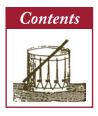
# The Fife and Drum

The Newsletter of the Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common

v. 15 No. 2 July 2011



- 1 Construction on the Visitor Centre Begins
- 2 Fort York Bridge Postponed
- 2 Naming Names in Fort York Neighbourhood
- 3 Postscript to Henry Ross: Renegade at Eureka
- 4 Annual General Meeting
- 4 Georgian Dinner Announcement

- 5 Administrator's Report
- 5 The Officers' Mess Establishment at Fort York
- 7 In Review: Stanley Barracks: Toronto's Military Legacy
- **9** Upcoming Events

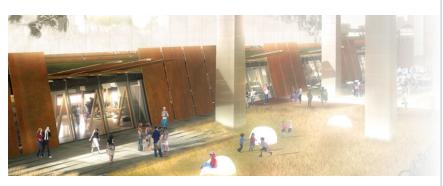
# Construction on the Visitor Centre Begins

The Visitor Centre project which is the centrepiece of Fort York's bicentennial commemoration of the War of 1812 is about to take a big step forward with the calling of building tenders in early July. They will close four or five weeks later and are expected to produce a structure ready for fixturing and the installation of exhibits by October 2012. This is about three months later than first hoped, but in good time to take up the \$4.6 million in grant monies from the Government of Canada that must be spent before April 2012. Saving the project from being deferred by the City for want of anticipated support was the announcement by the Hon. Michael Chan, Ontario Minister of Tourism & Culture, on April 29 that the provincial government would support the building of the Visitor Centre with a grant of \$5 million. These grants by the senior governments, besides being welcome endorsements that will help fundraising by the Fort York Foundation from private sources, represent the first time that Canada and Ontario have supported capital improvements at the Fort York National Historic Site.

The City of Toronto which owns Fort York and its surrounding 41 acres of parkland is committed to providing \$7 million in funding to the project, including \$2.7 million in monies from payments under Section 37 of the Planning Act. These contributions have been required from the developers of nearby condo projects because the building will serve also as a community centre for the upwards of 30,000 residents in the new neighbourhoods immediately surrounding the site. Besides having a multipurpose theatre, the Visitor Centre

will contain seminar rooms, a library for research into the fort and local history, a cafe and a service kitchen to support receptions and the like. Some part of the monies tabbed for the project, particularly the privately-raised funds, will go towards upgrading the Garrison Common surrounding the Visitor Centre and fort to park standards. Construction of a pedestrian-cycling bridge over the rail corridors north of the fort, when and if it occurs (see related article below), will greatly improve access to this precious green space.

On June 1 the Fort York Foundation held a big-ticket dinner co-hosted by Earle and Janice O'Born and Valerie and Andy Pringle to raise money for the Visitor Centre. Attended by over 200 persons at tables set up in the fort's blockhouses and barracks and prepared by five celebrity chefs, it was a sellout. Andy Pringle is chair of the Foundation's fundraising cabinet that's busy canvassing for donations. Currently it is in touch with several donors capable of giving major gifts. To date it has raised nearly \$1 million towards a goal of \$6 million.





Janice O'Born (I.) and Valerie Pringle (r.), with their husbands Earle and Andy, were co-hosts for the Garrison Dinner on June 1 to raise funds for the Visitor Centre project. (Credit: Sonia Recchia, Pimental Studios)

## Fort York Bridge Postponed

by Elizabeth Quance

The much anticipated Fort York pedestrian and cycle bridge has been delayed indefinitely because of concerns about its cost. The bridge, two sculptural, inclined arches across a pair of diverging rail corridors, was intended to be a key link in the network of parks following the route of the long-buried Garrison Creek, connecting Trinity Bellwoods Park and Stanley Park to the Garrison Common, and thence to June Callwood Park, Coronation Park and the Martin Goodman Trail. It would have also provided a pedestrian- and cycle-friendly connection between the neighbourhoods north of the tracks – the Niagara Neighbourhood and Liberty Village – and the growing community south of Fort York Boulevard and the waterfront. Moreover, it was a key to making more parkland accessible in an area identified as being deficient in open space.

On April 27 the results of the tender call for the construction of the structure came before the City of Toronto's Public Works and Infrastructure Committee for approval to award a contract to the recommended bidder. Rather than do this, the Committee referred the item back to staff to recommend a lower cost alternative. A motion to keep the design moving forward by bringing the item directly to City Council for debate at its meeting on May 18 was defeated, leaving the fate of the bridge uncertain.



