



A Commemorative Plaque Program
est. 2002

Table of Contents

About the Program

1. **Samuel Johnson Boddy D.C.L.** – A Remarkable 42 Years of Service to the Community
2. **Tony Brady** – Children’s Entertainer and Founder of the Forsythia Festival
3. **Benjamin Brick** – Builder and Specialist in Elaborate Plaster Decoration
4. **Edward Hodder M.D.** – Ontario’s Father of Obstetrics and Gynaecology
5. **Darrell Kent** – Cabbagetown Benefactor
6. **Daniel Lamb** – Industrialist, Politician, and a Founder of Toronto’s First Zoo
7. **Charles B. Mac Kay** – Toronto’s First Customs Officer
8. **Sir Ernest Mac Millan** – Renowned Musician, Conductor and Educator
9. **Arthur Schawlow Ph.D** – Nobel Laureate who Co-developed the Laser
10. **The Early Settlers**
11. **Flos Jewell Williams** – A Writer with a Passion for Western Canada
12. **Sarah Anne Curzon** - A Pioneer for Women’s Rights
13. **James Grand, Samuel Toy** – Founders of City’s Oldest Office Supply Company
14. **Rowena Hume M.D.** – A Founder of Women’s College Hospital
15. **Oronyatekha M.D.** – Mohawk Physician Victorian Businessman and Philanthropist
16. **Cabbagetown’s First People**
17. **Al Purdy** – “The Most Canadian Poet”
18. **Samuel Rose D. D.** – One of the Pioneers of Methodism in Ontario
19. **Ernest Thompson Seton** – Biologist, Scientific Illustrator, Naturalist
20. **Lieutenant Francis Gwillim Simcoe** – First Owner of Land in Cabbagetown
21. **Gordon Sinclair** – A Giant in Canadian Broadcast Journalism
22. **Eden Smith** – Prolific Early Toronto Designer and Architect
23. **Morley Callaghan** – Writer, Broadcaster and Canada’s First Urban Novelist
24. **Corporal Ainsworth Dyer** – Soldier raised in Regent Park
25. **Hugh Garner** – Author and Witness to Depression Era Cabbagetown
26. **Arthur Goss** – His Legacy - over 35,000 Photographic Images of Toronto
27. **Frederick Hagan** – One of Canada’s Greatest Artists and Teachers
28. **Doug Henning** – World Famous Magician
29. **Walter Huston** – Academy Award-winning Actor
30. **Fredelle Bruser Maynard Ph.D** – Author of Child Care Books and TV Host
31. **Mary O’Riordan D.V.M.** – Pioneering Veterinarian
32. **J. L. (Allen) Yen Ph.D** – A Leading Figure in Canadian Radio Astronomy
33. **Betty Oliphant** – World-Renowned Innovator of Ballet Education
34. **Luigi Von Kunitz** – First Conductor of The Toronto Symphony Orchestra

How to Use This Book

About the Program

Cabbagetown, recognized as the largest continuous area of preserved Victorian housing in North America, is much admired as a unique heritage destination for tourists, educators, and students.

Throughout its history, Cabbagetown has been home to an amazing and diverse group of Canadian personalities active in the arts and sciences, in politics, business, architecture, and social movements. These people have left a distinct imprint on this community, the City, the Province, this Country and other countries worldwide.

“The Cabbagetown People Plaque Project evolved out of an idea to salute not the bricks and mortar, but those very men and women – some famous, some infamous, and some just plain folks, all of whom provide a cultural and heritage link to Canada’s colourful past.” Their stories, their achievements and their legacies are the threads of a community proud of its unique identity and heritage, and help to make up the historical fabric of the Nation.

In many of the great cities of Europe, their historical figures are recognized by permanent plaques affixed to building façades, marking their place of abode and their achievements, or by interpretive panels placed in front of signature residences and buildings.

To date in Canada, permanent plaques or free-standing interpretive panels have largely been installed or erected by governments at historical sites. These, with few exceptions, deal with events in the history of the Nation or Province rather than individual achievements.

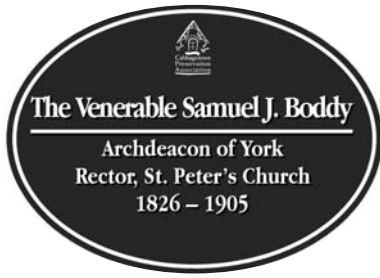
What makes Cabbagetown People a truly unique heritage signage program is that it honours a broad range of individuals (no longer living) who have made contributions. It salutes not only famous persons, historical figures, or people who have distinguished themselves in their occupations or careers. It also honours the average person who has contributed to his community, left a lasting legacy, whether in a tangible way or “in leading by example”, serving as a role model, and inspiring those who follow. The Program underscores the ability of any individual to be a “hero”, of ordinary persons to do extraordinary things regardless of how humble their circumstances. These “heroes” stand side-by-side the famous and the legendary.

In 2001 the concept for Cabbagetown People was presented to the Board of the Cabbagetown Preservation Association, and since then has been managed by a dedicated volunteer committee. The Program is totally self-funded through the generosity of the donors it has attracted.

In addition to the permanent plaques installed throughout Cabbagetown, to which we will be adding on an on-going basis, we have erected a 3 ft. x 5 ft. Orientation Directory in Riverdale Park which offers an informative overview of the essence of the Program, and by way of graphic images,

biographies of the honorees, and a map of plaque locations, serves as a heritage resource and educational complement to the many existing walking tours of Cabbagetown.

Cabbagetown People with its focus on the stories of people provides a very nice balance to the built heritage of the neighbourhood. Our aim is to “humanize the past”, engage people in their local history, and ensure that this historic signage program continues to preserve Canadian heritage for future generations.



Plaque location: **21 Winchester Street**

The Venerable Samuel J. Boddy
Archdeacon of York
Rector, St. Peter's Church 1826 - 1905

Samuel Johnson Boddy, born in Hampshire, England was educated at St. Paul's School, Southsea and St. John's College, Cambridge, from which University he graduated with a B.A. in 1850 and an M.A. in 1853.

He came to Canada in 1858 and was appointed Assistant Minister of St. James Cathedral in Toronto. In 1863 he was selected to organize a new parish. His congregation found a temporary place of worship in the cemetery chapel (St. James-the-Less) located near Parliament and Wellesley Streets until, in 1886, the Anglican parish of St. Peter's was duly constituted, Reverend Boddy was appointed rector, and the new church opened.

His home at 21 Winchester Street served as the Rectory for St. Peter's during his tenure. His rectorship was marked by great prosperity. The

influential and compassionate congregation of St. Peter's was reputed for many years to be the wealthiest in the Country. In 1885 the Duke and Duchess of Connaught visited the parish to learn more of its skills in organizing and fundraising as the givings from St. Peter's were the highest in the Dominion.

As a preacher, Reverend Boddy was much valued by his congregation over his forty-two years of service. Always the teacher, his sermons were informative as well as inspirational. He fought for the participation of lay members in important offices in the Church and Synod, and was also responsible for getting the first streets in the area paved, sending a representative to Chicago to study their paving methods. (That put to rest the claim of having got stuck in the muddy roads as the reason for being late for the start of those sermons on Sunday mornings!)

Reverend Boddy was appointed Archdeacon of York in 1881.



