

Tesla – a Canadian premiere for Corktown?

By Philip Stoop



Tesla Store in Los Angeles

Last summer, neighbourhood residents were sad to learn that Ritchies, the long-standing and well-respected auction house, was letting 25 employees go, and subsequently went into bankruptcy. This was a sad loss for all involved, including other Corktown local businesses.

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Since then, the building has been vacant and left us worried and wondering who the next tenant might be. Though the site is zoned 'industrial', we have been relieved to learn there will be no factory moving in. Instead of going dirty, we may be going clean and green. Currently, Tesla Motors is crossing the final T's with the city to open their first Canadian store at 380 King St. E.

So what do they sell and what to their products look like? Tesla Motors produces zero-emission electric cars. Each vehicle has a lithium-ion battery (like in a laptop computer) that powers an electric motor. So there isn't a need for gas or oil changes with such vehicles. If only Toronto Hydro could make our electricity cleaner and cheaper, it would help speed-up the adoption of zero-emission electric cars.

Tesla is cutting-edge technology in a high-end niche market. They envision their showroom to mirror the styles of King St. E. designer-furniture stores, as opposed to the big Front St. and Eastern Ave. car dealerships. This approach has worked well for Mini Downtown on King St. W., and the CRBA hopes this can work here.

The city plans to reduce the length of the drive-up curb to the property to make the sidewalk more pedestrian-friendly. Typically, no cars for sale will be parked outside, and the landscaping will be updated. Meanwhile, across the street from Tesla Motors' new showroom, the property at 445 King St. E. will receive a major overhaul to house a new designer-furniture store, signaling more changes to come.

The CRBA is following neighborhood developments, for all comments/concerns: info@corktown.ca.

CRBA celebrates Christmas

By Francine Barry



Corktown Chamber Orchestra

The annual Corktown Christmas party was huge hit in December.

The \$5 turkey dinner was the best so far, cooked and served by Sean Duranovitch's staff at the popular Dominion on Queen.

John Libby's live auction was highly entertaining, and the Corktown Chamber Orchestra wowed everyone with wonderful carol arrangements.

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2010 CRBA Elected Board

By Philip Stoop

At the last Corktown Annual General meeting, a new CRBA board was elected by the public. The 2010 board is a nice mix of old and new faces, just like Corktown itself. We are excited to carry on the great work of John Libby's board, and build on this well-run organization. We are also hoping we can count on John and Radford this year to help us with entertainment events!

This year's board members are: Philip Stoop (President), James Caldwell (Vice President & newsletter), Jonathan Martin (Treasurer & CPLC), Francine Barry (Secretary & CPLC), Maria Hazel (membership & fundraising), Eugene Kurz (website & newsletter), Jayson Lin (graffiti squad), Cindy Wilkey (WDLC), Jonathan Goode (residential and business development & WLDC), Khadija Mahmoud (residential development).

Have you noticed that Corktown is changing? We have heard it for a long time, but look around – there is a dramatic transformation. There are more children visiting the playgrounds, there are new condominium buildings rising and new businesses are opening their doors. Over the next five years, hundreds of families will move in to our neighborhood with more retail businesses to follow. There are also large developments being completed like the Regent Park Revitalization Phase One. Right next door, West

Don Lands development has received a boost, since Toronto will be hosting the 2015 Pan American Games.

Many exciting changes are coming, and this can be a little scary for some of us who have known and loved Corktown all our lives. Therefore, the CRBA wants to know what your concerns and wishes are. And we want to keep you up-to-speed with changes that are coming. Even though we are just a small group of volunteers, we manage to have the voice of our community heard. At the Councillor's office, at City Development, at 51 Division, at Regent Park, at the West Donlands, at the Condo Developers – we are at the table – and often, they want to hear what we have to say. So your involvement is crucial to make sure we get the right message across.

The CRBA would like to invite you to all our public meetings. We welcome all input, questions, comments or concerns at info@corktown.ca.

