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HIGH PARK Quarterly

celebrating
**FIVE
YEARS**

**Group of
Seven's
Walden**

**That's a wrap:
The best/
worst of
1998**





High Park, 1909. Postcard courtesy Fred Turner

SEASON'S GREETINGS



from

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HIGH PARK Quarterly

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drawing by Mario Maceda

Liquor permit gets by

A common summer sound in High Park is the POP! of corks and the GLUG, GLUG, GLUG of wine being stealthily poured in opaque glasses.

Every season theatre-goers lug overflowing picnic baskets to the Dream in High Park, and settle in for some Shakespeare, a hillside feast and a covert sip or two of wine. You can feel the "invisible spirit of wine" spreading through the audience.

The hushed pleasure has gone unchecked in puritancial Toronto where it's still illegal to consume alcohol in public parks.

So it was with interest that it came to *High Park Quarterly*'s attention, that a liquor permit was granted for a private party that took place in June at the newly

restored Grenadier Cafe and Teahouse. The special occasion permit was issued by the LLBO for a party on the cafe's enclosed terrace.

According to an LLBO manager the permit office had no idea of century-old ban on sale or consumption of booze in High Park, as per the agreement between park founder John Howard and the city of Toronto.

The manager said the first permit was an oversight and that no other ones will be issued, following receipt of a letter from Mario Zanetti, a parks and recreation director, informing the LLBO of the park's dry status.

John Howard must have tapped the parks staff on shoulder from the great beyond. G.S.

Peppy electric car takes run at park

High Park seems like the perfect place to test an electric car that produces about one-eighth the emissions of a fuel-powered vehicle.

The Toyota Prius, a combination gas-electric system, was being filmed recently in High Park, to create a video for dealers in Japan where the car is manufactured and sold.

The small sedan main engine components are a gas engine, an electrical engine, a battery, an inverter and planetary gears.

These elements work together to decide how much and from which engine power will be drawn from. The battery, according to a Toyota spokesman, is recharged by the gas engine. The planetary gears help transfer power between electrical and fuel system. Interestingly, the battery also recharges when the car is travelling at highway speeds.

"The idea behind this car is that it is a step in the right direction," said Paul Partridge of Toyota public relations.

The Prius is only on sale in Japan where it has a price tag of \$17,000 (US). Because it is new technology, each car that is sold is subsidized by about \$5,000.

Partridge said the car could be available in North America in two years.

G.S.



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Cider and winter walks

There are plenty of good reasons to get out and enjoy High Park this winter.

Volunteers have put together a list events and activities for this season to get you up and out of the house.

Winter Fun Day, Jan. 17:

The third annual fun day, this event started as a fundraiser for the High Park Adventure Playground. Although construction of phase one was completed in May, 1999, a second phase that will incorporate a maze and an 18-foot slide, is scheduled for the spring of 1999. This year's fun day will be collecting donations toward this end. All the

action happens around the fire ring in the parks' south end, near the High Park Boulevard/Parkside Drive entrance. There'll be hot apple cider, roasting marshmallows over a bonfire. Horse and wagon and dog cart rides are available. For more information call 392-1748.

High Park Volunteer Stewardship Program:

Important restoration work continues unabated. The VSP recruits people to help with projects around Grenadier Pond and in the oak woodlands. A series of events are planned for this winter including training, planting and seeding, starting in the New Year. All events take place in the High Park greenhouse. Events leave from the Grenadier Cafe and Teahouse, 10:30 a.m. Dates are Jan. 10, 24; Feb. 7, 21; March 7, 21.

High Park Walking Tours:

This is the 3rd season for the winter program. Meet every other Sunday from January to April, starting Jan. 17. Tours leave at 1:15 p.m. from the Grenadier Cafe and Teahouse Skating:

High Park's artificial rink opened Nov. 30. For more info call Toronto Parks and Rec at 392-1111.



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Book ideas for the armchair adventurer

by Ken Winlaw

As winter wraps us in her chilly grip, there's nothing better, I always say, than sitting in front on a roaring fire and reading about people freezing to death in the dark.

Real-life adventures of people surviving (or not) horrifying wilderness experiences make marvellous reading, especially if somebody else is doing the freezing and dying.

Wilderness warriors who take to High Park in wintertime should be able to appreciate this vicarious thrill particularly. Wade knee-deep in snow through a High Park ravine, then come home, whip up a hot toddy, and read a book about an Arctic plane-crash survivor

with two broken legs lapsing into the final stages of hypothermia. Life doesn't get any better than this.

A multitude of books catering to this particular perversion permeate the market this time of year. Cold weather always inspires me to read about some poor schlep whose fallen off a cliff in the Yukon or had his leg gnawed off by a sturgeon. Here are a few of my favourite titles. Perhaps, During the long, dark months ahead, you'll find comfort in them as well. There's nothing better than reading about someone else's misfortune to make you feel smug and superior.

Into The Wild: A bestseller by outdoor writer Jon Krakauer, the book chronicles the final months in the life of Chris McCandless.

McCandless hitchhiked to Alaska and then walked into the wilderness, where he died under mysterious circumstances. His desiccated corpse was discovered months later. A thoroughly gripping work by a veteran outdoor writer.

