

Toronto's Northern Gateway

By Tom Czerwinski, O.L.S.

Four and one-half years ago, the Deloraine Residents Association and the North Toronto Historical Society approached their local City Councillor (Kay Gardiner) to find a way to celebrate the centennial of the incorporation of the Town of North Toronto. City Planning Department staff suggested that potential improvements to the Yonge Boulevard Parkette on the west side of Yonge Street between Deloraine Avenue and Yonge Boulevard at the very northern tip of the City of Toronto would be a good way to celebrate the event.

It was quickly realized that the site had a rich and varied history and that its relationship to the entry to the City of Toronto was of major importance. Noting the relationship of Yonge Street to the City as a whole led to our involvement in the project since, at the same time, plans were underway for the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors to celebrate its Centennial and we were looking for some prominent sites to commemorate the contribution of surveyors over the last hundred years.

A working committee comprised of representatives from the above groups and the Toronto Historical Board, the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto Cultural Affairs Division of the Chief Administrative Officer's Department, the City of Toronto Parks and Recreation Department and the Planning and Development Department, Community Improvement Section met together to develop a design proposal for the expansion and improvement of the Yonge Boulevard Parkette which would also include an entry marker to the City of Toronto.

In order to select an artist for the entry marker, the Working Committee established a sub-committee who established a series of design objectives for the entry marker which was to be the major element within the parkette and was to reflect the following objectives:

- * to delineate the northern entrance to the City of Toronto;
- * to recognize the significant role of surveying in establishing the layout and subdivision of the City;
- * to recognize the importance of Yonge Street in the surveying of Ontario;
- * to provoke thought regarding the history of the local community and the growth of the City of Toronto;
- * to be of a size to be visible from vantage points north and south for several blocks along Yonge Street;
- * to recognize certain pioneer surveyors who made a major contribution to the development of the City in the work as land surveyors;
- * to recognize the co-operative efforts of the City of Toronto and the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors in providing this marker;
- * to be visually interesting in the day and night.

Following a selective short list of potential artists skilled in the use of metal and stone which were the media of choice, the Entry Marker sub-committee, in conjunction with Jane Perdue, an art consultant provided by Metro's Public Arts Commission, chose Mr. Jeff Goodman to prepare sketches for the design and fabrication of the marker.

Mr. Goodman also had an artistic background using glass and prepared three alternative designs which incorporated an illuminated glass element atop a metal and stone tripod shaped structure for the committee's consideration. The final design was chosen by the entire Working Committee and a scale model prepared for presentation purposes.

At this time, the support of the South Central members was required to commit to the project so that the artist could be hired. Twenty-six firms pledged and forwarded \$350.00 each to purchase a stone that would be placed in a circle around the base of the marker. The South Central Group committed \$1,500.00 and the AOLS contributed the balance of our \$11,000.00 portion of the \$31,000.00 needed for this part of the parkette improvement.

The project was to proceed in two phases, with the first phase to be completed in early 1992 to co-inside with our Centennial celebration. The second phase was dependent on additional budgetary allocations in the following year to complete the work on the balance of the site. However, certain problems with contamination in the soil and the co-operation of the adjoining landowner held up the completion of both phases.

Several other contributors were later to provide additional funds to assist with the remedial work and the re-design and development of the balance of the park in conjunction with a new National Trust Bank building on the former Mr. Transmission site.

After much delay, and several set-backs, the work on the park was finally completed in the summer of 1994 and a dedication ceremony held on October 8th, 1994 (see pictures, next two pages). Councillor Graham Bowden represented the AOLS. Russ Jones, Chairman of South Central, was also an official attendee on behalf of the group and several of the sponsoring surveyors came to enjoy the ceremony and free hot dogs and drinks provided by Loblaw's.

Due to bureaucratic red tape, the illuminated glass element that was to signal the entrance to the City was never incorporated into the structure. However, due to our insistence, the Parks Department has agreed to provide lighting for the monument from spot lights installed in the ground.

