

Oasis of green & growth

*Ottawa's only dedicated
Children's Garden is a
blooming gem on Main
Street*

Page 3

Two families joined at the heart

*How the war in Ukraine
brought the Aouaj and Peach/
Yetman family together in Old
Ottawa East*

Page 15



Art Beat

*Old Ottawa East
photographer Susan
Bahen finds beauty on
the streets of our
neighbourhood*

Page 22



Happy birthday Terra Firma!

Celebrating 25 years of cohousing on Drummond Street



PAUL SCOTT PHOTO

It took five years of planning before Terra Firma, the bold experiment in community living, launched in 1997; today, looking back 25 years, its founders say their initial expectations have been exceeded.

Interview and Photos at Pages 4 & 5



SUPPLIED PHOTO

It's Party Time!

It's summertime and it finally feels like the living is easy.

Backyard gatherings and street parties sprung up all over Old Ottawa East during June and July as residents grabbed every chance to socialize.

LEFT: Over on Havelock Street, residents recently went to the dogs! Beau Kingsbury (a handsome corgi mix) celebrated his 10th birthday in his backyard with some of his neighbourhood canine friends (and their people).

Pictured here are 11 of the wonderful dogs and their humans who live on the street and nearby.



ABOVE: Always a favourite at the Mason Terrace street party, musical chairs drew an enthusiastic crew of young party-goers; ABOVE RIGHT: Girlie Robles and her daughter, Elysia, admire one of many cakes at the cake table. ABOVE FAR RIGHT: Sno-cones were new to the Mason Terrace party, as was young Eloise.



SUPPLIED PHOTOS



JOHN DANCE PHOTOS

ABOVE: *The Mainstreeter*'s volunteer appreciation barbecue on June 22nd was a chance to give thanks to our many distributors, including Yao Nielsen and her daughter, Danica. LEFT: Board Chairperson of *The Mainstreeter*, Ron Rose welcomes distributors Phil Castiglione and his daughter Evelyn to the backyard barbecue.



LORNE ABUGOV PHOTO

ABOVE: Colourful signage and picket fence make for a bright welcome to the Children's Garden: RIGHT: A basket of veggies harvested by Garden Manager Marianne.

Ottawa's first dedicated Children's Garden is an oasis of green and growth

LORI GANDY

One of the delights of living in Old Ottawa East is its proximity to green spaces and natural beauty. Brantwood and Springhurst parks, the Rideau River Nature Trail and the Ottawa River all greatly enhance the liveability of OOE. But there's another gem hidden in plain sight that residents, young and old, can enjoy. Take a stroll down to the corner of Main and Clegg streets and you will find a welcome respite from the asphalt and cars streaming past - The Children's



LORI GANDY PHOTO

Garden enthusiast Aerith with her coveted carrots.

Garden, with its gorgeously colourful painted pickets.

Since 2008, Robert Legget Park has been transformed into Ottawa's first dedicated Children's Garden. A veritable oasis of green and growth, the Garden represents a true community effort, with contributions from: The Ottawa East Community Gardeners, Sustainable Living Ottawa East, The Community Foundation of Ottawa, Sandy Hill Community Health Centre, Community Activities Group, the Main Farmers' Market, students at Lady Evelyn School, and TD Friends of the Environment. The Garden is managed by a dedicated volunteer advisory board, a summer coordinator and many volunteers.

As is appropriate for a Children's Garden, students at Lady Evelyn Alternative School undertook research and design work, which resulted in the garden plan. As well, each fence picket was painted by a student at the school.

Several improvements were introduced in 2017: raised beds, wide paths to provide greater accessibility for wheelchairs and strollers, interactive signs explaining, for example, the composting process and the life cycles of insects and plants. A new and improved sandbox was also installed.

A grand re-opening took place in 2018 and that year saw the installation of a "Little Free Library" and a perennial bed featuring a host of different plants including flowering vines, native shrubs, fruit trees, herbs and

pollinator-supporting flowers, many of which were donated by members of the OOE community.

Meet the new Garden Manager

Marianne took up the position of Garden Manager in June and is now well established in the garden and loving her new job. "It's been a great experience," she says. "The plants were just starting out when I arrived. Now everything is thriving."

Marianne has a degree in horticulture and has worked in many commercial growing settings so she knows about gardens and helping people enjoy them.

The best part of her job is working with all the people who come into the Garden: "It's very fulfilling in that you get to see the results of your efforts and bring people into the garden and explain to them how things grow. There is nothing more cool than showing a kid how peas grow."

A huge part of the Garden's mandate is educating children about gardening, showing them where food comes from and helping them appreciate and respect the natural world.

The Garden provides the space for groups such as Let's Talk Science to bring in their programs, with story time and activities focused on furthering the children's understanding and appreciation of nature.

Let's Talk Science

Jennifer San from Let's Talk Science at uOttawa and CarletonU and Hannah Keefe from Frontier College Ottawa were on hand on a particularly lovely day in early July to offer their expertise. A group of enthusiastic children gathered around the seating circle and were spellbound while Keefe read *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein. She and San then encouraged the children to think about the story and what they can do to appreciate and respect nature. The children then dashed around the Garden to find a leaf that interested them. Back at the table, they were given a chunk of clay to roll out and press their leaves into to create an impression. The children summed up the activity with enthusiasm: "excellent, fun, great, helpful knowledge."



ANNIE STAPLES PHOTO

Jennifer San and Hannah Keefe with a group of children for story time and an activity with Let's Talk Science at uOttawa and CarletonU.

Meet Aerith - a frequent visitor

Aerith, a nine-year-old veteran gardener, comes to the Children's Garden "for the plants and the activities." She was keen to chat about her love of the Garden and to share her insights into what makes a great salad. She's been coming to the Garden with her parents and siblings since she was six. She loves that she can bring a few veggies home to cook.

She particularly likes digging up potatoes, "It's fun and it's also dirty," she says with a giggle. Her favourite plants are the strawberries and the apple tree. She also likes the mint because she likes to make tea. Aerith gardens at her home too. "I have a small garden box and I have beans, kale, carrots, lettuce and lots of strawberries."

Aerith likes making vegetable stews with beans, carrots, potatoes and tofu. She thinks the Children's Garden is fantastic: "I like that you can just pick food from the ground or from the tree. It's really crazy."



LORI GANDY PHOTO

As for what makes a great salad, according to Aerith? Growing your own produce. "We made a salad with our lettuce at home, and it was way better than the salad at the store," she said, beaming. Lesson learned for sure!

The Children's Garden is open for everyone to enjoy. Check their Facebook page for updates on activities and programs or to help out (little hands always welcome) with planting, transplanting, pruning, harvesting - and many other gardening activities. If you are interested in volunteering plants or your time to The Children's Garden, please contact the board at ottawachildrengardeninfo@gmail.com.

SHARING LUNCH WITH ... OOE's TERRA FIRMA

In this issue of *The Mainstreeter*, we toast the families of Terra Firma who recently celebrated their 25th year of community living within the visionary cohousing venture on Drummond Street in Old Ottawa East. Five years in the planning, Terra Firma launched its pioneering housing concept in 1997 and, remarkably, every family that purchased a unit at the outset of the bold initiative remains there today, enriched immeasurably by the experience.

In conversation with two of the co-owners, Suzanne Gagnon and Steve Fick, and joined by their Herridge Street neighbour, Rachel Thibeault, *The Mainstreeter* gained an appreciation of the vision that motivated the founders to launch Terra Firma, and a sense of how their lives have unfolded living in an alternative urban housing arrangement and raising children in a multi-family environment.

Terra Firma neighbour Paul Scott was a guest at the recent 25th anniversary party on Drummond and snapped the photos adorning this interview.

The Mainstreeter: Let's begin with an explanation of what Terra Firma is, and what it isn't. As we understand it, Terra Firma is not a housing cooperative, but rather a cohousing arrangement established as a condominium. Can you explain the difference?

Steve Fick: We are organized legally as a condominium since all of us own our units. That's the main difference between our cohousing situation and a housing co-op since people living in a co-op would not typically be owning their own unit. Each household has its own private unit, and we have shared physical indoor and outdoor amenities - as do most condominiums. But we are more than a condominium since we all share a commitment to social interaction and community-building. Cohousing is a loose concept, and it can take many forms as is the case with cohousing groups in Europe and throughout North America. And while they are all different, the basic overriding principle is intent to foster community.

The Mainstreeter: As you reflect on the 25th anniversary of Terra Firma, and as original co-owners, can you comment on how closely the reality of more than two decades of living together here has tracked with the original vision that inspired you to purchase your cohousing units back in 1997?

Suzanne Gagnon: For me, cohousing is my peace project. What I mean by that is that I've always wished for peace in the world. I figured that if I can live in peace with others in a community setting, then I will know that peace in the world is possible. Now, here we are 25 years later, and I can see how difficult it is to maintain peace and harmony. I can now better imagine what it's like when we're talking about world issues, and people trying to find ways to compromise, and to negotiate, and to struggle to hear each other. So, it's been exactly what I was hoping for in the beginning, to gain experience in achieving peace and learning how much you have to be open to diversity, and how much you have to be open to yourself, and to letting go of some



Terra Firma cohousing owners Suzanne Gagnon and husband Fred Simpson: "...the fact that we managed to do all of this on our own is a major thing!"



Terra Firma families, friends and neighbours celebrated 25 years of cohousing and community at a lively Drummond Street party in late June.

thoughts and opinions you might have in order to find peace and harmony living next to others.

Steve Fick: In terms of living here for the past 25 years, I would say overall, it's been better for me and my family than I could have imagined. And that's in relation to all the basic things that I desired - a sense of community, cooperation, and personal growth. Those have all happened in spades. And a lot of personal growth comes about through the challenge of community living. Every group of people is going to have a variety of concerns and conflicts. But I guess for me, one of the core understandings I have come to realize is that it's not about our competing views of utopia. It's about all of us working together to make this situation the very best it can possibly be.

The Mainstreeter: It's interesting that you both focused on trying to live in harmony with others and with your surroundings, and the challenges that arise in trying to do that. I wonder if you can think back to the founding days of Terra Firma and identify some of the challenges that you experienced at the outset in getting a cohousing initiative off the ground here in Old Ottawa East back in 1997?

Suzanne Gagnon: I think for me, the fact that we managed to do all of this on our own is a major thing. Doing this with very little experience and maybe with too much idealism was challenging. And once we found a place to establish Terra Firma, we had to engage professionals who had little understanding of what we wanted to achieve. For example, when we hired legal advice, the lawyers were trying to write things into our documents that would protect each of us from each other. They would always be thinking about what could go wrong and how we could protect ourselves. Because that's what they're used to thinking about - rules to protect an individual against another individual. And we were saying "no, no, we want to live together" and we don't want that

kind of protection against our neighbours doing something to hurt us.

Finding a mortgage was also a big challenge for us. We ended up hiring a mortgage broker because no bank understood the concept of cohousing. We also didn't have the name of a developer behind us. They didn't know who we were and why they should trust us. Those were some of the challenges of the initial days. Today, it's a little easier to get professional advice. Architects now understand the concept of cohousing, and developers might be more supportive.

The Mainstreeter: After the initial few years, and once things were up and running, did Terra Firma have any mid-life crises or was it all pretty much smooth sailing?

Steve Fick: Well, no relationship is entirely conflict-free, but honestly, I think we've done really well dealing with the occasional situation of potential conflict that emerged over the years. In any group of people, you have different degrees of ability or skill to manage conflict. I do couples counseling, and some of the conflicts we've seen at Terra Firma are the same conflicts you'll find in a human relationship - money, how you spend your time, cleanliness, the sort of things you would expect to be challenges in any social group.

And in any kind of relationship, including cohousing, there's sort of a honeymoon phase. And then when a conflict arises, some might think that's the beginning of the end. But in my mind, it's the beginning of the beginning. That's when you really start to grow the relationship. That's when you grow your maturity.

Suzanne Gagnon: Certainly, Terra Firma has helped me realize that conflict is a good thing. While I was educated to think that conflict is a bad thing, you either run from it or you just kind of dig in and deal with it. I saw conflict here as the emergence

Continued on Page 5

COHOUSING CELEBRATES ITS FIRST 25 YEARS

Continued from Page 4

of something. If you don't explore it, you lose the incredible energy it has. In this particular housing context, conflict was an opportunity to hear a diversity of views. It was an opportunity to be patient. It was an opportunity to experience true communion, in the sense that the whole is bigger than the sum of its parts. If you were able to stay with the conflict and ride it through, you realize you've come through a powerful experience. It's more than what I was ever expecting, and I started to see different viewpoints in a good light.

I realized that when challenges arise in a situation where you trust everyone, you will probably find the right solution as long as all the voices are heard. If you don't trust the others, well that's where it might break apart. It's that trust factor that's key, and it is what was important for us to build trust at the beginning because that's what became the safety net for future difficulties that might come along.

The Mainstreeter: Rachel, you have been a next door neighbor of Terra Firma for 25 years, pretty much since it began. What of your own perspective on this cohousing venture – has it changed over time and, if so, how?

