

NO. 4

Free Issue

Shore Stories



Lakeshore Grounds Interpretive Centre

Editor's Letter

With the increased amount of time we're spending in social isolation, perhaps it is not uncommon to fall into moments of introspection and reflection on the views outside our windows. The Canadian seasons can cause limitations in our already limited access to the wider world amid the COVID-19 pandemic. But in our distancing and keeping safe, there are moments that I have come to value that I previously took for granted. The focus of this edition of *Shore Stories* offers perspectives of these types of moments that our contributors have had on the Lakeshore Grounds.

We hope that this long awaited issue finds you safe and well, and may inspire you to find your own grounding moments that connect you to the Lakeshore Grounds.

If you would like to share your moments or reflections, or contribute to a future Zine, please email info@lakeshoregrounds.ca. We'd love to share your stories about the Lakeshore Grounds!

Nadine Finlay

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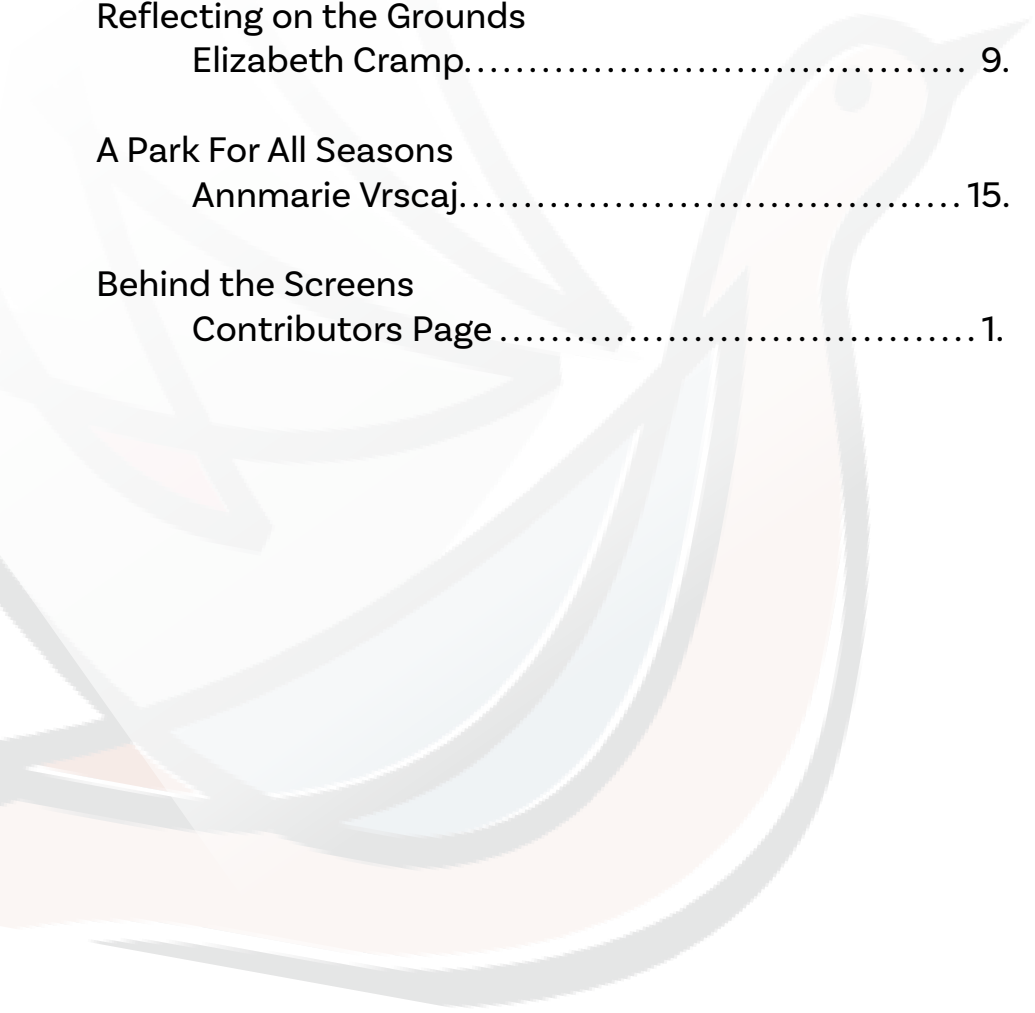
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Reaching Across The Sky

The sun lies invisible behind the rooftops
its golden rays reach out as fingertips
to destinations beyond my reach.
across a light blue sky
fluffy white clouds nest
the shooting star
as white as the clouds
climbs gently upwards.
gently a low growl can be heard
behind the children's laughter
as they rejoice this summer's eve.
Shooting star taking us to destinations
far and wide
joining families
across earth's expanse.