Credit: Aecom with Montgomery and Sisam

Construction was to have begun this summer, to take advantage of a relatively narrow window of opportunity provided by Metrolinx during the construction of the new Strachan Avenue overpass of the Georgetown rail corridor. While some have suggested that the bridge still could be constructed at a later date, almost certainly it will take a different form and come later than the celebration of the bicentennial. There is unlikely to be another window of opportunity to construct the bridge until 2015 at the earliest.

A Facebook and letter-writing campaign initiated by residents of the neighbourhoods near Fort York suggests that there is strong community support for the bridge. Staff is expected to report back on a new bridge design sometime in the fall, and it is to be hoped that a solution will be found then to allow this important community link to be built.

# Naming Names in Fort York Neighbourhood

by Gary Miedema

Grand Magazine Street The Grarid Magazine In the Battle of York, 1813, the retreating British defonded the magazine with devastating impact on the American attack.

If you've visited the Fort recently, you'll know how quickly much of the landscape to the south keeps changing. After years of planning and construction, residential towers lining new streets are now a reality in the Fort York Neighbourhood. And in the midst of that dramatic and continuing development, a cluster of small pieces of heritage interpretation are finding their place.

About eight years ago, the Friends of Fort York joined a committee of local landowners and City staff to decide upon new street names for the area to the immediate south of the Fort. Balancing the myriad interests involved in such exercises, the committee recommended names closely associated with the area's history: Iannuzzi Street, Grand Magazine Street,

Bastion Street, Gzowski Street, Angelique Street, Bruyeres Mews, and Sloping Sky Mews. After City Council approved those names, they were reported on in the May 2005 issue of *Fife and Drum*, with brief descriptions of the history behind each. http://www.fortyork.ca/newsletter.htm

Thanks in part to the Friends, plans were made to have plaques interpret these street names, so that the story behind them could be understood. Funds were secured from the area's land developers. Given its long-standing Plaques and Markers Program, Heritage Toronto was brought on board to coordinate and complete the interpretation, in

consultation with the Friends of Fort York, and with the considerable help of Robert Mays, from the City's Public Realm section.

After much deliberation and several on-site visits, it was agreed that every effort should be made to have the interpretive plaques maintain the simplicity of the Fort York Neighbourhood streetscape (itself very carefully designed). As a result, Heritage Toronto is producing bronze plaques (approx. 30 x 8 inches) which will be installed into the sidewalks at the intersections with Fleet Street and Bathurst Street, and where Sloping Sky Mews meets June Callwood Park. The installation of each plaque will be timed with the completion of the sidewalks, which in some cases won't be finished for another year. That said, four plaques to interpret Bruyeres Mews, Grand Magazine Street, Iannuzzi Street, and Angelique Street, will likely be in place shortly. Lanterra Construction, Plazacorp, and Malibu Investments (with Tucker HiRise) are providing assistance with their installation.

Gary Miedema is Chief Historian and Associate Director, Heritage Toronto

## Postscript to Henry Ross: Renegade at Eureka

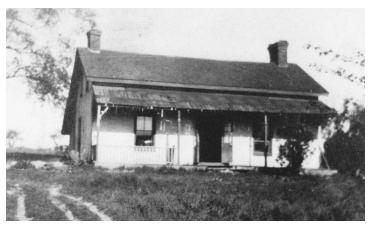
by Stephen Otto

In the last issue of *Fife and Drum* it was said that Henry Ross was born on his father's 200-acre farm in Lot 3, Second Concession west of Yonge Street, York Township, now part of midtown Toronto. It appears now this was not strictly correct. His birthplace was a house on a five-acre parcel in Lot 2 attached like a chad to the southeast corner of Lot 3. It was a newly-built squared-timber structure when Henry's father bought it in 1821 from his brother-in-law Robert Wells. Numbered as 2600 Bathurst Street until the 1950s, it then became 8 Ridelle Avenue.

In 1858, four years after Ross's death in Australia, his parents moved from Bathurst Street and divided the farm between two of his brothers; Joseph got the house. Among its later owners were William and Minnie Gemmell who bought it in 1920. It was also the home of Dora Mavor Moore, a noted actor, teacher, and stage-director who purchased it from the Gemmells in 1938. In a barn on the property the Village Players, a company she co-founded, performed plays by Federico García Lorca and Bertolt Brecht when it was not touring Shakespeare in the high schools.