Rachel Thibeault: What I found interesting, those times I would be invited for dinner or to spend time in the common area of Terra Firma, was the shared vision of living together and creating community. As a witness, there was something really comforting for me to see that the decision to live "in community" could actually take shape and succeed in an urban setting. In fact, it was comforting to me at many levels, because I live so close - even the creation of

the green space; there's something extremely soothing about having this green space at Terra Firma that seems to radiate through the neighborhood. And the events they have here help to create focal points for the community. We don't have too many opportunities to bring people together. And so Terra Firma has become like a pivot or a magnet that, at times, creates platforms for community to come together.

The Mainstreeter: It's something of a testament that all of the original owners within Terra Firma still live here and have raised their families here. What has it been like to raise a family in this cohousing setting, and what was it like for your kids growing up here?

Steve Fick: For my kids, they felt like they had multiple parents. My son, for example – whenever he would return from being away he would go around and visit all the families. And if there was a crisis in our family, we knew the wagons would circle around us for protection. One testament is that all of our kids have lived in various places around the world. But our daughter came back to start a daycare in this neighborhood, and right now she's living with us while she gets some more schooling. Our older daughter has returned to live near us after living in Europe for many years, and she's raising her family here at Terra Firma.. So, I'd say the benefit for children and for families was profound.

Suzanne Gagnon: Well, my son (Thoma Simpson, 29-years-old) just came through the door with my grandson who still lives here. Thoma - how did you enjoy growing up at Terra Firma?

Thoma Simpson: One word comes to mind



PAUL SCOTT PHOTOS

Co-owner Steve Fick, pictured here with his son Galen who grew up in community at Terra Firma: "... the benefit for children and for families was profound."

– fun! It was fun to grow up in a community like this with different households, different views, and different sorts of parents to model from. It definitely shaped my worldview and my ability to work with others, to collaborate and to foster a sense of community in everything that I do. It definitely was enjoyable living in a housing community, and it's been proven that community living has some strong benefits to mental health as well.

I moved out for four years and lived in an apartment nearby, but there is definitely a lot of appeal to moving back here where my son could grow up in a community like this. The number one attraction is a backyard with greenspace. Being able to come back here, there's a lot more kids on the street this time around than when I was younger. So I was glad to come back and give my son some of the upbringing that I had the privilege to have here at Terra Firma.

The Mainstreeter: What have been some of the more significant successes of Terra Firma over the years?

Suzanne Gagnon: Well, to quite an extent, the members of Terra Firma have been determined to instigate change not just within our housing group but across our broader community. Our members have built platforms to facilitate community growth with real success. They have been instrumental in establishing the Children's Garden, the community garden in Old Ottawa East, the Farmers' Market, our environmental group – SLOE – and the nature trail along the Rideau River and our redesigned Main Street. So these are just some of the beneficial by-products to the broader community from those who chose to start Terra Firma.

We often find that people come here to learn about Terra Firma, and how cohousing works in reality. People are wanting to do

something similar. So, for us to have success makes people realize, oh, this is possible. And when you think something is possible, then you have the motivation to try it yourself.

Steve Fick: We had a vision of a better way to look at how we could live in community. And, I've always thought we were really, really lucky. This is a great group of people, and we're the ones who sort of stuck with this initiative during the five-year planning period before we purchased and moved in. Over that period of time there were actually about 125 people involved at one point or another. Some people just got tired of waiting for it to come to fruition, but others stuck with it, which is what we did. It wasn't always easy waiting, and there were financial issues as well.

It's one thing to have the idea, but are you willing to put money behind that idea - to me that's where the rubber hits the road? You know, are you willing to put \$1,000 into the pot to collectively hire a lawyer? And to do that when you still don't really know if it's going to work? So it's an investment. You have to understand that while there is certainly a vision, at some point in order for it to happen, there has to be some degree of reality that goes with it. So it's really not about utopia at all.

Suzanne Gagnon: What I find deeply comforting about our years in Terra Firma is to see that the concept of people living in community and seeking to build and benefit the community has worked. Often these concepts remain very esoteric, and we see very few actual cases where the values take shape and flourish. And, certainly for me, the main takeaway is that with all the goodwill we've put in, it has worked, worked for us individually and worked for the surrounding community.



Singing, dancing and a giant parachute canopy were among the highlights of the 25th anniversary street celebration that captured the spirit of Terra Firma and its founding families.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Lansdowne Park: Some jewel, some crown

A huge thank you to Alexandra Gruca-Macaulay and to *The Mainstreeter* for articulating the issues associated with the proposed Lansdowne 2.0 development in the June 2022 issue. Lansdowne 2.0 exemplifies a long-standing planning deficiency in Ottawa's governance and management, and the concerns outlined in her Special Report must get proper exposure with City Council and staff before any permanent decisions are made.

In Mayor Watson's column in the same June issue of *The Mainstreeter*, he states that "Lansdowne is a jewel in Ottawa's crown." Some jewel, some crown. Nothing could be further from the truth. Each visit to Lansdowne leaves me increasingly disheartened and sad. Yes, the Aberdeen Pavilion is a gem, as is the Horticulture Building, and both the Lansdowne Park Rink of Dreams skating court and the green space have wonderful potential, but the commercial buildings and retail spaces are a complete disappointment.

Lansdowne Park could have been a huge tourist draw that would have enticed tourists the world over to experience novel and contemporary commercial, cultural and recreational design. Regrettably, City Council allowed another soulless, grey temple-to-profit to be built next to a UNESCO site, the Rideau Canal. The lost opportunities to turn Lansdowne into an international tourist draw, rich with cultural and historical attributes, are staggering.

The reason Ottawa continues to wallow in mediocre city planning and design is simple. For too many years, Ottawa City Council has ridden on the coattails of the federal government. When one is asked what makes Ottawa unique and beautiful, many will say it is Gatineau Park, the Rideau Canal, the NCC parkways and green spaces, the National Art Gallery, the Canadian War Museum and the Parliamentary precinct. However, these are all federal assets. They are well-planned, unique and a calling card to the world. If one were to strip away these assets from Ottawa, what would be left? A city that is quite drab and uninspiring. The large municipal assets that we invest millions into usually lack excitement, success and bold thinking. A classic example is Lansdowne Park.

This is an embarrassment for Ottawa's planning and architectural communities. Would I bring an overseas visitor to marvel at Lansdowne Park? No. It is merely big-box stores, restaurants and movie theatres surrounded by paving stones that have vehicles coming

dangerously close to pedestrians and cyclists. With two heritage buildings on site and a UNESCO heritage asset next door (the Rideau Canal), City Council had the chance to turn Lansdowne into a world class attraction. Lansdowne 2.0 is going down the same uninspiring, profit-motivated road. The glory of the Aberdeen Pavilion will be grossly diminished and overshadowed by the construction of three residential towers. A huge piece of existing parkland will succumb to the excavator and to concrete.

I hope that Old Ottawa East residents and all Ottawa citizens actively voice their concerns about the proposed Lansdowne 2.0. The existing proposal will forever seal the fate of Lansdowne Park as yet another example of tired, routine and uninspired planning. Ottawa deserves better. We are a beautiful, livable city due mainly to federal and not municipal influence. This must change under the new City Council. Ottawa must become more bold, innovative and collaborative if we are to stand on our own feet to become an example for the world.

**Peter Croal,
Elliot Avenue**

Highway robbery!

I am writing this as much to squawk as to give readers a "heads up".

With Ontario's new approach to renewal of vehicle registration, it is now left to the motorist to remember to renew. The province offers the possibility of a digital reminder of an upcoming renewal – at least in theory.

My car was parked on Old Chelsea Road on June 21 while I lunched with a friend. Yesterday, I received notice from the Chelsea MRC of a fine for having an out of date sticker on my license plate. I am guilty. Despite my request of a digital reminder from Ontario, none came, and so I gave no thought to the date of the sticker. I have arranged for a new sticker. However, what hurts is the incredible fine of \$494, an amount that includes something undefined called "contribution" of \$40. I think the fine is beyond reasonable, frankly.

I have paid my fine but I warn others who might fall into the same trap. It was a very expensive lunch.

**Barb Grisdale,
Queen Elizabeth Driveway**

People's Park porta-potty pilot project praise

A big thank-you to the Old Ottawa East Community Association for taking the initiative where the City of Ottawa has dropped the ball! Having a toilet facility, however basic, available 24/7 is much appreciated. Our enjoyment of Springhurst Park has improved considerably. If only other groups would take up the same mantle.

**Kathy Krywicki,
Aylmer Avenue**

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Old Town Hall: 613.627.0062

OPINION

The manifestation of People's Park

RICK BURROWES

Located between Springhurst Park and the Lees Avenue apartment towers, People's Park hosts thousands of user-hours per week. More than a dozen formal sports and event teams and hundreds of casual users engage in dog-walking, frisbee, spike ball, sparring, martial arts, sunning, kite flying, soccer, quidditch, Movies in People's Park Nights, and much more.

Yet, incredibly enough, this beautiful oasis, unique to the City's centre, has been under threat of imminent destruction since the 1950s from forces seeking to build a freeway through its greenspace. Yes, the Alta Vista Transportation Corridor (AVTC) continues to rear its ugly asphalt head! For those of you blissfully ignorant of its existence, the AVTC has been recently reborn, in a gush of greenwash rather than amniotic fluid, as the "Green Transportation and Utility Corridor". It's sad - but I'm not making this up.

Less and less sense

With every passing year, the concept of a new freeway to downtown Ottawa makes less and less sense, what with billions of tax dollars already spent on LRT, City Council's 2019 climate emergency declaration and Highway 417's expansion, which facilitates access for commuters from Riverside Drive to Nicholas Street. Moreover, in the post-COVID era, fewer people are making daily commutes to and from the city core.

A Google Maps search comparing the existing Riverside Drive to Nicholas Street route to the route of the proposed AVTC, shows that the AVTC route cuts the commute by only 1.4 kilometres and all of one to two minutes of driving time. Nonetheless, the City's Transportation Department plods on with this mid-20th century concept of facilitating private automobiles driving downtown.

Our Old Ottawa East community is frustrated, angry and fed up with the City's decades-long threat to pave over People's Park, which is known to City Hall bureaucrats as "160 Lees Avenue". City staff refuse to designate or recognize People's Park as an official city park because the Transportation Department appears bent on destroying the greenspace to construct a freeway in its place.

Old Ottawa East volunteers have spent countless hours advocating to have the City remove this outdated freeway plan from Ottawa's Official Plan once and for all, but so far to little avail. However, community residents - who have done and continue to do more than their share of advocacy - have succeeded at least in forestalling Council's adoption of the project. We owe them a huge debt of gratitude.



LORNE ABUGOV PHOTO

A father and son take advantage of the wide expanse of green space and blue sky at People's Park to enjoy some kite-flying.

The idea is simple

It is timely now for all of us, as a community, to do what we can. An idea has recently surfaced that has been most enthusiastically received and already adopted by hundreds of residents of Old Ottawa East. Starting now, in our conversations and in our thoughts, in our written correspondence with each other and with the City, let's all refer to this field of green as "People's Park".

The idea is that, through our collective belief in People's Park, we "manifest" this wonderful green space to become an official City of Ottawa park. This community-wide channeling of our willpower may be more powerful than we realize - and it doesn't hurt to try. We also reinforce, in the minds of People's Park users, that this is an official park ("reinforce" because they already believe it to be a park). We will have help along the way. Lee Jacobs of the Communities Activity Group of Old Ottawa East managed to get a Google Maps "pin" dropped on People's Park, and signs announcing People's Park will soon appear on the grounds. To see is to believe.

To this end, we will be asking the many teams and clubs that use the park to refer to it as "People's Park" in communications with their members and "People's Park (160 Lees)" in correspondence with the City.

City, NCC seem dug in...

No-left-turn ban at Colonel By Drive and Main Street leaves residents puzzled

JOHN DANCE

Residents north of Highway 417 are pleased with the much-improved intersection of Main Street and Colonel By Drive (CBD) but, now that it is fully signalized and reconfigured, they are baffled why northbound Main motorists still will not be allowed to turn left onto the parkway.

"If the traffic is stopped in both directions on Colonel By, why can one not make a left turn onto it?" asks Montcalm Street resident Vera Akers. "What is the logic in this? Surely turning left there is a better option than driving south on Main, then turning right onto Clegg in order to be able to drive south on Colonel By." A number of others have noted that, if left turns were allowed, the heavy traffic on Main Street would be reduced.

Also, Tom Scott, OOECA transportation and infrastructure chair, points out that a permissible left turn would be useful during the three year project when Greenfield, Main and Hawthorne (GMH) are under construction. "Just updating the gas connections recently caused huge backups in all directions as an example of how limited a driver's choices can be for moving around in the downtown core," Scott pointed out to City staff in an email.



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

Vera Akers, Montcalm Street resident, and Tom Scott, OOECA transportation and infrastructure chair, question why left turns will not be allowed at the reconfigured and fully-signalized Main Street - Colonel By Drive intersection.