Reaching across the sky.

One of the few evenings being in Pearson's flight path was more gently appreciated.

Sharon Kawabata

Crafting Personas for the Summer Soundscape Series

Marie, Lakeshore Teachers' College student, 1969.

Benjamin, Humber College student, 1983.

Anthony & Jean, Mimico Branch Asylum patients, 1893.

Those are the four fictional characters participants follow in the Summer Soundscape Series, the project I have been producing over the past few months for the Lakeshore Grounds Interpretive Centre.

When I first came up with the idea for the Series, I decided these characters would be integral to the experience because I didn't just want audiences to understand the history of the grounds, but I also wanted them to embody that history through this project. To help participants immerse themselves I decided to create these characters to forge a greater connection to the past by experiencing the thoughts, feelings, and actions of someone who may have existed at that particular moment.



However, when I first plotted out the basics of each soundscape, the details of the characters were VERY vague. I made notes like “maybe at this point they talk about not having finished the homework?” My plan was to figure out who these characters were as I wrote, so once I did an initial breakdown of landmarks to highlight, and possible narrative moments, I started writing the first script.

I pored over historical aerial views, reports, and any other sources that could tell me what kind of landscape these characters would have been walking through. What structures were around them? What did each building hold? Were they walking on grass or paved road? From this information I mapped out routes for audiences to follow, which I designed to take audiences as close to the sites that I thought would be most fascinating for the soundscape’s given topic.



For Marie's soundscape, I took participants right around Humber's current "A" Building, as that was the site of the Teachers' College campus. For Benjamin, I took participants around the cricket pitch and the cottages to highlight the main areas that were used to film *Police Academy* (1984). For Anthony and Jean, participants are brought right around the original cottages, and past the cricket pitch to end at the gazebo – all areas that were integral to the hospital's history.

Every time the narrator explains a part of the history or landscape that is rather different from today, I used it as an opportunity to start fleshing out the characters. I asked myself: "how might this character react to that aspect of their environment?" The first instance I remember doing this was writing Marie's reaction to walking past the gymnasium.



An aerial view of the Lakeshore Grounds in earlier years.



Students fencing at the Lakeshore Teachers' College.

I knew from my research that fencing was one of the sports offered to students at the Teachers' College, so I decided there would be students practicing fencing while she walked by.

This provided a prompt for her to comment on the sport, so I decided she would be an avid fencer. Every subsequent reaction I then wrote was decided based on that initial response – whenever I added something new to her character I had to make sure it would make sense with that first fact. For example, when she comes across students playing in the courtyard she's terrified she is going to throw the ball too far – which came from my thought that fencing is a more controlled action, so she might be tentative about throwing something wildly.

A lot of times while writing these responses, I would think about how I might react to a given situation, what my internal dialogue would be, in order to ensure the dialogue sounded realistic. Benjamin's opening line comes directly from some experiences I've had sitting in class listening to other people ask questions that have been clearly explained.

Sometimes though, it has been harder to connect my experiences to the characters. Anthony and Jean were especially hard because I have no direct experience spending time in a psychiatric hospital. In those situations, I would either rely more heavily on reacting to the environment (the amount of times Jean commented on Lake Ontario in the first draft was incredibly excessive) or find ways to weave in aspects that I am familiar with into their characters. For example, Jean and Anthony both have strong roots to their families, as I share that as well.

Through this process I aimed to create characters that would provoke a conversation about the history, but also felt real, like you can imagine these characters could have existed at one point. To do that I may have been veering far off traditional writing processes, but for a very non-traditional tour experience like this, I found it to be highly effective.

Explore the Summer Soundscape Series at:
lakeshoregrounds.ca/soundscapes.

Maranda Tippins

A Tidbit of Your Time

According to Shakespeare, brevity is the soul of wit, but unlike Hamlet #TidbitTours is anything but a tragedy! If you've visited the Interpretive Centre, participated in an event, or attended a tour, you'll recall the anthology of the Lakeshore Grounds that we tend to share in conversation. Condensing the "book" of information into a shorter 15 seconds of fame film is no mean feat.

Behind the scenes of each clip, we read, memorize, adapt, and film each clip in a matter of minutes – quite the departure from traditional tour delivery. Each 15 seconds has countless minutes of outtakes and rarely seen bloopers. The final collection consists of about 8 videos per week, sharing short tidbits related to the Lakeshore Grounds Interpretive Centre's tours, or questions that come up in relation to our tours.

