

# the bridge

Connecting people, places and ideas from the downtown east

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By Jayne Kitchen

## Inadequate air controls leave residents fuming

By Rosemary Frei

Crombie Town residents are gasping after dozens more trees were cut down by a developer without clear information -- until after they were felled -- on whether or when they would be chopped down.

This contributes to the rapidly worsening air quality in the area, which has one of the highest concentrations of air-pollution sources in the city, and which also is located beside the high-profile Quayside site.

Months of pleas to the provincial environment ministry's Air Quality Office to set up an air-quality-measurement station in the area -- and to local MPP Chris Glover's office to help push for this -- have not succeeded. Instead, an official from the ministry indicated they had moved one such station to the vicinity of John and King streets, which is more than two kilometres west of Crombie Town.

Gary Wheeler, the media relations person for the provincial environment ministry, did not respond by deadline to a query from the bridge about why an air-quality monitoring station cannot be placed in Crombie Town.

More than 40 large maple and ash trees were toppled in the vicinity of the former FedEx building at Lake Shore Blvd. E. and Lower Sherbourne Ave. during the week of October 21 to prepare for a new development. An April 2019

city-commissioned arborist report stated all but three of the trees were in good health.

Ward 10 Councillor Joe Cressy's office did not provide details about what would happen to the trees until one local -- who'd been inquiring for weeks about the plan for them, without a clear response -- contacted the office on Oct. 27 asking why the trees had been killed.

"The redevelopment of this site and removal of trees has fortunately been planned through a deliberate planning process that will provide an improved growing condition for new, healthier trees, as well as an improved streetscape and public realm," Tom Davidson, Director, Waterfront Initiatives in Cressy's office, responded in an Oct. 28 email.

The local resident, to whom the bridge granted anonymity to protect her from possible repercussions from speaking out, said this rings hollow.

"The city can request that the setback of grass and trees that FedEx had there [at the site] be maintained. Not doing so shows a real lack of concern for the present air quality."

Longboat Ave. resident Mike Hutchinson added that the poor air quality is tangible.

"If you leave a window open you have to wipe the sill down, and then have to wipe it down again the next day," he said. "And at certain times



Dozens of healthy trees at the former FedEx site were turned into woodchips

the smells are just as bad -- like during the many months earlier this year when they were remediating the huge construction site at Front and Sherbourne, and people wearing white suits and respirators used foam to seal in the very unpleasant smells escaping from the soil."

Another resident, to whom the bridge also granted anonymity to prevent repercussions, said a similar scenario has played out at every construction site in Crombie Town.

"Here we are in an area that's seeing more vertical housing going up and our trees

are going down," said the woman, who reported having respiratory problems from the pollutants. "And we've had absolute roadblocks from Cressy [when trying to find out in advance whether the trees would be saved]."

continued on page 4

## 'in reply to the mayor'

By Anthony Van Zant

From: John Tory  
Date: Wed, Jul 17, 2019, 5:00 PM  
To: anthonyvanzant1

Thank you for your note with respect to EMR field exposure. I take note of the request made to the UN to have a more complete examination of the long term effects of EMR. I am very much guided by objective expertise of scientists on these matters so those opinions are always welcome as we try to

promote and protect health.

I will look forward to whatever developments or reports may emerge on this matter and thank you for bringing it to my attention. John Tory

(october'30th/2019 2:47pm)  
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[continued on page 5]



## From the Publisher

With great gratitude it is my pleasure to introduce the first edition of *the bridge* community newspaper. As the name implies, *the bridge* is a collaborative force connecting people, places and ideas from across our city to the downtown east. Our audience and readership contribute to each issue, welcoming an expanding voice on this open forum promoting the integrity and dignity of good community.

History has shown that community newspapers play an important role in society. Collecting and disseminating local news, they provide a platform to advocate on behalf of residents, business owners, schools, churches and governments. Local news is a proven value for governance and democratic traditions, reflecting demographics, economic activity and a community's political consciousness.

