

London's Cycling History Draft Text

Panel 1: In the Beginning 1877 – 1910

Although Montreal may have been the first Canadian city to import a "high wheel" bicycle (aka penny-farthing) in 1876 and establish the first Canadian bicycle club in 1878, London was not far behind and had several Canadian bicycle "firsts" that all Londoners should be proud of.

In the 1880s, bicycles were a novel and fashionable way to get around town and country. As a new and relatively expensive technology at the time, only the elite could afford the luxury and privilege of "riding on a wheel!"

In London, The Forest City Bicycle Club (FCBC) was organized on Sept. 18, 1882. Members wore uniforms and participated in a variety of cycling and social activities. They would go on long tours through the countryside, practice drills (formation riding), and organize races at the Western Fair. In November 1887, the FCBC established the first bicycle club orchestra in Canada.

One of FCBC's founding members, William Payne (# 15 in the photo), was among Canada's first bicycle manufacturers and retailers. He began making bicycles in 1879 and started retailing in 1881 at 147 Dundas St., later moving to 217 Wortley Rd. In an advertisement he claims his shop to be "The Oldest House in the trade." In 1889, Payne's 15-year old daughter Muriel Evangeline (Minnie) Payne became the first female in Canada to compete in a bicycle race.

The Canadian Wheelman's Association (CWA) was Canada's first national cycling association and formed just outside London in St. Thomas in 1882. The goal of the CWA was to promote, organize and represent cycling in Canada, discover touring routes and preserve the bicyclist's right to the road. The Forest City Bicycle Club was the first club to officially join the CWA and hosted its first annual meet in London on July 22, 1883. In 1968 the Canadian Wheelman's Association changed its name to the Canadian Cycling Association and still operates today as Canada's oldest sport governing body.

London was also home to the first national cycling publication, also called The Canadian Wheelman. It was "a monthly journal, devoted to the interests of cycling, etc. – The only one published in Canada." It was published in London from 1882 to 1889*.

*Need to verify the end date.

Panel 2: George Wenige and the Red Bird Bicycle Picnics – 1910-1950

George Albert Wenige (1874-1952) was London's most prolific and arguably eccentric Mayor, serving nine terms, mostly non-consecutively between 1923 and 1950 (at the time, Mayors were elected annually). Born in Detroit, Wenige rode his bike to London in 1900 to work as a stunt bicycle rider at the Western Fair.

By 1915 Wenige owned and operated the *Bicycle and Motor Sales Company*, Southern Ontario's largest and most popular bike shop located on Wellington just north of Dundas next to the former YM-YWCA. He famously claimed his store "made walking expensive."

Wenige was well known for his promotional stunts. He once ordered a contractor to build his new bicycle store in a record 30 days. To make sure the deadline was met he hired a brass band to provide motivational music for the construction workers. In promotion of his shop, Wenige bicycled from London to Halifax at a time when roads were commonly unpaved. He even taught his two-year-old son to ride a "Baby Red Bird" bicycle and claimed he was the "world's youngest cyclist."

Every year on his birthday, Wenige organized the Red Bird Bicycle Picnic. Children from all over the city would gather at this shop on Wellington for the start of the race. The first child to arrive at Springbank Park would win a brand new Red Bird Bicycle. The festivities continued at the park where more races, games and refreshments were enjoyed.

Wenige brought his love for cycling to his role as Mayor, campaigning for better road and lighting conditions for cyclists.

When the freeway linking London to Highway 401 was built in 1963, the City of London named the 360-metre section from Hamilton Road to the Thames River the "Wenige Expressway." The signs denoting this stretch of the road disappeared in the 1980s, and today it is known only as Highbury Avenue. In north London, he is commemorated by "North" and "South Wenige Drive."

On the day of his funeral, the London Free Press ran an editorial cartoon that depicted Wenige peddling into the sunset. He is buried in Woodland Cemetery.

Panel 3: The Modern Era: 1960-Present

Although the modern era is generally associated with the supremacy of the car, cycling in London had several significant milestones and characters that set the stage for the cycling scene in London today.

The London Centennial Wheelers (LCW) was founded in 1967 by a group of local cyclists with considerable racing experience. The purpose of the club was to promote bicycle racing, to develop young riders and to serve as a focal point for cyclists interested in bicycle touring and racing. They have been hosting the Springbank Road Races annually since 1968. The London Bicycle Club was founded in 1971 with a greater focus on recreational cycling.

One of the LCW's founding members was the internationally renowned artist and activist Greg Curnoe. Greg loved cycling, advocated for better cycling conditions in London and often used his Mariposa bicycles as the subject of his work. Greg lived large and died tragically at the age of 55 when a distracted driver plowed into a group of 12 LCW cyclists killing Greg and injuring six others.

Jane Bigelow was London's first female Mayor serving from 1972 to 1978. Bigelow was a socially minded Mayor focusing on child care, the arts, services for seniors, neighbourhood improvement programs, public transportation, and cycling. She was often seen riding her bicycle to City Hall and her various official visits.