Plaque location: **443 Wellesley**

**Performer, Children’s Entertainer,
Author, and Founder
of the Forsythia Festival
1935-1991**

Tony Brady was born in Drummondville, Quebec. He was a Torontonion by adoption. He was a writer, actor, magician, hairdresser, animal breeder and traveller, as well as a clown. As most clowns are male, and he wanted to be different, he created Briget The Clown.

He loved animals and at one time had 30 parrots and macaws in his house.

It has been said that Tony Brady had Canada’s

first Bengal cat and that actress Elizabeth Taylor visited his home to see the famous animal.

The children’s stories he wrote were very popular, appearing in books and in the Toronto Star newspaper.

After being so impressed with the Cherry Blossom Festival in Washington D.C., he founded the Forsythia Festival. It was his pride and joy and it has become a popular annual event in Cabbagetown. He had a tremendous sense of community spirit and loved entertaining young people.

Tony Brady died in Toronto General Hospital at the age of 56 following a heart attack.



Plaque location: **314 Carlton Street**

**Benjamin Brick, Builder Who
Specialized in Elaborate Plaster Decoration
1845-1913**

Benjamin Brick was born in Worchester, England on March 11, 1845. He worked as a bricklayer until he came to Canada. He and his wife Anna Marie Ingleson, had five children, and in 1875 they moved into 314 Carlton Street, a Second-Empire style cottage that he had built.

Shortly after they moved in, Mrs. Brick died, and in 1887 he married Margaret Leggott from Alliston, Ontario.

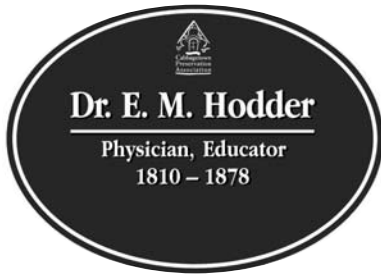
At this time Mr. Brick was a prominent house-builder and chief contractor for the gas works site on Eastern Avenue.

While on a trip to Paris, France, he was inspired by the workmanship and artistic forms that he saw in the houses that he visited.

After his return to Toronto, he became well known for his richly-decorated plaster moldings and elaborate ceilings.

In 1890 he moved his family into a new house he built a few doors away at 308 Carlton Street. His exquisite plaster moldings and dining room ceiling are still admired to this day.

In 1897, after the death of his second wife, he married Jane Bartrem. He lived at 308 Carlton Street until his death on September 7, 1913. This house is rumoured to have a resident ghost.



Plaque location: **41 Spruce Street**

**Edward Mulberry Hodder M.D.
The Father of Obstetrics and
Gynecology in Ontario 1810-1878**

Dr. Edward Mulberry Hodder was born December 30, 1810 in Sangate, Kent, England. He was educated on the Isle of Gurnsey and in France. He became a mid-shipman in the Royal Navy, but after a year, he left the Navy to study medicine in London, Paris and Edinburgh.

He married Frances Tench in 1834, and they left for Canada in 1838. First, he practiced in

Queenston, and then moved to Toronto in 1843.

In 1850, he and James Bovell founded the Upper Canada School of Medicine and subsequently joined the medical school of Trinity College.

Dr. Hodder was president and chair of many medical associations and was one of the first to use carbolic acid as an antiseptic in surgery. He continued teaching until 1871.

Together with a fellow sailing enthusiast, he founded the Royal Canadian Yacht Club.



Plaque location: **368 Sumach Street**

Darrell Kent
Real Estate Agent and Philanthropist who
started the Gentrification of Cabbagetown
1942-1989

Darrell Kent was born and raised on a farm in Saskatchewan and came to live in Toronto in the late 1960's. He enrolled in Ryerson's hotel and restaurant program and then worked for the Canadian Restaurant Association.

He eventually bought a 13-room house on Metcalfe Street, renovated it, then sold it, turning a lucrative profit. He then began in earnest to sell real estate in Cabbagetown, and is credited with making a great contribution to the revival of the area in the 1960s and 1970s. He built a

dominant real estate firm and became a millionaire several times over. He had charisma and the ability to hire very competent people. He is considered the driving force behind the restoration of many of the area's beautiful and unique Victorian houses.

Darrell Kent helped to establish the Cabbagetown Cultural Festival and a tour of renovated homes in the area. He financially supported activities for local youth, inspiring and encouraging others to join in his philanthropy.

Mr. Kent enjoyed collecting art deco pieces and antiques for his home. He travelled the world and enjoyed a full life.



Plaque location: **156 Winchester Street**

**Daniel Lamb Businessman, City Father
A founder of Toronto's first zoo
1842 – 1920**

Daniel Lamb was the son of Peter Rothwell Lamb, founder, in 1848, of Lamb's Blacking and Glue Manufactory, a local tannery and glue and stove black factory, which made leather, blacking in cakes and tin boxes, neatsfoot oil (made from cattle), paste black, and ground bone for manure. In the 1860s Daniel Lamb took over his father's factory which was located at the end of Amelia Street on what is now Wellesley Park. He owned a number of workers' cottages in the area that were rented to some of the employees. Many of the bricks from the original factory were used to build the Hillcrest Park houses.

Daniel Lamb entered politics a few years before fire destroyed the buildings of the Lamb's Blacking and Glue Manufacturing in 1888. He served two terms as alderman, until his retirement from public office in 1902.

Daniel Lamb donated additional land to Riverdale Park and in 1894 became founder of the Riverdale Zoo, which quickly developed an excellent reputation for the quality and range of its international wildlife. Daniel Lamb inspired friends and eminent citizens to donate animals or money to extend the collection, which started with only a few deer and two wolves. He was also responsible for many civic engineering innovations, including the Rosedale Valley Road and the first public water works on the Toronto Islands, which continue to function to this day. He was also instrumental in providing the main railway routes from the east end, and returning Ashbridge's Bay to a suitable condition for use.

Daniel Lamb was President of the York Pioneer Society in 1896. His tombstone, located in the Necropolis, is overlooked by the east windows of his original home on Winchester Street.



Plaque location: **35 Spruce Street**

Charles B. MacKay
Toronto's First Customs Officer

Charles B. MacKay was an official sent by Queen Victoria in 1858 to set up and administer the customs offices in the burgeoning Port of Toronto. With the imminent threat of a Civil War in the United States, the relative political stability in Canada made

Toronto a desirable destination for the shipping of a wide variety of goods. Charles B. MacKay thus became Toronto's first Custom's Officer. He was accompanied to Canada by his wife Isabella, and they later bought land adjacent to his home at 35 Spruce Street. It is not known whether he and his wife remained in Canada or returned to England.



Plaque location: **152 Winchester Street**

Sir Ernest MacMillan
Composer, Conductor, Organist
1893 – 1973

Born in Mimico, Ontario, of musical parents, Ernest was recognized as a child prodigy. He played the piano from age two and the pipe organ at his father's church, St. Enoch's on Winchester Street, from age seven. He performed at Massey Hall when he was only eleven years old. A year later he was sent to Scotland to study with the best organist in the world and at age sixteen he graduated from Oxford University. At seventeen he received a Bachelor of Music, and also became a prize-winning Fellow of the Royal College of Organists – the youngest ever.

