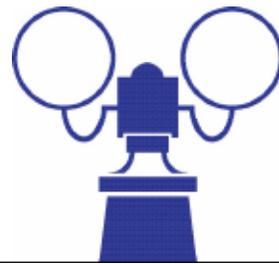


PARA



PALMERSTON AREA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

The Royal Theatre: Grand Lady on College Street

by Fernanda Pisani

If the Royal Theatre on College St. could talk it would regale us with a fascinating and sometimes precarious history of itself and the neighbourhood which it graces. I have been told of how patrons would line up around the block in the Fifties to see blockbusters such as "Ben Hur" and the "Robe." For decades (as of the late Thirties), it was the main source of entertainment in the area. Along with my family, I have been a regular at the Royal, which used to be known as the Pylon. The theatre was renamed the Royal by the McQuillan family when they purchased it in the mid-Nineties. Before the McQuillans bought the cinema, there were those who wanted to rip the theatre down and turn it into a parking lot. Fortunately fate dealt the Royal a favourable hand. Thanks to those with great foresight and an appreciation for heritage buildings, the Royal endures. The theatre's interior and exterior were designated historical in the mid-2000's.

The Pylon was built in 1939 as a state-of-the-art Art Deco theatre. Part of the excitement of the opening of the Pylon was the appearance of British actress Anna Neagle, whose footprints cast in cement were installed in the theatre lobby. Her film, "Victoria the Great" was one of the first features to play at the Pylon. In the Sixties the theatre was owned by the Lester family and served the Italian community. The theatre later became the Golden Dragon which screened Asian films.

As lovely examples of Art Deco architecture and design, I remember a fountain in the lobby featuring a mermaid similar to the mermaids



The Royal Theatre on College Street; poster for Anna Neagle's feature "Victoria the Great" (right)



over the doors at the Eglinton Cinema, also an Art Deco building. The fountain has since disappeared but the telltale signs of it remain.

Royal Theatre building owner Geoff Pickering, along with Dan Peel and Carlos Herrera, owners and operators of the businesses Theatre D Digital and Royal Theatre, had their sights on the Royal as an extension of their successful ventures before the building was put on the real estate market. They were finally able to purchase the theatre in 2006. Dan Peel and Carlos Herrera are experts at using older cinemas to full advantage. Also owners of the Regent theatre on Mount Pleasant Rd., Theatre D Digital use the cinemas during the day as production facilities and as movie theatres in the evenings.

Due to its 1930's design the Royal adapts

itself well for post-production film work in the 21st century. The auditorium is the right size for viewing work on a large screen as editing progresses and the acoustics are excellent. There are four state-of-the-art editing suites. Clients, including local filmmakers such as Bruce MacDonald, Astra Burka, Don McKellar and Sarah

Polley, patronize the Royal due to its location downtown as well as its boutique atmosphere for doing business.

Renovations and upgrading to bring the building back to its past glory are a long-term commitment for the owners. Terrazzo floors have been restored and cleaned, as well as historical paneling on the ceilings, and we will soon see work done to the outside of the building.

Film programming at the Royal is diverse and quite quirky. Documentaries from all over the world as well as commercially produced films are selected by programmer Stacey Donen. It has partnered with many festivals such as CineFranco, the European Union Film Festival, and the new and upcoming Greek Film Festival. The best part of watching films at the Royal is meeting the directors and actors participating in the films. Live concerts at the Royal include the Ukulele Festival and Cuban concerts with Eliades Ochoa and Las d'Aida. We look forward to more evening programming at the Royal, which may include the Italian Song Competition in late summer, as well as regular screenings of "The Room."

Congratulations to Theatre D Digital, and see you all at the shows!

ROYAL THEATRE PHOTOGRAPH BY DON SCOTT

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ABOUT PARA PARA (Palmerston Area Residents' Association)

is a volunteer organization of residents committed to strengthening and preserving the stability, distinctive character and quality of life in the Toronto neighbourhood bounded by Bloor and Bathurst, College and Clinton Streets.