The charm and history of the home inspired the Gemmell's daughter, Jeanne Minhinnick, author of the much respected *At Home in Upper Canada* (1970), in her work as a consultant on Upper Canada Village, the restoration of The Grange at Toronto, and Hamilton's Dundurn Castle. In the 1990s Minhinnick's sister, Mary Denoon, led a spirited campaign to prevent the house from being torn down, but without success. Said then to be the longest-inhabited dwelling in the City of Toronto, this failed to sway Council to prevent demolition.

Apart from stucco applied to the exterior for practical and cosmetic reasons in the 19th century, the house changed very little in appearance or function in its first century. In 1920 as in 1820, it still lacked running water, central heating, and



Ross-Gemmell-Moore House, ca. 1920.

indoor plumbing. When the Gemmells became the owners they made several improvements. A trio of dormers with casement windows was opened on the second floor, bringing welcome light to the upper hall and two front bedrooms. The verandah was rebuilt to a deeper configuration and given heavier columns. Hydro service would wait until 1941.

By 1954 when the house was boxed in by a large apartment building on Bathurst Street it lost much of its setting. By the 1990s Dora Mavor Moore's children were joint owners and could not agree on a course leading to preservation. In spite of real public interest in this option, when it was clear that demolition was impending the structure was given to Habitat for Humanity to auction the materials. They were bought for \$29,000 by a young couple who after some delay were able to re-erect the building on Allbright Road in Uxbridge, a small town 65 km northeast of Toronto.

#### Entre Nous

There has been good news in the Friends of Fort York community recently. On June 7 Shawn Micallef, a newly-elected member of the Friends of Fort York Board of Directors, was named a 2011-12 Canadian Journalism Fellow at Massey College. Shawn was previously a four-year veteran of the Fort York Management Board. He's the author of *Stroll: Psychogeographic Walking Tours of Toronto* (2010), an editor at *Spacing Magazine*, founder of the [murmur] mobile phone documentary project, and writes about cities, culture, buildings, art, and politics in books, magazines, newspapers, and websites.

Also, in early May our incoming co-chair Stephen Otto had conferred upon him an honorary Doctor of Sacred Letters by his alma mater, Trinity College, for his long career in advancing heritage causes, especially at Fort York. He was a founder of The Friends of Fort York in 1994 in response to the development pressure being put on the fort's site; the organization has persevered much longer than most such groups do. A frequent contributor to this newsletter, Stephen is able to draw from his encyclopedic knowledge of history gained while heading Ontario's heritage programs from 1975-81, and subsequently as an independent consulting historian.

The quiet courtyard of Friends' director Meg Graham was featured in a recent issue of *Now Magazine*. http://www.nowtoronto.com/lifestyle/story.cfm?content=181396. This serene space behind the office of superkül, the architectural firm where Meg is a partner, was the site of The Friends' nominating committee meeting to formulate recommendations to the Annual General Meeting (see following article).

## Annual Meeting of The Friends of Fort York for 2011

This occasion which took place on June 16 is where we elect our directors for the ensuing year and reflect on the last one. After approving the minutes of the 2010 AGM, the 20 or so people present for this year's meeting elected as directors for 2011-12: Nancy Baines, Geordie Beal, Matt Blackett, Sid Calzavara, Harriet De Koven, Richard Dodds, Patricia Fleming, Joe Gill, Meg Graham, Greg Kitscha, Eva Macdonald, Brian MacLean, Shawn Micallef, Marc Nufrio, Stephen Otto, Michael Peters, Elizabeth Quance, Ted Smolak, Andrew Stewart, George Waters, and Rob Zeidler.

For the first time in several years all 21 places on the board allowed by our by-laws have been filled. Unusual circumstances accounted for this in part. City Council recently vacated its power to appoint Management Boards for several City museums, including Fort York, effectively winding down those bodies. The Friends invited former members of the Fort York Management Board to join our board, and Harriet De Koven, Brian MacLean, and Shawn Micallef accepted. Some others including Bruce Chown and Eileen Costello said they were willing to be involved but in a less formal way.

Our treasurer Joe Gill then presented unaudited Financial Statements for the year ending 31 December 2010. These showed that The Friends continue to be in a solid, solvent position going into 2012 and the bicentennial commemoration of the eponymous war, when big changes are expected in how the fort operates resulting from increased visitation and the opening of our new Visitor Centre.

Joe had indicated his desire to retire as chair of The Friends at this meeting, while being willing to continue as treasurer, if elected, and to pilot the Fort York Guard through the important year ahead. Therefore his report to this AGM was more wide ranging than usual, touching on high points in the organization's accomplishments during his time as chair from 1997 to 2008, and 2009 through 2011. He ended by offering four things that he thought The Friends should concentrate on in the year or two ahead: (1) find stable funding for the Fort York Guard as our traditional sources of support from parking fees shrink or disappear, (2) explore the future status of Fort York within the municipal structure where, clearly, it is an odd duck among the city's museums, (3) adapt to the new staff structure and expanded operations at Fort York after the Visitor Centre opens, and (4) look to increase the age range and cultural diversity of our membership and board.