Starting in the early 1990s, City staff began working to improve cycling conditions in London. The Thames Valley Parkway began to take shape, in-boulevard bike paths were installed along some major streets and bike parking was added downtown. To help promote the burgeoning bike trail system, the PUC published London's first Bikeway Map in 1992. In 1995 federal funds were acquired for the creation of a tunnel to connect the trail to the west with the city to the east. The tunnel was dedicated to Greg Curnoe and officially opened in May 1995.

A more recent milestone in London's ongoing cycling history is the Forest City Velodrome, which opened its 138 meter cycling track in the former Ice House hockey arena in April 2005. It is one of only three indoor velodromes in North America.

Heritage Planners' Report to LACH – November 12, 2014

1. Wortley Village-Old South Heritage Conservation District – notice sent to property owners on November 6, 2014
2. Blackfriars-Petersville Heritage Conservation District OMB hearing date set for February 17, 2015
3. Delegated Authority for Heritage Alteration Permits at the December 10, 2014 LACH
4. Working toward distributing Terms of Reference for Heritage Conservation District Studies for Grosvenor-St. George and SoHo areas

Upcoming Heritage Events in London

- Village Vignettes: History of Old South, Landon Public Library (167 Wortley Road), 7:30pm
 - Tuesday November 18, 2014 – From Temperance to Prohibition in London: Overcoming the Evils of Alcohol Consumption in the 1850s through the 1940s with Marvin Simner
 - Tuesday January 20, 2015 – Architectural highlights in and around Old South with Nancy Tausky
 - Tuesday February 17, 2015 – Queen of Wortley Village with Alice Gibb
- Blackfriars Bridge EA Public Information Centre: www.blackfriarsbridge.ca
 - Wednesday November 19, 2014
- Public Open House on the draft of the *London Plan*, 6:00pm-9:00pm
 - Wednesday November 19, 2014 – South London Community Centre (1119 Jalna Boulevard)
 - Wednesday November 26, 2014 – Goodwill Industries, 3rd floor (255 Horton Street)
- History of the Byron Area – Fall Speaker Series, Byron Public Library (1295 Commissioners Road). 7:00pm
 - Wednesday November 19, 2014 – History of the Mills on the Thames River with Hilary Bates Neary
 - Wednesday November 26, 2014 – Byron and the War of 1812 with Dan Brock
- Hidden History of Hamilton Road – Crouch Library (550 Hamilton Road). 7:00pm
 - Thursday November 20, 2014 – Ruggles Truck Company with Glen Curnoe
- *London Doorways* book launch and ACO London Region logo launch at Grosvenor Lodge (1017 Western Road)
 - November 24, 2014 at 7:00pm

May 14th, 2014... At our meeting the LACH recommended: "That the City's Planning Approval Authority BE REQUESTED to meet with a representative of the London Advisory Committee on Heritage to discuss the ... recommended responses to the Streamlined Approach to Archaeological Report Review (November, 2012) and that the above noted responses BE FORWARDED to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, Culture Division, Programs and Services Branch, Archaeology Unit.

September 8, 2014

The meeting took place at 206 Dundas St. from 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Present:

John Fleming, Managing Director, Planning and City Planner

Jim Yanchula, Manager, Urban Regeneration

Don Menard, Heritage Planner

Kyle Gonyou, Heritage Planner

Darryl Dann, LACH representative, Archaeology / Anthropology

Agenda Items:

1. Recommended responses to the Streamlined Approach to Archaeological Report Review (November, 2012)

2. Concerns about the City of London's Archaeological Master Plan. (A.M.P.)
Information regarding this topic had already been discussed with the Heritage Planners and a summary of those concerns was emailed to all participants, prior to the meeting.

The City of London Archaeological Master Plan

- * written in November, 1995 and adopted by Council in November, 1996.
- * the bibliography lists 17 references... all written between 1964 and 1994.
- * 12 of 17 were written prior to 1990.
- * in our world of exponential change, it is no surprise that the London A.M.P. has fallen out of date and is now, too often, not reflective of current theory, regulations or practice.

- * Standards and Guidelines (the rules and regulations) under which all consultant archaeology in Ontario is now conducted were put into place in 2011, long after the City of London A.M.P. was created and adopted, and are not reflected in, or addressed by, London's current A.M.P.

I. City of London's Archaeological Master Plan recommends:

"a comprehensive review every 5 years to remain responsive to the changing needs and pressures on the City's archaeological resources".

II. London's Archaeological Master Plan states:

"The Annual Report:

On an annual basis, the City of London Planning division will prepare a report for review...This report will list and map all development applications processed by the City during that calendar year. The report should clearly indicate which properties were determined to require the placement of an archaeological condition, as well as those that did not."

