

The Beach and East Toronto Historical Society

# Annual Report

**April 1 2019 to March 31 2020**



Dena Bain Taylor, author of *100 years at the Beach; a history of the Beach Hebrew Institute, 1919-2019*, and Uwe Sehmrau TBETHS president, at a jointly-sponsored event held at the Institute, February 18, 2020

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The fiscal year 2019-2020 was again one of the busiest and most productive in the 46-year history of The Beach and East Toronto Historical Society (TBETHS), as the following report will document.

The Board of Directors election at the Annual General Meeting held on June 11, 2019, was followed by Executive and functional appointments (there were no changes from the previous year):

<b>Board Role</b>	<b>Other Board Roles</b>
• President: Uwe Sehmrau	Heritage Conservation District Committee Chair
• Vice-President: Clyde Robinson	Web Committee Chair
• Treasurer: Mary Campbell	
• Secretary: John Ellis	Membership Secretary, Web Contact Response
• Event Coordinator: Glenn Chadwick	Web Committee
• Social Media Coordinator: Deborah Livingston-Lowe	
• Project Lead, Card Index Automation: Barbara Myrvold	Web Committee
• Honorary Adviser: Gene Domagala	

We held eight regular board meetings, the annual general meeting and 18 public events (a new record!). We continued to provide services and also developed new initiatives to increase awareness of our history and to preserve the built heritage of our catchment area:

- Increased membership by 40 percent (See Membership Report)
- Expanded and enhanced our website, with the support of our webmaster, Pete Richardson, President of Tayson Information Technology (a local business).
- Launched a Facebook page [www.tbeths.com/facebook](http://www.tbeths.com/facebook)
- Established a project to automate 13,600 hand-written cards in the Society's Archives. The manual index to newspaper articles, books, archival documents, maps, and pictures of the local area housed in libraries and archives was created by students hired by the Society in the 1980s under federal government grants. The goal of the automation project is to increase access to this unique resource of local information. The first step of the project team (Barbara Myrvold, Irena Lewycka and Kathy Vice) was to review 2,250 subject cards and verify them with standard authorities. This was a large amount of work but crucial for the consistency and integrity of the final database. Working with Donna Rohr, also a librarian and a local resident, documents to electronically store the authority file and the index entries were created along with a form for inputting data and an instructional manual for data entry. The next steps will be to recruit and train volunteers to transcribe the cards into a database.
- Attended a workshop sponsored by the Toronto Branch of the Architectural Conservatory of Ontario to learn how we could add information and images about the Beach and East Toronto to TOBuilt, an open-source database of Toronto building and structures  
[https://www.acotoronto.ca/tobuilt\\_new\\_detailed.php](https://www.acotoronto.ca/tobuilt_new_detailed.php)

- Continued to identify sites for heritage plaques, including several in the vicinity of Kingston Road and Queen Street East: Orchard Park Hotel (now a Day's Inn); Canadian Imperial Bank (now a restaurant/pub) and Woodbine Race Track (now a housing development).
- Began work on an inventory of prominent local residents over time to facilitate the City's Laneway Naming initiative. (Thanks, Erik Malmsten).
- Prepared research and submitted a nomination to the City's Heritage Preservation Services for one property within our catchment area to be added to the Heritage Register.
- Participated in City-sponsored meetings to ensure preservation of historic aspects of Danforth Avenue in the vicinity of Main Street and of the TTC barns at Coxwell and Danforth.
- Improved our response to the "Contact Us" section of our website to ensure that public requests for information were promptly addressed. Responses to 18 queries were prepared in the fiscal year, including a neighbourhood group's appeal for help to save a threatened double house on Elmer Avenue and offers to donate materials.
- Accepted donations of collections. To increase access and preservation, some original materials were transferred to the Toronto Public Library:
  - Hogg/Tomlin Collection from 41 Waverley Road, which included many local photographs, 1910s to 1940s, and a soldier's diary from the First World War.
  - A large c.1918 panoramic photo showing buildings at the west end of Benlamond Avenue and on Benlamond Drive.



**Panoramic photograph of the southward extension of Benlamond Avenue**

- Joined other community organizations and laid a wreath at the Remembrance Day service on November 11 at the cenotaph in Kew Gardens.
- Filed required reports with the Ontario Historical Society and the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations.