Besides telling us what you think, why not volunteer in our neighborhood? It can be a lot of fun, and it all happens close to where you live. This year, we are starting a graffiti cleanup squad. Plus, we can always use more hands in our yearly entertainment events: the BBQ and Christmas Dinner.

Best wishes and hope to hear from you soon, Philip Stoop.

Don't miss any Corktown meetings!

You're concerned about what's happening in the neighbourhood, so be sure to attend the CRBA meetings.

All CRBA meetings begin at 7pm, first Tuesday of every month except for August. The meetings are held in the back room of the Dominion on Queen, at Queen St. and Sumach.

UPCOMING CRBA MEETINGS:

May 4, 2010

Local issues with TTC transit

The guest speaker will be Bill Dawson who is the Director of Route and System Planning for the TTC.

Mr. Dawson will be addressing both the transit changes due to the development of the Don Lands and Regent Park and the issue of the quantity of sand that streetcar drivers expel from their vehicles.

Important Numbers

Need help or let your views be known, phone these people!

City services and information

311

Councillor Pam McConnell

416-392-7916

MPP Glen Murray

416-972-7683

MP Bob Rae

416-954-2222

TPS 51 Division

416-808-5100

Crime Stoppers Anonymous Tips

416-222-8477 (TIPS)

Telehealth Ontario

1-866-797-0000

Stinging nettles – handle with care!

By Andrew Starling

Walking along the byways of the Don Valley during spring and summer reveals fields of a plant that at first glance one had best avoid – *Urtica dioica*, more commonly known as the “stinging nettle.” The leaves and stems have small hairs that can pierce the skin, releasing chemical irritants such as histamine, acetylcholine and formic acid that cause the skin to burn and itch. That said, I suggest you head to the Don Valley with a shopping bag, scissors and a **pair of work gloves** to do some harvesting. Not only is this plant a renowned and ancient herbal medicine, it also happens to be delicious – better than spinach, and incredibly healthy. It’s also free of charge. By now, we’ve all heard of the 100-km diet. With stinging nettles in Corktown, we should consider the 100-metre diet?

When harvesting stinging nettles it’s best to snip off the tender leaves only and stuff them into a shopping bag. Then when you are safely at home with the nettles, place them into a sink of cold water, and clean the nettles well.

Get a large pot of salted water on the boil. Blanche the nettles for about 1 minute. The key here is that cooking the nettles in boiling water negates the stingers. Remove the nettles to a large bowl of ice water, drain the leaves and squeeze-out the excess water. At this point, you can use them in recipes where you would use spinach, beet greens or chard.

My first experience with stinging nettles was working in a restaurant in Trentino-Alto Adige, Italy. Crates of stinging nettles were delivered to the restaurant where the ‘ortiche,’ as they are known in Italian, would be blanched, chopped and make their way into ‘canederli’ – basically large bread gnocchi. The canederli then rested on a pool of fonduta cheese sauce.

Hopefully, foraging for food that stings hasn’t put you off cooking with nettles. The ultimate consideration: nettles are a source of iron, calcium, magnesium, potassium, phosphorous, silica, iodine, sodium, sulfur, tannin, beta-carotene and amino acids, as well as vitamins C and the B complex. They are very rich in protein. Enough said. Next is a recipe that showcases the culinary possibilities.

Stinging Nettle and Ricotta Ravioli with Poppy seed Butter

This recipe will make good portions for you and a friend.



Urtica dioica in the wilderness

Pasta Dough

- » 200 g all-purpose flour
- » 2 large eggs
- » 1 tsp virgin olive oil
- » 1+ tsp water

Pasta Filling

- » 1 shallot or small onion, finely diced
- » 50 g stinging nettles (weight after blanching, drained and chopped)
- » 100 g ricotta cheese, drained
- » 20 g grana padano or parmigiano-reggiano cheese, grated
- » sea salt
- » black pepper
- » a little butter

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Gently cook the shallot in a small amount of butter, remove from the heat, and in a bowl mix all the ingredients together to form a thick paste (seasoning with the sea salt and pepper according to your taste). I find it easiest to put this filling into a piping bag to make the stuffed pasta.

