



**THE ANNEX
RESIDENTS'
ASSOCIATION**

This Week in the Annex:

June 21, 2023

Legacy Space on Walmer

Last Saturday afternoon, [TAS](#) and Walmer Road Baptist hosted a festival to celebrate the official inauguration of an outdoor [Legacy Space](#) created under the auspices of the [Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack](#) Fund. The Fund's stated mission is to build cultural understanding and create a path toward reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. And it seeks to do this in part through the establishment of dedicated spaces where conversation and education about our shared history is encouraged.

Not a single one of the speakers at Saturday's event failed to mention the great irony of a Legacy Space being inaugurated in front of a church. Pastor Elaine Poproski indeed made a special point of it. And that openness went a long way to establishing the tone of the afternoon's program.



The late Gord Downie – iconic Canadian singer-songwriter and activist – was both shattered and inspired by the story of Chanie Wenjack, a young Indigenous boy who died while trying to escape residential school. Chanie became the centre of Downie's multi-media [Secret Path](#) project which in turn led to the establishment of the eponymous registered charity.



Gord Downie's brother, Patrick, can be seen standing at the far right in the image above. Despite his personal reticence at being on stage, he took the mike and spoke movingly about his brother's inspiration and legacy. You can hear part of his speech [by clicking here](#).

In addition to speeches, there was food, including Indigenous specialties like bannock; there was smudging for those who wished to take part; and, of course, there was dancing. You can catch some of that performance [in a video](#) shot by Mark Chemij, Director of Development at TAS.



Photo courtesy Stuart Lowe

But the most lasting and enduring physical element of the celebration is undoubtedly the eye-catching triptych by Métis artist Dani Kastelein recently installed on the main church doors. (You can read a synopsis of the Master's thesis Dani defended in 2020 for the school of Architecture at the University of Waterloo [by clicking here.](#))



Many will appreciate Dani's triptych simply as a glorious burst of colour that lifts the spirits. Passersby walking closer to the work may well make personal meaning from the images of the women, the fish, and the campfire woven together by a stream of air, mist, and smoke. But those of us who were privileged to sit at its base and speak in person with Dani last Saturday now have a huge new appreciation for the complexity of the work and the message it conveys.

The triptych celebrates the traditional four elements of matter: earth, air, fire, and water. And it is also deeply connected to the urban crate farm that sits in front. Developed in partnership with the [Bowery Project](#), the garden includes Indigenous medicinal plantings such as sage, tobacco, and sweetgrass. Consider, for example, the far-left panel representing three sisters, each holding the next in support. In Indigenous lore, they are the foundations of Nature's bounty. First planted is the corn that, as it grows, provides a trellis for the beans which, in their turn, offer shade to the delicate gourds, the last to be planted. Look for the emblems of these plants on the spirits' clothing.



Dani sits on the church steps in front of an image of a sturgeon, fish lauded by Indigenous people for their wisdom as they spawn only in clean, clear, unpolluted waters. It's a hard truth to know and to lament that the sturgeon is now listed as an [endangered species in Ontario](#).



For those who couldn't attend the festivities, there are explanatory signs still posted on the site to augment Dani's work. And for those who pass by, you're invited to take from the plantings anything you might need. The spirit of sharing and mutual support lives manifest in the garden.

Mulberry Picking This Sunday

These past warm days have done much to bring along the mulberries – at least enough of them that this **Sunday June 25** should provide at least a bit of an early crop for those of us who turn out to join the annual ARA Mulberry Festival. And even if the berries are sparse, organizer Terri Chu informs us that as an added bonus, the graduate students from Forestry at UofT who will be conducting this summer's tree survey will be present to give tips on identifying different species.

Things get underway at **3:00 pm** sharp in **Jean Sibelius Park** where you'll get sorted into teams of pickers. As always, there's a call out for ladders and long

poles and old bedsheets if you have them.



As the [attached poster](#) for the event suggests, don't forget to bring your own cup for refreshments as well as a container for your mulberries. And judging by the shot below taken last year of Joey Chu, it might also be prudent to come prepared with handi wipes as well.



Photo courtesy Charlotte Mickie

Finally, you should know that volunteers always get to go home with fresh fruit to enjoy themselves – as long as they don't gobble up the berries from the get go!

Notes and Queries

Tree Survey Launch

The second year of our ARA tree survey gets underway next week. So if you live between Brunswick and St George, don't be surprised by a knock on your door from a student asking to be given access to the rear yard. The team of graduate

students met with Terri Chu and their professor, Danijela Puric-Mladenovic, a couple of weeks ago to finalize plans. Shown with their professor (rear right) are ARA survey team members Becky Martin, Bhavika Sharma, and Dele Idowu.



