Niagara Escarpment VIENS

WINTER 2022-23 (DECEMBER, JANUARY, FEBRUARY)



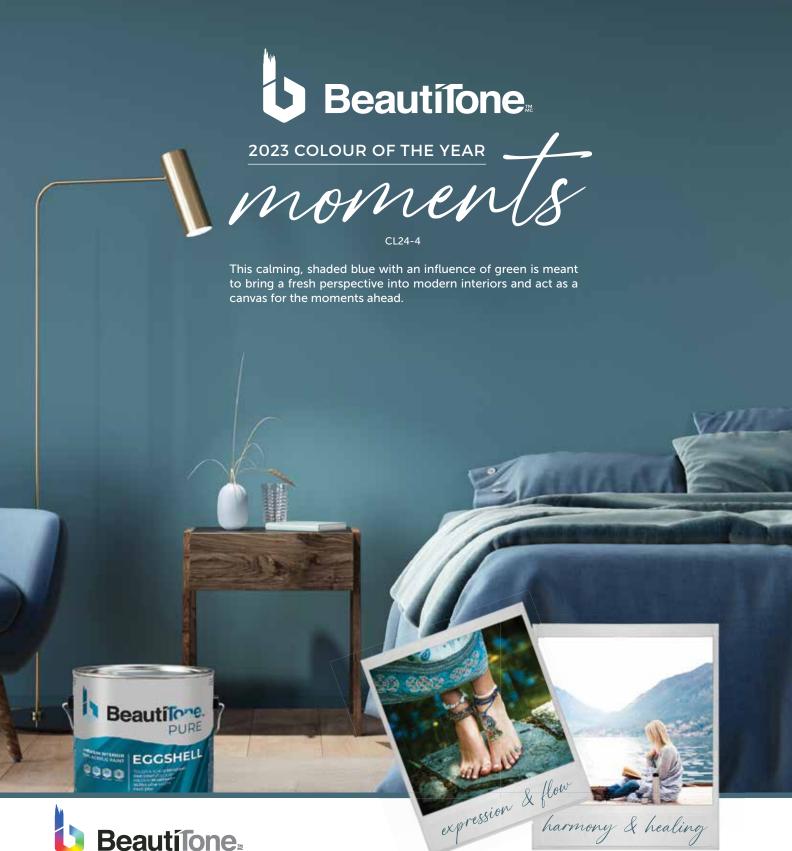


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Winter 2022-23

(December, January, February)

ON THE COVER: CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING AT HIGHLANDS NORDIC, DUNTROON. Photo by Sandra J. Howe.

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Niagara Escarpment

SINCE JANUARY 2008

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of the Government of Canada.



Views & Vistas, Favourite Photographs from the Entire Niagara Escarpment in Canada, Published 2021



Conservation Halton Award, 2014 to Mike Davis in Media/Blogger Category

Did The Queen Sleep Here?



ublishing this magazine for the last 15 years has often included some lucky accidents. Stories that we are considering doing sometimes fall easily and unexpectedly into place. So it was with our feature "Royal Retreat," about The Queen's 1973 visit to the Escarpment.

When I heard that The Queen had died, I began remembering a rumour that The Queen had once stayed at a stately farm north of Georgetown. Basic research didn't bring a result and we didn't know how to investigate this. As a long shot, I emailed Mark Rowe, a historian for the area of Georgetown and north Halton. Did he know if this rumour was true?

Not only could he confirm this, he had written a report a few years ago that includes

this fact. He knows which farm it was, when The Oueen visited and who the current property owners are. It was natural to ask Mark to write about this for us.

So it was, that on the day that The Queen's coffin was passing through London to Westminster Hall, that Mark, Mike Davis and I visited Rolling Hills Farm on a mission to find out more about Her Majesty's visit, including whether she slept there.

This Anniversary Issue

Another story we present this time is an exploration of Bird Kingdom in Niagara Falls, where the most spectacular tropical birds shake their tail feathers in a magnificent permanent jungle-like home. There are also some exotic reptiles and amphibians that have a safe refuge here. Conservation and education are a big part of the mission.

Sandra J. Howe takes us cross-country skiing at Highlands Nordic, an impressive ski resort in the Escarpment at Duntroon. Fun family skiing, serious racing and even night skiing can all be enjoyed here before the rewards of après-ski.

We're also helping to celebrate another 15th anniversary, that of the community festival Light Up the Hills of Georgetown, Glen Williams and Acton. This is the 15th winter of lighting displays brightening

up the darkest weeks and commemorating loved ones. Volunteers and sponsors have worked to make this annual event free and available for all to enjoy.

It was 15 years ago that Mike Davis and I started this magazine, publishing the premier issue in January 2008, at the time under the name of Escarpment Views. While other magazines have folded permanently, including some that I used to edit or write for, we have managed to do well, despite the challenges of ad sales and distribution to a very large geographic area, a name change to Niagara Escarpment Views, and the COVID pandemic. Of course there have been some disappointments. Yet we have not wanted to give up. We have also been amazed, heartened and encouraged by the flood of cards, letters, phone calls and gifts we receive from you, our readers and subscribers.

Three Big Successes

Over the last 15 years we've had three successes that we're very proud of. The first is this magazine itself. It is increasingly recognized and well received, both by the large number of advertisers, most of them repeat customers, from all along the Escarpment in Canada, and also by our growing number of loyal, paying subscribers.

The second is our

photography book Views & Vistas. Completing it and publishing it has been a significant achievement for us. Having it sell steadily is what we hoped for. Having a retailer tell us "It's selling better than expected" is gratifying.

The third accomplishment is the establishment of the Hildebrandt + Davis Nature Park, which recognizes a conservation easement recently placed on my family's rural property, achieved through Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy (EBC). This leads me to do something I don't normally do: comment on an advertisement. But the EBC ad on page 17 this time mentions me by name, thanking me for my work on this magazine, for the perpetual gift of the conservation easement, and for helping to conserve a part of Ontario. I am, of course, only one of many landowners who have protected property through EBC. I encourage others to consider doing this as well. In addition to the great personal satisfaction that comes, there can be significant financial benefits. To find out more, contact EBC at 888.815.9575.



Gloria Hildebrandt

P.S. Wild animals need wild spaces.

The offices of Niagara Escarpment Views are located on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, specifically The Ajetance Treaty No. 19, of 1818, when Chief Ajetance sold the lands to the Indian Department of the government.

Let us know what you think!

Write us at editor@NEViews.ca or Niagara Escarpment Views, 50 Ann St., Georgetown ON L7G 2V2.

More Online!

Keep in touch with Escarpment news between issues at our website. We have unique content not seen in the magazine, and you can leave comments in response. See www.NEViews.ca.



Niagara Escarpment Views is on Facebook as: www.facebook.com/N.E.Views

READERS & VIEWERS



Big congratulations on your success and longevity!!!

