Between Memories

FEBRUARY 20, 2007 00:18 - 01:21 / 01:35

"I guess that I got scared,"
he said before the blur of lights
set in. He asked her if she saw it.
"Beautiful, beautiful." She ran for
her turn to use the sled.

sliding, snow, cold

A Tour by Andrew & Elenore

Created for Swap-a-Walk, by Celia Beketa and Minnar Xie

Jane's Walk Toronto 2021

Land Acknowledgement

When acknowledging the land we are on, we feel it's important to make it personal. Rather than choose official language, we ask you, the people about to embark on this journey, to reflect as you move through the landscape on the following:

Toronto is located in the Dish with One Spoon treaty territory. The Dish with One Spoon is an agreement made between the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas, and Haudenosaunee peoples to share and protect the land. Subsequent nations and peoples have been welcomed into this covenant in a spirit of mutual friendship, peace, and respect.

It is fitting, then, for a city that values diversity and the contributions of all peoples regardless of religious affiliation or national origin to be located in such a place.

However, we recognize that as descendants of settlers and children of immigrants, our forebears and ourselves have failed in many ways to live up to our obligations to the land and to the many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples who have in the past, and continue in the present, to make this land their home.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has published <u>94 Calls To Action</u> toward addressing these failures and rebuilding relationships between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous people.

All of us who are guests on this land have an urgent responsibility to implement and amplify these calls.

Welcome to our tour.

Moving physically through space is an exceedingly intimate way to learn about or experience an idea of place. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to create this path for you today.

During the pandemic (and, honestly, even before that), we have enjoyed walking the many laneways and streets of Toronto to discover small treasures, stories, and vistas that are a part of our urban environment. We've put together a sample of favourite highlights from our neighbourhood rambles into a single adventure for YOU, fellow Swap-a-Walk project participant.

By no means is the information contained herein meant to be expert. We've shared what we know and what we have been able to learn. The point isn't to tell a history (though we will tell histories!), but to offer an experience of a landscape that collapses notions of "a past" into the present in which we are living—to understand one as a continuing condition of the other.

As you follow the route, we ask you to keep in your mind that this tour takes place on Indigenous land. Land that for 200 years was worked and lived upon by enslaved peoples. Land that continues to bear the names of many enslavers and colonizers. Land that contains powerful stories of joy and resistance. Land with long memories, and fleeting ones too.

We hope you will find pleasure in learning a bit about the city, but also in learning a bit about us, your neighbours. Finally, we hope that through this dérive-of-sorts that you make and give some happy and new stories to the land today.

Your friends, Ellie & Andrew



Start at the southeast corner of Trinity Bellwoods Park. (Queen St. W and Gore Vale Ave.)

Keen eyes will spot a poem entitled *Feb. 20, 2007*. This is one of 10 plaques commemorating banal and/or intimate moments in Toronto's history. The series, *Grand Gestures*, was created by 640 480 (a now disbanded art collective) and includes unscripted dialogue sourced from YouTube videos of everyday Torontonians getting up to nonsense. **Only two of the 10 remain!** These two memories bookend today's adventure, but many more lay between.

While there, it's always nice to read the **Garrison Creek** plaque found on the ground, and to remember that the creek is buried below your feet. Think about what the creek might have looked like running along right where you're standing. Picture the ravine through which it flowed. You can still see it today in the "Dog Bowl." It's the valley that puts the "vale" in Gore Vale.

Walk north on Gore Vale and turn right at the first alleyway. Travel east along the rear of the St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church. At Bellwoods Ave. (the first street you meet), walk north.

As you pass by the "Homemade Perogies for Sale" sign, you're in front of the St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Hall. Pause to read the plaque that commemorates the <u>internment of the Ukrainian people</u> by the Canadian government during World War I.

Walk east on Crocker Ave. and you'll see St. Mathias Pl. on the north side of the street. (If you hit Claremont, you've gone too far.)