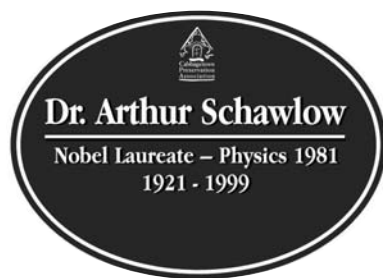
In 1914, he went to Germany to continue his musical studies but with the outbreak of World War I he was imprisoned and spent four years in Ruhleben prison camp. He continued to study music in prison, and at twenty-five (and still a prisoner) he became an Oxford Doctor of Music. He was released in 1918 and returned

to Canada. A year later he married Elsie and over the next 10 years had four boys, two of whom died at birth.

From 1918 until 1926 he was organist of the new Timothy Eaton Memorial Church in Toronto. In 1926 he became head of the new Toronto Conservatory of Music, and in the following year, Dean of Music at the University of Toronto.

He devoted his life to the musical well-being of his country, and spent from 1931 – 1956 as conductor of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. He was an accomplished composer, a brilliant organist and an Olympian educator. On September 26, 1935, he was conferred a knighthood in recognition of his musical accomplishments.

On May 3, 1956, the elegant Sir Ernest conducted his beloved Toronto Symphony for the last time as its musical director. It was an emotional end to a great career. The orchestra played their hearts out for him.



Plaque location: **436 Sackville Street**

Dr. Arthur Schawlow
Nobel Laureate – Physics 1981 1921 – 1999

Born in Mount Vernon, New York, Arthur, at the age of three years old, moved to Toronto with his family to the neighbourhood of Cabbagetown, later attending Winchester Public School. “Bud”, as he was called, was a nice young boy. He was not athletic, he read a lot, was smart in school, and skipped some grades. After some difficulty in a regular classroom, his mother took him for an IQ test. His score was extremely high. He was then transferred to the Model School at Church and Gould Streets (now Ryerson Polytechnic University) where Toronto’s “gifted” children went in the 1930s. Arthur also excelled in Boy Scouts, reaching the highest rank - King’s Scout.

As a youngster, he read everything he could find on, things scientific, electrical, mechanical or astronomical. His intent was to study radio engineering, but at that point in the 1930’s, the economic depression was at its height. Very few families could afford to send their children to university, and there were no scholarships in engineering. His sister, Rosemary, scored excellent marks in Grade 13, but didn’t get a scholarship to the University of Toronto, so she voluntarily repeated the year in order to earn marks high enough to win the \$125 tuition to Victoria College to study English literature. In 1937, at the age of sixteen, Arthur joined his sister there. His scholarship was for mathematics and physics, and it was physics that he pursued, earning a Ph.D from the University in 1949. While at University, Arthur was very involved in the Toronto amateur jazz scene and played clarinet with a group called the Delta Jazz Band. Listening to traditional

jazz from his large record collection continued to stimulate and interest him throughout his life.

While on a postdoctoral fellowship to Columbia University, he met Charles H. Townes, a leader in research on microwave spectroscopy, and their long collaboration began. In 1951, he married Aurelia, Charles Townes’ youngest sister.

Over the ten years that followed, Arthur Schawlow worked as a physicist at Bell Telephone Laboratories, and with his brother-in-law in his spare time. They co-authored a book, published in 1955, entitled Microwave Spectroscopy, and continued to work together on the principles of a device – the Laser.

Arthur Schawlow then went on to become a professor of physics at Stanford University, and was chairman of the department of physics from 1966 to 1970. In 1981 he won the Nobel Prize for physics for his contribution to the development of laser spectroscopy. Dr. Schawlow retired from teaching and became Professor Emeritus in 1991.

Honours and Awards:

Stuart Ballantine Medal (1962), Thomas Young Medal and Prize (1963), Morris N. Liebmann Memorial Prize (1964) California Scientist of the Year (1973), Frederick Ives Medal (1976), Marconi International Fellowship (1977), Arthur Schawlow Medal, Laser Institute of America (1982), U.S. National Medal of Science (1991). **Honorary doctorates** from University of Ghent, Belgium (1968), University of Toronto, Canada (1970), University of Bradford, England (1970), University of Alabama, U.S.A. (1984), Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland (1986), University of Lund, Sweden (1988). **Honorary professor**, East China Normal University, Shanghai (1979)

Member, U.S. National Academy of Sciences

Fellow, American Academy of Arts and Sciences

President, Optical Society of America (1975)

President, American Physical Society (1981)



Plaque location: **NE Corner of Winchester & Sumach Streets**

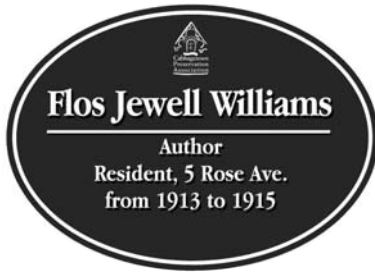
The Early Settlers

Potter's Field was a six-acre plot in what is now the Yorkville district of Toronto, and was the first non-sectarian burying ground in the Town of York. People in the mid-nineteenth century didn't want a cemetery in the middle of their village, believing that "germs and disease" came from cemeteries. The most common causes of death at that time were fever and child-birth. So, Potter's Field was closed, and the remains of 984 of the 6,685 early settlers buried there were moved to their final resting place in the Necropolis. Some bodies were also moved to Mount Pleasant

Cemetery. Only those bodies with head stones were moved.

The Necropolis (Greek for City of the Dead) was situated on the west slope of the Don Valley between Winchester and Amelia Streets. Although Winchester Street was one of the main crossing points across the Don River, there were only a few houses in the area and a hotel (the infamous Donvale House) located part way down the hill towards the bridge connecting Cabbagetown to, what is now, Riverdale.

Between 1851 and 1881 the remains of these early settlers were re-interred in a section of the cemetery designated, "The Resting Place of Pioneers".



Plaque location: **5 Rose Avenue**

Flos Jewell Williams
A Writer with a Passion
for Western Canada

Flos Jewell Williams was born in Toronto in 1893 and attended Jarvis Collegiate and Toronto Normal School. She began teaching in Bobcaygeon in the Kawartha Lakes District, which established the setting for her first novel. After teaching for many years in Toronto, she married and moved to Calgary. As she was separated from her friends and family, she began to write. She submitted, *The Judgement of Solomon*, to the Hodder & Stoughton Canadian contest and won a prize of \$2500. This came as a big surprise, as she had not previously written.

While living in Calgary, she raised her twin sons and contributed poetry, short stories and articles to Canadian periodicals, to qualify for membership in the Canadian Women's Press Club.

In 1949 she won second prize in the Ryerson book contest for *Fold Home*, set in the Cariboo district of British Columbia.

Her novels dramatized the experiences of immigrants building a new life in the harsh Canadian rural environment.

Flos Jewell Williams was one of the best known women writers of Western Canada.



Plaque location: **274 Carlton Street**

Sarah Anne Curzon
A Pioneer for women's Rights who made
Laura Secord a Household Word
1833-1898

Sarah Anne Curzon lived at 274 Carlton Street between 1873 and 1875. She was a playwright, poet, journalist, and a pioneer in educating readers of her newspaper and magazine columns in which she wrote about female suffrage, property rights equal to men and access to higher education for women.

Canadian history was the main source of her writing. Furthermore, she wanted to prove that women could write professionally in a field that at the time in Canada was dominated by men.

Although she moved easily among fiction, poetry and history, she felt that the moral lessons of Canadian history could be taught in novels and poetry.