> Tracy Nietvelt-Prentice, The Market Shoppe, Markdale



I've missed your magazine for the last two years. The Owen Sound tourist Centre has been closed. Rightfully so. It was so nice to open the mail box [as a new

subscriber] and there it was, two weeks early too, happy day. Excellent magazine. Gwen Rollinson-Lorimer, Owen Sound

I can't tell you how much I and my family enjoy the Niagara Escarpment Views magazine. I have often given a subscription to my parents at Christmas. However, it is especially your editor's column I enjoy the most. Having grown up on a farm in the Milton countryside I can very much relate to your stories and I always look forward to them. Katherine Sasek, Mississauga



It's always a pleasure to find the Niagara Escarpment News [sic] in our mailbox, especially the Autumn issue's "My Bruce Trail Thruhike Project" by Jaimie Dietrich. (My husband and I were BTC members and hikers prior to moving to Vancouver Island.) But I was shocked and saddened by the photo on page 34 of a man displaying a bright yellow T-shirt stating (I think) "I club baby seals." Am I wrong? Is

that a course on the curriculum at Rosseau Lake College? I was disappointed to find something like this in what is otherwise a fine magazine. I am still with you though since mistakes happen -- to all of us... even the fellow in the T-shirt.

Pam Brown, Comox, BC



I just wanted to say thank you so much for the article and spread you did on TWAS!! [The Wearable Art Show] We have door prizes at the show so people will give us feedback on how they found out about us and I will let you know how that turned out after the show. You wrote so well! Please give that Mike guy a hug from me too. Really - THANK YOU!

Bonnie Glass, Guelph



I enjoy reading Niagara Escarpment Views. I am writing seeking permission to reprint the first two paragraphs and the Venn diagram of the

Summer 2022 edition article A Purpose Revealed. The copy would appear in our newsletter as well as our social post. We would most certainly credit Gloria Hildebrandt and your publication. If

permitted we would also provide a link to your website.

> Wayne Peterson, Executive Director, **Construction Employers Coordinating** Council of Ontario, Mississauga

It was such a pleasure to have you and Mike visit our home in Grimsby on the Garden Tour. We seem to be still catching up from that day. The Club sold over 400 tickets and we easily had over 300 people visit our property over the day. We were thrilled. Since your publication featuring Earthbound on the cover we spent most of May and June on the Bruce. This allowed us to arrange a visit to Kemble with friends and relatives. Whenever we meet with people in the Wiarton area we always take them to the Women's Institute site. Outside of Ottawa we think this is the best piece of public art in Ontario and what a wonderful story.

Bruce Mackenzie, Grimsby



At the Kemble Women's Institute memorial, Kemble, with the Escarpment in the background, are from left, Debbie Hastings, Bracebridge, Laurie Mackenzie, Grimsby, and Debbie Brook, Bolton. PHOTO BY BRUCE MACKENZIE.

Very good magazine, interesting articles, photos are top notch. Keep up the good work!

Nick Danielak, Mississauga



Noticed the recent book Views & Vistas on a store shelf and didn't hesitate to buy it to finally check out after seeing this thing in your magazine a few times. I really appreciated the photographs of the Horseshoe Falls in Niagara Falls from the US side. Thank you for a great collection of landscapes and points of view of the entire Niagara Escarpment. The horse in the fog shot was really the only one page I skipped through when enjoying your book so good

job with all other photographs. The descriptions of the photos and titles you added were brief while being informative. I wanted to let you know it was fun going through this book. It felt like I was hiking the bruce trail and Niagara Escarpment with you.

Peter Tanczos, Niagara Region



Spiced Carrot Soup

Prep Time: 15 min. | Total Time: 45 min. | Serves: 6

Ingredients

2 tbsp Compliments Extra Virgin olive oil Ground cinnamon 1 tsp 2 lb Carrots, thinly sliced 1 tsp Chili powder Small onion, diced 1/2 tsp Ground nutmeg 1/4 cup Honey 1/2 tsp Ground allspice 1 tbsp Grated ginger 1 carton Chicken Broth

To taste, salt and pepper
To taste, 15% M.F. cooking cream
Fresh Chives

Directions

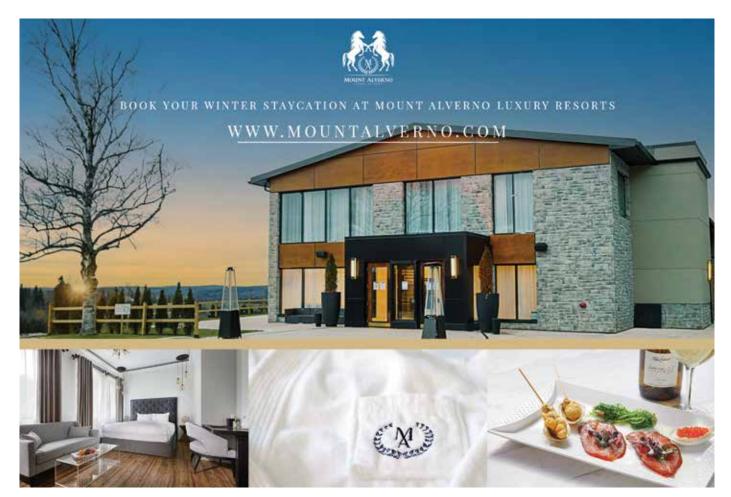
- 1. Heat oil in a Dutch oven set over medium-high heat.
- 2. Add carrots and onion; sauté for 10 minutes or until browned. Stir in the honey, ginger, cinnamon, chili powder, nutmeg and allspice; cook for 2 minutes or until very bubbly.
- 3. Add the chicken broth & 2 cups (500 mL) water; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer for 20 minutes or until carrots are tender.
- 4. Carefully transfer hot soup to blender and purée in batches. Reheat. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Garnish with cream and chives. Serve with pretzel twists.

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EVENTS



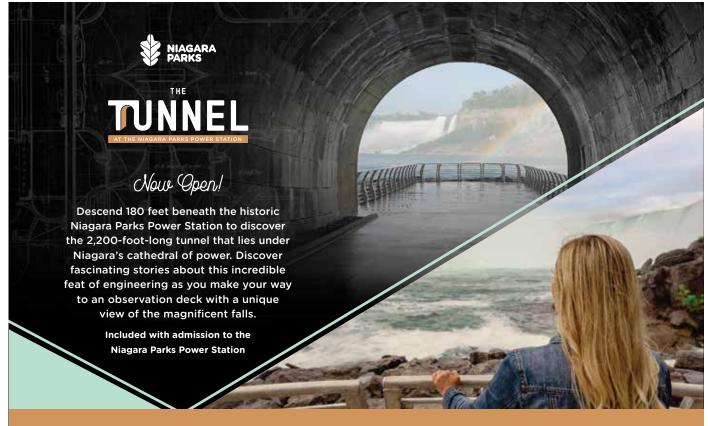


▲ Acton Legion's classic car show with 250 vehicles displayed, was held on Aug. 28 next to beautiful Fairy Lake in Acton. PHOTO BY CHRIS MILLER.

