



Be the River
Poetry on the Don
November 3 2019

Land Acknowledgement

We wish to acknowledge Toronto as a gathering place for many people of Turtle Island. We recognize the long history of First Nations people in Ontario and show respect today to the Wendat, the Petun, the Haudenosonee, the Anishinabek, and the Mississaugas of the Credit; the Chippewa also travelled the routes.

This territory was the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. This territory is also covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

Today, Toronto is a home and meeting place for many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island (North America). We are grateful to be here - Chi Miigwetch

Be the River – A Poetry Walk in conjunction with Phantom Pain by Maria Thereza Alvarez, November 3, 2019

1. Gathering at St Matthew’s Clubhouse:

- Welcome, introductions, how the walk is organized, washrooms.
- Land Acknowledgement
- **Poem**

2. Under the trees before the bridge:

- Four poems

3. Cross the bridge – no reading – mindfulness moment

4. At the west side of bridge

- The west “oxbow” bend in the Don & the social history of the area. Brooks Bush Gang, Setayesh on sewers
- **Form a “human river” and walk the meander or as close as we can get (fence line?)**
- Poems

5. Phantom Pain Sculpture

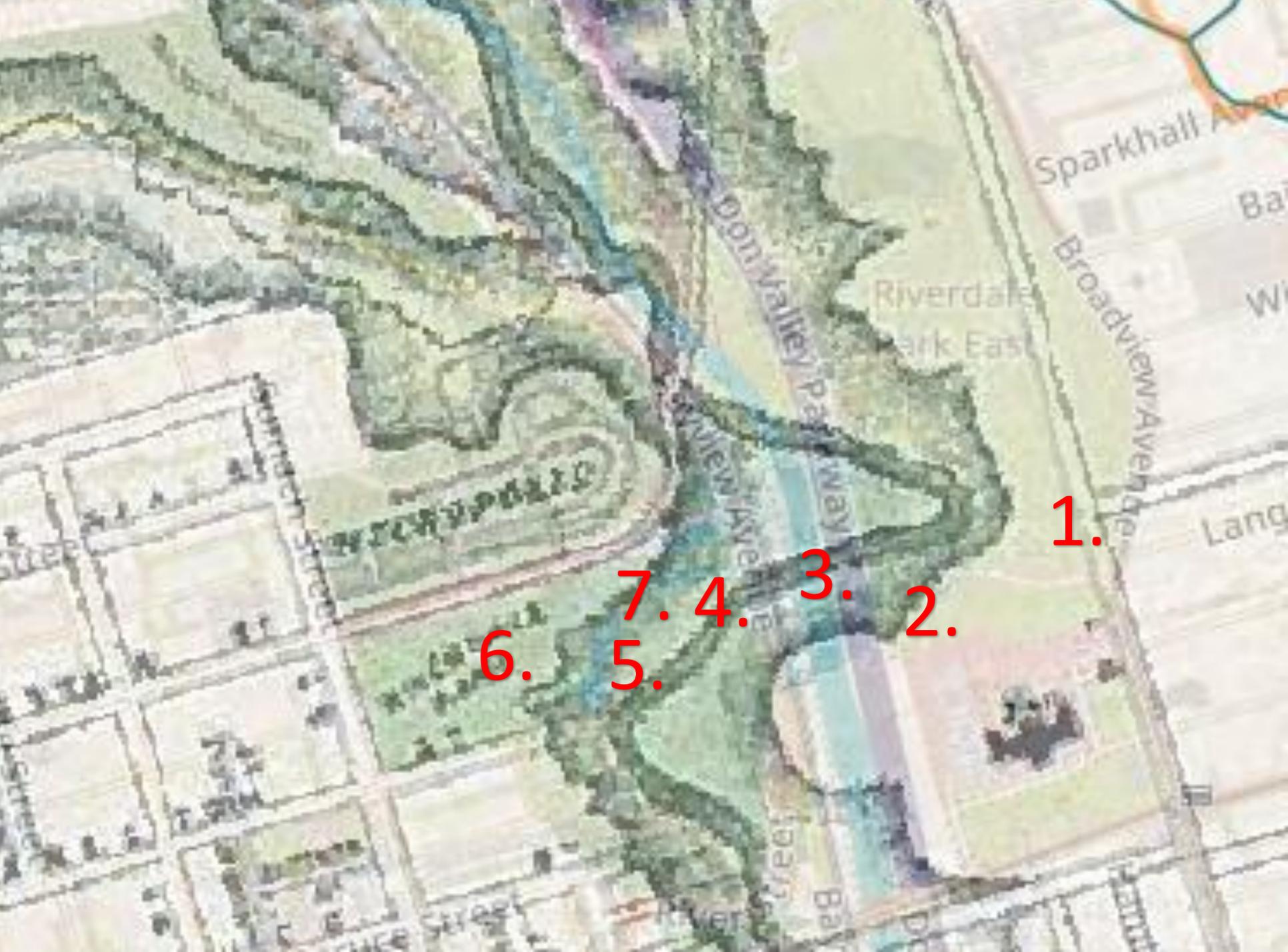
- Interpretation, Evergreen and Toronto Biennial
- Poems

1. At Riverdale Farm

- From Lost Rivers to Rivers Rising
- Rhonda Lucy, Joce Tremblay

2. At the Sanctuary Pond

- Poems
- Closing Rhonda Lucy Joce Tremblay Water Ceremony?



1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

7.

6.

1. Gathering at St Matthew's Clubhouse:

Welcome, introductions, how the walk is organized, washrooms.

Land Acknowledgement, comments from Rhonda Lucy
Joce Tremblay

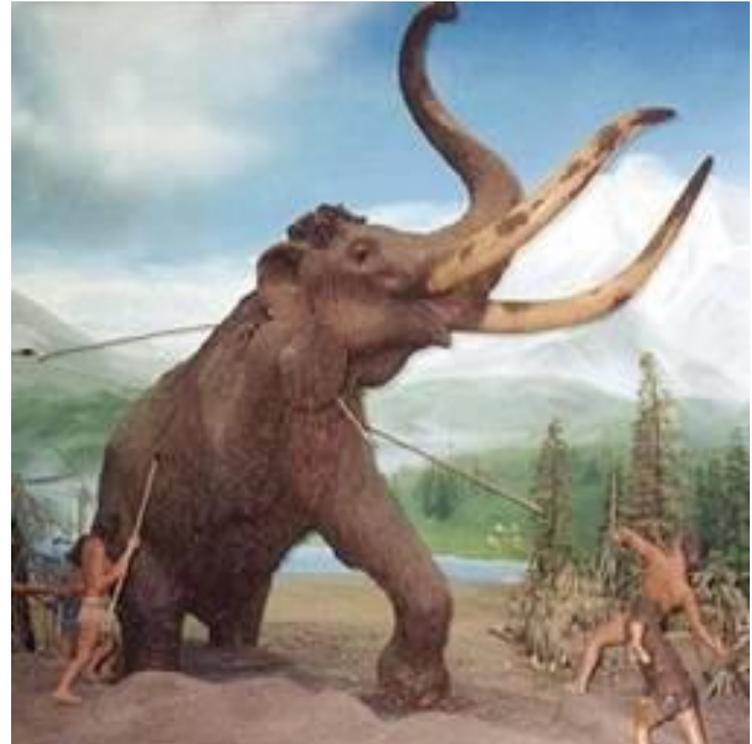
Maureen Hynes's "Withrow Avenue"

Withrow Site

Some further information on the site:

