



# EAST YORK INKLINGS

Newsletter of the East York Historical Society

Volume 15 Issue 1 – January 2019

## *A Message from President Pat...*

Greetings loyal supporters (Members and visitors) of the East York Historical Society.

As always please accept my many thanks on behalf of the East York Historical Society for ongoing support with your membership renewals, new memberships, regular attendance, donations and any help you give us during the evening meetings... Thanks for wearing your name tags during the meetings.

I trust your Christmas, New Year and other Holiday celebrations were well enjoyed and all is well with each and everyone of you. East York Historical Society 2019 calendar was completed since 2018 and the 2020 **Calendar dates** are listed in this Newsletter filled with an excellent list of speakers and presenters who **are committed to deliver on their topics as scheduled on time.**

The East York Historical Society is definitely the place one ought to be on any given evening general meeting and this includes Tuesday evening, 29th January, 2019 when East York Historical Society Celebrates Black History. Please invite everyone to attend and enjoy an evening of delightful refreshments and excellent presentations **Opener: Canadian Opera Company Ensemble. Main Presenter Ms. Sheila White... pages 1, 2, 3**

Our 38th AGM and GM was well attended with an attendance of over 102 members and visitors in attendance. The evening began with serving of enjoyable refreshments, and mingling followed by **Father Larry's** opening blessings upon our meeting. The First Nations Acknowledgement Text was read out at the meeting. Many thanks were given to all who served in various need of the Society on the evening: Kitchen Refreshments: Chris Theo; Kay Horiszny, Joyce Crook, Connie Fenton, John Michailidis & Ron Brown. Ron Chamberlain as Greeter. Our Co Sponsor, S. Walter

Stewart Library w. Janet Nanos Personal contributions made possible to our evening's refreshments by P. Tabuns, N. Erskine-Smith, K. Horiszny, J. Crook & P. Barnett.

AGM Election of the EYHS Executive Board was chaired by Diane Dyson (well done) including an immediate correction to the name of VP. Ron Brown **not Alan Brown** as was announced. **pl. see page 7 for minutes of the AGM.**

The EYHS 2018 Certificate of Appreciation was awarded to member **John Michailidis** Our Main Presenter was the **Hon. Alan Redway** who sold & signed copies of his new book at the incredible low cost of \$20.each; all 200 copies sold out.

Mr. Redway spoke about his new book East York 1924-1997: Toronto's Garden of Eden" Q&A and was received with great appreciation, honour and demand for more copies. Sales final. EY Foundation has promised to donate 28 copies to all Schools in East York. The EYHS Meeting closed with a resounding singing of **O' Canada.**

The East York Historical Society recently lost a long time member **Mrs. Jessie EDNA BEANGE** passed away in her 99th year at aged 98...please turn to pg. 4

Warm Welcome to our newly appointed Secretary **Mrs. Shannon Timms-Ugochukwu**...pg. 5 Warm Welcome to our new members...page 6.

Best wishes for Happy Family Day & Happy Valentines Day to you and your loved ones.

Sincerely and thanks

Pancheta (Pat) Barnett  
President of the East York Historical Society  
[eyhs@eastyork.org](mailto:eyhs@eastyork.org) [www.eastyork.org/eyhs.html](http://www.eastyork.org/eyhs.html)

## JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING...

Tuesday, January 29, 2019  
Refreshments at 7:00pm ~ Meeting Starts at 7:30pm  
John S. Ridout Auditorium at the S. Walter Stewart Library  
170 Memorial Park Avenue  
EYHS Celebrating Black History Month  
**Guest Speaker: Ms. Sheila White**  
**Topic: Portia White – 50 Years On**  
**Opener: The Canadian Opera Company Ensemble**

Our Meetings are Co-sponsored By



# PRESIDENT PAT'S SPOTLIGHT: PORTIA WHITE

## Portia White Biography

Portia White (1911-1968) was born in Truro, Nova Scotia on June 24, 1911, the third of thirteen children born to Izie and Andrew, a Baptist minister who first became renowned for his role leading Canada's No. 2 Construction Battalion, a remarkable all-Black regiment in WW1, to which Rev. Capt. Wm. Andrew White served as its Chaplain.



Portia grew up in Halifax where her father was called to be minister at Cornwallis Street Baptist Church in 1919, a post he held until his death in 1936. Her mother was a talented singer, pianist and the church organist. Portia was singing in the church choir by the age of six and was leading it by 13.

After obtaining a teaching certificate from Dalhousie at 18 and spending a few years teaching school and taking voice lessons, Portia began winning Halifax Musical Festival competitions as a Mezzo-Soprano in her mid-twenties. She won the Helen Kennedy Silver Cup in 1935, 1937 and 1938, frequently enough that they told her to keep it permanently. The Halifax Ladies' Musical Club took a keen interest in Portia and paid for her to study at the Halifax Conservatory with the newly arrived head of vocal music, opera virtuoso Ernesto Vinci. Her new teacher introduced the young Portia to the *bel canto* singing technique and cast her as a contralto.