Crocker Ave. was named for James Crocker, a city alderman. His estate (pictured here) fronted on Muter St. (now Palmerston Ave.). In the late 19th century, he sold the southern portion of his land, which makes up the commercial block from 654–672 Queen St. West today.



Head north on St. Mathias Pl.

In Christianity, St. Matthias is the 13th apostle. The only apostle not hand-picked by Christ himself, but rather was picked by the remaining disciples following Jesus' crucifixion and after Judas Iscariot "quit the band", so to speak.

All of the literature, and the church you'll see up ahead on this walk, spells his name with two Ts. But, our street name has just one. auושיאau

Stories of St. Matthias are varied, so we don't really know what happened to him. One story says he preached the Christian faith as far as modern-day Georgia, where he was stoned to death. Another says he was stoned and beheaded while in Jerusalem. Yet another says he lived to an old age in Jerusalem, where he died peacefully.

Keep walking along St. Mathias Pl, crossing north of Robinson St.

You'll soon hit a little patch of lane houses that are exemplary of once common, now disappearing, Victorian workers' cottages. As you walk down the lane, imagine who might have lived there in the past. Who lives there today?

Across from the houses, you'll see the rear of St. Matthias Church (the front is pictured here), an Anglo-Catholic parish. The liturgy and religious practices of the church emphasize the Catholic heritage and identity of the Anglican communion. Opened in 1874, St. Matthias was the first parish in Toronto to offer a formal animal blessing every autumn. Several popular hymns are associated with St. Matthias Church, including "Bellwoods" and "Sing of Mary, Pure and Lowly"—both composed by members of the church. The church is responsible for ministering to the nearby Centre for Mental Health and Addiction as St. Matthias is the patron saint of alcoholics, as well as carpenters; tailors; smallpox; Gary, Indiana; and Billings, Montana.