Krakauer also wrote *Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mt. Everest Disaster*. The title is self-explanatory, but the book is a must for the armchair adventurer.

Both books are published by Doubleday.

Death and Deliverance: The true story of the 1991 crash of a CC-130 Hercules in the High Arctic. It is also the story of those who survived the crash, but died before rescue, and those who, mercifully, were died instantly when their plane slammed into the Arctic tundra. A haunting, well-crafted tale by veteran journalist Robert Mason Lee.

Published by Macfarlane Walter & Ross.

A Wolverine Is Eating My Leg: A collection of adventure short stories by Tim Cahill, a legend in the field of adventure writing. The stories are often funny, sometimes tragic and never dull. Another Cahill collection, is called *Jaguars Ripped My Flesh*. Both titles are tongue-in-cheek nods to the manly adventure tales of yore.

(*Buried Dreams: Inside the Mind of a Serial Killer* is one of Cahill's I haven't read yet. It is not adventure writing in the usual sense. It is also supposed to be his most disturbing work.)

Published by Vintage Books, a division of Random House.

Into the Heart of Borneo: The charming and terrifying tale of a mild-mannered Brit adventurer, Redmond O'Hanlon and his poet-sidekick James Fenton, in the primary jungles of Borneo. O'Hanlon has a self-deprecating brand of humour and keen powers of observation. No one in this book freezes to death.

O'Hanlon followed *Into the Heart of Borneo* with *In Trouble Again*. This time O'Hanlon tackles the jungles of South America and the Amazon. High-spirited and engaging, but not as much fun as his first effort.

Published by Vintage Books.

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The BEST & the worst

'98 of

Best: High Park Adventure Playground

Building the thing was a hoot for all involved, and the kids are thrilled with the end result. The playground was the culmination of months of planning and hard work for hundreds of volunteers. During construction in May, it didn't matter what your skill level was, there was a job there for you. If you didn't get involved, it was your loss.

Worst: Dream in High Park, Romeo and Juliet



al wrestler in sight.

Worst: Parkside Drive

Traffic lights are great, but it's still a deadly business getting to the park from the east. Some putz with overactive gonads and a Bad Boy decal in his rear window is still going to take the street too fast, and plant his Tonka toy on the front lawn at. It's only a matter of time before somebody dies. A collision there six months ago put one old guy in hospital. The other driver, a wanted criminal, escaped – limping, bleeding – into the park, and may be there still, for all I know.

Best: Colborne Lodge Drive

After a failed attempt to close the drive to the public to cut down on inappropriate sexual activities (what is this, 11th century Vatican City?), the drive was reopened. Now let's see that it stays open. A public park is for the public's use; ergo, it's gotta have public access. As for sex that's inappropriate (which is really about the only kind I get involved in anymore, on principle), don't knock it til you've tried it.

A competent production marred by a truly dweebish Romeo. (Man, I hope his mom's not reading this.) It was hard to believe that Juliet would get her knickers in a knot over this, this, captain of the high school chess club. I know he was supposed to be just a kid and all, but I swear, most of the YTV PJs have more charisma than this guy. Even PJ Patty.

Best: New playground

The new children's garden in the park's south end. This is what public space is all about; to delight and inform curious little minds. Added bonus for the money-minded - it's cheap. Close to local schools, and not an exploding dinosaur or profes-

Worst: No booze in the Park

Still. In this day and age. Closing in on the new millennium. Can you imagine? Some long dead geezer signs a deal with the city way back in 1873 banning the consumption of alcohol in the park. No ifs, ands, buts, or what-have-yous. Sheesh. He and the inappropriate sex people would have gotten along grandly.

Best: No booze in High Park

If people are of the mind, there are plenty of places to tipple. They don't need High Park. Broken liquor bottles and beer cans litter the ravines. It's dangerous and unsightly. Although technically it's illegal for an otherwise law abiding couple to share a demi-carafe of Zinfandel, by candlelight in the park, it really isn't the kind of criminal behaviour most cops give two hoots about, in my experience. It all boils down to what you learned in school. Play nice with others.



Best: The Grenadier Cafe and Teahouse

Major renovations to the restaurant in High Park were long-overdue and really welcome by most park users. Some favourite fixes have to be the patio, and life-sized maple tree in inside the restaurant. Oh, and don't forget the pizza ovens either.

Worst: Oiling the swan eggs

Many parkusers experienced distress this spring and summer when they were denied the expected pleasure of watching the cygnets grow from fluffy grey hatchlings into graceful adults. Swans' eggs were oiled, covered in liquid paraffin.

Toronto the “sanctimonious ice box”

by Sandra Black

Winter is a magical season in High Park. for decades, outdoor enthusiasts have come to the park for sleighing, snow shoeing, skating and cross-country skiing. but the more risky pursuit – bobsledding and tobogganing – have proved the most memorable, and controversial.

In the years straddling 1900, bobsledders enjoyed thrills and chills while hurtling along Half-Mile Run on their long wooden sleds. Daring young men would launch their craft atop Deer Pen road and swoop through the Animal Paddocks on a south-eastern course as far away as The Queensway.

According to West Toronto historian Fred Turner, a sled storage shed was built in High Park in 1912. At the outbreak of World War I, many young men placed their bobsleds there for safekeeping. Alas, many went unclaimed by soldiers who never returned.