For the pasta: add the wet ingredients to the flour, mix well and knead the dough for about 10 minutes. Cover and rest the dough in the refrigerator for about an hour. When the dough is ready, roll it out by hand or with a pasta machine to its thinnest setting. Alternatively, you can use wonton wrappers that are readily available in grocery stores. Cut out pasta rounds using a cookie cutter, or use the wonton wrappers. Pipe a bit of stuffing into the centre of the circle. Wet your finger with some water, and rub it around half the circle. Fold the circle in half to create a half-moon shape. Dust your finished pasta with some flour, and continue in the same way until all the filling is used up. Cook the pasta in boiling salted water for a minute-or-two at the most. Fresh pasta cooks very quickly.

I finished the ravioli in a pan with some melted butter and poppy seeds and lots of grated grana padano on the top. For drinking, I suggest a northern Italian pinot grigio – the crispness of the wine cuts the pasta’s richness nicely.

With the world becoming more aware of the environmental issues surrounding food being produced in foreign lands, and then transported over vast distances, it is very satisfying to find ultra-local, healthy food on our doorstep. Stinging nettles, wild raspberries and fruit trees are some of the more easily found wild foods on offer in our area.

1st Annual Eco-Wheels Show

“Scooters – Bicycles – In-line Skates”

The Distillery District
Sat/Sun May 29-30, 2010



My name is Greg Lee and I have been a downtown Toronto resident for over 17 years and a motorcycle/scooter/inline skate enthusiast for over 20 years. Over the last decade, I’ve noticed that downtown traffic has increased significantly and I worry about the resulting pollution that is an issue with many large cities. My business partner and I had an idea to utilize our skills in a positive way which has evolved into

a unique event initiative we call the ‘Eco-Wheels Show.’ We believe that there is a necessary shift towards eco-friendly transportation that can promote:

- » ease of traffic congestion
- » reduction of pollution and green house gases
- » Toronto as a leader in eco-transportation

This outdoor event is taking place at the Distillery District on May 29-30th. The 2-day event focuses specifically on eco-transportation alternatives including scooters, bicycles, electric bicycles, mopeds and other eco-alternatives. The Show provides a forum for clubs, manufacturers, distributors and retailers to showcase and promote their green-alternative transportation products and also to raise the level of awareness and education.

We are proud to have the support of our Sponsors: The City of Toronto, Humber College, the Bicycle Trade Association of Canada, and Rogers TV.

Have a look at our website at www.eco-wheelsshow.com

If you are a business, club, or association that would like to sponsor or participate in this eco-event with a booth, we would be happy to sit down with you and provide further details as to how you can become involved. Please contact Greg Lee directly at: 416-420-6906 or kickstart@bell.net

We invite everyone to come out and see the show! It is free admission and it runs from 10 am to 7 pm on Saturday and Sunday. The whole family will enjoy it. See you at the Eco-Wheels Show!

Corktown welcomes Sherwin Williams

By Francine Barry

Still living with white walls? Corktown now has its own wonderful paint and wallpaper store at the corner of Sackville & Queen streets in the former Speedy Auto Glass premises. Everything you might need to transform your home is stocked, and expert advice is readily dispensed.



Brad Dornan, Assistant Manager, Sherwin Williams

Deck stains and sealants are popular this time of year, as well as paint strippers and peelers, stains for concrete and brick, and of course, graffiti remover. Assistant Manager Brad Dornan tells me their own brands are environmentally responsible formulae, and the old oil-based paints are being phased-out in favour of water-borne paints.

The store is open 7 - 6 Monday to Friday, 8 - 5 Saturdays and 10 - 4 Sundays. And the best news is that your CRBA 2010 membership card gets you a 20% discount!

