

Niagara Escarpment **ViEWS**

SUMMER 2023 (JUNE, JULY, AUGUST)



**OWEN SOUND'S
RECONCILIATION
GARDEN**

SHEGUIANDAH'S Archaeological Trail

**BETH GILHESPY'S
BOOK**
Walking Through Time

**FOUR SEASON VISITS
to Petun
Conservation Area**

ARTIST
Leonard Beam

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Niagara Escarpment **Views**



Summer 2023
(June, July, August)

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Photo by Mike Davis.

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



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

15 YEARS OF PUBLISHING

Our Readers Have Influence!



Also in this Issue

In contrast to this negative news, our other features are more cheerful. Sandra Howe reports on a special new garden that has been created in Owen Sound to celebrate Indigenous history and bring together people of all cultures.

We also

share an exploration of the Sheguiandah Archaeological Trail on Manitoulin Island. Guided tours are offered that give the feeling of travelling back in time, as you climb up a slope that goes back thousands of years.

In the Escarpment lands south of Georgian Bay, new access has been created to give visitors a convenient entrance to Petun Conservation Area throughout the year. The Bruce Trail main trail and a side trail provide easy ways to experience the various habitats that are established here.

Those who follow the offerings of the Bruce Trail may know that Beth Gilhespy, a former CEO of the Bruce Trail Conservancy, is a geologist known for giving specialized tours of the Bruce Trail, explaining the various

rocks and fascinating layers of sediment visible along the Escarpment. She has written a book about the geology of the Beaver Valley section of trail, and we are delighted to present excerpts and images from this work.

Influential Readers

As happened with the Greenbelt feature, our readers sometimes urge us to write particular articles. Sometimes they give us great ideas and help us put together interesting pieces. At times they even influence our advertisers. This has happened more than once in response to Foodland ads in our magazine.

Regular readers may know that Foodland store managers, long-standing advertisers with us, usually have a seasonal recipe in each ad. Some time ago, a recipe was missing an important step, and we got letters pointing that out! We let Foodland head office know about this, and they acknowledged their mistake in the recipe. They had proof that our readers act on the recipes.

For Spring 2023, the Foodland ad had a QR code on it. We told our contacts at Foodland that we thought some of our readers might not like that. Foodland wanted to know how many people acted on the QR code in that ad, so it remained. Then one of the managers of a Foodland store

heard from the customers who didn't like the code, who wanted to see the whole recipe at once, who referred to the recipe in the store to buy the right ingredients. He heard in such number, that he passed on this response to us and to the Foodland head office. Our contacts replied that they would go back to publishing complete recipes in their ads.

Our readers care about what is in our magazine, are not shy about letting us know this, and we are delighted by their – your – responses!

Send Us Your News

We always like publishing photos of events that take place all along the Escarpment. Send us your photos with some details about what happened, when, where, and who is in the photo. As well, we'd like to resume our calendar of coming events, so if you're planning something interesting, send us the details. The only catch is that we have to know very far in advance, like about four months ahead of time!

Gloria Hildebrandt

P.S. Wild animals need wild spaces.

After passing Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster on Nov. 28, our provincial Progressive Conservative government went on to pass amendments to the Greenbelt Act, on Dec. 21, 2022. Three days before Christmas. Were you paying close attention to this that day? I wasn't, I was preparing for the holiday. It was one of our subscribers who urged us to publish a piece on the threats to the Greenbelt, and introduced us to Doreen Nicoll, who wrote the article for us that appears in this issue. While widespread opposition to these rushed changes remain, media coverage about this issue has faded. Perhaps when shovels begin to hit the wetlands and sensitive animal habitats, concern will resume.

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.

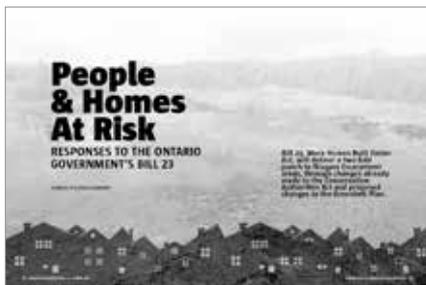
 *Niagara Escarpment Views* is on Facebook as: www.facebook.com/N.E.Views

READERS & VIEWERS



The spring 2023 issue is outstanding!
Gord McNulty, Hamilton

I am very happy with how it [the Spring issue] turned out. Thank you for featuring a Portfolio of my work. The front copy looks great too!
Greg Coman, Georgetown



I made 2 copies of your Article – Bill 23. Mailed 1 Doug Ford – Premier, 2 Marit Stiles – NDP Leader.
Edward Naftolin, Burlington



The article is amazing. You are such a good writer. Thank you so much for getting this out there. And photos are superb! Thank Mike for making me look so good.
Brenda McEnery, Erin

Beautiful mag! Hugs, Health and Happiness,
Regan Roy, Mindemoya

I have read a few of your magazines and I love them.
Ursula Hopkins, Brampton



I just wanted to send a line to tell you how much I enjoy your magazine. I especially enjoyed the winter edition which featured Rolling Hills Farm and the Queen's visit. I live not far from that farm, up in the escarpment.
Deborah McLachlan, by email

I have found your magazine very entertaining in the first year I have had a subscription. It has also been interesting that in each issue there usually is something noted within 25 kilometers of where we live. I was born and live within two miles of the Silent Valley Side Trail that Ron Savage and the Sydenham Bruce Trail Club developed and have spent my life since the early 1960s walking that property near Bognor, Ontario. Keep up the good work with this magazine.
Gary Shute, Bognor

I live in Niagara and have enjoyed the Niagara Escarpment since I was a child. I enjoy reading your magazine very much! I would like to purchase a two-year gift subscription for good friends who now live in Alberta.
Terry Hall, email

We have been ardent viewers of your magazine for a couple of years now and being an ex Brit I wondered whether

you had ever thought of trying to invite interest in our escarpment over there. I have a dear friend who lived in Canada when she was only 18 but had to return to Britain after being here only one year. I am sure there are quite a lot of immigrants who have returned to England for some reason or other who would love to re-visit some of their old haunts through your magazine.....just a thought I had!!!!!!

Jeannie McGeary, Aged 86, Guelph

Editor's note: We're delighted with your email, Jeannie, and want to remind people that our back issues are available on our website under Magazine and then Back Issues.



Brody posing in a Niagara Escarpment Views fanana.

PHOTO SUBMITTED BY JOSEPH MOUSSEAU, BURLINGTON.

A couple of years ago I relocated permanently up to the cottage in the Tobermory area. As an avid reader of history, geography, The Escarpment, etc, I was delighted yesterday, to find your "Views & Vistas" in the local Tobermory bookshop! I'm familiar with many of the locations the images were taken at. I'm about to pour a coffee and enjoy a good read and view - well done....an excellent addition to my personal library!
Dave Buckton, Tobermory

[Advertisement]

CHANGE IS NEEDED AT ESCARPMENT BIOSPHERE CONSERVANCY

Founder and Executive Director Bob Barnett Fired Without Cause – Time to Change the Board

On February 28, 2023, Bob Barnett was terminated as the Executive Director of EBC. This board decision was made behind six months of closed-door board meetings with Barnett not being allowed to defend himself at such meetings.

Barnett, co-founder and for 20 years the Executive Director of EBC working tirelessly and for minimal compensation, had just completed EBC's most successful year ever with 26 new nature reserves and 2,974 new acres (12 sq km) protected, making EBC second only to The Nature Conservancy among land trusts in protecting Ontario with 226 nature reserves.

WAY FORWARD REQUIRES A NEW BOARD

EBC is a major Land Trust in Ontario and must be governed by a board with the sophistication and expertise needed to develop its strategy, have a competent staff in place (with a succession plan) and that is fiscally prudent. This is a unique time in the history of land preservation with many new government grants available to successful organizations like EBC. The EBC board must be changed at the June Annual Meeting of Members. EBC needs a strong capable board with experience in land conservation that sees the future clearly and which understand a board's role – to focus on policy development and having the right staff in place.

WHAT SHOULD THE NEW BOARD FOCUS ON?

To move forward, the new board should:

1. Develop an updated strategic plan focussed on land acquisition to protect the Escarpment which is under increasing attack utilizing new government funding.
2. Develop a long-term stewardship plan including having the funds needed to fulfil this core obligation, recognizing that Nature does a pretty good job growing without human interference. A key part of stewardship is encouraging access to walking trails, while fencing out wheeled vehicles, to provide public access.
3. Build a community of supporters and donors to ensure that EBC can protect Nature's "services" to our world such as cleaner air and water while increasing the habitat for species and sequestering carbon in ancient trees which eventually decay and store carbon in the soil.
4. Develop a long-term people plan, including a succession plan for the Executive Director and other key staff. Barnett had been working on implementing a succession plan for the organization - always a challenge with not for profits with limited resources – giving EBC the time needed to allow Barnett to retire in due course.

WE NEED YOUR HELP TO ELECT A NEW BOARD

A number of good candidates, including land donors and long-term volunteers, have stepped forward and more are likely to join them, to stand for election to form a fresh, skilled board.

WE NEED YOUR HELP TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN.

- First, if you are not a member of EBC, please join. It is simple and can be done online at <https://escarpment.ca>.
- Second, email us at escbiosphere@gmail.com to give us your contact information.
- And third, once the AGM date is announced, we will be in touch to give you information about the proposed new board members and how you can vote for them.

Together we can set EBC back on the path of successful land conservation!

Barbara Heidenreich | Gunter Springer | Doug Dingeldein | Ivor Simmons | Gwen McConkey

(These supporters and donors have been a major part of EBC's success including more than a dozen nature reserves and very significant cash and volunteer-time donations.)

EVENTS



▲ Rick Peacock of Peacock's Foodland in Tobermory, cut the ribbon at the Jan. 19 opening of the new location at 7357 Hwy 6. PHOTO BY JOHN FRANCIS.