As we grow our virtual platforms we've been adapting how we reach out to you, our community, to connect you (however briefly) to the stories Lakeshore Grounds. Reviving tour information we are currently unable to offer, and sprinkling in a tidbit of new research, Alex and I (with the occasional guest tidbit tourist joining in) endeavor to continue to connect you to the stories of the Lakeshore Grounds. You can watch past months #TidbitTour videos on our YouTube channel, and send us your thoughts, feedback, or suggestions for future topics via email at info@lakeshoregrounds.ca. Thanks for reading!

Nadine Finlay

Reflecting on the Grounds

Immersing ourselves in nature engages our senses, serving to connect mind and body. A walk in the woods provides a moment of grace. It is here we are able to: see, smell, hear, and feel the present moment. The forested trail offers us stillness in which we can contemplate privately while simultaneously surrendering to the notion that we are part of a beautiful and timeless natural web that exists outside of human construction.

Access to the wildlife along the natural trails that surround the Lakeshore Grounds has allowed me to find some semblance of peace during the current pandemic. For this, I am grateful to the community members who have remained steadfast in their resolve to preserve the historic buildings and natural grounds.

I have come to regard the natural area surrounding the former Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital, now Humber College Lakeshore Campus, as a place that connects the past to the present. Historic patients and hospital staff emerge in my mind and I recognize our connection through the grounds we both have walked. As community members live through the “new normal” and students shoulder the weight of their course load, the natural beauty of this place grants us all a moment of relief. The Lakeshore Grounds offers the gift of respite, a common understanding that connects the generations of people who have spent time here.









The peace and beauty of the Lakeshore Grounds and its surrounding area is difficult to decode in words. Included is a collection of visual moments I have compiled. As I took these photos, I was inspired by the awe of nature and historic beauty here.





My hope is that these words and photos translate into a gesture of appreciation for the citizens of the past and present, who have served to build and protect this area.

Elizabeth Cramp



A Park for all Seasons

A visual tour of the Lakeshore Grounds and Colonel Samuel Smith Park through the seasons. This project was an attempt to capture the many facets of this natural oasis at the foot of Kipling Street.



Hopefully, the images will inspire you to explore this beautiful park and make it your own special space.

January, 2011







February, 2019



March, 2020







April, 2019



May, 2019



June, 2019



July, 2020



August, 2020





September, 2018



October, 2019



November, 2019



December, 2018

Annmarie Jrscaj



Behind the Screens



Sharon Kawabata

Sharon is a life long Etobicoke resident, who has recently completed the level 1 Horticulture pre-apprenticeship program at Humber College.

She proudly participated in the first community exhibition at the Lakeshore Grounds, “In Your Eyes” and is actively enjoying attending a variety of arts events (virtually for now).



Maranda Tippins

Maranda is currently finishing a post-graduate program at Humber College in Arts Administration and Cultural Management. Previously, she graduated from York University with a Bachelor's Degree in Theatre. Through her studies, she became fascinated by the ways performative techniques can be used to animate history, which is what inspired her to create the Summer Soundscape Series.

Her love of learning about other arts and cultural experiences brought her to teaching art classes at the Visual Arts Centre of Clarington, and doing an internship with the Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery earlier this year. Since quarantine started she has been focusing on some of her favourite hobbies like knitting and reading good fantasy books.



Nadine Finlay

Nadine is the Assistant Curator of the Lakeshore Grounds Interpretive Centre, and is enjoying her recent freedom from academic commitments as a graduate from the University of Toronto with her Master of Museum Studies and Master of Information.

She has relocated away from the Lakeshore Grounds, but is filling her spare time as a bridal stylist and as her dog's new favourite person in the house (sorry Mom). You'll see Nadine with Alex on #TidbitTours, with the occasional outtake posted across the Lakeshore Grounds Interpretive Centre's social media channels!



Elizabeth Cramp

Elizabeth holds a degree in both Honours History and Education. Special interests include amateur photography, naturopathy, yoga, historical research and freelance writing.

Elizabeth is pleased to be a part of the volunteer team at Lakeshore Grounds. As a volunteer, she is able to pursue to her curiosity about the historical and natural framework of Toronto communities.



Annemarie Vrscaj

Annmarie is a transplant to the Long Branch area. She enjoys exploring the parks of southern Etobicoke and capturing the beauty she finds on her walks.

She loves sharing her pictures on social media. And when she is not working and exploring the neighbourhood, she enjoys volunteering at the Lakeshore Grounds Interpretive Centre and learning about local history