This was not the only cause for lament among those who enjoyed sliding in High Park.

Widespread disapproval of Sunday sliding also took its toll. Many Torontonians considered the Sabbath a day of rest, and shunned sliding and other sports. With its added risk of social impropriety, tobogganing was especially frowned upon.

As *Globe* writer Margaret Thornburn recalled: “Of course, the girls were warmly dressed in many flannel petticoats and grey flannel drawers with a touch of coloured crocheted lace. At the toboggan slide, a rope was provided to enable the participants to reclimb the hill. One night the strain was too great, and the rope broke. Down tumbled the girls, head first into a snow bank, forming a great kicking mass of legs. The crucial test came when the gentlemen attempted to identify the legs with which they came and extricate them.” (*The Globe*, Jan. 20, 1955).

Incidents like this led the Lord’s Day Alliance and other moral reformer groups to advocate for a ban on Sunday sliding in Toronto’s parks. Controversy raged. The Alliance regarded such sports as a desecration of the Sabbath, whilst moderates sought to retain “comparatively innocent amusement on Sunday.”

The issue was finally decided in 1912 when Toronto’s city council passed a bylaw stating that, “No person shall on the Sabbath in any public park, square, garden



Winter Sports : “Tobogganing,” High Park, Toronto

Look! Snow! A shed was built in High Park so people could store their toboggans there.

or place for exhibition in the City, slide upon or use any of the public slides constructed or maintained by the Corporation.”

Police constables were posted at toboggan slides to enforce the ban.

Not until 1938 did Sabbath restrictions ease somewhat to allow “unorganized and personal recreation” in Toronto parks on Sundays from 1-6 p.m. Yet the ban on

tobogganing continued.

Is it any wonder that visiting American author Wyndham Lewis described 1940s Toronto as a “sanctimonious ice box”?

Such was the decline in Sunday sliding during the 40s and 50s that slides in many Toronto parks were phased out altogether. Not so at High Park, where tobogganing continued unabated during the week.

Activity increased when the ban was finally lifted in December, 1961. But despite this thaw, High Park’s best sliding hills would soon face their final demise.

During the 1960s a popular tobogganing hill south of the Grenadier Restaurant was transformed into Hillside Gardens, complete with cascading waterfall and maple leaf garden. Since then, a succession of barriers – evergreen shrubs, snow fencing and now wire fencing – have been introduced to impede the path of would-be sliders.

Suicide Hill, a steep toboggan slide on the east slope of Wendigo Ravine, has met a similar end. There, young daredevils would hurtle downhill, slide across Grenadier Pond, and land at the far shore. This was a mecca for area youth from the 40s to 70s, until a steep-sided earth berm was built to end the toboggan era.

Generations of youth have tested their mettle on these hills. While the safety of park users must be protected, we can still lament the loss of these once lively slides. Those who remember the glory days might even shed a tear.



Slip Sliding Away: The toboggan runs at Grenadier Pond.

John Howard rescued brother-in-law from icy Lake Ontario waters

MOn the Sunday morning before Christmas, 1832, my brother-in-law called upon me, stating that the bay was frozen over, and that a great many persons were skating on it. He wished me to go with him, and I very reluctantly consented, but on examining my skates I found they had no straps. My brother-in-law was so eager for skating that he agreed to tie them on with strings. We went down to the ice at the foot of Frederick Street, he having tied on my skates. We started off, he leading being a much better skater than I. About the middle of the bay a schooner was frozen in. Among some rubbish which had been thrown out I picked up a stave of a flour barrel, which was of great service to me. At starting we agreed to skate across the bay towards the lighthouse. We both started at the same time. We saw something black upon the ice. My brother-in-law, being ahead, called to me, asking if I did not think it was a seal. I thought it might be one.

He pushed ahead very fast, and when he was about three hundred yards in advance of me the ice suddenly gave way, and he was struggling in the water. I looked back at the schooner. She was at least a quarter of a mile from me. I then pushed on as fast as I could to his assistance. Coming up to the broken ice, the stave that I had picked up was of great service in sounding. All this time he was trying to get firm ice. I tried to get off my skates. At last, by sheer desperation, I succeeded in breaking the strings. He was then about thirty feet from the sound ice. At this time he must have been in the water at least twenty minutes. At last, by the use of the stave, I managed to get within ten or twelve feet of him, and by tying the sleeves of my two coats together, I managed to reach him, but had a terribly difficult task to get him up the sound ice, for the cold had almost paralyzed him. As soon as he got upon his skates he struck out for the schooner, and by

the time he got to the shore he was one cake of ice. We made what haste we could home, and as we went along the boys hooted at us. I was in my shirt sleeves, and had my two wet coats hanging on my arm, and the skates hanging by the strings in the other hand. They doubtless thought us mad. On getting home we took some gruel and went to bed. What a night we both passed. I fancied that he had sunk, and that I had dived in and was trying to catch hold of him at the bottom of the lake.

An excerpt from *Incidents in the Life of John G. Howard, Esq. of Colborne Lodge, High Park, near Toronto*, chiefly adapted from his Journals, printed in Toronto in 1885, pp. 15-16.

Compiled by Sandy Black



Howard in his 80s.