Fresh Strawberry Pie

Prep Time: 20 min. | Total Time: 1 hr. 40 min. | Serves: 8

Ingredients

- 1 cup finely crushed chocolate chip cookies (blitzed in processor)
- 3 tbsp unsalted butter, melted
- 8 oz brick-style plain cream cheese
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/4 cup strawberry jam
- 4 cups halved strawberries

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 180°C (350°F). Toss together cookie crumbs and melted butter; press into 9-in. (23 cm) pie pan, covering the bottom and up 3/4 in. (2 cm) on the sides. (Note: The sides of this shallow crust do not reach the rim of the pan.) Bake 10 min. Cool completely on wire rack.
2. Meanwhile, beat cream cheese with brown sugar until light and fluffy. Spread into pie crust. Chill about 1 hr. until firm.
3. Melt strawberry jam in small saucepan set over medium-low heat for 3 to 5 min, until runny. Cool slightly; toss with strawberries to coat.
4. Top pie with strawberries. Serve immediately.



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Music in the Gardens

Sunday evenings; July 2 – August 27

RBG Hendrie Park, Mitchell's Field

Bring a lawn chair or pack a blanket, grab a cold drink and enjoy performances featuring local and award-winning musicians in our lovely garden setting.

Shakespeare in the Garden – Living with Shakespeare presented by Driftwood Theatre

August 25 – 27 | RBG Laking Garden

Driftwood Theatre presents Living With Shakespeare. Driftwood Artistic Director Jeremy Smith reckons with his life-long relationship to the Bard of Avon. Weaving scenes, passages, and music from Shakespeare's greatest plays with personal stories from Jeremy's lifelong relationship to the Bard. Run time: Approximately 90 minutes. No intermission.

What's in Bloom

Iris - June

Peonies - June

Roses - end of June through to August



Come enjoy dishes inspired by fresh, seasonal ingredients. Reservations available at our RBG Rock Garden Bistro.



Royal
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rbg.ca/more-to-do    

EVENTS



▲ On March 9, after part of the Welland Canal had been drained of water for extensive maintenance work, Lock 5 was made available for some people to have a rare, behind-the-scenes tour. PHOTO BY MIKE DAVIS.



▲ Tom and Stephanie Jellicoe of Wiarion Foodland staffed the Foodland booth at the Spring Cottage Life Show in Mississauga on March 23. They are pointing to their store in Wiarion on the Bruce Peninsula. PHOTO BY MIKE DAVIS.

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EVENTS ■



▲ On March 7, Gloria Hildebrandt gave a presentation to the Georgetown chapter of Canadian Federation of University Women, about *Niagara Escarpment Views* magazine. Afterward, Greg Coman, whose photo was the cover for Spring 2023, was urged to stand beside the huge projection of his work.



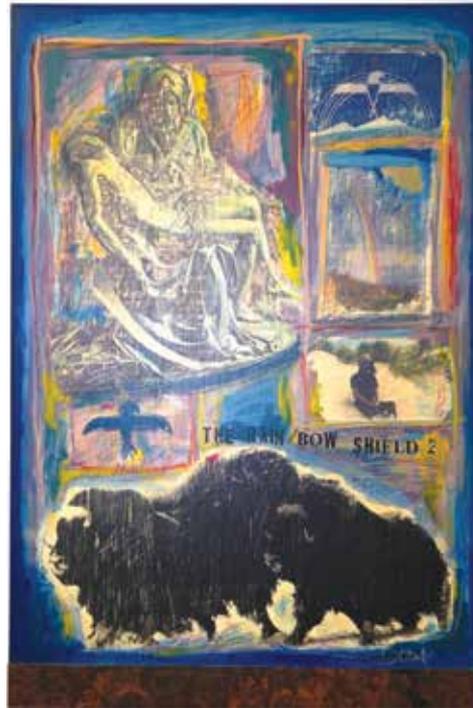
▲ People inspected many kinds of electric vehicles at the April 22 Race to Net Zero event that was held at Acton Arena and Community Centre.

Leonard Beam: True to His Own Ideas

WRITTEN BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT | PHOTOS BY MIKE DAVIS



▲ Leonard Beam in his Pinecone Art Gallery between two works that seem to explore the residential school experience. The birds suggest freedom, while the Thunderbird, frequently seen in his work, is a powerful symbol of the culture that was forbidden during the '60s Scoop.



▲ Images of power from a couple of cultures: a *pieta*, Thunderbirds, bison, a rainbow, and a dark figure of Leonard in a field, with the words "The Rain/Bow Shield 2."



▲ Three birds fly or escape during moonshine, while below, three faintly painted figures are walking.

One sign of good art is that the more you look at a work, the more you see and appreciate. This is true of the creations of Leonard Beam. His mixed-media paintings use various surfaces, acrylics, inks, tempura paints and photo transfers to create dream-like compositions with layers of possible meanings.

As a child of the "60s Scoop," when Native children were taken from their homes in an attempt to assimilate them into the dominant culture of

the time, Leonard seems to be exploring this trauma in some of his works, even repeating themes in various ways. Leonard makes frequent use of birds, feathers, photographs of old cars, and words. Birds and feathers seem to suggest flight, freedom or escape. The older-model cars have a beauty but may indicate the experience of being taken away from home.

He uses letters and language in word play that makes you think of words in a new way, especially with a perspective that reflects

Native experiences. Letters may not be the first thing you see in some of his works, but after careful study, they gradually become visible. The palindrome "live evil" appears in one work; "HORSE POWER" in another. The name of one of his exhibitions was "The Traveling Alter Native Medicine Show."

If Leonard's last name is familiar, it's because members of his extended family are also artists. His brother, Carl Beam, was the first Native artist to have contemporary

work bought by the National Gallery of Canada. Carl's wife is Ann Beam, who has been featured in this magazine, and his niece is Anong Beam, a painter and paint maker.

Leonard's Pinecone Art Gallery is located in M'Chigeeng on Manitoulin Island. Along with beautiful small works of cabinetry, there are paintings of all sizes, plus prints and lithographs. Prices range from \$60 to \$5,000.

5915 Hwy 540,
M'Chigeeng 705.348.2770



▲ Wordplay adds humour to this work that acknowledges the border state of Michigan and travel between two countries.



▲ Dreamlike images are bordered by the red letters of HORSE POWER, while at the bottom looms the dark block of an institutional building.

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Photos from "Seven Stones"

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Farmland to Sprawl

Ford Government Defies Public Response, Removes Greenbelt Lands From Protection

BY DOREEN NICOLL

In November 2022, the Ontario government passed Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act as part of their strategy to build 1.5 million homes over the next decade. To meet that goal, the Ford government proposed significant amendments to the Greenbelt Act. Yet the mandate of this act, and accompanying plan, is to permanently protect from development, agricultural and environmentally-sensitive lands in the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

During the 30-day consultation period, close to 20,000 comments were submitted. By the government's own admission, these comments overwhelmingly opposed any removals or redesignation of lands under the Greenbelt Plan. The summary of comments emphasized that numerous submissions asserted that the proposal was contradictory to the vision and goals of the Greenbelt Plan and requested a full withdrawal of the proposal. Concerns were voiced over the lack of transparency and scientific process around the identification and evaluation of proposed removals.

Overall, environmental groups were unsupportive, citing concerns for the environmental impacts of the proposal due to the role the Greenbelt plays in addressing climate change. The home

building industry supported the proposal, maintaining it would contribute to increasing housing supply.

Public consultation resulted in no changes to the original proposal. Despite the overwhelming lack of support, on December 21, 2022 the provincial government passed all amendments.

Lands in the Niagara Escarpment area that have been removed from protection in the Greenbelt Area include:

- Land located in the City of Hamilton south of Garner Road West, west of Fiddlers Green Road, east of Shaver Road in the vicinity of Book Road
- Land located in the City of Hamilton south of White Church Road East, west of Miles Road, north of Chippewa Road East, east of Upper James Street
- Land in the Town of Grimsby south of the GO rail line, west of Oakes Road North, north of Main Street West, east of Kelson Ave North
- Land located in the City of Hamilton at 331 and 339 Fifty Road

Public consultation resulted in no changes to the original proposal. Despite the overwhelming lack of support, on December 21, 2022 the provincial government passed all amendments.

Over 88,000 urban acres are available for housing starts within the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. Instead of utilizing development-ready lands, the government removed 7,400 acres of protected Greenbelt land, replacing it with 9,400 acres elsewhere to build 50,000 homes within the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Mike Marcolongo, coordinator of Keep the Greenbelt Promise Campaign, reminds people that we all need to build more efficiently and smartly. "That fight for the Greenbelt is also about the fight for the Escarpment because the Escarpment is a key ecological corridor in the Greenbelt," he says.

The Greenbelt provides a buffer for development around large sections of the Niagara Escarpment. Carving off sections will diminish natural animal and plant corridors forcing these species up the Escarpment. Fragmenting agricultural and natural landscapes by removing thousands of acres undermines the protection of wetlands, woodlands, rivers, streams and wildlife habitat.

The trend under the Conservative government is that any wetland under two hectares in size doesn't deserve protection from development. Bill 23 takes that even further by eliminating the endangered species criterion that would

previously have protected a wetland from development.

"We're going to start seeing applications to pave over the smaller wetlands even if they are part of a larger complex," says Mike.

Government policy means developers could destroy ecological features as long as the feature is recreated elsewhere or the developer pays a fee in lieu of habitat reconstruction. Historically, this approach has been unsuccessful because wetlands connect to the existing natural groundwater system unique to that area. Likewise, replacing a 200-year-old Eastern White Cedar or old-growth forest with newly planted trees falls far short of replicating the antiquity and environmental significance lost to development.

Housing Needs

Ontario welcomes hundreds of thousands of immigrants every year. The government needs to recognize the majority of those needing housing want to be in established areas with solid public transit and essential services.

The fight for the Greenbelt is also about the fight for the Escarpment because the Escarpment is a key ecological corridor in the Greenbelt.

When Hamilton held a referendum in 2022, Hamiltonians resoundingly said no to sprawl. The provincial government recently ripped out sections of Hamilton's official plan that accommodated new builds within the urban boundary, replacing it with sprawl legislation requiring more aggregate for roads and infrastructure.

Grimsbey council voiced concerns over two parcels of land that lost Greenbelt designation. Their quota of 7,000 homes could be accommodated without using lands the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority identified as floodplains.

Alliance for a Liveable Ontario wants to stop provincial government messaging and emerging policies that undermine environmental protection of the Niagara Escarpment. The non-partisan group represents hundreds of thousands of Ontarians from diverse sectors including agriculture, housing, academia, urban planning, environmentalism, and labour.