Portia became world famous in the 1940s as a contralto concert singer. The Portia White Talent Trust, formed in 1944 by Vinci and other interested individuals, assisted her financially as her star began to rise. (Later the Trust became the Nova Scotia Talent Trust, which has gone on to assist thousands of Nova Scotian artists and is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2019 with a year of events.)

With the help of the trust fund, Portia lived in New York City for a number of years. She played New York's Town Hall a record three times. She performed in Canada, the U.S., the Caribbean, Central and South America, and Europe, touring as a woman of colour in her thirties when racism permeated

the times. She was adored by audiences and acclaimed by the critics.

In 1995, the Government of Canada declared Portia to be a person of national historic significance, and prepared a plaque in her honour, which may be seen at Zion Baptist Church, Truro, N.S. In 1997, the Government of Nova Scotia established the Portia White Memorial Award of \$25,000. Canada Post issued a stamp in her honour in 2000. She has been the subject of Canadian artworks - a tree sculpture, a bronze bust and a portrait in charcoal - an award-winning documentary film, a children's storybook about her life, a play, a musical and a Karsh photograph.

A gold medal was cast and presented to her in Panama in 1946. It and other treasures are housed at the Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia and in government and university collections. A rare exhibit of artifacts from her estate will be on display from May 11 to October 11, 2019 in Truro at the Colchester Historeum as the province of Nova Scotia celebrates the enduring scholarship fund that was founded on her behalf, now known as the Nova Scotia Talent Trust. [www.portiawhite.ca](http://www.portiawhite.ca)

Parts of it will be shown at our East York Historical Society's evening presentation Tuesday, January 29, 2019.

By 1950 Portia had retired from the concert stage and turned to teaching in Toronto and performing occasionally. According to Branksome Hall's records, Portia White was employed at the school as a vocal instructor between 1954 and 1960. Over the course of her all-too-brief career, Portia did two command performances, one for Princess Alice and the Earl of Athlone (then governor-general of Canada) and the other in 1964 for Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh in Charlottetown. Her final public performance was for the World Baptist Federation in Ottawa in 1967. She died of cancer on February 13, 1968 at the age of 56.

*Thank you, Portia for the legacy that you have left us all.*

## GUEST SPEAKER: SHEILA WHITE –

### TOPIC: CELEBRATING PORTIA WHITE 50 Years On

Sheila White has a diverse background in politics, communications and environment, but her first love is music. Sheila is a musician and composer, a niece of Portia White, and the curator of the Toronto exhibit, "Celebrating Portia White ... 50 years on." [www.portiawhite.ca](http://www.portiawhite.ca)

Sheila leads a community choir at Don Heights Unitarian Congregation in Toronto and runs a monthly song writing group for the Songwriters Association of Canada. In 2016 "Power of Song", a songbook of songs by Sheila and others (including Chris White) was released and is available for sale.



In 2014 Sheila won an African Canadian Achievement Award of Excellence for politics in recognition of her five runs as a candidate for elected office. Sheila had a long tenure as a senior political advisor and communications guru at the municipal and provincial levels and was a spokesperson for the left wing on CBC for many years. She has been the subject of a number of news stories and documentaries, including one feature film for her work on litter prevention.

Sheila's company, Words, publishes a website and weekly newsletter with a focus on the world's littering problems. (photo credit: CBC)

# OPENER FOR THE EAST YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY ON JANUARY 29, 2019

## INTRODUCTIONS BY CATHERINE WILLSHIRE

### Simona Genga – Mezzo-soprano

Simona Genga, from Vaughan, Ontario, won First Prize and the Audience Choice Award at the 2017 Ensemble Studio Competition, and received her Master of Music in opera performance from the University of Toronto (UofT). She was also winner of the 2017 Norcop Recital Prize in Song. This summer, Ms. Genga returned to the Gerdine Young Artists Program at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis to sing Annina in *La Traviata*, was listed as one of the CBC's 2018 "30 hot Canadian classical musicians under 30", and completed a Voice Fellowship at the Ravinia Steans Music Institute. Her additional credits include Nettie Fowler in *Carousel* (Chautauqua Voice Festival); Sister Helen in *Dead Man Walking* (Opera NUOVA); La Sciaurata in *Prima Zombie* (UofT Opera); Mistress Quickly in *Falstaff* (UWOpera). Roles with the COC this season include Second Maid in *Elektra* and Cindy in *WOW Factor: A Cinderella Story* (Opera for Young Audiences).

