

HIGH PARK NEWS

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HPCAC Receives Toronto Environmental Award of Excellence

By High Park Correspondent

The High Park Community Advisory Council has received a City of Toronto Environmental Award of Excellence (Green Toronto Award). These awards are delivered in partnership between the City and Green Living magazine (formerly Toronto enviroguide) along with media, corporate and community sponsors. There are eight categories of award.

We were one of three winners in the Community Project category, which recognizes the work of volunteers engaged in community building and conservation, including urban stewardship.

Robin Sorys, HPCAC chair, accepted the award from Mayor Miller, Deputy Mayor Pantelone and the corporate sponsor in this category, Loblaw Companies Limited, at a ceremony on May 2nd in the City Hall Council Chamber.

The Awards Ceremony was preceded by a bountiful reception, during which many expressed words of congratulation, including the Mayor, who has always been a strong supporter of HPCAC, both as our local Councillor and in his present position.

The Green Toronto Award is fitting recognition after ten years of dedicated effort. Our involvement in High Park is very much a team effort and this recognition is shared with all members, volunteers and supporters, active presently and in the past. Through our various committees and our more recently established partner organization, High Park Initiatives, we look forward to continuing the promotion of responsible stewardship and community involvement in the Park for years to come.



*Ron Allan and Robin Sorys with Green Toronto Award
Photo credit: High Park Correspondent*

HPCAC - 10th Annual Meeting, June 15th

Yes, the High Park Community Advisory Council (HPCAC) will be 10 years old this summer and, among other things, we will be celebrating this milestone at the Annual Meeting on June 15 (6:30 p.m. at the Grenadier Café and Teahouse). **Plan to attend and celebrate with us. All are welcome.**

Significant achievements through the 10-year period are:

- **1995** – After functioning as an interim Committee for two years, the **High Park Citizen's Advisory Committee** was formally recognized by the original City of Toronto in the summer of 1995. Its basic mandate is to facilitate ongoing public input and assistance in the stewardship of High Park for present and future generations of Park users.
- **1996 - Volunteer Stewardship Program** initiated. Working closely with personnel from Urban Forestry and the High Park Greenhouses, great strides have been made in the restoration of the natural areas of the Park over the last 9 years. Some 15,000 volunteer hours have been invested since the start of the program
- **1996 - Walking Tours program.** Conducted walks of the Park had been offered since the early 1990s but the summer of 1996 saw the beginning of a formal program under the HPCAC which has continued to date. Through these walks, which now run all year-round, thousands of people have been introduced to the Park and have learned something about its natural and human history.
- **1997 - Children's Events.** This program was initiated to bring families into the Park and to raise funds for the construction of the High Park (later Jamie Bell) Adventure Playground. *(continued on page 6)*

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High Park Advisory Council

HPCAC, a volunteer group, began as an interim Committee in 1993. It was recognized by the City of Toronto as the High Park Citizens' Advisory Committee in 1995. Its name was changed to the High Park Community Advisory Council in 2003.

HPCAC is made up of a broad range of Park users, including individuals and representatives of organized groups. These include local ratepayer/residents' associations, recreational stakeholders, long-term interest groups such as the Toronto Field Naturalists, business/park entrepreneurs and a number of members-at-large from the community. The Council meets on a regular basis and meetings are open to the public.

The HPCAC mandate is:

- to facilitate ongoing public input and assistance in the stewardship of High Park for present and future generations of Park users
- to provide public input on Park policies, goals and objectives to the Commissioner of Economic Development, Culture & Tourism, City of Toronto
- to facilitate volunteer involvement in Park initiatives
- to promote public awareness and responsible stewardship of the Park

Contributors to this issue:

Ron Allan	Cheryl Hart	Lisa Kemp	Cara Webster
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You can find up-to-date information on the various programs through our infoline and on our website.

