

---

# CABBAGETOWN PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

## 2022-2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

### CHAIR'S REPORT & COMMITTEE REPORTS

---

---

Pandemic restrictions remained in place for much of this year, but we were delighted to be back at the Meeting House with a **Cabbagetown Talk** in April. And on May 30th we're holding our AGM at the Farm. Our November public meeting was held over Zoom and there was good turnout for a talk by Don Loucks and Leslie Valpy discussing their new book, *Modest Hopes: Homes and Stories of Toronto's Workers from the 1820s to the 1920s*. Over the year we continued to hold our monthly board meetings on Zoom. It is a productive way to meet, but meeting together to celebrate the holidays in December – an evening graciously hosted by Virginia Van Vliet – reminded us of the difference of meeting face-to-face. How the board should meet in the coming year will be a question for the new chair and the board to answer.

There have been a few changes in the membership of the board this year. I'd like to thank CJ Cogswell who joined us last year, but returned to the US in the fall with his partner who had a new position there. CJ's experience in establishing and managing an endowment helped refine our thinking on a topic that had become relevant to us with the bequest from Barbara Mercer.

We were pleased that Christina Jackson joined the board in October. She is active in the Tour of Homes Committee which is planning a tour this fall; our first since 2019. As you'll see in the Committee Reports below, they are looking for volunteers, and you can sign up now.

In reviewing my report from last year I note that we were starting to engage more deeply in conversations at the local, provincial and national level on the nature of what constitutes heritage today. It is important that we keep abreast of these developments, and these conversations continued this year. The CPA now has membership in several associations, including the National Trust of Canada, the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario Inc., the Ontario Historical Society and the Toronto Historical Association, each of whom publish a regular newsletter, and in some cases host events. Last October, Gilles Huot and I attended the National Trust

---

of Canada's Conference entitled *Heritage Reset* — a conference designed to accelerate key conversations within the field about our values and the purpose of heritage work and heritage places which, by their definition includes, but is not limited to, landscapes, sites, areas of land, buildings and structures, archaeological sites and other physical places that are valued by individuals, communities, or governments for their cultural, social or heritage significance. While the CPA's definition of heritage has for several years gone beyond an exclusive focus on the built environment, we still have much to learn. Gilles and I have a lengthy article in the Fall 2022 Newsletter on the Conference which you'll find on our website, and there is ongoing discussion on the National Trust of Canada's website. This year's conference will be held in Ottawa. If there are those among our membership who have a specific interest in this subject, please get in touch. It is possible for you to work on a board committee without taking on full responsibly of board membership.

The situation regarding heritage in Toronto and in Ontario continues to demonstrate that we can never take Toronto's heritage for granted. While the concept of heritage is being expanded to be more inclusive which we applaud, it is also under attack both at the level of the city and the province. The CPA can't do this alone — not even for our own neighbourhood, and we need active engagement by members of the broad community if you wish to keep this neighbourhood intact and thriving. This past year we have worked to further our goal of what we call *collaborative advocacy* through active cooperation and information sharing with other local associations. We supported some administrative expenses of Cabbagetown Heritage Conservation District Committee (CHCDC) who have no budget, and yet do so much work on behalf of the community. We also sponsored one of their members to attend a four-day course, titled *Heritage Planning for Professionals*, held at the Algonquin College Campus in Perth, Ontario. The course was taught by Marcus Letourneau, managing principal of LHC / Heritage Planning and Archeology. We have agreed to keep each other connected to our monthly activities. The CHCDC, given its relationship with the city, regularly updates us on local developments, as well as responding to questions from the community to our CONTACT US address which we are unable to answer.

I contacted the Cabbagetown Residents' Association (CRA) as they have a new President, and the goal is again to stay in touch so we can be on top of topics of mutual interest. We were grateful to the CRA for hosting the installation of one of our

---

2022-2023 Student Experience Programme Award holders. The CPA was a Silver Sponsor of the Festival this year.

Gilles Huot and I met with Matthew Mohan, the new Executive Director of the BIA to see if there were areas where we could be mutually supportive. Gilles is currently exploring the option of providing some of our historic data in support of the BIA's tours and their potential use of Dreamscape.

The Barbara Mercer Fund has now been set up and the funds invested. This generous gift enables us to further invest in our education and communications programs. The overriding goal is to work on behalf of our community as we continue to position the CPA as a vibrant association in Cabbagetown specifically, and in the Toronto and Canadian heritage community more generally.

The endowment also enabled the launch of a pilot project in September 2022, currently called the Student Experience Programme (SEP) Award. More on this in the Awards section below. This project of mine seeks to mobilise current graduate student research on topics of interest to the community with the aim of creating a talk, an installation, etc. I am preparing a short report on the results of the pilot, and if approved by the board, I hope that this will move this into a more formal programme next year. As always we are looking for academics, planners, or others experienced in awarding contracts to give us a few hours to assist in the selection process. Contact me if you are interested.