"Bill 23 makes it easier for developers to bulldoze natural areas and farmland and turn it into sprawling neighbourhoods which we frankly don't need," says Franz Hartmann of Alliance for a Liveable Ontario. He maintains that building large, expensive homes will not address the housing needs of Ontarians, but will lead to the destruction of farmland, natural areas, and even the Niagara Escarpment.

"You get to a tipping point where there just isn't enough land available to maintain the biodiversity that we need," he adds.

Biodiversity loss is one of the consequences of Bill

23 which Phil Pothén of Environmental Defence asserts the Ford government has packaged as somehow relating to housing supply. In-house counsel and Ontario environment program manager with Environmental Defence, Phil says the net effect of Bill 23 will be to produce fewer homes in more expansive forms and in places where the overwhelming majority of Ontarians say they don't want to live.

According to Phil, "There are a small number of real estate investors with outsized political influence who have spent decades stockpiling land that ought to remain forever off-limits for anything other than farming or natural heritage." These land owners convinced the government to confer billions of dollars of unearned value on them by designating their property as development land.

Those developers alone benefit from the Ford government's push to sprawl that threatens the spectacular Niagara Escarpment and the flora and fauna who call it home.

Doreen Nicoll is an award-winning social justice and human rights writer and editor. Her articles have appeared in over 20 publications across Canada and internationally. Reach her at healinggaia@yahoo.ca or doreenhnicol.wixsite.com/portfolio.

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Building a New Future Reconciliation Garden,

WRITTEN BY SANDRA J. HOWE AND SUSAN STAVES

A photograph of three women standing outdoors near a body of water. The woman on the left is wearing a patterned vest and a long, colorful skirt with a rainbow stripe at the bottom, and is holding a large fish. The woman in the middle is wearing a purple jacket and a similar colorful skirt. The woman on the right is wearing a black top with a floral design and a black skirt with a rainbow stripe. In the background, there is a large, abstract sculpture of a sturgeon, a body of water, and some industrial buildings under a clear blue sky.

Drummers and singers from Saugeen Ojibway Nation in front of the Great Grandmother Sturgeon art installation in the Reconciliation Garden, Owen Sound.

Through Owen Sound's Giche Namewikwedong

PHOTOGRAPHED BY SANDRA J. HOWE



On Canada Day weekend in July, 2022, people of diverse cultures, nations, and races gathered for ceremony and fellowship. They came together in a spirit of sharing and learning at the Giche Namewikwedong Reconciliation Garden, Kelso Beach at Nawash Park, Owen Sound. This beautiful garden and park nestle along the west shore of Owen Sound and the mouth of the Pottawatomi River. These lands, part of the original Nawash Reserve that pre-dates the establishment of the city of Owen Sound, were surrendered in Treaty 82 in 1857. Today, with support from the city and many local people, Anishinabek voices are again being heard at the Reconciliation Garden.

Welcome to the Gitche Namewikwedong Reconciliation Garden

Written by Susan Staves, Naaniibawikwe

(Upright Standing Woman), a member of the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation

Since 2010, the Gitche Namewikwedong Reconciliation Garden Committee, and our supporters, have worked with the City of Owen Sound and Indigenous elders who are knowledge holders in our region. Using their input and cultural knowledge we developed a detailed plan for an art and historical installation and garden at Kelso Beach in Nawash Park, formerly and historically the site of the original Newash Village, once home to the Saugeen Ojibwa Nation (SON). Saugeen Ojibwa Nation territory extends from the Nottawasaga River, across to Goderich, including the Maitland valley river system, and north to Tobermory.

The garden helps all cultures within the SON territory move forward with shared understanding and respect, to walk softly and to be mindful. The art pieces share Indigenous culture and healing practices. The installation of the Great Grandmother Sturgeon sculpture brings with it the seven dodem or totem teachings which are built around the seven natural laws, or sacred teachings. Each teaching honours a path for a full and healthy life.

The indigenous plants in the gardens represent stories and legends of the history of the location. The project reclaims place, culture, ecology and wellness. Several interpreter plaques will be placed to educate, inspire and encourage further research by visitors.

In the spirit of reconciliation, the garden is a contemplative place where our community can pause, reflect and learn about the past legacy of residential schools and the intergenerational trauma that still exist today.

The word “reconciliation” means “to renew or restore a friendship.” The injustices of the past cannot be changed. But here, in the present, we have the opportunity and responsibility to come



▲ Firekeepers tending the sacred fire.



▲ Reconciliation Garden, Owen Sound, with newly-planted White Birch and Tamarack, both culturally-important tree species.



▲ Susan Staves, right, drumming.



► Garden designer Thomas Dean installing support stakes for new tree plantings in the garden.

together and build a new future.

Through traditional stories and Indigenous knowledge, we will honour and remember our Indigenous ancestors. Having the history of local Indigenous peoples made public and accessible in the garden, establishes common ground and starts conversations and a place for people of all nations to gather. We make the current “invisible” presence and history of Indigenous people “visible” to people walking through the garden, increasing the awareness and respect for long-ignored history. Sharing the culture and traditions of our local Indigenous peoples helps our community address ongoing racism and colonialism.

Youth involvement is an investment in reconciliation in our community. Whenever there are committee events at the garden with a Sacred Fire and/or Pipe Ceremony, youth are invited to help and learn from the Fire Keeper and Knowledge Keepers. In this way youth will hear stories and learn about their connection to the land and plants under the guidance of the committee. An Indigenous way of life is based in spirituality, plant-based medicine, dance, music and art, and a belief that we are all a part of creation, nurtured by the gifts of Mother Earth who is a powerful healer and mother to all our relations.

We are proud to acknowledge and celebrate the history and culture of the First Nations and Métis peoples of the Grey-Bruce area.

A version of this article was first published in Escape to Grey Bruce, 2022.

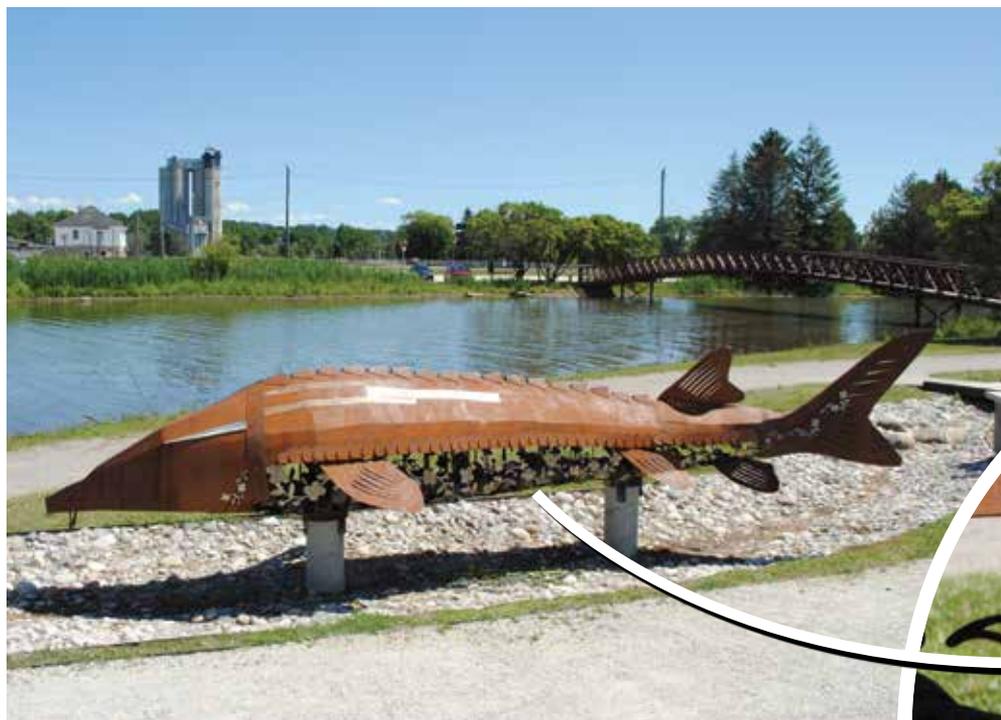
Celebrating the Reconciliation Garden

Written by Sandra J. Howe

Giche Namewikwedong means Great Sturgeon Bay in Anishinaabemowin, the Ojibwe language, and acknowledges the original name of Owen Sound. The Reconciliation Garden is being developed as a place of healing, reflection, and learning to bring indigenous, settler, and all peoples together in community. The Canada Day celebrations were called the first annual Sound Waterfront Festival. The celebrations spanned four days to honour the contributions of Indigenous, youth, white settler, and Black peoples to the past,



▲ People of many nations gathered for a Walking Together Tour.



▲ The sculpture called Nookomis Gitche Name Kwe, or Great Grandmother Sturgeon, was created by Kathryn Corbiere of One KWE, from M'Chigeeng First Nation on Manitoulin Island. The piece of art is positioned as if swimming toward the Pottawtomi River in Owen Sound. The garden's name, Giche Namewikwedong, is the original Ojibway name for Owen Sound.

► This detail from the belly of Great Grandmother Sturgeon has river stones suggesting fish eggs and decorative features honouring the beauty of nature.

THE SEVEN DODEM TEACHINGS

Each law represents an animal which teaches how to live close to the earth. The connection between the animal world and that of humans instills a respect for all life for those who follow the traditional ways.

- The Eagle teaches us Love.
- The Buffalo teaches us Respect.
- The Bear teaches us Courage.
- The Sabe (a mythical giant) teaches us Honesty.
- The Beaver teaches us Wisdom.
- The Wolf teaches us Humility.
- The Turtle teaches us Truth.



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present, and future of Owen Sound and Canada. It was a great privilege to witness and participate in ceremony with Saugeen Ojibway Nation members and friends.

The Truth and Reconciliation Day began with the lighting of the sacred fire at the centre of the garden and gathering. Indigenous and white men worked together under the leadership of Saugeen elder Ken Albert to light the fire in a traditional way and offer teachings to the gathering. Sheila Albert led the drumming and singing.

“These songs,” Sheila Albert explained, “are prayers. We call in the ancestors to help us in our healing work. If you notice the air around you, you will feel a breeze come to cool and refresh us. The ancestors are here now!”

Elder Shirley John, Strong White Buffalo Woman, led the Water Ceremony, and shared many beautiful teachings. “We are all equal and God put us all here together. We must accept all people of all nations and all the creatures that share the world. We must pray, pray, pray, and give thanks for everything. We must walk softly on Mother Earth. Don’t be in a hurry, walk slowly!”