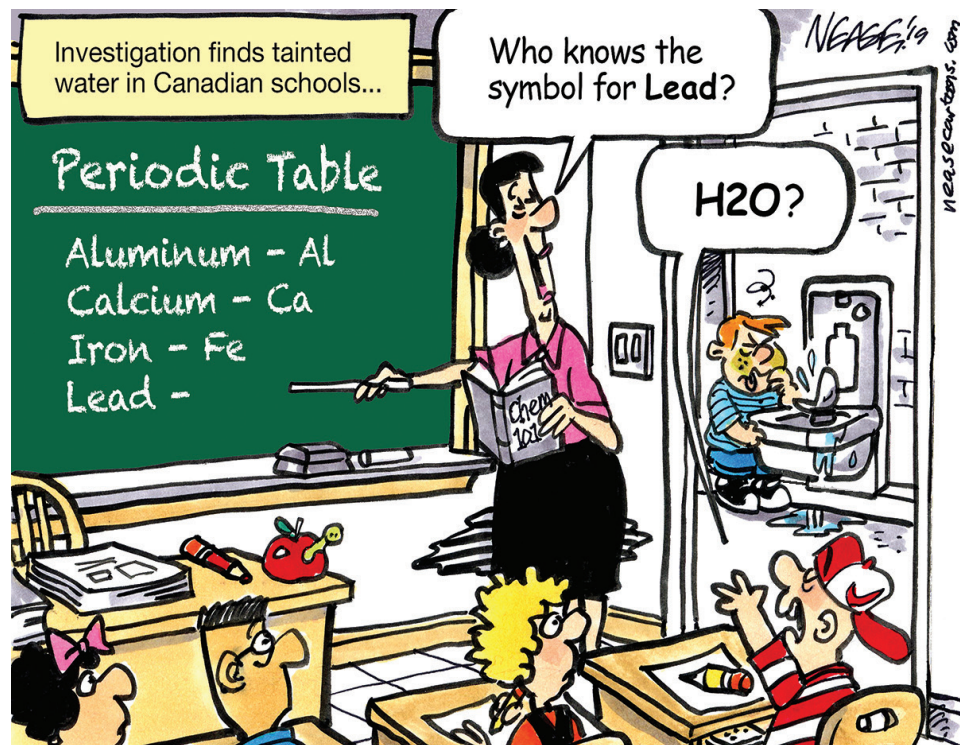
Over time *the bridge* looks to gain familiarity with residents as a main stay of local news. Working alongside existing media and adhering to groups, agencies and organizations is our goal towards building better community relationships. Communication is key to keeping conversations going.

I would like to thank all the businesses who advertised and to the writers who contributed their time and material content to our pages.

Questions, comments, concerns? Want to contribute?

Write to us: [thebridgedowntown@gmail.com](mailto:thebridgedowntown@gmail.com)

Publisher, André Michael Bermon  
Contributing Editor, Anthony Van Zant  
Photographer, S. Blondal



## Amazing Moss Park

By Carol Mark



Photocredit

Neighbourhoods are communities made up of people who are about their place and the people who reside in them. My sense of community was first inspired by a street that I had lived on as a student called Draper Street; a small one-way street nestled amongst a massive development in the lower part of Front and Spadina. This little street became the first

historical district in Toronto, and it was here that my sense of what constituted a community was formed.

My experiences on Draper St. shaped my ideas of how communities and people should be and has led me to work with communities all over the world. The Lakota Sioux at Wounded Knee Pine Ridge Indian Reservation

U.S.A. was one. At Wounded Knee we cooked and taught each other about our cultures while brewing tea and learning to prepare bison stew for the first time. Then my daughter and I volunteered in remote Mayan communities in the Yucatan, bringing medical aid. And finally, perhaps most dramatically, I visited the widows and children of Afghanistan, reading secretly the stories that the children had written.

In the big city we have lost our sense of community and the joy of people and genuine connection, concerning ourselves with only with our social media presence or how we can make the next dollar; forgetting that it is the people that make up our community. Bruce Bell, a local historian that has inspired and fuelled my love for local history, reminds everyone that knowing the stories of the past paves the way

for the future of community.

With this inspiration of people place and history [www.amazingmossspark.ca](http://www.amazingmossspark.ca) has been making inroads in sharing the history of Moss Park for the present and future. Come share

and discover the lost history of this neighbourhood and join us on our associations mailing list and Instagram to be a part of history going forward.

### Preservation House

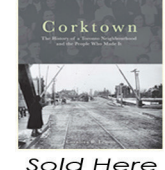
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## Yesterday Today Tomorrow

By Dini Petty

Toronto has been my home since I was eleven. We lived around the Yonge and St Clair area but in the late 1990's I left for the peace and quiet of the Mulmur Hills (an hour and a half north of the city) Surrounded by five acres of forest with a one-acre pond in the front yard where blue heron's would come to fish, it was paradise found for fifteen years.