"The light signals replaced are for pedestrians and cyclists only," Sofia Benjelloun of the NCC told *The Mainstreeter*. "The intersection was designed to replace a similar traffic configuration, which never included a

left turn on the intersection of Colonel By Drive and Main Street."

"The intersection at Main Street and Colonel By Drive was designed to minimize the overall size of the intersection while maintaining all pre-existing vehicle

movements and enhancing pedestrian and cycling connections from Main Street to the canal pathway network," responded Bruce Kenny, the City's manager of design.

"To accommodate vehicle movement from Main Street to southbound Colonel By Drive, a separate right-turn lane on Main Street would be required," he continued. "This constrained area is not well suited to accommodate an additional turn lane."

A number of residents do not agree with the NCC-City position, although some are pleased with the continued prohibition because they see it contributing to cyclist and pedestrian safety.

Akers suggests that, if high volumes of traffic on Main Street north would result in congestion, then perhaps the solution would be to prohibit left turns onto CBD during peak periods. Scott agrees, "An interim solution could be investigated by temporarily allowing left turns at this intersection with CBD, with data then collected about how much and how often waiting traffic fills that northbound portion of north Main, if ever."

Given the City-NCC position, it appears that the left-turn restriction will remain in place unless the authorities can be convinced that its removal will be beneficial for traffic flows.

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Rehabilitation or replacement?

Heritage value of the CPR Bridge to be considered

In an advanced state of deterioration and without any heritage status at present, the CPR railway bridge is a prime candidate for demolition and replacement; but a local community heritage expert believes the historic landmark should be designated a heritage site and preserved and rehabilitated.

JOHN DANCE

Should the 124 year-old CPR bridge over the Rideau River just east of Lees avenue be fixed or demolished and replaced?

City staff propose to conduct an environmental assessment of the bridge and a possible replacement. However, heritage expert and Sandy Hill resident Barry Padolsky recommends that the CPR bridge should be designated under the provincial Heritage Act so that, rather than being replaced, it would likely be refurbished.

The bridge was converted from rail to pedestrian and cyclist use decades ago and, despite three major rehabilitations, the “bridge currently shows advanced deterioration and is being inspected annually to ensure safety until the renewal can take place,” says Lesley Collins, the City’s program manager of the heritage branch.

Currently, the bridge has no heritage status although it is the last of the three railways bridges that crossed the Rideau River into Old Ottawa East and Sandy Hill. The impact of the railways was profound in shaping the communities and by providing a major component of the local economy.

“In 2018, the City retained Parsons Inc. to conduct a condition assessment and renewal scoping study for the bridge,” Collins has written to the City’s Built Heritage Sub-Committee (BHSC). “The report presented two options: major rehabilitation or structure replacement. The rehabilitation option would have a 25-year service life and the replacement option would have a 75-year service life.

Based on engineering assessments, staff in the Asset Management Branch have made a primary determination that the replacement option is preferred; however, a detailed evaluation of both alternatives will take place through the Environmental Assessment process.”

This process will include a cultural heritage evaluation report on the bridge, however, Padolsky notes that these actions “do not commit the City, to initiate a designation under the Ontario Heritage Act,” something he feels is necessary to have the bridge restored.

Consequently, at the next meeting of BHSC, Padolsky will be seeking assent

for a motion that “The City heritage staff undertake an assessment of the heritage value of this eight-span half-deck plate-girder bridge with the objective of designating the structure under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act as a step towards preserving and rehabilitating this historic landmark.”



GEOOTTAWA

A 1956 aerial photo of Old Ottawa East shows the community’s extensive rail infrastructure. Now, only the CPR rail bridge over the Rideau River, just south of the Queensway (middle right), remains and it may be demolished if it doesn’t get heritage protection.

Concerns voiced over proposed density of the Sisters’ Convent

JOHN DANCE

Many residents oppose the proposed density of Forum/SLP’s redevelopment of the Sisters’ Convent at 15 des Oblats Avenue and the Old Ottawa East Community Association (OOECA) has highlighted this concern in a letter to the developers and the City.

At the end of June, more than 60 people attended a Zoom consultation on the proposed 284-unit development. Hosted by Councillor Shawn Menard, the meeting allowed the developers to present the project, outlining how it has evolved from a 339-unit proposal to the current plan.

Attendees expressed a general appreciation that the developers were “adaptively reusing” the century-old convent. Domicile, which previously owned the building, had planned to demolish it and build a structure similar to The Corners on Main.

Forum/SLP proposes to build a four-storey addition at the northwest corner of the lot and many residents - particularly those living in the eastern part of Corners - are opposed to this. The “L”-shaped addition would provide additional units to those that can be created within the existing structure and its construction would provide an interior courtyard for the new residents.

The addition would result in the elimination of the parkette that Domicile had created for the exclusive use of the Sisters, however, its Mary statue would be relocated to a new public park at the northwest corner of the site where two large silver maples would be preserved.

Another contentious issue is Forum/SLP’s proposal to create 20 visitor parking spaces, but none for residents, even though the applicable zoning bylaw requires

about 130 spaces. In the interests of reducing car usage in Old Ottawa East, OOECA supports the no-residential-parking proposal “provided that there is a substantial reduction in the unit count,” as noted by OOECA president Bob Gordon.

In his letter to the developers and the City, Gordon says, “The Old Ottawa East Secondary Plan (SP) states, ‘The former property of the Oblate Fathers and the Sacre Coeur are anticipated to accommodate a target of 1,000 dwelling units.’ The proposed 284 units for 15 des Oblats combined with what’s already been built plus the potential for what is yet to be built in Greystone Village and on the undeveloped lands of Saint Paul University is likely to result in about 2,000 dwelling units, i.e., about twice the target of the SP.”

“We are of the view that the road infrastructure of Old Ottawa East, specifically Main, Springhurst, Clegg and the interior streets of Greystone Village do not have the capacity to readily service the traffic and parking demands of the residents of 2,000 new dwelling units,” wrote Gordon. “To this end, we request that the unit count of the 15 des Oblats development be substantially reduced. Ideally, the unit count would be constrained by the number of units that can be accommodated by the repurposing of the convent without a new addition being built.”

OOECA is supporting Forum/SLP’s proposed public pathway between the new development and the eastern part of Corners so that there is a convenient and safe link between Springhurst Avenue and des Oblats. A number of residents object to such a pathway because of the potential loss of privacy, and security and noise issues. However, the approved site plan for the Corners development noted that Domicile “committed to provid[e] a public pathway either at this location in the future if the Sisters of the Sacred Heart vacate the property or further east on the property if the convent is demolished in the future and that location is more appropriate.”

As of this writing, Forum/SLP had not submitted its final plans to the City of Ottawa so some details of the proposal, including what roof-top amenities are proposed, are not yet known.

John Dance is chair of the OOECA planning committee.

New safety feature for the corner of Main and Hawthorne

JOHN DANCE

Permanent bollards may be installed at the dangerous southwest corner of Main Street and Hawthorne Avenue in order to provide some improved safety for the many pedestrians and cyclists who use this intersection.

In light of the insufficient improvements that City staff proposed for the corner in the plans for the rebuilt Hawthorne Avenue, Councillor Shawn Menard recently proposed to City staff that solid concrete or steel bollards be installed.

Some years ago, Councillor Menard persuaded staff to install “flex posts” to delineate and protect the substandard pedestrian “storage” area at the corner. Unfortunately, this installation is regularly destroyed as large vehicles cut the corner and run over the sidewalk. The Main Street Safety Audit of 2018 deemed the safety issue as “extreme” but aside from the “flex posts” nothing has been done to remedy the situation.

The key challenge is that the building on the corner is built to the lot line and the sidewalk has substandard width. The City says it does not have enough time to acquire additional roadway width from the provincial government before the Hawthorne reconstruction begins.



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

The “flex posts” at the southwest corner of Main and Hawthorne have again been destroyed but, when the intersection is reconstructed, permanent bollards may be installed to protect pedestrians from large vehicles running over the substandard sidewalk.

Consequently, the fundamental problem of inadequate space may not be remedied for years, if ever.

In response to Menard’s request that

solid bollards be installed, City staff wrote: “[T]he addition of permanent bollards in this location may be merited and so we will look into the design further and also

review details from the similar installation at Rideau / Waller.”

However, the Rideau / Waller use of bollards is strictly along Waller and they do not provide protection for pedestrians waiting at the corner.

“The current flex stakes at Main / Hawthorne are situated around the radius [of the corner] and, given the close proximity of the corner building, the placement of immovable bollards could pose a problem for accessibility; specifically, ensuring that pedestrians have sufficient space to pass in a location where pedestrian storage is also required,” City staff wrote.

“This is something we will need to assess,” they continued. “However, [...] perhaps placing the bollards on the Hawthorne approach to the intersection, may be enough to encourage the trucks to start their turns in the correct location, and prevent trucks encroaching on the curb / sidewalk around the radius.”

The use of bollards to protect pedestrians in other cities such as Paris is standard practice. In Ottawa, bollards have been used to protect above-ground gas lines and electrical boxes. The question is whether the City will now also use them to provide solid protection to pedestrians and cyclists at what is arguably Old Ottawa East’s most dangerous corner.

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Rebecca Bromwich

Ottawa election 2022: Shawn Menard has a challenger

JOHN DANCE

Rebecca Bromwich has stepped forward to challenge Capital Ward incumbent Shawn Menard in the October 24 municipal election.

Last election, Menard triumphed over four others, including then-incumbent David Chernushenko, but the election was close. None of the losing candidates has yet expressed an interest in running again.

Bromwich is an adjunct professor with the Department of Law and Legal Studies at Carleton. She also teaches courses about diversity, equity, and inclusion, and conflict resolution in the Sprott School of Business. “My current law practice is largely pro bono, seeking to support access to justice for people who would likely not otherwise have legal representation,” she says. “I have been a litigator for nearly 20 years, and also have an MBA and management experience, as well as my PhD.”

Asked about Old Ottawa East issues, she responded to *The Mainstreeter*: “In talking to folks in Old Ottawa East so far, I have been hearing that burying hydro cables and developing infrastructure while taking a sensible approach to development and protecting parks and the river are important. I’m interested in hearing from people about their concerns and I am walking around with my team to meet people. I have a lot of ground to cover so I welcome people to also reach out to get in touch with me.”

Key points on Bromwich’s election website are, “Collaboration produces results... Vote for Rebecca Bromwich to get those results for our community ... A vote for Rebecca is a vote for a strong, collaborative approach to a sustainable, equitable Capital Ward.” Cited priorities are: collaborating with local businesses and driving Capital Ward’s economy, protecting safe streets, ensuring transit is reliable, protecting our communities, providing safe and affordable housing at Lansdowne and around the ward, investing in health care infrastructure like

the Civic Hospital, and supporting arts and culture.”

For his part, Menard has a master’s degree in public policy and administration with an undergrad in Criminology and Criminal Justice from Carleton University. His past experience includes being a senior staff person for Canada’s Big City Mayor’s Caucus and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Vice-Chair of the City of Ottawa Pedestrian and Transit Advisory Committee, President of the Centretown Citizens’ Community Association, and previously working at the Department of Justice Canada as a federal public servant.

“This is the most important election in Ottawa in a generation,” he says. “We can’t afford more of the same at City Hall. Ottawa is at a crossroads and we have a choice to make about our path ahead. When our team was first elected three and half years ago, I never imagined that we would need to be on the front lines of the battle of Billings Bridge or organizing safety walks for people to feel comfortable accessing essential services because of a convoy occupation. We have had multiple “1 in 100 year” climate-related events causing flooding, tornadoes, and power loss for up to 11 days in our communities. The city launched an LRT system knowing it had major deficiencies leading to derailments.”

“The approach to challenges that come our way matters,” Menard continues. “With new leadership at City Hall, we can move beyond the toxic dynamics which have stifled dissent and created barriers to change. We can collaborate to ensure a resident-focused City Hall that places quality of life at the centre of everything we do.”

Ten candidates are running to replace retiring Mayor Jim Watson. Since *The Mainstreeter* previously reported on who’s running, two significant changes have occurred: Ottawa journalist and entrepreneur Mark Sutcliffe joined the race and City Councillor Diane Deans withdrew.



Carleton U professor Rebecca Bromwich will challenge Capital Ward incumbent Shawn Menard in the October 24th municipal election.

BROMWICH CAMPAIGN PHOTO

New pilot project cited as a “revolutionary change”

Four-day work week introduced at Saint Paul University

MAINSTREETER STAFF

Saint Paul University officials are hailing a four-month pilot project now underway as a potential catalyst for a “revolutionary change” in how universities operate in Canada. The Old Ottawa East university is believed to be the first in Canada to introduce a four-day work week.

“We’re not implementing a compressed work week and we’re not cutting pay. We hope to be a successful case study for others to follow this path, to foster a better work-life balance for all,” says Carole Audet, Associate Vice-Rector, Talent, Diversity and Culture at Saint Paul, who recognizes the importance of this move.

