



Spring 2011 (March, April, May)

Reflecting Niagara Escarpment lifestyles & values

Escarpment Views

Special Garden Issue

Perfect Private Gardens:

Ruth Young's Garden for All Seasons

Tulip Garden in Glen Williams

Ferns of the Niagara Escarpment

Maple Syrup Making – Pioneer-Style ♦ Plus Misty Ingraham's Love of Liquid Gold

Seana McKenna Tackles Richard III ♦ Honouring Barbara Halsall

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So be prepared to turn the pages of this magazine and get lost in a variety of adventures all along the Niagara Escarpment. Like Alice down the rabbit hole, you might get lost in Wonderland.

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Escarpment Views



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Escarpment Views

Spring 2011 (March-May)

COVER: YOUNG'S HOUSE & GARDEN
PHOTO BY MIKE DAVIS



6 Editor's View of Signs of Growth in Spring

7 Views From Our Readers

8 Events Along the Rock

10 Worth the Visit: Lakeshore Living Outdoor Elements

11 Green Feathers: Rock-loving Ferns of the Niagara Escarpment

by Gary Hutton

The Niagara Escarpment has more kinds of ferns than any single place in Canada...

14 Ruth Young's Garden for All Seasons

by Gloria Hildebrandt

Ruth Young has a one-and-one-third-acre garden near the Niagara Escarpment...

18 Featured View: Spring tulips in a private garden, Glen Williams

by Mike Davis

20 Sap to Sugar Festivals

by Trudi Down

There are many maple festivals close to the Niagara Escarpment...

30 Misty's View of Maple Syrup

by Misty Ingraham

31 Seana's View of Playing Richard III

by Seana McKenna

32 Book Views

by Catherine Randall & Gloria Hildebrandt

34 Foresight

35 Coming Events

36 Map of Where to Get Copies of *Escarpment Views* Along the Niagara Escarpment

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Editor's View of

SIGNS OF GROWTH IN SPRING



Most of the Niagara Escarpment has had a fair bit of snow this winter, so it may take a while for the spring melt to clear it all away. I have seen snow in some dark, shady pockets of forest as late as May!

But March starts to show signs of spring. Despite cold temperatures and hard-packed snow trails, the sun is strong in a blue sky where crows fly and call. If you stand near a big maple tree on a sunny day, you may hear a dripping, tapping sound. Sap is rising and the excess is falling to the ground, unless a cold snap freezes it into delicious sapcicles. Maple syrup festivals will be in full swing this spring, and writer Trudi Down explores a couple of them starting on page 20.

It will likely be April before we start to see lovely bare earth. Eager gardeners like my father will be planting cool-weather vegetables like radishes, peas and lettuce, as soon as they can crumble the soil. Flower lovers will look for forsythia, daffodils, tulips and all the other wonderful bulbs to burst forth in glory. This issue is our annual gardening special, with a gorgeous centre spread to inspire you, and an in-depth feature on an amazing and award-winning Escarpment-area flower garden to give you ideas. Begin touring this enchanting garden on page 14.

If you prefer plant life wild, free and perhaps difficult to find, Gary Hutton's thorough look at the ferns of the Niagara Escarpment, from page 11, will introduce you to a surprising variety.

This issue also sees the return of our special theatre columnist Seana McKenna. I know of no other publication that has a working actor as a contributor, let alone one as articulate, thoughtful and as talented as Seana, award-winning and internationally known. I read somewhere that someone called her Canada's Meryl Streep. She reminds me more of Helen Mirren. This season at Stratford Shakespeare Festival, Seana's husband Miles Potter directs *Richard III*, in which she takes on the role of Richard. The king. A male. Read her approach to this latest challenge of a lifetime on page 31. You and I, all of us in the *Escarpment Views* community, are extremely fortunate to be able to read her thoughts. And if you can get a ticket to the show, you'll be witnessing history.

There's even more to enjoy in this issue, our biggest yet. Like all of nature in spring, we're growing! And as all the birds and animals show themselves again, please try to protect them.

Gloria

Gloria

editor@EscarpmentViews.ca

Views From Our Readers

Sponsored by EBC

Landowners save \$1,831,000

This is the first of a series of articles by Bob Barnett on recent developments in land conservation.

Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy (EBC) just completed its 100th nature reserve, now protecting 8,107 acres. EBC's mission is to create nature reserves in the area of the Niagara Escarpment (including the Huron Shore, Saugeen watershed and on Manitoulin) and educate people about the Escarpment.

Over the past 13 years, EBC has given out charitable income tax receipts which have saved property owners \$1,831,000. Eight brochures have been created to complement EBC's website and explain how landowners can start saving money. Some ideas require applications to government ministries, the Ontario Forestry Association or partnerships with conservation groups. EBC's objective is to introduce the ideas, the programs and the groups so you can start saving.

Based on the work of the Greenway Initiative of farmers, hunters and environmentalists, whose goal is to expand and enhance forested areas, the EBC is currently approaching landowners in selected parts of Grey and Bruce Counties to make them aware of the dozen most accessible ways to save property taxes, get grants and save income taxes.

Using a grant under the EcoAction program, the EBC is also working to help connect landowners with financial incentives available for conserving their land in some way.

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In your summer 2010 *Escarpment Views*, in the "Beyond the Garden Gate" section, I was fascinated by the backyard garden photos. This gave me the incentive to redo my very plain layout. After two weeks of effort my friend and I removed sod, picked and added fieldstones and came up with a design with the swing as the centrepiece. I'm sending a photo of the completed results and am very pleased with the results. I truly enjoyed your magazine while in the Toronto, Kitchener area. Where can I get this magazine in the eastern Ontario area (Cornwall)?

Diane Iwachniuk, Cornwall

Editor's note: If you don't live close to the Niagara Escarpment, the best way to get Escarpment Views is by subscribing. Send a cheque for \$22 to Escarpment Views, 50 Ann St., Georgetown ON L7G 2V2.

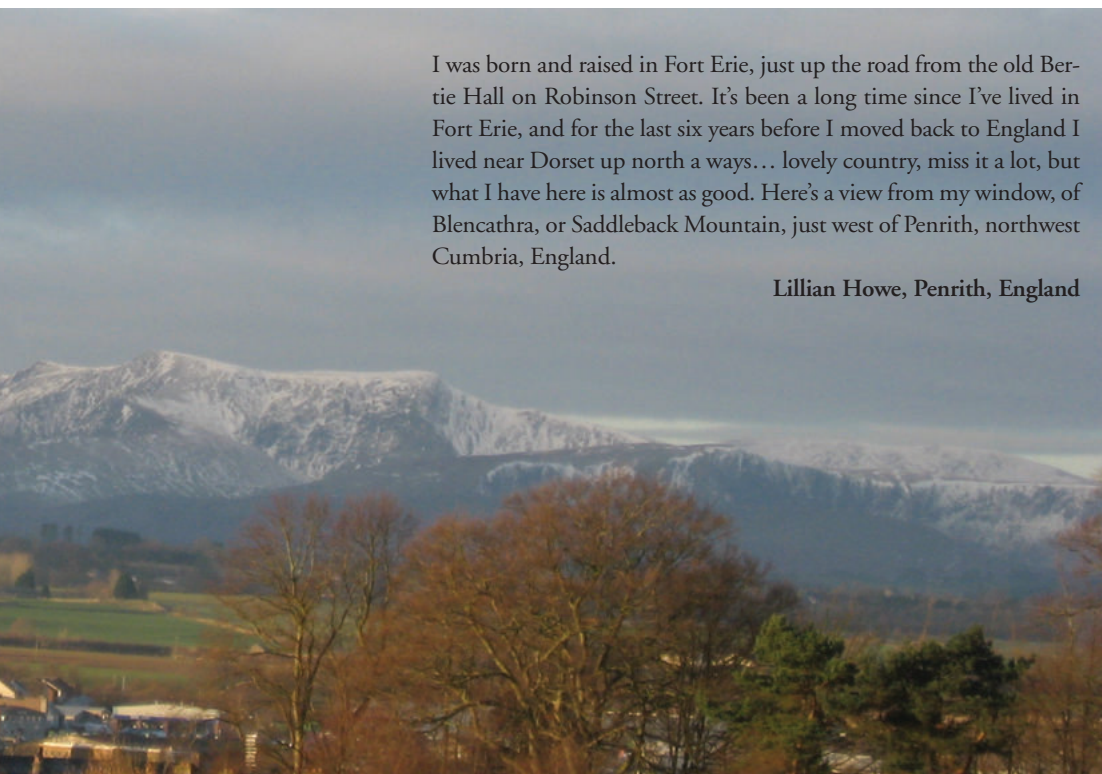
Congratulations!!! Is it really *Escarpment Views'* third Anniversary? Wow, good for you. It is a very informative and good magazine, especially for all of us who live in Escarpment Country. To think that I had the honour of being in your Premier