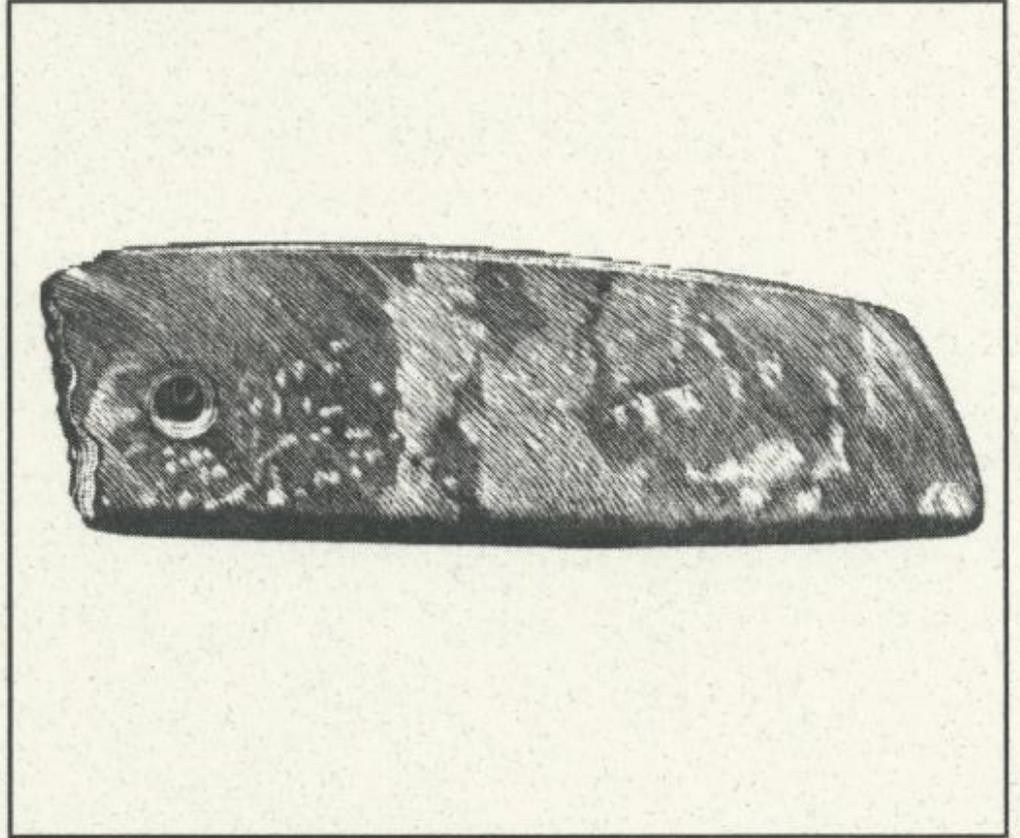
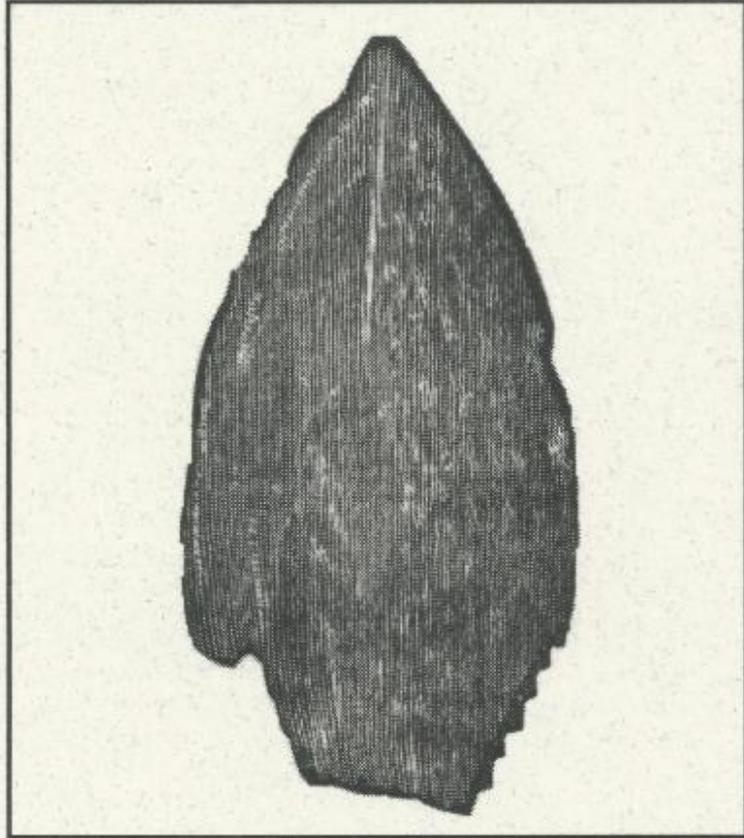
<https://www.ontarioarchaeology.org/Resources/ArchNotes/an86-3.pdf>

15,000 Years - 14,800 lived sustainably



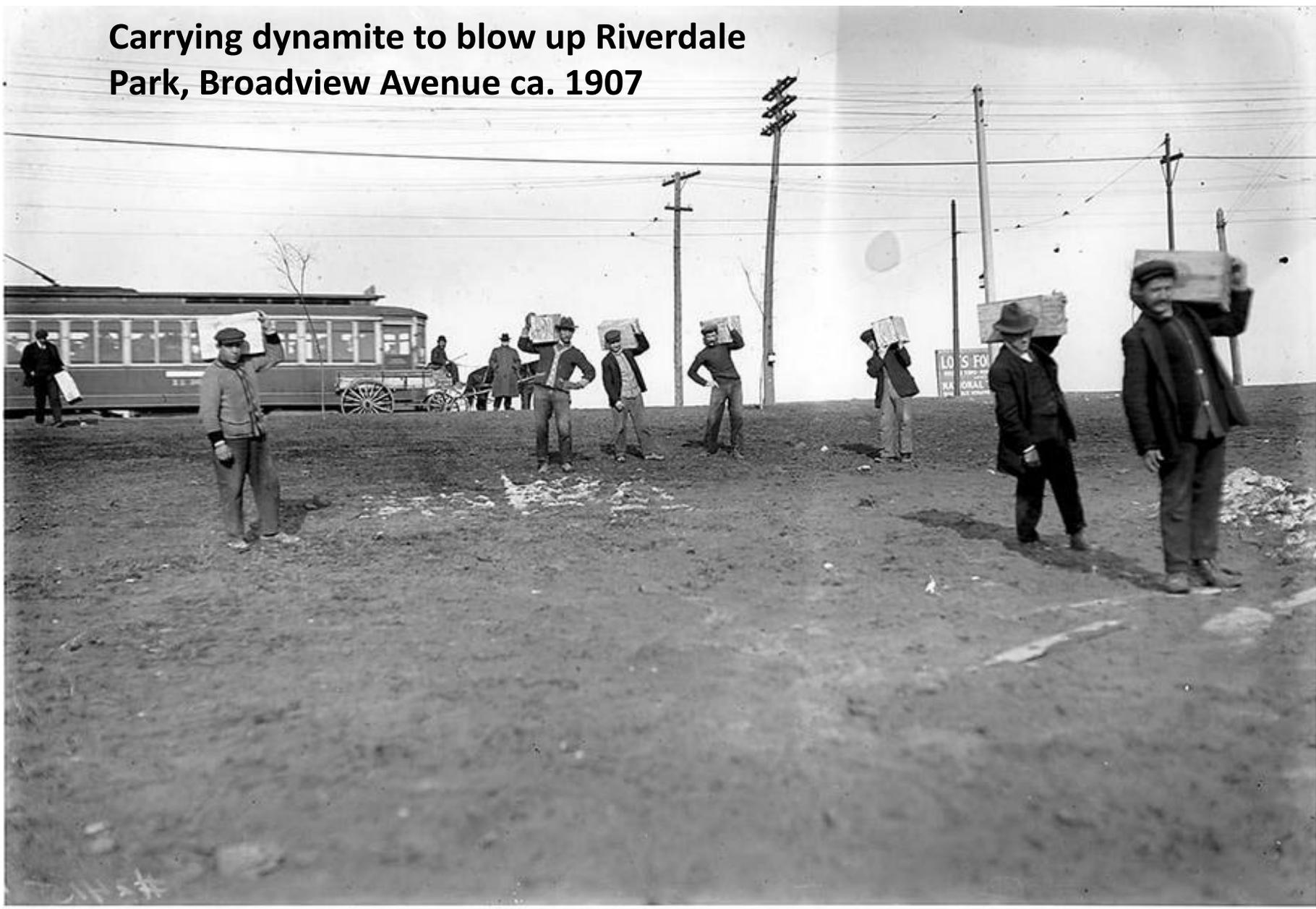
There is well documented evidence that Riverdale has attracted human habitation since early prehistory. An archeological site was discovered in the 1886 during the original excavations for constructing Withrow Avenue near Broadview on land that is now part of the Withrow Avenue Public School grounds. This "Withrow site" was excavated in 1886 by David Boyle of the Royal Ontario Museum, called the Father of Canadian Archeology, and Professor W.H. Vander Smissen. It contained two ossuary pits, or communal gravesites, each yielding about 30 skeletons. Few implements were found with the human remains, but elsewhere at the site Boyle and Vander Smissen found slate knives, a slate spear head and stone axe heads and chisels. (Mima Kapches, "1886-1986: The Centennial (?) of the Discovery of the Withrow Site", *Arch Notes*, 86-3 (May/June 1986), pp 11-17.)