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High Park spark under



Morning After Snow, High Park, 1912, by J.E.H. MacDonald

Group of Seven fire

Founder J.E.H. MacDonald learned his love of nature at the knees of High Park

by Ken Winlaw

High Park is recognized as a picturesque focal point for many an artist's eye – less is known about the park's position as a spark that lit the fire under the greatest artistic movement in Canadian history.

• • •

The young artist and his wife moved into a small rented house on Quebec Avenue's east side. While his wife attended school, the artist would walk down to High Park, sketch books or a box of paints in hand, forging links with the land that would eventually redefine (some would say define for the first time) Canadian art.

Around work, at the Grip Printing and Publishing Co. on Yonge St., he was known as Jimmy, or Mac. To generations of Canadians to follow, he's known as J.E.H. MacDonald, — founding member of the Group of Seven.

The Group of Seven's position in the history of Canadian art is undisputed. Every school kid knows the story. Prior to the Group's birth, Canadian art was little more than a turgid imitation of European art – unimaginative realism with a transplanted Victorian soul. But in the early years of the 20th century, in very short order, seven young rebels turned Canadian art on its head and gave a young nation its first sense of artistic identity.

James Edward Hervey MacDonald was 26 when he married Joan Lavis, a student at McMaster University, located at that time in Toronto – on Bloor St.W., to be exact, in what is now the Royal Conservatory of Music building at 273 Bloor St. W.

The young couple set up a small house on Quebec Avenue. During their years as west-enders, the MacDonalds actually lived in several homes in the area. From the small cottage on Quebec, they moved to tonier digs further up the street after a couple of years. But a minor development boon in the neighbourhood drove the young family to Conduit Street. (now known as Glenlake Avenue). Apparently Joan couldn't stand the racket, as woodcutters went around the neighbourhood felling trees to make room for new homes. All in all, the MacDonalds spent about 14 years in the area before moving to Thornhill.

During their Hgh Park years, young Jimmy spent much of his time working in England, corresponding frequently with his wife back in

Canada. Although he was away, there can be no argument that High Park's natural beauty had a profound effect on the young artist.

"I don't think anyone has said he moved here because of High Park," acknowledges Fred Turner, a collector of rare art books who lives in Swansea and has made a study of Canadian art in general and J.E.H. MacDonald in particular. "But I don't think it would be a *mistake* to say that," he adds with a smile.

The park was central to the young artist's developing philosophy. Indeed, much of his High Park art was completed when he still lived with his parents on Davenport Road, and would travel to the park for artistic forays.

Paul Duval, whose book *The Tangled Garden* chronicles MacDonald's life, writes that High Park was "the artist's Walden", a reference to MacDonald's lifelong infatuation with Henry David Thoreau, the American transcendentalist; indeed, MacDonald named his only son Thoreau, after the founder of American civic disobedience).

"Close by his home on Quebec Avenue, (the park) offered him hundreds of acres of woods, fields and water," Duval writes.

MacDonald himself writes, "There are dozens of pictures in High Park now coming home. Wherever I look the landscape took on the most beautiful composition and colour."

Over the course of a decade, High Park featured in sketches and paintings. But perhaps more important is the influence the park had on MacDonald's spiritual nature. In Duval's analysis, the park "was a place that pleased his love of nature and renewed his poetic soul."

High Park also had a pragmatic impact on MacDonald, however. It was during this time he was working as a commercial artist at Grip, designing labels for patent medicines and such. The work paid the rent, but it didn't feed the soul. In 1911, MacDonald exhibited a series of oil sketches executed in High Park and along the Humber River. It was not the first time that year his works had been exhibited. But the critical success of the show had a profound impact on MacDonald.

C. W. Jeffreys, in a review of the exhibit, said the paintings exhibited "a refreshing absence of Europe, or anything else, save Canada and J.E.H. MacDonald and what they have to say."

Lawren Harris was also struck by the

exhibit, saying MacDonald's work "affected me more than any painting I had ever seen in Europe."

That exhibit, according to Bruce Whiteman, author of *J.E.H. MacDonald*, "for the first time, led to MacDonald's name being linked



J.E.H. MacDonald: High Park "was a place that renewed his poetic soul."

with a particularly Canadian subject matter and technique."

The warm reception his paintings received prompted MacDonald to do something daring. He quit his job at Grip and became a freelancer, allowing him to spend more time on his painting.

During his years at Grip, MacDonald became friends with other young artists disenchanted from and disillusioned with the artistic establishment; Tom Thomson, Arthur Lismer, Franklin Carmichael and Frederick Varley were all employed at Grip at one time or another. Eventually all five – along with A.Y. Jackson and Lawren Harris – banded together to repaint the Canadian landscape.

A.Y. Jackson wrote that MacDonald "was probably the first to dream of a school of painting in Canada that would realize the wealth of motifs we had all around us."

Without High Park, that dream might have been profoundly different.

Sources: *A Story of The Group of Seven*, By Harry Hunkin; *J.E.H. MacDonald*, by Bruce Whiteman; *The Group of Seven - Art for A Nation*, by Charles. C. Hill; *The Tangled Garden - The Art of J.E.H. MacDonald*, by Paul Duval; Special thanks to Fred Turner.

kennel cafe

dog and cat stuff

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Victorian Recipes from Colborne Lodge

Colborne Lodge, the home of High Park founders John and Jemima Howard, is a restored historic house museum reflecting gracious country life in the 1870s. From its summer and winter kitchens, these period recipes from 19th century cookbooks are typical of what is produced for demonstrations of historic cooking. For museum hours and additional information about the recipes, please call 392-6916.