After termination of the Annual Meeting a meeting of the newly-elected board was held to choose officers for the organization. Joe Gill was appointed treasurer, Elizabeth Quance to be secretary, Andrew Stewart to be vice-chair, and Harriet De Koven and Stephen Otto to be co-chairs. Co-chair is a concept we have not tried before, but Joe has left big shoes to fill at a time when things are promising to get even busier. Harriet has experience on the Toronto Museums Board, Todmorden Mills Centre Board, and in the Ontario Government at the level of assistant deputy minister. Stephen Otto was a founder of The Friends and chair in 2008-09 until sidelined by poor health from which he has largely recovered.



# RESPECTED CITIZENS OF THE TOWN OF YORK

As the President of the Officers' Mess of His Majesty's Garrison at York, I would like to advise you of an important change in the date of the annual Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common "Georgian Mess Dinner."

This year the date will be Thursday, 13 October 2011 and the Friends respectfully ask you to save the date and join us to honour Major-General Isaac Brock, a remarkable man who fulfilled dual civilian and military duties as the president and chief administrator of Upper Canada, and the commander in charge of His Majesty's forces when war was declared on 18 June 1812. It was on 13 October 1812 that Brock lost his life during the battle of Queenston Heights, and we are marking the anniversary of that day with a special dinner, just as it was done throughout southern Ontario in the nineteenth century.

Our "Georgian Mess Dinner in Honour of Sir Isaac Brock" will mark the 13th year of hosting a special fundraiser that will support the 27-member Fort York Guard and Fife and Drum, who provide lively animation at Fort York National Historic Site. The money raised this year will be especially important given the increased programming that will come with the War of 1812 bicentennial as well as opportunities to travel to represent Fort York at other historical sites. We are very fortunate again to have the talents of the Volunteer Historic Cooks, Berkley Hospitality, and the staff at Fort York, who help the Friends to provide the only authentic Georgian fine dining experience in Ontario.

More details will follow. Don't miss this special opportunity to dine as the officers once did and to honour Major-General Brock. You will be guaranteed a fabulous meal and you will be helping an irreplaceable asset in the Fort York Guard.

Sincerely,
Richard Dodds
President of the Officers' Mess of His Majesty's Garrison at York

# News From The Birthplace of Toronto Contributions from the Staff at the Fort

### **Administrator's Report**

by David O'Hara, Site Administrator

With the imminent release of the Visitor Centre construction tender and completion of the design development phase for the exhibits within, efforts are now focused on other site improvements, exhibits, landscape enhancements, and programming.

On the landscape rehabilitation and restoration front, a Request for Proposals will be issued for the Garrison Common and the surrounding area within the next few weeks. This process will include taking a detailed look at the integration and interpretation of the former tree nursery site and existing surface parking lots as part of the broader site. This RFP will be followed by one for the design of Fort York National Historic Site lands to the east of Bathurst Street where the archaeological remains of the Grand Trunk Engine House, Garrison Creek, the Queen's Wharf, and the original shoreline were recently uncovered. While many of these improvements won't be in place until after 2013, the objective is to implement components using a phased approach as funds and resources allow. A first phase in the Common, for example, might involve removing the tree nursery and a very simple landscape approach with grading and seeding. The improvements at the east end of the site won't be undertaken until the adjacent condominium and Toronto Public Library developments are complete.

The most significant change over the last eight to nine months has been the addition of new programs and special events. In April we held our annual Battle of York Day events, hosted the launch of Aldona Sendzikas's book on the Stanley Barracks, and another successful citizenship ceremony. The Historical Food Tasting and Tea event, like all of our other food-related events, was only possible due to the extraordinary efforts of our volunteer cooks. Among the events throughout May, we had another successful Doors Open, the TDSB's History Fair, and hosted the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario's first annual Ultimate Block Party with more than 3000 in attendance. Our new series, in partnership with the Friends of Fort York, Parler Fort continues to draw first-time visitors down to the site, while our regular walking tour program expands.