Recent analysis of the record of Withrow site specimens and artifacts point to a long history of occupation. Dr. Kapches of the ROM suggests that the site was used during the Late Archaic (3000 - 1000 BCE), Initial Woodland (1000 BCE - 1000 CE) and pre-historic Iroquoian (1000 - 1650) Periods, as well as in the post-contact "European" period, for a brass ornament was also recovered. Several artifacts and skulls from the Withrow site have been retained in the ROM collections, although they have yet to be analysed thoroughly. (Personal conversation with Dr. Shelly R. Saunders, McMaster University, Department of Physical Anthropology, June 1996.)



Slate tools: A spear head and knife (fragment) used for dressing skins - Late Archaic. Taken from Withrow Avenue site 1886 or 1887. [Annual Report of the Canadian Institute, Sessions 1887 and 1888.]

**Carrying dynamite to blow up Riverdale
Park, Broadview Avenue ca. 1907**



https://gencat4.eloquent-systems.com/webcat/systems/toronto.arch/resource/fo1244/f1244_it2415.jpg
Fonds 1244, Item 2415

#2415

Levelling in Riverdale Park (between 1900 and 1930)

A note says, "75 men working at levelling park at \$2 per day."



Toronto Archives Fonds 1244, Item 1271

https://gencat4.eloquent-systems.com/webcat/systems/toronto.arch/resource/fo1244/f1244_it1271.jpg

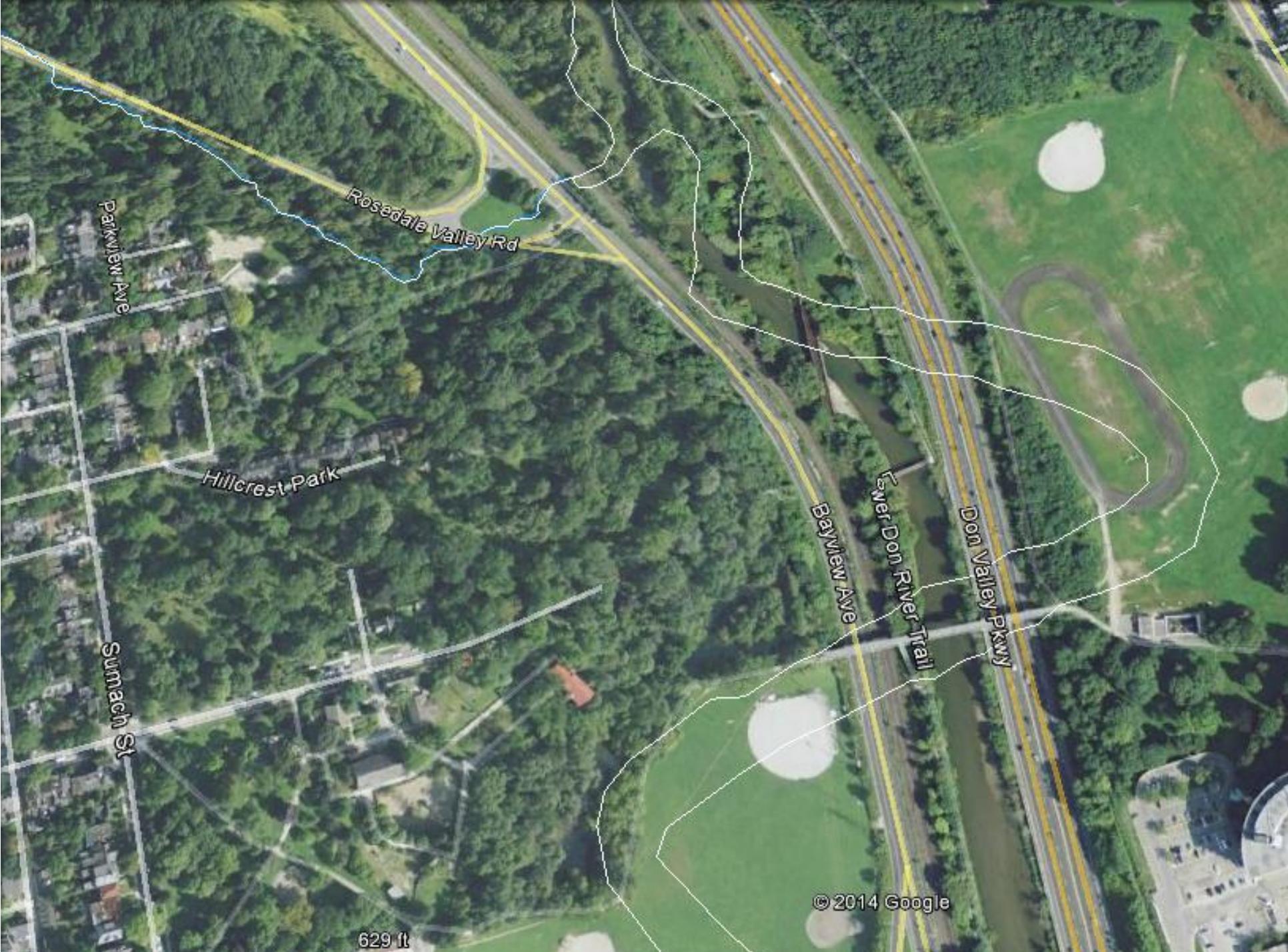
2. Under the trees before the bridge:

M Hynes's "Crossing at Dawn"

Section 11 of Anita Lahey's "The Don River,
Crossings and Expeditions"

Dilys Leman "Skinny Dipping in the Don River,
1910"