On a positive note, the pandemic continued to provide the board additional time to get our administrative house in order, as well as to redesign and replace damaged banners, and to consider and order new swag. Steve Yeates, our vice-chair and designer-in-chief had an especially busy spring with so many new projects, including the Welcome Brochure, the vinyl squares for our student's inclusive design game installation, as well as materials for the upcoming Tour of Homes.

Social media play an increasingly important role – our Facebook and Instagram accounts are thriving, we're using QR codes extensively, and we're looking at ways to improve access to our secure back-end payment system in a number of ways, including mobile payments.

---

A target we missed again this year was to participate in **Ontario Heritage Week**. Since 1985, Ontario has designated the third week in February as **Ontario Heritage Week**. There are many events across the province. Once again consider this a call to folks who might have ideas and/or skills to participate in such an endeavour. There are many creative people in this neighbourhood, and it's a great way to contribute to celebrating Cabbagetown, even if you don't have the cycles for full participation on the board. How about a video *A Walk up Parliament Street* describing the many colourful stories that can be told along one of *Toronto's Main Streets* as it's described in the recent **TOcore: Planning Downtown Report**. How many people in the City know why its called Parliament Street, and the ways in which current developments taking place along this too oft neglected street are impacted by history and current planning agendas?

These are just a few of the highlights of the past year. To stay on top of all our activities, please become a member [\$20/year for a family of 4] or a subscriber [free] and most important please get involved or let us know with a note that you care about the activities of the Association.

I turn next to the specific activities undertaken this year as told through the reports of the committees. As I leave this chair, I want to say a special thanks to each of the board members who have contributed, not only over this year, but over the past 5 years to help make this association a success. As you'll see from the reports below, it takes an incredible amount of work to run all our programmes, and events, and the results are all around us to see. But I also want to say a major thank you for the hours of invisible work that have gone into making the public facing activities of the association successful.

## **Awards**

### **1. The Peggy Kurtin Award Program for Excellence in Restoration**

The Peggy Kurtin (PK) Award for Excellence in Restoration has been awarded annually to an outstanding restoration project since 1998. Honouring the best and most authentic restoration projects of the year, this award is at the heart of the CPA's purpose of celebrating architectural and streetscape restoration, and encouraging work of high quality. The winner of the Excellence in Restoration Award for 2022 was *237 Seaton Street* for its thorough facade restoration. *385 Carlton Street* won the

---

Improved Facade award for the carefully researched replacement of its porch, which unified its row of houses.

The 2023 PK Award and Improved Facade Award will be given at the AGM on May 30th, 2023. Details on these properties and on the other winners in various categories over the years are on our website. Special thanks to Monica Kuhn who once again generously offered her professional expertise to assist in the judging this year.

## **2. CPA Recognition Award**

Founded in 2011 as the Volunteer of the Year Award, in 2017 the Board decided that tying this award to a specific year did not allow us to honour what are often lifetime contributions of a Cabbagetown resident or friend of Cabbagetown, nor did it truly reflect the nature of the contributions. The award, which is not necessarily given every year, is now called the CPA Recognition Award, and the winner is announced at the Fall meeting of the association. Winners receive a glass wine cooler engraved with their name and the name of the award.

The 2022 award was presented to Gina Dineen who was acknowledged for her many lasting contributions to the Cabbagetown community, in particular her founding and programming of the annual **Cabbagetown Short Film Festival** which began in 1992 and continues to be held in September each year. More information on the award and on Gina and previous years' winners can be found on the website.

## **3. Streetscapes in Bloom**

The Streetscapes in Bloom Award is an annual competition created to celebrate front gardens that are available for everyone to enjoy over the gardening season. Any street facing Cabbagetown garden may be nominated, and will be assessed through visits over the course of the summer using the criteria set out on our website. The winner receives a water-colour portrait of the front garden by local artist Rosie Shephard and an art glass medallion from Kitras Glass.

Congratulations to our 2022 winning garden: *310 Berkeley Street*. A true gem – well developed and cared for over a number of years with a nice arrangement of heights, textures, plant types, density and colours.

2023 Nominations are now open! Please submit your garden suggestions by June 10. Visit our website to learn more.

---

#### 4. CPA Student Experience Programme (SEP) Award

In the summer of 2022 the CPA launched a pilot project which offered two awards, each worth \$1500, to graduate students whose research was in some way relevant to this historic Toronto neighbourhood. The idea was to mobilise relevant research and ideas from the university to the community through some form of public engagement – a talk, an installation, etc. The objectives were to showcase graduate student work, to give students hands-on experience with managing a small award (structured as a contract), to provide an opportunity to add to their portfolios and CVs, and to encourage them to appreciate, perhaps in new ways, the importance of heritage in a community.