EVENTS



■ Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy (EBC) celebrated the protection of Hildebrandt + Davis Nature Park, Georgetown, on Oct. 1. Mike Davis and Gloria Hildebrandt cut the ribbon while Bob Barnett of EBC looked on. PHOTO BY SHANNON MACDONALD.



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EVENTS



▲ Larry and Valeris Crowe were chosen on Aug. 10 as the ambassadors of the Meaford Scarecrow Invasion and Family Festival's 25th anniversary celebrations. PHOTO BY DONNALEE HOBSON.



▲ On Oct. 20, Reginald Leach of Aundeck Omni Kaning First Nation on Manitoulin Island was invested by Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada, as Member into the Order of Canada. Since retiring from playing in the National Hockey League, he has been dedicated to coaching youth and being an advocate for sport's role in building healthy communities. PHOTO BY MCPL ANIS ASSARI, RIDEAU HALL © OSGG, 2022.





▲ Publisher Gloria Hildebrandt and Buckle, on Aug. 5, picked up the third printing of Views & Vistas: Favourite Photographs from the Whole Niagara Escarpment in Canada – Niagara Falls to Manitoulin Island. PHOTO BY MIKE DAVIS.



► On Nov. 5, National Indigenous Veterans Day, a ceremony was held at Landscape of Nations Memorial in Queenston Heights Park. An annual event, this recognizes sacrifices made by Six Nation and Native allies during the 1812 Battle of Queenston Heights, which was won by the British side. РНОТО PROVIDED BY NIAGARA PARKS.

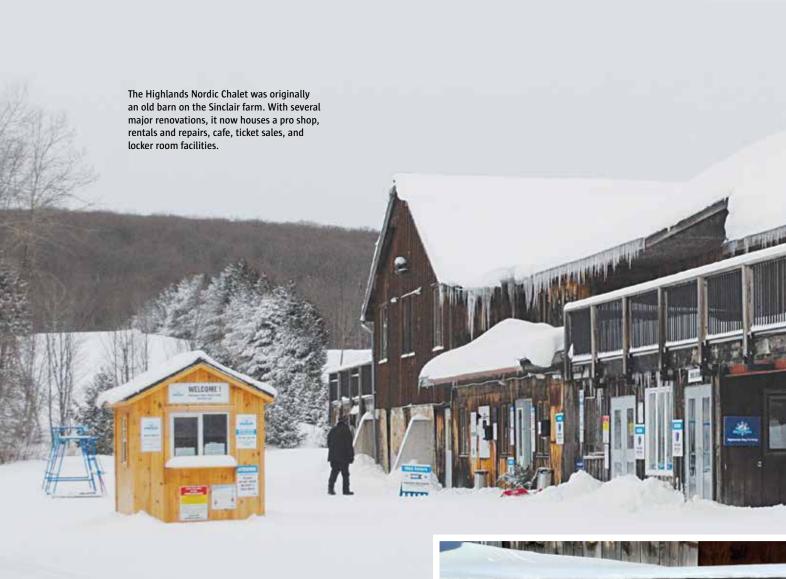


Family Skiing Whighlands Nordic

WRITTEN & PHOTOGRAPHED BY SANDRA J. HOWE

ighlands Nordic is perched on the Niagara
Escarpment 15 km south of Collingwood. On a
clear day, Nottawasaga Bay and the rich farmlands
toward Stayner are visible to the east. To the west
and north, the Escarpment rises in steps to a summit called
Larry's Glacier. There is, of course, no glacier but imagination
is part of the fun. In business since 1989, Highlands Nordic
has had fun as an important part of the building process all
along. The Sinclair family started a cross country ski centre
out of the Duntroon Highlands golf clubhouse because of their
love of skiing. In 1993, they purchased the adjacent property,
and renovated an old barn for a lodge. Thirty years, three
generations, several renovations, and Highlands Nordic is
going strong.





he fragrance of fresh-baked banana bread wafts through the Highlands Nordic chalet. The staff are friendly and welcoming. Lockers painted with winterwonderland scenes line the walls of the dressing room. The pro shop is stocked with all the outdoor clothing, gear, and waxes needed. Large trail maps and helpful signage provide orientation to the etiquette and possibilities of this beautiful property. The snow is groomed to perfection. We are all set for an amazing day of Nordic classic or skate skiing, or a snowshoe stroll through wintry woods.

Kelly Sinclair, general manager, greets us with a warm smile. She introduces her husband, Chanse Dionne, outdoor operations manager. We joke about the next generation's

► Chanse Dionne, Kelly Sinclair, and their mascot dog, official greeter, Teal, pose in front of the chalet and trail map. Teal and Kelly often get out for a ski on Teal's Tango, a dog-friendly trail in the lower meadow.







■ Skiing on the beautifully-lit night ski trails. About five km of trails are lit by low-voltage LEDs powered by solar panels.

arrival but she explains, "Teal, our dog, is it so far! He does love to go out skiing though, and we are developing a meadow called Teal's Tango with dog-friendly trails."

Kelly talks about growing up at Highlands Nordic, skiing, racing, working, and stepping into greater responsibilities. Chanse came to work as a co-op student for Kelly's father.

"The boss's daughter asked me to marry her so I stayed," laughs Chanse. Kelly's mom does the book work. Kelly's grandma still helps with the cleaning sometimes. It really is a family effort!

On a blustery Wednesday, my husband Dennis Stier and I arrive at Highlands Nordic.

Temperatures are hovering near zero, and the snow is heavy. Chanse kindly adds a layer of glide wax to our ski bases to reduce snow stick. There are no long views to be seen today but we catch

glimpses of the Escarpment rising in the distance. Heading out on the easy loop, we climb gradually through beautiful maple forest past a small sugar shack. It is so quiet and peaceful on the trails. A few other skiers skate or glide by. Staff tell us that it will be busier when after-school programs, and night skiing start. On Wednesdays and Fridays solar-powered lights come on at dusk to light up five km of night skiing trails.

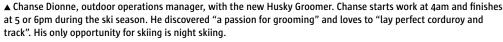
Sustainability

The solar-powered lighting is only one example of Highland Nordic's deep commitment to ecological sustainability both on and off their property. They do not provide printed trail maps but rather post permanent signage at each trail junction, thus reducing paper consumption and waste. They have grown and planted more than 400 evergreen trees



toward the chalet. Highlands Nordic offers a great range of terrain and difficulty, from easy to expert trails.











▲ Young Trailblazers in bright blue jackets line up at the starting gate for a chance to pre-ski their race route at Sawmill Nordic Centre in Hepworth. Trailblazers, the not-for-profit ski club from Highlands Nordic, includes a few hundred members, ages four to 80.



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Thank you Gloria for your work on Niagara Escarpment Views, bringing that commitment to life in every issue and in your perpetual gift of the conservation easement to EBC at Hildebrandt & Davis Nature Park this past October.

Congratulations on NEV's **15 years** and your part in conserving Ontario!

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into a retired field area. This is Teal's Tango, a beginner and dog-friendly loop trail, which is becoming very popular as more skiers want to bring their furry friends skiing.