Accordingly, since there are still three stones left to be sold, any member of South-Central wishing to add his name to the list of sponsors below can contact Tom Czerwinski, O.L.S. at (416) 252-2511 or the AOLS office.

NORTHERN GATEWAY PARK

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There are three granite boulders surrounding the base of the marker with the following engravings:

You are standing at Toronto's Northern Gateway. Surrounded by history, this former lookout has always been a prominent site. Until well into the 1850s, a tollgate stood nearby. Across the road, in the 1920s, passengers boarded the Yonge Street streetcar south or the Toronto and York Radial Railway Train heading north. Later, a farmers' market took over the site. During World War I, pilots trained in a field to the northwest.

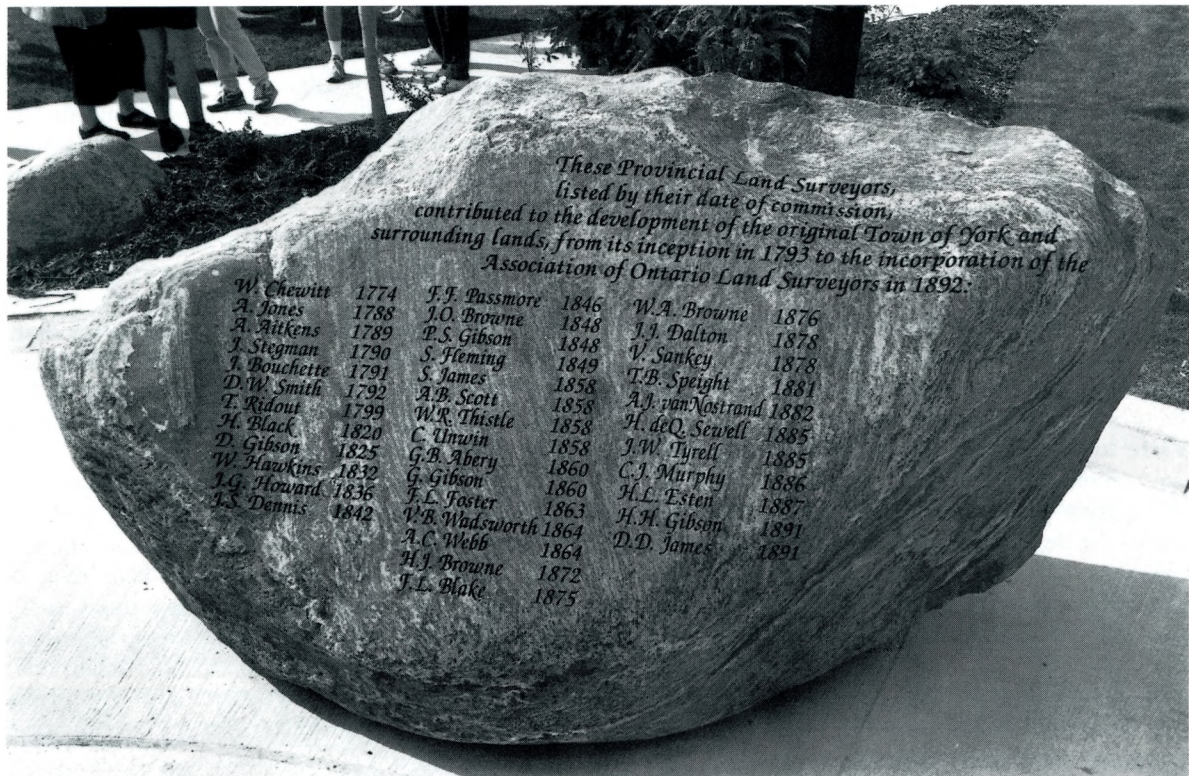
This entry marker, created in true community spirit, also commemorates the centennials of the former Town of North Toronto, 1990, and the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors, 1992.