While living in Cabbagetown, she wrote the play, *The Sweet Girl Graduate*, which mocked the idea that women were not intelligent enough to study at the university level.

Sarah supported Dr. Emily Stowe's efforts to found the Women's Medical College on Sumach Street, which opened in 1883. The two women also founded the Toronto Women's Literacy Club, which focused on advancing women's rights, as well as literacy.

In 1895, she and feminist Mary Agnes Fitzgibbon co-founded the Women's Canadian Historical Society in Toronto.

She was most impressed with Laura Secord and one of her major works was, *Laura Secord, the Heroine of 1812: A Drama and other Poems*. (1887)

Sarah Anne Curzon is buried in Mount Pleasant Cemetery.



Plaque location: **26 Spruce Street**

James Grand 1857-1921
Samuel Toy 1859-1906
Founders of Toronto's Oldest
Office Supply Company

Grand and Toy, the family-owned, all-Canadian office furniture and supplies company, has been in operation for over a century. When his partnership in a printing business ended, James Grand began a solo effort from one room in a King Street home.

In 1882 Victorian Toronto was a young city bustling with enthusiasm in a very young Canada. It is believed that he was the first office

supply salesman to go door-to-door selling stationery products. He carried his supplies in a wheelbarrow.

By 1883 his company had grown, so his brother-in-law, Samuel Toy, joined him as a 1/3 partner. This was the beginning of the Grand and Toy name.

The first store was at the corner of Leader Lane and Colborne Street. It was at this time that James Grand lived at 26 Spruce Street and Samuel Toy lived at 28 Spruce Street.

Grand and Toy represents one of the greatest business achievements in Canadian history.



Plaque location: **226 Carlton Street**

Rowena Hume M.D.
A Founder of Women's College Hospital
1877 – 1966

Rowena Grace Douglas Hume was born in Galt, Ontario, the youngest of 12 children. She was a graduate of Galt Collegiate Institute, and University of Trinity College. She took post-graduate studies in England and the United States before returning to Canada to take a position at the Ontario Medical College for Women.

Her career was exceptional, having lectured in Pathology and Bacteriology, she was Assistant in Anatomy, Ontario Medical College for Women, from 1902 – 1906. In 1911 she became a founder of Women's College Hospital, and its first Chief of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, a position she held for twenty years.

A pioneer of planned parenthood programs, she formed the Birth Control Clinic, the first in Canada, in Hamilton, Ontario. It opened March 3, 1932, and Doctor Rowena Hume was the first doctor in attendance.

She was also actively involved in Alcoholics Anonymous, the Salvation Army's Harbour Light Centre, and the Fred Victor Mission. After retiring, she ran a private practice in Toronto.

Dr. Hume was in the habit of hiring the unemployed to do odd jobs around her home, and at the age of 89 she was attacked and murdered by a transient worker. Some reports of the event suggest that she died at the hand of a man at whose birth she had officiated 28 years earlier.



Plaque location: **211 Carlton Street**

**Oronhyatekha M.D. Mohawk Physician,
Victorian Businessman and Philanthropist 1841 – 1907**

Dr. Oronhyatekha was a remarkable Canadian who was successful as a Mohawk physician, scholar and Victorian businessman.

Born on the Six Nations Reserve near Brantford, Ontario, Oronhyatekha (means "Burning Sky") was also known by his baptized name of Peter Martin. He attended colleges in Massachusetts and Ohio, before returning to teach at Tyendinaga on the Bay of Quinte.

In 1860, Oronhyatekha, on behalf of the Six Nations, gave the welcoming address to the Prince of Wales. He so impressed the Royal Party that he was invited to study in England, resulting in his becoming the first North American aboriginal to attend Oxford University. Oronhyatekha's portrait hangs in St. Edmunds Hall at Oxford, to this day.

In 1863 he returned to Canada and married a great-granddaughter of Joseph Brant (Thayendanegea), the great Mohawk chief and Loyalist military leader during the American War of Independence. While attending the University of Toronto, Oronhyatekha joined its militia corps, as well as the Queen's Own Rifles; he also joined the Masonic order. In 1866 he graduated from the University of Toronto's medical school, and was likely the first native medical doctor in Canada. He practiced medicine in Frankford, on the Trent River, and in Stratford, Napanee, and London, Ontario.

In 1871 Oronhyatekha was part of the first Canadian rifle team invited to compete at Wimbledon, where he won nine prizes.

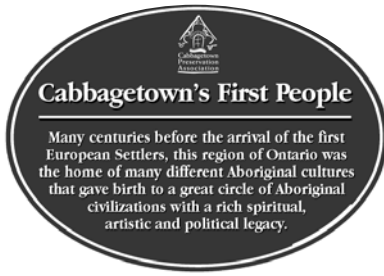
He became President of the Grand Indian Council in 1874, an association of reserves in Quebec and Ontario, and often lobbied for change in legislation to give support to the native peoples in Canada.

In 1878 he joined the Independent Order of Foresters (IOF) which was a fraternal life insurance company, and he became the first elected Supreme Chief Ranger of that organization in 1881. He was CEO for twenty-six years. He guided the IOF's growth from a struggling bankrupt fraternal organization of 400 members to a membership of more than 250,000, and a fund of over eleven million dollars. Dr. Oronhyatekha wrote *The History of the Independent Order of Foresters*.

Oronhyatekha travelled the world extensively, and when he travelled, he collected artifacts. His collection included Australian boomerangs, Indo-Persian battle-axes, Burmese drums, Japanese shoes, and native artifacts, including a silver belt medal and compass owned by Tecumseh, an ally of General Brock. In his collection, as well, were over a thousand specimens of marine shells and coral. In 1911 his collection was transferred to the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto.

Oronhyatekha had organized the details of his funeral. His body lay in state at Massey Music Hall in Toronto, and in a four-hour period on March 6th, 1907, over ten thousand people paid their respects. That evening a memorial service was conducted at St. Peter's Anglican Church, which he had attended. His body was later transported in a specially-commissioned train to Tyendinaga Reserve for a family service at Christ Church and interment there.

As one of the greatest builders of the fraternal movement in North America, Dr. Oronhyatekha was widely accepted as a distinguished leader in Canada. His success in Victorian society was founded on the Mohawk values in which he believed, including the principle of reciprocity between people and the institutions they create. While inhabiting two worlds, he remained true to his Mohawk principles, heritage and language.



Plaque location: **Riverdale Park**

Cabbagetown's First People

Centuries before there was a Cabbagetown community, and long before French fur traders or the British settlement called York, many different Aboriginal cultures such as the Anishnabai (Ojibwa), Haudenosaune (Iroquois), Huron, Eries,

Petuns and Neutrals came together to trade, hold councils and seasonal ceremonies in this region of Ontario.

The confluence of these many cultures gave birth to a great circle of Aboriginal civilization with a rich ceremonial, ritual, artistic and political legacy.



Plaque location: **435 Sackville Street**

Al Purdy, Poet

1918 – 2000

Al Purdy has been called “the most Canadian poet”, as well as the best English-language Canadian poet of the century. He wrote 33 books of verse, and twice won Canada’s Governor General’s Literary Award, once in 1966 for his collection, *The Cariboo Horses*, and again in 1986 for his *Collected Poems, 1956 – 1996*. He also received the Order of Canada. These awards are among the highest honours an artist can receive in Canada.