But, the kids left, the dog died, and it was time to move back to the big city. I'm now within walking distance of the St Lawrence Market and aware that Toronto is fulfilling it's wish to be a mini New York City. Complete with unaffordable rents 'constant sirens' 'grid locked streets and far more ho-

meless people.

The city with a heart has been replaced with a city of people struggling to survive who have little time if any to care. I attended a meeting where an architect described the half dozen buildings on land owned by the LCBO near the Gardiner 'that will be thirty to seventy stories tall and each building a community unto itself.

The dream of homeownership is disappearing and those with homes are financially trapped. "If I sell it will cost me the same or more to buy what I already have!" Reality today is five hundred thousand dollars will get you a 600 square foot condo downtown

plus monthly upkeep plus property taxes.

Recently a young friend said; I don't think I can afford to live in Toronto. I replied, why would you want to live in Toronto? (I've never said that before but) 'now I tell people about Chatham, Orangeville and the other small wonderful communities where life is still affordable and quieter.

I love Toronto, it's good for seniors who need access to medical care but, if I were younger with a career plus family and I didn't have to live in the city, I wouldn't.



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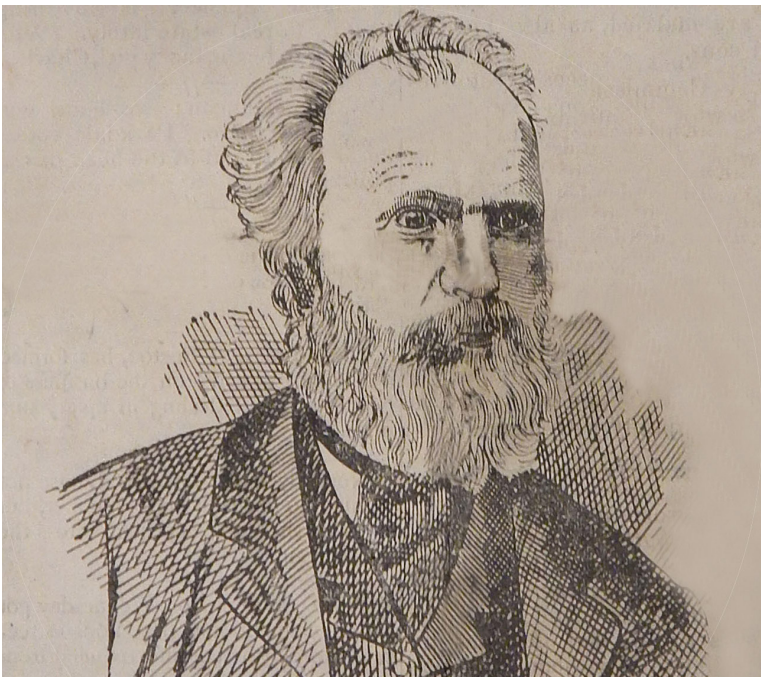
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# The Benevolent Mr. Coatsworth

By Coralina Lemos



Mr. Coatsworth, courtesy of the Toronto Reference Library.

As we welcome the birth of *the bridge* community newspaper, my thoughts turn to Emerson Coatsworth Sr. who around the age of sixteen was inspired to gain a vocation in the carpentry trade, and in time was employed in the construction of dams and bridges.

Born in England, he grew up in St. Catharines, Ontario, where his widowed mother settled with her four children. At

the age of twenty-six, Coatsworth arrived in Toronto to supervise the building of the Don Bridge at the forks of King and Queen Streets; an essential connection known to provide ease of passage from Toronto to Kingston. Choosing to accept work at various province-wide locations, by the following year he was awarded his first city contract to plank Palace Street (now Front), from

Trinity Street to the St. Lawrence Market, including portions of Wellington and Church Streets. This led to additional employment opportunities, one of which was the building of Berkeley Street Methodist Church, on Queen Street East, of which he was founding trustee.

By the mid-19th Century, Corktown was comprised mainly of blue-collar workers who lived in labourers' cottages that lined main and side streets. Quick access to people wanting work was beneficial to him and a good reason to move his family to a cottage frame house on the south side of King Street, just west of Gilead Place. It was also at this location where he kept a workshop. He was a man with a compassionate nature, evident in his generosity to the needy of Toronto's east end whom he helped anonymously by supplying them with coal and wood during winter months.

Given his undeterred nature from a young age, within a few years of living in Toronto he was elected to the School Board for St. David's Ward and for one year served as the districts Alderman. Coatsworth then went on to be City Commissioner.



