

Cabbagetown Preservation Association Newsletter

December, 1999

Volume 11, Issue 2

Festival of Lights announced for Cabbagetown

Organizers of The Cabbagetown Festival of Lights announced exciting plans for the inaugural year of this community-based winter event.

With more Victorian architecture than any other place in North America, Cabbagetown is the ideal location for such an event. The object is to "light up Cabbagetown" on this — the last month of the century — and to celebrate both the holiday season and the new Millennium. It is anticipated that visitors from communities throughout the GTA will come to Cabbagetown to "take in the lights" and enjoy the local history, culture and hospitality.

To give the event a "kick-start" in its first year, festival organizers have selected several homes that typify various architectural styles in Cabbagetown. Cost-free to homeowners, the Festival will decorate the fronts of these houses. Experienced designers will provide the lighting plans, and skilled craftsmen at Dutch Touch Renovations will install the lighting — all at no cost to owners.



Co-Chair Christopher Dew's Georgian-style home is one of many that will help light up Cabbagetown

The purpose of The Cabbagetown Festival of Lights is to encourage local residents to light up their homes, balconies, trees, shrubs or fences. It is a fun activity and a means of self-expression that everyone can enjoy.

A prize, decided by popular vote, will be awarded to the house with the most attractive and innovative lighting treatment. Ballot boxes will be placed in 10 to 15 businesses in the community.

The Cabbagetown Festival of Lights will feature Walking Tours on Friday evenings, starting on December 17th. For departure times, contact the Festival Hotline: 413-0757. Tours will leave from Carlan's Gourmet Market and Coffee House where a complimentary hot beverage will be served.

As well, the Old Cabbagetown Business Improvement Association is launching an initiative to encourage local merchants to light up the facades of their businesses. A prize will be awarded to the most original display.

The Cabbagetown Festival of Lights runs from December 15, 1999 to January 15th, 2000. It is partly supported by the City of Toronto Millennium Grants Program and is presented by Gifts of Light Inc., a not-for-profit corporation. The Co-Chairs are Daniel J. Dochylo and Christopher Dew.

Riverdale Farm to Hold Holiday Season Open House



Children at Riverdale Farm enjoy a wagon ride, courtesy of Dolly, the oldest horse at the farm

Mark the date — Thursday, December 16th, 4 to 8 p.m. — in your calendar. Drop by Simpson House to enjoy the spirit of an old-fashioned holiday season open house.

Sip on hot chocolate or steaming cider. Enjoy a few holiday treats. Try your hand with decorations -- or, venture outside for a horse-and-wagon ride in the brisk winter air.

Also mark the 16th as final day to register for winter programs at the

farm. Programs are described in the Parks and Recreation Guide for Winter 2000. Note that a new telephone registration system requires you to apply for a personal identification number. More information is in the Guide and at the Farm Meeting House.

Year round, the Farm offers delightful meeting spaces for workshops or community groups. Contact is Ruth Armitage, 392-0046.

Tulips in December? No, Streetscapes in June



Front garden at 123 Winchester Street

The awards for this year's Cabbagetown's Streetscapes in Bloom competition were presented at the CPA meeting in November.

The winner of the top award went to 123 Winchester Street, the home of David Grant and Gordon Robins. A wrought iron arch covered with climbing roses and clematis framed the entrance of a garden full of colourful perennial flowers and flowering bushes. This long, narrow garden fronts a subdued gray board and batten Victorian home. The winners were presented with a watercolour portrait of their garden by artist Connie Johnson.

Each garden was visited and scored by the judges three times, once each in June, July and August. The judges were Fred Jarmen, last year's winner of the Streetscape in Bloom competition, Stephen Boddy, a landscape architect, and Peggy Kurtin, President of the Cabbagetown Preservation Association.

Other outstanding gardens and winners were 52 Aberdeen, 15 Bowman Street, 16 Geneva Street, 16 Sackville Place, 54 Spruce Street, 267 Wellesley Street East, 394 Wellesley Street East, 458 Wellesley Street East, 122 Winchester Street and one big garden fronting 13 to 19 Winchester Street.

CabBits — A Few Tidbits of Cabbagetown Historical Trivia

In this issue, CabBits focuses on sharpening up your "Street Smarts".

Carlton Street..

It was named after Sir Guy Carleton, brother of Ann, wife of Dr. John Strachan, Bishop of Toronto. No one knows when the "e" was dropped. Until 1873, the section of Carlton east of Parliament was called Elm Street.