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West Don Lands Update

By Cindy Wilkey, Chair West Don Lands Committee

Pan Am Games Athletes' Village

In February, Ian Troop was named the CEO of the Toronto Pan Am 2015 organization (see www.toronto2015.org). We are waiting for confirmation that Waterfront Toronto will remain as development lead for the development of the athletes' village, which will occupy about one third of the West Don Lands. The province and the 2015 bid team assured the West Don Lands Committee that the village would respect the West Don Lands precinct plan, but we are watching closely to see whether Waterfront Toronto which developed the plan in consultation with the community, will lead the development.

Join the West Don Lands Jane's Walk - May 2, 2010

On Sunday, May 2nd, join representatives of the West Don Lands Committee and Waterfront Toronto for a guided walk from the Distillery District, through the West Don Lands and Corktown, and then down the bike path to the Paddle the Don landing at the Keating Channel. Details are just being finalized. Check the Toronto area walks on the Jane's Walk website for details (www.janeswalk.net).

Gardiner/Lakeshore Environmental Assessment and Integrated Design Study

The second phase of the Gardiner/Lakeshore environmental assessment and integrated design study kicked off on April 13th, with the first meeting of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee. The West Don Lands Committee, the Gooderham & Worts Neighbourhood Association and the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association are members of a very broad-based stakeholder group. Waterfront Toronto will be hosting an international design competition this spring to generate ideas for what removal, improvement or replacement options might look like. More information is available online (www.gardinerconsultation.ca).

West Don Lands Committee Meetings - please attend!

West Don Lands Committee is a coalition of resident, business, heritage and environmental organizations with an interest in promoting timely and positive development on the West Don Lands and Toronto's waterfront. Meetings are monthly, usually the fourth Monday of every month, at 39 Parliament St., 11th floor. You can join the West Don Lands Committee E-mail list by sending an E-mail to wilkeyc@lao.on.ca.

Old York Village update

By Francine Barry

Old York Village is a lovely enclave of 33 townhomes north-east of River & Queen streets in Corktown.



Just four-and-a-half years ago, residents and friends of Old York Village were out in below-freezing weather, picketing the Porsche dealership at Front and Berkeley streets.

Some of you might remember how our property was relentlessly battered and damaged while city officials turned a blind eye to the antics of a construction company next door, building another car dealership for the Porsche site owners.

Our warnings of impending disaster, backed by a solid engineering report, were pooh-poohed by the city's building services inspector in charge of the development. Failure to reign-in the construction company resulted in the collapse of our retaining wall at the end of Old Primrose Lane. The construction crew breached our property line with a back hoe,

recklessly and illegally digging underneath our wall to haul out a huge rock. This caused the ground above to collapse, taking out our water mains, some gardens and front steps.

Now, years later, our pretty laneway & gardens are restored, and the wall is rebuilt with concrete. Old Primrose Lane residents are finally at peace with their new neighbour.

Here are three lessons I learned:

1. If something doesn't look right, take pictures and document everything.
2. If you are the innocent victim of wrong-doing, get the media involved and expose the perpetrators publicly and noisily.
3. Make sure you have a ward councillor who will fight for your rights against the cronyism and cover-ups at City Hall.

Retail Survey

What new businesses would you like to see?

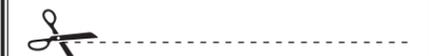
Summer/Fall 2010 will see new retail space available in Corktown in the Streetcar Developments buildings located at Queen and Sumach. In order to allow us to provide Streetcar Developments with feedback on Corktown's wants and needs, please fill out the survey below and bring it to the next CRBA meeting on Tuesday, May 4th, or e-mail your answers to info@corktown.ca.

The top 3 to date have been:

- » Tim Horton's
- » Grocery Store
- » Dry Cleaner

Name _____

Address _____



I would like to see the following businesses/types of businesses in Corktown (please list your top 3):

First Choice _____

Second Choice _____

Third Choice _____