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Assuming the role in 1873, his duties covered overseeing the construction of buildings, control over sanitary and fire departments, the care of streets, and other responsibilities. With a population of roughly 70,000, the city was reported to have been growing rapidly, resulting in the lack of affordable living accommodations. This is evident in a letter Coatsworth wrote to architect and friend, William G. Storm, where he mentions, "...not a home to let is to be found. Small houses are renting as high as \$17 per month and others at \$20 -

\$25..."

Emerson Coatsworth continued to own two lots he purchased in Corktown from James Beaty Sr. up to 1885, and in a decision to sell he did so to the Wilkins Brothers, local realtors and builders.

~ Coralina Lemos is a Corktown resident. She is the author of, "Corktown: The History of a Toronto Neighbourhood and the People Who Made It," an award-nominated book available at Preservation House, Toronto or visit her website. ©

## TOBuilt, a database for Toronto heritage

By Caroline Ross, TOBuilt Coordinator

While walking through Toronto, have you ever asked yourself, "Who built that building?"

The Architectural Conservancy Ontario's Toronto Branch (ACOTO) has an answer for you. Its TOBuilt Database is an open-source database full of information on buildings and structures in Toronto, including associated architects.

The database was started by Robert Krawczyk in 2005 to catalogue images and details about Toronto's heritage buildings. Recognizing the importance of keeping this information publicly available, ACOTO acquired the site in 2013, and since re-launching in 2015 has expanded the database to over 11,400 entries spread across Toronto's 140 neighbourhoods.

What makes TOBuilt unique is that it is not limited to heritage buildings included on the City's Heritage Register, protected under the Ontario Heritage Act, or designated as National Historic Sites. ACOTO wants to collect information on as many structures as possible, not only to engage communities in learning about the physical history that surrounds them, but also to enable the City to designate buildings

worth saving.

In line with ACOTO's mandate of education and conservation, TOBuilt features "At Risk" entries, highlighting and monitoring threats to built heritage as well as keeping the

public up to date on any news regarding buildings at risk of demolition or alteration. Many "At Risk" entries were brought to ACOTO's attention by concerned community members, and TOBuilt offers the opportunity to bring awareness to a large audience.

TOBuilt is ACOTO's biggest project, and communities are encouraged to share stories and

knowledge of sites they care about. Many buildings and structures lining the streets of Toronto's Downtown East have yet to be included in the database; by compiling information now, residents can use TOBuilt as a resource should part of the area be studied for designation as a Heritage Conservation District.

TOBuilt is freely available to

the public, and its new "Map View" feature has made searching and using the database even easier. With more community support, TOBuilt will be able to answer almost any question about Toronto's built environment. To become a member of ACOTO and contribute to TOBuilt, send an email to [tobuilt@acotoronto.ca](mailto:tobuilt@acotoronto.ca).



**Shawarma  
Shish Taouk  
Kabab**



**Falafel  
Salad  
Vegetarian**

**Shawarma Chicken Plate**  
Thinly sliced marinated chicken, served with rice, salad, hummus, and garlic sauce.

**\$10.62**

**Falafel Plate**  
A mix of Freshly ground chickpeas, golden fried and made in house, entirely by hand, hummus and garlic sauce.

**\$7.99**

**Shish Taouk Plate**  
Grilled seasoned chicken breast, served with rice, salad, hummus, and garlic sauce.

**\$11.50**

**Shawarma Chicken Wrap**  
The flavour of this Chicken Shawarma marinade is absolutely incredible.

**\$6.19**

**Shawarma Beef Wrap**  
Shawarma is the ultimate on-the-go meal. Thinly sliced meat, wrapped in a pita bread with veggies and sauce is a delicious quick meal.

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**Falafel Wrap**  
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# Reflections on a Park Bench

By Ken Rosser

On reflection, there were those old cartoons of homeless people asleep on park benches with a newspaper for a blanket. I never understood the punchlines to those. Now, we make our benches too short, and we put our hand rests in the middle. Oh no, not for you, this place of rest. We don't want

**Some news publications complain about the litter left by the damned, which is a symptom, not the disease**

to see you taking up space in our bus shelters, where you might have some protection from the winter winds. We don't want to see those we have made homeless by corporate or government policies. We don't want to notice that houses have soared to become million-dollar properties, while wages have stagnated.

It is rare to be hired off the streets back into a mainstream job, because we have come to look scruffy. We don't mean to, but it is just how it is. We

no longer have the means to buy fine clothes.