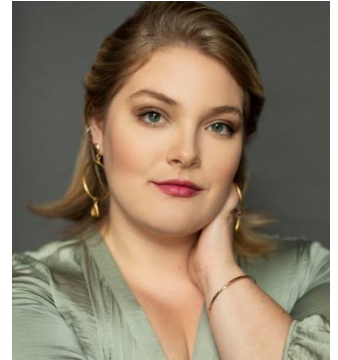
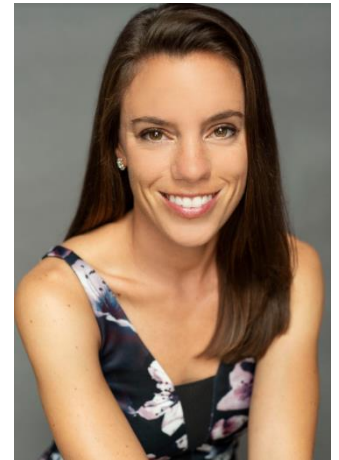


Photo Credits: Gaetz Photography

### Rachael Kerr – Pianist

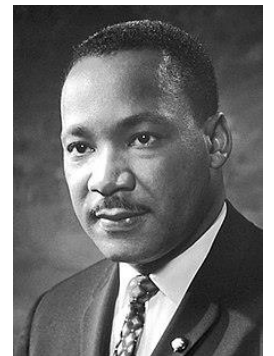
Rachael Kerr enjoys varied roles as a pianist. She has served as rehearsal pianist for COC productions of *The Elixir of Love*, *Rigoletto* and *The Nightingale and Other Short Fables*. Credits include being a collaborative pianist at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity and the Académie Orford Musique, a fellow at the Toronto Summer Music Festival, and a two-time fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center. As an orchestral pianist, she has performed with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Beijing Symphony Orchestra, and the National Ballet of Canada. Recently, she was a rehearsal pianist at the TSO for Mozart's *Requiem*, Shostakovich's Symphony No. 13, and Weill's *Seven Deadly Sins*, among other projects. She recently graduated with her doctorate from Northwestern University, where she was concurrently a faculty instructor in music theory. This season, she returns as rehearsal pianist for *Hadrian*, *Elektra*, and *La Bohème*.



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## MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY – CELEBRATING 90 YEARS

Born on January 15, 1929 and assassinated on April 4, 1968 in Memphis. He would have been 90 years old this month. was an American Baptist minister and activist who became the most visible spokesperson and leader in the civil rights movement from 1954 until his death in 1968



## TRENDING NOW...



From left to right, East York's newest representatives:  
Councillor Brad Bradford,  
Councillor Paula Fletcher,  
Councillor Jaye Robinson,  
MPP Rima Berns-McGown



# WE REMEMBER...

## Former Borough of East York Councillor Edna Beange

BEANGE, J. EDNA (nee LONGMAN) May 12, 1920 – January 7, 2019 After a rich and full life, Edna passed away on January 7, 2019, at the age of 98. Predeceased by her husband, George Beange (1973) and son-in-law, Marc Paradis (2004). Survived by her children Donald Beange (Carolynn), Jean Paradis and grandson, Graham Beange.

She will be sadly missed. Edna Beange was a woman of distinction with a commitment to service and a history of leadership. For over 50 years, she served on over 20 agencies, committees and boards working tirelessly so that seniors could remain independent with first-rate community health care. Meals on Wheels, Sharing, East York Community Care, Call-A-Service, Hospital Special Needs and SAHIL are all organizations that Edna founded, chaired or supported as well as Leaside Garden Society. She served 3 terms as East York Alderman (1975-88) and was the first woman on the Toronto East General Hospital Board of Governors.



In 1999, she was appointed Honorary Director for outstanding service to the Hospital Board of Directors. In 1994, she received the Agnes Macphail award in its inaugural year for furthering women's rights, senior's fairness and access to housing, health care and education. In 2001, Edna received the Governor Generals' Caring Canadian award from the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. Declining health in June 2018 required the support of a Palliative Care team, caring friends, neighbours and United Church parishioners.

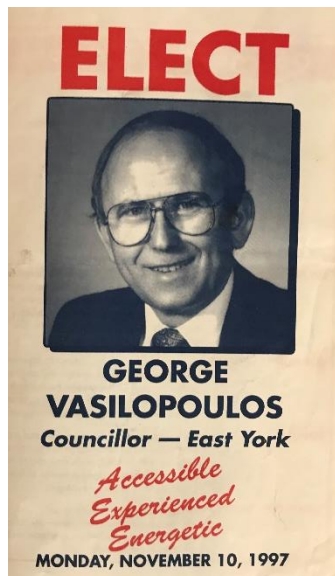
We are grateful for their support. A special thank you goes to the staff at Sunnybrook Palliative Care for their wonderful care and compassion. A service will be held on Friday, January 11th at 2:00 p.m. at Leaside United Church at 822 Millwood Road, followed by a reception in the church hall. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre Foundation Condolences and photographs may be forwarded through [www.heritagefuneralcentre.ca](http://www.heritagefuneralcentre.ca)

## Former Borough of East York Councillor George Vasilopoulos

Former East York Councillor George Vasilopoulos left us on December 19, 2018. He passed away at the age of 76 at Scarborough General Hospital. Mr. Vasilopoulos is known to many in East York as a hard working advocate who cared for his community. He served on the Borough of East York Council from 1986 to 1997 and had a good working relationship with his colleagues on council and also Mayor's Dave Johnson and Michael Prue who he served with.