According to the university, the new work regime is an effort to reduce fatigue and pressure on mental health, which the pandemic has exacerbated. At a time when the amount of information processed by employees seems to be at an all-time high, Saint Paul hopes the mental respite associated with a shorter work week could lead to happier employees, willing and able to work more efficiently.

“We have made our expectations clear to the employees,” says Chantal Beauvais, Rector of Saint Paul University.

“First and foremost, we want to create a work environment that is conducive to success, while allowing for a positive work-life balance. To do this, we will help all employees affected by the change find ways to function more effectively in performing their duties. This could mean some forms of cross-training, asking employees to think about how to save time throughout the day, and generally working together to ensure that we can continue to provide excellent service to the student body and stakeholders of the university.”

The decision to launch the pilot project followed an agreement with the bargaining unit representing Saint Paul’s administrative support personnel to support implementation of the four-day work week. As a result, effective July 4, all administrative support personnel at the university, both unionized and non-unionized, began working a 28-hour instead of a 35-hour work week. Current salaries and pension plans will not be affected.

The revamped work structure should also benefit the university by helping to attract new talent while increasing employee retention. Both the university and the bargaining unit believe that the new four-day work week will improve staff well-being.

Next issue of *The Mainstreeter*...

**Content and advertising
submissions are due on:**

SEPTEMBER 23, 2022

Following the news

Community updates in brief

OOE driver Zacharie Robichon competes in the 24 Hours of Le Mans endurance race



Team Porsche driver Zacharie Robichon, who grew up on Brown Street in Old Ottawa East, drove the green car (1st row, far left) in shifts along with his two co-drivers to place 16th in the GTE category at the recent Le Mans 24 hour endurance race.

Born and raised in Old Ottawa East, professional race car driver Zacharie Robichon set a new standard for himself on June 11/12th placing 16th in his GTE category at the 90th running of the famed 24 Hours of Le Mans endurance race in France.

And he did it in front of his mom and dad, Pierrette and Jacques Robichon of Brown Street. The pair were lost in a sea of 242,000 fans who jammed the storied race course for the event. "Watching Zacharie drive past me during Le Mans was like having your kid in the World Cup of soccer, it's a moment you will never forget," says Jacques, a race car enthusiast himself. Both of Zacharie's parents enjoy travelling the North American circuit to watch their son, but Le Mans was "out of this world! Once in a lifetime."

Quoted following the race on his Facebook page, Robichon spoke of his career bucket list accomplishment: "Nobody said it would be easy! Survived the race, despite a few setbacks and we saw the chequered flag. Everything surrounding this race lived up to its expectation, including the challenge itself. The amount of work to get to this point for the whole crew was incredible, and continued throughout the night as we encountered some damage on a few occasions necessitating quick repairs..."



LORNE ABUGOV PHOTO

New OOE retail businesses cater to seniors demographic

Three new businesses will open their doors in Old Ottawa East in the weeks and months ahead, and all of them will cater, though not exclusively, for the more senior demographic living in the community. As we went to press, finishing touches were being applied to River Bank Dental, the first commercial establishment to open in the new Millieu building and the second dentist office in the Main Street condo and apartment hub.

At street level of the Corners on Main condo, two "leased" signs have adorned two commercial units between Greens & Beans and Nu Grocery for more than a month. A 24/7 pharmacy is slated to open next door to NU Grocery while a hearing centre will fill the final Main Street storefront space next to Greens & Beans.

Two honourable mentions for OOE writers

Two Old Ottawa East writers recently earned honourable mention awards in the 35th annual National Capital Writing Contest (NCWC), presented by the National Capital Region chapter of the Canadian Authors Association. Both of the authors, Theresa Wallace, for her short story entitled *Aftermath* and Lori Gandy, for her poem *Afternoon Tea*, are regular content contributors to *The Mainstreeter* and were featured in the June issue of the newspaper.

Wallace was a prior winner in the short story category of the 2020 NCWC competition, for her short story *Water, Fire, Air*. Gandy was a first-time entrant in the poetry category of the contest. Her article on the OOE Children's Garden is featured on page 3 of this issue of *The Mainstreeter*.

Completion of Colonel By Drive stone wall delayed

The planned completion of the landscaping and related work on the new stone wall between Echo Drive and Colonel By Drive in the Clegg to Bank Street stretch will not be completed until mid-September or later. The June issue of *The Mainstreeter* reported that the work would be completed by the end of June.

"Due to trade union strikes and other factors beyond our control, this project has been pushed back to August 8 with a September 16 finish date," Dominique Huras, spokesperson for the National Capital Commission, reports. And if the strikes continue, the work could be further delayed she says.

UOttawa health and science building update



ANNIE STAPLES PHOTO

The new UOttawa Health Sciences complex is on schedule and on budget for completion in June 2023.

Construction of the UOttawa Health Sciences campus is on schedule for substantive completion by June 15, 2023, in time for its grand opening in September 2023, according to Isabelle Mailloux-Pulkinghorn, spokesperson for the university. The 200 Lees Avenue/River campus project is on budget at \$130M. This new campus along the banks of the Rideau River will become the home of the Faculty of Health Sciences and will unite our Schools of Nursing, Nutrition Sciences, and Rehabilitation Sciences.

"Our new Campus is fundamental to uOttawa's vision of becoming a world leader in health sciences research," says Mailloux-Pulkinghorn. "Our co-located and collaborative new lab spaces are designed to drive cutting edge investigation, invite partnerships, foster multidisciplinary collaboration, and fuel new ideas. With a focus on Indigenous, women's, and mental health research, we will catalyze revolutionary advances in global health, wellness, and care."

Proposed development at 148 Main Street

Main/Hawthorne zoning agreement threatened by City planning approval

JOHN DANCE

A unique and important feature of the “traditional mainstreet” (TM) zoning for Old Ottawa East’s Main Street and Hawthorne Avenue is not properly understood by some developers and City planning staff, says the planning committee of the Old Ottawa East Community Association.

Unlike TM zoning elsewhere in Ottawa, the TM zoning in Old Ottawa East requires that new developments have a two to three metre setback of the building from the front lot line.

As was negotiated with the City a decade ago when the OOE community design plan and subsequently the OOE secondary plan were approved, this setback provision is meant to encourage pedestrians to “linger” and provides an opportunity for the commercial stores to place private signage, merchandise displays, other

temporary appurtenances such as an outdoor seating area.

A recent City approval of a new three-storey development at 248 Main Street allows permanent fixtures within the setback area. The community association is protesting this and wants to ensure that future Main and Hawthorne developments respect the intent of the setback area.

“The intent of this proposal [248 Main] is to contribute to the requirements of the existing traditional mainstreet zone by introducing new commercial space not currently present along this section of the street as well as provide two large-size luxury residential suites not normally found in current developments in the area,” says the Skyscraper website that reports on development proposals in Ottawa.

John Dance is chair of the OOECA planning committee.



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

A new three-storey commercial and residential building will replace an old house at 248 Main Street, but the OOECA planning committee questions whether the front yard setback provision of the zoning has been respected.



Top Questions to Ask Yourself Before You Renovate your Kitchen

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Two families joined at the hearts by the war in Ukraine

The Aouaj family's flight from the war-torn country to the safe haven of a caring Old Ottawa East family...

ALEXANDRA PEACH AND MAHDI AOUAJ

The Peach/Yetman Family

When my husband Mike and I planned an 'in-law' suite in our new house, our plans were to have a possible space for our parents. The invasion of Ukraine created a whole different situation.

As we saw the horrendous images daily on the news, we discussed the idea of hosting a family to escape the violence. After considering the logistics, we acted quickly and placed an ad on the website "Ukraine Take Shelter" and within 24 hours we had two replies to our ad. Through WhatsApp we met the Aouaj family, who had already fled Ukraine and were taking shelter in Morocco, where Mahdi, the father is from, and we immediately wanted to offer them our help.

Through all of the support from our neighbours, we were able to set up the 'in-law' for a family of four, equipped with toys, firetrucks, scooters and everything a young family would need. On June 1st, at the McDonald Cartier International Airport, a very tired but relieved family came down the escalator. Together we came home to Merritt Avenue.

An unsung hero in this story is our dog, Tui. Love for animals is universal and the boys immediately fell on her, hugged and played with her which made everyone feel like they had a common bond. In fact, both boys' first word in English was "Tui"! She became the patient, loving hero that personifies the good in all of us that isn't always easy to communicate. With love, we welcomed our new friends to Canada.

The Aouaj Family

The day that Russia invaded Ukraine, I (Mahdi) was actually in Morocco finalizing documentation for my Ukrainian citizenship. It was terrifying news, and many countries were announcing evacuation orders. I had no other choice than to clandestinely get my family out of Ukraine as quickly as possible. My wife and the boys were able to escape but my wife's mother and brother were unable to get out. It has been a horrifying experience because we are constantly thinking about our family and all of our friends who are still there.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Left to right: El Mahdi Aouaj (with son Raian Aouaj), Mariia Aouaj, Jay Yetman, Michael Yetman, Alex Peach with Amir Aouaj in front of her and Carolyn Yetman - and the Yetman family dog, Tui, in the middle.

After the invasion began, in March, the Canadian government created a special program, the CUAET (the Canada-Ukrainian Authorization Emergency Travel) that fast tracks immigration for Ukrainians seeking asylum. People coming in through this program are considered temporary residents. After the bloodbath in Ukraine, we submitted all of our documentation and we were accepted to come to Canada, making us very happy.

Once we chose Ottawa as a good place for us and after searching online, we found and met a warm family who welcomed us with love and joy at the Ottawa airport. This was of course, the Yetman/Peach family. They offered our family accommodations in their home and helped us with many things. The help they gave us for our initial needs was truly amazing. They have our love and gratitude.

I am a civil engineer with seven years of experience in industrial construction. My wife is a certified esthetician with expertise in many techniques. We hope to find work opportunities in our areas of expertise. In conclusion, I want to thank you all for your support and having opened your hearts and doors to us. It is truly a marvelous thing.

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For more information on the positions available, pay rates, and to apply online, visit **ottawa.ca/vote**. The Elections Office will begin contacting applications now through September to fill available positions.

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BUSINESS BEAT

We take a preview tour of Amica The Glebe

New upscale retirement residence offers 162 units, many amenities

PHYLLIS ODENBACH SUTTON

With plans currently uncertain for Old Ottawa East's (OOE) own senior's building – the Greystone Retirement Residence – *The Mainstreeter* recently accepted an offer to tour Amica's new retirement residence in the Glebe. Building access is at 35 Monk Street, but many OOE residents may more easily pinpoint its location as the former site of the Beer Store and parking lot on Bank Street, south of Fifth Avenue.

Our visit was just days before the grand opening ceremony and the arrival of first residents on July 20. Many of the larger suites are already rented with some availability remaining for studio and one-bedroom units. Suites start at \$4,750/month. Over half of the new residents (60 – 70%) have ties to the Glebe, being current or former residents of the area or having family living in the area; we were told that some OOE residents will be moving into this new residence soon. One of the Memory Care floors will be welcoming residents starting on July 29.

This is the 22nd Amica residence in

Independent Living units (on floors 2, 7, 8 and 9), 61 Assisted Living units (on floors 3 and 4) and 40 Memory Care rooms (on floors 5 and 6). I imagine that like a number of readers, I was not familiar with the distinctions between these categories. Independent Living is for seniors who require little to no assistance with daily living. Assisted Living provides seniors with assistance for the activities of daily living such as mobility, grooming, personal hygiene, and medication management. Memory Care units are for seniors with a form of dementia such as Alzheimer's who require specialized care.

The building boasts some very impressive views (garden, Monk Street, Bank Street) and has a wide range of amenities. These include a three-season patio with a lovely garden, a wellness centre, a beauty salon, a massage therapy/physiotherapy treatment room, games rooms, a small cinema/presentation centre, a billiards table, a poker table, gardening opportunities, a tuck shop, a craft kitchen, a private dining room and



Ontario; these residences are privately owned retirement homes for seniors and do not receive government funding. When asked why Amica chose the Glebe for their newest residence, we were told by Ted Gaisford, General Manager at Amica The Glebe, that “building a community within the neighbourhood is of the utmost importance to us. Our front door is our window into the community and their window into us. The community network starts with us getting to know our residents first and deciding what’s important to them. Every person’s view of a good life looks different.”

Amica The Glebe is comprised of 61

a pub. Amenities on the Memory Care floors include outdoor balconies, activity rooms, motorized pets, a serenity room and an indoor-outdoor terrace.

“There are so many things to love about this residence, from the neighbourhood walkability to the outdoor spaces within the building,” says Teri Stern, Regional Director of Sales and Marketing at Amica Senior Lifestyles. “Residents can enjoy their own personal balconies, or larger shared terraces throughout the building. The indoor-outdoor terrace on the 5th floor in Memory Care features a central garden and circular walking path, ideal for residents with Alzheimer's or other



ANNIE STAPLES PHOTOS

TOP: Amica Glebe offers three types of living units- Independent, Assisted and Memory Care; MIDDLE: Residents are able to engage in a wide range of activities, including poker, billiards, crafts and cinema; BOTTOM: A fully-appointed beauty salon is available for residents; LEFT: Outdoor patios and gardens are open to all residents to enjoy.

forms of dementia. Our 2nd floor grand garden terrace, available to all residents, is partially covered and heated for year-round enjoyment.”