Sheila Stewart – "Where are the Water Babies"



Parkview Ave

Rosedale Valley Rd

Hillcrest Park

Sumach St

Bayview Ave

Lower Don River Trail

Don Valley Pkwy

© 2014 Google

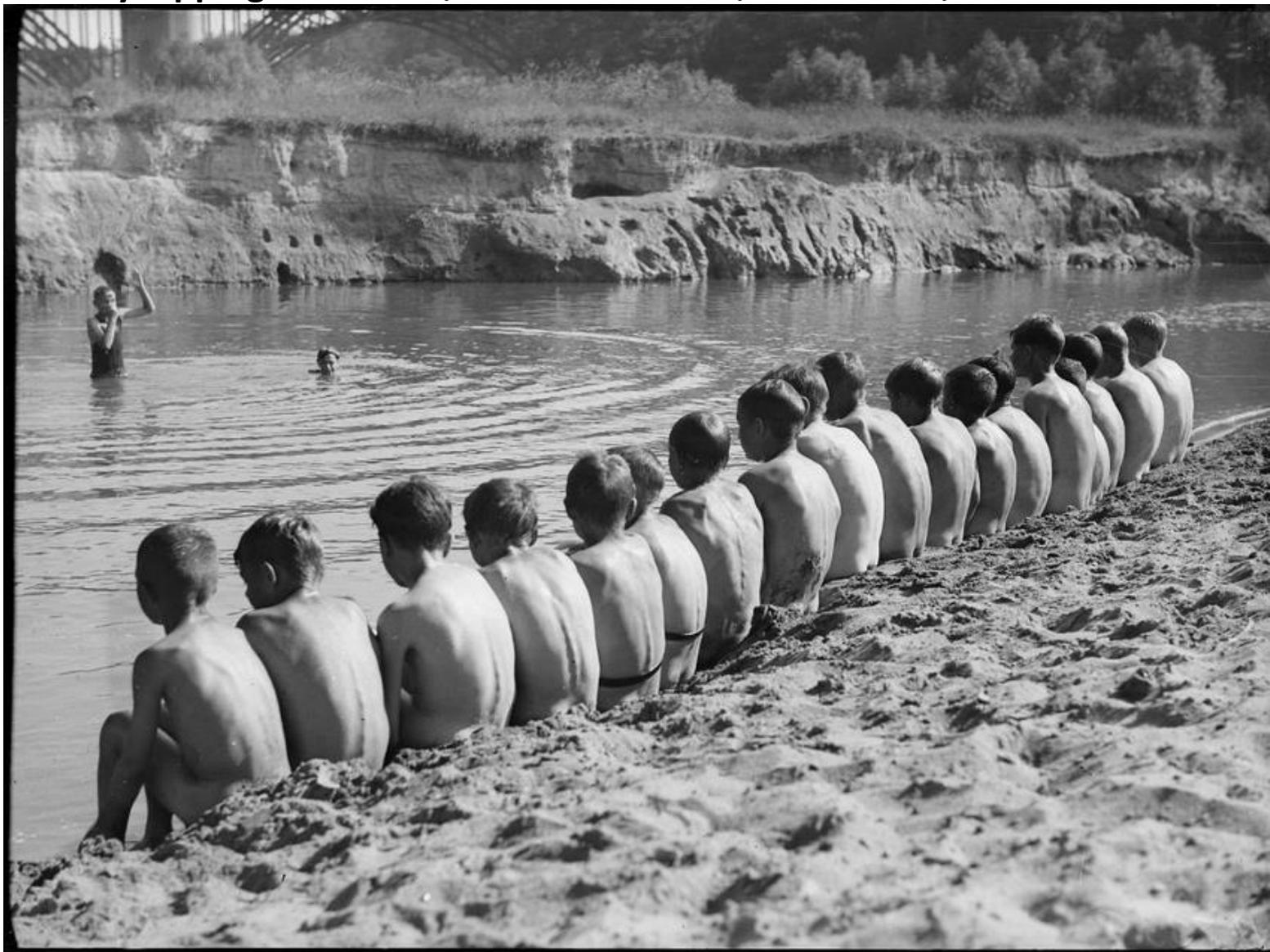
629 ft

Public Morals

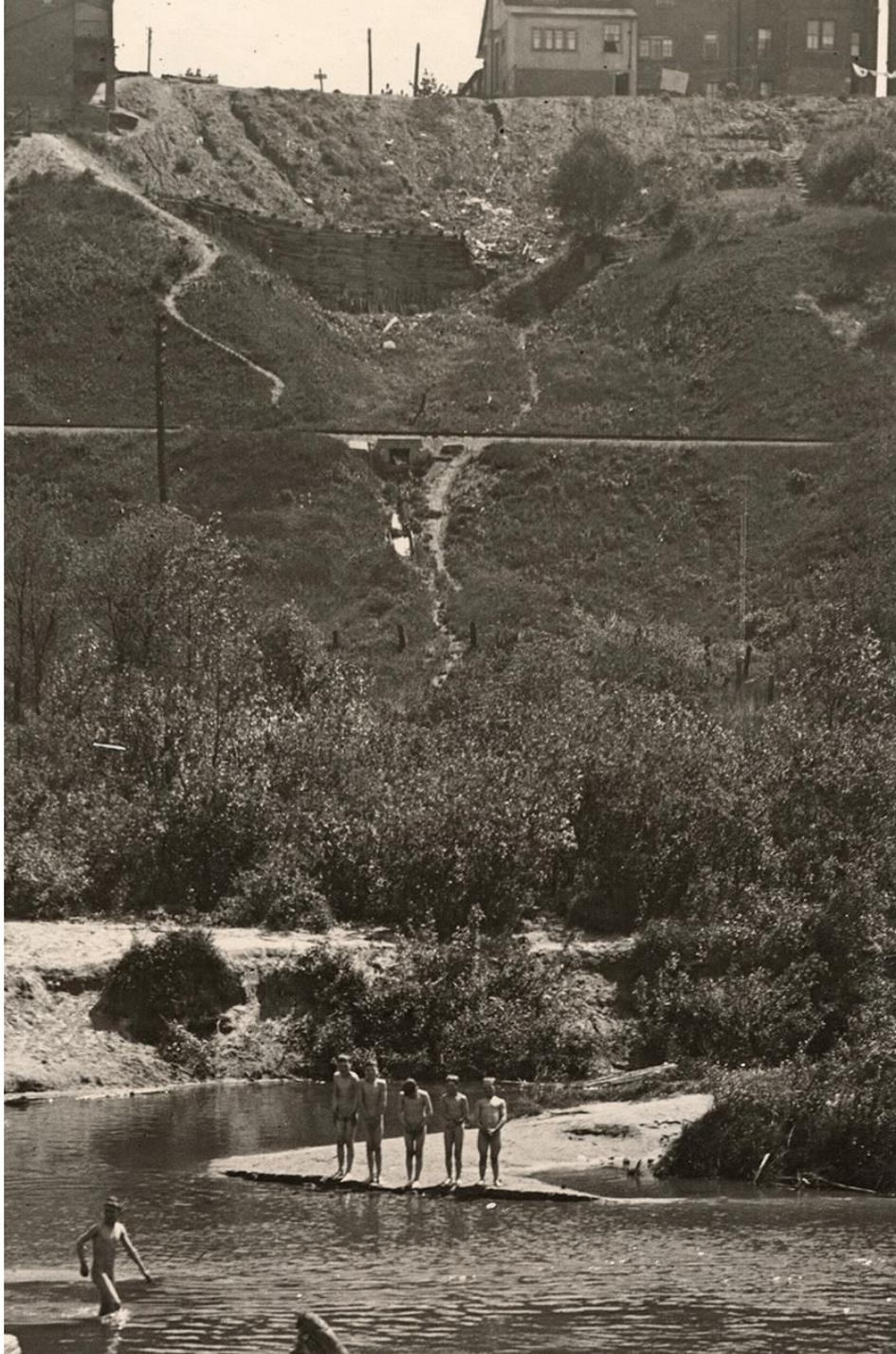
In 1890, Toronto passed the first of several by-laws designed to regulate “morality.” Prohibited activities included panhandling, selling alcohol to “any child, apprentice, or servant” without the permission of the parent or master, being drunk in public, gambling, swearing, keeping or visiting a brothel, and “indecent,” which covered what we would now define as pornography. Public nudity was also forbidden, including nude swimming between six in the morning and ten at night—which seems to have left the door open for nighttime skinny-dipping. The penalty for breaking the law was a fine of up to fifty dollars, at a time when a general labourer might earn ten dollars a week.