Artist: Jeff Goodman

Architect: Craig Goodman

October 1, 1993

The participation of the South Central Group and the AOLS in this community-based, co-operative project was a unique and permanent method of celebrating the Centennial of the Association. All who pass by will be drawn to look and perhaps wonder at the 9 metre sculpture installed at the top of Toronto and those who stop by and walk through the pleasant surroundings will have the opportunity to learn a little about the heritage and history of the area and the contribution that surveyors have made to the overall development of the City of Toronto.



NORTHERN GATEWAY PARK

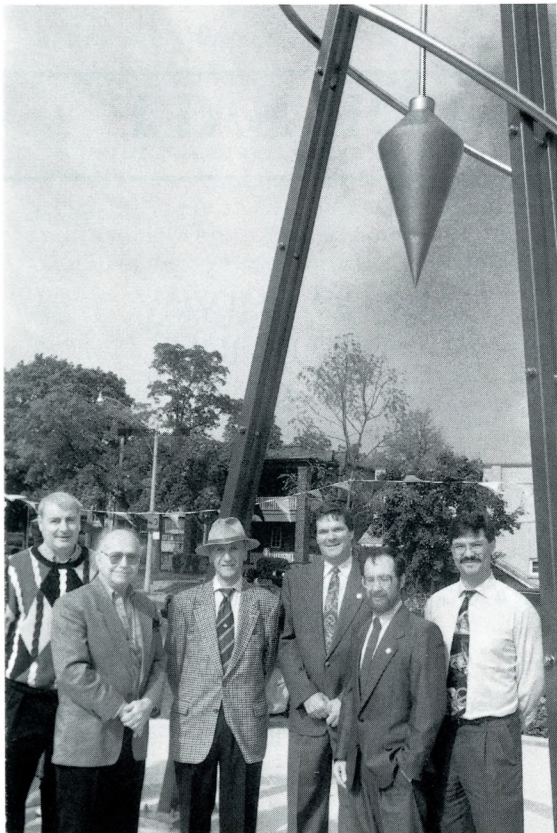
Editor's Note: On October 8, 1994, the Northern Gateway project at Yonge Street and Yonge Blvd. was officially opened. The following text is from AOLS Councillor Graham Bowden's speech given that day.

In 1992, the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors celebrated their Centenary marking 100 years of service to the people of the Province of Ontario

Our Association, which is the governing body responsible for regulating the practice of land surveying in Ontario, and individual Land Surveyors wanted to establish a permanent remembrance of our anniversary.

The Association commissioned the writing of an historical text which detailed the lives and travails of the early surveyors in the province. In communities throughout Ontario, land surveyors marked the Centenary by participating in re-enactments of historic surveys and speaking to interested groups on the history of surveying.

In Toronto, the Association was approached by the City of Toronto Planning Department, and asked if they would join with the working Committee in the preparation of a North Toronto Gateway facility. The Association accepted the offer to participate and the South Central Regional Group, which represents the surveyors of the Greater Toronto Area, took up the challenge to assist in the preparation of the design and the financing of the park and historical marker. Contributions were made by the South Central Regional Group, corporations and individual surveyors and are acknowledged in the paving stones circling the sculpture.



From left: John Barber, Fred Schaeffer, Peter Pavlin, Russ Jones, Graham Bowden and Tom Czerwinski.



The neighbourhood where we stand today is symbolic of our history by reflecting the mature forest of early Toronto and the busy thoroughfares of today. As surveyors we are pleased that this land has been well surveyed by 3 plans of subdivision and numerous reference plans.

Each day surveyors research the history of land. And in our work we acknowledge the contribution that surveyors of the last 100 years have made to the lot and street pattern of the many communities that are Toronto.

This sculpture, which we dedicate today, names prominent Provincial Land Surveyors from 1793 to 1892, and Ontario Land Surveyors from 1892 to 1992. Through their naming we recognize the memory, service contribution of all surveyors to the settlement and development of the City of Toronto.

One hundred years from now, let people visit this place and say that

*"the Land Surveyors of Ontario
from 1993 to the year 2093
have served the people well and
this monument also honours their commitment
and contribution to the City of Toronto".*