In terms of parking, Annie Staples (*The Mainstreeter's* photographer) and I were

the first visitors to use the bike racks out front (they were still covered in some protective plastic), and we were told that Amica has partnered with a local parking lot to provide discounted staff parking.



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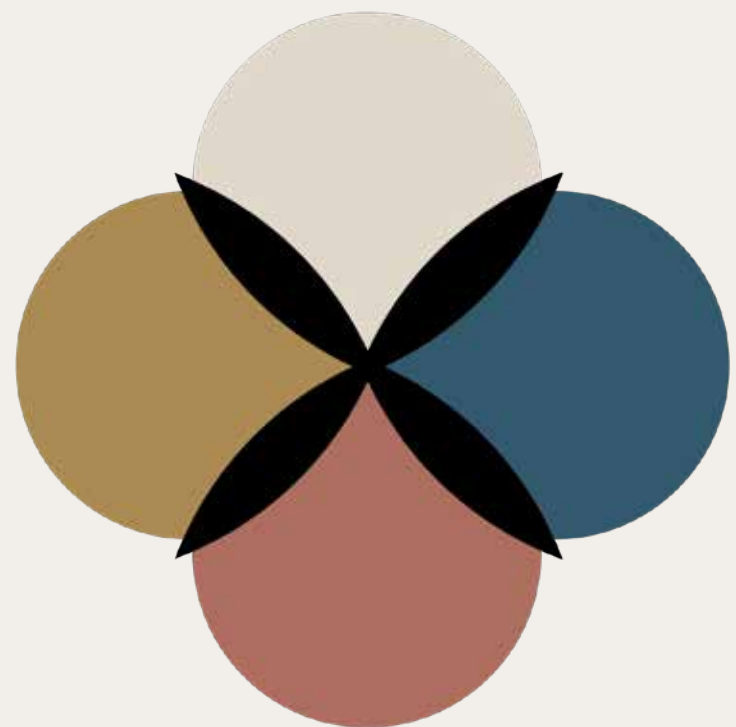


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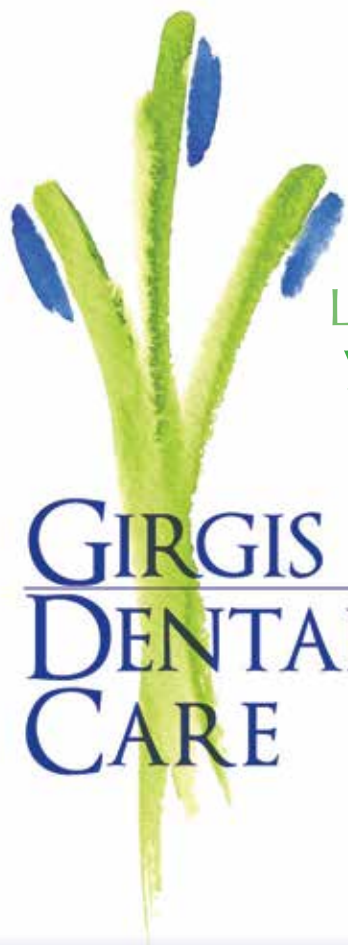


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ABOVE LEFT: Church of the Ascension's design was inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement. ABOVE RIGHT: Calvary Baptist Church is a representative example of a vernacular red brick church built in the early decades of the twentieth century.

Two Old Ottawa East churches, one Riverdale Avenue residence added to Ottawa's heritage registry

JOHN DANCE

The rich heritage of Old Ottawa East got a recent boost with City Council's addition of two churches and a "prairie style" house to the built heritage registry.

Both Church of the Ascension on Echo Drive and Calvary Baptist Church on Main Street are now heritage-listed as is the residential property at 100 Riverdale Avenue, about three blocks off of Main Street.

Ascension was built in 1919 and is, according to the report that went to the City's Built Heritage sub-committee, "A rare example of a vernacular church inspired by the Arts and Crafts Movement." It was designed by Allan Wilfred Horwood who was a member of the well-known Horwood family of architects who lived and worked in Ottawa and Winnipeg.

When the congregation moved from their old building at 115 Echo Drive (former Church of the Holy Trinity and now demolished), it took along items from the original, including several stained-glass windows.

Calvary Baptist Church was built nine years earlier and is, according to the staff report, "A representative example of a vernacular red brick church built in the

early decades of the twentieth century. The building has a prominent location on Main Street and is associated with the growth and development of Old Ottawa East." A one-storey addition was constructed in 1960.

The house on Riverdale Avenue, situated two flights of stairs above the roadway, is "a representative example of a residence designed in the Prairie style. Few buildings in Ottawa reflect the tenets of Prairie style, an American architectural style closely associated with Frank Lloyd Wright. The building is characterized by its horizontal lines and volumes, two storeys with single-storey wings, wide over-hanging eaves, brick and stucco cladding, decorative wood brackets, discreet side entrances, stained glass, pattern of rectangular openings and its landscaped front yard."

"The building is associated with the development of Old Ottawa South and East," notes the staff report. "A depression during the 1890s stymied development in this area until the annexation by the City in 1907, and the construction of the Bank Street Bridge over the Rideau Canal in 1912 and the Pretoria Bridge in 1915. The bridges permitted the expansion of the streetcar line and spurred rapid development in the neighbourhood."



JOHN DANCE PHOTOS

100 Riverdale is one of the few Ottawa examples of the Prairie style of Frank Lloyd Wright.

The addition of these structures to the heritage registry means that if demolition was proposed a review of the heritage significance would have to be completed

within 60 days. If the review resulted in a heritage designation then redevelopment plans would have to reflect this.

Some Flora Footbridge fun facts

MAINSTREETER STAFF

Recently released City data show that over the past year the Flora Footbridge had an average of exactly 2,000 trips per day. This figure turns out to be precisely in the middle of the range of daily use forecast by the bridge's environmental assessment.

In terms of the cyclist-pedestrian split in average daily use, 63 percent of the users are pedestrians and the balance are cyclists, a split that has held constant over the last two years. However, the split varies greatly over the course of the year. In the depths of winter, daily cycling use diminishes to as little as 14 while daily pedestrian use falls to about 600. Only during the height of the summer does daily cycling use ever exceed pedestrian use.

The total number of trips over the June 1, 2021 to May 31, 2022 period was 729,987.

This was down from the previous year, however, much of the difference was accounted for by virtue of people being able to walk across the Canal during a longer skating season this past season and possibly because of more frequent walking during the first year of the pandemic.

In other Flora news, the plexiglas snow-stopping panels that were damaged in the winter are being repaired before they are removed until next winter. Because of the City's extended storm response, some operations have been delayed, therefore an exact timeline of the complete removal of the panels is not determined, reports Bryden Denyes, the City's area manager of roads services.

Everyday transportation in Old Ottawa East including the use of the Flora Footbridge is part of a study by Cassie Smith, a Master's student at Carleton University. You can learn more at www.OttawaHabits.wordpress.com, and if you are interested in participating please email her at CassieSmith@cmail.carleton.ca. *The Mainstreeter* will report on her findings when they are available.

ART BEAT

A finger on the pulse of the arts in OOE



OOE ARTIST FEATURE: SUSAN BAHEN - SEEING THE BEAUTY ON OUR STREETS

Street photographer Susan Bahen captures the beauty of Old Ottawa East (OOE), even in the most unlikely of subjects.

Bahen first became interested in photography while playing with the dials of her dad's Minolta film camera back when she was a kid. "I was very inspired by our many boxes of family photos," she says. "I grew up in the era of record album cover art, National Geographic magazine, and design magazines. Even though I only had a 'point and shoot' pocket camera, I wanted to take photography classes when I was at Earl of March high school in Kanata. They had a great arts program! Unfortunately, photography did not fit into my math and science-heavy academic timetable. I planned to go into engineering, then business, and finally ended up getting my Bachelor of Arts in Law."

It would be a while, yet, before Bahen could fully embrace the artform. "When our kids were young, I photographed them all the time. I signed up for several local photography classes during that period, but they were always cancelled for lack of enrolment. Photography is an expensive pursuit for a single income family raising kids."

In 2013, Bahen's family moved into OOE. As Bahen adjusted to her new neighbourhood, she simultaneously found an online global community. "It was a women's photography network called Click Community," she says. "This was the start of me becoming serious about photography."

Through Click Community, Bahen began taking classes. "I learned the mechanics of photography and studied all the genres—everything from portrait to landscape photography. I also learned from other members of the network. Getting and giving feedback is a crucial aspect of the Click Community. Their mentors provide critiques and encouragement and write tutorials. They do this constructively, talking about the elements they love in your work and if something isn't working, identifying why (the composition may be off balance or there may be issues with lighting, for example)."

Bahen loves to walk around OOE and throughout our nearby neighbourhoods "seeing things...being aware...paying attention." Sometimes, she has her golden retriever George with her.

"Once you've mastered the technical aspects of photography, seeing is everything," she says. "It becomes intuitive. It is how you see the world."



ABOVE LEFT: A different perspective of a common view. Red against the winter blue sky, Isabella Pizza with its angles and icicles caught photographer Susan Bahen's beauty-seeking eye. It pays to take a closer look at unexpected subjects; ABOVE RIGHT: Known more for its utility than for its beauty, the Hydro building at Main and Riverdale's patinaed windows are delicately framed by some wispy pine branches. Bahen likes to find beauty in the mundane and explore the details.

"I love street photography, which is a genre that records everyday life in public places. After the severe storm we had in May, I could have captured the tragedies and the suffering. That, of course, is important work. But I do this for the joy of it. I like to find beauty where beauty does not seem to exist. Some people say that it is like creating 'found still life.' As a street photographer, I am eclectic but local. I like both urban and natural scenes."

Bahen points out that many photographers like the golden light of day. But that is not Bahen's time to photograph. "Mine is during business hours," she says. "I also like to

photograph when it is rainy or foggy. I am interested in capturing mood and atmosphere in my work—getting emotion into images without people. Grungy alleyways have stories to tell!"

Bahen's images have been featured in Click Magazine and in the VOICE Image Competition. Several of the pieces featured were shot in Ottawa neighbourhoods.

In 2017, she became a Click Community Mentor. "I am

Continued on Page 23



Susan Bahen loves to photograph the flowers along Echo Drive, especially the lilacs that grace the neighbourhood in the spring.



TIM HUNT'S MAIN STREET SKETCHES

Tim Hunt explores his community outfitted with a small sketchbook, pen, and watercolour kit. In our regular feature, he shares the pages from his sketchbook and tells the stories behind his work.

Sitting at the base of one of the grand willow trees near the Rideau Canal, my Saturday morning goal was to draw the Pretoria Bridge in its raised position with a boat passing underneath. One of the challenges of drawing on location is all the moving parts; a scene can change before your eyes, whether it be clouds, cars, people, or in this case, boats and bridges!