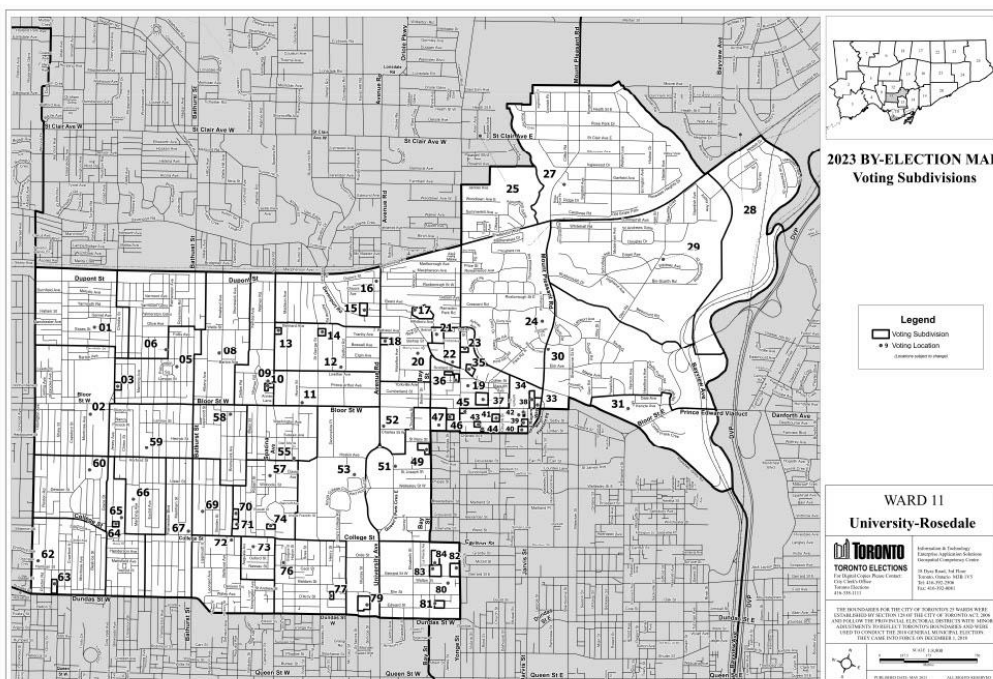
Let's Try That Again

Fingers crossed that all goes well for tomorrow night's **7:00 pm** rescheduling of the FoNTRA, FoSTRA mayoral debate. Same format, same rules as before. Details about attending the event in person are [available by clicking here](#). But once again, if you prefer to attend virtually, you can do so by accessing OCAD University's You Tube channel in real time at www.ocadu.ca/live. There's no registration required for virtual attendance.



Councillor's Town Hall Rescheduled

Of course, the RAs' debate trumps Councillor Saxe's previously scheduled town hall. So her office has moved the monthly event back a week to **Wednesday June 28th at 7:00 pm and held virtually on Zoom**. Given that we'll know by then who's been elected as Toronto's new mayor, the conversation should be interesting. If the new date suits your schedule, then by all means [click on this link to register](#). There's also still time to submit your questions prior to the Town Hall by [completing this form](#).



Community Environment Day June 25

Don't know about you, but we ourselves have been storing a half dozen cans of expired paint that we're determined to dispose of this **Sunday, June 25** at Ward 11's Community Environment Day. Held at Central Technical School (enter from Harbord & Borden St) the event will run from **10:00 am to 2:00 pm**. And while you're dropping off hazardous materials, you might want to help yourself to some City-produced compost. Be warned that it's packaged in hefty 13 kg bags and that there's a limit of two bags per household – while supplies last. [Check the City website](#) for details.



COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT DAY

Sunday, June 25 | 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Central Technical School, 725 Bathurst St.

🌐 Drop off items for reuse and recycling and
safely dispose of household hazardous waste

🌐 Pick up free compost

LEARN MORE



Quaker Book Sale

As if there's not enough to do this Sunday in the 'hood, you might also be interested in the book sale happening at the Friends House at 60 Lowther. Scheduled from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, it's a charity book sale with a twist. While the titles on offer range the gamut from fiction, non-fiction, history, spiritualism, archeology, travel, etc., the pricing is unique: It's by donation, and the proceeds till go to the work of the Peace and Social Action Committee. As an added bonus, four Quaker authors will be on hand at 1:00 pm for signing their recent publications.



**USED BOOK SALE &
QUAKER AUTHORS
BOOK SIGNING**

Sunday, June 25 at 1 pm

**Meeting Room at Friends House,
60 Lowther Ave., Toronto.**

Bill Kelly. *A Northern Exposure – Shedding Light on My Early Years in Canada*, on fleeing the US to avoid fighting in Vietnam.

Bette Logan. *Life Lived Inside Out*, a memoir about her relationship with a prison inmate.

Ruth Lor Malloy. *Brightening My Corner: a Memoir of Dreams Fulfilled*, a personal story about her fight against discrimination around the world.

Julie Saeger Nierenberg. *Journey's End – Death, Dying, and the End of Life*, a tool for education, professional training, and grief and bereavement support.

Lloy Cook will emcee

Cruel Intentions?

If you're a regular customer of the Kitchen Table up on Dupont, be warned that access to the store may be spotty next **Wednesday June 28**. Turns out that it's

been selected as the site for scenes from [Amazon's television series](#) based on the cult film *Cruel Intentions*. As the [attached schedule](#) indicates, both vehicular and pedestrian traffic at the corner of St George and Dupont promise to be even more chaotic than usual. But, hey, that's the price of stardom!



[Photo via Cruel Intentions / IMDb](#)



The Annex Residents' Association is a volunteer organization of residents committed to improving and preserving the distinctive character of our neighbourhood. Our strength depends on our base of support in a well-informed community.

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The Annex Residents' Association