Updates from Mike Layton, City Councillor, Ward 19

The following are a few matters that may be of interest to Palmerston Area residents

2011 Budget

The City's 2011 Budget was passed by City Council on February 24, 2011. Though residents were promised no major cuts, the budget contains cuts to valuable water programs like the high-efficiency washer and toilet rebates and the downspout disconnection program, as well as significant service reductions on bus routes, cuts to recreation programming at Priority Centres, and significant cuts to the library budget, to highlight a few.

This budget will gobble up our reserves and last year's operating surplus and leave behind a structural deficit of approximately \$774 million going into the next budget cycle. What lies ahead is a budgetary tsunami: without an increase in the property tax rate, Council will be forced to consider significant program and service cuts. The budget passed by Council is irresponsible, and that is why I voted against it.

As we move forward into the 2012 budget process, I will be providing opportunities for you to get more information about the budget, and gather your thoughts and opinions.

Proposed Traffic light at Harbord and Clinton

Transportation Services is requesting authority from City Council to install traffic control signals at the intersection of Harbord Street and Clinton Street. The installation of traffic control signals at this location will enhance safety for pedestrians and motorists. This installation will result in the loss of a couple of parking spaces on Harbord Street and one space on Clinton Street. The Staff Report accompanying this request can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/4atv5t8>.

Saturday Office Hours

I am available to meet with residents and community members during office hours every Saturday at the CHIN building, 622 College Street, 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. If you have a municipal matter you need help with, feel free to visit me on Saturdays.

Contacting My Office

If you have any questions or concerns regarding these or any other municipal matters please email me at councillor_layton@toronto.ca or call me at (416) 392-4009 or visit my website www.mikelayton.ca to sign up for my newsletter. Angela Surdi, my Constituency Assistant for ward matters north of College, can be reached at (416) 397-4110 or by email to asurdi2@toronto.ca.

Healey Willan Park Gets Attention

by Rachael MacKenzie

Party in the Park – Sunday, June 12: Mark your calendars for Party in the Park, which will be held at Healey Willan Park (at the corner of Ulster & Euclid) on Sunday, June 12, from 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Last year was a tremendous success and we hope to see all of our neighbours there again – kids or no kids! Party in the Park is a fundraiser with all proceeds supporting improvements to Healey Willan Park and funding for next year's event. Last year, the park received new equipment and a painting facelift. This year, look for additional new equipment and greening initiatives while we continue to fundraise to replace the bigger items in the park.

Planning is just getting underway, but we hope to open the wading pool, have a visit from the fire truck and police horses, face painting, bake sale, music, raffle and barbeque.

Interested in helping? We're looking for raffle prizes, bake sale donations and volunteers for the day. If you would like to help, please contact jennifer.deyell@gmail.com or rachaelmackenzie@rogers.com.

Clean Up/Greening Day – Sunday, May 1 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm.:

We'll be having a Clean Up/Greening Day, to clear away broken toys, debris and do some planting. Bring your work gloves, and enjoy a coffee with your neighbours as we get the park ready for the warmer weather. Given the number of broken toys that will be disposed of, donations of sturdy toys for the sandbox or larger pieces (like play kitchens and cars) would be appreciated.

Cash Donations Welcome: For those interested in making a cash donation, charitable receipts can be issued (go to healywillanpark.wordpress.com for additional information). If you are interested in a lasting gift that would both support the park and commemorate a loved one, the City of Toronto offers a commemorative tree and bench program. See www.toronto.ca/parks/engagement/commemorate.htm.

The Wrong Time and Place



Palmerston Blvd., February 17, 2011: This car ended up upside down in the middle of the street after the driver lost control and hit a nearby tree. It took several firemen and the jaws of life to free him. Luckily, no one else was injured. Isn't it time we talked about strategies for controlling speeding on our streets? Come to hear city officials talk about traffic solutions at PARA's community meeting on April 14.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DON SCOTT

The Revitalization of TDSB School Pools

by Fernanda Pisani

Many of you may have noticed flyers and emails marked, "Save Our Pools," as well as "Make Waves With Us". You may ask what the end results of the campaign have been. I am delighted to inform you that the results have been very good.