Gingerbread is a snap

Gingerbread for Christmas

Historical Background

Made since Roman times, gingerbread has long been a popular Christmas cookie. In medieval England this spicy sweet was shaped into "baby cakes" to represent the Christ child. Once Caribbean trade made sugar cane available, molasses replaced honey in British recipes. In New England a soft, thick gingerbread cake evolved, and traditional "hard gingerbread" began to be made throughout the year, though especially at Christmas.

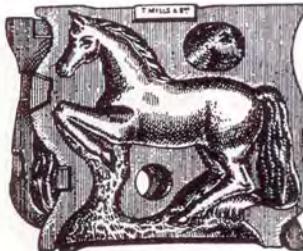
With the advent of the tin cookie cutter, animal, plant and symbol shapes replaced plainer square- or round-cut gingerbread. Elaborately decorated with icing and paper scraps, gingerbread was often displayed on Christmas trees in the 19th century. By 1900 male and female gingerbread figures called "Yule dollies" became popular; these gingerbread men and women may have been inspired by Adam and Eve Day, which was celebrated on Dec. 24.

Today gingerbread baking remains an enduring Christmas custom, enjoyed by all ages.

Original recipe

"One pound of butter, one of sugar, one pint of molasses, one teacup of ginger, three teaspoons of pearl ash, flour enough to make a stiff dough, spice to your taste,"

Anonymous, *The Cook Not Mad; Or, Rational Cookery* (Kingston, Upper Canada: James MacFarlane, 1831). reprint: (Toronto: The Cherry Tree Press, 1972 and 1982) p. 42



Victorian cookie cutter

Modern Equivalent

500 ml	soft butter	2 cups
500 ml	white sugar	2 cups
500 ml	molasses	2 cups
10ml	baking soda	2 tsp
60 ml	ginger	4 tbsp
10 ml	cinnamon	2 tsp
10 ml	nutmeg	2 tsp
10 ml	allspice	2 tsp
2 l	flour	8 cups

Cream: butter and sugar until very light

Blend: molasses, baking soda and spices

Sift: flour, a cup at a time, to make a ball of stiff dough, adding more if needed.

Roll out: on a well-floured surface, about .5cm (1/4 inch) thick

Cut: dough into shapes using plain or fancy cookie cutters

Place: on ungreased baking sheets

Bake: at 180 C (350 F) for 10-12 minutes until browned, turning once

Yield: about six dozen biscuits, depending on their size.



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Beetle released to eat away at plants

Importing species on purpose or by mistake has met with disastrous consequences all over the planet.

Despite the lessons of the past, The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority went ahead this past summer and released a type of beetle into High Park to have a go at Purple loosestrife, a tall plant with purple flowers that is invading Ontario's wetlands.

On July 9, 2,000 European beetles were released at the pond's north end. Laura Stephenson of the conservation authority describes the creepy crawlers as "fairly

small", about one centimetre in length and golden-brown in colour.

"They have been approved for use in Canada and tested to make certain they didn't consume anything other than Purple loosestrife," Stephenson said.

According to Stephenson the University of Guelph has studied the beetles performance for the past four years to make sure they didn't move to other plants once they had exhausted their supply of loosestrife.

Stephenson said the results so far point to the belief that

once the beetles work their way through a Purple loosestrife community, their numbers "bottom out."

The reason the species was selected is because it's believed its only and preferred food is Purple loosestrife. The beetles are being tested in similar projects at other sites in Toronto. Among them are Colonel Sam Smith Park and Tommy Thompson Park

G.S.



Eco-tips for having a 'green' Christmas

Bloor West Eco-Village

ECONOTES

Incorporate a remembrance of nature into your holiday season and take the emphasis off standard commercialism. Celebrate the winter Solstice on Dec. 21, when light returns and the days grow longer again.

Create Easy Rituals. Small, simple ideas can create low-stress magic, such as lighting lots of votive candles, turing off the lights and having a story-telling ritual one night. Go for

walks in the forest or park. Use simple artifacts from nature to decorate your house.

Choose a piece of earth and commit yourself to taking care of it. For example, clean up a vacant lot. Collect and recycle all the plastic debris on a stretch of beach or around a favourite pond.

For those of you who love the holidays, but want to find ways to simplify them and/or escape from the commercialism monster, here are two helpful books loaded with time- and

money-saving tips, tricks, and insights.

Simplify Your Christmas: 100 Ways to Reduce Stress & Recapture The Joy Of The Holidays By Elaine St. James

Debt-proof Your Holidays: How To Save A Sleigh-load of Money, Wrap Up Your Bills & Have The Happiest Holiday Ever! By Mary Hunt

Checkout the Simple Living Network's homepage (<http://www.slnet.com/>) for further ideas on how to simplify life.

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Park Lover's KOLUMN K9

Treat aggression right away

by Dr. Gary Rosnick

Canine aggression comes in many forms, all of which can be harmful to an innocent bystander.

Dogs can be fearful of many things, including familiar and unfamiliar people or situations. The fearful dog often protects himself by biting.

