to Toronto.

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**Poretta Lane** was officially unveiled by the city on July 22, 2011. The name honours Giuseppe Porretta, who passed away on September 9th, 2005. Giuseppe owned the well known Porretta's Pizza on Harbord at Robert Street.

Giuseppe immigrated to Canada from Sicily in 1958 with his young family and in 1969 they opened their family restaurant — the first pizzeria in the neighbourhood. He was a generous man, hiring from the area, donating to schools and community centres, hosting events on Harbord Street and helping those less fortunate. After being in the business for 25 years, Mr. and Mrs. Porretta retired and had to close down the business. Some of the family continue to live beside and near the lane. Many locals reminisce about the good old days, Porretta's Pizza, the Harbord Bakery, and how the two businesses made Harbord Street what it is today – a wonderful family community.

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**Kosower Lane** was officially unveiled by the city on July 22, 2011. Kosower Lane honors Albert and Goldie Kosower who came from Poland and took over the Harbord Bakery in 1945, establishing a Toronto landmark.

Goldie Elster, born 1911 in a Polish shtetl, was sent by her family to Canada at 15. She lived then on Lippincott Street with her aunt, uncle and grandmother who had come to Canada some years before. Two more of the Elster girls made it here in the next 8 years; the rest of the family remained helpless in Poland and perished in the horror of Treblinka.

Alter came to Ontario when he was 18 to work as baker's apprentice in Jewish bakeries. The couple worked day and night, in 1945 buying the little bakery



next to the fish market at the corner of Major and Harbord. This was still a time when the locals brought their own cakes and savoury sabbath meals to bake in the bakery's brick oven.

Albert was famous for developing an early morning coffee club with business men and locals, where they would discuss all sorts of things. Goldie did much the same in the front. Her specialties were families, couples, joyous and not so happy events, problems and solutions. She became a loving and beloved community resource. The family lived above the bakery for many years. Their customers became their friends and they earned an enduring loyalty from everyone whose life they touched.

Source: <http://www.harbordbakery.ca/about-us>