

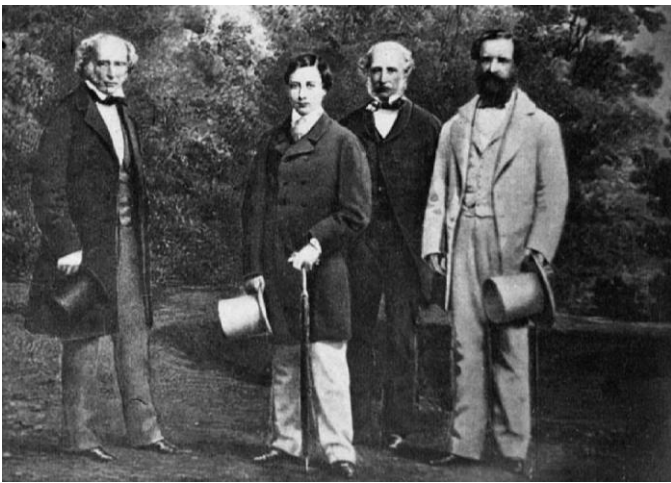
NEWSLETTER

The Town of York Historical Society

July 2012

Vol. XXVIII No. 2

PRINCE OF WALES VISITS TORONTO



This photograph, in the collection of Library and Archives Canada, shows young Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, in front of Sir John Rose's house on Sherbourne Street, Montreal. At left is Sir Edmund Head, Governor General. At right are Major-General Robert Bruce (brother of the previous Governor General) and the Duke of Newcastle. In an early example of "photoshop," Sir Christopher Charles Teesdale, who stands between the Governor General and the Prince in the original Notman photograph, has been excised.

When Prince Charles rode past Toronto's First Post Office on May 22nd of this year, he was on his way to visit the athlete's village for the 2015 Pan-Am games. Or, rather, the future site thereof. Media photographs later showed him gazing respectfully at several foamcore-mounted architectural renderings propped on easels. In contrast, when Queen Victoria's eldest son Albert Edward first visited Toronto in September of 1860, the 19th-century equivalents of foamcore had been used to construct elaborately decorated ceremonial arches over the routes by which the Prince's carriage would pass.

The future King Edward VII was just eighteen when his mother sent him on a tour of British North America and the United States that began in Newfoundland and ended in Portland, Maine. The young Prince of Wales was accompanied by his uncle, the Duke of Newcastle. On entering Canada West, the Duke made it clear that the Prince would *not* pass under any arch erected by members of the Orange Order. Toronto, in 1860, was Orange to the core.

Continued on page 4

City Set to Acquire Last Piece of First Parliament Site



On Thursday, July 12, Toronto City Council unanimously adopted a staff report moved by Councillor Pam McConnell that confirmed the City's intent to expropriate the remaining privately owned properties that make up the First Parliament site. "It is very fitting that we reach this historic milestone as we commemorate the bicentennial of the War of 1812," said Councillor McConnell. From 1798 to 1813 these lands were the location of Upper Canada's first parliament buildings, which were burned by the Americans when they attacked the town of York in April of 1813. The deal adopted by Council grants authority to

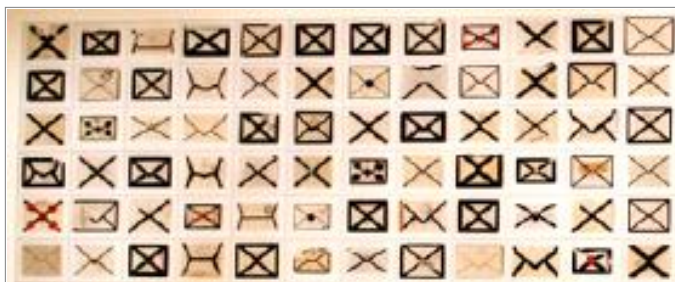
complete a land exchange for the Toronto Public Library property located just to the east, across Parliament Street. Rollo Myers, Manager of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, has worked tirelessly and voluntarily for almost fifteen years to see this project to fruition. "It's been a long struggle," he says. "I want to thank Pam McConnell for her tremendous effort in making this a reality."

Our Celebrated Friends



Photograph by George Rust-D'Eye.