You don't like how our etiquette has lapsed? Well, we have had to learn the etiquette of the streets to survive. You don't panhandle in the same block as someone else. You share, yet you fight over a dropped bill. What brought us

here is the same trap door that is under your own feet, if you were only aware. But look at us, think about us sometime. This is someone's little girl, or boy. Maybe you went to school with them, but what happened along their

journey, that now you don't want to share a bus seat with them? What are the torments behind their eyes? They could fill novels with their stories, will you listen?

Things will only get worse before they get better.

Some news publications



Reflection on a Park Bench by Wendy Belcourt, courtesy of MYTORONTO/Ve'ahavta.

complain about the litter left by the damned, which is a symptom, not the disease. They want to cover everything up with a big rug, and pretend it isn't there. They want more police, not more money for the poor. More jails, not more housing, no safe injection sites, just more graveyards. Things will only get worse if you follow their solutions, and in the end, who will be left to bury them? We need better park benches, and more of them. We need more kindness,

better wages and better laws to protect workers. We need rent controls and tenant protections, not carte blanche for greedy landlords to make excuses for evictions. We need power for the many, not the few. We need blankets, not newspapers, for those who need a park bench for a temporary mattress.

Courtesy of the Toronto Writers Collective

... continued from page 1

There are many contributors to the high burden of fine particulate matter and other forms of air pollution in the area bounded by— clockwise from north to west -- Front St., Parliament St., Queens Quay E. and Lower Sherbourne St. The main sources are: four lanes of traffic on Parliament and six lanes each on the Gardiner Expressway and Lake Shore Blvd. E.;

eight sets of GO train tracks between Longboat Ave. and Lake Shore, with another two to be added soon; eight active construction sites; and the first phase of the Gardiner rebuild, between Jarvis and Cherry streets.

A recent Toronto Star article detailed “potentially hazardous” effects on construction workers from the carcinogenic dust created when workers finish cement and grind, blast or chip concrete. Yet there is little study and public discussion about the health effects on people living near construction sites. There is even less consideration given to the additional consequences of a high volume of cars, trucks and diesel trains at their doorstep.

However, the provincial and municipal governments appear unwilling to address this in any way. Therefore, Crombie Town residents' only recourse is to pay for air-quality monitoring themselves or find another way to have the pollution assessed.

Glover told the bridge another community group, the Bathurst Quay Neighbourhood Association, very recently found a University of Toronto researcher who is willing to study the air quality in their area, which is very close to the Billy Bishop Airport.

## It is not the end – it is more like “See you later”

By Phil Roth

SCHNITZEL QUEEN has been in operation and serving the local resident population of Moss Park and beyond Toronto proper for over 37 years. Local business owners Margo and Karl Hubsch have run this specialty European Cuisine

restaurant for the past 7 years successfully and have grown both their business and their family during this time. Growing strong and deep roots require commitment from both local business such as the SCHNITZEL QUEEN and a community

that supports and encourages local entrepreneurship. One cannot grow without the other.

It has been the aim and goal to welcome guests and patrons to experience a feeling of home in a cozy and welcoming environment that is mat-

ched by the delicious taste of artistic Schnitzel-making. Karl Hubsch does not just rhetorically ask his clients for feedback. He follows up and places great emphasis on the highest level of quality control and takes great pride in delivering such on a daily basis. Caring to know that every food experience remains outstanding and consistent on every visit.

Connecting people through food is not just a business mantra, but a lived ambition that can be witnessed on any day of the week. Bringing visitors together from all walks of life, backgrounds, cultures and social standing. It is exactly that straightforward and transparent approach that offers a welcome that is open and honest. A yearning of what old school business used to be and feel like. Long-term residents of Moss Park and other patrons alike can attest to this approach and have learnt to enjoy and cherish this home-like atmosphere, which is also reflected in its quaint décor.

A satisfying food enjoyment and a deeper social connection is what the objective has been all along for the Hubsch's. They also in turn have maintained and grown roots with local business suppliers, of

which some span a period of over 30 years. Small business supporting small business. Promoting a minimized carbon footprint in times when supply chains can span unjustified long distances.

The departure of SCHNITZEL QUEEN from Moss Park located at 211 Queen Street East is not to be viewed as a loss but more like a celebration that communities thrive when they look after each other, residents and local business alike. The personable and friendly welcome and gastronomic sophistication will be missed, but the unveiling and opening of the next growth chapter of SCHNITZEL QUEEN will bring delight and joy, whichever location in Toronto will host its presence.



The owners of Schnitzel Queen, Margo and Karl Hubsch.