issue, thanks again for that. You are also doing a great job with your blog. I am reading it faithfully. I think I lapsed my subscription and would like to start again.

Brigitte Schreyer, Burlington

I was born and raised in Fort Erie, just up the road from the old Bertie Hall on Robinson Street. It's been a long time since I've lived in Fort Erie, and for the last six years before I moved back to England I lived near Dorset up north a ways... lovely country, miss it a lot, but what I have here is almost as good. Here's a view from my window, of Blencathra, or Saddleback Mountain, just west of Penrith, northwest Cumbria, England.

Lillian Howe, Penrith, England



Events Along the Rock

Photos by Mike Davis



Amy Fennell, a raptor expert at Mountsberg Conservation Area, Conservation Halton, brought several birds to the Nov. 9 meeting of the Halton/North Peel Naturalist Club. Here she introduces Chomper, a Great Horned Owl.



The annual house tour to benefit the United Way of Georgetown featured fine houses in the downtown area, on Nov. 19.



Winter yoga was one of many outdoor activities at Alton Mill's Fire & Ice festival, Jan. 22.



On Jan. 29 & 30, visitors to the Guelph Organic Conference Expo crowded round exhibitors like Solar G, a provider of solar and wind systems.



Trudi Down was a nominee for the Non-Fiction Short Article award by Arts Hamilton on Nov. 15 for "Halton's Local Fresh Food," published in *Escarpment Views* Spring 2008.



Five new businesses in Thornbury celebrated their grand openings on Nov. 20. The Cheese Gallery, above, offered beverages and gourmet snacks to crowds of visitors, including Ellen Anderson, mayor of The Blue Mountains. Evolution for Men, Gaia, Mantra Yoga Studio and Wonderactive Art Shop are the other new enterprises.



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Nick & Anna Di Carlo stand behind their unique, high-end products for outdoor living, such as these wood-burning ovens.



Maidenhair Spleenwort is a beautiful, dainty, 10-cm fern with black stems which fan out in dense clusters. It can be found along the entire Escarpment in crevices, on cliffs and boulders.

Green Feathers: Rock-loving Ferns of the Niagara Escarpment

Words & Photos by Gary Hutton

Ferns are part of the amazing mosaic of plant life that covers Ontario's Niagara Escarpment. Ferns soften the rocky forest floor and fuse the colours of the hard landscape to the flowers, shrubs and trees to create a seamless natural portrait. Their graceful leaves or fronds can be likened to intricately arranged bird feathers. These rock-loving green feathers dot the Escarpment floor in a whimsical array of shapes and forms that beguile the imagination.

The Niagara Escarpment has more kinds of ferns than any single place in Canada, a total of 48 species. Ferns thrive on the calcium-rich land that dolomite and limestone create. Even the pickiest ferns can find the habitats they need. From the mineral-rich soils above and below the Escarpment to the arid fissures of the weather-beaten cliffs, the Escarpment supports a vast diversity of thriving colonies of delicate ferns. Several species are not found anywhere else in Ontario.

Ferns also seem to share an affinity with waterfalls which add to their mystique and beauty. Chasing the abundant waterfalls of the Niagara Escarpment yields some excellent views of ferns that dance on the moss-covered rocks associated with watery cascades. Some of the ferns are small and less prominent like Maidenhair Spleenwort and Smooth Cliff-brake while others are more noticeable and showy such as Northern Holly and Marginal Wood Fern.

Fern Anatomy

Ferns are vascular plants with leaves (fronds), stems (axis) and fully developed roots. The leaves are often subdivided into leaflets (pinnae) and subleaflets (pinnules). The number of leaf divisions along with size and shape are key features in fern identification.

This ancient group of non-flowering plants reproduces by way of spores located on fertile fronds or in spore cases under the leaves. The shape, quantity and location of

Green Feathers: Rock-loving Ferns of the Niagara Escarpment

Inglis Falls Conservation Area near Owen Sound is a great spot to look for ferns in late May to early June.





The 90-cm Bracken Fern has fronds that form a broad triangle divided into three parts. This fern prefers poor soils and can often be seen along Escarpment country roads.



Walking Fern, about 22 cm long, has a cluster of spear-shaped fronds that straddle large moss-covered boulders.



Hart's Tongue Fern, 60 cm high, has strap-shaped leaves with oblong spore cases under the fronds.



The spore cases of the Northern Holly Fern are evenly spaced in two rows under the pinnae.

the spore cases also help distinguish individual species.

Another unique feature of ferns is the way the leaves are rolled up before they unfurl in the spring. These tightly curled structures, called fiddleheads, look like the scrolled end of a violin. They are also called crosiers because of their resemblance to a bishop's crook. Similar to a butterfly emerging from its cocoon, the marvellous unfolding of ferns is known as circinate vernation. Every part of the frond is present in the bud including spore dots, pinnae and pinnules. When the fern starts to grow, it stretches up and leans backwards in an effort to become bigger. First the main stem loosens its coil, then the leaflets, which are at right angles to the stem, begin to unfold. This is followed by the sub-leaflets that loosen and seem to stretch and look at the world they have just entered.

Fiddleheads vary in appearance from species to species.

Continued on page 24

A large, leafy tree with dark branches stands in a lush green garden. In the background, a pond is visible, surrounded by more trees and foliage. The scene is vibrant and green, suggesting a healthy, well-maintained garden.

Ruth Young's Garden for All Seasons

By Gloria Hildebrandt Photos by Mike Davis & Neil Young

Ruth Young has a one-and-one-third acre garden near the Niagara Escarpment between Acton and Georgetown. Although she and her husband Neil own and operate Young's Pharmacy & Homecare in Georgetown, she does all the garden work herself, without professional help. "I garden whenever I can," Ruth says, "whenever I'm not at work." She adds that Neil sometimes mows the lawns, and they hired a tree-cutting company to take out a large tree that fell down. Otherwise, this is very much Ruth's garden.



The view from Ruth and Neil Young's house is onto their natural pond. The heron sculpture is meant just to add beauty, not to protect the goldfish. "I love seeing a heron land at the pond," says Ruth. PHOTO BY MIKE DAVIS.