As a young man living on Sackville Street, he loved observing the residents of Cabbagetown, and spending time at the Riverdale Zoo. His voice

was that of the common man and woman; he gave ordinary events an extraordinary view.

He was not a poet-academic like so many of his peers. His first book was self-published. A high school dropout, he served an “undistinguished” term in the air force. His final work is a 652 page collection of poems entitled *Beyond Remembering*.

Al Purdy died at his home in Victoria, B.C. from lung cancer at the age of 81.

From Al Purdy’s book, *Naked with Summer in Your Mouth*:

Ages

I am four years old
The most important person
Ever born on earth
- life bursts into flame
for me the night stars shine
for me it’s always June
days are bright discoveries
in my infinite bedroom world
the moon’s a silver spoon

I am very young
only 16
I will never die
the years are made
of edible gold braid
the weeks are sun sun
and endless endless
the days stand still

I am 25 now
and feel the same
only more so
the world’s a lovely place
full of birds’ cries
and all my own
the birds like little jewels
belong to me

I am 32
and know a lady here
on this lovely earth
each day she steps out of
the sunrise glow
emerging like a star
I walk my life with her

I am 40 now
and knowing less and less
each day I live
bewildered by the loss
of gifts existence gives
still foolish but finally
I’ve learned how
to curse what I can’t bless

Now I grumble aloud
and scream my discontent
BUT GOD HOW LUCK I WAS
for all the friends I had
for the look in a woman’s eyes
for the death I refuse to die
and scream my lust and rage
to the God I don’t believe in
to god and all the gods
plural and singular
but god does not reply



Plaque location: **27 Rose Avenue**

**Samuel Rose D.D.
One of the Pioneers
of Methodism in Ontario 1806-1890**

Samuel Rose, one of the Pioneers of Methodism, was born September 13, 1806 at Marysburg, near Picton, Ontario. In 1831, he began his ministry and was stationed as a missionary to the Indians in the town of what is now known as Orillia. He never lost his love for the Native Indian, and devoted six years of his life to the superintendency of the Muncey Mission. When ordained, he was pastor of churches in St. Catherines, London, Brantford, Dundas and Toronto. He was Chairman of the district from 1856 to 1864.

In 1865 he was elected Book Steward of the Methodist Church, and held the office for fourteen

years. He had a good sense of business and served on many financial committees. His presence was also a constant inspiration to several local charities.

He was known as a man of noble and generous impulses, a man who left behind him a record of pure character and devotion to God.

During his career Dr. Rose held many responsible positions within the Methodist Church.

In 1878 the degree of D.D. was conferred upon him by the Central Tennessee College of Nashville, Tennessee.

Dr. Rose was one of the original trustees of the Metropolitan Church in Toronto, and at one time he was Treasurer of Victoria College in Toronto.



Plaque location: **6 Aberdeen Avenue**
formerly #4 which no longer exists

Ernest Thompson Seton
Self-trained Biologist,
Scientific Illustrator and Naturalist
1860-1946

Ernest Thompson Seton was one of the most important 19th-Century Toronto novelists.

Seton began his career as a scientific illustrator and was a self-trained biologist.

From the 1890s until his death he wrote about 60 books, and nearly 400 magazine articles and short stories. His book *Wild Animals I Have Known*, first published in 1898, has never been out of print. His dramatic wilderness stories brought him praise from such notable contemporaries as Andrew Carnegie, Rudyard Kipling, Theodore Roosevelt, Leo Tolstoy and Mark Twain.

It is said that he had an almost mystical reverence for Wolves and Indians. He thought that wolves were the most clever and noble of creatures and eventually called himself 'Black Wolf.' Indians to him were the finest people because of their understanding of, and respect for, nature.

As one of the founders of the Boy Scouts and the Girl Guides of America, he inspired children to imitate the Indians' ways.

The message that Ernest Thompson Seton delivered for 60 years was that nature is a great gift and should be valued and protected. One of the more thought-provoking phenomena of the 20th century is the remarkable extent to which we have become a nation of nature lovers.

In his time, Ernest Thompson Seton did more than his share to help this cause along.



Plaque location: **SW corner of Riverdale Park**
at Carlton and Sumach Streets

**Lieutenant Francis Gwillim Simcoe
First Owner of Land in Cabbagetown
1791-1812**

Francis Simcoe was the eldest son of John Graves Simcoe and Elizabeth Gwillim. His father was the first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada. His mother painted watercolour sketches and wrote detailed diaries.

Francis was a year old in 1792 when the family came to Newark, now known as Niagara-on-the-Lake.

In 1793 they moved to York, later to be named Toronto. Francis's father selected a 200-acre lot for his son was well-located on a height of land

and looking down upon the Don River. By law, a home had to be built in order to secure Francis's title to the land. This was done, the home was called "Castle Frank," and Francis became the first private owner of these lands, which encompass present day Cabbagetown and surroundings.

Letters written by his mother, sisters, and by Francis himself tell about his childhood at Eton, in London England.

At sixteen, he was an ensign on the 27th Inniskilling Regime. Francis Simcoe died at the age of twenty-one while leading a storming party under the command of the Duke of Wellington, in the Trinidad Breach at Badajoz, Spain.



Plaque location: **Carlton Street, west of Sumach**
south side, formerly 375 Carlton Street

Gordon Sinclair
A Giant in Canadian Broadcast Journalism
1900-1984

One of the biggest names in Canadian broadcast journalism is Gordon Sinclair. In 1922 he began working as a reporter for the Toronto Daily Star. He had a series of assignments in the late twenties and thirties that sent him around the world four times as a wandering reporter. He traveled 360,000 miles, through all continents, and on all oceans except the Antarctic. From these adventures he wrote the following four books; *Footloose In India, Cannibal Quest, Loose Among the Devils and Khyber Caravan.*

His career took a turn in 1942 and he began working in radio. He reported on the raid on Dieppe, and he was then asked to write biographical sketches of leaders in that raid. The result was a mid-day personality series – “Let’s Be Personal,” on Canada’s radio station CFRB which attracted huge audiences, and which continued until the time of his death.

At this time, Gordon Sinclair was still working

for the newspaper. After 21 years as a newspaperman he quit the Toronto Star and opted for a free-lance career in radio.

In 1948, CFRB granted Gordon Sinclair a leave and he took a fifth trip around the world, traveling to Japan, China, Malaya, and on to Europe. He witnessed the takeover of China by the communists.

In 1957 he became a charter member of “Front Page Challenge”, a weekly panel show on the CBC TV network.

It was Canada’s longest running television program, which continued until 1995.

“Sinc’s” most famous commentary was broadcast in 1973 when anti-American sentiment was at an all-time high. The piece was echoed around the world and is considered one of the most respected tributes from Canada to the people of the United States of America. Its renewed popularity in September 2001 can be attributed to recent terrorist attacks on U.S. soil.



Plaque location: **34 Salisbury Street**

Eden Smith
Prolific Early Toronto Designer
and Architect **1858-1949**

Eden Smith was born in Birmingham, England. He was one of the youngest of a large Victorian family.

He studied drawing and architecture throughout Europe. He and his wife Annie moved to Toronto in 1888 and he began his architectural practice in 1892. In 1890 they lived at 34 Salisbury Avenue.