HPCAC Executive 2003/04

Chair	Robin Sorys
Secretary	Ken Sharratt
Treasurer	Stephen Mick
Natural Environment Committee	
Co-chairs	Karen Yukich George Bryant
Built Environment & Safety Committee	
Chair	Paul Hindle
Program Committee	
Chair	Ron Allan
Parks & Recreation Ex-officio	
Representative	Carol Guy
Colborne Lodge Ex-officio	
Representative	Cheryl Hart
Councillor	Bill Saundercook

HPCAC Members-at-large elected June 2004

Ron Allan
Grace Petrucci
Karyn Morris

HPCAC Members-at-large elected June 2003

George Bryant	Mark Cyr
Susan Flanagan	Stephen Mick
Peter Mulvihill	John Romanov

HPCAC Volunteer Program Groups

Children's Events	Robin Sorys
HYPE	Ray Bielaskie
K-9 Working Group	Jane Brown
Park Watch	Gloria Worth
Volunteer Stewardship Program	
	Jean Vesik
Walking Tours	Ron Allan
Members Representing Residents Assn.	
Swansea Area Ratepayers Assn.	Merle Hudson
Dundas West Residents Assn.	Ken Sharratt
Members Representing Long Term Interests	
Ontario Insect Association	
	Karen Yukich
Toronto Ornithological Club	
	Don Barnett
Toronto Field Naturalists	George Bryant

Members Representing Business/Park Entrepreneurs

High Park Food Concessions	
	Steve Caragianakos
Canadian Stage Company	
	Paul Shaw
OFVIC	April Cornell
City-sponsored Programs non-voting members	
Colborne Lodge	Cheryl Hart
Children's Garden & Exploring Toronto Programs	Christine Klianis
High Park Initiatives	
Secretary	Paul Hindle
Treasurer	Michael Still
Director H.R.	Robin Sorys
Director	Eleanor Morton
Director	Merril Mascarenhas
P&R Ex-officio	Carol Guy
Nature Centre	Diana Teal

High Park Initiatives

An affiliated charitable corporation called High Park Initiatives (HPI) was founded in 2003 to raise funds in support of various Park programs and activities. HPI has also assumed responsibility for managing the High Park Nature Centre, an education program operated jointly by staff and volunteers.

HPCAC Committees

The work of the Council is carried on through two standing policy committees, the Natural Environment Committee, and the Built Environment and Safety Committee. Meetings of these committees are open to the public and your participation is welcome.

In addition, the Program Committee sponsors six volunteer-led programs in the Park.

- Children's events
- High Park Youth connecting People and the Environment (HYPE)
- K-9 Working Group, dog owners and walkers
- ParkWatch
- Volunteer Stewardship Program
- Walking Tours

This committee also liaises closely with the Nature Centre, and City sponsored programs such as Colborne Lodge Museum and the Children's Garden and Exploring Toronto Programs, both located near the south end of the Park.

All activities are conducted on a regular basis throughout the year.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MAY						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Walking Tours The Birds of Spring	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 VSP Spring Ephemeral Tour and Garlic Mustard Control	11	12	13	14
15 Planting South Shore Grenadier Pond Colborne Lodge High Park Day VSP Plant Sale	16	17 Walking Tours Lost Waterways in High Park and Vicinity K-9 Meeting	18 HPCAC General Meeting	19	20	21
22	23	24 VSP Boulevard Beds Spring Cleanup	25	26	27	28 Colborne Lodge Doors Open
29 Colborne Lodge Doors Open VSP Boulevard Beds Planting Event	30	31 Walking Tours Native and Non- Native Trees				



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7 VSP Invasive Species Removal From Tablelands	8	9	10	11
12 VSP Oak Savannah Expansion Planting	13	14 Walking Tours Spring Flowers	15 HPCAC Annual Meeting 10 Years!	16	17	18
19	20	21 K-9 Meeting <hr/> VSP Boulevard Beds Weeding and Watering	22	23	24	25
26 VSP Japanese Knotweed Cutting and Tour of Grenadier Pond Wetlands	27	28 Walking Tours Wildflower Names: meanings, history and lore	29	30		



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JULY						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	5 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	6 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	7 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	8 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	9
10	11 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	12 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp Walking Tours Moth Night (meet at 8:30 pm)	13 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	14 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	15 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	16
17	18 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	19 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	20 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	21 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	22 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	23
24	25 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	26 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp Walking Tours On Grenadier Pond	27 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	28 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	29 Colborne Lodge High Park Discovery Camp	30
						31



HPCAC - 10th Annual Meeting, June 15th *(Continued from page 1)*

The program continues today with Winter Funday, the traditional Easter-Egg Hunt and the Annual Pumpkin Float on or near Halloween. Proceeds are now directed towards the maintenance of the Adventure Playground.