As with other behavioural problems, the causes of fear-related aggression are both innate and learned. Certain breeds of dogs — such as German shepherds and many toy breeds like Chihuahuas — are predisposed to being nervous, fearful and shy.

Inadequate socialization of a puppy to different situations or people may cause it to be fearful, for example of children, people in uniforms or wheelchairs, or people of different skin colour from the owner. Physical abuse, of course, is a predictable cause of fear biting, although many dogs that appear to have been abused have simply just been inadequately socialized.

Although uncommon toward people, this type of aggression does occur.

Dogs, especially certain breeds (such as terriers), are natural predators who love to stalk and kill small prey, like squirrels, and cats. Infants and babies, by virtue of their size, can be mistaken for prey by some dogs. Many owners are mistaken in their belief that these attacks are based on jealousy rather than instinct.

As an absolute rule, never leave babies alone with a dog regardless of how friendly and trustworthy the family pet has proved itself to be.

A dog's predatory instincts can also surface when he is faced with a group of people — say joggers, rollerbladers, active children or bicyclists. Dogs are

easily and naturally stimulated to chase moving objects. Attacks of this nature are entirely preventable by controlling the freedom of dogs to run loose.

If you are chased by one or more dogs, you are better off standing or lying still rather than running away.

While a dominant dog usually stands tall with its ears forward, tail held high or wagging, and with direct eye contact, a fearful dog appears in many situations less secure, with lowered, flattened ears, the tail held between the legs and a tendency to avoid confrontation.

Dogs that are territorially aggressive direct their threats toward unfamiliar people or those who come and go daily, such as newspaper deliverers and postal workers.

Dogs have a natural tendency to sound an alarm when someone enters their home, yard or approaches the family car. But a dog that is territorially aggressive exaggerates this behaviour.

Rottweilers and German shepherds are predisposed to territorial aggression, although any breed or mix can have this problem behaviour.

Some owners encourage watch-dog behaviour without understanding that some dogs cannot distinguish between a burglar and a visiting child.

In most cases, careful selection and training of puppies can help prevent aggression before it becomes problematic.

If your existing pet displays any type of aggression, get advice immediately from your veterinarian on how to subdue your dog before it becomes dangerous to your family and your community.

Gary Rosnick is a doctor of veterinary medicine in Toronto. Winter 1998

Getting high in High Park

They didn't call it High Park for nothing, you might say. After all, the original inhabitants of Colborne Lodge made their own wine, probably brewed up a key or two of beer, and laid down more than a few farthings for store-bought spirits. But by the standards of mid-1880s life in Toronto, John and Jemima Howard were not exactly party animals. In fact, they were apparently quite upright, sober individuals. And this in an age when it would have been easy to be otherwise. From the dining room sideboard to the kitchen cupboard to the medicine chest (even in "Temperance" homes), alcohol seemed to be everywhere. Take the "beer for breakfast" thing, for instance.

As Lodge historical interpreter Philip Chong points out, living conditions were somewhat trying in the less-than-world-class city that was 1800s Toronto. For one thing, the drinking water was often an excellent source of dietary fiber – various bits of flora and fauna that could make you go bump in the night. If your were even modestly fixed, like the Howards, you could afford to buy tea leaves to put into you well-boiled water. If not, well, there was always beer – with breakfast, lunch and dinner – cheap at two pennies a glass, and at least the alcohol content would kill off of the microbes. And the brewskis probably tasted better than the water, too. Or maybe not. Beer recipes of the time called for some very, um, unusual ingredients.

You could make beet beer or maple beer, for instance. Flavours that Labatt's might have trouble promoting these days. On the other hand, spruce beer, all the rage in the 1800s, is still a popular

item in parts of Eastern Canada today. Made differently, though, we suspect. In *The Cook Not Mad*, a cookbook of the era, the recipe for spruce beer blithely calls for "essence of spruce." To get this, the hapless brewer had to boil young spring shoots and cones from a spruce tree until the water turned brown (!), then strain out the lumps. *Et voila!* Essence of spruce. Kind of makes you thirsty just thinking about it.

The wines of the time, on the other hand, were probably a little tastier. At least, their ingredients were more appealing. The Howards made currant wine with fruit from

their own bushes, according to John Howard's journals. And he wrote about hiring some Italian immigrants to prune his grape vines, so it's likely the grapes were intended for something more spirited than the jelly jar. There was also plenty of other wine-worthy fruit in the garden (as well as a wine cellar waiting to be filled), so chances are some of it, too, ended up festering away in crocks and barrels like the ones on display. A recipe of the era even suggested one could make a fine wine from raisins "pressed through a horse-hair bag." Modern winemaking hobbyists may pause here to shudder. No wonder mixing wines and spirits with whopping amounts of sugar and flavourings was a popular practice.

Take, for instance, "shrub," a drink that consisted of brandy and sugar, flavoured with nutmeg, lemon juice and

rind. A typical recipe called for three pounds of sugar to each quart of brandy, which goes a long way toward explaining the snaggle-toothed smiles common at the time. And then there was "negus," a zippy punch of port wine, lemon juice, nutmeg, sugar and water – highly recommended for children's parties! According to Mrs. Beaton's *Everyday Cooking and Housekeeping* book of 1865, one pint of port would do for nine or ten children. This probably resulted in very jolly but short parties, followed by very long naps and very cranky but subdued children the next day. To add

insult to injury, Mrs. Beaton suggests that the port "need not be very old or expensive for the purpose," since it's only for children. No sense spoiling the little beggars.

