

Riverdale Heritage Conservation District

Volume 1

The Newsletter

Issue 3

Hallowe'en 2011



Hello RHCD Neighbours!

This is the third issue of your neighbourhood newsletter and your Riverdale Heritage Conservation District Advisory Committee hopes you all had a great summer!

By now those of you with children should be settled into your routines, gardeners should be busy and even those with low maintenance gardens or lawns must be noticing the increase in leaves settling in yards.

This letter should arrive just before Hallowe'en and we all know how busy the neighbourhood gets on that particular day of the year. So, for those of you who participate in this once a year tradition of door knocking and 'trick-or-treating', have fun, make sure you have something extra nice for the ghouls and ghosts and most importantly - BE SAFE! Keep an eye out if you are driving home after dark. You never know what spooky little character may bolt out onto the road in search of that all important bag of Hallowe'en candy. If it's wet out (which it often is this time of year) make sure the leaves are off your steps and veranda - they get awfully slippery and the possibility of a slip or fall is increased even more so when there are so many theatrical distractions. If we all look out for the little ones then we will all enjoy a safe and happy Hallowe'en night

Happy Hallowe'en!

Editor's note...

Are you receiving this newsletter?

Well, are you? I know it's coming to your house as my son and I deliver them personally but whether you mistake it for junk mail and just throw it out is something I am not sure of.

Please let me know as, apart from the fact that I do pay for these things myself and would prefer to spend my money wisely, your Advisory...

(Continued on page 2)

What's Up in the Neighbourhood?

As most of you know we have had another summer and fall full of construction vehicles and the accompanying mess and noise. One of the things that has come to our attention (other than the number of potholes still in need of filling) is the loss of the original bricks bordering the sidewalk along the repaired roadway. While members of your Advisory Committee were quick to point this out to Heritage Preservation Services at City Hall we were disappointed to learn that the brick border was not included in the Heritage description of the neighbourhood. It is unfortunate, as many neighbours considered this a lovely addition to the character of the streetscape.

Before you call the Contractor!

(Editor's note continued from page one)

...Council would truly like to keep everyone informed as to what's going on in our special heritage neighbourhood.

Ideally, e-mailing the newsletter would be best. After the first issue I received a number of positive responses (i.e. neighbours sent me their e-mail address) however, since then...nothing. I understand that not everyone has a computer or internet but those people could still request a hard copy delivery to their mailbox. Like I said – please let me know – e-mail me or drop me a note in my mailbox at 181 First Ave.

Thanks!
S. Smith

Your Riverdale Heritage Conservation District Advisory Committee felt it timely to remind you about the protocols involved before you get your tools or pick up the phone to hire a contractor.

Please be reminded of the following:

1. Even if the exterior renovations or repairs you may be considering (replacing windows, doors, lighting, walkways, mailboxes, etc.) do not require a City of Toronto Building Permit, any work contemplated that will visually alter the front façade of your house (or any part of the building that can be seen from the street) does require a City Heritage Permit. The Heritage Permit does not cost anything; however, the importance of applying and allowing the City's Heritage Preservation Services staff to make sure the work is within the Heritage Guidelines for the District is extremely important, and is also the law. Please remember to go through this process as early as you can!
2. Where a Building Permit *is* required and granted, a Heritage Permit will be granted at the same time

and at no extra cost.

For more information, contact City of Toronto Heritage Preservation Services at:
416-338-1077
heritagepreservation@toronto.ca

While this process may seem tedious and yet another bureaucratic step to overcome, our neighbourhood was designated as an HCD for reasons other than the amazing fact that our streetscape happens to retain much of its original Victorian flavour. More than this it is very much an insurance against owners or developers wanting to renovate or even tear down homes and erect something totally out of character with the streetscape. We have all seen the 'Lego' type houses that have been parachuted into neighbourhoods all over the city. Fortunately, with the Heritage Conservation Designation that will not be happening in our neighbourhood.

For a reminder of the Riverdale Heritage Guidelines agreed to through public consultations held at three public meetings in 2006 and 2007, please click on "Riverdale Phase 1" at: www.toronto.ca/heritage-preservation/heritage_districts.htm

Dispelling the Myths

Downspout Disconnection

For those of you who have not disconnected your downspouts as per the City's 'request' you may find the link below of some interest. There are situations where downspout disconnection is not a viable option and you may be exempted from the program. Please check out the link and find out if you are able to maintain the so-called 'status quo'

The following link describes how to apply for an exemption. You can also call 311 for further information.

http://www.toronto.ca/water/protecting_quality/mandatory_downspout_disconnection_exemption.htm

E-mail List

It would be extremely helpful if I had a list of e-mails for all of our HCD neighbours

I promise your e-mail address will not be sold, borrowed, misplaced, misspelled or otherwise misused and will be used for the sole purpose of informing you about what's going on in the RHCD and surrounding neighbourhood. That might include emergency meetings, street parties, RHCD updates, reminders or other concerns or events in the neighbourhood. I would also like to start sending the newsletter by e-mail rather than the paper version which may mistakenly end up in your recycling bin.

If you'd like to be kept informed just let us know. It will be a real bonus to the RHCD if everyone is on the list!

See 'Contact Us' on page 4.

Safety Notes

House break-ins are always a problem in the GTA and just recently the Toronto Police have been warning residents about the danger of leaving ladders or chairs where they can be used to gain entry to your home or your neighbour's home via windows or roof decks.

Don't make it easy for the bad guys!



Special Events

This area is set aside for any resident in the RHCD who has a special event or announcement they think the neighbourhood would be interested in.

It could be the famous and well-attended Tiverton Film Fest or an Easter Egg Hunt something at the church or school or maybe even something you personally are doing somewhere else.

If you want to make use of this space just let us know. (See 'Contact Us' on the last page.)

Historical Tid-bits

Pumpkins and 'Jack-O-Lanterns'

The original 'Jack of the lantern' fame was said to be a roguish but crafty Irish blacksmith. On the night that Jack was due to die, the devil appeared to collect his soul. Using all his cunning, the blacksmith managed to trick the devil into transforming himself into a sixpence in order to pay for one last drink on earth. Instead of paying for the drink, Jack stuffed the devil into his purse, in which he had placed a silver cross. The power of the cross stopped the devil from changing back to his original form and he was trapped. Jack refused to let the devil out of his purse unless the devil left Jack for another ten years.

When the ten years were up, the devil returned to claim him but Jack managed to trick him again. He persuaded the devil to climb a tree and then carved the sign of the cross on the trunk beneath him. The devil was trapped once more. This time Jack insisted he would not free him unless the devil promised never to take his soul to hell.

When Jack finally died, after many years of riotous living, he was denied entry into heaven. He was told to ask for entrance at the gates of hell, but of course the devil would not take him either. The devil cursed Jack, telling him to be gone, and threw a live coal from the fires of hell after him as he went. In order to light his way, Jack put the ember into the hollowed out turnip he was eating. His fate was to wander between the realms of the living and the dead forever carrying his turnip lantern.

By the time Hallowe'en made it's way to North America pumpkins were much more plentiful and appropriate for the ritual than turnips so...thanks Jack and Happy Hallowe'en!

Contact us

If you have any questions you'd like to see answered in the next issue or something you think would be of interest to the neighbourhood then PLEASE let us know. Send me an e-mail or just drop it in my mailbox!

Scott A. Smith,
Chair

Riverdale Heritage Conservation District Advisory Committee,
181 First Ave.

Toronto, ON M4M 1X3

E-Mail:

tapdancer@sympatico.ca

Watch for our next issue in December