The two award holders for 2022-2023 were Sarah MacKinnon, a M.Sc. in Planning Candidate, at the University of Toronto, and Shalaine Sedres, a MSc in Rehabilitation Science Candidate at the University of Toronto. Both students did exemplary work.

Sarah's longstanding interest in the *Saint Luke's United Church Redevelopment Project* was presented on April 13th as a Cabbagetown Talk (see page 7).

Shalaine's installation, *The All-Abilities Adventure*, was launched at the CRA's Forsythia Festival on May 7th. For a description of the installation and what inspired it, please see our Spring Newsletter on the website.

Congratulations to both our 2022-2023 SEP Award winners.

### Events

#### 5. Hidden Gardens & Private Spaces

June 5, 2022 marked the triumphant return of the CPA's ever-popular Hidden Gardens & Private Spaces tour. Hundreds of gardening enthusiasts from across Metropolitan Toronto and beyond came to be inspired by the beautiful designs and imaginative solutions of the private and community gardens featured at this event. This tour is an important community building opportunity as guests come to meet up with friends, stop at shops and restaurants, and explore beautiful historic Cabbagetown.

Heartfelt thanks to the talented green thumbs who opened up their magical spaces for us to enjoy. We recognize how much work is required to make your gardens shine.

---

Also, thanks to our volunteer-led committee and sponsors who enabled this event to run without a hitch!

We look forward to doing it all again in 2024.

## **6. Tour of Homes**

We welcome back the Cabbagetown Tour of Homes this September after a long hiatus due to the pandemic. Our last tour was in 2019. The past three years have given us time to reflect and we have both new ideas and directions for the upcoming year. For example, this year a portion of the proceeds will go to a local Indigenous charity.

We have an exciting tour lined up for Sunday, September 17th. There will be a variety of homes featured, with some Cabbagetown homes showing off their renovations, while others are an ode to how homes in this neighbourhood once were. Plenty of character all around, with both the new and the old. Many homeowners have also used local trades in the neighbourhood, including local architects and designers, so this is a source of more than design ideas. Something for everyone. Please keep an eye out for tickets available online and through local outlets from July onwards.

We are also calling for volunteers on September 17th. You can register by emailing [info@cabbagetownpa.ca](mailto:info@cabbagetownpa.ca)

## **7. Cabbagetown Walks**

Still reeling from the effects of COVID-19 social distancing, we had a very light Cabbagetown Walks program in 2022. Through local advertising in various social media, we invited people who wanted to take part in a tour of Cabbagetown to show up three Sunday mornings at a given time and location over the summer.

Unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate and there were only a handful of participants. However, we have been working with Heritage Toronto to plan a stronger walking tour program in the summer of 2023. Keep an eye out for us on three Tuesdays this summer at Cabbagetown Farmers Market in Riverdale Park West.

## **8. Cabbagetown Talks**

Cabbagetown Talks returned April 13th with a talk entitled *Re-imagining Planning: The Saint Luke's United Church Redevelopment Project* held at the Meeting Room at the Farm. It was great to be back. Last year I reported that I'd had an idea that might generate a minimum of one or two talks a year, and this year's talk was the result of that idea. In

---

September we launched the Student Experience Programme Award as a pilot project (Item 4 above). Sarah MacKinnon, one of CPA's 2022-2023 award holders created this talk, building on her research interests in creative-mixed used buildings. Sarah put together a stellar panel. For more information on the event, please see the Cabbagetown Talks website page, or the Spring newsletter for an article on the event.

As always, if you have suggestions for topics or speakers, or perhaps you are a local media person, academic or writer who enjoys working with ideas please get in touch. The CONTACT US form on the website is the best way to reach us.

## Programs

### 9. Cabbagetown People

The last year has been a busy one for the Cabbagetown People Program team. We added a couple of biographies to our [cabbagetownpeople.ca](http://cabbagetownpeople.ca) website:

- What happens between Captain William Arthur Durie's death in France at the front during World War I and his burial in Cabbagetown's St. James' Cemetery is quite incredible. Read this unbelievable story on our website.
- Pam McConnell, first a school trustee and then our indomitable City Councillor who died while still in office.

But most of our efforts were spent on having new plaques installed and some replaced. Our new plaques honour:

- Richard Gwyn, journalist, author, and historian.
- Murray Laufer, innovative stage designer and artist.
- June Rowlands, first woman to be elected Mayor of Toronto.
- Frederick Varley, artist and member of the Group of Seven.
- J. Norman Emerson, dean of Canadian archeology.

