



The Niagara Escarpment Plan

By Mike Davis, Publisher



Gord Kranz of the Escarpment's Town of Milton, have held office throughout the entire plan process. Others, like me, have served shorter periods. With the varied "stripes" and principles of the political representatives comes a very broad spectrum of views on how the Niagara Escarpment should be used and what its legacy should be.

The NEP has a common set of rules over

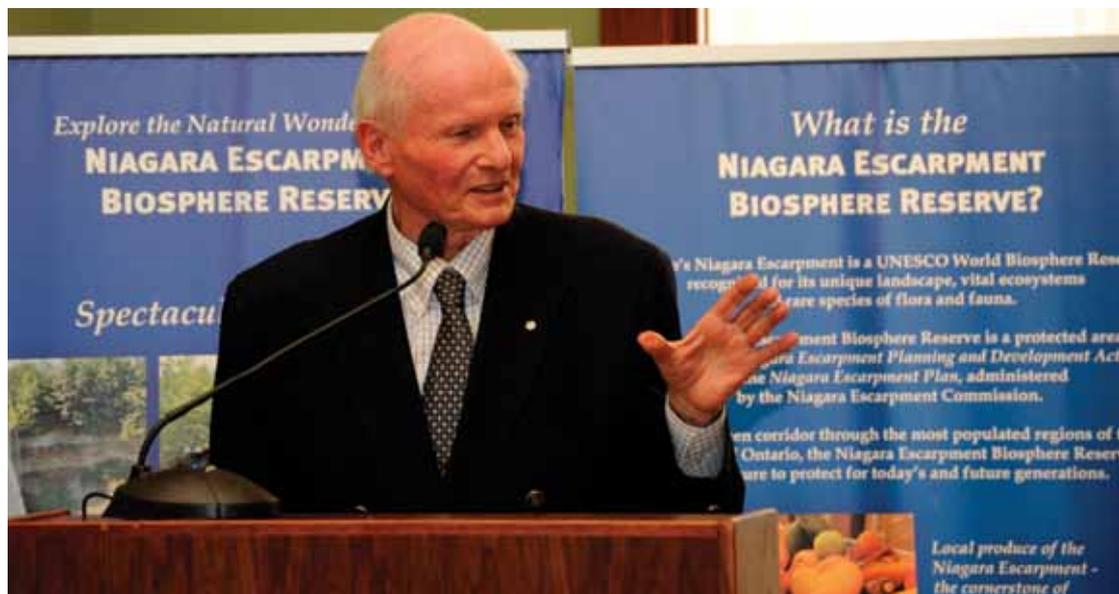
Escarpment features in New York across the river from the cairn at the Queenston end of the Bruce Trail, but can only dream about a continuous natural area there. After the economic gains have been realized there, opportunities for a long trail become limited.

A Precious Treasure

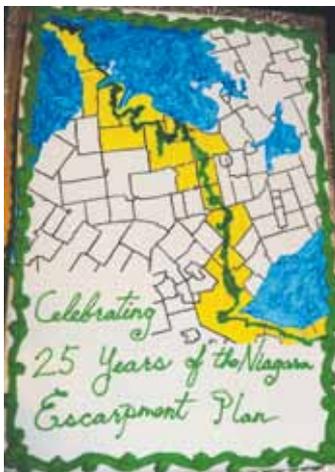
I remember my interview with Robert Bateman in 2011, which led to two stories

political machine. Make sure your political representatives know of your wishes and concerns. The "ship of state" has a lot of momentum, but the course can be "nudged" with persistent and long-term pressure. Pressure will be from many directions, economic, environmental, development, rural life, nature, resource extraction. An absence of a voice from one side can steer the "ship" in another direction.

It's been 41 years since Bill Davis' provincial government started the process for the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP). June marks 29 years that the NEP has been in force; Premier Davis (no relation) left politics earlier in 1985. The Plan has seen all three provincial political parties in majority and minority governments over its life so far. Many local municipal governments have come and gone, with some areas amalgamating and some town, villages, hamlets fading into history. Some politicians, like



▲ Former premier Bill Davis speaking at the 25th anniversary celebration of the Niagara Escarpment Plan at Queen's Park in 2010. PHOTOS BY MIKE DAVIS



▲ The 2010 celebration cake shows the Niagara Escarpment as a green line going through yellow municipal boundaries.

its jurisdiction. Although there are different rules for different uses, the rules knit together the commonality of the Escarpment. A rural designation in Lion's Head is the same as in Hamilton. If planning were delegated to municipal government using a general Ontario planning act, the result would, no doubt, be highly variable. As time goes on, I feel the wisdom of the NEP becomes more cherished.

Pressures from economic gains will always be with us. Dealing with the "now" can cloud judgement on decisions of the future. Our American friends have Niagara

published in 2012. He said "I want my great-grandchildren to be able to drive across the future Ontario at the turn of the next century and know they are in the Escarpment and it is a precious treasure that has personality. That the natural and human heritage of the Escarpment is intact." I agree with him.

In 2015, the NEP as well as the Greenbelt Plan and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan will be reviewed. Although this is still the early stages, there is preliminary work being done now. An interested public has the interest of the

Speak Up

I enjoy the Niagara Escarpment. Being a publisher and principal photographer for this magazine has given me excellent opportunities to experience the people, places and the essence of what the Niagara Escarpment is. I walk the dogs on trails, learn about neat things at a local Naturalists' meeting, know because of the NEP there is less fragmentation of the land than what might have been, know that habitat and biodiversity is strong on the Escarpment.

What do you think? Please get your views and opinions to your representatives. **NEV**