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/accountability-operations-customer-service/access-city-information-or-records/city-of-toronto-archives/whats-online/web-exhibits/historical-by-laws/>

Skinny dipping in the Don, Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, Item 7339



City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, Item 7339



Boys swimming in the Don River at "Bare Ass Beach" in Riverdale

James & Son

Picture, 1923,

Publisher

Toronto Star

Rights and Licenses

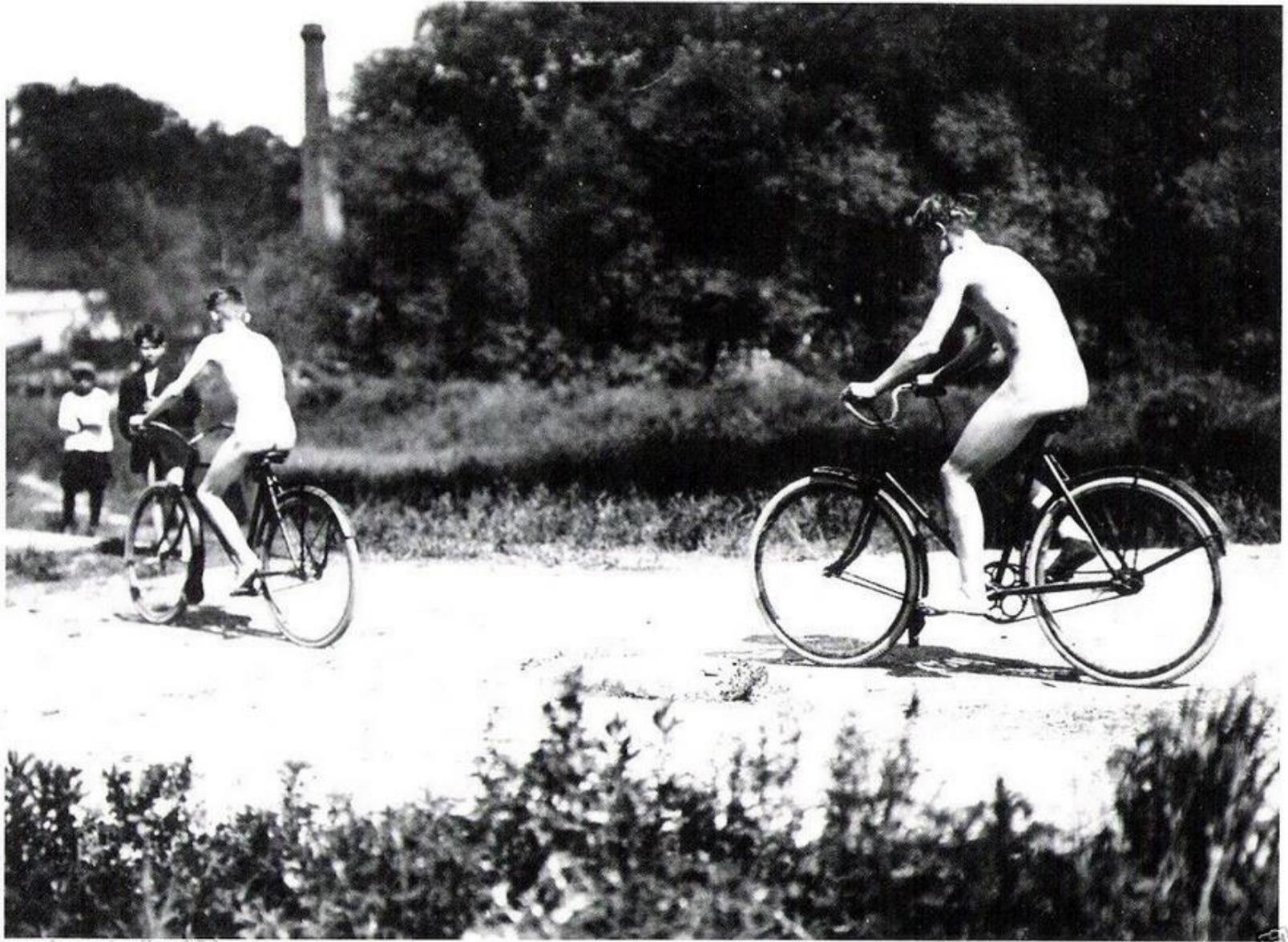
Toronto Star Photograph Archive

- Public Domain

Provenance

From the Toronto Star Archives

<https://static.torontopubliclibrary.ca/da/images/LC/ts-2-125-go-015.jpg>



americanstudies101



http://www.ebay.com/itm/Postcard-SKINNY-DIPPING-Toronto-Ontario-Canada-Don-River-near-Pottery-Road-1912-/301228130379?pt=Postcards_US&hash=item462298804b&nma=true&si=c9SeD8ADnft%252BrfYUGbudk%252BoyDs0%253D&orig_c vip=true&rt=nc&_trksid=p2047675.l2557

3. Cross the bridge – no reading – mindfulness moment. Historic images follow

House Of Refuge,
Broadview Ave., w. side,
betw. opp. the ends of
Langley & Riverdale
Aves., view from Don
River.
1865 Pencil drawing (B 4-
66b).