Owen Sound Mayor Ian Boddy spoke about the importance of diversity and inclusivity, and offered tobacco in a respectful, traditional way to the sacred fire. Drumming, singing, storytelling, and teaching continued throughout the day. People came, went, shared food and ideas, developed friendships, and made plans for further gatherings at the garden.

Thomas Dean, who prepared the landscape design for the Reconciliation Garden, noted, “This needs to be a living, breathing space that inspires experiences of reconciliation. It is not a theme park. Ongoing plantings and signage will provide education on medicinal plants, plant lore, and how to live lightly on the Earth. The first White Birch and Tamarack trees will be planted soon. The garden will grow and change over time as our human relationships deepen.”

The Giche Namewikwedong Reconciliation Garden is an evolving centre for personal and community reflection and connection. At present, it includes a council fire circle, gardens, paths, tree plantings, grandmother and grandfather stones, and a spectacular metal sturgeon art installation.

For more information about events and activities at the garden, follow on Facebook and visit in person. **NEV**

Sandra J. Howe is a frequent contributor to Niagara Escarpment Views.

Her last piece was “Family Skiing at Highlands Nordic,” Winter 2022-23.





◀ Artist Virginia Gail Smith introducing Canoe Sculpture on a Walking Together Tour.



◀ First United Church of Owen Sound has a historic plaque about the Newash Village, and a Walking Together Tour sign and sculpture. The church is a partner in the development of the Walking Together Tour.



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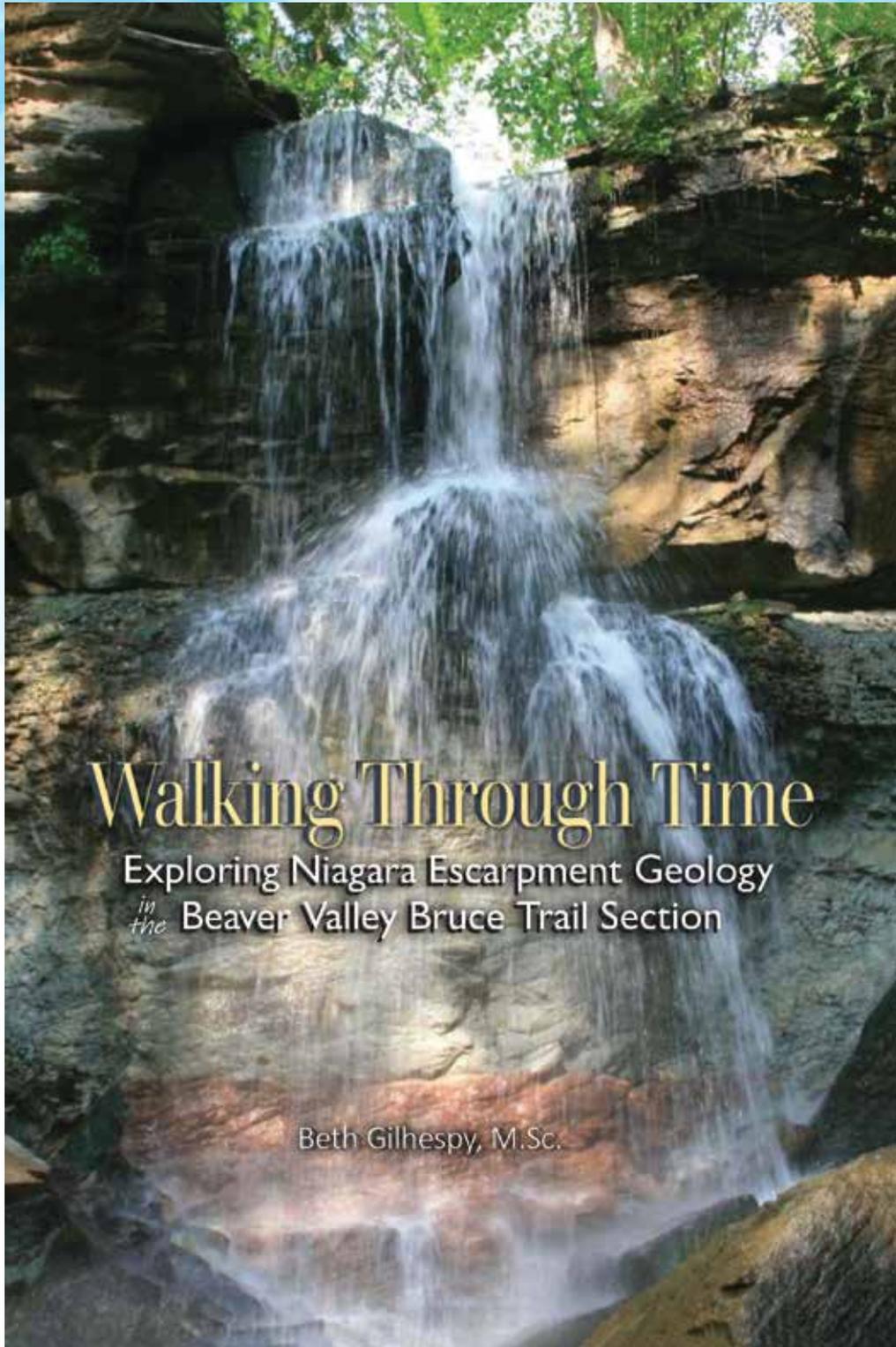
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Walking Through Time

Exploring Niagara Escarpment Geology
in the Beaver Valley Bruce Trail Section

Beth Gilhespy, M.Sc.

Beth Gilhespy's Walks Through Time

Beth Gilhespy is known for leading Bruce Trail hikes that share her knowledge of the unique and puzzling geology of the Niagara Escarpment. Now she has written a book that, while it gives an overview of the entire Escarpment, concentrates on the dramatic Beaver Valley section. Here are excerpts from her book *Walking Through Time*.

My love affair with the Niagara Escarpment is life-long and enduring. I fell for the Escarpment as a child while vacationing at the Blue Mountains, exploring crevices at Rattlesnake Point and on school geography trips to Forks of the Credit. As I grew older I discovered the Bruce Trail, that string of white blazes that seemed, delightfully, to pass through and bind together all the places I loved. I explored farther, backpacking in the Beaver Valley and camping at Cyprus Lake on the Bruce Peninsula. It was the Niagara Escarpment that inspired



my university studies in geography and geology.

In my late 20s I joined the Bruce Trail Association (renamed the Bruce Trail Conservancy in 2007), volunteering on various committees and eventually on the Board of Directors. I was – and still am – passionate about the mission of the organization in preserving land along the Niagara

Escarpment, land that I love. I was fortunate to be able to apply that passion to a career as Chief Executive of the Bruce Trail Conservancy from 2004 to 2018. It was a magical time and I worked with a stellar team of staff and volunteers to preserve thousands of acres of Escarpment land.

I love exploring the Niagara Escarpment. To me, every walk on the Escarpment is a walk through time, starting 450 million years ago and continuing through the

millennia to the still-changing landscape of today. I have found profound delight in sharing my love of Escarpment geology with thousands of others on geology hikes I lead as a volunteer between 2003 and 2018. This book is a culmination of many years of exploration and encouragement from those geology hikers, and from the volunteers with whom I connected and who remain my friends.

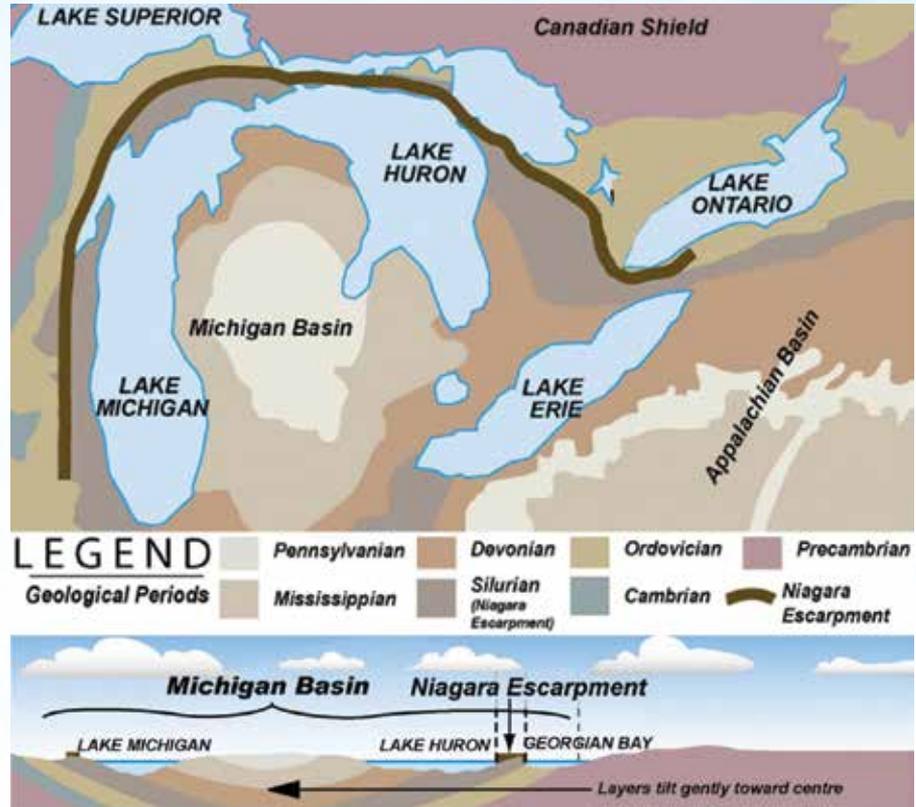
The story of the Niagara

Escarpment stretches back 450 million years to a time when the earth was vastly different to what it is today. The land that we now call southern Ontario was covered by a tropical sea, and the whole continent that would become North America was laying on its side straddling the equator, with southern Ontario located at about 10 degrees south latitude. The planet spun faster so the days were only 21 hours long. Oxygen levels were at a reasonable, and even slightly