... continued from page 1

(ofcourse'thats the g me for g mers of peopl'(facading voice'whilst usurping in'a contriv'd consensus 'by anymeans possibl') ,,  
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ofwich the canadian civil-liberties association(in 2015) director brenda mcphail

preficed(inleadup to an ongoing international study)that the 'e'-forensics n'external over'ride meddling'of my tel communications 'is illicit and appauling and grading my 'e'-file as "extreme" and(actually) ranking it in the top'40 in all of canada inrelation to;  
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asanote;)  
oflate'y our office has'announced further restoration or rebuild to the toronto'sign@nathans (ofwich'was) part'of the "getloud" campaign

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(workinonit'('countonit'as) in 'our' city mr.mayor 'topsy turvy' looks like;5g n'its rather uninformed'whilst highly harmful millimeterwave'tech.  
<https://emfscientist.org/index.php/emf-scientist-appeal>  
(EMF- 'u.n. scientist appeal document')  
anthonyvanzant1@gmail.com  
\*part 2\* (in next months 'edition series']



Closing Date: December 27th

211 QUEEN ST EAST



## Building roots in Moss Park

By Darcy Higgins  
and Lisa Kates

Picture this. You get up Saturday morning and walk a block away to your neighbourhood produce market to get fruit and vegetables for the weekend. You get a bag each for just \$5 and put another \$5 in the jar to cover the cost for a neighbour with less means.

While you're there you run into some friends before taking your clothes to be mended for free by volunteers at Repair Cafe. Afterwards you grab your kids and head upstairs to help a local cook create a meal, while your kids enjoy a multimedia storytelling workshop by StoryPlanet. You decide to come back tomorrow with a friend for a free workshop to make your own hand cream for the winter.

This is now life in the Moss Park neighbourhood, as Building Roots works with residents, partners and donors to make a difference. Building Roots is an organization working to enable socially cohesive communities and has been doing that for four years.

Building Roots has been working hard to bring new resources and programs to Moss Park, enabling people in the area to come out of situations of loneliness and isolation. And now they're asking for your participation, no matter where you live. Come to Moss Park Market on Queen Street East to buy your vegetables, check out our events schedule, say hi to someone you don't know, or volunteer.

You can also donate to keep these programs free and join us for Building Roots' Skate-a-thon on December 6 at Nathan Philip Square. Check out [www.buildingroots.ca](http://www.buildingroots.ca) and @BuildingRootsTO on social media for everything they're doing.

Moss Park shouldn't stay invisible to the rest of the City. Be a good neighbour, get involved

# Smart City to proceed with caution

By Jayne Kitchen



Photo by DroneBoy for Sidewalk Labs.

On October 31st, the Waterfront Toronto committee and Google sister company Sidewalk Labs reached an agreement on how the two parties would proceed with their collaboration on the 'Smart City' development planned for a section of the Toronto lakeshore.

The American tech giant Sidewalk Labs released their official plan for the site in June. Since then, they have become a heated topic of debate, particularly surrounding the issues of data collection and the ramifications of a foreign business holding a large stake in Toronto property. A 'Smart City', by Sidewalk Labs has until now, been loosely described. While Smart Cities have become a topic of conversation around the world as of late, the physical realities often go undetailed. The likely reality is that the area will contain a substantial number of sensors, recording pedestrian, automotive, and environmental detail in unprecedented quantity.

This kind of gaze is what makes many Torontonians very nervous, myself included. For starters when Sidewalk Labs initially proposed their plan, they stated that in order to fulfill the potential of the project they required a 190 acre area

of land. Since the October 31st ruling, that number has been reduced to 12 acres, with Waterfront Toronto having a stronger presence in the decision making than Sidewalk Labs had initially requested.

The concerns of the Waterfront committee and of Torontonians are largely based on

the data collection and privacy. The amount of certain data categories that would be collected by the Smart City would no doubt be of significant value to the owning company. Assuming that since Sidewalk Labs is an affiliate company of Google, this data would be accessible to a company that is no stranger to data privacy scandals.

To complicate things further, both Google and Sidewalk Labs are American companies who abide by American regulations. Regardless of the Big Business value of the Smart City itself, how does this data collection affect the locals who live in and frequent the area? We expect some of our data to be organized by local government in order to inform public policy, but for the most part the contribution of our information to companies is voluntary. How can people fully consent to be a part of this system with such vast information being re-

corded?