- **1997 - Park Watch.** Launched in the spring of that year, this volunteer program has been an on-going success. Volunteers wearing highly visible yellow vests patrol the Park on weekends. They provide directions and information, explain the on- and off-leash areas to dog-owners, work with the local police in locating lost children (or parents) and communicate suspicious behaviour and safety concerns to the police.
- **1997 - High Park K-9 Committee** established. A group of dedicated dog-owners has worked hard over the years to encourage other dog-owners to respect on and off-leash areas and to clean up after their pets. This is not an easy job and efforts continue in cooperation with Park Watch and Animal Services to enforce the rules.
- **1998/1999 - Adventure Playground.** Over the course of two periods in mid-spring, hundreds of volunteers, under the direction of a professional landscape architect, supplied the labour to lay out and build the Adventure Playground. The Parks & Recreation Department supplied the equipment and materials of construction. This was a tremendous achievement which many families continue to enjoy year-round.
- **1999 - High Park Nature Centre,** begun as a one-month prototype program in the Forest School, has now expanded to a highly successful year-round operation, reaching thousands of schoolchildren and day-care clients with the message of responsible stewardship of the environment. The Nature Centre is operated jointly by paid staff and volunteers.
- **2002 - High Park Youth connecting People to the Environment (HYPE).** A program initiated by high school students themselves, under adult guidance, to bring the same message to another part of the community.
- **2003** – Committee name was changed to the **High Park Community Advisory Council** (same acronym, same mandate). In compliance with revised terms of reference developed by the Parks & Recreation Department and approved by City Council, we were required to separate the money-raising function, which the Committee had been exercising informally from the beginning. An affiliated charitable corporation called High Park Initiatives (HPI) was founded to raise funds in support of various park programs and activities. HPI also manages the High Park Nature Centre.
- **2003 - HPCAC Archives** set up at Runnymede Library

(later moved to the High Park Library).

- **2004** - Conforming to our new name and terms of reference, we developed a **new logo**. A **website** was established which is receiving a significant number of visits. A **quarterly newsletter** was developed which has now run the seasonal cycle from summer to spring.
- **2005 – HPCAC/HPI receives a Green Toronto Award of Excellence from the City in recognition of our sustained impact on the Community and the Park.**

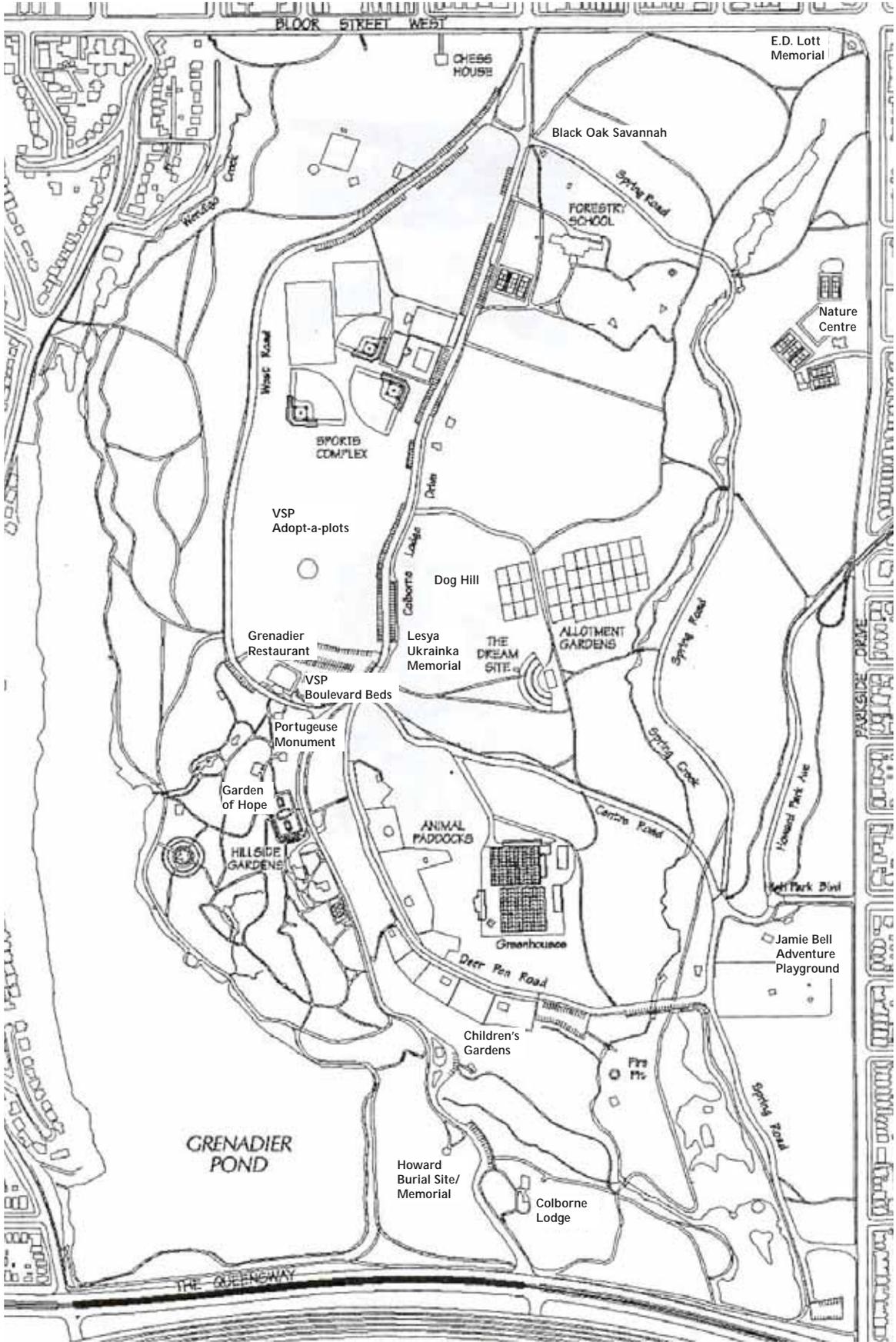
In addition, one can list a number of important contributions and successes originating from the work done by various Standing Committees in cooperation with the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Dept. Some examples:

- **1996** – Began a series of steps in the **restoration of Grenadier Pond**, including removal of the concrete edge on the east side and subsequent naturalization of the shoreline; restoration of the marshland at the north end of the pond, including wetland sculpturing to improve the habitat for wildlife; and, this year, restoration of the south shore of the pond including removal of the concrete edge in favour of a naturalized shoreline with subsequent plantings.
- **1997/1998 – Prescribed burns** done on an experimental basis in the Park, led to a series of operational burns from 2000-2005
- **1999** - Initiation of **Adopt-a-plot program** by VSP on the tablelands
- **1999** - Installation of **solar-powered emergency telephone** on Spring Road
- **2002** – Development of a 10-year **Woodland and Savannah Management Plan** for High Park by Parks and Recreation with input from HPCAC
- **2004** - Opening of **demonstration wildflower garden on the Boulevard Beds** at the edges of the Grenadier parking lot
- **On-going** – developing ways and means of **controlling and calming traffic flow through the Park** to make movement safe for all – pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicular traffic
- **On-going** – looking for further opportunities to **restore and expand the naturalized areas** of the Park.

Over this 10-year period many people have played a part on the HPCAC and in its volunteer programs. A few have been active from the beginning. Some came on board later and continue to serve. Again many others were involved for greater or lesser periods of time and have moved on. **We thank all sincerely for their contributions in helping us to fulfil our mandate.** With their support, High Park is alive and well and in much better health from the point-of-view of restored, sustainable natural areas than it was 10-12 years ago.



HIGH PARK MAP



Oak Savannah Expansion Planting, June 12

By Cara Webster, Restoration Specialist, Urban Forestry Services

The City of Toronto Urban Forestry Dept. manages High Park according to the guidelines set out in the High Park Oak Woodland & Savannah Management Plan.

The area just south-east of the Bloor Street entrance to High Park is dominated by Black oaks with an understory consisting primarily of non-native turf grasses and Canada goldenrod. The High Park restoration crew has initiated work to try to reverse past management practice of turf replacement in the area by connecting the tableland area to the high-quality vegetation on the south-facing slope beside Spring Road. This slope contains a variety of native savannah species including New Jersey tea, Upland willow, Big bluestem, Pennsylvania sedge, Pale-leaved sunflower, Sky-blue aster and Plantain-leaved pussytoes.

The restoration crew has planted native species in four different sites within the area since 2001, experimenting with different methods of planting, site preparation and species selection. Another section is **planned for** planting this spring on **June 12th** with the High Park Volunteer Stewardship Program.



*Planting with VSP, spring 2002
Photo credit: VSP Archives*

This site was partially planted with the VSP in spring 2002 and a fence was erected around the area to prevent trampling or vandalism. The area was also burned in spring 2004 to encourage the native plantings and to prepare the site for further planting. A mix of savannah shrubs, grasses and wildflowers will be planted, consisting only of the determined hardy native species. Future work on the site may include the addition of other species to diversify the site and prescribed burning to maintain the native plant community.