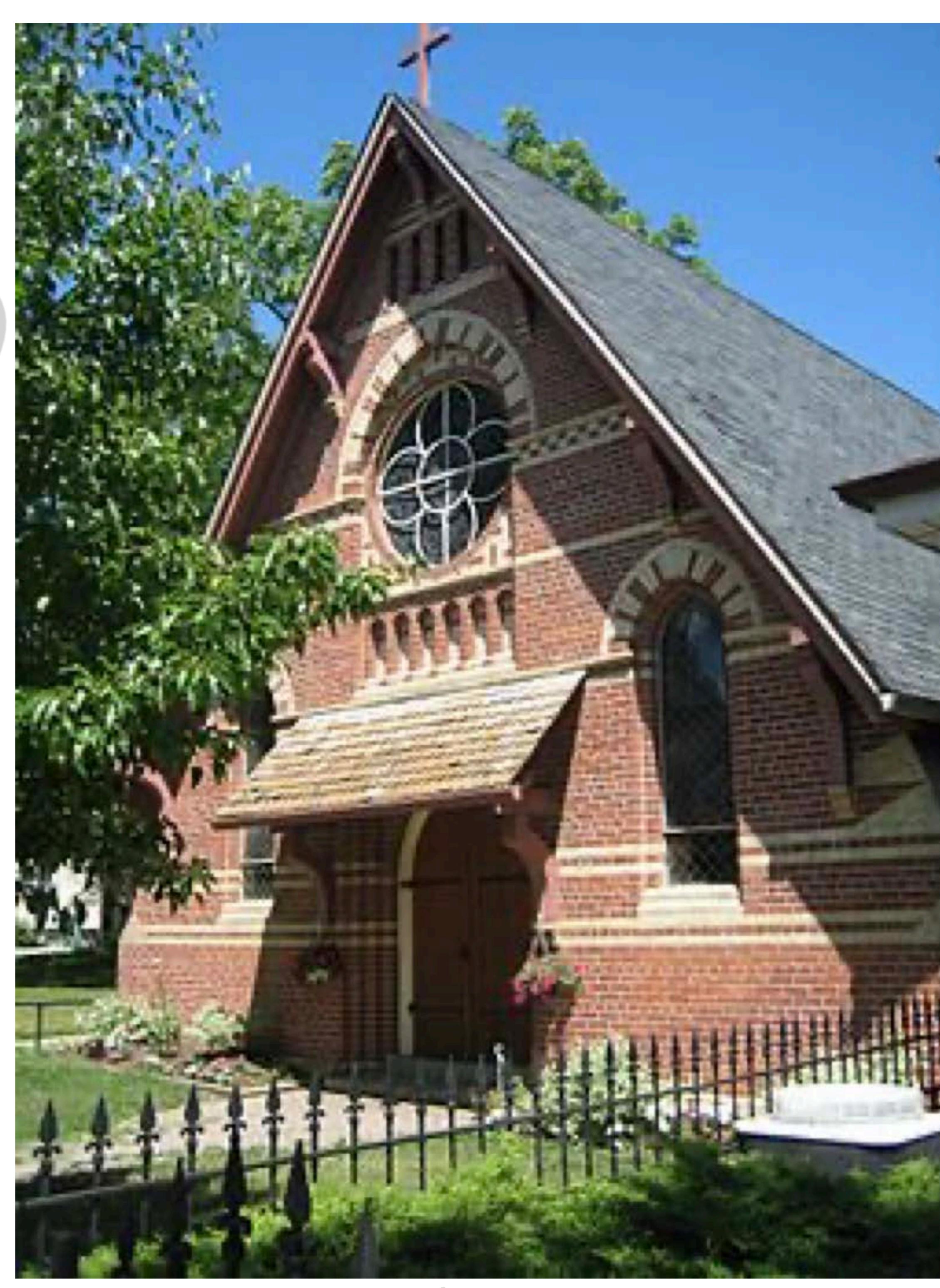


Image attribution: I, SimonP, CC BY-SA 3.0

Continue walking north on St. Mathias Place and you'll come to some large brick buildings.

The building on the west side (65 Bellwoods) is currently home to the Mint Agency, but let's look back. According to Douglas Hunter, author of Canada's Coca-Cola, the first batch of coca-cola bottles in Canada came off the line here

Image from https://www.coca-cola.ca/news/welcome-to-the-coca-cola-coliseum

"In October 1905, the company applied to register the Coca-Cola trademark in Canada, and for \$5,000, set up a small factory at 65 Bellwoods Avenue in Toronto, Ontario near Trinity Bellwoods Park. The trademark registration was granted in November and in January 1906, the plant was up and running.

in 1907. Coca-cola.ca corroborates this:

This marked the first time that Coca-Cola was bottling anywhere outside of the United States."

The warehouse conversion on the right (68 Claremont) is currently Free Space, a performance and event venue. We're not sure what it used to be, but a garment factory is a possibility.



Continue along St. Mathias Pl. to Bellwoods Pl.

Look up and to the right just before Bellwoods Pl. Nice solarium!

The building on the southeast corner has historically been a dairy and a bakery. More recently, it has been an extended-stay rental for visiting movie stars and athletes. A <u>BlogTO</u> article claims Jessica Timberlake (née Biel) once stayed there, as well as former Maple Leafs defenseman Joffrey Lupul.

On the northeast corner, you'll see some multi-coloured bollards. These are remnants of the Museum of New, opened in 1998 by artist Joseph Drapell and poet Ann Maclachlan to promote the work of the New New Painters. The last show listed on the website was in 2019, so it seems maybe the museum has closed.

Keep going along St. Mathias Pl. to Dundas St.

Carefully cross Dundas St. It's a street that has been in the news lately. It's named for Henry Dundas, a Scottish politician who was personally responsible for delaying the abolition of slavery in the British Empire. This was done to protect the financial interests of his friends and himself. The City is considering renaming many streets and city assets named after Dundas and others involved in human trafficking, colonization and enslavement. What do you think about this renaming project?





Cross Dundas St. and walk to the northernmost end of St. Mathias Pl.

Welcome to tiny Plymouth avenue. Take a moment to admire the scenery! You've now seen all of St. Mathias Place, but what more can you see? Follow on to find out!