The Youngs' log house has a wide front verandah to enjoy the hosta bed in front and the natural pond beyond. PHOTO BY MIKE DAVIS

The garden has been significantly transformed from what it was when the Youngs moved here 14 years ago. Ruth remembers that there were some boxwoods at the front door, a couple of peonies, huge yews at the side of the house, and junipers and weigela decorating the pool area. "And a huge black walnut in front of the house," she adds.

Ruth is fortunate in that the

soil, while rocky, is predominantly good loam, so she didn't have to do much. "I still add compost, manure and lots of mulch on top," she says. Yet at first, Ruth wasn't keen on moving to the country away from her house and garden in Toronto. Neil got her to change her mind when she saw this house and property.

"All that open space to create a garden," she remembers. "And the fact that I could look out

the window and not see another brick wall."

Structure and Colour

The garden wraps around the house and extends to the back fence. Grass lawns provide open space and wide paths through arbours. Flowering plants climb the posts and shrubs add height. Wooden obelisks and garden sculpture punctuate the beds, adding drama when plants are



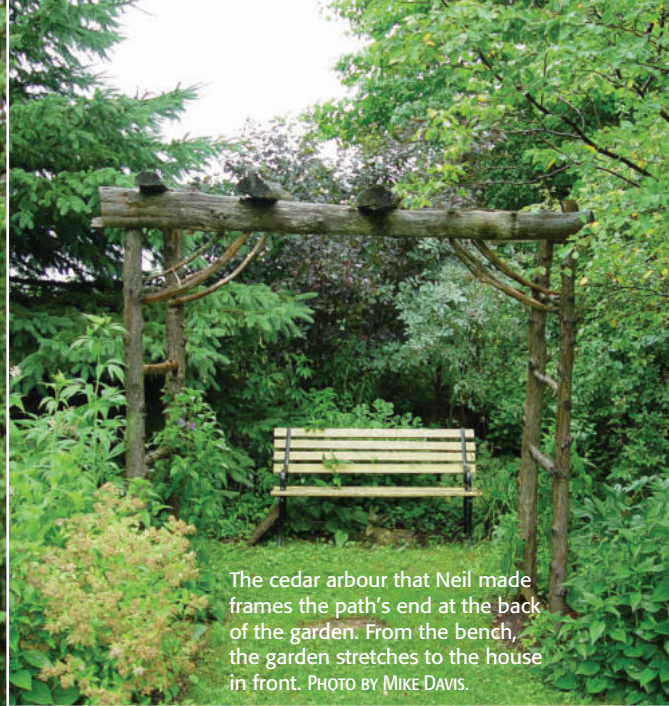
A side view of the front of the house shows the troublesome slope now converted to an easier-to-maintain hosta bed. PHOTO BY MIKE DAVIS.



Ruth's garden uses obelisks and fencing to frame tall plants like delphiniums, foxgloves, roses and grasses. PHOTO BY NEIL YOUNG.



Mist rises from the large garden at the side of the house. Plantings and structures invite visitors to explore. PHOTO BY NEIL YOUNG.



The cedar arbour that Neil made frames the path's end at the back of the garden. From the bench, the garden stretches to the house in front. PHOTO BY MIKE DAVIS.

Ideas from Ruth's Garden

- ◆ Repeat structures to create a theme and unify separate garden beds.
- ◆ Consider contrasting and complementary colours when choosing plants.
- ◆ Change a slope that's difficult to mow into a garden bed.
- ◆ Provide seating throughout so people can linger within the garden.
- ◆ Protect yourself against mosquitoes, try to build resistance to bites, but get tough!



tall, and beauty when snow is on the ground.

Ruth is conscious of repeating structure and colour throughout the large space to create a theme and unity among the separate beds. She is also interested in contrasting and complementary colours among plants. She points out a red Japanese maple planted behind a light green bush with red stems, with the name Tiger Eyes Cutleaf Staghorn Sumac. Even the hen and chicks below reveal green and red stems.

Ruth has been gardening for about 30 years, ever since she was in her first house. The garden was the size of a "postage stamp," she says. She learned to garden from watching her mother, and she says she has been influenced by some great gardening speakers and designers like Stephanie Morris and Toronto gardener Marion Jarvie.

"But really," she explains, "after joining the horticultural society in Acton, I got to listen to great speakers, exchange ideas and information with experienced gardeners. I also dug into all sorts of gardening journals and magazines."

It was her mother who solved a problem in the garden. She suggested that Ruth plant the steep slope close to the front of the

Continued on page 26



Spring tulips in a private garden, Glen Williams
By Mike Davis



Maple syrup festivals signal the end of winter and the beginning of spring. Here, Mountsberg Conservation Area near Campbellville holds its Mapletowne maple syrup festival and people are heading for the Sugar Shack to see maple sap being boiled into syrup.

Sap to Sugar



"But I must tell you now of our sugar-making, in which I take rather an active part. Our experiment was on a very limited scale, having but one kettle, besides two iron tripods; but it was sufficient to initiate us in the art and mystery of boiling the sap into molasses, and finally the molasses down into sugar." – Catharine Parr Trail, The Backwoods of Canada, 1833

Festivals

by Trudi Down Photos by Mike Davis

Today, the pioneer experience that Catharine Parr Trail wrote about, can be witnessed by visiting living museums where costumed volunteers demonstrate the many tasks that were needed for daily living and surviving, including the making of maple syrup. There are many maple festivals close to the Niagara Escarpment, and there may be one at a conservation area or rural museum

near you. Mountsberg Conservation Area near Campbellville and Westfield Heritage Village near Rockton are two locations for annual maple syrup festivals that provide an excellent outdoor adventure for the whole family.



Visitors on the Sugar Bush Trail at Mountsberg check to see sap dripping into a maple bucket.



Huge iron cauldrons suspended over a constantly hot fire, shown here at Mountsberg, was a pioneer method of boiling off the sap.





Dressed as a Jesuit priest of the 19th century, Rob Winner of Westfield Heritage Village shares his knowledge of the period.

At Westfield Heritage Village, a costumed interpreter shows how settlers grated blocks of maple sugar to use as a sweetener throughout the year.

Percheron horses take visitors for a wagon ride through the forest at Mountsberg. Jane, on the left, and Sally were in foal at the time of this photograph, and gave birth to healthy babies some weeks later.



“Mapletowne,” as the Mountsberg festival is called, is crowded on a sunny, warm spring day in March. Weather is an important factor in the making of maple syrup. Too cold, and the sap won’t run; too hot and the trees bud, making the sap bitter. Sap runs best during warm, sunny days (+5°C) followed by cold nights (-5°C).

Costumed volunteers watch the water being boiled off sap that bubbles in huge iron cauldrons hanging over blazing fires. Part of their job is to ensure the fires underneath are kept burning constantly. They pose good-naturedly for photos and expertly answer all questions.

Pioneer Methods

During early spring, pressure inside the tree forces sap up from the roots so that it can nourish the new leaf buds. Early pioneers drilled a hole into the tree and inserted a notched twig (spile), forming the “tap” from which the sap flows. The dripping sap was collected in hand-made wooden buckets hung underneath the spile hole. The clear liquid, known as sweet water (because it really does taste sweet) has to be collected every day. This might be done in buckets slung from a yoke placed over the shoulders of the farmer and the sturdiest larger children. However, if the sugar bush area was large, the farmer would hitch horses to a wagon loaded with wooden barrels into which the sap would be poured. Then the boiling would begin. Sap collected from a large stand of maple trees would be boiled in a clearing directly adjacent to the bush. If the bush was small, the farmer was more likely to transport the sap closer to the homestead where it was easier for family members to tend the fires.

