



The Green Door

Citizens Supporting Ontario's Prosperous and Sustainable Future

The Yorklands Green Hub Newsletter

| June 2022 |

No. 22

A Call to All You Thoughtful, Committed Citizens! Again

Your stories will help decide Heritage Conversation District Status for Guelph's Yorklands

There's a wonderful quote by anthropologist Margaret Mead that you may know. It goes, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." It's a great line. It can make you feel determined when there's yet another thing to work hard for. Another thing to make our world better. It's that time again.

Our Role in Heritage Designation for the OR

In June of 2021, there was a call for deputations and citizen input into the city of Guelph's planning meeting. They were about to decide on a Heritage Designation for parts of the former Ontario Reformatory lands.

Groups including the Yorklands Green Hub and the Coalition to Protect Ontario Reformatory Lands reached out, urgently, for people to speak out to ask for heritage status for this special place. To keep a green space that's been enjoyed for over 100 years by local people, green. And protect its special features, stone walls and steps, waterways and ponds, and old buildings. To decide that these will be safeguarded as part of Guelph's history when the last of the provincial Reformatory lands are sold to developers, and become part of the city of Guelph.



On June 14, 2021 Guelph's City council was impressed that more than 30 people stepped up to make a long evening's delegations to their meeting. More than 100 calls and emails arrived from people asking them to vote for a Heritage Designation for the old OR lands.

Council voted, unanimously, to grant it. The citizens had spoken. YOUR voices were a key part of this process. Citizens who speak out do change their world. YGH won an advocacy award for "municipal championing" – for engaging people like you to speak out together for heritage conservation.

If You Love the Yorklands - Post Your O.R. Story by June 22nd

You love the Yorklands. You want to protect it for the public for the future. Your story (long or short) is important. Numbers count.

We need to contribute to the consultation on the city's Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan to show we care. Guelph sees citizen input as an important part of the process. Whether you write a quick comment, a personal story, or some fascinating historical or environmental reasons, our input is a mosaic of care for this about-to-be-sold property.

You can read about the process here:

<https://www.havetoursay.guelph.ca/reformatory-district>

Then write and post your story, experiences, or thoughts to be part of this important process. (You can also read other's stories at this site.)
Never doubt that your say matters. And thank you for being part of this historic moment!



WHAT'S YOUR O.R. STORY?

- Urban nature? Fishing?
- Unique history and heritage?
- Family memories?
- City hiking and trails?
- A feel-good place?
- Birdwatching?
- Photography?
- Parkland, waterways and ponds?
- Wedding pictures?
- An outdoor learning place?
- The old hidden quarry?

YGH 2022 Annual General Meeting



OR Gatehouse and Clythe Creek 1936

Our April AGM welcomed Jamie Cockburn, local young lawyer, to our board. Jamie has a strong background and interest in the environment so is a great addition for us.

Members present enjoyed a presentation by John Fisher of the Guelph Hiking Trail Club about saving the heritage trestle bridge over the Eramosa River by working together. P. Brian Skerrett, chair of Heritage Guelph, gave us great historical background on the OR property. And Cameron Shelley delivered a fine show of Guelph's old postcards of the OR, long a tourist destination that allowed many regional people to enjoy the beautiful gardens shaped by the inmates.

YGH 2022 Board Members as at May 15/22: Norah Chaloner, Chair, Alex Smith, Vice-chair, Lynn Bestari, Secretary, Beth Shier, Treasurer. Members at large: Susan Ratcliffe, Tyson McMann, Sophia Yanishevsky, Jamie Cockburn.

Read our 2022 Annual Report at: <https://yorklandsgreenhub.ca/yorklands-green-hub-annual-report-2022/>

Looking for a Volunteer

Opportunity?

YGH invites member volunteers for Wordpress website updating, and Programming and Fundraising committees.

Contact us at

<https://yorklandsgreenhub.ca/volunteer/>

COME WALK FOR THE YORKLANDS! WALKATHON 2022 is on 'til June 25!