*Prescribed Burn 2004 to prepare area for further planting
Photo credit: City of Toronto*

We will be looking for lots of volunteers to **come out and help plant**. Please check the VSP calendar and bring your own hand trowel if possible.

Monuments, Memorials and Artworks in High Park – Part I

By Ron Allan

There are a number of monuments, memorials and sculptures in High Park. Some you may have passed and wondered about. Others you may not have noticed at all. Many are unidentified.

Why were these particular works of art placed in High Park? Are they appropriate to a public park?

Howard Burial Site/Monument

The Howard burial site/monument is located at the south end of the Park, near Colborne Lodge. When John and Jemima Howard deeded their 165 acre country estate, which they had called High Park, to the City of Toronto in 1873, one of the conditions of the deed was that they would be buried in the Park and that their graves maintained by the City in perpetuity. The City ultimately agreed to this condition and other terms of the contract, including a monetary consideration.

In 1875, the Howards designed and constructed their future tomb and monument near the Lodge, on an attractive site overlooking Grenadier Pond and the Lakeshore. It consists of a cairn or pile of stones to mark Jemima's Scottish background. The cairn is surmounted by a marble pediment at the top of which is a Maltese cross (John was a member of a Masonic lodge and the Maltese cross was a Masonic symbol).

A modest gravestone was later placed in front of the monument.





*Howard Burial Site/Monument
Photo credits: Lisa Kemp*

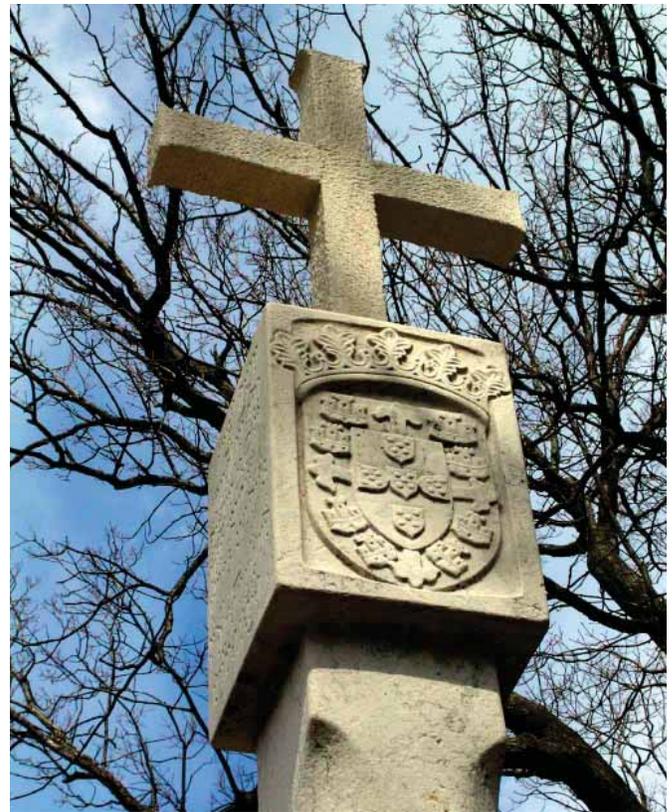
At the same time, John heard that the original fence around St. Paul's Cathedral in London, England was being dismantled and was up for sale. He bought the fencing and had it shipped to Toronto. Unfortunately, the ship carrying the fencing ran aground in the St. Lawrence River and sank. Divers were able to recover part of the fencing and that is the piece that extends across the front of the enclosed burial plot. Sadly, Jemima died of breast cancer in 1877, aged 75 years,

and was buried first. When John died in 1890 at the age of 86, he was buried with her. The City has maintained the Howard burial site with care through the years.

There can be no debate about the appropriateness of this particular monument in High Park.

Portuguese Monument

The Portuguese Monument stands near the centre of the Park just south of the Grenadier Café and Teahouse. It was originally erected in a back area on the north side of the restaurant in 1978 to mark the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Portuguese community in Toronto. When the monument was moved to its present, more visible location about eight years ago, the surrounding terrazzo patio was replaced.



*Portuguese Monument
Photo credit: Lisa Kemp*

It consists of a terrazzo base with compass points surmounted by a granite plinth. The top part of the monument is a granite column on which sits a marble cross. Just below the cross, and beginning to weather somewhat, is a series of lines written by a 16th Century Portuguese poet, Luis Vaz de Camoes. The epic poem, in the original language, celebrates the exploits of legendary Portuguese explorers and adventurers.