Most notably, as I was told by Councillor Jim Karygiannis and Prue, Mr. Vasilopoulos shares a special honour with former East York Councillor Steve Mastoras as being the first two Councillors of Greek descent to ever be elected in Metro Toronto. He sought election to the amalgamated City of Toronto Council in November 1997 but finished behind Prue and Councillor Case Ootes.

In the community as a Councillor and even after he held office, Mr. Vasilopoulos was always there to lend a helping hand. He served as Honourary Chair and Grand Marshall for the East York Canada Day Parade, a member of the Toronto East General Hospital Board of Governors, a member of the 54 Division Community Police Liaison Committee and as a staunch volunteer and member of the Mayor's East York Multicultural



Committee that organized the very popular East York Day year after year.

Mr. Prue, now serving as Councillor for the Town of Amherstburg, described Mr. Vasilopoulos as a great East Yorker who served all those who lived in it. "He was a kind and gentle person and was well respected by all," said the former Mayor who served with Mr. Vasilopoulos on East York Council from 1988 to 1997. "He was proud of his Greek heritage and was instrumental in facilitating the twinning of our community with that of Tripolis, Greece, his boyhood home."

Mr. Johnson described his former colleague as sincere. "He was honest and a very hardworking Councillor who was committed to serving in the best interests of East Yorkers," said the former Borough Alderman and Mayor

who served from 1972 to 1993. "To me, George was always a good friend."

Toronto Councillor Paula Fletcher was saddened to learn of his passing and plans to move a condolence motion at the January meeting of Toronto City Council. The motion will also recognize his many years of service to East York.

*Written by: Justin Van Dette, President, East York Hall of Fame and Director, East York Historical Society. Article will be appearing the Jan 2019 issue of the East York Chronicle.*

## CONGRATULATIONS, JOHN!

Dr. John Carter was the recipient of the 2018 Volunteer Award from the Town of South Bruce Peninsula. He was recognized for his many years as a member and chair of the local Municipal Heritage Committee, and for other voluntary civic contributions. John had a 7 part series of articles about the 1838 Patriot War, published in the Brockville Recorder and Times in July and November.

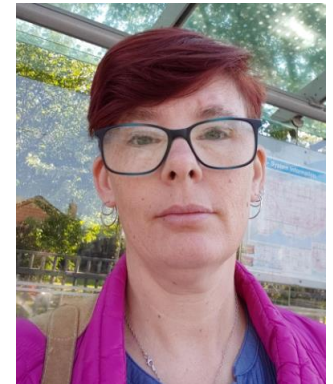
He was also a contributor to and guest editor of a special Upper Canadian rebellion issue of the Australasian Canadian Studies journal. His three part series about William Helliwell appeared in recent issues of the East York Chronicle, and his article about William Helliwell's 1832 trip to England will be published in the 2019 edition of the York Pioneer.

*PHOTO CREDIT: John Schreiter, Kitchener.*



## BOARD APPOINTMENT: SHANNON TIMMS-UGOCHUKWU

The East York Historical Society newly appointed (at the 38th AGM on Nov. 27, 2018) Secretary Mrs. Shannon Timms-Ugochukwu. Shannon was born, raised, schooled & reside in East York and is well known by many for her excellent years of service with the East York Toronto Canada Day Corporation (as Past Chair). Her love and interest in local history is mainly what prompted her to say yes when President Pat called upon her to become a member and come on Board in service as Secretary of the East York Historical Society a position previously held by East York Historical Society former secretary Mr. Jeffrey Brown. Shannon runs a striving home based day care and look forward in getting to know the members of the Society. On behalf of the President including the Executive Board Directors & members of the East York Historical Society A Warm Welcome to you Shannon we wish you all the best in your new position with the Society. Thank you.



## A Special & Honourable Announcement for Mr. KIRK HOWARD:

President of The Dundurn Group publishing house, has been appointed a Member of the Order of Canada, and to extend to him the congratulations and best wishes from the East York Historical Society and its President Pancheta Barnett.

"The announcement of Mr Howard's appointment was made in the New Year's Honours List from Government House on December 27, 2018. The Order of Canada, a company of honour, is one of the highest civilian orders of Her Majesty The Queen's Canadian Honours, second only to the Commonwealth-wide Order of Merit. Mr Howard's appointment as a Member of the Order is in recognition of 'his commitment to Canadian authors and to a domestically owned publishing industry'".



## THE TRADITION CONTINUES...

On December 6, 2018, Councillor Paula Fletcher hosted the annual lighting of the East York Christmas Tree at the East York Civic Centre. The event was well-attended by residents of all Ages. EYHS Board Member Ron Chamberlain attended the festivities.