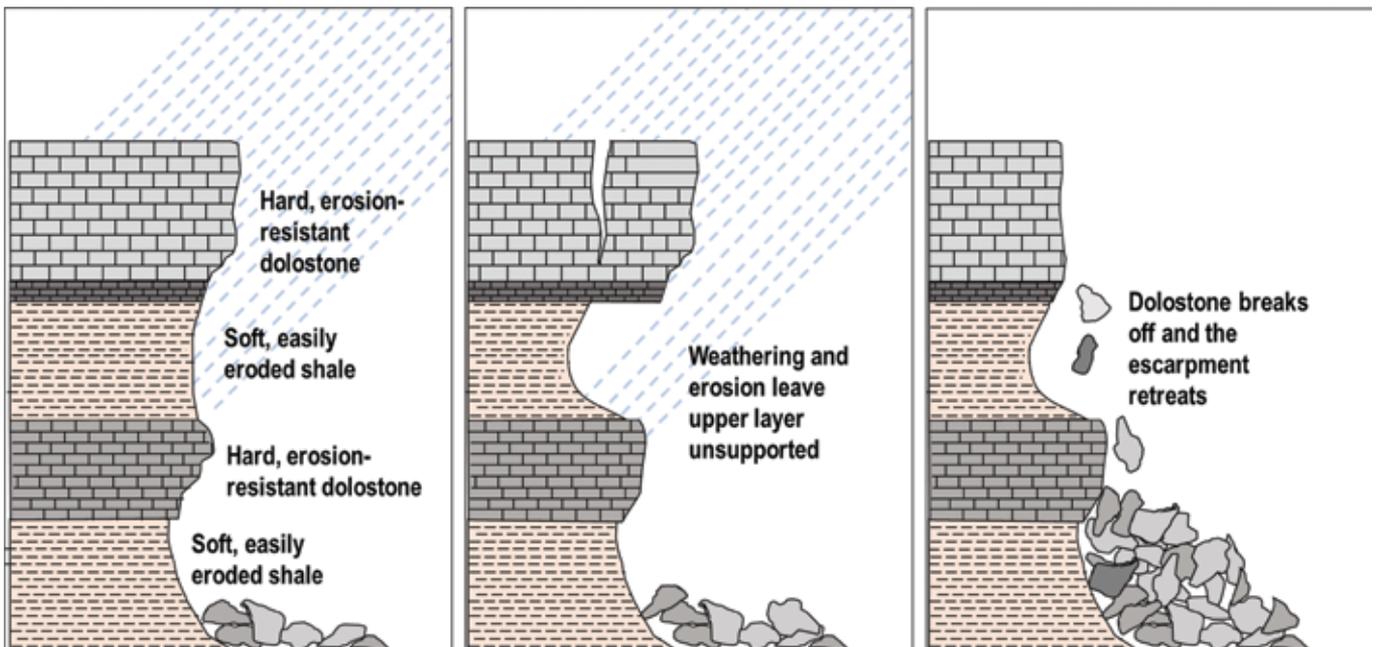


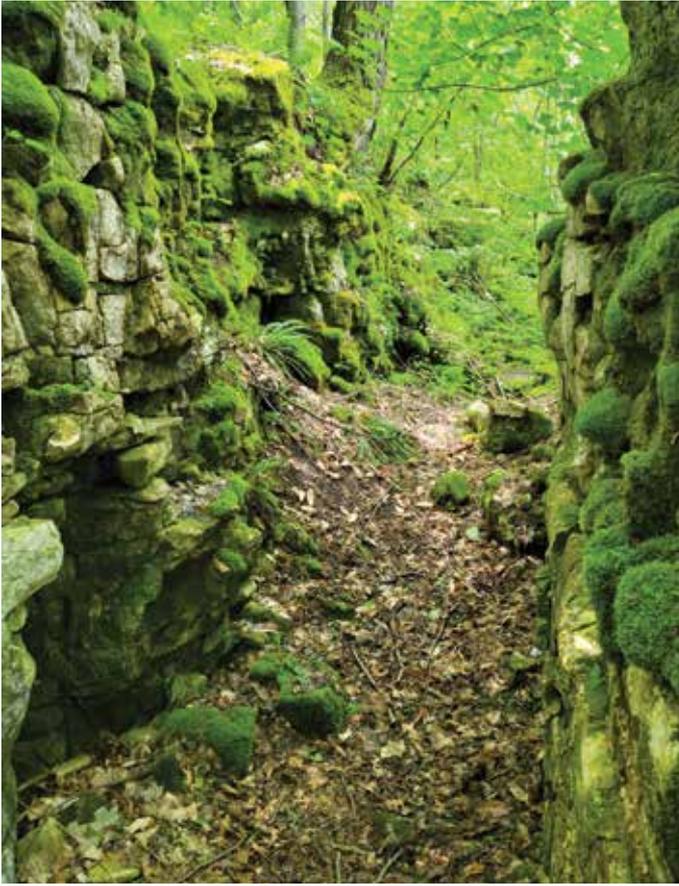
◀ All of the Niagara Escarpment rock layers are stacked up one atop the other at old Baldy in the Beaver Valley, from the Queenston Shale laid down 450 million years ago in a shallow tropical sea up to the Amabel Dolostone caprock so iconic of the Niagara Escarpment. PHOTO BY LILLA FODOR.

SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.CGENARCHIVE.ORG/TORONTO-NIAGARA-ESCARPMENT.HTML](https://www.cgenarchive.org/toronto-niagara-escarpment.html)



SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.CGENARCHIVE.ORG/TORONTO-NIAGARA-ESCARPMENT.HTML](https://www.cgenarchive.org/toronto-niagara-escarpment.html)





▲ Through freeze-thaw activity, the fractured dolostone rock is wedged apart creating cracks and eventually widening into crevices. PHOTOS BY BETH GILHESPY.

invigorating, 24 percent, but with the exception of primitive algae, all life on earth was confined to the seas.

It was into this unfamiliar environment that the rocks that would become the Niagara Escarpment were deposited – layer upon layer of sand, mud and coral reef, building up over roughly 22 million years in a shallow depression called the Michigan Basin. There are older rocks in Southern Ontario, stretching from the Escarpment edge east to the Canadian Shield and underlying the homes of more than 10 million people in the GTA. There are younger rocks, too, which lie on top of the Escarpment and extend west into Michigan. But the rocks we’re most interested in – our beautiful Niagara Escarpment – is the 22 million year sequence of layers that formed between about 450

and 428 million years ago.

The formation of these rocks is the “building up” stage of the Niagara Escarpment. Old, old rocks lain down in a shallow tropical sea, on a planet that was – at least from our present day perspective – both inhospitable and unfamiliar.

That we have an Escarpment at all is thanks to a perfect combination of conditions: just the right degree of dip of the rock layers, the sequence of hard rock overlying soft rock, and the slow, steady passage of time over the past 250 million years after the shallow sea dried up and exposed the layers to erosion.

The rocks of the Michigan Basin sag towards the centre of the basin due to the pressure of overlying layers and a slow tectonic drawdown at the centre of the basin as the

rock was being deposited.

Water more easily penetrates the exposed, slightly tilted, edge of the rock, exploiting the cracks, breaking the rock apart, and eating away at the soft layers underlying hard layers, causing the hard layers to fall. This process of undercutting and erosion of the Escarpment is easy to see at its many waterfalls, but even where there are no waterfalls, the passage of time has been sufficiently vast to wear the Escarpment face back 100 to 200 km over the past 250 million years to its present location today.

At its southeast reaches the Niagara Escarpment follows the edge of another basin, the Appalachian Basin, to the Hamilton, Ontario area, then picks up the edge of the Michigan Basin north along the Bruce Peninsula and Manitoulin Island,





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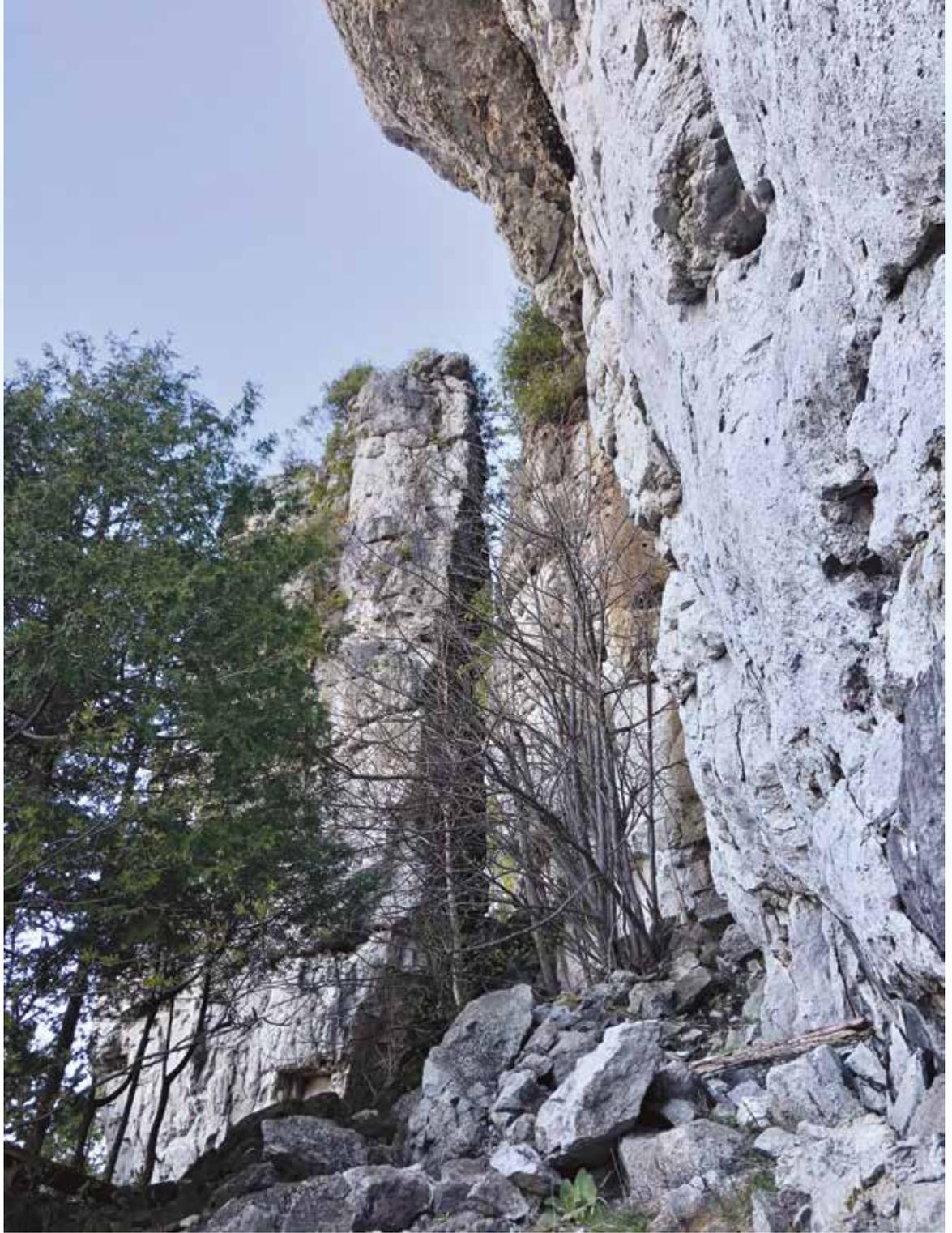
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▲ Extinct coral fossils found along the Niagara Escarpment, like this Favosites (“honeycomb coral”) fossil, are evidence of the ancient tropical sea that once inhabited the area more than 400 million years ago. PHOTO BY BETH GILHESPY.