The following plaques had either been stolen or damaged and we had them replaced and/or reinstalled:

- Roger Abbott, comedian, co-founder of the Royal Air Farce.
- Tony Brady, entertainer and founder of the Forsythia Festival.
- Hugh Garner, writer and author of the novel Cabbagetown.
- Flos Jewell Williams, writer of the Canadian west.

We are very grateful and would like to thank Weenen General Contracting for installing all our plaques free of charge for us.



---

To find the location of those plaques, just go to the person's biography on our website.

## **Media**

### **10. CPA Newsletter**

Steve Yeates continues as editor and designer-in chief, and Tory Gzebb continues as a staff writer for our biannual newsletter. With other social media now in place, the newsletter provides an opportunity to dive deeper on heritage issues. We hope it encourages the community to be actively aware of Cabbagetown's heritage status, issues and history, and to support and respect interest in Cabbagetown's ongoing restoration. Once again due to COVID-19 our Fall 2022 issue was made available digitally only, but the Spring 2023 issue is both digital and available as a printed newsletter. It has been distributed to several retailers in the hood. In this way we hope to reach friends and neighbours who do not (yet!) subscribe to our mailing list.

Each issue is posted on the News page of the website as well as in the CPA Newspaper Archive. This almost complete archive of more than 30 years of news, views, and activities of the CPA is a great resource. We are still missing one or two issues. So, if you are cleaning up and find some old CPA Newsletters please check to make sure you don't have one that we're missing.

### **11. Social Media**

We continue to use a variety of social media to reach our members and beyond. The Social Media Committee led by Daniel Bloch with members Stephen Yeates and Gilles Huot continue to explore new digital approaches. Our Facebook page, curated by Gilles Huot, now has 840 followers. This page is used to announce events, share news, celebrate anniversaries of remarkable Cabbagetowners, etc.

We have a few YouTube videos on the site and there are plans for more. We'd love to find some video production expertise in the community to assist in these efforts. *Cabbagetown Heritage Minutes* perhaps? Please let us know if you're interested and can help.

The CPA's Instagram site, curated by Steve Yeates, has grown since its launch last year to 550 subscribers.

---

Our goal is to meet everyone where they read the news, and to continue to move into new areas. Please follow us on Instagram and Facebook for news and updates about our plans and activities.

## **12. The CPA Website**

The website continues to serve us well. The e-commerce portion of the site is especially useful, in particular for association memberships and tour tickets. Our payment processing platform, Stripe, is not only secure, but provides bookkeeping and statistics that support the work of our Treasurer.

## **Administrative Activities**

### **13. Welcome Package**

At the CPA, we endeavour to enrich how visitors and residents experience our unique neighbourhood. Learning about our history and architecture, and engaging with the attractions and activities produced by our volunteer-led board is a great way to do this. Several years ago we created an information dense, multi-page New Resident's Package to help us spread the word. Since then, we launched our website, providing us an opportunity to reimagine our approach – and we're thrilled with the outcome.

Going forward, we will distribute a *Welcome to Cabbagetown* letter to each new resident, personally signed by the chair. This will be accompanied by a beautifully designed, tri-fold *Explore Cabbagetown* brochure, highlighting the CPA's programmes and awards, as well as opportunities to support us through membership, volunteering and joining our board. Recipients are encouraged to visit our website to learn more. Not only is this a more cost-effective and sustainable approach, but it is also multi-purpose. The compact size of our new brochure enables us to share it more readily via events and partner locations thereby increasing awareness of all that we do beyond new residents. Special thanks to Valeriia Prymachenko, a recent arrival to Canada from Ukraine, who worked with Steve Yeates and other members of the board to design our new brochure.

### **14. CPA Membership and Marketing**

We continue to encourage members of our community to join our association to support our work, to continue our efforts to promote an active interest in the history of the community, and to encourage participation in these activities.

---

To be blunt, this has been a challenge, and despite the small membership fee of \$20/year for up to four members of a family, we continue to have difficulty increasing our base from the loyal group of supporters who contribute each year. We have made it easier than ever for folks to join with a secure e-commerce application on our website, and the renewal reminders have been very successful. We thank each of you who have contributed over the years. We are, however, dismayed by the lack of response generally, and we are giving this topic a major rethink in the coming year.

The primary goal of the CPA is education, including community building through our programs and events. Most of this, outside of our garden and home tours, is available free of charge. We also distribute almost all our materials to the community free of charge. Sarah McCarten (formerly Vagg) is heading up the Membership Committee, and in the coming year the committee will be re-thinking our traditional approach, and considering alternatives. If you have ideas or an opinion, please write to us, or join us on a committee or the board to move forward with us.

*Prepared by Gale Moore, Chair, CPA with contributions from Board members heading up these events and activities, and a call out by name to those doing important behind the scenes work which is not acknowledged elsewhere. As always, there's more on the website. Thank you all.*