Now one might question the appropriateness of this monument today in that it singles out a particular community in a multicultural Toronto and, by the same token, emphasizes a Christian symbol like the cross at the top. In retrospect, the monument might have been better sited in the original core community “Little Portugal” on Dundas Street.

Incidentally, there is an excellent blue and white tile mosaic recognizing the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Portuguese community in Toronto (2003) in the Queen’s Park Subway Station.

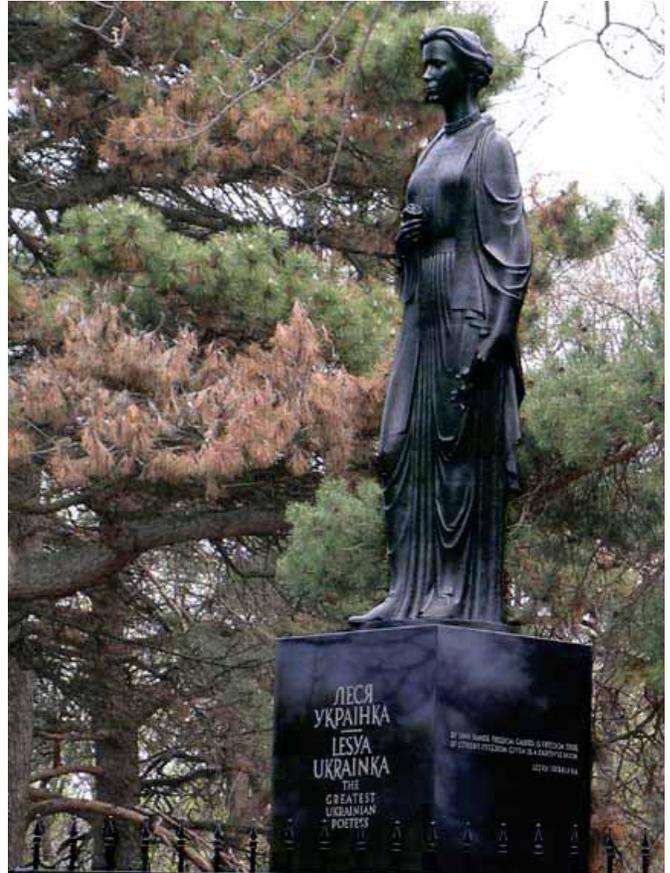
Lesya Ukrainka

This sculpture is located in a prominent spot opposite the Grenadier parking lot on the east side of Colborne Lodge Drive, near the entrances to Dog Hill and the Canadian Stage Dream Site. It was erected in the fall of 1975 (The International Year of the Woman) to commemorate the Ukrainian poet and playwright, Lesya Ukrainka. High Park was chosen “because it was convenient” and because there was (and still is) a large Ukrainian-Canadian Community living in the neighbourhood of High Park.

Lesya Ukrainka was the pen-name of Larysa Petrivna Kosach-Kvitka. She was born in the Ukraine in 1871 at a time when the Ukraine was part of the Russian Empire and began to write poetry in her native tongue at an early age. As she matured, she contributed dramatic prose, articles of literary criticism and social-political essays, again in Ukrainian, and her work began to reflect a demand for human rights and national freedom. Because the Russian Government at the time prohibited publication in the Ukrainian language and also the risk to her personal safety due to the subject matter itself, she published under her pen-name. Always of delicate health, she died of tuberculosis at the young age of 42.

The bronze sculpture is erected on a granite plinth on the front of which, besides her name in both Ukrainian and English, is written the words “The Greatest Ukrainian Poetess”. On the back panel there is some biographical data and the name of the sculptor, Mykailo Cheresniovsky.

Originally, the sculpture stood in the open. However, inner and outer fenced enclosures have since been installed in attempts to prevent unleashed dogs from “paying their respects” to Lesya. There is still some residual odour along the outer fence and it is planned to move the dog-entry path further south.



*Lesya Ukrainka Monument
Photo credit: Lisa Kemp*

In contrast to the Portuguese Monument, which is generic, one could make a case for honouring an early freedom fighter to whom a lot of the local community could relate. (At the time the statue was erected, Ukraine was part of the U.S.S.R. and still not free). Were Lesya alive today, she would certainly have been out in front among the demonstrators in the recent election controversy in the Ukraine.

Part II of this article, which deals with Sculpture Hill as well as other Artwork and Memorials in High Park, will appear in the summer edition of the Newsletter. If you have any comments or questions, don't hesitate to contact editor@highpark.org