► The Amabel Dolostone, which is magnesium-rich limestone, seen here at Old Baldy, is the caprock of the Niagara Escarpment and iconic along the Bruce Trail. PHOTO BY LILLA FODOR.



then curves west and south through Mackinaw Island and the western edge of Lake Michigan in Wisconsin. The bedrock continues the circle into Illinois and Ohio, where it is covered by a layer of glacial sand and gravel so thick that it completely disappears from the landscape. The portion of the Niagara Escarpment followed by the Bruce Trail extends from the

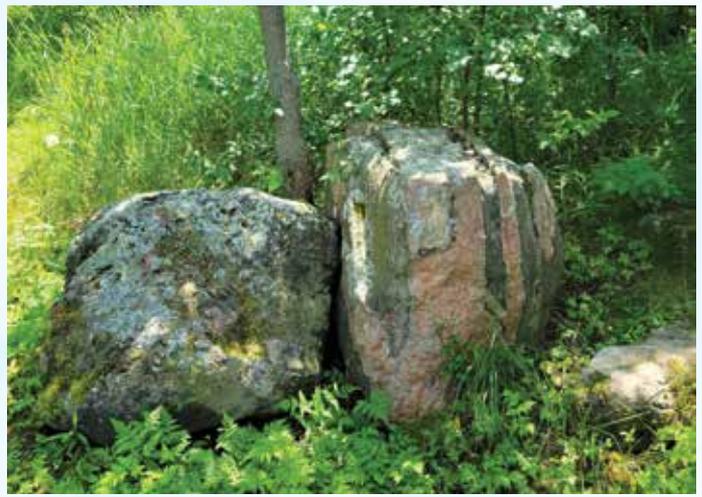
Niagara River west to the Hamilton area and then north to Tobermory at the tip of the Bruce Peninsula. Along its length the Bruce Trail is divided into 9 sections, and in this book we will focus on the geology of one of those sections, the magnificent Beaver Valley Section.

Books are available from the Bruce Trail Conservancy

store at brucetrail.org/store or 1.800.665.4453 or from the author directly, at walkingthroughtime.ca or wttnegeology@gmail.com. The price is \$25 for BTC members and \$27 for non-members.

Beth Gilhespy has worked in the field of environmental conservation for more than 30 years and was CEO of the Bruce Trail Conservancy

*between 2004 and 2018. She is an avid explorer and frequently hikes in the Canadian Rockies, on long distance paths in the UK and locally on Ontario's Bruce Trail. She holds Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in physical geography and geology from the University of Guelph. Beth is executive director of the Toronto Zoo Wildlife Conservancy. **NEV***



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▲ Erratics are rocks that are transported to a new area within glacial ice and left behind as the ice melts. Many old fields on the Escarpment are dotted with these rock piles, created as settlers cleared the land. Larger erratic boulders were often moved by oxen and cart to line the field edges. PHOTOS BY BETH GILHESPY.

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Big Tub Harbour, Tobermory.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKE DAVIS.





DIG this Historic Trail!

Manitoulin's Sheguiandah Archaeological Site

WRITTEN BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT
PHOTOGRAPHED BY MIKE DAVIS EXCEPT WHERE NOTED

Visitors head back down the trail from the summit, or highest point of this historic site. Well-built boardwalks provide access while protecting the ground, stones and plants from being trampled. According to Indigenous elders, the summit has in the past been used for such spiritual purposes as meditation and sweat lodges.



If you're interested in archaeology, history, Indigenous culture, geology, nature or simply walking in a beautiful forest, you'll probably enjoy the in-depth, educational exploration of one of the most intriguing parts of Manitoulin Island, on a guided tour of Sheguiandah's national historic Indigenous site.

This area was first featured in the Summer 2017 issue of this magazine, with the article “Quest for Quartzite: Aboriginal Ancestors at Sheguiandah.” That feature covers much of the history of the site and the archaeological studies done there, including the controversy over the earliest date of human occupation. This feature is available for free on the website NEViews.ca.

In 2017 plans were underway to develop an interpretive trail through the large site and offer guided tours to the public. Taking the trail is only possible with a guide, and the knowledge and information that is shared is worth the time and attention. Access to the trail is through the Centennial Museum in Sheguiandah. Before starting the tour, it's helpful to examine the museum's exhibits of artifacts and finds from archaeological digs at the site. These include stone worked points and examples of cordage made from Leatherwood plant fibres. From the museum, it's a short drive to the shore of Sheguiandah Bay where the trail begins.

The 10-hectare site is one of many early sites in the area, and is significant for ancient quarry pits and stone tool workshops that have been assessed as reaching back up to 10,000 years ago when Paleo-Indians used the resources here. Other peoples occupied the site more recently, including those from Archaic, Woodland, Ojibwa and Odawa cultures. The site continues to hold cultural and

spiritual significance for First Nations people today, who may practise meditation here.

The trail was developed with the expertise of archaeologist Dr. Patrick Julig of Laurentian University, who explains that “the trail concept as related to a tourism initiative was put forward around 1989/90 by a local consortium of three First Nations on Manitoulin and the local municipality, now the Town of Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands. There was a band council resolution to do the new research on the Sheg site and improve access or build an interpretive centre as a tourism initiative and help protect the site. It was looted for artifacts by collectors for many years.” Patrick explains that the interpretive centre was found to be too costly, and the option of a guided tour on a trail was chosen instead.

Climbing the Trail

The trail moves gradually upward from Sheguiandah Bay, past occasional informational signs and black metal sculptures that suggest activities from long ago. The landscape features some flat sections or terraces, which are ancient beaches or “erosional steps” that date further back in time the higher the elevation, leading to the description that you're “walking back in time” as you climb the trail. These levels have been precisely dated and identified by scholars, and are explained on the signs beside the trail.

“The trail itself was essentially a mitigation plan to help protect the site by allowing limited guided



visits, and to discourage illicit visits and looting,” adds Patrick. Together with others, including Indigenous people, Patrick helped plan the trail route and choose 10 locations for the plaques and art installations.

Fascinating Demonstrations

Last year, student Olivia Fetterly brought enthusiasm and energy to her work as a tour guide on the

trail, showing how some plants were used by ancient cultures for food and to make useful materials, and by demonstrating how the stone was knapped or chipped to form tools.

Between an area called Mystic Ridge and the highest point of the trail, is a relatively flat area of ground that became known as the Habitation Area, because it is rich in artifacts like scrapers and knives that



◀ Climbing up the trail.

▲ Some of the site's artifacts displayed in Centennial Museum.



▲ Tour guide Olivia Fetterly inside the entrance to the trail.



▲ One of the permanent art installations depicting activities that might have occurred here thousands of years ago.

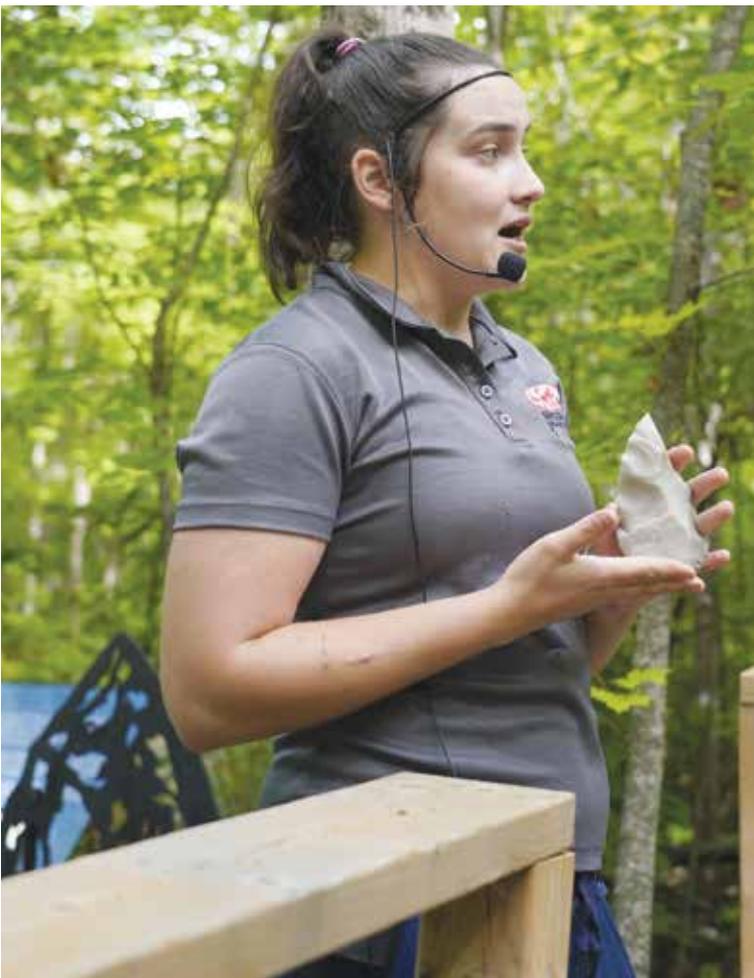
would be useful where people lived. Some of these tools were found almost a metre down in the ground.