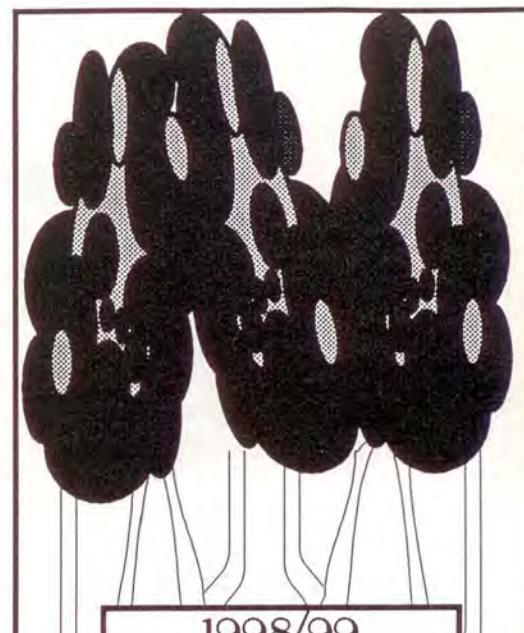
Surprisingly, considering the way they heaped it on, sugar in those days was not so easy to use. It came in the form of a large, solid cone called a loaf – Colborne Lodge has a replica, courtesy of the Redpath Sugar Museum. Small chunks were cut from the hard sugar cone with a medieval-looking pincer called "sugar nippers."

Preparing large quantities must have been tedious work.

Or course, in those days, almost every chore involved back-breaking labour. No wonder many kept some "liquid cheer" and plenty of sweets about to liven up their existence. They probably whistled (through the gaps in their teeth) while they worked.

Park Pundit

by Mary Lou Kumagai



1998/99 WINTER CONCERTS

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FEBRUARY 20
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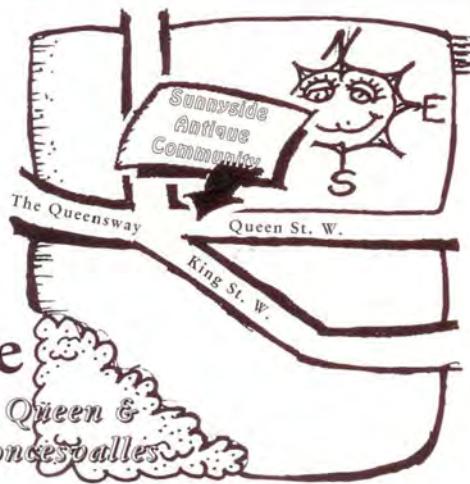
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Merry Christmas
& Happy New Year
from
High Park Quarterly

Native plants are steeped in aboriginal and medicinal history, and are an important new area of interest in gardening and environmental circles. The High Park greenhouse is a major source of native plants, where 150 species are currently being grown from seed for re-introduction in the park. This column features one species per issue "from the greenhouse".

From the Greenhouse

(right, wild bergamot)



Don't sneeze at Goldenrod

Some plants leave behind reminders – the shrivelled corpses of their lost summer vivacity – that they'll be back with the summer. Goldenrod is one such plant.

Often mistaken for Ragweed, Goldenrod grows tall and has clusters of tiny yellow flowers. Its hollowed stalks riddle the park in the winter. Ragweed is much shorter with green flowers.

While Golden may seem a mundane member of the plant world, there actually exist many different varieties, some of which have been grown for reintroduction into the High Park.

Canada Goldenrod is one variety that exists in abundance in the park. It can grow from 30-150 centimetres, has spear-shaped leaves with toothed edges and elongated clusters of yellow flowers.

In an effort to more widely reflect some of the other species that once grew in High Park, greenhouse staff is working on cultivating four other types. They are: Blue-stemmed goldenrod, Early goldenrod, Old field goldenrod, Square-stemmed goldenrod. Goldenrod is a member of the daisy family.

According to the National Audubon Society Pocket Guide, there are nearly 60 species of goldenrod, while Peterson's field guide says there are 30 in northeastern and north-central North America.

Author Charlotte Erichsen-Brown in *Use of Plants for the Past 500 Years*, writes that "solidago" the Latin botanical species identifier for Goldenrod means "to make whole." Erichsen-Brown wrote it was called so because it gained a reputation as an effective wound-healing herb.

Many medicinal uses of Goldenrod were recorded.

Huron Smith, an ethnobotanist, recorded in 1928 a special use for Canada goldenrod. "The Meskwaki say that sometimes a child does not learn to talk or laugh. Then the medicine man must secure the bone of an animal that died when the child was born, and cook it together with this plant, then wash the baby with this liquid. This insures that the baby will grow up with its faculties intact."

French explorer Jacques Cartier noted a Mohawk use for Canada goldenrod: "Canada goldenrod for pains in the side, use an infusion of the root and the flowers."

Goldenrod's flowers were also known to provide excellent dyes. In *Natural Dyes in the United States*, Rita Adrosko wrote: "Many professional dyers acknowledged the clarity and fastness of goldenrod yellows, but for some unknown reason this native American plant was used mainly by home dyers..."