Much of his early work in Toronto was ecclesiastical and sponsored by the Anglican Church. He designed several churches, among them the church of St. Cyprian in Seaton village, St. John the Evangelist on Portland Street and the church of St. Thomas on Huron Street.

After 1888, domestic architecture monopolized his prolific output. He designed 11 houses in Wychwood Park and others in Rosedale, The

Annex and Forest Hill, many of which embodied the contemporary design principles found in the Arts and Crafts Movement, of which Smith was a leading exponent. His style was called English Cottage, which had steep-pitched roofs, tall chimneys, and bands of small-paned casement windows.

In his 33 years of practice he designed over 2,500 houses in the city. He was also on-site and supervised the construction.

Another outstanding achievement was the design of the co-op housing complex at the corner of Spruce and Sumach Streets in Cabbagetown. It was begun in 1913 and flourishes to this day as a model of successful co-operative housing.

Mr. Smith was also one of the founding members of the Arts and Letters Club.

Eden Smith died on October 10, 1949, and is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery in Guelph, Ontario.



Plaque location: **Regent Park Community Centre**

Morley Callaghan
Writer, Novelist, Broadcaster
1903 -1990

Morley Callaghan was born into an Irish Catholic family, and lived the first five years of his life in Belshaw Place in Cabbagetown. He was educated at the University of Toronto, and attended Osgoode Hall in 1925, but never practiced law.

He worked as a junior reporter at the Toronto Star, where he met Gordon Sinclair and the older Ernest Hemingway, who encouraged him to be a writer. His first novel, *Strange Fugitive*, was published in 1928. He was thought of as Canada's first "urban novelist".

In the 1950s he focused on broadcasting, and became a public personality. At this time he was doing little writing. American critic,

Edmond Wilson identified him as an "unjustly neglected writer", and compared him to Checkov and Turgenev. This pronouncement in 1960 led to many reprints of Callaghan's works in Europe and Asia, where his concern for "the little man" attracted popularity.

One of the finest memoirs in Canadian literature was his book entitled, *That Summer in Paris* (1963), reminiscences of his memorable stay there in 1929. In Paris, he matured as a writer, and developed friendships with some of the most famous authors of the century, including Hemingway and Joyce.

Mr. Callaghan received the 1951 Governor General's Award for his book, *The Loved and the Lost*. He was the recipient of numerous awards, prizes, honours and the Royal Bank Award. He was also a Companion of the Order of Canada.



Plaque location: **Regent Park Community Centre**

Corporal Ainsworth Dyer
Soldier, Princess Patricia's
Canadian Light Infantry
1977 – 2002

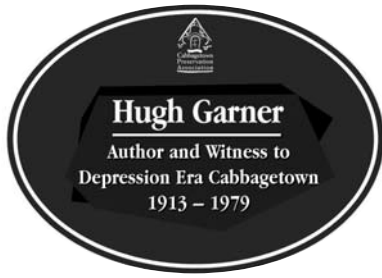
Corporal Dyer grew up in Regent Park. He became a member of the Edmonton-based battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. After joining the 5 Platoon in 1998, he quickly developed into a mature and responsible soldier. Always looking to challenge himself, he trained for the Mountain Man competition, the blood and guts of the light infantry soldier. He also conquered the skies and became a paratrooper. His sense of adventure complemented his strong temperament.

Raised by his strict Jamaican grandmother, he had a strong sense of right from wrong.

Corporal Dyer was killed in action on April 18, 2002 during a night-time training exercise near Kandahar, Afghanistan.

He is described by his colleagues as a thoughtful leader, his own man, and one who had a strength of heart that was unparalleled.

Corporal Ainsworth Dyer was buried with full military honours in the Necropolis Cemetery in Cabbagetown.



Plaque location: **Hugh Garner Housing Co-op**
550 Ontario Street

Hugh Garner
Author and Witness to
Depression-Era Cabbagetown
1913 – 1979

In 1919, when he was six years old, Hugh Garner's parents emigrated to Canada from Yorkshire, England. He grew up in Cabbagetown and began working at the Toronto Star as a copy boy. Eventually, he realized that in order to succeed as a writer, he had to work at the task full time, so he quit his day job.

During the Depression he "rode the rails" across Canada and the United States, working at a number of different jobs. He also fought

in the Spanish Civil War. When World War II broke out, he joined the Navy and served on Atlantic convoy duty until 1945.

As a Canadian writer Hugh Garner's poor, urban, Protestant background is evident in his work. His focus was on working-class Ontario. The best known of his realistic novels is *Cabbagetown* (1950). His extensive literary output includes 100 short stories, 17 books, numerous articles, radio and T.V. scripts, and his autobiography, *One Damn Thing After Another*. In 1963, Hugh Garner was awarded the Governor General's Literary Award for *Hugh Garner's Best Stories, A Collection of His Short Stories*.

Hugh Garner is known for his hard-living life style, which he lived to the end.



Plaque location: **20 Metcalfe Street**

Arthur Goss
Left a Photographic Legacy
of over 35,000 Images of Toronto
1881-1940

Arthur Goss was born in London, Ontario, and was the eldest child of John and Jessica Goss. His father was a journalist and worked for Grip Publishing in Toronto.

Arthur went to Rose Avenue School for two years. The family moved a number of times within Cabbagetown.

After his father died in 1892, his mother had little money. For financial reasons, Arthur, at the age of 11, began his working life as an office boy in the City of Toronto Engineer's Office on Front Street.

In 1896 Arthur Goss and his mother moved to Alpha Avenue where he remained until he married Ethel Ross Munro in 1903.

As a young man, Arthur Goss joined the Toronto Camera Club and formed the Studio Club. No one knows how and where he learned to take photographs.

While working for the City, he attained the position of City Photographer and remained so for 37 years, devoting his entire working life to creating countless important photos of early Toronto, including Cabbagetown and the Riverdale Zoo.

While his personal interest lay in pictorial photography from 1911 to his death in 1940, the Department of Public works Photography and Blue Printing Section employed him to document a wide range of municipal activities.

These images produced a photographic record of Toronto. Goss left a legacy of over 35,000 images.



Plaque location: **262 Ontario Street**

Frederick Hagan
One of Canada's Greatest
Artists and Teachers 1918-2003

When Frederick Hagan was 13 years old, his father, a cabinet maker, died. His mother was left to raise eight children, so at the age of 16, he dropped out of school to work in a paper-box factory.

From a studio he set up in an empty garage, he used to wander the streets of his Cabbagetown neighbourhood sketching and painting.

While studying at the Ontario College of Art (now Ontario College of Art and Design) his teachers were John Alfsen, who became a mentor and father figure, and Frank Carmichael of the Group of Seven.

In 1946 Mr. Hagan was hired to teach drawing, painting and printmaking at O.C.A. He was living in Newmarket at the time and commuted to Toronto for the next 37 years.

Like most painters, his work was deeply-rooted in his own experiences, and it was never easy to classify. His work never lost its figurative basis. He had a different way of seeing the world.

Mr. Hagan left a great legacy as a teacher at O.C.A. He challenged his students and gave them an immense technical background, along with invitations to great parties at his home.

In 1985 Canada Post commissioned him to create a set of 16 postage stamps on the theme of Canadian explorers.

In 1998, he was awarded the Royal Canadian Academy of Art's medal. Previously, he received the Canadian Centennial Medal.