Mountsberg’s meandering Sugar Bush Trail is a wonderful adventure. Be sure to take the time to read the short information placards

Continued on page 28



A costumed interpreter checks the iron cauldrons of sap hung from large tripods in Westfield Heritage Village.



Sensitive Fern, about 45 cm in size, produces triangular, unfurl-like leaves that are light green in colour. These ferns prefer the damp habitat of swamps, streams and bogs.



Polypody Fern, sized 25 cm, is also called Rock Cap Fern due to its preference for cliff edges where it thrives in harsh conditions.

Green Feathers: Rock-loving Ferns of the Niagara Escarpment

Continued from page 13

The crosier of the Bracken Fern, found almost everywhere on the Escarpment, develops three claws that look like the talons of an eagle. So intricate is the action of these multiple spirals that it is very impressive to watch.

Where to Find Ferns

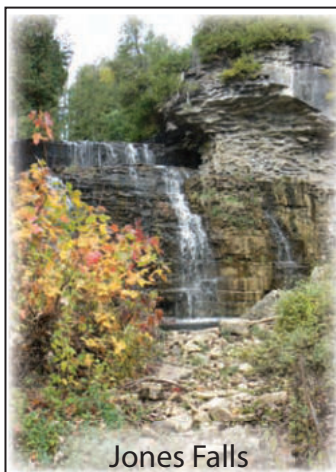
Ferns can be found almost everywhere on the Niagara Escarp-

ment which is well endowed with shade, moisture and rocky outcrops. Damp crevices reveal small delicate ferns such as Green Spleenwort and Slender Cliffbrake. Large boulders covered with moss are clad with strings of Polypody Ferns. You may also see the less common Walking Fern with single spear-shaped fronds with tips that sprout new baby ferns. Escarpment forests are often blanketed with ferns such as

Marginal Shield, Evergreen Wood and the Bulbet Fern. This fern produces little buttons or bulbets which fall to the ground and grow new ferns. Even the most weathered part of Escarpment cliffs include unique ferns like the drought resistant Smooth and Purple Stemmed Cliffbrake.

One of my most pleasurable fern hunting experiences took place along the Escarpment in the Owen Sound area. Anyone into

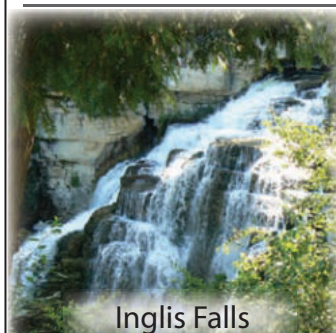
plant hunting knows the thrill of finding a new or uncommon species that you venture out to find, comparable to finding a gold coin on a beach. The Hart's Tongue Fern is one of the rarest ferns in North America but somewhat abundant in selected Escarpment locations of Grey and Bruce Counties in Ontario. Following in the footsteps of several famous naturalists who undertook special expeditions to find this glossy



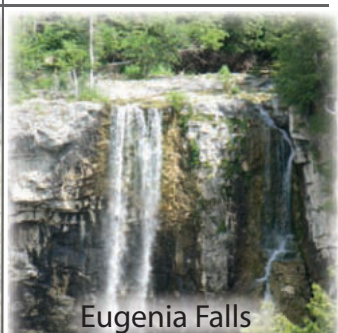
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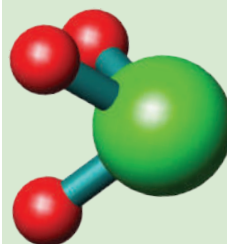


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The eight-cm Green Spleenwort is a small delicate fern with green stems, that prefers cool damp crevices.

fern with strap-like leaves, I began my fern quest.

With my wife and dog along for the adventure, we began our search for this renowned green feather. A short drive out of Owen Sound to Mount Kemble led us to a remote part of the Bruce Trail known as the Nelson Maher Side Trail. The trail was named after the 'Fern Guy' of the Bruce Peninsula. The late Nelson Maher was a local expert in ferns who opened the door to green feathers to hundreds of budding

nature enthusiasts. We hopped out of the car at this nondescript natural area where even the trail was a bit difficult to find, but there were ferns everywhere.

The first fern we encountered was a new one for us. The one-metre tall, robust Male Fern was ubiquitous here but rare in most of eastern North America. A few minutes later we had our "ferntastic" botanical moment! Patches of Hart's Tongue Ferns were everywhere, in dolostone crevices, on moss-covered rocks and in old

stumps. The plants seemed to appear at every turn or hump along the trail. Patches of Northern Maidenhair, Christmas, Royal, Marsh and Sensitive Ferns could also be seen nearby. A most memorable fern hunting experience.

Fern Conservation

Ferns provide a beautiful backdrop for things natural and are part of the incredible biological diversity of the Niagara Escarp-

ment. If we want to conserve our wild green feathers we must continue to protect the Escarpment's special landscape as well as educate people about its significance. Hunting for and learning about ferns is a great pastime that supports this effort. **EV**

Gary Hutton is the author of Halton Hikes and the former director of communications for Conservation Halton.

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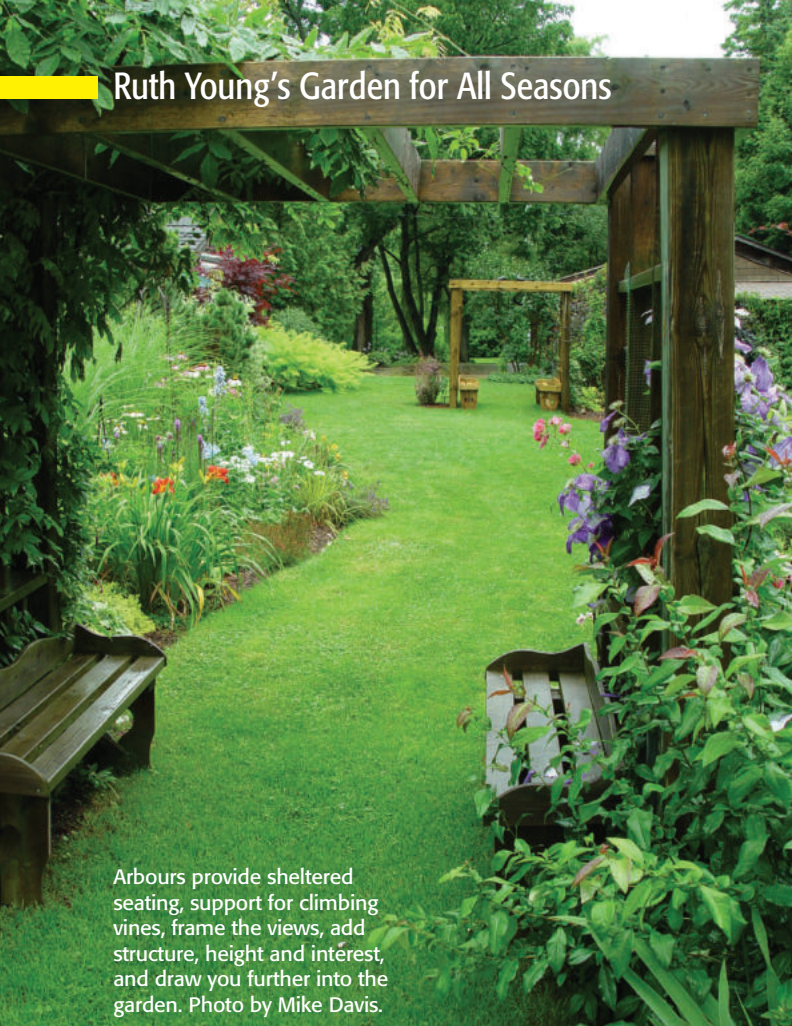
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Ruth Young's Garden for All Seasons



Arbours provide sheltered seating, support for climbing vines, frame the views, add structure, height and interest, and draw you further into the garden. Photo by Mike Davis.