Walk east along Plymouth Ave., turn right and cut through the Green P lot to get to Manning Ave. Take the alley across to Euclid. Walk south on Euclid to Dundas, and cross to the south side. Walk east a few steps and disappear down to the right, into the unnamed alleyway beside The Real Empanada. If you hit Palmerston, you're too far east.

As you walk south on this nameless path, think about the space you're in. Alleys and laneways are often used as service roads. They're where we have our garages or park our cars. But, they can also be a shortcut or an escape route. People associate them with illicit or private activity. But, like streets, they have character. They are like secret passages through the city, and a reprieve from the business of the high street. How would you characterize this alleyway?



As you get farther south, you will see that many of the residents have adorned their garage doors with murals. Find the following:

- i. A seascape
- ii.Our neighbour Totoro
- iii. The name of a classic footballer
- iv. A couple's portrait

Main image: Andrew Lochhead Inset image: Rui Viera/PA



At the end of the alley, head west to come out onto Palmerston Ave. and walk south, crossing Robinson St.

Did you know Robinson and Beverley Street are connected? Not physically of course, but they are both named for the same person <u>Sir John Beverley Robinson</u>, an important judge and politician in Upper Canada. He approved the executions of leaders of the Upper Canada Rebellion, but also passed a law preventing enslaved people who fled the US from being sent back! His same-named son was later the Mayor of Toronto.

Notice 32 Palmerston on the west side. This is a house with lanes on either side. Have a quick look in the northern lane to see if you can spot a hidden treasure. (Local artists have been known to leave postcards for unsuspecting wanderers to discover. If you find one, take it and send it to someone you're thinking of.)

18

When you get to the parking lot of this lane (it's before you reach Euclid), head south down another alley. You'll cross the southern lane of 32 Palmerston (Greener Lane) and keep walking south. On the map, this road officially ends, but you can keep going for a big surprise.

Welcome to Euclid Pl. #1 is right in front of you. Isn't this a cute street?! Rumour has it that #5 belongs to a filmmaker and #4 belongs to a famous Canadian painter. Enjoy exploring.

Walk west to Euclid, and turn south, stopping in front of 10 Euclid Ave.

Take a deep breath... the house you're looking at was once a portal to "The 20th Plane"—a world bathed in eternal pink, where the air was sweetened with the distilled flower of astral perfume. Perhaps you can still detect its fragrance.

As local historian Adam Bunch recalled in a series of Tweets last year, this was once the home of Dr. A.D. Watson. Dr. Watson was a physician, scientist, and Methodist minister who, from 1918–1920, hosted some of the most famous séances in the city's history. These events attracted ordinary people, professional skeptics, and some of the 20th century's most famous artists, including Lucy Maud Montgomery (the creator of Anne of Green Gables) and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (the creator of Sherlock Holmes). The psychic guests to the séance were no less well known. Supposedly, Dr. Watson and his medium, Louis Benjamin, successfully contacted such famous people as Shakespeare, Voltaire, Jesus Christ himself, and even Dr. Watson's late mother. The spirits allegedly encouraged Watson to publish their communications in a book entitled "The Twentieth Plane, a Psychic Revelation." Such magnanimous spirits... they also encouraged Watson to include some of his own poems in the book as well!

Take a moment and gather your senses. If you are not lost in another dimension, travel east along the north side of Queen St. W. to just past Bathurst St. Keep your eyes low on the buildings, especially 578 Queen St. W.

This is where you'll spot the other remaining poem from the *Grand Gestures* series by 640 480. It's almost the 15th anniversary of May 15, 2006, and incidentally May 15th is also the Feast Day of St. Matthias. Maybe you'd like to come back and mark the occasion.

Thank you.

You've reached the end. Thanks for going along with us on this mini journey. And a big thank you to Celia and Minnar for creating this Swap-a-Walk, and to Jane for inspiring it all.

If you liked the tour, you can Tweet at us. @AndrewLochhead / @SofterLandings.

Enjoy the rest of your day!