Working with the Mississauga of the New Credit, and as a result of support from the Department of Canadian Heritage, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, and Tim Horton's we were able to present a wonderful National Aboriginal Day program with over 350 in attendance. At its meeting in May, and as a result of Council's decision to stop appointing management boards for each of the City's museums, the Fort York Management Board agreed to combine efforts with the Friends of Fort York to advance the interests of Fort York National Historic Site. The Management Board, which was first appointed in 1999 and then reappointed at intervals coinciding with the term of City Council, has always worked closely with the Friends of Fort York and more recently the Fort York Foundation. Working with the Friends, the board co-published Fort York: Setting It Right and Fort York: Adding New Buildings. The Management Board took the lead in the publication of Carl Benn's Fort York: A Short History and Guide, which won Interpretation Canada's Gold award of excellence in 2009, and introduced the twice-yearly enhanced citizenship ceremonies at Fort York.

It's been a privilege to work with the many dedicated members of the Fort York Management Board and we look forward to their continued involvement via the Friends, the Foundation, or through other related committees.

# The Officers' Mess Establishment at Fort York

by Fiona Lucas

Many military historians point out that an officers' mess establishment is a social organization. Although much is known about this prominent aspect of military life in the 19th century from the officers' own accounts considerably less is known about their servants, particularly the cooks. The British Army may have left massive records but few first-hand documents exist about the experience of being an officer's servant. Also, many were illiterate women so their history is even more obscure.

The now familiar officers' mess was just starting to evolve in the early 19th century. Modelled after private gentlemen's clubs, the manners and etiquette were (ideally!) formal, regular dues were levied, and the kitchen operated as a private catering service. The work of servants and the officers' own resources made their comfortable lifestyle possible. Soldiers were often seconded to be personal attendants and waiters, and it is believed that their wives and older daughters were cooks, laundresses, and hospital attendants, although little primary documentation survives to prove this last point.

All mess servants were organized under either a civilian mess man or a mess sergeant, who were rather like butlers. While practically nothing is known about any individual mess man some officers claimed that mess men were sloppy, sleazy, and uncouth. By reputation they were drunkards and furthermore, took advantage of their employers by offering them financial loans at high interest. On the other hand, they also must have been proficient, prompt, and diligent. In order to get that big dinner (ten to fifteen cooked dishes for about eight officers) out on time each day, every day, the mess man had to be a good organizer, unless of course his staff covered for him. Not necessarily a cook himself, he was sometimes professionally trained.

As for the mess men at Fort York, we currently have only two specific references. A mess man named William Steers lived on Garrison Common, according to *The Toronto Directory and Street Guide* for 1843–44, and an anonymous mess man of the 32nd regiment offered a six-oared gig for sale in several issues of the 1840 *Patriot*.

The cooks were soldiers, their wives and daughters, and/or local civilians. The most likely scenario was a mess man or sergeant with a female kitchen staff of two or three, maybe four. In York, we know of Mary Casey, who signed with an "X" to receive her pay in 1813, and Mrs. Chapman, whom Ely Playter mentions in his description of the Battle of York (27 April 1813): "I then perceived we were to leave the Garrison, And I went into it & to our Quarters got my Coat, advised Mrs. Chapman a Woman that Cooked for us to come away & as I returned out at the Gate the Magazine blew up & for a few Minutes I was in a Horrid-situation, the stone falling thick as Hail & large one's sinking into the very earth." Was she cooking in the militia officers' kitchen, unaware a battle was raging outside? Did someone forget to tell her that all the other women and children were long gone? Was she deaf? Alas, we will never know since we do not have any personal diaries or letters.

Hannah Jarvis, like other well-to-do women in York, hired garrison women as cooks, because "soldiers' Wifes are all we can get." She was quite scathing about their cooking abilities, but we maintain that some of them must have been quite skilled.

Recently a reference was discovered to another local woman, Rachel Ross, cook to a commanding officer of the 4th Artillery. She was a Black woman twice mentioned in the Landmarks of Toronto column of the *Toronto Telegram*, in 1888 and 1922. Since she died on August 16 in 1866 at age 89, it is likely that she was enslaved during her early to middle years. Was she born in Toronto? Did she arrive here as a fugitive? When did she meet and marry her husband, Sergeant-Major William Ross of the 4th Artillery? We've not been able to trace the 4th Artillery to know when they were stationed at Fort York, nor determine which commanding officer she cooked for and how long.

Each of these women, Mary Casey, Mrs Chapman, Rachel Ross, and all their unnamed sister "soldiers' Wifes" had life stories that are denied to us today because they did not enter the written historical record.