Ruth's garden is award-winning. Proof is displayed modestly yet proudly at the side of the house near a shy clematis. PHOTO BY MIKE DAVIS.

Continued from page 17

house in order to eliminate mowing the lawn there. Ruth used the idea and now that area is her hosta garden.

Neil has also left his creative mark. He made the lovely, rustic arbour at the back of the garden out of cedar from trees that had to be cut down.

All-Season Interest

Ruth aims for year-round interest

through all seasons. This is apparent from lush evergreen plantings that screen the pool area from the family room's large window, which would give a beautiful vista when heavy with snow. For the other seasons, Ruth chooses a variety of perennials that will give continuous bloom.

"If you have to have them all, like I do," she confides, "then you will find you will have plants that bloom at all those times." Then she shares something surprising.

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Peonies after a light rain. PHOTO BY NEIL YOUNG.

"But actually, I hate when there is too much bloom. It's too much. I like the balance of green. I love green foliage. But I love burgundy foliage too. And charreuse. So foliage and the form of plant material is very important. Structure is too, in shrubs and trees. I have to have grasses as well, for summer, fall and winter interest. And of course hardscape, like arbours, obelisks, statues, urns and pots, is great because it never dies! We leave

the deck furniture out to collect snow. We have a metal and glass table that looks nice and we can measure how much snow we've had."

Country gardeners, especially near wetlands, can have problems with blackflies and mosquitoes. With the large pond in the front yard, aren't they plagued by insects?

"I think there are more mosquitoes in the cedars or the shrubs in the shade along the wooded

area," counters Ruth. How does she deal with them?

"Tough it out. Build a resistance to those bites. Really, maybe wear long sleeves and get into those buggy areas before the bugs."

Spring, especially May, is Ruth's favourite season. "Everything comes to life after the long winter," she says. "What a miracle! I just love those bulbs, spring blossoms, crabapple, daphnes,

peonies and lilacs."

Everyone always points out that no garden is ever fixed and final, but is always changing. Ruth can live with that.

"I'm trying to think of the garden more like a three-dimensional painting. I hope someday I'll achieve that balance of proportion, repetition, structure and form. I'm always hoping to make it better. I don't think I'll ever be finished but that's gardening." **EV**



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Sap to Sugar Festivals

Continued from page 23

scattered along the path, for they contain a wealth of facts and statistics.

Sap Run

Brenna Bartley, coordinator of education programs at Mountsberg, says the conservation area's

sugar bush has about 400 taps. (For comparison, a large commercial sugar bush will have 20,000 taps.) The sap runs for about five weeks. "When the frogs start to sing, that indicates the end of the run," she says. Hence, the last collection of sap is called "the frog run."

The lineup for pancakes is



Helpers in Mountsberg's Candy Cabin turn syrup into maple sugar for visitors to sample.

- ♦ There are seven species of maples trees in North America; however, sap for maple sugar and syrup is collected only from the Sugar Maple and the Black Maple.
- ♦ How do you know if the sugar bush is healthy? Look for the Maiden-hair Ferns.
- ♦ The spile hole must be inserted 2.5 to three inches deep into the tree to reach the sapwood layer.
- ♦ A tree must have a diameter of 10 inches to support one bucket; another bucket may be added for each additional five inches.
- ♦ The Northern Saw-whet Owl, the smallest Canadian owl, frequents sugar bushes and is known as the "sugar bird."
- ♦ One tree produces about 50 litres (11 gallons) of sap during the run; it takes 40 buckets of sap to make one bucket of syrup.
- ♦ The syrup has to contain 67% sugar to be called "maple syrup."



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long but the wait is well worth it. What could be better than pancakes and sausages doused in maple syrup and eaten at a picnic table surrounded by woods on a beautiful spring morning!

At the Sweet Taste of Spring Maple Syrup Festival at Westfield Heritage Village, re-enactor Bill stands next to a cleared area con-

baked over the open fire, visitors are invited to dip them in maple syrup before popping them into their mouths. Mmmmm.

Canadian and Delicious

Both Mountsberg and Westfield make a limited amount of maple syrup for tasting but not for sale. Neither has the number of trees



Outside of Mountsberg's Pancake House, maple buckets show the amazing amount of sap needed to make maple syrup: it takes 40 litres of sap to make one litre of syrup!

taining three tripods, each holding an iron kettle. Dressed in outdoor pioneer attire representative of the 1800s, Bill explains what's happening.

The first kettle is the largest and holds about 25 gallons of sap. The water is boiled off over a period of about 10 hours and the resulting liquid is transferred to the second smaller kettle. After another eight hours of boiling, the mixture turns to maple syrup. Pioneers didn't keep much of the syrup, Bill notes, because there were no preservatives or refrigerators. What the pioneers really wanted was sugar. Another six to eight hours of boiling in kettle number three, produced maple butter. The final fourth boil, lasting about eight hours, would result in the desired sugar consistency. All during his talk, Bill is busy adding wood to the fires, to keep them flaming under the kettles.

At D'Aubigny Inn a volunteer is making biscuits. After they are

needed for a large commercial operation, nor do they have the resources to ensure the product would pass health and safety requirements. All maple products offered for sale in the on-site stores are from Ontario producers.

Rob Winner, program officer at Westfield, says the Village taps about 150 trees each season. The festival attracted over 3,500 visitors in 2010. "It's a very Canadian event," he says. "I've noticed that more new Canadians are coming to experience the festival."

Westfield Heritage Village holds its Maple Syrup Festival on Sundays in March and on selected days during March Break. The 472-hectare Mountsberg Conservation Area's maple syrup festival takes place during March and April. **EV**

Trudi Down is a Hamilton freelance writer and editor specializing in corporate communications materials.

Some Sources for Pure Maple Syrup

- ◆ Downtown Georgetown Farmers' Market, Georgetown
- ◆ Dutchman's Gold, Carlisle
- ◆ Foodstuffs, Georgetown
- ◆ Hamilton Farmers' Market, Hamilton
- ◆ Heatherlea Farm Market, Caledon
- ◆ Ottawa Street Farmers' Market, Hamilton
- ◆ White Meadows Farms, Pelham

Maple Syrup Festivals

- ◆ Mapletowne, **Mountsberg Conservation Area**
Feb. 26-April 3 weekends & March 14-18 conservationhalton.ca
- ◆ Sugar Bush Adventure, **White Meadows Farms**
Feb. 12-April 3 & March 14-18 whitemeadowsfarms.com
- ◆ Maple Syrup Festival at Westfield, **Westfield Heritage Village**
March Sundays & March 16 & 17 westfieldheritage.ca
- ◆ The Old-Tyme Maple Syrup Festival,
Saugeen Bluffs Conservation Area Bruce Co. Rd. #3, March 26 & 27
saugreenconservation.com/maplesyrup.php

Let us know your favourite maple syrup festival or other good places to buy maple syrup! Email editor@EscarpmentViews.ca.

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Misty's View of MAPLE SYRUP

Just recently, I was in front of grade 8 students and asked them what it means to be Canadian. Their feedback indicated that our identity as Canadians is closely tied to many quirky things, like our universal use of the expression "eh?," our

love of hockey and our knowledge and use of maple syrup. Bigger concepts included our love of freedom, diversity, and good health care. I was impressed by their consensus and accuracy!