# UPCOMING MEETINGS OF THE EAST YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DATE	TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER
Wednesday, February 20, 2019	2:00 PM	Toronto Watery History	Ed Freeman
Tuesday, March 26, 2019	7:00 PM	His Family of East York – Donated family artifacts to the EYHS	Dr. John Cooper, MA EdD
Wednesday, April 17, 2019	2:00 PM	Glenn's Cold War	Glenn Fenton
Tuesday, May 28, 2019	7:00 PM	HORSES... Race Tracks	Ms. Muriel Lennox
Tuesday, September 24, 2019	7:00 PM	Transit Bricks	Trevor Parkins-Sciberras
Wednesday, October 16, 2019	2:00 PM	A Call to Duty	Teresa Hall
Tuesday, November 26, 2019 39 <sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting	7:00 PM	To Be Announced	Mr. Rob Lavery, Executive Dir. of the Ontario Historical Society
Tuesday, January 28, 2020	7:00 PM	To Be Announced	To Be Announced
Tuesday, March 31, 2020	7:00 PM	Life and Times of John Candy	To Be Announced
Tuesday, May 31, 2020	7:00 PM	To Be Announced	The DelZotto Family
Tuesday, September 29, 2020	7:00 PM	To Be Announced	To Be Announced
Tuesday, November 23, 2020 40 <sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting	7:00 PM	Living Up To The Legend	Diana Bishop

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Joseph Zeller  
Shannon Timms-Ugochukwu  
Councillor Brad Bradford



## ROBBIE BURNS SUPPER

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 26th, 2019**

LATVIAN CANADIAN CULTURAL CENTRE  
(4 Credit Union Drive)

HOSTED BY...THE KIWANIS CLUB OF EAST YORK

**TICKETS - \$75**

Advance Purchase Only

CASH BAR - PRIZES & SILENT AUCTION - SCOTTISH DANCING

For Tickets...Online at [eventbrite.ca](http://eventbrite.ca)...Call (416) 451-6777...e-mail: [treasurer@kcey.ca](mailto:treasurer@kcey.ca)

ALL PROCEEDS GO DIRECTLY TO LOCAL COMMUNITY PROGRAMS



**WE RECYCLE>>>**

**The EYHS recycle all its EY Inklings Newsletters of the EYHS by returning to the meetings or passing on to neighbours and friends**

Correction: 38<sup>th</sup> AGM Annual Report #192 – Nov 28, 2017 – (60 in attendance. Total for 5 meetings 232)

Correction: June 24, 2018 – Pat Barnett attended the ceremony for Leaside's First Mail Delivery, June 24, 1918.



EAST YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
MINUTES OF THE 38<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
Tuesday, November 27, 2018 – 7:00 PM  
S. Walter Stewart Library

Number in attendance 102

MINUTES: Chris Salmond moved and Alan Redway seconded that the minutes of the 2017 Annual Meeting as published in the Jan. 2018 East York Inklings be accepted. Carried.

ANNUAL REPORT: Moved by Alan Redway seconded by Mike Dolbey that the annual report distributed in the November 2018 newsletter be accepted. Vote carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Moved by Ron Chamberlain seconded by Paula Davies that the Treasurer's Annual Report as published in the November newsletter be accepted. Vote carried.

FINANCIAL REVIEWERS REPORT: Moved by Lorna Krawchuk, seconded by Alan Redway that the Financial Reviewer's report be accepted. Vote carried. Lorna Krawchuk has agreed to be our financial reviewer for the fiscal year 2018 – 2019. Moved by Chris Salmond seconded by Paul Robert that Lorna Krawchuk be appointed as Financial Reviewer for the fiscal year 2018 to 2019. Vote carried.

ELECTIONS: Diane Dyson took the chair to conduct the election of the board of directors.

She announced that the positions of Treasurer and Secretary are appointed by the Board. Val Dodge will continue as Treasurer and we plan to appoint a secretary. Margaret McRae will continue as Past President.

She announced that the following slate is recommended by the Board of Directors.

President – Pat Barnett  
Vice President – Ron Brown

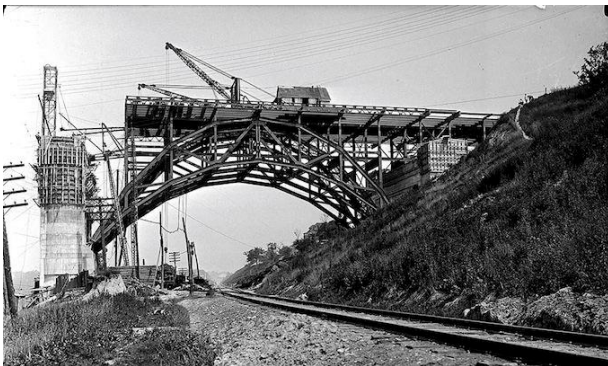
Directors at Large  
Ron Chamberlain  
Christopher Salmond  
Justin Van Dette  
Chris Theofilogiannakos

She asked if there were any other nominations. Alan Redway moved and Mike Dolbey seconded that nominations be closed and the proposed executive be elected. Vote carried.

Pat announced that Shannon Timms-Ugochukwu will be appointed as secretary.

ADJOURNMENT: The AGM was adjourned and we returned to the general meeting.

*Minutes taken by Margaret McRae*



## 100 Years Ago...

Construction on the Prince Edward Viaduct was completed on October 18, 1918. The photo on the left is what the construction looked like. On December 12, 2018, a ceremony was held by Heritage Toronto and the City of Toronto as Mayor John Tory and Councillor Paula Fletcher unveiled a permanent plaque to celebrate the milestone. EYHS President Pat Barnett was present for the special event.