Guests can also sponsor a tree to help reforest this area, reducing winds and maintaining snow cover for a longer ski season. Chanse says his goal is to plant up to 200 more trees per year on the property. Posters in the chalet encourage skiers to connect with Collingwood's Climate Action Team and the local chapter of Protect Our Winters, a group advocating for policy solutions to climate change.

Sure enough, as dusk approaches many young skiers appear on the trails. The masters, age 18-plus, race

past us, skating strongly. Gord Salt, who has coached skiing for more than 50 years, explains that the Highlands Trailblazers Ski Club has several hundred members, and on weekends has more than 100 children, ages four and up, participating in their programs.

Gord says, "I love the sport! The elegance of classic skiing. The toughness of racing. There is so much to learn. It is just a beautiful sport, and Highlands Nordic is a great place to ski!" Several Olympic-level athletes came up through the Trailblazers Program.

Athletes in other sports also practise skills and races at Highlands Nordic. Over the years, Highlands has hosted mountain and fat biking events, snowshoeing, disc golf, obstacle courses, a wide range of skiing competitions, Mud Hero, and 5 Peaks Adventures. The Bruce Trail crosses the top of the property.

Chanse proudly shows us the biathlon ranges



▲ Kathy Pedersen in red, and Fred Tustin in blue, head out from the chalet for some track skiing after completing their work shifts. Kathy, "one of Kelly's Highlands chicks," is in her second year as pro shop assistant. Fred is the program manager. Both are avid skiers.



A young racer powers to the finish line at Sawmill Nordic Centre, Hepworth, on the Suntrail Special Cross-Country Ski Race. Each competitor is timed over the route and scored accordingly.

which were built in 2020 for skate skiing and shooting challenges. He talks about Highlands outdoor education programs which offer experiential learning linked to the Ontario curriculum for all ages. The property includes hardwood, mixed, and cedar forests, clear-running streams, open meadows, and Escarpment topography. There is plenty for everyone to learn in this beautiful landscape!

Variety of Trails

Highlands Nordic trails wind and loop, offering varying length and skill levels. Trails are named and colour-coded to help with navigation. The trail grooming is meticulous for both skate and set track. The snowshoe trails and

Bruce Trail criss-cross our path. We head back to the lodge through snow-laden trees lit by solar-powered lights. The forest is truly beautiful at night! One turn, the Hairpin, gives me trouble on our route down the Escarpment, and I land spread-eagled and laughing in the soft snow.

Arriving back at the



chalet, we meet Fred Tustin, program manager, and Kathy Pedersen, pro shop assistant, just heading out for a night ski after work. Asked about her work, Kathy says, "We are all passionate about skiing and kind to each other. Our kids were Trailblazers and staff here too. Highlands is our second home and family!" They ski off happily together.

We head into the lodge for a snack. Warm banana bread from the cafe oven is a welcome treat. Highlands Nordic really does feel like family skiing! NEV

Sandra J. Howe's last feature for Niagara Escarpment Views was "Giving Thanks for Barrow Bay Cliffs Nature Reserve," Autumn 2022.



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Tropical WRITTEN BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT or a tropical experience on the Escarpment, Bird Kingdom in Niagara Falls provides welcome heat, humidity and the enjoyment of being in a bird-filled jungle.





the top and winds through the trees down to the bottom. The way is completely accessible for wheelchairs and strollers.

There are around 200 birds living here, representing more than 40 species from around the world. Birds flit, fly, hop, squawk and call through the lush plants that fill the glass building. At first it may be difficult to see the birds, but many have colourful plumage that let them stand out against the greenery.

Spectacular examples of vibrant species are the Blue and Gold Macaw, Scarlet Ibis, Blue-Crowned Pigeon.









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◆ The Bluecrowned Pigeon originates in New Guinea.





▶ Named Thor, the male Great Argus Pheasant rests in the foreground while the female is further back. This species is from Asia.

Not as colourful, but equally exciting, are the large Golden Pheasant, the Great Argus Pheasant, the Laughing Kookaburra from Australia.

Cross-Species Pairs

A fascinating development is that some of these birds have formed cross-species friendships, or pair bonds. One sweet couple is a Bluefronted Amazon parrot called Beau Bébé and Max, a much larger Hyacinth Macaw. Another pair is a Silvery-cheeked Hornbill and a Pied Crow. These two species have very different nesting habits, which led to some confusion between them. Steve Bush, education ambassador with Bird Kingdom, says "Polo brought

up a stick to her in the nest box and she opened her giant beak and feinted at him." The female didn't appreciate what the male was offering.

Feed the Birds!

There is one place in the large aviary where visitors are able to feed the birds. Lorikeet Landing is a large caged area that is home to

three kinds of Lorikeets from Australia, who have big beaks and are very colourful, and who look like small parrots. In the cage, the Lorikeets fly freely around people.

A visitor is given a small plastic cup of white liquid to hold out, and if a Lorikeet wants to, it will land on the outstretched hand or arm to feed from the cup. Two



▲ A bird from China, this female Golden Pheasant has stately tail feathers.



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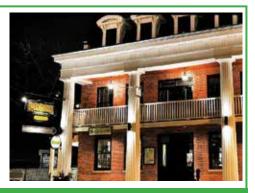
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▲ The Silver Pheasant is a stunning bird originating in Asia.

birds might compete for the liquid, and one may even give a warning nibble to a human finger as if to say "Behave!" And beware: a visitor standing too close to the cage wall could receive an unwelcome gift from a bird above, and experience hot guano down the neck and back!

Steve explains that Lorikeets "need to be in a separate area because they eat different food than the other birds in the aviary, and hard foods like seeds can damage the tongue bristles they need to drink nectar."

Other Experiences

While the three-storey aviary is the most dramatic area of Bird Kingdom, there are other exhibits to experience. The first is an open aviary where staff handlers demonstrate interactions with a variety of species of parrots. These birds seem to love attention and performing small tricks for treats. It's possible to get very close to these birds.

Another space, the Small Aviary, is a large room for free-flying smaller species including finches, pigeons, doves and quail, which enjoy foraging on the



▲ Australia's Laughing Kookaburra, with its amazing call, is always a favourite.



▲ Mike Davis with Lorikeets feeding from his hands. PHOTO BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT.

ground. There are 20 species of birds here, some rare or endangered. Tortoises and tiny frogs share the habitat.

A nocturnal area houses

creatures like bats, owls, frogs, snakes and lesser-known species, that may be active at night. These have shelters behind glass in darkened areas.

Conservation

Conservation issues are important here. The Egyptian Fruit Bats living in the nocturnal area are part of a species survival plan, which is, according to Steve, "accredited zoos working together to keep a species healthy in human care. There is a coordinator who makes sure the population is kept genetically diverse and at a good population level. Then if the species ever starts to decline in its native range, accredited zoos can reintroduce it and give the species a second chance to avoid extinction."

None of the birds and animals here were caught in the wild to become exhibits for Bird Kingdom. Some were donated by people who tried them as pets but can no longer look after them. Some animals were bought from breeders in Canada. Other animals were transferred

from other accredited zoos while four birds came from local wildlife rehabilitators.