Data collection aside, I don't think that I am alone in being suspicious of a US tech giant striding into Toronto, setting up un-tested programs, and then jumping ship if it goes south. Toronto will continue to expand and develop. We're not desperate to fast track our reputation on the world stage with a Smart City if it means a headache for everyone. However, I do believe that if Waterfront Toronto continues to remain a strong collaborative force alongside Sidewalk Labs, that a Smart City would be an interesting and potentially profitable addition to the Lakeshore. Now we will have to wait and see if Sidewalk Labs can accept not having full creative control, and if Waterfront Toronto can see the benefit that tech could have on our public spaces.

ARTISTS

PAUL JOSEPH CARROLL  
HENRY DINEEN  
JOSEPH FLASKO  
DAVID ALLAN MARCH  
JOAN McNEIL  
BOB PAPADOPOULOS  
KATHERINE PIRO  
KAREL VONDRA  
ROCHELLE  
ELLA BERNHARD

OPENING RECEPTION Friday Dec 13  
90 Ontario Street, Toronto  
Suite 208, 7-10pm

SHOW RUNS Dec 14-15 1-5pm

ART90  
ONTARIO

## Visit the Moss Park Market



Check out our events  
[buildingroots.ca](http://buildingroots.ca)

Facebook Instagram Twitter @BuildingRootsTO



## Market Winter hours

Saturdays 11-4pm



\$5 Produce Baskets Free Books

Art exhibits Workshops



# Visiting clowns, local firemen, and one particular brothel: what could possibly go wrong?

By Jennifer Mary Bell

As you walk through St James' Park today, you might pause to admire the typically-Torontonian juxtaposition of old and new visible from the park: the graceful spire of Saint James' Cathedral set against the gleaming glass towers of the financial district. What you may not know, however, is that this park is near the site of a dramatic episode in the city's history, involving clowns, firemen, prostitution, and sectarian divisions.

Toronto in those days was a small, but fast-growing city of 40,000 people that had more character of a frontier town than its later prim 'Toronto the Good' moniker might suggest. It had muddy streets, plenty of taverns, and buildings made mostly from wood, and as a result, it also had an ever-present risk of fire. During the war of 1812, fires set by American troops had caused such damage that the city passed a rule requiring every homeowner to

keep two buckets handy at all times, one filled with sand and one empty for use in a bucket brigade. There were also numerous volunteer fire brigades.

These brigades seemed to have doubled as social, or drinking, clubs as well. A month before the circus came to town in August 1855, a minor fire had broken out on Church Street. One brigade, the Hook & Ladder, rushed to put out the fire. But when they arrived, they found that another brigade had already arrived to do the job. Their response: lend a hand to the first group, right? Wrong. The Hook & Ladder men went in punching, and soon an out-and out brawl broke out between the rival firefighters. History does not record what happened to the burning building.

But back to the circus. It was a warm August night, and a visiting troupe was in town from the United States. They brought animals, acrobats, and clowns. After a successful performance, the clowns decided

to spend the evening celebrating at one of the many brothels in Toronto of that time. That was where the trouble began. Being from out of town, the clowns had no idea that the brothel they chose was the preferred choice of the Hook & Ladder brigade. Before long, a brawl had broken out, and the clowns – hard men of the road more than friendly jugglers – soundly beat the firemen.

Little did the clowns know, though, that the Hook & Ladder belonged to the dominant—almost the only—political force in the city, the Orange Order. The following day, the defeated firemen gathered up their many friends and came back to seek revenge on the clowns. While the police—themselves members of the Orange Order—stood idly by, the circus was attacked, with wagons overturned, stones thrown, and weapons drawn. Circus performers jumped to safety in the lake, the firemen brandished axes, and it was only when the mayor called in

the militia to break up the melee that the riot was put down.

Toronto has, of course, changed markedly in the century and a half since the clown riots, mostly for the better. Travelling circuses have largely passed out of fashion and, while the clown endures as a cultural symbol, the tougher sort appears mostly only in horror movies. The Orange Order of Canada survives, of course, as a fraternal organization. But its days of political influence – four Canadian Prime Ministers, NDP icon Tommy Douglas, and nearly every Mayor of Toronto until the 1970s were members – are long past. And thankfully, when two fire trucks arrive at the scene of a fire, they prefer to work together.

Jennifer Bell lives in the city and is a volunteer tour leader for Heritage Toronto.



Toronto 1854. Courtesy of the Toronto Public Library.

## No 'More Moss Park'

By Andre Bermon, Community Enthusiast

On October 16 the City of Toronto, The 519, and an undisclosed philanthropic partner declared the Moss Park Revitalization Project “unfeasible.” This was a result of poor judgment made worse by a less-than-clear vision for elevating this underprivileged neighbourhood.