### IMPORTANT REQUEST TO OUR MEMBERS AND THE COMMUNITY OF EAST YORK

The East York Historical Society is still looking for a nice permanent home in East York for its growing Archives. Contact us at EYHS e-mail [eyhs@eastyork.org](mailto:eyhs@eastyork.org)



# NOMINATIONS ARE NOW OPEN... 2019 AGNES MACPHAIL AWARD

Agnes Campbell Macphail was once described as “the most important woman in public life that Canada has produced in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century”.

In 1921 she blazed a path for women with her election to the House of Commons in Ottawa where she served for 19 years until 1940. In 1943, she became the first woman to sit in the Ontario Legislature, representing the riding of York East (which at the time included East York and a large surrounding rural area).

On March 24, 1993, Mayor Michael Prue proclaimed the first annual Agnes Macphail Day in the Borough of East York in honour of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her election to the Ontario Legislature. In January 1994, East York Council established the Agnes Macphail Award.

### Purpose of the Award:

The purpose of the award is to recognize the importance to the East York community of the issues that Agnes Macphail espoused in her long career:

- Women’s rights, Fairness to seniors, Criminal justice system and penal reform, International peace and disarmament, Access to adequate housing, health care and education

### Conditions/Criteria:

An annual award is presented to an East York resident who has made outstanding contributions as a volunteer, advocate, contributor to community life and leader in one or more of the above fields, but is not limited to them. These contributions should be over considerable periods of time.



All living in the former Borough of East York are eligible, with the exception of federal, provincial & municipal elected officials and judges while in office. *There are no posthumous appointments.* Nominees from previous years are eligible for re-nomination. Previous recipients are ineligible. The ideal candidate will live by Agnes’ motto, “Think Globally, Act Locally”.

### Nomination Information:

All information requested on the separate nomination form must be submitted and will not be returned. The deadline for receipt is midnight, Thursday, February 7, 2019 and it must contain the following details of: Nominator’s testimonial, Biography/profile of the nominee, Affiliations, Letters of support, to be included as outlined on the nomination form.

Note: Only information actually submitted on and with the nomination package will be considered. The Committee is not permitted to contact the nominator for further information.

### Agnes Macphail Recognition Committee:

c/o Councillor Paula Fletcher  
phone 416 392 4060 Email [councillor\\_fletcher@toronto.ca](mailto:councillor_fletcher@toronto.ca)  
100 Queen Street West, Suite C44, Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

### 2019 Agnes Macphail Award Ceremony:

The Agnes Macphail Award Ceremony will be held on the birthday of Agnes Macphail, Sunday, March 24, 2019, 2 pm, in the True Davidson Council Chambers of the East York Civic Centre, 850 Coxwell Avenue.

## TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS INVITES YOU...

Toronto Field Naturalists will hold their Nature Images Show on Sat. Feb. 16th at 1:30 pm at the Walter Stewart Library. TFN members will show digital photos of nature in Ontario they have viewed in the last year. The event is free and is open to the public and refreshments will be served. There will also be a silent auction for some books and artwork. If interested please bring cash or cheque book as they don't take credit cards.

### DEAR SUNNYBROOK HOME HARDWARE FAMILY,

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve you for the past thirty years, yes 30 years! My dad and I took over this store on October 4, 1988.

We want you to know that my family and I have deeply appreciated your business and a huge “thank you” to those of you who became friends to us over the years - and there are many of you.

It became quite evident as soon as the LRT construction began, that our sales would decline, and this is now the right time to close this store.

I was fortunate to get sage advice 8 years ago from my accountant, and that was to prepare for the eventual closing of this store. Thus, I set out a 5-year plan, which has been successful: I have opened up 3 other Home Hardware stores in the city and HomePro Pest Control (operated from our office in Markham).

Please feel free to contact me any time at (416) 488-7378 for hardware store advice, or to purchase any inventory.

Heather, Ruthann and Andrew will also be available in these stores.

We would be happy to serve you out of one of the locations shown below.

As well, please call the same number if you require any pest control services. Once again, thank you, thank you, thank you!

Best Regards,

Malcolm

Malcolm Firkser and the entire Sunnybrook Home Hardware team



680 DANFORTH AVENUE  
(East of Pape)  
(416) 469-4807



2151 DANFORTH AVENUE  
(East of Woodbine)  
(647) 348-7850



2305 QUEEN ST. EAST  
(East of Woodbine)  
(647) 352-4807





*EYHS Director Justin Van Dette and Councillor Fletcher at the 34<sup>th</sup> annual East York Seniors Christmas Day Dinner, which was held on December 25, 2018 at the East York Community Centre.*

*Over 200 people attended the event that was hosted by Councillor Paula Fletcher with many volunteers thanks to community leader Kam Babulal. The event was started in 1984 by East York Mayor Dave Johnson when it was called the 'Mayor's Christmas Day Dinner'*

### **MANY THANKS!!!**

Mrs. Janet Nanos staff of S. Walter Stewart Library (EYHS Co sponsor) for her many years of service to the East York Historical Society evening and afternoon meetings. Mrs. McKinnon will take over the position. On behalf of the EYHS, we thank Janet for her ongoing commitment and support.