"Exotic animals are not good pets," notes Steve. "Most parrot species are in decline due to capture for the pet trade, plus other types of animals. The more we can reduce demand for exotic pets, the better off the species will be in their native range."

It's recommended that you allow 60 to 90 minutes to walk through Bird Kingdom, but it's easy to spend a lot longer than that. Groups of 10 or more can arrange to have a tour with an animal care staff member who can answer questions and help you see the animals you would like to see. One family with three young boys frequently comes from Scarborough in the east end of Toronto to spend an afternoon there.

As Steve says, "There's always something different to see each time you come." NEV



Your Voice in Ottawa

FILOMENA TASSI, MP

Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas

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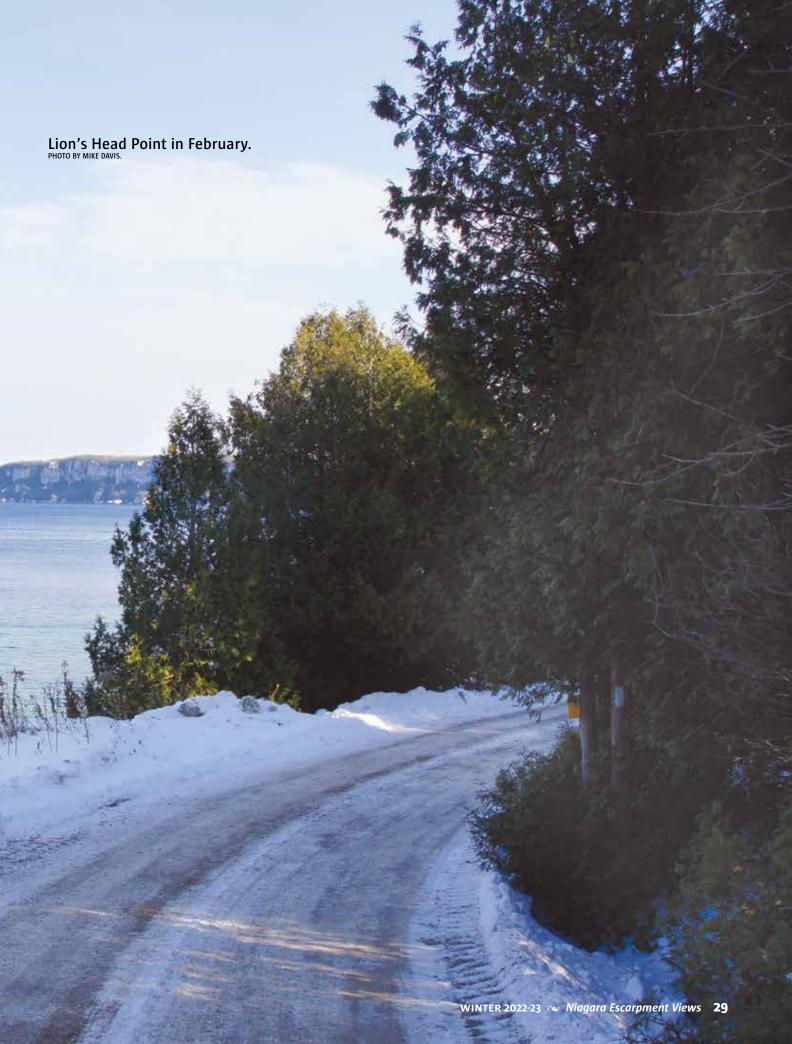


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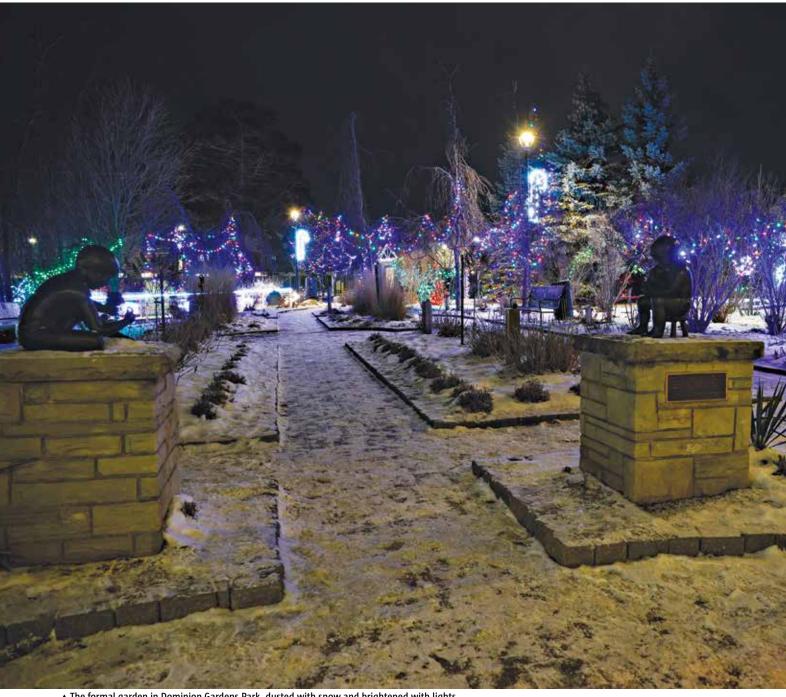


15 YEARS OF LIGHTS & COMFORT

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MIKE DAVIS | WRITTEN BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT

A bridge at Dominion Gardens Park, Georgetown, invites visitors to explore the many installations at Light Up the Hills.





▲ The formal garden in Dominion Gardens Park, dusted with snow and brightened with lights.

ecember 1 at 7pm is Ignition Night when the lights are turned on for the season and all the old and new lighting displays create a bright, magical space. There are illuminations that suggest Christmas, including a huge wreath, Santa Claus in his sleigh, grazing reindeer, and oversize candy canes. Other decorations celebrate winter by showing snowmen, a skating party, and Polar

Bears. These displays may change slightly each year as old ones are retired and new creations introduced.

The show can be enjoyed from before sunset, at 5 pm, until 11 pm daily from Dec. 1 to Jan. 3. Entrance is free and no reservations are needed. You're welcome to go for a stroll through the bright wonderland any evening of the season.