Sackville Street...

It was called Pine Street until 1879.

Amelia Street...

It was named for the wife of John Scadding, who bought 200 acres, east of Parliament Street from the Simcoe Estate.

Wellesley Street...

It had a number of names. First it was called Frank Street, after Francis, the son

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Volunteer Help Wanted

For the Heritage District project...

Researchers: To do research at Archives. We will train. Any morning, Monday to Thursday.

Inputters: To input research data on to a disk, using your computer at home. On and off for 3 to 4 months.

Writers: To write 3 to 4 sentence descriptions of homes. We will provide a book of architectural terms.

Phone: 967-6432

For the Forsythia Festival:

So far, the only thing that's certain is the date -- Sunday, May 7th. We need volunteers with fresh new ideas for planning and implementing.

Phone: 410-4259

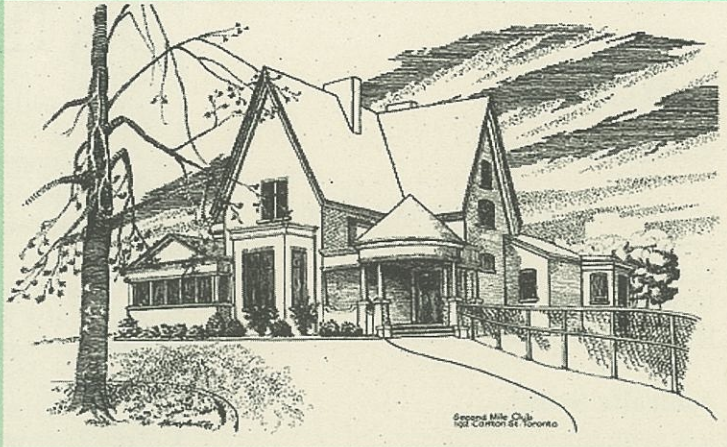
From the Archives

by John Court, CPA Board Member

The Allan McLean Howard family home, built in 1850 at 192 Carlton Street, is now occupied by the Second Mile Club. This ink drawing by Hans Plant (1987) is reproduced through the courtesy of the Second Mile Club.

Allan McLean Howard, a scion of the "Family Compact", was born at York in 1825, named after his father's patron — the Hon. William Allan of *Moss Park* and *Allan Gardens* — and educated at the Home District Grammar School.

Soon after building this large, elegant home — only the 17th dwelling between Yonge and Parliament Streets in the woodland along the north side of Carlton — he married an Edinburgh-born Macdonald of the Confederation Life Insurance founding family. Their family ties remained strong. Allan Howard later became a director of Confederation Life (along with a bank and a loan company), a donor to the Family Compact-supported Trinity College and a Captain in the militia.



The Howards had eight children and were active in St. Peter's Anglican Church, built in 1865 on adjacent land that they severed for the church and later (1905) its rectory next door. St. Peter's has been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act as an exceptional rendering of the High Victorian Gothic style in polychromatic yellow and red brick.

In 1947, the Howard house was sold to the City by its successor owners who asked that it become a senior citizen's day centre. The Second Mile has happily occupied it since that time. For further information on the Second Mile Club and Mid-Toronto Community Services' programs for seniors, please call 922-5819.

CPA News

Update: "Heritage District"

A meeting was held on November 18th for the residents of the Metcalfe Street Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study to discuss what impact the study would have on their homes. The area includes the whole length of Metcalfe Street, and the sections of Amelia, Salisbury and Carlton Streets from the lanes running parallel to Parliament to the west side of Sackville Street.

The first of several scheduled public meetings throughout the study introduced the Steering Committee and discussed the work plan. Steering Committee members are: Mary Rose Daigle (Amelia Street), Joan O'Roark (Salisbury Street), George Rust D'Eye (Sackville Street), Jeff McCanna (Metcalfe Street), Peggy Kurtin (Winchester Street), Ilona Eurchus (member-at-large), Bonnie Dew (Councilor Pam McConnell's office), Marisa Williams (Heritage Toronto) and Lori Martin (Urban Planning).

Patricia Braithwaite, one of the main researchers with the CPA, gave a brief description of research that needs to be done on each house. There is much research to be done, and help would be appreciated. If anyone has already researched their home, she would appreciate a copy.

Marissa Williams explained that Heritage Toronto provides information and guidance as to appropriate changes and offers advice on restorations of heritage homes. The agency also offers Heritage Grants for work on houses in designated heritage areas.