But as a foodie at heart, I latched onto their love of maple syrup. **This liquid that drips from our mighty maples is a national treasure.** Even middle school students identify it as a unique ingredient that defines our identity. My French brother-in-law, however, sees it as the perfect gift to bring back to France after his tri-annual trips to Canada. That is a compliment, if you really know any French people.

When you think about it, maple syrup has been the reason for many culinary creations over the years. Can any Canadian imagine a

pancake without it? Many of us don't know what we love more, the fluffy buttermilk pancake or the syrup that cascades with poetry down the sides of a stack of hot-off-the-griddle wonders! In France, the crepe, a thinner version of our pancake, is a wrap for Swiss cheese and ham, or a sponge for Grand Marnier and butter, both wonderful dishes that are served at lunch or dinner, but are still not nearly a maple syrup experience.



In our past culinary history, **maple syrup has been a star at breakfast**, but never made many appearances after noon. Awhile ago, however, Canadian chefs began to realise that their artistry could be more recognised by elevating indigenous ingredients and incorporating them into high-level culinary preparations.

Thus the lowly fiddlehead, bison, caribou, and venison meat walked onto the Canadian culinary stage. It was not long afterwards that

maple syrup became the new savoury sugar in the best kitchens on the Escarpment.

Imagine this! Maple-cured salmon, a totally Canadian-inspired revision of the classic Gravlax that replaces the typical sugar and salt curing with a subtle hint of maple.

Other chefs have seen how painting capon, chicken, Cornish game hens, and quails with maple syrup towards the final minutes of roasting can create a delicious new basting ingredient. More than that, how about maple-pecan glazed salmon, salmon marinated in maple syrup and soy sauce for an Asian-Canadian fusion.

But fish and poultry are not the only proteins to get the maple treatment. Think about maple syrup Korean teriyaki beef or the beef tenderloin with maple syrup and grainy mustard that was made famous by Jean Soulard at the Chateau Frontenac, a castle fortress located in the heart of this ingredient's homeland, Quebec!

I hope you're inspired to **give your own dishes the maple treatment**. Here is a suggestion to get you started:

- ◆ Use maple syrup to boost the natural sweetness (or lack thereof) in root vegetables. Some carrots are sweet enough on their own, but others may taste lacklustre depending on when they were harvested. Why not cook your carrots French Vichy-style in about an inch of water (lid on) flavoured with salt and maple syrup to taste? About 2 to 3 tablespoons should do for carrots for four to six guests. Naturally, you will want to toss your carrots in butter for extra richness.

Maple syrup can go other places too, but in moderation. Why not add a Canadian edge to your next vinaigrette dressing? Instead of a touch of honey, why not **try a little of our liquid gold, eh? EV**

Misty Ingraham and Bill Sharpe of Ancaster own the catering company The Portable Feast at Home.

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Seana's View of PLAYING RICHARD III

I am about to play Shakespeare's Richard III at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival this season. For any actor, this is a daunting task. It has been called "the character actor's Hamlet." It is the second largest Shakespearean role, and one that has fascinated people for centuries. He is a villain, a warrior and for a short spell, a king. And he is a he, while I am a she.

Gender Bending

We have all heard of, and some of us have seen, female Hamlets. Sarah Bernhardt had him in her repertoire for years. Kelly Fox played him a few years back. About 20 years ago, Fiona Shaw played Richard II. Helen Mirren recently committed her Prospera to film. Pat Hamilton has played King Lear. There have been female Ariels and Pucks.

At the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, women have played roles usu-

ally played by men: Charmion King played Mistress Quince in *A Midsummer's Dream*; Lucy Peacock played a female Grumio in *The Taming of the Shrew*; I played the Chorus in *Henry V*. Lords have been changed to ladies, and many a young woman has donned the gear of a soldier or page. And of course, all of Shakespeare's roles, including females, were originally played by males. So this gender bending is not new.

That being said, it is unusual. At Stratford, a woman has never played one of the great Shakespearean male roles. Years ago, Richard Monette once approached me to be one of six Hamlets, four males and two females. I did not see myself as a Hamlet. I told Richard "I can't see myself transforming into a virile young man grieving for his father. Now Richard III, maybe..."

One morning I came out of the shower with my hair flat and scrag-

gly over my face and my husband, Miles Potter, who also happens to be my best collaborator and favourite director, looked at me and said "You could pass for Olivier as Richard III." I was not offended, but intrigued. Miles and I began to talk about my playing Richard.

Why Richard?

Over the years, I have worked with students and actors on monologues and scenes and had marvelled at the mind of Richard. For years I had approached various artistic directors about playing a male role, if only to experience Shakespeare's writing for a male mind. I once asked to play Jacques in *As You Like It*, and the Fool in *Lear*, both parts that do not rely on their sexuality. But no director cast me.

Then, in a discussion with Stratford's artistic director Des McNuff about upcoming seasons, Miles and I suggested *Richard III*. Des was intrigued, even excited. Finally, our

Richard III was part of the 2011 festival line-up.

Playing Richard

And now, I have to play Richard. I am going to play him as a man. He may be a strange man, he may be an effeminate man, he may be a weak man.

Someone asked me how I can play him as a male, since I'm not big and tall? Neither was the real Richard. He was a small man. I know men more petite than I. But he is a warrior, you may say. So are women in our armed forces. This will be Seana McKenna's Richard, no more, no less. I have no idea what that will turn out to be. That terrifies and thrills me.

My being a woman can add to Richard's "otherness." Shakespeare's Richard is a "hunchback." Unfortunately, in our society we often neuter those with physical disabilities. We see them as sexually invisible. We define them by their "handicap." We see the wheelchair first. We underestimate them. I think many in the court underestimate Richard. I think many underestimate women.

Yet evil knows no gender. Shakespeare's Richard III is evil. I see him as an actor, someone pretending to be something he is not, to gain power. He is without empathy. He pretends to be humane. It is no accident his enemies refer to him as an animal, calling him a dog, a spider, a hog, a "bunch-backed toad." He is an "it."

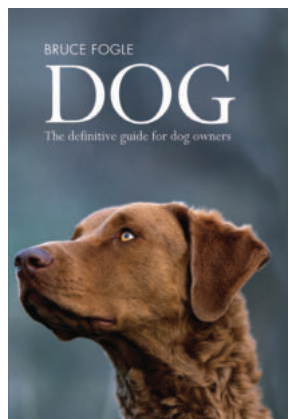
After 30 years in the theatre, the undeniable thing I can bring to the character of Richard is my experience, not as a male, but as an actor. I look forward to the moment in rehearsal when I say "Ah, there he is." **EV**

The award-winning Seana McKenna is playing Richard III and the solo character in Shakespeare's Will this season at Stratford Shakespeare Festival. Both productions are directed by Miles Potter.

Seana McKenna as Richard III.