### **Public Programs**

#### **2019**

- **April 23:** Gene Domagala; *Toronto Places, People & Buildings*
- **April 27:** Gene Domagala Walk; *Historic Danforth Avenue*
- **May 18:** Gene Domagala Walk; *Victoria Day on Queen Street*
- **May 21:** Barbara Myrvold; *Researching the History of Your House*

- **June 11:** Camille Begin; *Industrial Dundas+Carlaw*
  - **June 29:** Gene Domagala Walk; *Historic East Toronto*
  - **July 27:** Gene Domagala Walk; *History & People of Kingston Road*
  - **August 10:** Gene Domagala Walk; *Historic Queen St.- Kingston Rd.*
  - **August 24:** Gene Domagala Walk; *The Ashbridge Estate*
  - **September 15:** Gene Domagala Walk; *Kew Beach to Balmy Beach*
  - **September 24:** Gene Domagala; *100 Years Ago in the Beach*
  - **September 28:** Gene Domagala Walk; *Early Pioneers of Toronto's East End – A Tour of St. John's Norway Cemetery*
  - **October 22:** Paul Warner; *The Men who Built the Beach: The Price Brothers Homes*
  - **November 12:** Scott Kennedy; *Don Mills – The Way it Used to Be*
  - **December 10:** Barbara Dickson; *Bomb Girls – Trading Aprons for Ammo*
- 2020**
- **January 14:** Gurth Pretty; *Lake Ontario's Forgotten Squadron during the War of 1812*
  - **February 18:** Dena Bain Taylor; *A History of the Beach Hebrew Institute – 1919-2019*
  - **March:** No program was held, due to COVID-19 concerns.



Public Presentation: Beaches Library, January 14 2020

*Lake Ontario's Forgotten Squadron during the War of 1812*

Gurth M. Pretty, Canadian Maritime Heritage Society, dressed as a Royal Navy sailor of the time with TBETHS Secretary, John Ellis, and Program Convener, Glenn Chadwick

### Other local heritage achievements:

- 28 Bracken Avenue was designated under Part IV, *Ontario Heritage Act*, and By-law 1634-2019, passed by Toronto City Council November 27, 2019, and added to the Heritage Register.
- The Main Street Planning Study – City-Initiated Official Plan Amendment – Final Report, November 15, 2019, included a list of “Potential Built Heritage Resources”.
- A Heritage Toronto plaque (prepared in 2018) was installed at Queen Street East and Kingston Road to commemorate the Toronto Golf Club, founded north of this location in 1876.



**Toronto Golf Club plaque**

Courtesy Joanne Doucette

At the end of our fiscal year, the COVID-19 pandemic began to have an impact on TBETHS. We cancelled our March event and awaited direction before scheduling other public events. With your help, your Board of Directors will be able to further strengthen TBETHS and continue planning and developing programs to expand and share the heritage of our treasured Beach and East Toronto communities.

We give special thanks to Beaches Branch of the Toronto Public Library and its branch head, John Pusan, and the Beach Hebrew Institute for co-sponsoring our programs, and the volunteers who donated their time and expertise to the Society. I personally thank our loyal members for your support and our directors who made my role easier.

On behalf of the Board of Directors,  
**Uwe Sehmrau, President**



THE BEACH AND EAST TORONTO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

**January 1 2019-December 31, 2020**

By the end of 2019, the Society had 75 members (an all-time record!), compared with 48 for 2018, contributing \$1,500 (an increase of \$540) to the treasury. We continue to encourage you, friends, and family to become members. Our membership fee, our primary source of revenue, is only \$20 a year.

**John Ellis, Membership Secretary**

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**TREASURER'S REPORT**

**APRIL 01, 2019 - March 31, 2020**

**Balance as of April 1, 2019 .....\$4,296.45**

**INCOME**

**Memberships .....\$1,400.00**

**Total Income..... \$1,400.00**

**EXPENDITURES**

**Administration/Supplies..... \$363.20**

**Gifts/Honoraria..... 138.77**

**Membership (OHS<sup>1</sup>)..... 60.00**

**Bank Charges..... 21.45**

**Total Expenditures.....\$583.42**

**Balance as of March 31, 2020.....\$5,113.03**

**Mary Campbell, Treasurer**

**The Beach and East Toronto Historical Society**

c/o Three Cedars, 52 Rainsford Road, Toronto, Ontario M4L 3N6

**[www.tbeths.com](http://www.tbeths.com)**

*The object is to foster interest in and to preserve the natural, built and  
documentary heritage of the east end of Toronto*

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<sup>1</sup> OHS: Ontario Historical Society