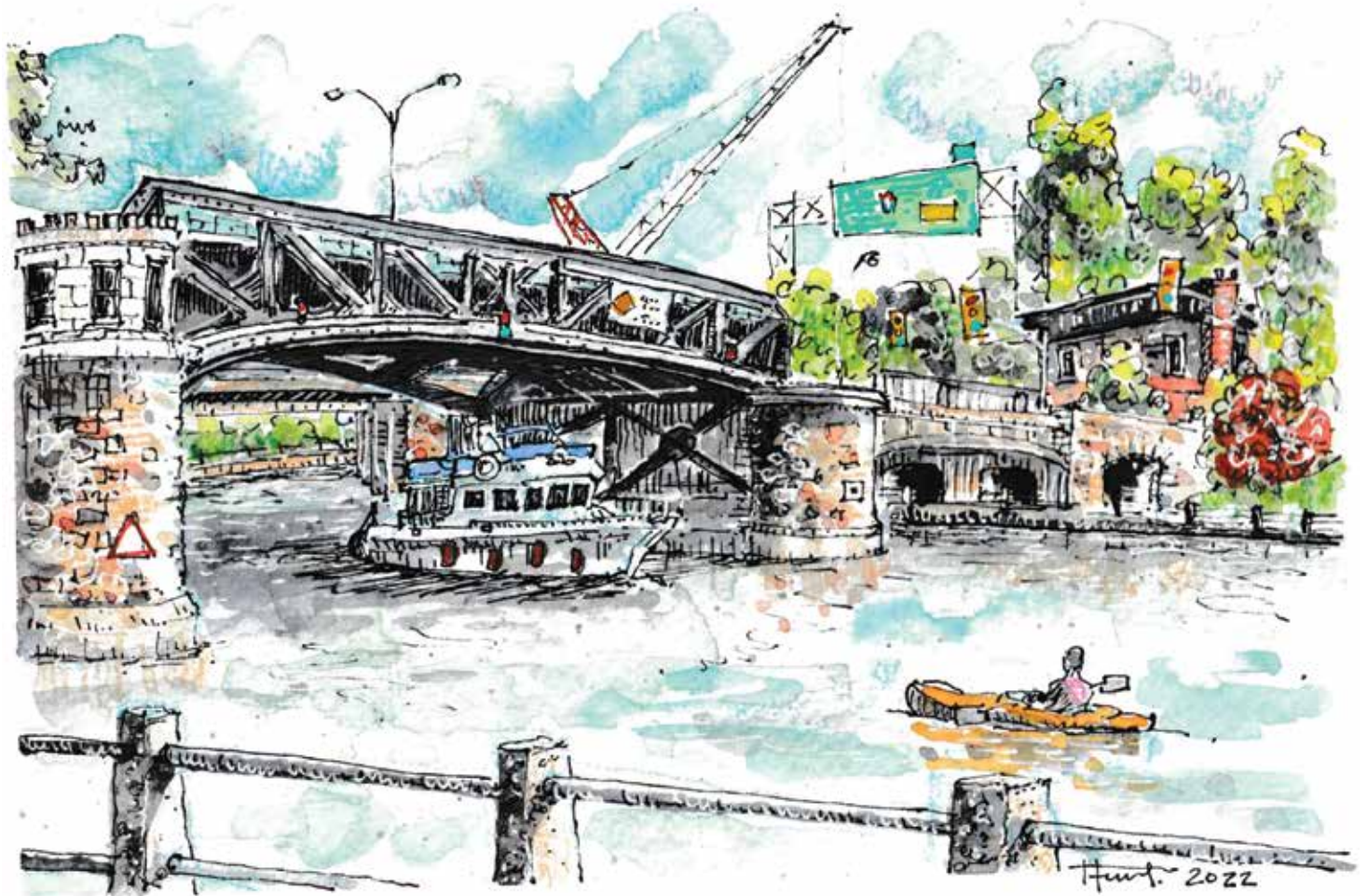
To construct a drawing on the fly, there is some creative risk involved, one must be ready for change and be able to

go with the flow. The mechanics of this table-lift bridge are efficient, there was not a lot of time to get it down on paper before it descended. My solution was to draw everything around the lift portion of the bridge first, and then snap a photo while it was raised. I was then able to sketch in the bridge position from my photo, and fill in the details from the span in its resting state. The bridge was

raised three or four times during my session, so while it was up I was able to make corrections to shadows. Similarly, for the boat, I photographed the line of boats that paraded under the bridge each time, and chose my favourite to sketch in the space I had reserved for it. Finally, I lightly sketched in the kayaker as he drifted watching the boats pass through, and ended up relocating him twice in the

sketch, so he wouldn't be in an awkward position in relation to the other elements of the drawing.

While I have waited impatiently a number of times to cross this bridge to pick up groceries or to run errands, I really enjoyed observing this historic bridge fulfilling the duty it was designed for over 100 years ago.



ART BEAT

Street photographer Susan Behan

Continued from Page 22

doing this out of love," she says. "Click Community taught me everything I know, and photography is now my passion. I felt very strongly that I wanted to give back to the community that mentored me." Last summer, Bahen created a self-guided class and e-book teaching photographers how to find and appreciate the beauty that is around them. "I think I 'fell into photography' at exactly the right time. Photography has helped me find my new work-life balance. And I now have dear friends all over the world that I've travelled to visit. These friendships go beyond photography."

Bahen will be exhibiting a collection of her photographs as part of the 2022 OOE Art Tour on September 10. "It is such an honour to be a part of this great event in a community setting. There is so much talent in OOE! Although I do show my photography through my network and on social media, I am quite shy about sharing my work. But I do believe that it



Glebe parking garage. Lines, shapes and repetition are elements that Susan Bahen often seeks in her work.

is important, as artists, to share. Not for personal gratification, but because it makes for a better world."

In the photo captions, Bahen shares the stories behind the photographs we selected for this story.

To see more of Bahen's work, go to <https://susanbahenphotography.com/>.



Author Tanis Browning-Shelp (<http://www.browning-shelp.com>) pens her *Maryn O'Brien Young Adult Fiction* series, published by Dog-Eared Books, from her home in Old Ottawa East. Contact tanis@browning-shelp.com if you have information about artists or art events that you believe would enrich our community members' lives.

The Old Ottawa East Art Tour just keeps on growing

Imagine a lovely Saturday morning in early September...you enjoy your morning coffee; you pop over to the Main Farmers' Market for some local produce and other treats; and you walk home through the streets of Old Ottawa East (OOE) only to discover a different outdoor art gallery at almost every turn!

Well, this flight of fancy can be your reality from 11:00am to 3:00pm on Saturday, September 10. This is when OOE's talented artists and photographers will "hit the streets" to display and sell their artwork in the front yards and driveways of their residences and other homes throughout the community. With the backing of presenting sponsor, *The Mainstreeter*, and other sponsoring local businesses, this year's Art Tour has added many new exhibitors, including both visual artists and photographers.

One of three founding exhibitors, Steve Fick, will participate again this year. "I love the informality of this event...the chance to meet people, see old friends and students, and have really interesting conversations," Fick says. "It re-inspires me as an artist, and it is a really great way to enrich the vitality of our community."

A painting of a street scene. In the foreground, a black signpost holds a white rectangular sign with a red circle and a diagonal line through it, indicating a 'No Left Turn' restriction. Below the main sign is a smaller white sign with two black arrows pointing in opposite directions. To the left, a two-story brick house with a dark brown roof has a black door and a window with a decorative pattern. A small figure of a person is visible near the door. To the right, a two-story house with a brown roof and white walls has several windows with black shutters. A group of people is standing near the entrance. In the background, more houses and trees are visible, creating a sense of a residential neighborhood. The style is painterly with visible brushstrokes.

A long list of talented local artists and photographers have confirmed their participation in A Walk of Art, OOE's 3rd annual outdoor art tour.

is beginning to be regarded by locals as a neighbourhood tradition. "It's amazing how many people in the community told us they enjoyed the Art Tour last year," stated Lorne Abugov, Editor of *The Mainstreeter*. "Many of them have been asking when this year's event will take place. And the growth we've seen in the number of local artists living and working in our community who want to get involved and exhibit their work as part of the Art Tour has been incredible. As a community newspaper that supports the arts in all its forms, we couldn't be happier to

present and sponsor the Art Tour again this year.”

Besides the growth in the number of participating artists, A Walk of Art will cover a larger footprint of homes exhibiting within the community this year. First-time exhibitors such as Susan Bahen on Riverdale Avenue and Louise Rachlis on Graham Street stretch the north-south boundaries of this year's outdoor art tour. In addition, to accommodate the expanded line-up of presenters, multiple artists will exhibit at neighbouring homes on Mason Terrace.

Bower Street, Echo Drive, Belgrave Road
and Drummond Street. *[See the map printed
on this page for details and watch for event
posters on the day of the tour.]*

"It may have been partly because of our many COVID lockdowns, but I overheard so many Art Tour visitors last year thanking our participating artists with boundless enthusiasm for providing such a rich cultural experience for their families," said Tanis Browning-Shelp, Arts Editor for *The Mainstreeter*. "I saw people out on their bikes and scooters, kids coming from soccer practices, entire families out strolling...and almost everyone spoke up to express their heartfelt thanks for the opportunity to walk amongst such lovely artworks and speak with local artists."

In addition to *The Mainstreeter*, which is the presenting sponsor, local community businesses have generously stepped up to provide financial support for A Walk of Art, including Ottawa Physiotherapy & Sports Clinics, RE/MAX Absolute Realty Inc. (Realtor: Michele Parent), Watson's Pharmacy & Compounding Centre, Merriam Print and Montgomery Scotch Lounge.

The rain date for the event will be September 11. Please see the electronic version of this issue of *The Mainstreeter* at mainstreeter.ca to explore some of the participating artists' websites or Instagram posts.



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With opinions mixed on the issue...

NCC will consult on car-free Canal parkways

JOHN DANCE

The Canal parkway closure pilot continues. Last year, much of Queen Elizabeth Driveway (QED) was closed for cyclists and pedestrians for the first part of the summer, then it was reopened and Colonel By Drive (CBD) took over. This year, just QED will be closed.

Reaction to QED closing this summer is mixed but there are enthusiastic supporters of it, especially the Centretown Community Association which has lobbied for the closure for several years. “Queen Elizabeth Driveway (QED) begs to be a permanent car-free promenade,” Shawn Barber, former president of the Centretown Community Association, wrote to Tobi Nussbaum, chief executive officer of the National Capital Commission which operates the parkways.

“The QED was extremely well used by pedestrians, joggers, dog walkers, cyclists and boarders when closed during COVID,” wrote Barber. “Its popularity and value as a vehicle-free amenity are now clear. Close the QED to vehicles, possibly as far as Fifth Avenue, and let it become a grand promenade. It would be a promenade epitomizing the character and culture of Ottawa.”

The NCC seems to have taken this advice to heart. “Our preliminary plan included the use of the full length of QED, however, as a result of the feedback received from the City of Ottawa and Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group, we adjusted the program, limiting it only from Somerset to Fifth Avenue.” Sofia Benjelloun, NCC spokesperson told *The Mainstreeter*.

“Even though I live on the Colonel By side of the Canal, I go over there [to QED] almost every day to walk or bike,” says Susan Redding, OOE resident and member of Parkways for People, an advocacy group for transformative change to the national capital parkways. “I love the vibe. I love seeing the huge variety of users out on the road, such as the little kids taking advantage of the extra road space to practice riding their two-wheelers. I also notice way more people using the green space to relax and enjoy views of the water. I feel fortunate to live near it.”

The City of Ottawa doesn’t “love the vibe.” When asked by *The Mainstreeter*

about the closure, Chris Brinkmann, manager of traffic operations, commented: “The current QED closure has resulted in the diversion of about 10,000 vehicles per day and the City is seeing an infiltration of detoured traffic. These daily volumes have shifted from the QED to these residential streets, significantly affecting the neighbouring residential transportation network. This congestion could further cause dangerous delays to emergency responses, both at Lansdowne and within the surrounding community.”

The Glebe Community Association discussed the closure of the QED at a board meeting earlier this year. “We have heard from people who love the increased active recreation space and we have also heard from people concerned about increased traffic and noise on residential streets” said June Creelman, vice-president of the GCA.

“While we are generally supportive of some QED closures, we decided it was premature to take a stance without better data,” Creelman said. “We have written to the NCC and asked them to study traffic impacts and to provide us with more precise data on traffic counts on affected streets.”

One issue with the closure of QED is that CBD is no longer reserved for active users on Sundays mornings and some cyclists miss having the full length of the parkway. On the other hand, QED will have no motorists 24/7 until September and then on Fall weekends so that there is lots more time for car-free cycling and walking than just Sunday mornings.

A recent OOE Grapevine Facebook discussion of the QED closure and the value of it being closed rather than CBD raised many perspectives ranging

from both Canal parkways should be car-free permanently to neither should be closed to cars at any time other than Sunday morning.

An oft-expressed Grapevine sentiment was that the closure of CBD to motorists would mean more traffic on Main Street and motorists would have to drive farther to get to their destinations, neither proposition being desirable to these respondents.

“The NCC continues to work with the City on gathering additional traffic data to better understand the impacts that City and NCC seasonal activities may have on neighbourhood streets,” says Benjelloun. “As part of our ongoing commitment to working with the community, we are meeting with different community groups and will be launching a survey at the end of the summer season to help shape the future of the QED programming.” So we’ll all get a chance to tell the NCC what we think of car-free Canal parkways.

Transportation Master Plan

Community association contends that AVTC draft criteria are biased

JOHN DANCE

Draft criteria for assessing the value of proposed new roadways contained in the City’s Transportation Master Plan (TMP) are biased and could lead to building the Alta Vista Transportation Corridor (AVTC), the Old Ottawa East Community Association (OOECA) fears.

“We found the most recent survey about proposed roadway and transit criteria and weighting very strongly biased towards more roads, especially for commuting and shopping, and nothing to weight the value of greenspace and parks as a key component to effective active-transport routing and usage,” Tom Scott, OOECA Director of Transportation and Infrastructure, recently wrote to Mayor Jim Watson and other officials.

In response, City staff recently held a Zoom call with OOECA board members and Councillor Shawn Menard. Although staff did not specifically say they would amend the criteria, they emphasized that there would be a separate review of the AVTC proposal and the impacted communities would be

consulted during this review. Staff also acknowledged that a number of factors had changed since 2013 when the AVTC was approved as part of the TMP.

The draft assessment criteria allow little consideration of the negative impacts of building the four-lane AVTC roadway that would start at Conroy Road and Walkley Avenue and end at Highway 417 and Nicholas Street. The roadway would eliminate much of the unofficial People’s Park, just east of Springhurst Park and would remove greenspace from the Riverview Park area on the eastern side of the Rideau River. In terms of traffic, Lees Avenue and Nicholas would become much busier and congested.