**Happy Birthday to Toronto East General Hospital. The hospital celebrated its 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday as they opened on January 12, 1929.**

**New Year's Levee** With Kathleen Wynne, MPP Don Valley West

Saturday, January 19, 2019 | 1:00PM - 3:00PM  
 Toronto Botanical Garden | 777 Lawrence Ave E. (At Leslie)

Over 100 people attended the EYHS AGM that took place last November. The Society welcomed former Mayor, MP and Cabinet Minister, The Honourable Alan Redway who spoke to us about his new book about East York. Councillor Jaye Robinson (Don Valley West) and Pat Barnett were among the may who purchased his book.



**Congratulations, Councillor Michael Prue!  
 Michael was elected Councillor in the  
 Town of Amherstburg On October 22, 2018.**



# MY THOUGHTS OF EAST YORK BEFORE AMALGAMATION

By Sonia van Heerden, Member of the East York Historical Society

I moved with my parents from Cabbagetown to East York in 1959, left for 1 ½ years to travel through Europe, then stayed in East York, but did not get involved with East York officialdom until I had married and my children were in school. Reading through Alan Redway's new book, "East York 1924-1997, Toronto's Garden of Eden" brought back memories of some of the organizations.

The East York Home & School Associations were very important to me. All 24 public schools had a parent run association. I learned all about Roberts' Rules and how to organize people to accomplish the members' wishes. At all school meetings the principal or his designate and a teacher were invited, and we had very satisfactory dealings with school staff. Then once a month we had Home & School Council meetings at the Board offices. We were able to use the East York Board of Education Board Room for our meetings of representatives from the 24 Associations, and at these meetings we usually had one of the Superintendents or the Director of Education in attendance. Here again we had a good repos with the local Board of Education. The Executive of the Home & Council also had meetings with the Executive Committee of the Principals' Associations, and we had help from the Board when we were hosting a Home & School Convention in East York. Now with the larger Toronto District School Board, I have been advised there are school run parent associations in each school, and parents have less say in what transpires.

When my older son was at school at Chester in the 1970s, I was able to go 1 morning a week to William Burgess School for mothers' meetings in their basement. My younger son was 2 years old and there were separate rooms for toddlers to play and another room with cribs and high chairs for babies. We ladies went off to a third room to meetings on finances, health issues and just fun conversation. Then we had to rush after the meeting to pick up our other children at school. I do not know who sponsored these meetings at the time, and wonder whether there are such meetings now for stay at home mothers or fathers wanting a bit of adult conversation during the day.

It also brought back memories of our last days of the East York Library Board. During my 9 years on the Board I learned much about governing libraries. Alice Lorriman was the

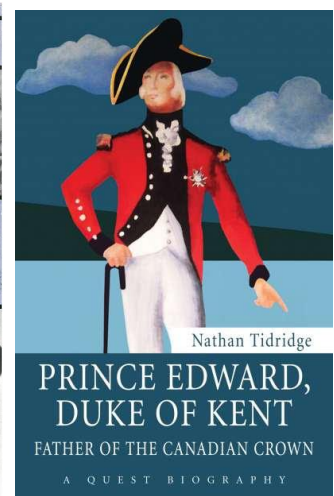
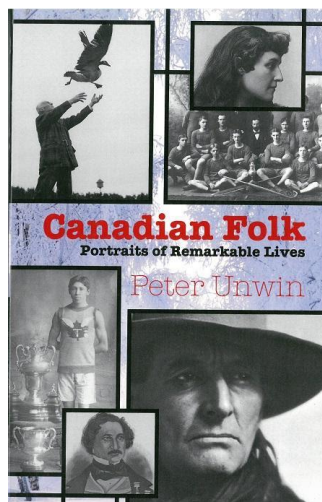
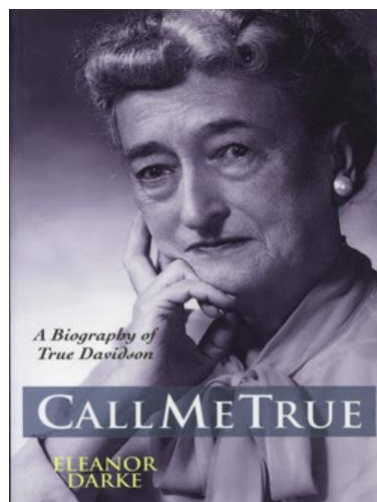
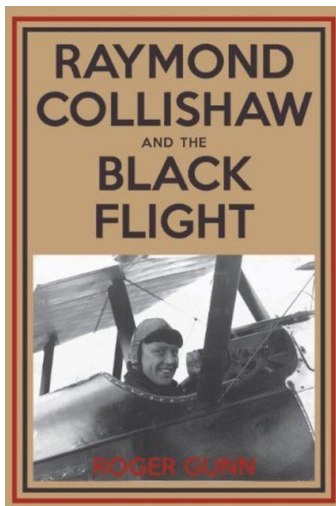
Director, based at S. Walter Stewart Branch. The Board was made up of a couple of aldermen, and I remember Bill Buckingham and Lorna Krawchuk. There were persons appointed by the Borough Council, appointed by the public schools, and appointed by the separate schools. I had to submit a resume and appear for an interview before the outgoing Borough Council for the appointment. We usually had meetings in the Board Room at S. Walter Stewart; which room was also used for volunteers teaching adults English one on one. Sometimes we had meetings at the branches – Dawes Road, where we had to decide on how to repair balconies of the condo owners who were part owners of the library building; Leaside, where we had a meeting in the basement on a very rainy day and watched the water come in from under a door, flow down the stairs and nearly reach us; and S. Walter Stewart, where we learned all about "blueberries" which need to be part of the hot tar added to the roof to repair it. We named the auditorium at S. Walter Stewart in honour of John Ridout, who had been a Chair of our Board and of the Metropolitan Toronto Library Board and also involved with Toronto's First Post Office Historical Society. We also named the children's room at the Thorncliffe Library the Hazel Thornton-Lazier Children's Room in honour of Hazel, who had also been a past Chair of our Board.