His works are held by the National Gallery of Canada, the Art Galleries of Ontario and the Frederick Horsman Varley Museum.

Frederick Hagan was one of Canada's greatest artists, a great teacher and a unique personality.



Plaque location: **94 Winchester Street**

Doug Henning
World-Famous Magician
1947-2000

Doug Henning was born in Fort Garry, Manitoba. He was six years old when he first became interested in magic, after watching a magician on "The Ed Sullivan Show."

As a teenager, he studied magic and began performing as The Great Hendoo.

In 1969 Doug was living in the third-floor apartment at 94 Winchester Street. He had just finished his undergraduate education and was deciding whether or not to become a surgeon. Later he applied for and successfully received a Canada Council grant to study magic... and the rest is history.

At the same time he was building some of his famous props: the giant cat prop to make the lion disappear, the moveable stomach of the woman and many more.

In the 1970's and 1980's, he created and starred in several magic musicals on Broadway, including "The Magic Show," "Merlin," and "Doug Henning's World of Magic." He created

the legendary magician Houdini's "Water Torture Escape," before a live audience.

The ratings for "The World of Magic Show," were so high that NBC made the show an annual event. The show won an Emmy award and seven Emmy nominations, and made Henning one of the world's best known magicians.

In 1987, he left the world of magic. He had been practicing Transcendental Meditation for many years and decided to dedicate himself to promoting this discipline.

In 1994, he returned to Canada and ran for parliament as a candidate of the Natural Law Party, but was not successful. Doug Henning began working with the Maharishi on plans for a Transcendental Meditation theme park in Niagara Falls, Ontario.

After his death there was a huge outpouring of grief. One person wrote of his absolutely genuine, sparkling, wonderful personality, on and off stage. He viewed all of life through the window of wonder and amazement. Doug Henning brought out the childlike innocence in us all when we watched his magic.



Plaque location: **Winchester Public School**

Walter Huston **Academy Award-winning Actor** **1884 – 1950**

Walter Huston was born in Toronto where his father was a building contractor. He attended Wellesley, Ryerson and Lansdowne Schools, and Winchester Public School in Cabbagetown.

He later studied engineering, but he gave it up and chose acting as a career. He made his stage debut in Toronto in 1902. By 1905 he was successful in vaudeville and was cast in a New York play. By 1929, he had moved to California and was making movies.

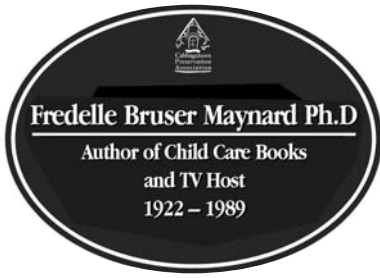
In 1948 he won an Academy Award for the best supporting actor in "The Treasure of Sierra Madre". He appeared in over 50 movies, and

occasionally returned to Broadway to act in a play. Some of his other films include:

- "Abraham Lincoln" (1930), title role
- "Dodsworth" (1936), voted, by the New York Film Critics, best actor of 1936 for his performance in this role
- "The Devil and Daniel Webster" (1941), as Mr. Scratch
- "The Maltese Falcon" (1941), cameo as Captain Jacobi

His love of making movies passed on to his son, John Huston, the successful Hollywood actor, writer and director. John Huston's daughter is Angelica Huston, also an accomplished actor, and winner of an Academy Award.

Walter Huston died of a heart attack one day following his 66th birthday.



Plaque location: **25 Metcalfe Street**

Fredelle Bruser Maynard
Author and TV Host
1922 – 1989

Fredelle Bruser Maynard was born and raised in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Foam Lake was the first of many towns in which she lived, as her family often moved. Her father was a Russian painter, turned country merchant, who opened one store after another in many small towns.

Fredelle studied at the University of Manitoba and the University of Toronto before earning

her Ph.D at Radcliffe. She went on to become a brilliant academic, a popular teacher, who taught at Wellesley and Radcliffe, and an acclaimed writer.

She is known for her autobiographies and books on child care. They include: *Guiding Your Child to a More Creative Life*, *The Child Care Crisis*, and her autobiographies: *Raisins and Almonds*, and *The Tree of Life*. Her articles have been published in many U.S. and Canadian magazines, and journals. She was the host of T.V. Ontario's "Parents and Children".



Plaque location: **160 Amelia street**

**Mary O’Riordan D.V.M.
Pioneering Veterinarian
1925-1993**

Born in Ennis, County Clare, Ireland, “Dr. Mary,” as she was known, is believed to be the first woman veterinarian to practice in that country. She continued her career in London and New York.

In 1963 she moved to Toronto where she worked in an animal clinic. She subsequently opened her own animal hospital and was purported to be the first veterinarian to make house calls.

In 1975 she wrote a picture book entitled *Dr. Mary’s Animals*, and became known to children, their parents and pets as Dr. Mary.

Her Amelia Street home was open to her many friends and animals alike. Her parties were wonderful gatherings where she served Irish stew to cabinet ministers, authors, actors and members of the medical profession.

She was a founder of Cabbagetown’s Annual Forsythia Festival, and a director of the Toronto Press Club.



Plaque location: **139 Amelia Street**

J. L. (Allen) Yen Ph.D
A Leading Figure in
Canadian Radio Astronomy
1925 – 1993

Born in Canton, China in 1925, Allen Yen received his B.Sc. degree from Chiao Tung University. He obtained his M.Sc and Ph.D degrees from the University of Toronto, Department of Applied Physics in 1950 and 1953 respectively. He was appointed to the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering at the University of Toronto in 1952, where he became Professor of Electrical Engineering in 1966.

Professor Yen's depth and breadth of knowledge contributed to the then-emerging disciplines of signal theory, and communication and digital signal processing on both the theoretical and experimental fronts.

In 1967 Dr. Yen was co-recipient of the prestigious Rumford Medal awarded by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences for the development of VLBI – Very Long Baseline Interferometry.

In recognition of his outstanding research and teaching career, Professor Yen was awarded the title of "University Professor" at the University of Toronto in 1980, and held that post until his formal retirement in 1991. Following his formal retirement, Allen Yen continued his work at the University of Toronto as "University Professor Emeritus" until his sudden death two years later.

A Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, he will be remembered, not only for his contribution to science, but also for his endless wisdom and love of sailing.



Plaque location: **137 Amelia Street**

Betty Oliphant
World-Renowned Innovator
of Ballet Education
1918-2004

Betty Oliphant was born into a prominent family in London, England. Sadly for her, she never knew her father, who died shortly after she was born. She had a passion for dance and fought her middle-class British family for ballet lessons.

In the late twenties and thirties she studied ballet along with stage, tap and ballroom dancing. When she was thirteen years old, she was teaching and dancing professionally, and at seventeen years of age she opened her own school above the Twinings Tea Emporium in London, England. At the age of twenty, she found that she was far too tall for classic dance.

During the Second World War she worked as an ambulance driver, as a choreographer of pantomimes, and also for a British Army touring group, "The Blue Pencils".

When the war was over, Betty came to Canada as a war bride with her Canadian husband (a soldier) and her two children. She then opened a school on Sherbourne Street, and helped found the Canadian Dance Teachers Association.