Museum folk prefer to rely on primary sources for information. Lacking much of that for the mess kitchen, we have to draw on our own personal physical experiences and our instincts in interpreting life in a kitchen. Instincts are not generally "permitted" in museums, but in "living history" settings we need them. Reading that the kitchen was hot, stifling, smoky, crowded, dirty, sometimes dark and claustrophobic, is one thing; experiencing it and then describing it to visitors is another. Cooks' rosy cheeks were not due to their health, but the result of so much time bending over a blazing fire. And singed forearms are nowhere mentioned in any primary source as a job hazard! Despite learning the kitchen personally, we cannot truthfully claim it to be an "historic" experience, because none of us works at the pace and under the pressure that the original cooks did. Today, we can escape to our modern support kitchens, to our less restrictive clothing, and to our air conditioned staff rooms – without fear of the mess man firing us.

We often sympathize about daily life in the mess kitchen – the aching backs, the scorched fingers, the smoke-filled eyes and lungs. These people worked hard; we speculate that the average hardworking cook put in a ten-hour day. Every day. We wonder about other points too: How much conflict was there between mess man and staff? How much food secretly made it back to the barracks? How did the civilian women manage their own homes and families? At day's end, did they leave together for safety's sake to walk the two miles back to town?

The work the Program Officers and the Volunteer Historic Cooks do in the 1826 kitchen of the Officers' Mess Establishment at Fort York National Historic Site attempts to portray an institutional kitchen of the early 19th century. Continually cooking over a fire means that we understand the culinary skills needed and some of the physical tolls exacted. We can only surmise the true nature of their personal experience and feel respect for the many women and men employed in this kitchen.

If you wish to know more about 19th century servants:

Claudette Lacelle, *Urban Domestic Servants in 19th Century Canada*, Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1987.

Robert Roberts, *The House Servants's Directory*, facsimile of 1827 edition, Waltham, MA.: Gore Place Society, 1977.

For an understanding of the social aspect of the officers' mess establishment, see Carl Benn, "Another Fine Mess" in *Explore Historic Toronto*, number five, December 1993.

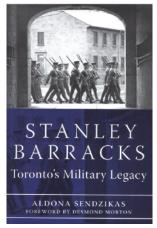
Senior Domestic Interpreter at Fort York when an earlier version of this article was published in Explore Historic Toronto, Fiona Lucas is now Coordinator of Volunteer Management for Toronto Special Events. In 1994 she co-founded the Culinary Historians of Ontario (now The Culinary Historians of Canada) with Bridget Wranich. Author of the award-winning Hearth and Home: Women and the Art of Open Hearth Cooking (2006) she is working now on a scholarly reprint of Catharine Parr Traill's Female Emigrant's Guide (forthcoming 2012) with Professor Natalie Cooke.

# In Review: Stanley Barracks: Toronto's Military Legacy

by Kevin Hebib

Aldona Sendzikas. *Stanley Barracks: Toronto's Military Legacy*. Canada: Natural Heritage Books/Dundurn Group, 2011. 212 pages, 18 maps and plans, 56 B+W photos, notes, bibliography, index. Paperback. \$29.99 CA ISBN 978-55488-788-0

In Stanley Barracks: Toronto's Military Legacy, author Aldona Sendzikas chronicles the establishment and demise of one of Toronto's important, early military institutions - "The New Fort" (1841), later given the title Stanley Barracks (1893), on what is today the grounds of the Canadian National Exhibition. Readers are to be forgiven if they know little or nothing about the robust, masonry garrison that was built to replace the near derelict "Old Fort" (Fort York) in the aftermath of the



Rebellion of 1837, since all of the buildings of that impressive establishment - save one - were demolished in the early 1950s to provide additional parking for the site's annual fair. Through Stanley Barracks, Sendzikas captures the significance of a pivotal chapter in the development of Canada's fledgling militia and regular army; the fascinating ways in which the civil and military worlds were inextricably linked in 19th century Toronto; and the crucial role played by Stanley Barracks as a Canadian army administrative, recruiting and training centre during the First and Second World Wars. She also reminds us that it was at Stanley Barracks that elements of the antecedent unit of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (North-West Mounted Police) were gathered and trained in 1873 before heading to Canada's west and that it also saw a darker use in 1914 as a receiving centre or transit camp for so-called "enemy aliens" destined for Canadian internment camps during the Great War.

Most importantly, Sendzikas covers the historic relevance of the Toronto Garrison in the life of the city. She reminds us of Toronto's original military role and the ways in which it evolved out of the British founding period of the 1790s to include the whole of the 19th century and first half of the 20th century. The author also documents the occasionally strained relations between Toronto's civil and military authorities in the operations at Stanley Barracks and the land use issues connected to it.