A good explanation of how the Habitation Area and other terraces likely came to be is offered by Dr. Peter L. Storck, an archaeologist who was involved, with others, in studying the Sheguiandah site in 1991:

“Manitoulin Island probably first emerged as dry land around 10,500 years ago, shortly after ice retreat and the draining of glacial Lake Algonquin, which at its highest had risen to a level roughly 60 metres above Sheguiandah. For the next 500 years lake levels dropped steadily, exposing much of the Georgian Bay basin as dry land. It may have been during this period that Sheguiandah was first occupied, by the



▲ Olivia demonstrates flint knapping to make a stone tool.



▲ Olivia showing a large flaked stone tool.



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Late Paleo-Indian people who would leave their distinctive spear points and other tools in the Habitation Area behind Mystic Ridge.” This description is from Peter’s award-winning book *Journey to the Ice Age*.

Dig Souvenir

A delightful touch at the end of the tour is that

each participant is given a souvenir booklet called Sheguiandah Archaeological Site Field Guide. It contains photographs, drawings, charts, information about the site and, from another source on Manitoulin, an actual flake of quartzite stone!

Patrick has this assessment of the trail: “By allowing guided access to the interested

public and locals, school groups and researchers, the unique history of ancient Indigenous mining going back to the Ice Age, is highlighted,” he says. “People take ownership and help protect and celebrate this unique Indigenous heritage.”

The tour takes about two hours and begins with a visit to look at the relevant

artifacts in the Centennial Museum. Tickets for the tour should be reserved through the museum by calling 705.368.2367 or emailing shegsite@townofnemi.on.ca. Ticket prices are \$31.50 for an adult or senior and \$15.75 per child. Group bookings of at least 10 people receive a 20 per cent discount. **NEV**



◀ Highest point of the Sheguiandah Archaeological Site Recreational Trail on Manitoulin. White quartzite from this site was used to make tools 10,000 years ago. At a break in the trees on the horizon can be seen Georgian Bay. PHOTO BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT.



▲ A keeper of a souvenir: this booklet summarizes important details of the trail's history and features. PHOTO BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT

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NEW Year-Round Access TO Petun Conservation Area

BY NOTTAWASAGA VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Four-season hiking pleasure is available at Petun Conservation Area (CA), which is owned by Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA). During a visit, you are sure to stop on the bridge over Black Ash Creek, enjoying one of many special experiences.



A woman stands on the bridge over Black Ash Creek in Petun CA.



▲ The Bruce Trail here leads to spectacular views of Black Ash Creek Valley and south Georgian Bay.

As motorists ascend the steep hill on 2nd Line Grey County towards the Petun CA, they are nearing some of the highest elevations on the Niagara Escarpment. Acquired by NVCA in 1975, Petun CA is named for the Tionontati people who inhabited the land during the early 1600s. Though the surrounding area has become more developed in the past 400 years, the views of the region's landscape from Petun CA still remain breathtaking.

In 2021, NVCA moved

the location of the parking lot and trailhead from the south edge of the property to the north to provide visitors access to the property's trail year round. This new location, along with year-round maintenance, will provide opportunities to explore the dynamic landscapes atop Osler Bluff through every season.

The spacious parking lot on the northwest corner of the site provides more than ample parking and removes the need for visitors to park along the road side as at other local access points to the

Bruce Trail. At the property's main entrance, visitors will note a large information kiosk including directional signage, an open field with recent tree plantings, and the Georgian Triangle Anglers Association's (GTAA) clubhouse.

From the parking lot, follow the 340-metre Black Ash Creek Side trail to connect to the main Bruce Trail, which runs the length of the property. A short distance along the Black Ash Creek Trail, the landscape changes from an open field to a mixed forest with varied elevations. Down a

small valley, a small footbridge allows hikers to pass over the side trail's namesake.

You are encouraged to stop on the bridge and listen to the sounds of the Black Ash Creek babbling combined with chirping birds and chattering squirrels. Along the banks of the creek, a diversity of tree species can be noted with the presence of Eastern White Cedar, hemlock, willow, spruce, pine, and maple.

Moving on from the tranquility of the footbridge and through a White Pine stand, there is a reminder that



▲ Visitor information sign in the new parking lot.



▲ The Bruce Trail's Black Ash Creek Side Trail links the new Petun CA parking lot up to the top of the Escarpment.



▲ Crevices and moist conditions create excellent habitats for a variety of mosses and ferns.

hikers are not yet atop the Osler Bluff. The trail tracks upward with a moderate climb, eventually intersecting with the Bruce Trail.

Bruce Trail East or West

At an information kiosk, visitors can choose to follow the Bruce Trail east leading towards Niagara Falls or west towards Tobermory. Eastwards, the trail follows a ridge line along limestone cliffs that leads to spectacular views of Black Ash Creek Valley and the south Georgian Bay region.

Trees along the ridge include birch, Black Cherry and Blue Beech which create beautiful opportunities for viewing autumn colours, while the absence of foliage in the winter allows for a more expansive view. Along the trail are information panels about the region's agriculture and ecology. The agricultural

information is particularly relevant as the trail moves close to neighbouring farm fields. The transitional land between the fields and Petun CA boasts its own ecological benefits with the presence of milkweed creating attractive habitat and host plants for Monarch Butterflies.

The section of Bruce Trail between Black Ash Creek Trail and 2nd Line winds through the limestone crevasses and boulders that are signature features of this part of the Niagara Escarpment. While traversing through this dynamic and enjoyable section of the trail, visitors may remark on the unique fern and moss communities of the area, growing in the cool sheltered areas of the fissures and grykes, which are vertical cracks in limestone.

Positive Conservation

Not only does the Petun CA

offer peaceful recreational opportunities only a 15-minute drive from downtown Collingwood, but ongoing conservation efforts from within the area have had a positive impact on the region's ecology.

In 2020, NVCA removed a man-made dam and pond on Black Ash Creek. This improved water quality and lowered summer water temperatures by 4°C, which improved habitat conditions for native Brook Trout. Additionally, the Georgian Triangle Anglers Association (GTAA) lease a portion of the property for the operation of a native fish hatchery. According to the GTAA, "the hatchery has the capacity to produce up to 100,000 fish a year and has been in operation for more than 30 years." The hatchery is not open to the public, but those interested can contact GTAA to learn more.





▲ Examining a Brook Trout: trained staff from Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority weigh and monitor Brook Trout populations in Black Ash Creek.



▲ Restoring the creek. In 2020, with funding from Bruce Power, Greenbelt Foundation and other partners, NVCA removed a man-made dam and stagnant pond in the headwaters of Black Ash Creek and restored stream habitat.

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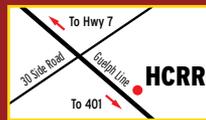


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Petun CA is also used as a seismic monitoring location. This monitoring location records tiny vibrations produced by earthquakes from around the world, forming part of an earthquake monitoring network. This location was chosen because it's far from sources of man-made noises, which are also suitable conditions for a quiet afternoon hike!

Daily parking fees per vehicle at NVCA properties are \$10.00+HST and annual parking passes are available for \$71.00+HST per vehicle. All fees collected are annually reinvested into general and enhanced maintenance needs.

NVCA strives to provide passive recreational opportunities suitable for all abilities, however the geological features, including steep inclines and dolomite bedrock trail at the Petun CA unfortunately creates challenging trail conditions. NVCA partners with the local Bruce Trail Blue Mountains Club, the Town of the Blue Mountains and Grey County on the maintenance and enhancement at this location.

Directions

Directions to Petun CA from Collingwood: travel west on Sixth Street to Osler Bluffs Road/County Road 34. Turn left and travel south to Grey Road 19. Turn right and follow Grey Road 19 to the 2nd Line. Turn left and follow the 2nd Line for approximately half a km, at the base of the hill of the Escarpment. The parking lot is on the left; visitors will see signs for the Petun Conservation Area and for the Georgian Triangle Angler's Association. Visitors should be aware that the 2nd Line south of Petun CA is not maintained during the winter. It is best to approach Petun CA from the north in the winter. **NEV**



▲ Year-round access offers beautiful scenery in winter.



► Children enjoying a hike on the Bruce Trail.



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▲ Seismic monitoring station in Petun CA records earthquakes from around the world, forming part of an earthquake monitoring network.

GRIMSBY BENCH: Not All the Best of Niagara is Wine

Written and photographed by Ashley Brown



◀ Raccoon tracks in Grimsby Bench.



▲ Wind-blown snag just off the trail in Grimsby Bench.

In Niagara Region, we call the area atop the escarpment The Bench, and it's easy to see why; looking out from the Escarpment is all the Golden Horseshoe laid before you, with the bright blue of Lake Ontario beckoning you to take a seat and ponder the view. Acquired in early March, Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy's (EBC's) new property is the first the Conservancy secured in Niagara Region, and a jewel in EBC's 225 (and counting) conservation areas.

As with so many of Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy's nature preserves, we are truly indebted to the Firestone family for their incredibly generous help making this sanctuary possible and permanent.

Situated at the edge of the Carolinian ecozone, Grimsby Bench is unique for EBC. Visitors will find

species Shagbark Hickory, Sycamore and Honey Locust amongst Eastern White Pine and maples. You might hear a Carolina Wren or Red-Bellied Woodpecker along with the familiar birdsongs heard at Heaven's Gate near Manitoulin Island or Cup and Saucer, on the Island. The property is nestled between farm fields and the southwest edge of Grimsby Bench prime edge habitat preferred by birds of prey. Hawks and Turkey Vulture are often seen circling overhead.

The 43.5 acres of conservation land is open to the public, thanks to the Firestone family who donated the parcel to EBC. It can be accessed by traversing the Bruce Trail from Park Side Road where you'll find yourself on the Escarpment at the top of the property. Looking down from the bench, you see stream tributaries flowing towards

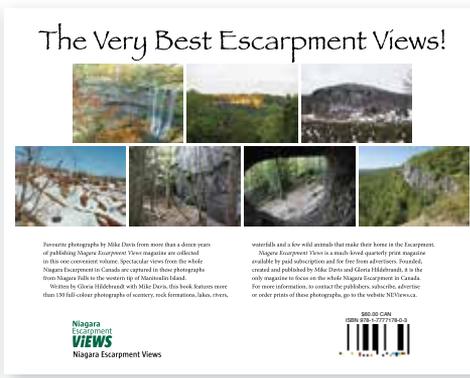
the lake, winding around a line of old Black Oak that once marked out a homestead. Much of the property is moist mature forest, perfect habitat for native flora and fauna.