Betty Oliphant was the ballet mistress for eight years and later the Associate Artistic Director of the National Ballet of Canada, established by Celia Franca. She was a fabulous teacher but had a reputation as being a very difficult task master. Central to her approach as a ballet teacher was the importance of mastering technique, with the sole purpose of achieving freedom of expression.

In 1959 "Miss O," as she was called, co-founded the National Ballet School with Celia Franca. It was successful

beyond their expectations, providing the best dance training and academic schooling combined. Among Miss Oliphant's early students were, Robert Desrosiers, Karen Kain, James Kudelka, Veronica Tennant, Rex Harrington, and John Aleyne, a choreographer.

Betty Oliphant's legacy is huge. All her work has been an uncompromising quest for excellence and insistence upon the highest standards. She put Canadian Ballet training on the world map and broadened its definition to include the education of the whole person.

List of Awards and Honours

- 1967 Centennial Medal, Canada
- 1973 Officer of the Order of Canada
- 1978 Honorary Doctor of Law, Brock University
- 1978 Honorary Doctor of Law, Queen's University
- 1978 Molson Prize
- 1980 Honorary Doctor of Law, University of Toronto
- 1981 National Dance Award from the Canadian Dance Teachers Association
- 1982 Diplome d'honneur, Canadian Conference of the Arts
- 1985 Companion of the Order of Canada
- 1985 Distinguished Educator of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
- 1990 Order of Napoleon by the Maison Courvoisier, France. One of the first two female recipients, and only the third Canadian.
- 1990 Toronto Arts Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award
- 1992 Paul Harris Fellow of the Rotary Foundation of Rotary International
- 1992 Commemorative Medal for the 125th anniversary of Canadian Confederation
- 1992 Honorary Doctorate of Letters, York University



Plaque location: **Rose Avenue Public School SW corner**

Luigi von Kunits First Conductor of The Toronto Symphony Orchestra 1870 – 1931

Luigi von Kunits was born and raised in the musically-enriched city of Vienna, Austria. He studied violin, composition and music history with some of the finest teachers.

When Luigi von Kunits was eleven years old, the great Brahms himself asked him to play second violin in one of the composer's string quartets. When he was twenty-one, he had the opportunity to perform his own violin concerto with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.

In 1893, he traveled to the United States to perform with an Austrian orchestra at the Chicago World's Fair, where he also won the best solo violinist trophy. At this time, he decided to stay in the United States and taught violin in Chicago from 1893 until 1896. Subsequently, he taught at the Pittsburgh Conservatory from 1896 until 1910 and was also concertmaster of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

In 1912 he came to Canada and the Canadian Academy of Music in Toronto offered him a position as head violin teacher. In September of 1922, two young men visited Luigi von Kunits in his studio. The proposition Louis Gesensway and Abe Fenboque presented was to found a new symphony orchestra. They had no money or connections and spoke only for themselves and some fine musicians, most of whom were his students. These musicians had a great desire to make better music than they were playing at the vaudeville houses or the "new" movie-houses. They wanted Luigi von Kunits because they knew he could train an orchestra comprised of his students, and that he would be inspired by the challenge of building a new orchestra.

On April 23, 1923, at five p.m., the New Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Luigi von Kunits, made its debut in Massey Hall.

There were about 60 musicians and admission was 75, 50 and 25 cents, no seats reserved. The response was very good and the critics were most impressed.

Mrs. von Kunits initiated the Toronto Symphony Orchestra Women's Committee. This strong group of women found ways to financially support and sustain the orchestra, and by the fifth season the orchestra had found its place and its patrons. The New Symphony became the Toronto Symphony. For the next five years Luigi von Kunits (now an honorary Doctor of Music from the University of Toronto) brought a series of Twilight Concerts to Toronto, which gave purpose and pleasure to its musicians and a great deal of pleasure to its citizens.

The 1924 – 25 season included the first orchestra sponsored jointly by the Toronto Board of Education and the Toronto Catholic School Board. This concert was the beginning of the TSO Education Program.

In the Fall of 1929, the first radio broadcast was heard across Canada on CNR Radio Network. This performance was broadcast from the Arcadian Court, a large dining area in Simpson's Department Store in downtown Toronto. The concerts took place on Sundays, which was convenient for the musicians. The venue for broadcasts eventually moved to the studios of CFRB Radio.

Maestro von Kunits, with his proper conductor's mane of hair, always accepted admiration and applause with great style. His life was music. He was devoted to establishing a solid foundation for his orchestra. It has been said that he brought German music to this new land and transmitted it through a mind that was essentially Greek. He acknowledged his doctorate in Latin, yet he was known to keep notes about his students in Greek.

When Luigi von Kunits died in 1931, the members of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra mourned the loss of their great conductor. For nine years they had played for him, admired him as an artist and loved him as a man.

How to Use This Book

Here is a unique resource for your use – already assembled. When you go through the list you will find that these most interesting people complement your existing resources and are a natural fit with a number of courses. Examples would include: geography, social studies, native studies, urban history, science, English literature, and the arts.

You might begin with a teacher-guided walking tour. As the plaques are spread over a wide area, you may wish to divide this into a few walks.

This resource is useful in classroom projects - theme-related biographies, reading and novel studies, occupations, and researching a chosen individual (through web and library searches).

This resource offers opportunities to explore several important issues and themes, such as:

- **Values and ethics** – cultural, social and humanitarian.
- **Leadership** – leaving a legacy, leading-by-example and inspiring others to do the same.
- **Volunteerism** – the benefit to one's community and beyond, the excellent opportunity volunteerism affords a young person to develop, test, and hone skills to employ later in his/her working life, as well as the great sense of satisfaction one derives from making a contribution, bringing about change and truly making a difference.
- **The Hero** – a theme which repeatedly comes to mind in the stories of these people, their accomplishments and contributions, particularly when viewed in the context of the times and circumstances in which they lived. Each one of us has the potential within us to also be a hero, regardless of the circumstances into which we were born, or the conditions of our environment, and *Cabbagetown People* underscores the ability of ordinary people to do extraordinary things. As we have previously said, in our description of the Program, true heroes, who are ordinary citizens, stand alongside famous, legendary and historical figures.

Request For Feed-Back

Cabbagetown People is a public education program whose aim is to be a heritage resource to the community.

We will be identifying and adding to the list of interesting and colourful *Cabbagetown People*, and we will provide you with updates on an annual basis.

Your response is extremely helpful in enabling us to continue to develop and enhance this on-going “work in progress” .

We invite you to share with us your suggestions and comments, and would also welcome the children’s responses as well.

- How did you use this tool?
- What worked? Why did it work?
- What didn’t work? Why didn’t it work?
- What would you like to see added?
- Any other comments?

Please e-mail your comments to the attention of:
the *Cabbagetown People* Plaque Committee at: cpa@cabbagetownpa.ca

We thank you for your interest and participation in *Cabbagetown People*.

***Cabbagetown People* Plaque Committee and Contact Information**

Chair: Sheila Schirmer
Marijan Bayer
Christopher Dew
Brian Hawkins
Margaret Rutledge
Alan Waterhouse
Designer: Steve Yeates
Installation Specialist: Toby Schertzer

For further information on *Cabbagetown People*, please visit www.cabbagetownpeople.ca
or contact:

Cabbagetown People Committee
Cabbagetown Preservation Association
422 Parliament Street, P.O. Box 82512
Toronto, ON M5A 4N8
<http://www.cabbagetown.ca>