Our second fundraising We Love Yorklands Walkathon is underway, through May until June 25th. To participate, find a sponsor or sponsors, and choose from one of our six enticing routes to enjoy.



It's a fun way to help support our work to secure and protect Guelph's unique heritage Reformatory site for the future, and create a sustainability learning centre. Choose your own time to enjoy the trails, the many water views, the birds, an old hidden quarry, the unique stonework features, and the unfolding natural splendour in this special place.

WALKATHON REGISTRATION
at https://fundrazr.com/Yorklands?ref=ab_d9fsj8_ab_6DToKhtC98J6DToKhtC98J Invite friends, family and colleagues to join you for a great cause ... or be a sponsor!

And many thanks to The Stone Store, Guelph Hiking Trail Club and Royal City Brewing Co. for their support of this event.



Spring Bottle Drive a Success



Our thanks go out to YGH board member Sophia Yanishevsky for initiating our first Bottle Drive to support our continuing work. Sophia arranged five April weekend pickups for bottles and cans, and her tireless effort organizing and gathering the bottles brought great results: the event raised almost \$1,000 for our programming. Volunteers from The Metalworks pitched in with extra help to make this venture such a success. Well done!

We're grateful to all of you who contributed your empties, and much appreciation also to solar company Bluewater Energy, and to Royal City Brewing for supporting us in this undertaking.

Themed Spring Weekend Walks Begin May 21 at the Yorklands

The Yorklands are bursting with not only spring greenery and blossoms, but also history, heritage, nature and inspiration for artists.

Once again, YGH is offering a series of easy-paced guided walks on the site. We invite you out on May and June Saturdays and Sundays to enjoy this special place. Walk with us for an hour and a half of fascinating lore, with an ecologist, a heritage specialist, and two artists inspired by nature's bounty.

* Meet at the entrance gate at 785 York Road.

* Watch for the full list of Weekend Walks on our Facebook page.

Loving Our Bees with Polli-Patches Season 3 Businesses to be added to participate



In 2020 we introduced our Polli-Patch project as a pilot, to engage Guelph households in adding pollinator plants to their outdoor spaces. Public interest was clear from the more than 100 applications received! We began with 15 east-side households, helping them plant and monitor their new garden additions. Last year in year two, we expanded the program to 25 households. We also provided new educational resources to let people know how they can plant to turn their own gardens into welcoming havens for local pollinators.

Our summer student, Julia Harvey, will work with Kiki Danninger recruiting businesses to introduce changes in their storefront gardens that include some pollinator-friendly plants. If you'd like to know more about our Polli-Patch Program, kdann@yorklandsgreenhub.ca

Yorky the Frog is Back!
Watch our Facebook page for invitations to find Yorky's spots during your Yorklands visits, till the end of June.



Send us a picture and you could be a prize winner!

Yorklands Research Continues University students expand our historical knowledge and demonstration potential

In the Yorklands Green Hub's early years (2013-15) University of Waterloo and Wilfred Laurier University classes contributed significant research to our evolving project. University of Guelph Landscape Architecture department with Prof. Karen Landman and Prof. Cecilia Paine's history students added more with their creative input on sustainable design and land use.

In 2021 and 2022 we are adding additional studies and a new video to our research archives. Three of Prof. Peter Goddard's history students at UofG contributed this work.



Emmanuelle Vanleeuwen wrote a history of the Superintendent's House at the former Reformatory, covering some of its notable occupants, reform efforts iFOODSTERSn corrections, and environmental changes.



Prof. Goddard at the Yorklands with Emmanuelle Vanleeuwen and Bohan Shi

Bohan Shi contributed a paper entitled "Test of Time: Reinterpreting the History of Sustainability on the OR Lands." And Gregory Stojanovski produced a video entitled "Stone Walls," documenting some of the unique heritage stonework done at the site in the last century.