Another meeting is planned for early spring to present the completed research work and the Steering Committee's long-term vision for the area.

Gifts Galore

Looking for just the right gift for the person who has everything?

How about a stylish CPA T-shirt or sweatshirt? T-shirts are \$16, or \$14 for CPA members. Sweatshirts are

\$25, or \$23 for CPA members.

Or, some Cabbagetown Christmas Hasty Notes — perfect for sending a brief note to faraway friends. Ten for \$5.

Or, the CPA's handy pocket-sized book "Touring Old Cabbagetown", an easy-to-use guide for do-it-yourself walking tours of the area. \$15, or \$10 for CPA members.

Winner of Garden Design

Marie Lynch of 343 Seaton Street was the lucky winner of a cost-free garden design offered by designer Wendy Boyle to encourage residents to join the CPA.

The CPA newsletter is edited by Kathy Farrell. Any story ideas or comments from readers are welcome (966-0493).

It is distributed to Cabbagetown homes by volunteers coordinated by Ray Barton (929-6388).

CabBits

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of Lt. Gov. John Graves Simcoe. Then it was called Charles, after the son of John Scadding. Then, finally it was called Wellesley after Arthur, Lord Wellesley, Duke of Wellington.

Metcalf Street...

It was named after Sir Charles Metcalfe, the first Baron of Metcalfe (1785 - 1846) and Governor General of Canada from 1843 to 1845.

And, moving right along — from streets to street corners — Sally Gibson told us about the history of the **southwest corner of Winchester and Sackville...**

From 1886 to 1890, a 20 x 90 foot wooden building called the St. Andrew's Mission Church stood on the corner. The 7300 square foot property cost \$2,555, and the "simple Frame Structure" cost \$1,300. By 1899, the attendance at the church had grown so large that the church elders decided to build a new church at Winchester and Metcalfe. This church is still standing and now houses the Toronto Dance Theatre. The building cost \$27,000.

Thank you, Sally, for your sleuth work. If anyone else in the neighborhood has any tidbits of Cabbagetown trivia, just pass them along to any of the Board members listed here, or phone editor Kathy Farrell.

Dig This!

by Wendy Boyle, Be-leaf Landscape Design

With the excitement of a new millennium peaking, why not look at winter gardening with a fresh eye? There are many things you can do to spruce up your winter garden -- to make it look warm and interesting rather than cold and lifeless.

Urns are an obvious place to start. Dogwood and cedar boughs are traditional, but why not add a little spark with gold-sprayed salal leaves or dried hydrangea? If you've just done some pruning, bundles of wood (about 5" by 2-3' long) can look great tied together with a bow or raffia, sitting at the base of the urn. Or, the branches can be used to provide height in the centre of the urn, with large cones or dried pomegranates around the base.

Outdoor statues, arbors and birdhouses all provide interesting focal points in a winter garden. Bird feeders are also fun and seeing wildlife during winter keeps us in touch with Mother Nature, even if it is from the inside looking out.

Lighting is something I always like to promote. Coloured lights add mood for the festive season, while sparkling white lights add presence and simplicity. A focal tree or shrub can be highlighted with a miniature spotlight, casting interesting shadows and patterns on snow-covered lawns and gardens.

Placing candles in a winter garden can add character and warmth. By using a colored paper bag — red, perhaps — and filling the bottom with about 2" of dry sand, then placing a tea candle in the center, the bag will glow with colour and illuminate the area around it. These whimsical "paper glows" are great for lighting up an outdoor staircase or in amongst a rockery on a special evening.

One last note is for the environment. Consider an alternative to the endlessly damaging use of salt. Alternatives include magnesium chloride, urea, calcium chloride, kitty litter and sand -- all available garden or hardware stores in winter. Please note that some granulars can temporarily stain natural stone. Let's try to look after Mother Nature and hopefully she'll look after us during the next, upcoming millennium.

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CPA Office Phone: (416) 410-4259; Fax: (416) 967-9728

CPA Membership Application

Your support is critical to the health of the Cabbagetown Preservation Association. Your membership fee, along with revenue from sales of our books, t-shirts, mugs and other items, is our main source of funding. Please mail or drop off your support to Ted Gzebb at 292 Sackville Street, Toronto, Ontario M5A 3G2.

Date _____ Name _____
One Year \$10.00 _____ Address _____
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