

# Riverdale Heritage Conservation District

Volume 1

The Newsletter

Issue 4



January 2012

## Editor's note...

I thought I'd take this space to comment on the special qualities of our neighbourhood. I could say that the quality comes from our designation as a heritage district but that would be only one of many layers. This little corner of Riverdale, bordered by heavy traffic from Dundas, Gerrard and Broadview, for some odd reason, remains a tiny oasis of calm amidst the turmoil of the city. It has been my observation that the houses in the neighbourhood are more than just brick, board and paint - they are not just houses - they are homes. Most of us have chosen to live in this area and done...

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## Hello RHCD Neighbours!

We hope you all had a great Holiday season and have already started the New Year off happy and healthy. Winter is definitely a bit of an enigma so far but hopefully the snow will eventually fall (at least on the hills and ski trails for those of us who enjoy that sort of thing). For the neighbourhood Scots a belated Happy 'Robbie Burns Day', of course "Gung hay fat choy" as the Chinese New Year begins its 15 day celebration and for the more amorous there is Valentine's Day coming up on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February. See, there's always something to look forward to.

## What's Up in the Neighbourhood?

A few weeks ago the City of Toronto mailed out reminder cards regarding the Heritage Grant Program. Just in case you didn't receive one or you 'accidentally' threw it out with the rest of the admail, here are the specifics.

**Application Deadline: March 30, 12012**

**1:00PM** Application forms and detailed program information can be found at <http://www.toronto.ca/heritage-preservation/grants>

or hard copies can be picked up at Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen Street, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor East Tower.

**Public Workshop** – to learn more about the program eligibility and application requirements you are invited to attend the Toronto Heritage Grant Program Public Workshop on Thursday January 26, 2012 Committee Rm #2, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Hall – Time 6:00 to 8:00 PM.

The program can fund up to 50% of the costs of your heritage improvements.

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..., so, not only for the look of the streetscape but because of the 'feel' of the neighbourhood.

People walk around and chat with neighbours about their gardens or their decorations. Many of us go all out at Hallowe'en or Christmas or other special occasions. There's the Tiverton Film Festival every fall, we've had Easter Egg hunts in the park and parades of decorated bikes and trikes through the streets and...

Yes - We are special! We are all different and yet we hold one similarity that binds us together - we are neighbours!

And in this day of social networks and online chats it's really nice to know we can, at any time, take a break and take a walk in a real neighbourhood!

## Before you call the Contractor!

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](mailto: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](http://www.toronto.ca/heritage-preservation/heritage_districts.htm)

## Dispelling the Myths

"If I don't need a building permit I don't need a Heritage Permit."

While there are certain jobs around the house that, legally, do not require a building permit the same is not true of a Heritage Permit. Anything that you plan on doing to your house that is 'visible from the street' requires a Heritage Permit.

Rather than think of this as a penalty why not think of it as a way of getting free expert advice. The Heritage Preservation Services staff is an extremely helpful group and it would be a shame to let their talents go to waste.

## Special Events

One of our Tiverton neighbours, **Lynn Harrison** is performing at the Red Sandcastle Theatre, 922 Queen Street East, Feb. 24th & 25th, 2012 - 8:00 p.m. Lynn is a truly charming performer and her musical outlook is fresh and optimistic. Definitely an event not to be missed!

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The Riverdale Historical Society is hosting a talk by Douglas Worts, entitled Gooderham and Worts -The Family, the Business and the Community February 28, 2012 at 6 p.m at the Riverdale Public Library, 370 Broadview Ave. Admission: \$5.00 / free to members

If you would like to make use of this space just let us know.

## Safety Notes

**Ice, Ice, ICE.** What else can I say? You know, that cold, kind of slippery stuff you often can't see until it's too late!

So

- Watch the 'jack rabbit' starts crossing the street.
- Remember that cars and bicycles (yes the bikes are still out there) can't stop or swerve with the same speed as on dry pavement
- Remember the glare from the ice on a sunny day is blinding for drivers so make sure they can see you before you cross the street.

Please keep the sidewalks and walkways clear and salted and make sure your handrails are accessible and stable as there is little use to having one if you can't grab hold of it.

## Historical Tid-bits

While this little tid-bit isn't specific to our neighbourhood it is a reminder that this year marks the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the War of 1812. Most of us do not fully appreciate the significance of this altercation with our southern neighbour. The War of 1812 was the first time that Canadians banded together with the British and the Native Peoples to protect a country and a 'way of life' which was unique and as markedly different from the United States as it is now. It was also the forerunner to what eventually brought about our need for Confederation in 1867.

There are many, many events, both local and throughout the region, over the next two years that promise to be both educational and fun for all.

Have a 'Google' and look back at our beginnings. You don't have to be a history buff to enjoy the experience.

## E-mail List

Here I go again!!

It would be extremely helpful if I had a list of e-mails for all of our HCD neighbours. I've got a lot but still not enough.

I promise your e-mail address will not be sold, borrowed, misplaced, misspelled or otherwise misused and will only 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 the more eco-friendly 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!

## 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!

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Watch for our next issue.