Light Up the Hills is the idea of Gerry Kentner of

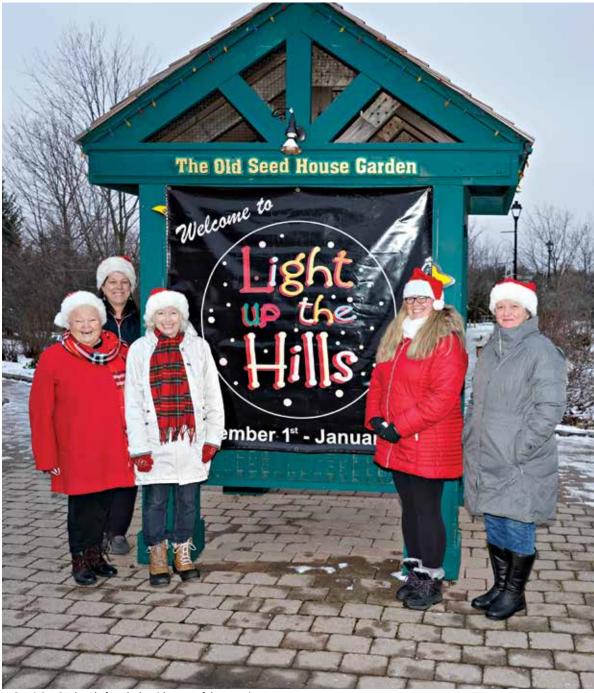
Georgetown. Gerry and daughter Lori Gysel published What's Cookin' Christmas Cookbook as a fundraiser for the festival, and it contains a description of the beginning:

"...on a cold, frosty night in February 2008... Gerry had been out for a drive with [husband] Dave and was wondering why was it that our local parks were so dark in winter - couldn't they use a little twinkle? By June of that same year, after

much planning, organizing, obtaining town permits, and major fundraising, we had secured a 12-member board of directors and on December 1, 2008, we illuminated 13 trees, three displays and the first Tree of Hope at Dominion Gardens Park in Georgetown with a fantastic turnout of 500 smiling faces."

In 2010 a second Tree of Hope was created in Acton Sports Park and in 2013 Shelagh Law Parkette in Glen





▲ Dominion Gardens before dusk, with some of the organizers.

Williams joined in with its own Tree of Hope. This third tree was donated by Al and Lois Fraser of Georgetown.

Memory Balls

Light Up the Hills is fully funded by community members: sponsors, donors, volunteers, and people who buy raffle tickets or Memory Balls. These balls are clear glass ornaments that are tagged with the names of loved ones and are hung on

a Tree of Hope in Dominion Gardens Park. They cost \$25 each and can be renewed the next year for \$10. Names on the Memory Balls are also put on a plaque and updated every year. A smaller plaque lists the names for new Memory Balls that are purchased each year.

"The plaques remain all year and many families visit the site throughout the year," says Marilyn Serjeantson, a member of the board. "It is a lovely spot for reflection and

remembrance. On December 1st that corner of the park is extremely busy. The Halton Hills community love the park but many really find comfort at the Memory Ball site. The volunteers that are involved with the Memory Ball program are very committed and proud of the program."

Funds, Costs

Another way of raising funds for the festival is by selling raffle tickets for prizes provided by sponsors. Tickets are \$5.00 each or three for \$10.00. They can be bought at the Downtown Georgetown Farmers Market, at designated times at Georgetown Marketplace and from members of Light Up the Hills who sell them. Sales close just before the draw at the Marketplace mall on December 13 this year.

The money raised is used exclusively to purchase lights and displays," explains Marilyn, "to pay for professional installers to decorate our major large Trees of Hope in Georgetown, Acton and Glen Williams, and to set up and store our lighted displays. We have to make sure the park trees are not damaged. The Trees of Hope and our major displays need professionals to install, including the lights, and to maintain the displays and store them. This budget alone is over \$25,000.00 each year. Money is also used to purchase the hundreds of additional lights and electrical cords needed in the park areas."

Volunteer Work

Volunteers add hundreds of lights to the numerous trees and bushes in the Dominion Gardens Park and the Acton Arena site. Volunteers maintain the park and displays. They walk the park each evening to check the displays and lights. At the end of the festival, they take down the lights and small displays, storing them in a leased storage facility. Volunteers manage the Memory Ball program which includes the tabulation, preparation, hanging, maintenance and storage of the Memory Balls. Volunteers fundraise, manage draw ticket sales and staff booths at the Farmers Market and the Marketplace Mall. Volunteers advertise and even create Light Up the Hills displays in Young's drugstore window and at the local libraries during December.

"We would like to thank our generous sponsors for their donations of money and inkind services," states Marilyn. "We need community support to light up the hills! Our dedicated, hard-working volunteers are the strength that makes Light Up the Hills work. However, we need

Continued on page 37







▲ Ladies of the lights, from left: Donna Volpini, Natalie Smurthwaite, Gerry Kentner, Michele Cameron, Marilyn Serjeantson.

◆ A memory plaque of names from 2012 to 2020.









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volunteers. Some of them are now 15 years older and a younger group of enthusiastic citizens would help make the dream continue to light up our community. The more people that are involved and take pride in what is presented throughout Halton Hills, the better our displays will be and they will continue to shine. Our volunteers are committed and take pride in what they do to make Light Up the Hills such a success."

For the latest, updated information, to donate, sponsor or volunteer, see www.LightUptheHills.com. **NEV**





◆ Some of the Lighting Displays





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olling Hills Farm between Erin and Georgetown has a fascinating history. The beautiful farm became well known under the stewardship of Brigadier-General Frederick Campbell Wallace. In 1963 and 1965, Wallace allowed an archeological dig alongside Rogers Creek on his adjoining property across the road. Evidence of a prehistoric Iroquoian-speaking village was uncovered.

In 1961 Wallace had purchased the Rogers' family fishing camp that sported cabins for overnight stays, a 1929 dam that flooded an old quarry, large barn and a solid stone house built in 1883. In preparation for retirement Wallace commissioned a modern bungalow on his farm in 1963.

After serving in World War II and heading the Tizard mission that invented radar, Wallace led a high-profile corporate career. He lived in Georgetown with his wife Vera as head of Smith & Stone. He was involved in several other corporations, including as a director of Eaton's department stores.

Yet his business credentials were not what interested the Queen. Brigadier and Mrs. Wallace loved horses. Wallace served as hunt master for the Eglinton and Caledon Hunt Club from 1958 until 1976. Rolling Hills Farm became the Saturday morning rendezvous for the riders of the club. Wallace was also chairman of the Ontario Racing Commission from 1965 until April 1973.

Royal Tour of 1973

Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip were invited to Canada twice in 1973. They spent 11 days on the first trip and four days on a trip beginning on the 31st of July. The second trip was to open the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, in Ottawa.

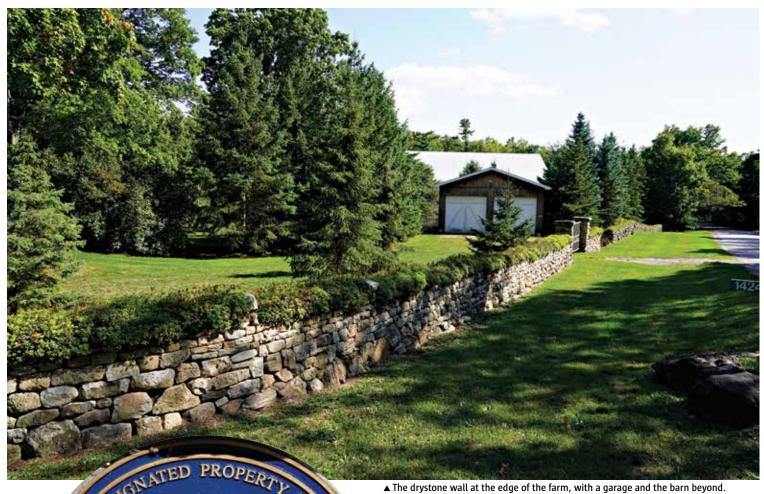
The first trip began on June 25 in Toronto and involved an extended tour of southern Ontario. The royal couple flew to Toronto and were greeted by His Excellency Governor-General Roland Michener and Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau. In a nod to history, The Queen and Prince Philip travelled by train, using the Governor-General's private rail cars. They made official visits to Cobourg, Kingston, Cambridge, Kitchener,

Waterloo, London, St. Catharines, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Scarborough, Brampton, and Malton. The royal agenda for June 29 indicated that at noon, the royal couple would proceed to their "rest area."