Much of what Sendzikas presents can be found in other texts, however she is to be congratulated for distilling key material and presenting it a concise manner. Her direct interpretive approach teases out the salient points in the Stanley Barracks story in a rational chronology. Four distinct chapters trace the critical periods of development and change: The British Period (1840-1870); The Canadian Period (1870-1914); The World Wars (1914-1945); and The Post-War Years (1945 to

Today). The British Period (1840-1870) tracks the origins of the British military presence in Toronto and the tensions of 1837 which ultimately hastened the construction of a more permanent and imposing military establishment. From there, the Canadian period that followed the handover of national defence from the British to Dominion Government is documented. Of particular note for that era was the founding at Stanley Barracks of the infantry and cavalry schools that gave rise to the Royal Canadian Dragoons and Royal Canadian Regiment, both celebrated units on the Canadian establishment historically and today. The World Wars (1914-1945) chapter will be of particular interest to Torontonians as it was, in the not-too-distant past, that Stanley Barracks was still in the public consciousness of many local residents. Thousands of men and women serving in Canada's military passed in and out of the city and through its gates, as part of the larger military centre dubbed "Exhibition Camp" during both world wars.

In the closing chapter, The Post-War Years (1945 to Today), the author details the final days of Stanley Barracks as a national defence facility; its near total demolition; and the rehabilitation of the sole, surviving building, the Officers' Quarters, as the Marine Museum of Upper Canada – a Toronto Historical Board cultural facility that served the public from 1959 until 1998.

The book is amply illustrated with a selection of archival photographs, documentary art, and plans. Of special note are two previously unpublished sketches dating from the summer of 1848 depicting the barracks at "The New Fort" and "Old Fort from Common." The latter is of particular importance because Garrison Common was part of the original military reserve that ultimately linked the Georgianera Fort York with its Victorian replacement. The Common was not only the "connecting tissue" between both British forts, but also the site of numerous military and civilian events. While space constraints no doubt dictated the number of original plans that could be published in this work, the first chapter could have benefitted from the reproduction of some of the earlier design proposals for "The New Fort" that were not brought to fruition.

Doubtless, Professor Sendzikas's book will not be the final word on Stanley Barracks, in light of the approaching centennial of the Great War (2014-18) and sesquicentennial of Canadian Confederation in 2017, but it is a very good primer that most will find informative and enlightening. A relatively short read, it provides an essential jumping-off point for those interested in the origins of Canada's army and the role played by forts as foundations for urban development. This is a book that should find space on the shelves of both professional and amateur historians as well laypersons interested in general Toronto history.

Aldona Sendzikas is an associate professor in the Department of History at the University of Western Ontario and a former assistant curator at Fort York National Historic Site in Toronto.

Kevin Hebib is Programme Development Officer, Fort York National Historic Site, and a specialist in military material culture.



Steve Peters, MPP for Elgin-Middlesex-London and Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, met men and women of the Fort York Guard when he visited the archaeological dig at Fort York to locate the foundations of the Lieutenant-Governor's House burned in 1813.



On June 5 the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) held "The Ultimate Block Party" at Fort York to show the value of play-based learning for children. ETFO's partners in this very successful demonstration included the Ontario Science Centre, Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), and Toronto Public Library. Children aged 3 to 13 participated with their families in over 20 play centres, an authors' corner, and interactive stage area. The event was modelled after a similar one held in New York's Central Park last October.



Seen behind Dr. Ron Williamson, chief archaeologist at Toronto's Archaeological Services Inc., are foundation walls of the Grand Trunk Railway's engine house of 1855-56 uncovered in May on the site of the Library District condos under construction at Bathurst Street and Fort York Blvd. This unusual brick building was about 585 feet in length by 65 feet wide broadening to 175 feet in the centre. It stood on landfill south of Fort York and was needed to repair locomotives operating on the western part of the GTR which was not connected at first to the Toronto-Montreal line. (Courtesy: CBC Toronto)



*In May a squad recreating the 10th Royal Veteran Battalion made* its debut at Fort York. The members – all former Fort York Guards – came together to mark the bicentennial of the War of 1812. Originally the battalion was formed when Colonel Isaac Brock petitioned government in 1806 for veterans to do garrison duty in the Canadas. Composed primarily of middle-aged soldiers, the corps arrived at Quebec in September 1807, saw service in the war, and is best remembered for helping capture Michilimackinac in July 1812. About half its men returned to England in 1816, while the remainder chose to settle in Canada.