The nine school pools that were on probation are now being used by the students and the communities around them. The pools of most interest to PARA residents would be the Harbord Collegiate pool, which was not on probation, the Central Tech and the Kensington School pools. Each pool has its own set of attributes.

The Kensington pool was designed for younger swimmers, has a large shallow end and is handicap accessible, the water a warmer temperature. The CTS pool is 25 yards long within a stand-alone building at Bathurst and Lennox Streets. It has room for lane swims as well as recreational swimming in the shallow and deep ends, and has a diving board. All of the Toronto District School Board pools can be permitted by contacting permits@tdsb.on.ca.

The challenge for TDSB pool advocates was to come up with permit holders that would use the facilities beyond school hours as well creating awareness of the pools availability to the community. In other words a business plan had to be created in order to prove that the pools are community assets.



CTS pool volunteers Troy, Sophia and Susan (left to right), within the mural in progress at the Bathurst and Lennox Street location

The receptive attention of local politicians at the provincial and municipal levels, the TDSB, the Toronto Lands Corporation, and the commitment and enthusiasm of many volunteers are why the pools in the public school system have been given new and improved leases on life. As a result, the Ontario government has helped fund the repairs and upgrading of the pools, and has made a commitment to help keep the pools open for at least 8 years as of 2010. The TLC is the umbrella organization that will oversee the well being of the pools.

At Central Tech, there have been many improvements. New and up-to-date pool infrastructure has made the upkeep of the pool a breeze since new filters and digitized calibrating equipment in the pool area is

much less labour intensive to oversee by the janitors.

The Toronto Swim Club is the main after-school permit holder and encourages new patrons on an ongoing basis. They can be contacted at www.toronto-swimclub.com/.

The PARA news is that thanks to a generous grant from CUPE 4400, there is a community swim program from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm every Saturday afternoon. The community swim is available to lane swimmers as well as recreational swimmers of all ages. A contribution of one dollar per adult and 50 cents per child under 12 is appreciated at the door. There are two lifeguards on duty as well as swimming equipment such as noodles and life jackets.

Volunteers will answer any questions or email us at centraltechpool@gmail.com.

The objective is to improve the pool facilities on an ongoing basis. We are also looking for new sponsors in order to continue with the community swim in the fall of 2011. We encourage suggestions from our patrons.

We are also very proud of our volunteer students Sophia, Troy and Elaine for their good work and especially for the creation of the lovely mural on the wall of the pool entrances. Do join us at the pool, and many thanks to the PARA and HVRA communities for their support.

Signs of the Times



Residents may have noticed new street signs popping up one by one around the neighbourhood. They incorporate a new corporate-looking design with white lettering against a dark blue strip and are slowly



replacing the distinctive pre-amalgamation signs of Etobicoke, North York, East York, York, Scarborough and the old city of Toronto. The familiar Toronto signs consisting of a white background and black lettering with an acorn



on top will soon disappear, but at the moment you can sometimes see both signs on the same street. The new Korea Town BIA sign shows how a neighbourhood or BIA name fits on the top plate.

SIGNAGE PHOTOGRAPHS BY DON SCOTT

DID YOU KNOW?

• PARA has three of the top new restaurants in the city

The April 2011 issue of *Toronto Life* names the year's top ten new restaurants in the city, and three in the PARA area have made the grade: Ici Bistro (538 Manning Ave at Harbord), Woodlot (293 Palmerston Ave at College), and Frank's Kitchen (588 College St).

• You can be fined \$325 for running a red light if a camera catches you

Since 2009, Toronto has had 87 red-light cameras installed at 114 intersections. Two of them are at corners in PARA. One is at College and Bathurst



and the other is at the Bloor and Bathurst intersection. City statistics indicate that the number of angle collisions at the Toronto locations resulting in death, injury or property damage have been reduced by 60 percent since the cameras were installed.