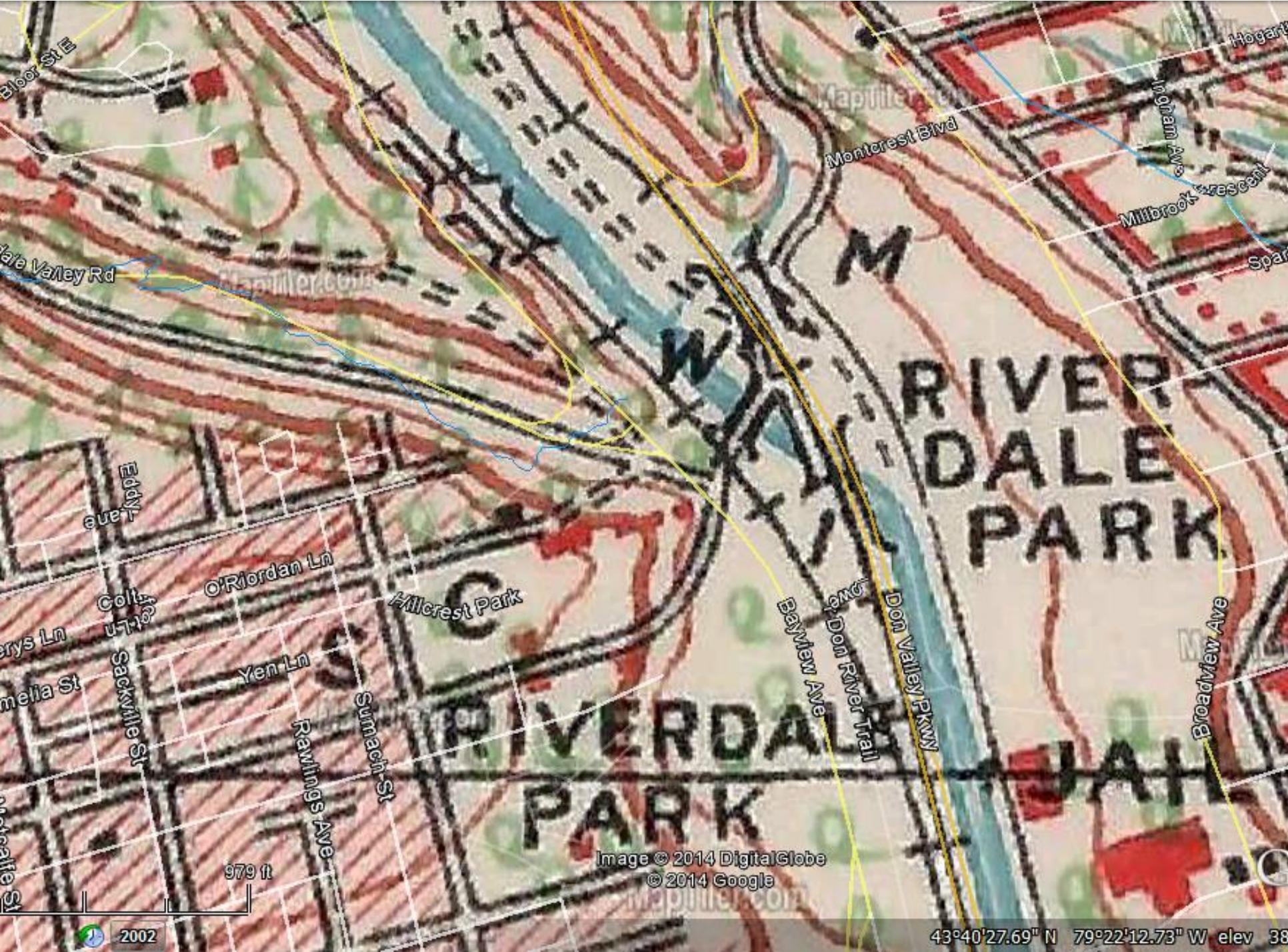
House of Refuge, c.1860. Toronto Public Library, TRL, Historical Picture Collection, B 4-66b. <http://maps.library.utoronto.ca/dvhmp/refuge.html>

Gerrard St. E. bridge over Don R. ("Bell's Bridge"), looking s.e., [Hoch, James, 1827-1878](#)



Toronto Public library Accession Number: JRR 912 Cab II

<https://static.torontopubliclibrary.ca/da/images/LC/pictures-r-1623.jpg>



Eloor St E

Hogart

Montcrest Blvd

Millbrook Crescent

Don Valley Rd

Mapiller.com

Spar

Eddy Lane

O'Riordan Ln

Hillcrest Park

Crys Ln

Collins Ln

Yen Ln

Mella St

Sackville St

Rawlings Ave

Sumach St

RIVERDALE PARK

Bayview Ave

Don River Trail

Don Valley Pkwy

Broadview Ave

Image © 2014 DigitalGlobe
© 2014 Google

979 ft

2002

43°40'27.69" N 79°22'12.73" W elev 38

4. At the west side of bridge and along the fence

Images of the “oxbow” bends in the Don

Be the River! Form a “human river” and walk the meander or as close as we can get (fence line)

Setayesh on sewers

The Wet Weather Flow Management Plan

Possible Women Fishing poem here?



**Don River, looking s.e.
towards Don Jail, from
below Walter McKenzie's
house 'Castle Frank',
Bloor St. E., s. side, just
e. of opp. Drumsnab Rd.,
Toronto, Ont.**

Notes: |Inscribed on vso:
Toronto Jail From Castlefrank.
1870.

Rights and Licenses

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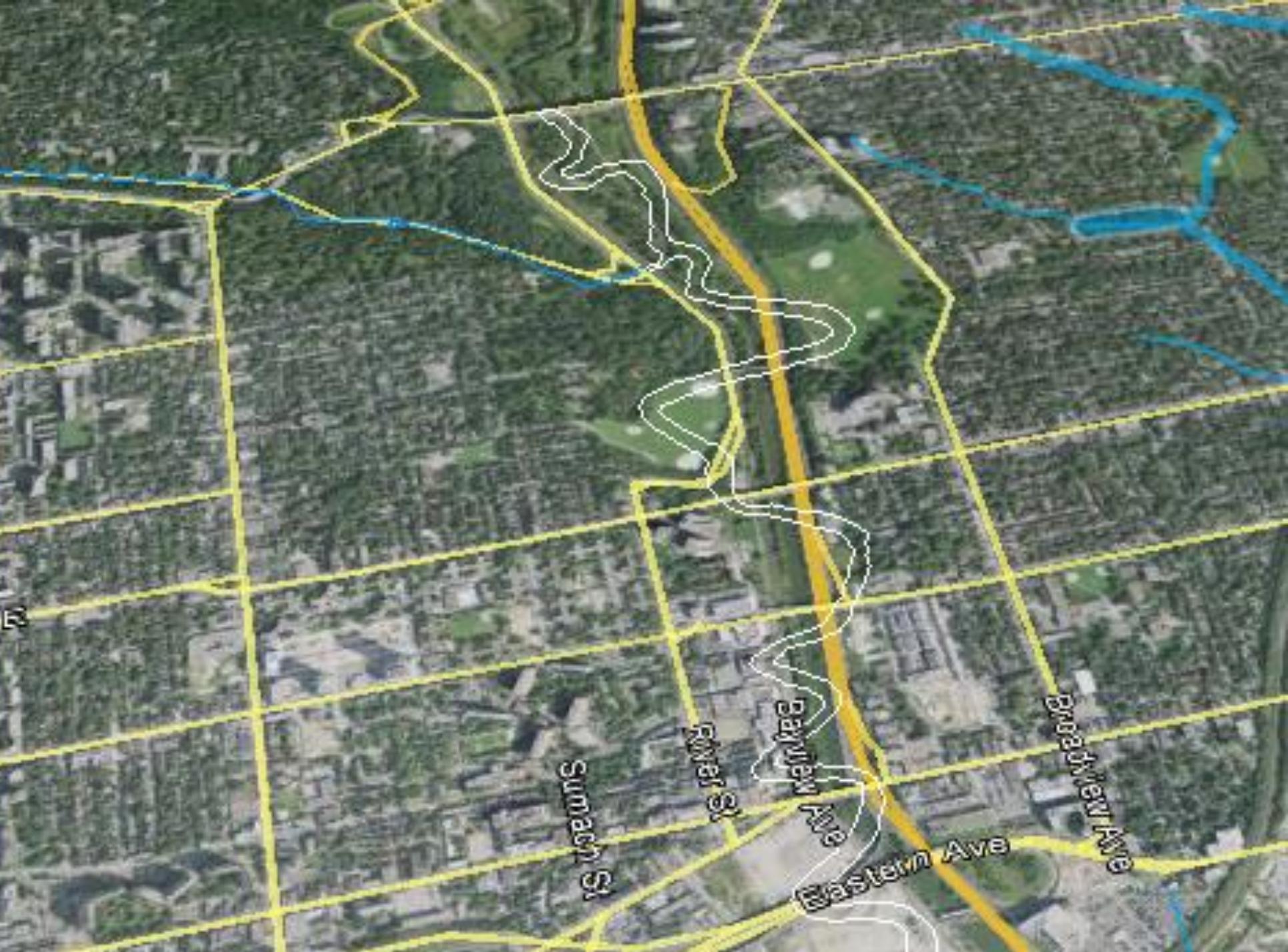
Toronto Reference Library