Videographer Gregory Stojanovski and one of the characteristic fieldstone walls at the former Reformatory.

Such student research work adds important depth to our knowledge about the former Ontario Reformatory that has just passed its 110th anniversary. This kind of research also models one type of the collaborative work the Yorklands Green Hub wishes to do into the future as an educational sustainability hub in Guelph.

Teen FOODSTERS Grow Sustainable New Skills

The YGH Foodsters Program for grades 7 and 8 is wrapping up its successful second year at Guelph's Sacred Heart Catholic School. Twenty-five lucky 13 and 14-year-old students learned about urban food gardening and pollinators. They



practiced tree identification, explored food webs, and tried their hand at composting. Happily, the intention is to continue this program in the next school year.

Environmental program coordinator Julia Harvey now has some trained help from her students. “Our summer staffer will finish up the weekly sessions with the class, along with looking after the garden daily. She’ll also oversee the student volunteers who will be taking care of the garden during the summer while earning their volunteer hours for high school credit,” she says.

At the moment the class is growing basil, parsley, and tomatoes inside. They’ve also planted basil, spinach, arugula, lettuce, Virginia creepers, and French marigolds in raised beds outside the school. They continue to nurture the little oak trees they started from acorns last fall. “Growing those little oaks is a success: the kids learn about their importance as top of the food chain for pollinators,” Julia reported.



Students get into vermicomposting with Compost Queen Karen Houle.

“After visiting the Huron St. Community Garden compost site last fall, the students are now excited about working on vermicomposting with red wrigglers (worms) in their classroom.”

Program objectives are to teach students about the importance of pollinators and food webs. As they learn to identify top pollinators, nurture new trees and grow food, the students learn hands-on about environmental stewardship.

Snow Sculpture Challenge Winners

Congratulations to our two Snow Sculpture Challenge winners for this winter event! The February winner was Irene Hanuta for her creation of a snow angel, entitled “Caring.”



And for March, the winner was Diane Hurst, for her “Snowbunny.” Each winner received a \$25 gift card for her choice of 3 local stores: Wyndham Art Supplies, Wild Birds Unlimited, and The Bookshelf.

Thanks to everyone who came out to participate in a bit of winter snow fun at the Yorklands!

New Weekend Walk: The Yorklands Mystery House



There’s an old stone house hidden away in the trees at the edge of the Yorklands site. It’s a piece of the site’s history, and a part of its heritage. This June we’ll be hosting one of our Weekend Walks about the Yorklands Mystery House. Watch for it on Facebook and learn the house’s story!



POST YOUR YORKLANDS STORY TO THE GUELPH HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY AND PLAN – BY JUNE 22
<https://www.haveoursay.guelph.ca/reformatory-district>

YORKLANDS WEEKEND WALKS 785 YORK ROAD, GUELPH

June 2022

Come out on Saturdays and Sundays for a fascinating mix of heritage, ecology and art-inspired guided walks and talks at the Yorklands. See the full list on our Yorklands Green Hub Facebook page. Meet at the entrance gate at the time indicated.

Some upcoming walks:

Sun., June 12, 11 am: Nature Walk with ecologist Will Barbour - Non-native trees/so what? The once and future great woodlands of Guelph
 Sat., June 4, 1 pm: Nature Art Walk with artist Sharyn Seibert – Art Inspired in All Seasons

Sun., June 5, 1 pm – Heritage Walk with Susan Ratcliffe and Gregory Stojanovski – History of the Ontario Reformatory and its Stone Features
 Sat., June 25, 1 pm: Turtle Walk with artist Irene Hanuta

See full list on YGH Facebook page.

“The Green Door” is a publication of the Yorklands Green Hub Promotions Committee. We welcome news, articles and letters. Each must include the author’s name and full contact information.

We reserve the right to refuse or edit all submissions. Questions or submissions should be directed to a member of the Board of Directors at info@yorklandsgreenhub.ca