An event at Fort York on May 16 celebrated the release of the latest editorial effort by **Margaret McBurney**: *It's All About Kindness, Remembering June Callwood*. (McBurney, as you may recall, was the recipient in 2011 of the fourth annual Sheldon Godfrey Award, presented at our AGM that year.) Hosted by CBC's Michael Enright, the evening included a performance by Molly Johnson, testimonials by the book's contributors and a preview of the design for June Callwood Park.



On May 9, **Arnaud Maggs** received the Scotiabank Photography Award. Coincidentally, the National Gallery of Canada had just opened a career survey exhibition of his work, which runs until September 16. An inveterate collector of ephemera, Maggs documents systems of identification, series of near-identical objects in which small differences clamour for attention. At a Paris flea market in 1995, Maggs discovered a collection of 19th-century mourning envelopes. Photographed, enlarged and displayed in a grid (*Notifications xiii*, above), the black-edged



stationery presents a pattern of Xs, each signifying the erasure of a human life. Maggs (left) visited our office in 2006 to examine the cross-written letters in our collection.



Bishop's Block to Become Exclusive Soho House Club

In our September 2007 newsletter we featured the two remaining row houses built in 1829-1833 on Adelaide Street West by the English Butcher John Bishop. At that time, the future of this historic structure – whose last incarnation had been the Pretzel Bell Tavern – was threatened by the development of the Shangri-La Hotel. Now it seems that the carefully reconstructed building will be home to the Toronto branch of Soho House, an exclusive private members' club catering to film-industry types and other artists. Scheduled to open in time for the Toronto International Film Festival in September, the 10,000-square-foot venue is modest in comparison to Soho's facilities in London, Manhattan or Berlin. Nevertheless, the club's founder and CEO Nick Jones declares that, "...Toronto has enough like-minded creative people to make it work." According to *The Globe and Mail* (May 28), Jones says he's investing \$7 million in the once derelict building. The Toronto opening is part of an ambitious expansion that will include locations in Chicago, Mumbai, Istanbul and Barcelona – financed in part by American billionaire Ronnie Burkle's recent acquisition of a controlling share in the Soho empire.

The multi-floor Toronto club will have a partially enclosed rooftop bar and its main lounge area will be named the Pretzel Bell, in a nod to recent history. Club members will also have access privileges to amenities at the Shangri-La, including its fitness centre, pool, spa, screening room and valet parking. Are membership dues a bargain at \$1,800 a year? You have to be invited to find out!

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AND BEYOND



1849: THE REBEL RETURNS!

Saturday, July 14, 10:00 am

When William Lyon Mackenzie returned to Toronto in March 1849, after twelve years in exile, chaos broke out and a mob attacked the house he was visiting. Should the city that Mackenzie had once governed as Mayor, and then threatened with armed rebellion, protect him or offer him up to mob justice? The Rebellion of 1837 cast a long shadow. Hear stories of its aftermath as you tour Mackenzie's Toronto.

Free, a Heritage Toronto Tour. Meet at Mackenzie House, 82 Bond Street.

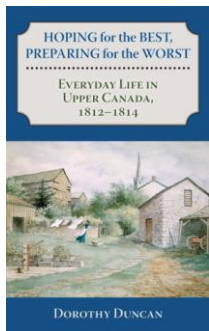
ON COMMON GROUND: Sarah Harmer, Shad, Rural Alberta Advantage and Alex Cuba

Saturday, July 14, 3:00 – 11:00 pm

Canadian diversity had its roots in the War of 1812. Celebrate two hundred years of common ground with these incredible musicians at Fort York's Garrison Common. Take the family, take a blanket and experience the richness of Canada's music.



Fort York National Historic Site, 250 Fort York Boulevard, free admission.



HOPING FOR THE BEST, PREPARING FOR THE WORST:

Everyday Life in Upper Canada, 1812-1814

Tuesday, July 24, 7:00 pm

The Town of York Historical Society will host a launch for Dorothy Duncan's latest book, which explores the web of human relationships that developed in Upper Canada in the years leading up to the War of 1812, and during the conflict that raged for two years. The book focuses on the families, homes, gardens, farms, roads, villages, towns, shops, and fabric of everyday life in this frontier society.