Baldwin Collection

Call Number / Accession Number

943-2-3 Cab

<https://static.torontopubliclibrary.ca/da/images/LC/pictures-r-5883.jpg>



Sumach St

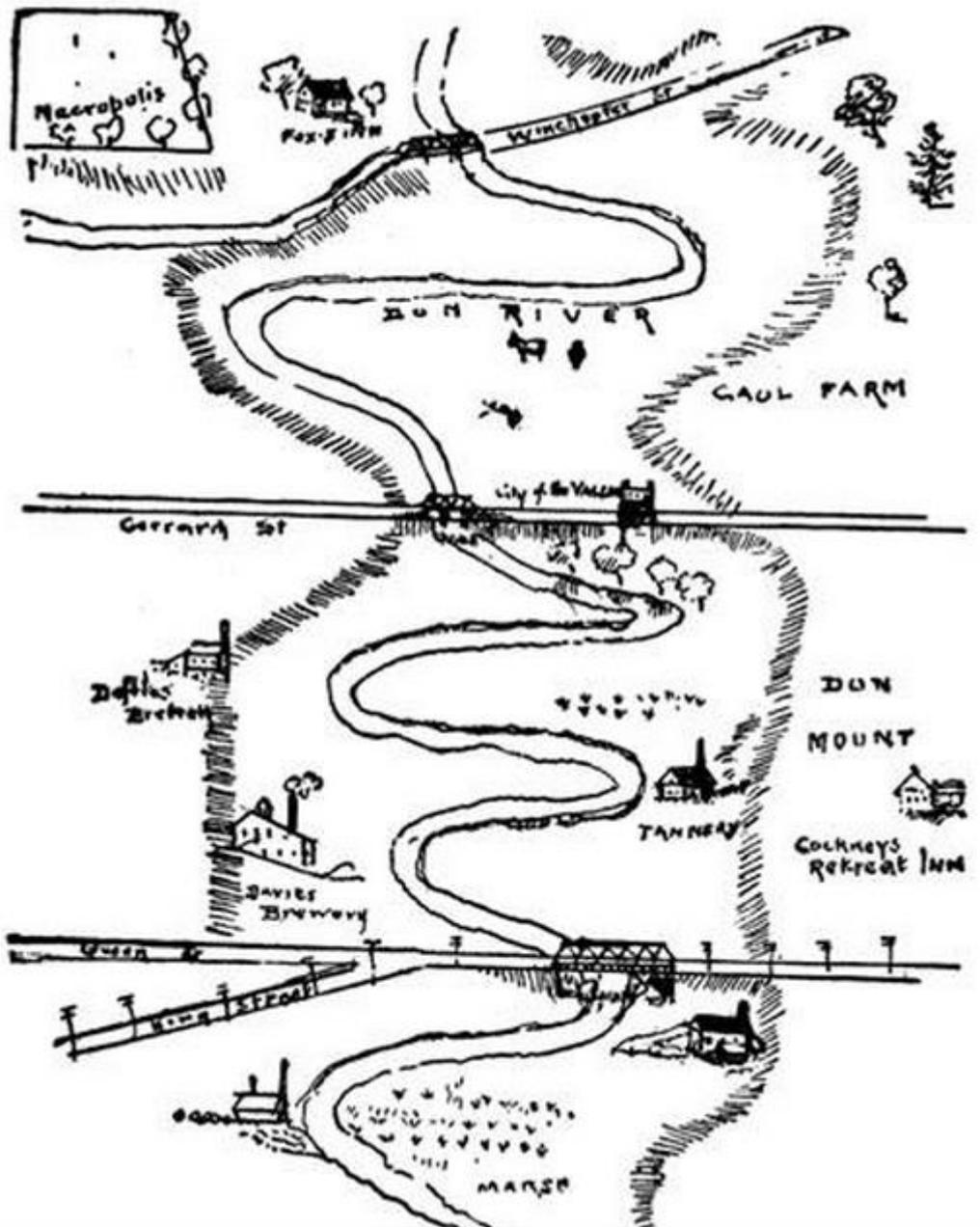
Power St

Eastern Ave

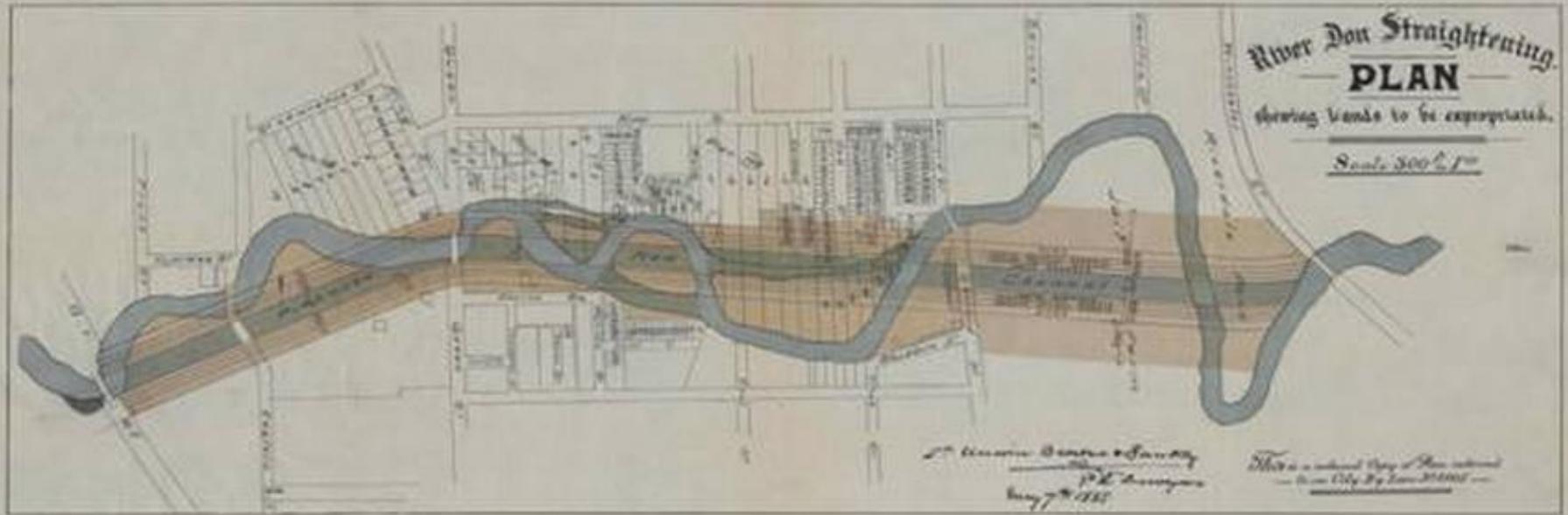
Broadway Ave

Channeling the Don, Filling in a Marsh





<http://maps.library.utoronto.ca/dvhmp/don-narrows.html>



River Don Straightening Plan, 1886, City of Toronto Archives, Series 725, File 12. Concentrating on a portion of the Lower River between Winchester Street and the Grand Trunk Railway bridge at Eastern Avenue, the Don Improvement Plan (1886-1891) saw the meandering Lower River straightened, widened, and deepened, dramatically transforming the landscape and hydrology of the marshy lower valley.