After visiting Brampton, the royal couple were whisked north to the John Eaton estate, Hawkridge Farm, in the Caledon hills. Not far away was the estate of Brigadier Wallace in Esquesing Township. The gruelling public schedule was placed on hold while the royal couple enjoyed the beauty of the Niagara Escarpment.

Enjoying the Escarpment

The Queen and Prince Philip would have spotted the drystone fence alongside the dusty road before arriving at the front gates with fieldstone



THE FIRST HOUSE ON THIS LAND, BUILT ABOUT 1854 BY ALBERT BONESTEEL, WAS FOLLOWED BY THIS GOTHIC REYIVAL STONE HOUSE BUILT BY FREDERICK NEAR IN 1883. THE FARM FEATURES A BARN CIRCA 1890, A POND ONCE USED AS A QUARRY, AND A FORMER FISHING CAMP, A LATER OWNER, BRIGADIER-GENERAL E.C. WALLACE, HOSTED H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH II DURING HER 1973 TOUR OF SOUTHERN ONTARIO.

▲ Whole story in one place. Affixed to one of

the farm's gate posts, this plaque from Heritage Halton Hills says it all.

posts. Brigadier Wallace had had the drystone wall and gates constructed by Glen Williams' stone mason Gerry Ingles when his new house was being built.

To the right of the drive was the two-storey Gothic Revival-style house built of stone extracted from the quarry on the property by

owner Frederick Near, a stone mason by trade. The gables and porch of the 1883 house were dressed in gingerbread trim, topped with ornate finials.

The driveway drops halfway down the hill to the single-storey retirement home of Brigadier and Mrs. Wallace, clad in cedar



▲ The large barn that sheltered fine, well-kept horses, still stands.



▲ Fieldstone posts support gates at the farm entrances.



▲ A plaque on the old stone house which was built from stone quarried on the property.

Stone Mason PALTON HILL



◆ The Queen likely saw this gravestone for a beloved pet who died in 1971.

shakes. This beautiful home with a huge picture window looking down the river valley included a great room with a fireplace. The master bedroom included a dressing room and ensuite bathroom.

A stroll on the grounds allowed inspection of the several cabins still extant from the days of a fishing camp. A large dam created a trout pond in the former quarry. Roger's Creek continued below the dam passing through a

second pond as it trickled down the Escarpment to join the Credit River. The remnants of the pioneer apple orchard included a memorial stone to the Brigadier's dog, Duke, who died in 1971.

Love of Horses

At the end of the pond stood the massive barn where The Queen would have been shown the stables and met the resident horses. We can only imagine her pleasure.



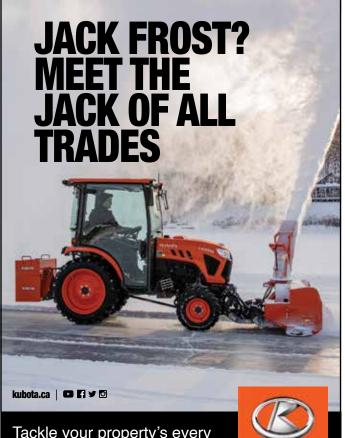
▲ The original farmhouse dates to 1883 and was built by stone mason Frederick Near.

Saturday morning may have brought out many more horses and their dogs, belonging to the riders of the Eglinton and Caledon Hunt Club for their usual chase.

The Queen's appreciation of horses was demonstrated at her funeral procession in September 2022, led by five Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), with four sitting astride the magnificent horses gifted to the Queen by the RCMP. That tradition

began in 1969 with the gift of Burmese which Her Majesty rode at the Trooping of the Colour ceremony for the next 18 years.

Queen Elizabeth loved horses, of that there was no doubt, but as Queen Camilla has revealed, her passion was horse racing. Brigadier Wallace and The Queen would have had many points to discuss about their horses, his involvement in the Hunt Club and particularly about



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◀ View for a queen. This is the original picture window in the living room of the bungalow where The Queen stayed.





the next item on the royal tour – The Queen's Plate.

The 114th Queen's Plate, Canada's oldest thoroughbred horse race was held at Woodbine Racetrack in Toronto on the afternoon on Saturday September 30, 1973. The gold cup and 50 guineas were presented by Her Majesty to the winner, Royal Chocolate.

After the race The Queen and Prince Philip boarded an airplane at the Malton airport and continued the royal tour in Prince Edward Island. She was there on Dominion Day to commemorate the centennial of Prince Edward

Island as a province.

Today Rolling Hills
Farm is still a private estate,
designated under the Ontario
Heritage Act. It retains all the
charm and beauty that was
enjoyed by Queen Elizabeth II
and Prince Philip on their very
short rest break during the
1973 royal tour of Canada. **NEV**

John Mark Rowe is an active historian and author. He has published several local history books and articles. Rowe received the Ontario Trust Lifetime Heritage Award and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal.



▲ This stamp of The Queen was issued to commemorate her visit in 1973, when she briefly stayed at Rolling Hills Farm. IMAGE COURTESY OF JOHN MARK ROWE.



lacktriangle The Brigadier on one of his horses at his farm in 1966. He and The Queen shared a love of horses. PHOTO FROM ESQUESING HISTORICAL SOCIETY ARCHIVES.





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VIEW OF LAND CONSERVATION

One Conservation Thread

By Bob Barnett

s the sun rises over the LaCloche Mountains near Manitoulin Island, I find it strange that Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy (EBC) has managed to protect 85 sq km of nature like the North Channel view I'm looking at now. What's strange is that my personal life's thread is just part of a whole tapestry of donors, board members, volunteers and staff who have pieced together 214 reserves over the last 25 years.

I grew up at Bayview and Eglinton in Toronto. At that time, Bayview had a one-lane bridge and Eglinton stopped at the Don River. I played in the swamp at the corner and jumped off the sand cliffs which were later replaced by Canada's first shopping centre. We had a small farm behind the house my Dad had built on an unpaved street. We spent Julys on Lake Scugog where I'd paddle down to the swamp and watch frogs and turtles.

As I studied architecture at University of Toronto, I joined the UofT Outing Club and started hiking, caving, climbing and canoeing with a group of outdoorsy people who slept under poly sheets and braved the snow and cold water. As I graduated, we started the white-water arm of the club and kayaked rivers as close as the Don, Humber and Credit, but more often the Madawaska, Petawawa, Ottawa, Rouge, Ste. Anne and once the Snake in Idaho.