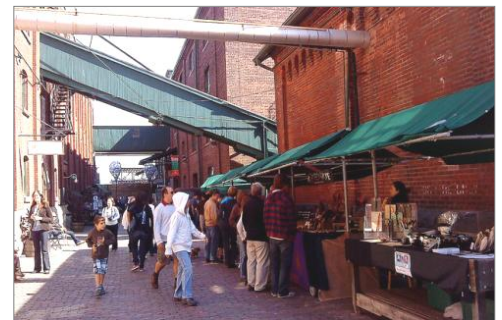
Free. Toronto's First Post Office, 260 Adelaide St. E., RSVP to 416-865-1833 or tfpo@total.net.

THE DISTILLERY ART MARKET

Saturdays and Sundays until September 30 (excepting holiday weekends), 11:00 am – 6:00 pm

Every weekend throughout the summer the Distillery Historic District comes alive with booths from some of Toronto's finest artists, craftspeople, designers and food artisans. Exhibitors offer a wide range of handcrafted and artisanal items for sale, including food, painting, ceramics, clothing, jewelry, soap, toys, musical instruments and more.

Distillery Historic District, 55 Mill Street, free admission.



HISTORY COMES ALIVE IN OLD TOWN TORONTO

Thursdays and Saturdays until September 1, 12:00 – 3:00 pm



Old Town Toronto commemorates the War of 1812 throughout the summer with live performance and re-enactments that describe life in the town of York during the early 1800's through historical first person accounts. Dressed in period costume as soldiers, militia and townspeople, performers will stroll through the neighbourhood and interact with people on the street. Theatre-in-the-round performances will take place from 12-12:30 on Thursdays in Berczy Park, and on Saturdays in Market Lane Park.

St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA; event takes place in multiple locations.

Prince of Wales, *from page 1*

The royal entourage was to arrive in Toronto on the evening of Friday, September 7. A special amphitheatre had been constructed on the waterfront for the welcoming ceremonies and celebrations. As the ensuing procession through the town would take place after dark, gas fixtures had been installed in order to illuminate City Hall (now part of the St. Lawrence Market building) at an enormous cost, albeit only a fraction of what the Law Society had spent to light up Osgoode Hall, where a ball was to be held the following night.

Meanwhile, a meeting of the General Reception Committee on Wednesday night had been held hostage by representatives of Toronto's twenty Orange lodges until almost three in the morning. By this time it was known that, owing to the Orange Order having appeared in full regalia on the Kingston docks, the royal party had declined to land there at all. Faced as they were with a choice between not making their presence felt and foregoing the Prince's visit altogether, the Orangemen compromised. They would hold a procession of their own prior to HRH's arrival. The arch they had constructed at King and Church Streets, however, with its image of King Billy crossing the Boyne – on a transparency and thus only obvious after dark when lit from within – remained in place over the parade route. The mayor was subsequently called on the carpet to apologize, but the rest of the visit went off with (almost) nary a hitch. Toronto has always welcomed royal visitors in style, even if that style has changed colour over the decades.

Above right, top: Half of a stereoscopic slide showing the arches on King Street East, looking east from just west of Leader Lane. Courtesy of the Toronto Public Library.

Bottom: An inkwell presented to the Prince by the Highland Society of Hamilton, September 19, 1860. This item recently sold on Gilai.com. Below: An invitation to the ball at Osgoode Hall. Toronto Public Library.



Toronto's First Post Office is administered by the Town of York Historical Society

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Monday to Friday: 9-4
Weekends: 10-4

Closed on holiday Mondays and the Sundays preceding them.

The Post Office will be closed August 5th and 6th for the long weekend, and September 2nd and 3rd for Labour Day.

Toronto's First Post Office is a museum and National Historic Site. The Town of York Historical Society is a legally incorporated non-profit organization and registered charity. Gratefully acknowledged is the support of the City of Toronto; the Ontario Ministry of Tourism Culture and Sport; our members, donors and customers; and Canada Post.

The Town of York Historical Society

Individual Membership	\$25
Family Membership	\$40
Lifetime Membership	\$250

Directors: Patricia Braithwaite, George Fells, Sheldon Godfrey, Sanford Hersh, Meredith Hogan, Ewa Jarmicka, Judith McEvel, Jennifer McIlroy, and Councillor Pam McConnell.