The draft assessment criteria are, however, concerned with traffic congestion in the areas where the traffic originates. Out of a total possible score of 100, a maximum 55 points could be awarded on the basis of providing a better transportation network in “new and growing areas” and for “relieving congestion in areas where this relief is needed.” The criteria include scant consideration of whether congestion in “downstream”

communities will occur because of the construction of a new road.

“City building impacts” can provide up to 20 points but there is little within these criteria that address much of the impact of AVTC on Old Ottawa East and other affected communities. There is one criterion worth four points that addresses negative impacts of a roadway on a “priority neighbourhood,” however, OOE is not deemed a “priority neighbourhood” by the City.

Another criterion is “support for transit,” also worth four points, and, given the proximity of the proposed AVTC to the LRT line, AVTC might score poorly on this count. There is also a four-point criterion for “impacts on natural systems,” but it pertains to “key environmental areas such as wetlands,” so that the impact on People’s Park might not be considered, aside from on its river shoreline feature.

The remaining 25 points for a proposed project address capital and operating costs. Given the potential high cost of a river bridge needed for AVTC and the elevated portion that would run through People’s Park, the cost factor may work against the construction of AVTC. The previous transportation master plan made AVTC a low priority project because of its cost but the project was still kept on the “ultimate” roadway network.

POLITICAL PAGES

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HOW DO WE END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN OTTAWA?

** Warning: this column is about gender-based violence (GBV). Help is available if you or someone you know is at risk. Contact the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Ottawa for 24/7 confidential support at 613-234-2266.*

It's been a horrifying time for gender-based violence (GBV) in the Ottawa area.

On July 2, Anne-Marie Ready and Jasmine Ready – a mother and her 15-year-old daughter – were killed by a young man in Alta Vista. Catherine Ready, 19-years old, survived the attack.

Anne-Marie and Jasmine were advanced karate students, having just received their black belts from Douvris Martial Arts. Jackie Perez from CTV news attended a community vigil that started at Edgehill Park, and later went to the family home on Anoka Street. She spoke to Naomi Eberhard and Michael Penny who trained with Anne-Marie and Jasmine.

Naomi said “...these were beautiful women who were murdered... and they are an extremely important part of our community. I've never seen them without a smile on their face, they were so full of joy constantly.”

Michael added “we had been training together for three years, and in the last six months you get to know people pretty well... her karate family is here to support [Catherine].”

Days before this tragedy, the findings of an inquest were released about three women murdered in Renfrew County by Boris Borutski, a former intimate partner to all of them. The jury detailed the inadequate protections for women facing GBV in rural Eastern Ontario.

According to the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW), the criminal justice approach to GBV is not working. They

note that sexual assault cases have a 3.2% chance of assessing any form of penalty for the perpetrator, so it is not surprising that only 5% of sexual assaults are reported.

So how do we end GBV? There is a push for changes to the Criminal Code to designate femicide as a crime, and efforts to raise awareness. Consequences matter, and education is important, but is it enough? What else must happen?

A recent study by Ottawa's Community Health Centres proposes “new investments in front-line violence against women shelter staff, expansion of shelter spaces for women leaving violent homes, more long-term affordable housing, as well as new investments in trauma care and counselling for women and children. Instead, the OPS spends millions on sexual assault resulting in the conviction of one in 100 perpetrators.”

I recently met with Shelter Movers Ottawa, a community group that helps women and their children leave abusive homes. They've done over 760 moves through a network of volunteers since 2017. They are looking for more help, so if you are able to volunteer with them, please reach out at www.sheltermovers.com/ottawa.

We also need a massive ramp-up in mental health services for those who, left untreated, will engage in GBV against loved ones or neighbours. We urgently need access to mental health support with an OHIP card, not a credit card, to prevent future tragedies.

But the last word here goes to Naomi who has created a fundraiser for the Ready Family, and powerful words to remember:

“Three women's lives forever changed, two of them no longer with us and our health system including our mental health system is broken... we need to fix that, or we will see this again and that is not okay.”

YASIR NAQVI MP, OTTAWA CENTRE

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CREATION OF A TASK FORCE TO REVITALIZE DOWNTOWN OTTAWA

On July 29th, I announced the creation of the Downtown Ottawa Revitalization Task Force. The members of the Task Force represent a strong and diverse collection of voices, and community partners invested in the rejuvenation and revitalization of Ottawa's downtown core.

Following the last two years of pandemic hardship, downtown Ottawa has changed significantly. Downtown office workers from communities across the region have changed their commuting habits. A business community that once relied on daily foot traffic in the tens of thousands is struggling to get by. Ottawa's transit system, once envisioned to bring workers from the suburbs to downtown, has yet to re-gain its pre-pandemic ridership. Recognizing this, I was proud to announce the new task force and bring together community and business representatives to propose creative ideas for Ottawa's downtown core, post-pandemic.

The Downtown Ottawa Revitalization Task Force includes affordable/social housing advocates, not-for-profit and for-profit housing developers, Indigenous leaders, sustainability advocates, local business improvement area representatives, and tourism stakeholders. This represents a comprehensive table of community and business leaders with the knowledge and experience needed to propose innovative, ambitious ideas for downtown Ottawa's successful future.

We need to take a deep look at the future of downtown Ottawa with all relevant and interested voices around the table. With the continuation of hybrid working arrangements, and need for more affordable housing in the area, it is important to create a space for people with diverse backgrounds and expertise to come together to develop new ideas and strategies to reimagine the downtown of Canada's capital city.

The Downtown Ottawa Revitalization Task Force will focus on bringing

innovative ideas to tackle the challenges faced by Ottawa's downtown communities. The group will study possible avenues to address known challenges to affordable, accessible housing in the area, reinvigorate local businesses by catalyzing the return of residents and tourists, provide ideas for a more sustainable environment, and more inclusive community spaces that promote Indigenous reconciliation.

Graeme Hussey, President of the not-for-profit housing developer Cahdco and Co-Chair of the Downtown Ottawa Revitalization Task Force has recognized that “(d)owntown Ottawa needs more affordable and social housing. With federal government employees and other office workers remaining at home, the time is right to evaluate what else can be done with all of this empty office space.”

The Downtown Ottawa Revitalization Task Force will begin meeting in August and will continue to meet on a regular basis over the next several months to develop a robust suite of proposals. The recommendations developed by the Task Force will be shared with federal and municipal governments as a resource to help rejuvenate our downtown core post-pandemic.

Quick facts:

- Statistics Canada estimates that 46 per cent of Ottawa's workforce is still working from home. Elsewhere in the country, that rate is roughly 28 per cent of the workforce.
- Demand for office space has remained between half and two-thirds of the pre-pandemic rate of demand, according to the VTS Office Demand Index.
- The average cost to rent a one-bedroom apartment in the Centretown neighbourhood of Ottawa is roughly \$1,600 per month.
- The average cost to purchase a home in Ottawa is \$690,940. To purchase a condominium, the average price is \$438,980.

POLITICAL PAGES

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GOOD NEWS FOR CAPITAL WARD

This summer and fall, residents can expect a lot of new projects taking shape in our ward. This is a result of collaboration amongst residents, community associations, city staff and our office. Thank you for all you have done to deliver on these accomplishments.

Deschâtelets Building—New Community Centre, Gym, Parks and Affordable Housing

We are pleased to see formal agreements for a new community centre in Old Ottawa East within the Deschâtelets Building with a new school, gym, parks and seniors affordable housing to come.

Greenfield—Main—Hawthorne Project

This project is advancing this summer with significant work to take place underground including the burial of hydro wires, safer street design, and a new safe intersection at Main and Colonel By.

New Tennis Court Renewal—Brantwood Park

The tennis courts at Brantwood Park will be resurfaced this fall, between September and October, which will mean the courts remain usable through the busy summer months, and ready for play in spring 2023.

New Springhurst Park Dock

Consultation will begin this summer on a new dock for Springhurst Park to make accessing the Rideau River more convenient.

Lycée and Frobisher Repaving

The streets off of Riverside are getting fully repaved and sidewalks repaired this summer, with a new electric vehicle charging station, and safe crossings to come.

30Km/Hr Speed Limit in Capital Ward

Traffic calming and safe transportation in Capital Ward has been very important for our office. City Council has now approved all residential neighbourhoods in Capital Ward for 30km/hr gateway zones.

Safer Bronson at Sunnyside Intersection

Work on the intersection of Bronson and Sunnyside by Carleton University is almost wrapped up. The final product will be a more protected intersection for all road users, including separated crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists that will connect with the new pedestrian and bicycling facilities along Bronson and University Drive.

Bank Street Bridge Permanent Improvements

Construction has started on this historic bridge. It will allow for fully repaired sidewalks, new extended bike lanes on Bank with a buffer from the three lanes of vehicle traffic (one southbound and two northbound lanes). There will be two lanes of traffic during construction as there has been for the past 2.5 spring/summer/fall with the project finishing up by winter.

West Coast Video Greenspace

Further down Bank Street, we worked to have the old West Coast Video building taken down and it has been replaced with grass, creating a nicer view of the street and open space until an eventual redevelopment of the site.

Fourth Ave Safety Zone

A new safety zone is being constructed between Mutchmor and Corpus Christi Schools this summer. It will mean new speed humps, raised crosswalks and safer trips to and from school for our kids.

New Splash Pad at Kaladar Park

Construction of the new splash pad, accessible pathway and landscaping started in the spring of 2022 and will be completed by summer 2022 for everyone to enjoy.

New Heron Park Community Building

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NOTRE COMMUNAUTE FRANCOPHONE

Le logement intergénérationnel: Repenser la cohabitation

ZACHARIE LANDRY

Parmi les changements que la pandémie du coronavirus a apportés au monde, beaucoup d'entre eux ont sérieusement modifié la façon dont des personnes ont mené leur vie. Travailler depuis chez soi est devenu la norme pour un grand nombre de domiciles, et l'apprentissage à distance a été également courant pour des étudiants de tous âges. Une autre idée qui a rapidement pris de l'ampleur au début de la pandémie a consisté à repenser le logement abordable. En effet, parce que de l'ambition et de la vision d'une poignée de femmes, il y a une nouvelle façon d'imaginer la cohabitation. En mettant l'accent sur le logement intergénérationnel, Habitations partagées Mirela cherche à connecter le plus de francophones possible qui souhaitent partager un toit.

Inspirée par ses connaissances en relations humaines, Mireille Leroux, cofondatrice et présidente de Habitations partagées Mirela, a conçu un concept d'habitation basé sur l'entraide. À la fin de 2020, après qu'une femme nommée Claire a découvert Habitations partagées Mirela et a ensuite contacté Mireille, les deux ont déménagé et ont vécu ensemble depuis. Malgré la différence d'âge, les femmes ont développé un lien sororal. Pour Claire et Mireille, les relations intergénérationnelles « contribuent au bien-être personnel, à la santé spirituelle et à la joie de vivre ».

À la suite d'augmentation des prix des loyers, de croissance de l'isolement et de la diminution des liens humains, Habitations partagées Mirela tente de



MARTA SOBRAL GARCIA PHOTOS

Mireille Leroux (en bas à droite) présente à un des ateliers en mai 2022.

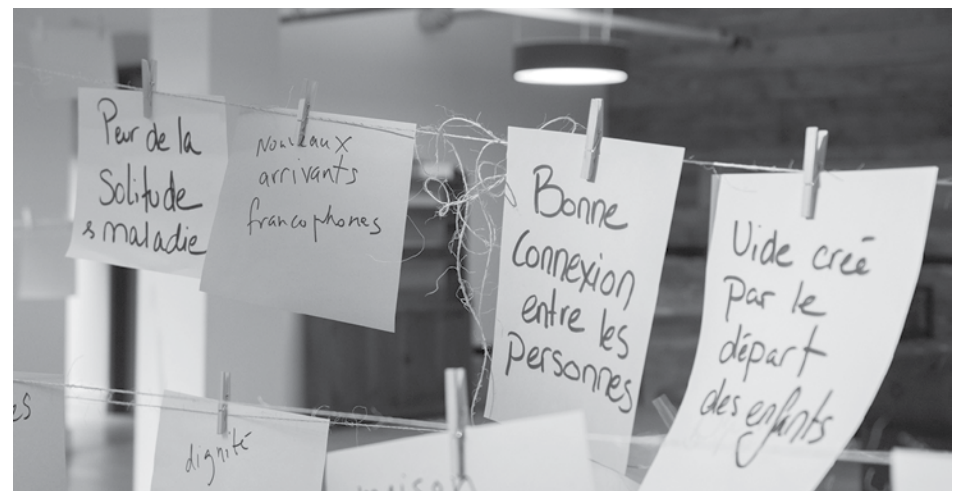
créer des opportunités pour que les gens puissent profiter des avantages de la cohabitation intergénérationnelle. Le jumelage de personnes dans un même logement pour des raisons économiques fait partie de la vision de Habitations partagées Mirela, mais ce n'est certainement pas le seul but du projet. L'avantage financier est important, bien sûr, mais Mirela met en avant l'établissement de liens intergénérationnels. Avoir un sens de communauté est particulièrement important pour l'organisation afin que les gens puissent être à leur plus heureux dans leur milieu de vie.