The concept for Moss Park's redevelopment, dubbed 'More Moss Park,' began with the 519 Sport and Recreation Project, the first LGBTQ-focused recreation centre in Toronto. The proposed site spanned the John Innes Community Centre, the Moss Park Arena and the adjacent parkland.

Through the spring and summer of 2016 there were consultations to gauge public sentiment. A final report entitled, “What We've Learned,”

detailed findings of more than 2,500 conversations with community members, groups and organizations about the plans for transforming the area's indoor and outdoor facilities. The \$100-million price tag was to be divided among the anonymous philanthropic donor, fundraising by The 519 and all three levels of government.

A revitalization project of this scope in an area long beset by social ills was not without sizable obstacles, as the final report concedes. Moss Park is home to a diverse community with a large population of low income earners and people who are either homeless or underhoused. Drug trafficking and addiction are also prominent in an area that, as a result, is packed with social services battling Toronto's ongoing opi-

oid crisis.

The improbable task of trying to accommodate all the needs of everyone who would use the future site was a major sticking point. Many residents made it clear in their feedback that a renewed Moss Park should serve local communities first. After all, locals are the focus of most “revitalization” efforts.

On the other hand, many also acknowledged that improved facilities would have brought groups from outside neighbourhoods to use the space as well. That was the primary focus of The 519 and

the LGBTQ community, which were the instigators of the plans.

According to the report's online survey, 85% of respondents who live near Moss Park and don't use the outdoor facilities claimed personal safety was their main concern. That reflects one of the many sets of physical and emotional barriers people have to negotiate when accessing the neighbourhood's public services.

Instead, what was presented in the 'More Moss Park' plans were elaborate drawings and the hope that bulldozing and replacing essential community hubs would reverse decades of

quarantining the city's social inequalities in Moss Park.

Despite pulling the plug, the city's Parks, Forestry and Recreation division, The 519 and local city councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam remain committed to improving John Innes and the programs the community centre offers.

For any such future initiatives to succeed, they must include what Moss Park needs most: the foundations of a safe and stable community.



Photo by S.Blondal



# Photographs from around our city

By S.Blondal



## Hospitality, fresh food and old-time restaurants make Estepona a special place to visit

By Annette Marie

The Costa Del Sol (The Sunshine Coast) is located in the province of Malaga, running from east of Gibraltar to the province of Granada. A very popular beach town is Estepona, the most westerly of the Spanish fishing villages. Palm trees line the promenade, Paseo Maritimo, that runs along the Playa de la Rada beach.

Estepona has everything for a relaxing, enjoyable vacation. This town is filled with white-washed townhouses lined with terracotta flowerpots filled with colourful flowers and lush tropical plants. Lavish water fountains and monuments complement the beautiful cobblestoned roads that lead to shops, cafes and restaurants.

Estepona restaurants are for the most part family run. They offer fresh, homemade regi-

onal dishes and outstanding friendly service. Gazpacho, chilled soup made with plump, ripe tomatoes, garlic and peppers. Pescaito Frito, a platter of small fish tossed in batter and fried in olive oil are among the favourites on the menu.

The Tapeo, or tapas crawl is an intrinsic part of the south of Spain. Each bar is known for a specialty. Croquetas, croquettes made with a thick bechamel, filled with ham or cod. Spain prides itself in its exceptional world renowned ham, Jamon Iberico, a type of cured ham produced from the Black Iberian breed pigs. This is one of the most expensive hams produced in the world. Perfect for tapas or small portions.

Not surprising, because of its location on an extensive coastline, this area offers every imaginable variety of seafood. Cod, hake, prawns, crayfish,

clams, octopus, cuttlefish, sole and tuna just to mention a few.

An essential visit is to the Chiringuito. Small thatched wooden structures located along the beach. Wine, sherry (Jerez) and very cold beer are served along with tapas. Best known for the Espetos, a sardine skewered on a long stick and cooked over a firepit in a small boat filled with sand. This method of cooking not only gives the sardines a unique robust flavour, it also fills the air with a delicious, smoky sensation. These delicacies are enjoyed by locals and tourists alike.

To add to all this great food, friendly locals and long sandy beaches is also knowing that the sun shines approximately 330 days of the year. Now that's something to celebrate. Salud!



The Chiringuito. Cooking Sardines over an open fire.



Punta Doncella Lighthouse built in 1863, La Rada Beach, Estepona.