• You can phone 311 as a one-stop number for all non-emergency Toronto City services

The 311 Toronto Contact Centre provides residents, businesses and visitors with one easy-to-remember phone number to reach non-emergency City services, programs and information 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The 311 Toronto central contact phone

number was officially launched to the public in September, 2009. It was followed in February, 2010, with a related online service at www.toronto.ca/311. The website is organized around three areas: Request, Register and Pay. Service requests can include the following: missed garbage, recycling or green bin collection, metal items or appliance pickup, report a damaged sidewalk or road, a pothole, a leaking hydrant or faded road markings, and requests for a solid waste collection calendar. More online services are planned to be added in the future.

• What a "sharrow" pavement sign means

A sharrow is short for "shared lane pavement marking." The markings, consisting of a bicycle and two white chevrons, are



used to indicate where a cyclist should ride in a travel lane and to remind motorists to share the road with cyclists. The signs usually appear where the road is too narrow for car and bicycle to ride side-by-side, at intersections and areas where traffic merges. Sharrows can be seen in the PARA area on the Harbord St bicycle lanes.

Welcome to the Neighbourhood

New business ventures along the commercial streets bordering the PARA neighbourhood are constantly changing. We welcome these new businesses, bringing as they do a greater range of services closer to our homes.

The Italian Canadian Savings and Credit Union, known as IC Savings, is opening a new downtown branch at 639 College St. IC Savings is a relatively new credit union offering a full range of banking services.

Briscola Trattoria is a casual new Italian restaurant just opened

at 501 College St. It's the brainchild of Toronto club and restaurant mavens Charles Khabouth and Toufik Sarwa and replaces the more trendy but short-lived Cinq 01.

Adding a bit of retail variety to College St, a men's clothing store called **The Suit Company** has opened its doors at 617 College St.

Another casual restaurant, replacing the former Plum Tomato at the corner of Markham and Bloor, is **Axis Gastropub**. It's a sister resto to the Axis Gallery and Grill in the Junction.

Further east along Bloor St, the

Hero Certified Burgers chain is launching a new outlet in the Honest Ed's building at the corner of Bathurst and Bloor.

Across the street, Qi Natural Foods has opened a 4,000 square-foot grocery store called **Herbs & Nutrition** in the old Payless Shoe space at 572 Bloor St.

Krispy Kreme, the American doughnut chain, has opened a modest Doughnut Café at 215 Harbord St just east of Bathurst and across from Central Tech. It's the only location downtown and one of four outlets in Canada.

The **Monarch Tavern**, the historic tavern at 12 Clinton St,

a block south of College, is under new ownership. Filmmaker Evan Georgiades and his family bought the building at the end of December and are in the midst of renovations. Downstairs, Lounge 88 will become a daytime café and lunch spot and a cabaret and live jazz and blues venue in the evening. The restaurant will stick to simple comfort food, Georgiades told *Eye Weekly*, including a "Sunday Gravy" meal. The tradition of bringing in outside food will continue. "It's rare that there's a place where people can do that," he said. "You have to accept it and respect it."

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DON SCOTT

NEWSLETTER MISSION

- We want to inform, educate and support our community on local issues
- Help develop a sense of belonging and enjoyment in a safe community
- Promote community betterment through active participation of residents
- Support the growth of PARA membership

PARA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Allan Reynolds (Chair); Linda Lapointe (College St. Committee); Paul Unterman (Treasurer & Membership Coordinator); Doug Lowry (Secretary); Emerich Kaspar (Zoning & Bylaws); Donald Scott (Communications, Newsletter Coordinator); Ed Jackson (Communications, Website Coordinator); Fernanda Pisani (Communications, Newsletter Design); Graham Lewis (Greenspace & Beautification); Rachael MacKenzie (Healey Willan Park Project); James Choy (Planet Palmerston). **For full versions of the newsletter content and additional information on PARA, visit our website at www.palmerstonara.org. Email us at info@palmerstonara.org.**