PHOTO: ANDREW ECCLES





Dog: The definitive guide for dog owners

by Bruce Fogle

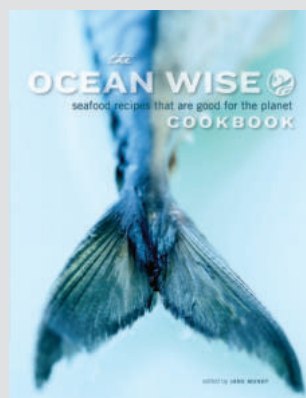
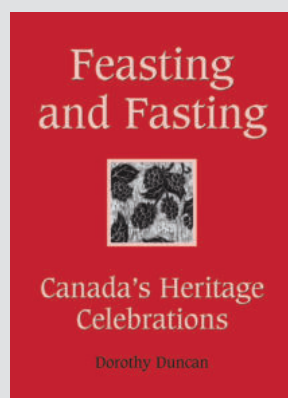
For the many people who love dogs, this will be a welcome addition to the home library, only after being read cover to cover. A comprehensive discussion of every aspect of dogs in general and specific breeds in particular, its engaging style makes it much more than a reference book. Starting with the ancestry of dogs as

wolves, author Bruce Fogle believes that the earliest dogs domesticated themselves, scavenging from human campsites rather than fleeing. Moving through the various categories of breeds from Nordic breeds to toy and companion dogs, Fogle describes the characteristics of all the breed groups, explaining their innate preferences. Fogle discusses how dogs think and how best to blend them into our families. All the life stages of a dog are described, helping us understand

what to expect at various ages and how to deal with the challenges. Positive reinforcement training of all the basic commands is explained, as well as where to turn for help with difficult dogs. Full-colour photographs of dogs on almost every spread help make this a delightful book. Fogle received his education at Ontario Veterinary College in Guelph and now practises in London, England.

Firefly Books, 2010, \$29.95

Reviewed by Gloria Hildebrandt



Feasting and Fasting: Canada's Heritage Celebrations

by Dorothy Duncan

This is a lovely book, one to pick up, read a chapter say on "Sap's Running!" or "Feasts of the Fur Traders" or "Feasting & Fasting" and have plenty of interesting trivia to toss out during the next lull in conversation. It is a fascinating collection of Canadian historical traditions and recipes.

Dundurn Press, 2010, \$26.99

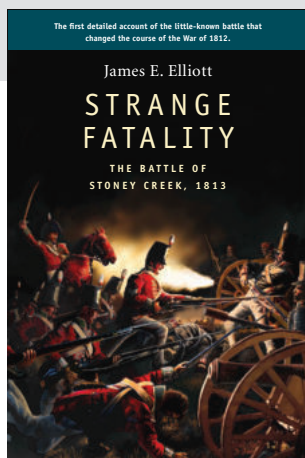
Reviewed by Catherine Randall of Curiosity House Books & Gallery, Creemore.

The Ocean Wise Cookbook: seafood recipes that are good for the planet

edited by Jane Mundy

The beginning chapter of this beautiful new book discusses what to buy, from which countries, whether farmed or wild is best and also what types of fish to avoid and what to substitute. There are many mouthwatering recipes contributed by some of Canada's leading chefs. Here's to healthy and informed eating in 2011!

Whitecap Books, 2010, \$34.95.



Strange Fatality: The Battle of Stoney Creek, 1813

By James E. Elliott

Meticulously researched, this is a thorough account of the battle between invading Americans and the defending British forces at Stoney Creek, said to have changed the probable outcome of the War of 1812. Elliott recounts the details of one night

in June and the movements and hasty decisions of both sides. Background information and historical context is woven throughout, providing a greater understanding of the events. Such personalities as James FitzGibbon, John Chandler, Henry Dearborn, Mary Gage, Laura Secord and others are brought to life through the use of letters, diaries and reports. Illustrations are plentiful and

conveniently appear close to the relevant text, adding to the educational value. The book extends the history far beyond the actual battle, to the conflicts over the battle's monument, which Elliott calls the second battle of Stoney Creek. It is clear why Arts Hamilton awarded Elliott the non-fiction book award in 2010.

Robin Brass Studio, 2009, \$24.95

Reviewed by Gloria Hildebrandt

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ads@EscarpmentViews.ca



Problems with
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www.tedarnottmpp.com

The seeds of our future are taking root right now, for better or worse. This page shares better, forward-thinking ideas and celebrates significant environmental achievements that can help us lead the way in creating the Niagara Escarpment as a healthy, sustainable example of a thriving World Biosphere Reserve.

REDUCING DRIVING

Smart Commute is a program of the municipalities of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton area and Metrolinx, an agency of the government of Ontario, and is intended to **EASE GRIDLOCK BY PROMOTING CARPOOLING, CYCLING AND TRANSIT.**

In Nov. 2010, Smart Commute awards were given out to 10 workplaces from Caledon to Hamilton to Ajax, for their efforts in helping employees create alternatives to driving to work by **WALKING, CYCLING, TAKING TRANSIT, CARPOOLING AND TELEWORK.**

For more, see www.smartcommute.ca.

OMB DENIES QUARRY IN CALEDON, CALLS FOR ALTERNATIVES TO AGGREGATE

In a November 2010 decision against a new quarry in Caledon, the Ontario Municipal Board wrote in part, "The **LOSS OF VIEWS** of rural lands, the **LOSS OF A CULTURAL HERITAGE LANDSCAPE** and cultural heritage resources and the conversion of a rural area into an urban area centered on a **HEAVY INDUSTRIAL OPERATION** cannot be permitted in the interest of the production of more aggregate for infrastructure development. **IT IS TIME FOR ALTERNATIVES TO AGGREGATE** for infrastructure construction to be found."

THE PASSION OF BARBARA HALSALL

Our environment in general, and the Niagara Escarpment in particular, **LOST A PASSIONATE ACTIVIST AND ADVOCATE** when Barbara Halsall of Georgetown died on December 3, 2010. Barbara was a **FOUNDING MEMBER OF PROTECT OUR WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES (P.O.W.E.R.)**, and was its long-time, hard-working president. P.O.W.E.R. credits Barbara with improving the Niagara Escarpment Plan, successfully opposing waste incinerators in Halton Region, and helping thousands of young people to get outdoors and plant native trees through the Future Forest program.

A local newspaper wrote a favourable item about her, and "This grudging praise from an editorial team that was not sympathetic to her views was a great surprise to us," shares her son Michael.

Finally, the publishers of this magazine met while serving on the board of P.O.W.E.R., so **IF IT WEREN'T FOR BARBARA, THIS MAGAZINE PROBABLY WOULD NOT EXIST.**



Coming Events

Jan. 29-April 10 **Wild Music Sounds & Songs of Life**
Royal Botanical Gardens rbg.ca

Feb. 12-April 3 & March 14-18 **Sugar Bush Adventure**
White Meadows Farms whitemeadowsfarms.com

Feb. 26-April 3 weekends & March 14-18 **Mapletowne**
Mountsberg Conservation Area conservationhalton.ca

March Sundays (6, 13, 20, 27) & March 16 & 17
Maple Syrup Festival at Westfield
Westfield Heritage Village westfieldheritage.ca

March 26 & 27 **The Old-Tyme Maple Syrup Festival**
Saugeen Bluffs Conservation Area
saugeenconservation.com/maplesyrup.php

April 2 **Georgetown Choral Society's 40 Years – Hallelujah!**
Georgetown Christian Reformed Church georgetownchoral.ca

April 9 **11th Annual Halton Eco Festival**
Glen Abbey Recreation Centre oakvillepeacecentre.org/haltonecofest