Un pas majeur dans la bonne direction pour le projet est survenu en décembre 2020, lorsque l'organisme a reçu la Bourse Desjardins en innovation

sociale de 10 000\$. Juste quelques mois plus tard, Habitations partagées Mirela a obtenu officiellement leur statut d'organisme à but non lucratif. En mai

2022, le groupe a organisé un atelier à l'Université Saint-Paul, où des gens se sont réunis pour apprendre, mais aussi pour donner leurs propres conseils afin d'aider l'organisation à atteindre son plein potentiel. Assisté par une foule culturellement diversifiée, l'atelier a souligné les thèmes importants pour ceux qui sont intéressés à la cohabitation intergénérationnelle.

Vivre avec un inconnu peut sembler une tâche difficile, surtout avec quelqu'un avec une différence d'âge considérable, mais Mireille est néanmoins confiante dans son projet: « Je dis toujours aux autres de ne pas avoir peur de faire le pas vers ce mode de vie en habitation partagée, parce que l'essayer, c'est l'adopter. Il y a tellement à apprendre l'une de l'autre. » C'est avec cette attitude que Habitations partagées Mirela espèrent devenir une partie prenante dans la façon dont les gens de la communauté francophone perçoivent le logement et la cohabitation.



Certains des idées concernant cohabitation intergénérationnelle qui ont été discuté à l'atelier.

OOE teen wins sprinting gold!

MAINSTREETER STAFF

Congratulations to Jay Yetman, who brought home two medals from this year's Athletics Ontario provincial championships held at the end of July in London, Ontario.

The 17-year-old was part of an Ottawa Lions Track and Field Club relay team pictured here that won the U18 (under the age of 18) sprint medley relay. In a sprint medley, the first runner runs 400 metres. The second and third runners each run 200m. The fourth team member runs 800m. Jay ran second. He also started the race off for his Ottawa Lions team in the 4 x 100m relay, and his team won the U18 bronze medal in that event.

Relays are exciting and sometimes unpredictable because each runner must pass the baton to the next runner within a strictly proscribed exchange zone. Jay, a grade 12 student at Glebe Collegiate Institute, says

his only experience with relays before these provincial club championships was in practices at school. But his Ottawa Lions coach was confident Jay had the right stuff. "Jay is also a competitive rugby player, so his experience with team sports meant we knew we could trust him in the relay event," says Zach Quevillon. "Jay is a versatile athlete as he competes in jumps, sprints, and relays. This summer, he really found his speed running competitive 200m's in 22.40 seconds and furthering his long jump personal best to over 6.40m (21 feet for those measuring at home!)"

Please watch for a full profile on the inspirational Jay Yetman in a future issue of *The Mainstreeter* as well as more stories on the outstanding young athletes of Old Ottawa East.



Photo courtesy of Ryan Rowat and the Ottawa Lions Track and Field Club.

OUR NEIGHBOURS

The many talents and interests of Steve Fick

DIANNE WING

Perhaps best known to Old Ottawa East residents as a co-founder and co-owner of Terra Firma, Ottawa's first and only cohousing community, Steve Fick is a renaissance man. He is a cartographer, painter, couples counsellor, grandfather, a swimmer, cyclist, storyteller, singer and so much more.

Colorado born, Fick still feels a creative umbilical cord to the magnificent western landscape. He completed his Masters degree in physical geography at Simon Fraser University where he met Signy, his wife of 42 years and where they began their search for a spiritual home. They found it in the Quaker community. Quakerism stresses experience over belief, that everyone has a seed of the divine in them and everyone is capable of direct unmediated experience of the Divine. These tenets have guided their life together.

Fick was one of those kids who could always draw and paint. So it was a natural arc that his study of physical geography would lead to cartography. And it was the offer of the job as Chief Cartographer at Canadian Geographic Magazine that lured him to Ottawa. It was the best place in the country to be a cartographer and for 23 years he created beautiful maps there: maps with a deceptive simplicity, beautiful to look at but containing a lot of information.

A year after leaving the magazine, Fick began working with the Inuit Heritage Trust, an organisation dedicated to the preservation, enrichment and protection of Inuit cultural heritage and identity embodied in Nunavut's archaeological sites, and traditional place names. Fick creates regional maps from a database of



PAUL SCOTT PHOTO

ABOVE: Steve Fick (right) strums the guitar during a family sing-along at the Terra Firma birthday celebration; BELOW: Self-portrait of the artist.

over 10,000 Inuit place names. Very few are actually official names at this point but probably will be some day. Every map has an index and for each place name there may be an explanation or story about that name. Fick marvels about this experience. "It is an amazing window on an extraordinary way of life." He is often told how much the Inuit treasure these maps. "They are so tied to the land and at a glance they see their heritage."

Whether at Canadian Geographic Magazine or the Inuit Heritage Trust, maps show relationships in a way that, if there is stuff missing, it is obvious, Fick explains. He is interested in relationships, as a cartographer and a spiritual person. After raising three children, his wife Signy earned her Masters of Counselling and Spirituality at St. Paul's University.

A certified psychotherapist, she obtained permission from the College

of Psychotherapists for Fick to assist her in 2 on 2 couples counselling, as part of her practice. Together they counsel couples who are about to become parents. Harkening back to Quaker principles, they provide leadership in what they call birthing from within, emotional and spiritual preparation for a life-changing event. As with cartography, he finds this work to be challenging but gratifying.

Fick's most recent gig is as grandfather to baby Gabor. He has already painted an arresting portrait of his baby grandson. Fick is first and foremost an artist. He prefers working in oils, and he started with landscape painting. He found a second artistic umbilical with the Canadian Shield as inspiration. Always one to need a challenge, he later went on to portrait painting which he mastered to the same high level as his landscapes.

It was his interest in relationships that prompted him, along with Rosie Cusson and the late Kathleen McCrea to envision the first Old Ottawa East Art Tour in 2019 as a way to show their work. The first tour was well received at a time when people were looking for something normal to do in the early days of the pandemic. The Tour, which has now been named *A Walk of Art*, has grown from 11 artists in its second year, and on September 10 this year there will be about 20 local artists and photographers exhibiting their work.

From Terra Firma to the Old Ottawa East Art Tour, Fick is a proponent of intentional communities, communities that are designed and planned around a social idea or collective values and interests. We are fortunate that he chose to make Old Ottawa East a part of his intentional community.



STEVE FICK PAINTING

Work on Grande Allée Park set to start

MAINSTREETER STAFF

Construction of the Grande Allée Park is planned for a fall 2022 start, "with substantial completion expected in spring/summer 2023," reports Kevin Wherry, the City's manager of parks and facilities planning.

The park with its defined areas for the Main Farmers' Market has been long sought as the permanent home for the market.

It also will contribute to protection of the heritage trees along the allée and new trees will be added to fill the gaps where dying trees were removed in recent years.

The public park will link Main Street to the interior of Greystone Village and only pedestrian, cyclist and authorized service vehicles will be allowed to use the narrowed paved lane that runs from Main to the site of the planned Forecourt Park in front of the Deschâtelets building. The lane will be bordered by pavers that are the same that were used for the new Main Street sidewalk.



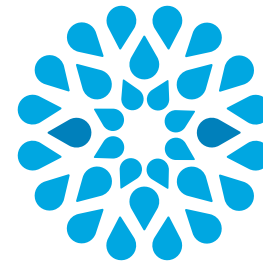
JOHN DANCE PHOTO

The completion of the Grande Allée Park in 2023 will afford a new permanent home for the Main Street Farmers Market.



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ECLECTIC EVENTS

STREETFEST, Celebrating our Heritage, IODE Laurentian, Saturday, September 10, 10:00am to 4:00pm, New Edinburgh, Tickets \$30.

Great minds think alike. A case in point – Old Ottawa East is planning two community events in September – the third annual Art Tour on September 10 and the Main Event on September 17. Meanwhile, IODE Laurentian – a local wing of a national women's service group – is also planning a festival in New Edinburgh on September 10 and is hoping to lay the groundwork for an annual heritage event in Ottawa.

The inspiration for StreetFest came from New Edinburgh's lengthy history, the idea being to raise charitable funds by exploring the history of an old Ottawa neighbourhood through walking tours and expert speakers. The concept has now expanded, through the engagement of community partners and sponsors, into something larger, with music, art, dance, vendors, a barbecue and even an antique car show being part of the mix.

While StreetFest will take place in New Edinburgh this year, organizers are already scouting for another community for next year. They are seeking a neighbourhood with a long history, one with surviving heritage buildings, good institutions (churches and schools) and a vibrant music and art scene. There are a number of candidates, and Old Ottawa East is one of them. The level of existing community activity there is certainly drawing Laurentian's attention.

Most people know Laurentian for the annual House and Garden Tour, which has raised funds for Ottawa's needy for many years now. "Laurentian brought the idea of house tours to Ottawa in 1960," says Laurentian co-president, Marian McLennan. "We were about to celebrate the 60th annual tour in 2020 when COVID hit. After two years of cancellations due to the pandemic, we thought it was time to try something new."

One of the differences between StreetFest and OOE's Main Event is the price of admission. StreetFest is at the Innuqatiguit Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families in Vanier, and it is marketing its event to the whole city; whereas the Main Event is free to all-comers, organized by local community organizations and mainly focused on those living in Old Ottawa East.

Another difference is the central focus on heritage. StreetFest has published a colourful, 60-page Souvenir History of New Edinburgh, including a self-guided walking tour with 32 featured houses and buildings, and this will be given to every ticket purchaser.

It is too early to say that there is any kind of fit between Old Ottawa East and StreetFest, and Laurentian will be looking at a number of neighbourhoods and talking to many community leaders before making any decision.

- JANET UREN



Though the inaugural StreetFest festival will be taking place in New Edinburgh in 2022, in years to come, the organizers will be looking for partnerships in other neighbourhoods. Old Ottawa East, created in 1888, is certainly a candidate. Tickets for StreetFest are available at iodelaurentian.com. Information at Janet.uren@wordimage.ca.

WALK FOR THE CENTRE, Centretown Churches Social Action Committee, Sunday, October 2, 2:00pm, Walk begins and ends at Ottawa City Hall.

For the seventh year, a fundraising walk will be held in support of the Centretown Emergency Food Centre. A collective of twenty-two churches in downtown Ottawa, the Centretown Churches Social Action Committee is the driving force behind the walk. Over the years, these churches have worked together on many projects including the establishment of the Emergency Food

Centre located at the corner of Bank and Argyle that serves the catchment area of Centretown, Old Ottawa East, the Glebe and Old Ottawa South. Open three days a week, the Emergency Food Centre serves up to 650 clients each month with a five day supply of food. No one is turned away.

Funds raised by the fundraiser support food on the table for the hungry in our neighbourhood. The family-friendly community "Walk for the Centre" begins and ends at Ottawa City Hall. You can choose to do either the two- or four-kilometre walk and, certainly, October is a perfect month for taking a stroll in the autumn leaves.

At 1:30 pm there will be a Barbershop Quartet followed by the official opening at 2 pm. At 2:20, a piper will lead the walkers out of City Hall to the energizing skirl of the bagpipes. Several local merchants have provided prizes which will be awarded for the best photos of groups, pets, children and images that capture the beauty and spirit of the walk. You can also make a

colourful poster and take a photo of it.

Come join the festivities and support the need for better food security in our area! Donations can be made either online at www.centretownchurches.org or in person with cheques at the time of registration or mailed directly to the Centretown Churches Social Action Committee, 507 Bank Street, K2P 1Z5.

CALLING ALL TENORS AND BASSES, Auditions for Rideau Chorale, Early September

Rideau Chorale is set to begin its eighth season, the first in over two years since Covid-related protocols appear to be easing. That doesn't mean there aren't new and continuing challenges.

One of Rideau Chorale's goals is common for choirs: the need for more tenor and bass voices. Men, who are generally those with lower voices, can be hesitant to audition for choirs. But there are good reasons to do so.

Many scientific studies have underlined that singing with others is good for longevity, good health and stress reduction. Choirs create a sense of community and members find friendship, not to mention the occasional romance.

As well, it's great to feel needed, and deeper voices certainly are. They add resonance and richness to the music. "I've been the lead singer in a Cajun band," says Yves Menard, a recent addition to Rideau Chorale's tenor section, "but I wanted something that would push my abilities in a group setting."

Rideau Chorale is an auditioned choir. The Music Director assesses the ability to hear and produce specific notes, vocal range and level of musical training. There is also a level of commitment required in at-home practice and preparation. Choir experience is an asset.

"If you want a challenge and to share music with some great people," adds Menard, "Rideau Chorale is for you."

Up-coming auditions are in early September and can be requested via rideauchorale.com/auditions.

- JANICE MANCHEE



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