Events to mark National Aboriginal Day were held around Toronto and across the country on the summer solstice, June 21, to kick off a ten-day celebration culminating in Canada Day. At Fort York it took the form of a Strawberry Festival with songs, dancing, traditional stories, and campfires co-hosted by the fort and Tim Horton's. Seen here is Mike Healy in the exuberantly colourful dress of the Blood Nation from southern Alberta performing a Grass Dance. (Credit: Jose San Juan, City of Toronto)

# **2011** Upcoming Events Historic Fort York

Compiled by Nawfal Sheikh

#### **JULY**

#### Spacing Road Show Tues. July 12, 7 pm

Fort York National Historic Site will be the only Toronto stop along the Spacing Road Show, a cross-Canada promotional tour, where you can celebrate the release of Spacing's first national issue and this city's top public spaces. The evening will also feature a discussion panel with local experts on urban design, architecture, and community building.

Cost \$5 (including tax)

#### **Fort York Ongoing Summer Programming** Daily throughout July, 10 am to 5 pm

Thrill to the boom of the cannon, the crack of muskets, the vibrant colours of the uniformed guard, and the lively music of fife and drum. Visitors will enjoy hourly demonstrations of military music, drill, musketry, and artillery performed by students representing the Canadian Fencible Regiment that was garrisoned at the fort at the end of the War of 1812. Highlights include the cannon firing at 12:30 pm and the music of the Fort York Drums (a fife & drum corps) in the afternoons.

Program varies daily. Call for specific details.

Regular admission

#### **AUGUST**

#### Simcoe Day

#### Mon. August 1, 10 am to 5 pm

Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe, founder of the town of York (Toronto) in 1793, was the first lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada (Ontario). Come learn about the birthplace of Toronto and thrill to the sounds of musketry, cannons, and the fife and drum.

Regular admission

#### A Special Simcoe Day Fort York Historic District Walking **Tour: Toronto's Changing Lakefront** Mon. August 1, 11 am to 12:30 pm

Starting and ending at the canteen, this special walking tour explores the evolution and history of Fort York and the nearby Lake Ontario shoreline from the early British colonial era to the present day. Experience the origins of Fort York and the early days through the eyes of Elizabeth Simcoe. Learn about the fortification of the harbour, local railway & road building, and the subsequent industrial and recreational development of this vital area. Rain or shine.

Free admission

#### **Pretty Little Instincts:** Presented by SNAFU Dance Theatre and Fort York National Historic Site as part of Summerworks Theatre Festival Fri. to Wed. August 5, 7, 8, 9 at 8:30 pm and August 6 &10 at 10 pm; Sat. August 13 at 9 pm

Renegade outdoor dance theatre. High society tea crumbles into a display of primal instincts as nine women, painted an eerie chalk white, unravel their raw intuition. The piece is performed outdoors, has no dialogue and a minimal set. Eerie, ethereal, and, at times, hilarious, this production picks apart the meat of what North Americans call femininity and stomps on the bones.

Tickets on sale July 12. To purchase or for more information, please visit summerworks.ca

#### **Conscious Food Festival** Sat. and Sun. August 13, 11 am to 8 pm and August 14, 11 am to 6 pm

Experience a range of activities highlighting the connection between our plate and the planet. The festival will feature tastings, chef and farmer demonstrations, live music, open forums, conscious debates, interactive exhibits, and seminars on food values, social justice, the environment and more!

This is a separate, ticketed event. The Fort's regular operation will be suspended for the weekend. Contact www.consciousfoodfestival.ca info@consciousfoodfestival.ca

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Program varies daily. Call for specific details.

Regular admission

#### **SEPTEMBER**

#### A Fort York Historic District Walking Tour in association with Heritage Toronto, "Fort York and the Garrison Common: Battlefields, Graves and Urban Development" Sun. September 18, 1 to 2:30 pm

Explore the evolution of Fort York's 'Garrison Common,' land outside the Fort which was originally set aside for military purposes. Through the years, from the early British colonial era to the present day, the Common has witnessed some of Toronto's most dramatic events and changes.

Free (including admission to Fort York following tour)

#### **Volunteer Historic Cooks Open House Volunteer Recruiting** Sun. September 25, 11 am to 2 pm

Interested in volunteering in the historic cooking program at Fort York? Come and talk with staff and volunteers to find out all about the Volunteer Historic Cooking group. Application forms for those interested in joining will be available to fill out.

Fife and Drum is a quarterly publication of the Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common



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Regular admission to Fort York: Adult: \$8.61, Senior (65+) & Youth (13-18 yrs.): \$4.31, *Children:* \$3.23, *Children (5 and under) FREE (all prices include HST, where applicable)*