Sources: *Use of Plants for the Past 500 Years*, Charlotte Erichsen-Brown; *Forest Plant and Central Ontario*, Brenda Chambers, Karen Legasy, Cath V. Bentley; *Peterson's First Guides* by Roger Tory Peterson.



Tall
Goldenrod

events guide

DECEMBER

Christmas in the Park – Until Jan. 3. Tues-Fri. noon-4p.m. Sat-Sun, noon-5p.m. Enjoy this special time of the year at Colborne Lodge, home of park founders John and Jemima Howard. Holiday treats, cidre. The lodge is located just north of The Queensway. 392-6916.

Christmas Carol Concert – Dec. 24, 10-11a.m. Toronto City Hall. 392-0458.

Ice Sculpture Competition – Dec. 28, 29, 30. Nathan Phillips Square. Professional and amateur sculptors. 392-0458.

New Year's Eve Concert – Dec. 31, 8p.m. to midnight. Nathan Phillips Square. Live entertainment. 392-0458.

JANUARY

Christmas in the Park – Jan. 3, noon-5p.m. Enjoy this special time of the year at Colborne Lodge, home of park founders

John and Jemima Howard. Holiday treats, cidre. The lodge is located just north of The Queensway. 392-6916.

Volunteer Stewardship Program – Jan. 10, 10:30a.m. Help restore the park's rare ecosystems. Eco-activities in High Park greenhouse. Training/planting. 392-1748.

High Park Walking Tours – Jan. 17, 10:30a.m. "High Park in the Winter." Meet at Grenadier Restaurant. 392-1748.

High Park Winter Fun Day – Jan. 17, 11a.m.-3p.m. Fire pit/ring. Parkside Drive entrance to park. All proceeds to phase two of the High Park Adventure Playground. 392-1748.

Volunteer Stewardship Program – Jan. 24, 10:30a.m. Help restore the park's rare ecosystems. Eco-activities in High Park greenhouse. Training/planting. 392-1748.

High Park Walking Tours – Jan. 31, 10:30a.m. "How

Plants and Animals Adapt to the Winter." Meet at the Grenadier Restaurant. 392-1748.

FEBRUARY

Volunteer Stewardship Program – Feb. 7, 10:30a.m. Help restore the park's rare ecosystems. Eco-activities in High Park greenhouse. Training/planting. 392-1748.

High Park Walking Tours – Jan. 14, 10:30a.m. "Ice Skating and Icing Cookies at the Lodge." Meet at Grenadier Restaurant. 392-1748.

Volunteer Stewardship Program – Feb. 21, 10:30a.m. Help restore the park's rare ecosystems. Eco-activities in High Park greenhouse. Training/planting. 392-1748.

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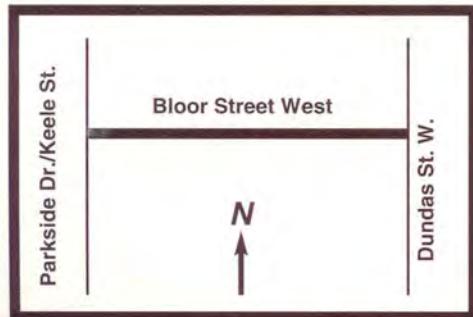
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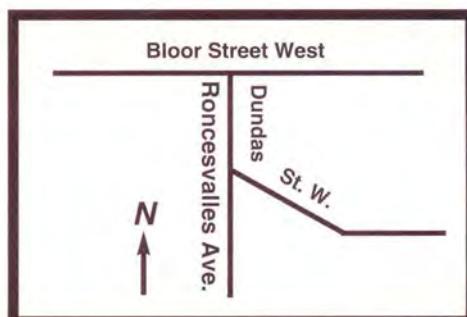


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High Park Walking Tours

Winter, 1999

The popular Sunday afternoon walking tours program begins again this winter and continues into spring. Meet at the south side of the Grenadier Restaurant (across the street at the benches) at 1:15 p.m. These walks are moderately paced and may go on uncleared trails.

High Park in Winter

Sunday, January 17th

How Plants and Animals Adapt to the Winter



Sunday, January 31st

Ice Skating and Icing Cookies at the Lodge *

Sunday, February 14th
(bring your skates)

Identifying Trees in the Winter

Sunday, February 28th

Visit High Park's Villa ~ Colborne Lodge Inside & Out

Sunday, March 14th

The Birds of Winter

Sunday, March 28th
(bring your binoculars)

Spring Comes to Grenadier Pond *

Sunday, April 11th

Celebrate Earth Day in High Park ~ Nature Lore *

Sunday, April 18th

* especially recommended for families

Dress warmly with appropriate footwear! Walks take 1 1/2 to 2 hours usually ending with an optional visit to Colborne Lodge for a refreshing drink and a tour of the house. A \$2 donation is suggested to support these and other volunteer programs.



SNOWSHOEING IN HIGH PARK, TORONTO, CAN.

These walking tours are sponsored by the High Park Citizens' Advisory Committee, Colborne Lodge (Heritage Toronto) and Toronto Parks and Recreation. For more information on this and other volunteer programs, call (416) 392-1748.