The plan further prescribes that one of the LACH's main functions, with regard to the City of London A.M.P. is, *"Reviewing the annual report prepared by Planning Division for MCZCR."*

III. Of further specific import / concern to members of the LACH are these further excerpts from the current City of London A.M.P.:

"Role of the London Advisory Committee on Heritage

The London Advisory Committee on Heritage will have several different functions in relation to the Archaeological Master Plan, including:

- 1. forwarding recommendations for the addition of archaeological resources to the sites data base*
- 2. Ensuring the maintenance and the quality of the data bases and the information entered into the GIS*
- 3. Monitoring the implementation of the procedures and policies in the Master Plan, and providing recommendations on the ways in which they might be improved.*
- 4. Reviewing the annual report prepared by Planning Division for MCZCR.*
- 5. Playing a lead role in the five-year detailed review of the Master Plan."*

Please note also:

Also briefly discussed were ongoing concerns that have been raised, by several members of the archaeological and heritage communities, regarding issues concerning "urban" archaeology as it is dealt with in the current City of London A.M.P.

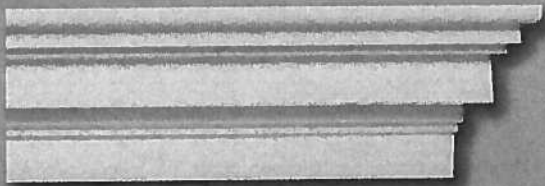
Respectfully submitted,
Darryl Dann



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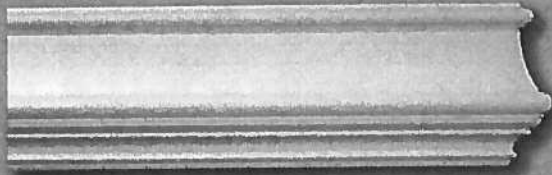
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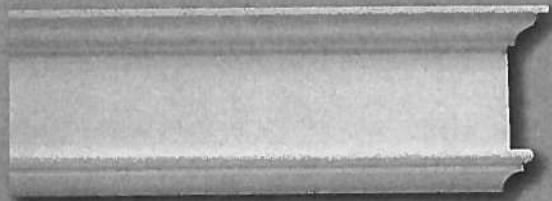
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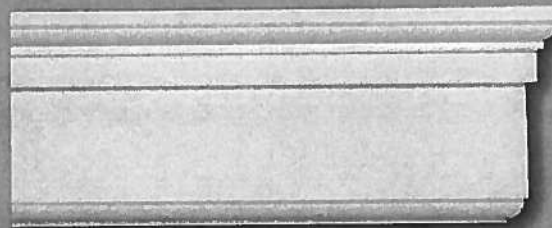
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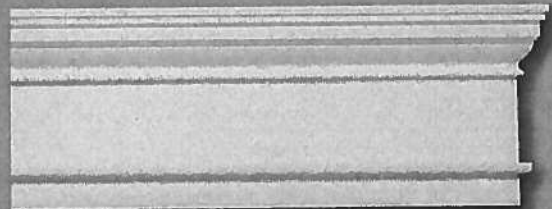
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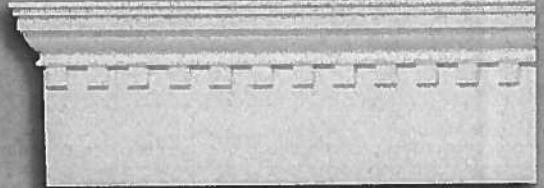
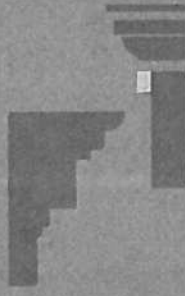
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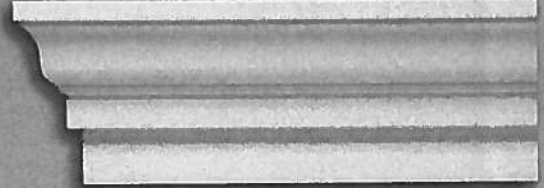
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MD 1335

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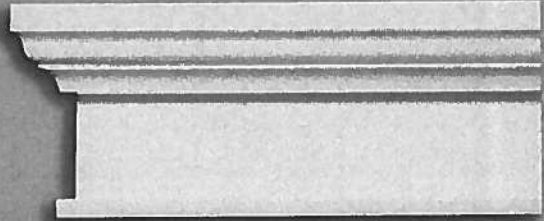
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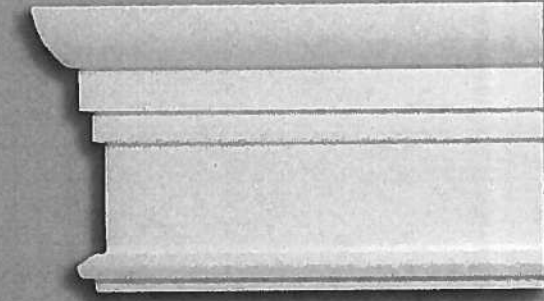
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MD 1252

• 4" Projection • 10" Height • 12'0" Length



MD 1753

• 5 3/4" Projection • 23" Height • 12'0" Length

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