Then we were told we were to be disbanded, and as Vice-Chair I was asked to attend a meeting at the Toronto Reference Library to set up the parameters for the new Toronto Library Board. It was time to step away from the library. I received a book mark and letter opener from the Board, which I nearly had confiscated at an airline check point years later, as the letter opener was metal and had a sharp point.

There have been a few times when I had to appear at the Committee of Adjustments in East York in connection with our house tax assessment and with parking for a Harvey's restaurant we wanted to open. I also made a presentation to Council in another matter without a lot of trepidation. I think these meetings in the Toronto City Hall today would be daunting episodes.

## THE EYHS HAS BOOKS FOR SALE



## ABOUT THE EAST YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The East York Historical Society was formed in 1980 and incorporated in 1981 as a non-profit corporation affiliated with the Ontario Historical Society to bring together people interested in the diverse heritage of East York, to research, retain, preserve and present historical data pertaining to the region.

Meetings of the East York Historical Society are generally held on the last Tuesday of January, March, May, September and November at the S. Walter Stewart Library (northwest corner of Memorial Park and Durant Avenues) at 7:00pm and include an illustrated presentation on a subject of historical interest. Our meetings are co-sponsored by the Toronto Public Library.

### INTERESTED IN THE EAST YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY, CONTACT US:

Pancheta (Pat) Barnett  
President, East York Historical Society  
E-Mail: [eyhs@eastyork.org](mailto:eyhs@eastyork.org) - Web: [www.eastyork.org/eyhs.html](http://www.eastyork.org/eyhs.html)

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### HELP PRESERVE THE HISTORY OF EAST YORK BY BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE EAST YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Help strengthen the History of East York by becoming a member of the East York Historical Society. Provide us with your ideas and know more about the great community that we live in. Your membership helps us to keep you informed and organize events that educate the residents of East York.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**New members and guests are always welcome. The fees for 2019 are:**

Single - \$15      Family - \$20      Student - \$7      Organization - \$50

Bring cash to our next meeting or mail us a cheque payable to the "East York Historical Society" to:  
East York Historical Society, 107 Cambridge Avenue, Toronto, ON, M4K 2L7

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The Toronto

# OBSERVER

In case you missed the last issue of the East York Observer, published December 7, 2018. Please visit this link as you will be able to read the paper in its entirety. Thank you for your incredible support towards the East York Historical Society over the years and for featuring our recent AGM and our special guest speaker Hon. Alan Redway  
<https://torontoobserver.ca/digital-paper/>



## The East York Historical Society **CELEBRATING** **BLACK HISTORY IN CANADA**

Cordially Invites Everyone to Attend the  
**General Meeting**

**Tuesday, January 29, 2019 @ 7 pm**

@ the S. Walter Stewart Library (John S. Ridout Auditorium)  
170 Memorial Park Avenue & Durant Avenue



**Portia White**  
1911-1968

**Main Presenter: Ms. Sheila White**

Photo Credit CBC

**Topic: Celebrating Portia White...50 Years On**

Sheila White, the niece of one of Canada's greatest classical singers, tells the story of a Black woman's success on world concert stages in the 1940s.

Portia White is a designated person of historical significance for being the first to achieve such fame.

Hers is a tale of talent, determination and shattering barriers.

Also included in the presentation: Music by the Don Heights Singers

**Evening Opener: Canadian Opera Company Ensemble**

Introduction by: Catherine Wilshire  
Adult Programs Manager, Education & Outreach  
Canadian Opera Company

**Simona Genga**  
Mezzo-soprano



and



**Rachael Kerr**  
Pianist

Photo Credits Gaetz Photography

**FREE  
ADMISSION**

Refreshments @ 7:00 pm  
President's Welcome/Remarks @ 7:30 pm  
Presentation/Speaker @ 8:00 pm

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Follow the EYHS on   for updates!

The East York Historical Society Meetings  
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