When our kids arrived, I cut out the death-defying stuff and Anna and I introduced them to the Bruce Trail. We hiked the whole thing in stages over two and a half years and my son was the youngest to finish it in 1986. Urban

development was closing in each time we drove through St. Catharines and Brampton. I could see fewer fields and forests with every trip.

That pushed me to join the Bruce Trail where I found 15 properties for sale as I went out to complete two more end-to-ends. I got to be chair of their land committee as we bought those and other properties with Ontario funding. Later I chaired their fundraising committee and became a board member as we protected as much trail as possible. But not everything was smooth. The government would only protect 100 metres of trail corridor and the Bruce Trail's executive director at the time wanted to divest the land to reduce tax and insurance liabilities.

Escarpment Land Trust

So, I collected some allies and thought up an alternate plan: a land trust for the whole area of the Niagara Escarpment. A few months later, 44 invitees joined us at Halton Conservation and we agreed to start a trust. With the help of Doug Larson, we held our first official meeting at Henry Nordin's and added "Biosphere" to our name. Terk Bayly of Ontario Heritage Trust and I discussed who should be the first chair. He suggested me, with him as vice. Unfortunately, he died six months later. He, incidentally, placed Ontario's first conservation agreement on his land in Meaford. EBC is now working with the Almond family to protect the land right next door, sharing Workman's Creek.

Mac Kirk was a big supporter in those days. He assembled 19,000 acres for the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority. He and I travelled Grey County meeting his friends as he mentored me



▲ Bob and his grandson Jack preparing found animal bones for an EBC display. PHOTO PROVIDED BY BOB BARNETT.

about trees and wetlands and how he raised money.

Those were good days. In 1999 Tom Ashman and Dee Cherrie from Rural Rootz helped us with our first agreement on the Escarpment, between quarries in Wiarton. Charlotte Vansickle sold us our first reserve at Dyer's Bay. From four reserves in three years, we went to four more in 2001 alone, to nine reserves in 2002 with the help of supporters like Bill Murdoch and Ontario funding. Now we have reached a frenetic pace with seven reserves in March 2022 alone and a projected 42 more reserves before March '23 with funding from Environment and Climate Change Canada. This week alone, I visited 11 existing or proposed reserves, met with four landowners and deposited the funds to create our 213th reserve!

Very strange, this path that has led us here. We now have over 5,000 supporters, 600 annual donors, 100 land donors, 300 members, three full-time staff and roughly 60 volunteers supporting our 14 board members. We have 214 nature reserves today, 48 on the Niagara Escarpment alone and the rest protecting the Escarpment ecosystem from the rivers that flow out of it, like the Nottawasaga and the Saugeen watershed where its tributaries all join, then end at the Huron shore.

We have about 120 reserves open for public visits and 96 km of trails. We all hope you will visit, take the kids, watch nature as I did over all these years, lower your blood pressure, and start the cycle all over again.

Bob Barnett, executive director of Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy, can be reached through www.escarpment.ca or at 888.815.9575.

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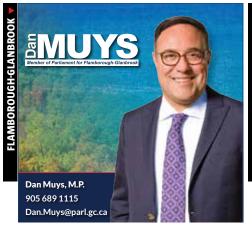








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I GUEST MEMOIR

The Farm



By Katherine Sasek

hen I was five years old my parents separated, and with my mother we moved from Port Credit to Meadowvale, Mississauga. My father, shortly after, built a house on a 50-acre parcel of farmland he had purchased several years before. The land was located on the 4th line in Milton, between the 5th and 10th Sideroad. There were working farms all around the property and the land gently rolled with wooded areas lining large crop fields. Along the north edge of the property there were the remains of a long-forgotten driveway ending at a small wooden bridge that crossed a meandering creek flowing from a pond. Above the pond, on a small knoll, was likely where that old original farmhouse sat. A boarded-up well was the only remnant of that long-ago property.

That old driveway was to be my path to many adventures when I visited every other weekend. My father had given me a minibike from a mechanic friend of the family - a peppy little Yamaha 60. With that bike I used to imagine I was riding off into the great unknown down that overgrown laneway.

But my favourite pastime was packing a lunch and heading off into the woods to explore the back '50'. Left on my own all day long in the summer while my father and stepmother worked in the city, I would dream up wild fantasies

that I was dropped off in a remote wood and had to fight off bears and wolves to find my way back to safety. I knew every inch of that farm and fell in love with the trees and remoteness of the land. 50 acres to a 10-year-old might as well be a thousand miles from civilization.

My dad used to have fun with my wild imagination. The property was indeed remote in the '70s. Compared to the modern conveniences a half hour drive away in the suburbs of Mississauga, we only had three television channels that, weather dependent, were able to tune with the old Sputnik-like antenna on the roof. Everywhere was long distance. We even shared a phone line - a party line, with neighbouring farmers. Winters were long and snowy, the wind howled around the empty fields unobstructed, and nights were inky black with millions of shining stars. Sitting around the fireplace at night, my dad would quietly disappear, then suddenly all the power would go out. Alarmed, I would call out to my dad in the complete darkness, then slowly a 'woooing' sound could be heard and a ghostly face lit from below by a flashlight would seem to float up the stairs. I would scream and beg for the lights to be turned back on.

Another time, capitalizing on my fear of the bathroom on the first floor, my father waited patiently for me to use the bathroom one evening. The bathroom was a long rectangular room with a window at

the end. It was at the side of the house away from the main living room. To me it felt like a thousand miles from the rest of the house and I used to delay nature's call for as long as possible. Hurriedly this one evening I made my way there and seated myself, firmly hoping to get out of there as soon as possible, when suddenly a loud banging on the window knocked me right off my perch and on to the floor. Howling in fear I ran like heck out of the bathroom running straight into my dad coming in the front door doubled over with laughter. I gave him my most indignant 10-yearold frown and stormed off.

Another time I was so angry with my older brother that I took his cherished Led Zeppelin record and buried it along the treeline at the edge of a field. I figured if he found out I had taken it and was angry at me I could dig it up, clean it up and return it. I feel a little bad about that now. Given that it is vinyl, it is likely still buried there. Polluting pristine land is something I am strongly against.

I often drive by that farm. Little has changed. The little cedar trees I remember planting with my dad all along the long driveway have grown mature and stately. But the land all around remains the same, rolling farmland with woods and creeks and plenty of adventure for the new youngsters who live there now.

Katherine Sasek dedicates this to her dad Arnold, with thanks for the wonderful memories.



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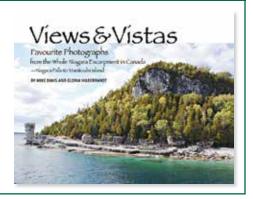
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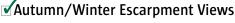
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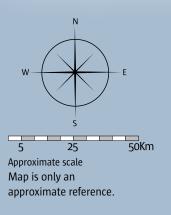
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