Lush Niagara Nature

Even in early spring, life is abundant in Niagara Region, evidenced by scores of singing birds, groups of Chorus Frogs, tracks, early blooming ferns and Hepatica. As the forest awakes from winter, EBC will keep a close eye for Species At Risk (SAR) that might call Grimsby Bench home, particularly those only found in this corner of southern Ontario; species like American Chestnut, Jefferson Salamander or Gray Rat snake are contenders for the area. Alongside SAR unique to Grimsby Bench for EBC, bird monitoring in this migratory corridor is also an important facet of stewarding

our new Niagara jewel. Joining incredible EBC properties like Trout Hollow, Grimsby Bench is also steeped in history. Before European settlers, Grimsby Bench was settled approximately 13,000 years ago by Indigenous peoples drawn to the fertile land that now produces some of the best wines in Canada. Stewards of the land included; the Neutral Nation, Iroquois, Mississaugas of the Credit, and Seneca peoples. United Empire Loyalists fled to the region during the American Revolution and homesteaded throughout Niagara Region. The rich history of Niagara Region can be felt acutely as you walk the section of Bruce Trail protected on the property, imagining the route American and British troops took during the War of 1812, seeing the same incredible views they may have seen. Whether it's the history of the region, the legacy of the Bruce Trail, the phenomenal birdwatching or simply an appreciation for lush Niagara nature, Grimsby Bench offers visitors a unique experience within the EBC umbrella. People have marvelled at the view from The Bench for thousands of years; though that view has changed over time, it remains, and will always be a spectacular place to stop and ponder.

Ashley Brown's last article for this magazine was "Trout Hollow Nature Reserve," in Winter 2021-22.



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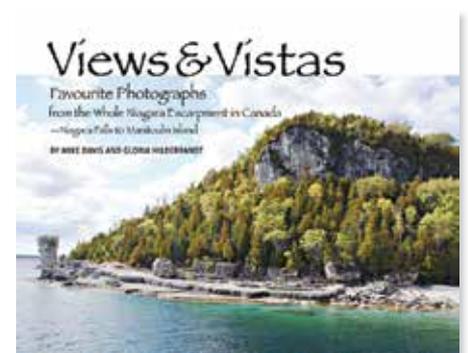
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Trees for All

Bringing Millions of Trees to the Niagara Peninsula Watershed

By Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority

The Niagara Peninsula Tree Planting Partnership (NPTPP) invites private landowners to join collective efforts to bring millions of trees to the Niagara Peninsula watershed, in support of Canada's goal of planting two billion trees.

The Government of Canada's 2 Billion Trees (2BT) Program seeks to partner with governments and organizations to plant two billion trees that will capture and store carbon from the atmosphere, improve air and water quality, help restore nature and biodiversity, cool urban centres, and support thousands of green jobs. As such, community groups, environmental agencies, and governmental organizations in the Niagara Peninsula watershed have joined to create the NPTPP, with the common interest of supporting this initiative at the local level.

The Niagara Peninsula watershed is known as a natural wonder with many environmental assets and unique phenomena and is

situated between two Great Lakes. It is the most biodiverse but also threatened ecoregion in all of Canada, part of the Carolinian Zone, and home to globally significant ecosystems, 40 per cent of Canada's species, and more than 150 species at risk. However, the landscape currently only contributes an estimated 56 per cent of what science recommends as the minimum ecological objective required for healthy and viable ecosystems.

One of the earliest conservation efforts to help mitigate watershed-scale problems such as erosion, flooding, and decades of degraded land and water quality, was planting trees to restore forests. Restoration efforts have since progressed to understand that involving communities helps connect people to their natural environment and leads to better outcomes.

The NPTPP's new Trees For All initiative for the Niagara Peninsula watershed will engage private landowners from Niagara, Haldimand, and Hamilton, to build the capacity necessary to participate in the Government of Canada's national tree program, and

collectively deliver a local, long-term tree planting plan for impactful and measured results.

The Goal Today is Simple

Private landowners are encouraged to express their interest and register their property for potential consideration in future tree plantings. This first data-gathering phase solely aims to gauge landowner interest to help shape the future of the Trees For All program, with no obligation.

The opportunity to engage watershed residents in enhancing our unique forests and urban tree canopy is significant. As so much of the land is privately owned, large-scale reforestation initiatives like the federal 2 Billion Trees provide local stewardship opportunities and help incentivize landowners to participate in tree-planting programs. The Trees For All initiative will help strengthen and surpass the NPCA's existing commitments to add 600 hectares of natural cover, plant more than one million native trees across the watershed by 2031 and help mitigate the impacts of climate change in the Niagara Peninsula watershed.

Private landowners are asked to visit the web portal getinvolved.npca.ca/trees-for-all to learn more and proceed with registration. This portal is home to important documents for interested participants, a project timeline on this exciting initiative, a confidential mapping tool to register interest and pin locations, and great online engagement tools to provide feedback and share stories and ideas.

For more information, visit getinvolved.npca.ca/trees-for-all or www.npca.ca. You can phone 905.788.3135 or write for information at 250 Thorold Road West, Welland ON, L3C 3W2.

About NPCA

The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority

(NPCA) is a community-based natural resource management agency that works to protect, enhance, and sustain healthy watersheds. With 62 years of experience, the NPCA offers watershed programs and services that focus on flood and hazard management, source water protection, species protection, ecosystem restoration, community stewardship, and land management.

The NPCA is one of 36 conservation authorities in Ontario and manages 41 conservation areas within the Niagara Peninsula watershed held in public trust for recreation, heritage preservation, conservation, and education. These natural and shared green spaces marry nature, culture, and adventure to create limitless opportunities for discovery.

About 2 Billion Trees

The 2 Billion Trees program is committed to partnering with governments and organizations to plant two billion trees that will capture and store carbon from the atmosphere, improve air and water quality, help to restore nature and biodiversity, cool our urban centres and create and support thousands of green jobs.

Editorial note:

Halton Hills

The 2 Billion Trees program (2BT) has provided funds for tree planting to other Escarpment-area communities as well. Trees for Halton Hills has received funding from 2BT and intends to plant 65,000 trees in the next five years, one tree for every citizen in the town. Information is at 65000trees.ca or by writing 30 Albert St., Halton Hills ON L7G 2B1.

If your community is involved in this program, let us know!

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

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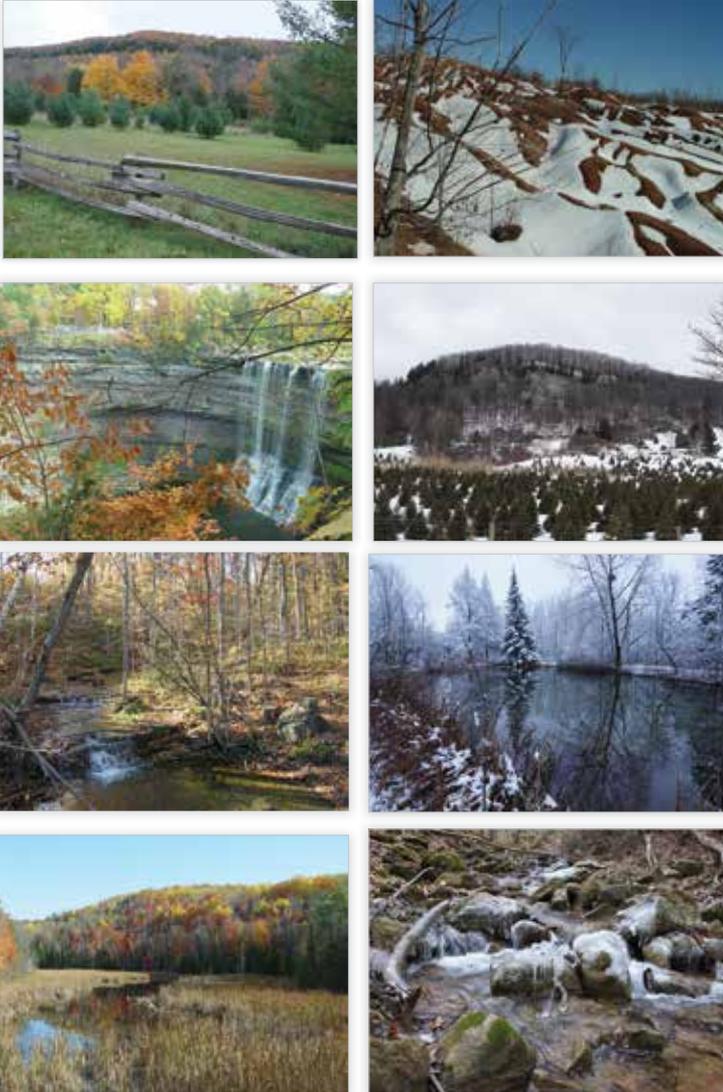


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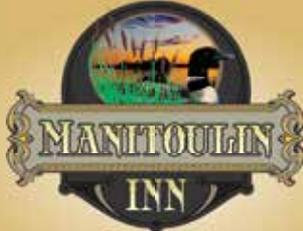
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The church “provides a hot meal and a warm place to sleep for those seeking overnight shelter in the colder months,” explains Reverend Steve.

Volunteers serve as staff on a shift from 8:30 p.m. to 8 a.m., watching over the guests and their possessions overnight, ensuring their safety. More volunteers are welcome to help with the program, and may make it possible to increase the number of nights offered.

For more information or to help, call 905.877.7585.



▲ Georgetown’s Knox Presbyterian Church is located at 116 Main St. S. The library is next door.



▲ Reverend Steve Boose of Knox Presbyterian.



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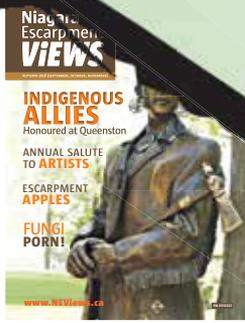
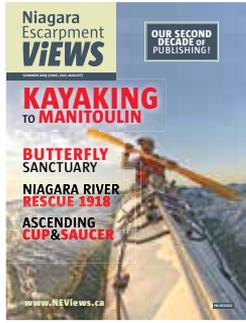
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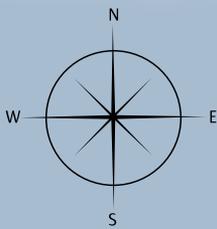
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