April 30 **Great, Big Garage Sale**, Caledon coalitioncaledon.com

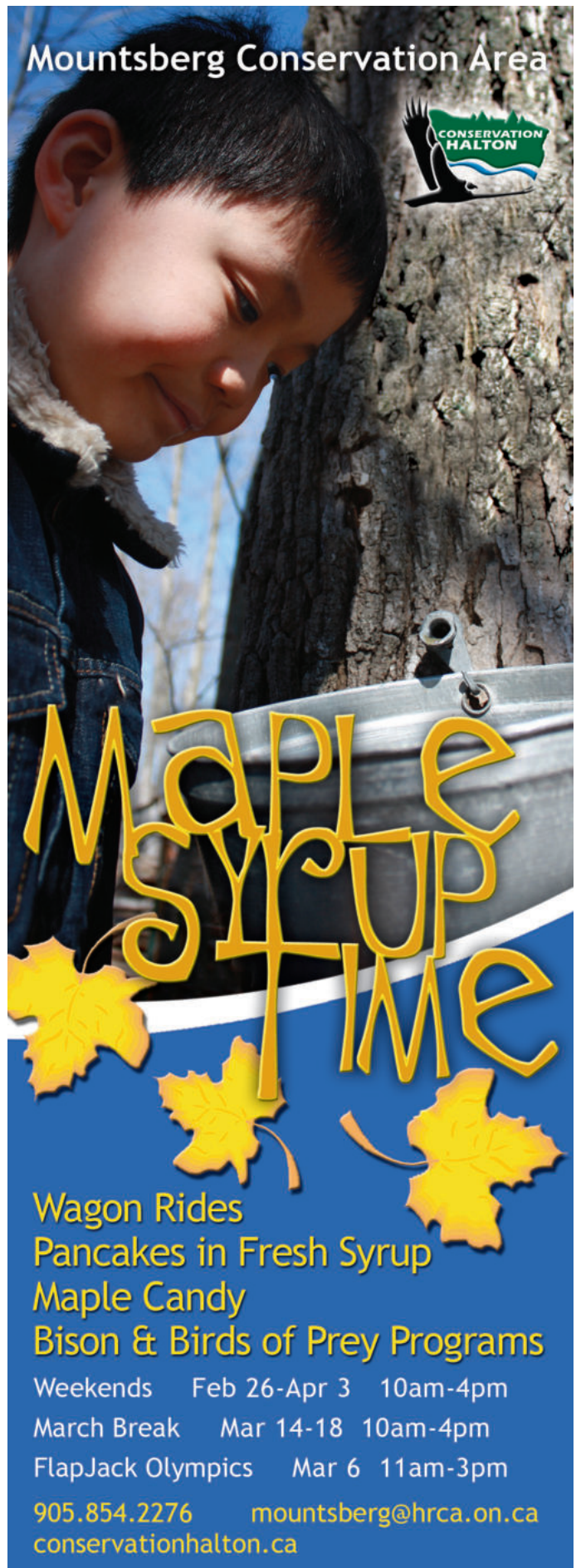
April 30 **Town of Erin Annual Spring Home & Lifestyle Show**
Centre 2000 Erin.ca

April 30 **Wayzgoose 2011**
Grimsby Public Art Gallery town.grimsby.on.ca/wayzgoose/

May 14 **Stoney Creek Garden Club Annual Plant Sale**
Battlefield Park Pavilion gardenontario.org/site.php/stoneycreek

May 26 & 27 **Leading Edge Conference: "Exploring Ontario's Natural Edge"**
Brock University escarpment.org

May 28 **Georgetown Choral Society's 40 years – Feelin' Good!**
Acton Legion georgetownchoral.ca



Mountsberg Conservation Area



Maple Syrup Time

Wagon Rides
Pancakes in Fresh Syrup
Maple Candy
Bison & Birds of Prey Programs

Weekends Feb 26-Apr 3 10am-4pm
March Break Mar 14-18 10am-4pm
FlapJack Olympics Mar 6 11am-3pm

905.854.2276 mountsberg@hrca.on.ca
conservationhalton.ca



11th annual

ONE DAY ONLY

HALTON ECO FESTIVAL

Saturday, April 9th
at the Glen Abbey Rec Centre,
3rd Line, Oakville, 10 am to 5 pm

IT'S FREE TO ATTEND THE GREEN FAIR!

A fun and educational environmental fair for the whole family featuring: inspirational speakers, green exhibitors, good food, kids eco fun zone, silent auction, door prizes, free give-aways and more!

oakvillepeacecentre.org/haltonecofest

Explore Ontario's Natural Edge!

LEADING EDGE 2011 CONFERENCE
Sustainable Tourism and Development in the Niagara Escarpment

MAY 26 & 27
 **Brock**
AT BROCK UNIVERSITY
ST. CATHARINES

- * *Tourism and the Niagara Escarpment*
- * *Sustainable cultural & economic projects*
- * *Balancing development & natural heritage preservation*

Conference Schedule & Registration at www.escarpment.org

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Bolton
Sylvia Jones, MPP
12596 Hwy 50

Burlington
Conservation Halton
2596 Britannia Rd
Joyce Savoline, MPP
760 Brant St., Ste. 44
Royal Botanical Gardens
680 Plains Rd. W

Caledon
Heatherlea Farm Market
17049 Winston Churchill Blvd
Topnotch Consignment Furnishings
14034 Hurontario St

Campbellville
Mountsberg Conservation Area
2259 Millborough Line

Carlisle
Dutchman's Gold
300 Carlisle Rd

Collingwood
Scenic Caves Nature Adventures
269 Scenic Caves Rd

Creemore
Curiosity House Books & Gallery
134-A Mill St

Dundas
**Dundas Valley Conservation
Area, Trail Centre**
650 Governors Rd

Fergus
Ted Arnett, MPP
181 St. Andrew St. E

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232 Guelph St
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The St. George
7 Main St. N
**United Lumber Home
Hardware Building Centre**
333 Guelph St
Wildwood Manor Ranch
14097 9th Line
Young's Pharmacy
47 Main St. S

Grimsby
Gateway Niagara Information Centre
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Hagersville
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Hamilton
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Dartnall Road Home Hardware
10 Dartnall Rd
Hamilton Farmers Market,
35 York Blvd
Ottawa Street Farmers Market
204 Ottawa St. N
Westcliffe Home Hardware
Westcliffe Mall 632 Mohawk Rd

Hillsburgh
Town of Erin
5684 Trafalgar Rd

Manitowaning
**Manitowaning Mill Home
Building Centre**
15874 Hwy 6

Markdale
Markdale Home Hardware
35 Main St. W
Centre Grey Builders & Supplies
Home Building Centre
74 Lorne St.

Meaford
Knights' Home Building Centre
206532 Hwy 26 (E. of Meaford)

Milton
Crawford Lake Conservation Area
3115 Conservation Rd.
(formerly Steeles Ave.)
Kelso Conservation Area
5234 Kelso Rd
Milton Heights Campground
8690 Tremaine Rd
Spriggs Insurance Brokers Limited
216 Main St
Ted Chudleigh, MPP
174 Mill St

Mississauga
Meadowvale Insurance Brokers Ltd
2000 Argenta Rd., Plaza Four, Ste. 110

Oakville
Spriggs Insurance Brokers Limited
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Orangeville
Booklore
121 First St
Islandview Farm Equipment
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Sylvia Jones, MPP
244 Broadway

Owen Sound
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237897 Inglis Falls Rd
**Springmount Tourism
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717875 Hwy 6

St. Catharines
St. Catharines Home Hardware
111 Hartzel Rd
White Meadows Farms
2519 Effingham St. (Pelham)

Stayner
Spriggs Insurance Brokers Limited
1071 County Rd. 42

Stoney Creek
Lakeshore Living Outdoor Elements
1100 South Service Rd., Unit 113

Thornbury
Niagara Escarpment Commission
99 King St. E

Virgil (Niagara-on-the-Lake)
**Penner Home Hardware
Building Centre**
700 Penner St

Wainfleet
Ben Berg Farm & Industrial Equipment
52034 Hwy #3 (at Chambers Corners)