<http://maps.library.utoronto.ca/dvhmp/don-narrows.html>

Three Women Fishing 1908?

City of Toronto Archives 1244, Item 167A





Inscribed lower left: Don River / LM.
/ 06; Inscribed on vso: The Don /
Mrs. Mill Pellatt / Not by E.M.A.M.
Signature is Lena [Colleyna] Morgan.
Shows Lady Pellatt fishing. TEC 322

Don River. 1906, Toronto, Ont., Morgan, Colleyna Mary Russell, 1871-1967

<https://static.torontopubliclibrary.ca/da/images/LC/e5-109f.jpg>



**Riverdale Park, looking s.
(?) to foot bridge across
Don R., approx. opp.
Carlton St., Toronto, Ont.
Ryan, John, 1923**

Notes

Inscribed in pencil, vso right: The Tom Sawyers & Huck Finns / got out their floats & lines / on Saturday they even brought / the dog along One of a group of prints most of which were reproduced in The Globe, Toronto, 1922-4.

Stamped in deep reddish purple ink, vso c.: FROM / JACK RYAN / PRESS PHOTOGRAPHER / 15 BLEECKER ST. NORI 4470;

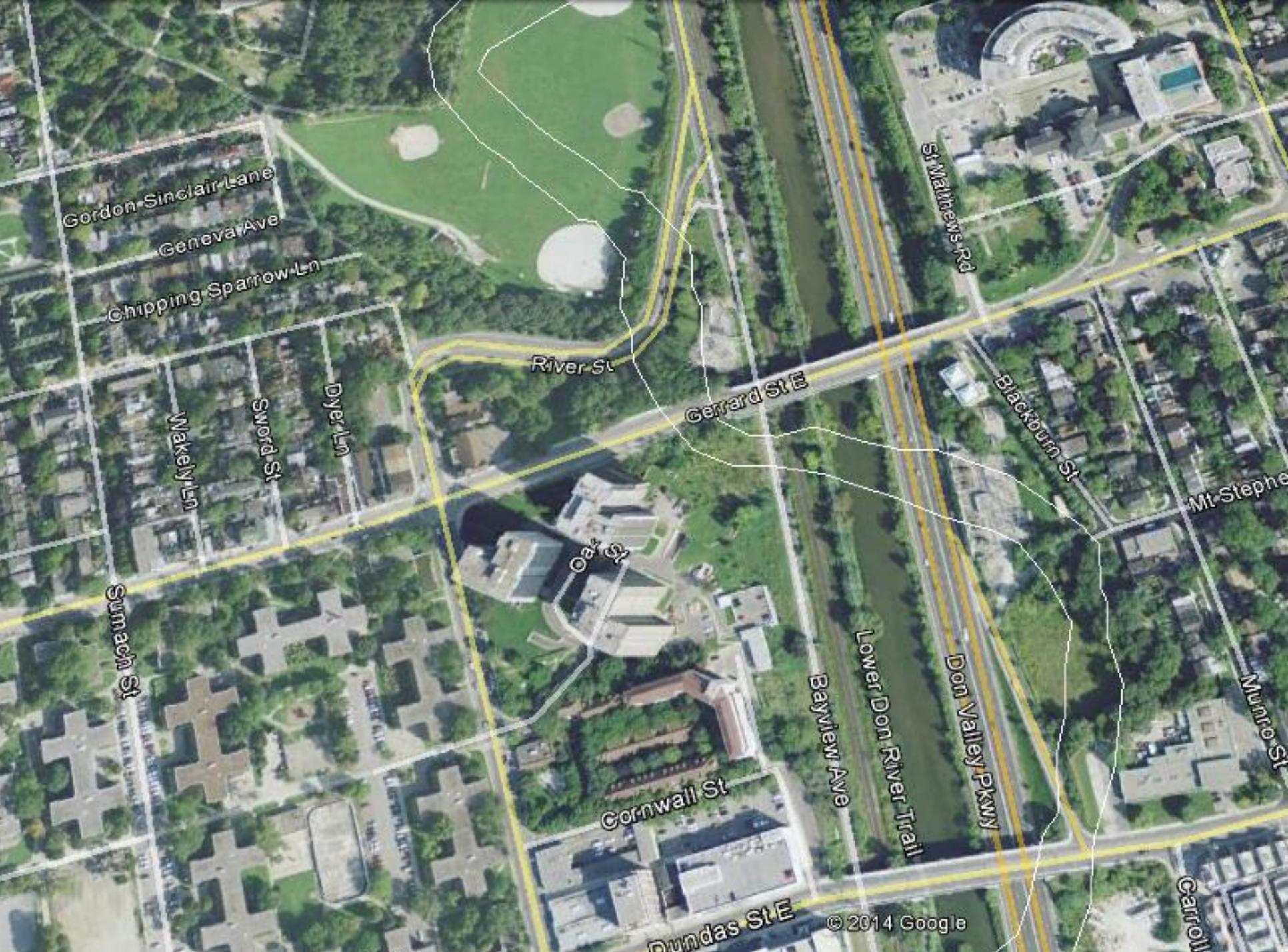
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<https://static.torontopubliclibrary.ca/da/images/LC/pictures-r-5819.jpg>

5. Phantom Pain

Interpretation Biennial and Evergreen

Poems



Gordon Sinclair Lane

Geneva Ave

Chipping Sparrow Ln

Wakely Ln

Sword St

Dyer Ln

River St

Gerrard St E

St Matthews Rd

Blackburn St

Mt-Stephe

Oak St

Sumach St

Lower Don River Trail

Don Valley Pkwy

Bayview Ave

Munro St

Cornwall St

Dundas St E

© 2014 Google

Carroll

6. At a Community Garden at the Farm

- From Lost Rivers to Rivers Rising
- Rhonda Lucy, Joce Tremblay

Davenport Trail, Indian Road Trail, Lakeshore Trail, Road to Yonge St



Davenport Trail

Taddle Creek

The Road to Yonge Street

Indian Road Trail

Ashbridge Bay Mars

Lakeshore Trail

ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO

an Ontario government agency
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

With thanks to Wendy Smith
Toronto Park Lot Project
<http://parklotproject.com>



River Don

Government Park

Maryville

Park No 5

Road
nery

Howse
Government

<http://maps.library.utoronto.ca/databub/digital/NG/historicTOMaps/1802Chewett.Smith.Maryville.jpeg>

**Gardeners are creating
a new kind of urban
ecosystem**

New urban foodwebs

**a new place
for nature**

**Indigenous
Food
Sovereignty**

7. At the Sanctuary Pond

- Poems
- Don River Valley Park, Restoration dreams
- Closing Rhonda Lucy, Joce Tremblay





[Daylighting Urban Rivers](#)

Nebelbach, Zurich, is a daylighted street stream along a downtown residential street, incorporating traffic calming measures. The stream flowed into the combined sewer, and in 1991 this project was constructed to separate up to 70 l/s of the clean water baseflow through an artificial but naturalistic street stream.

Apparently trout live in this stream, but I didn't see any. In fact, I think the main benefit of this is the aesthetic and the land value improvements as part of downtown urban regeneration, as well as reducing the sewer baseflow.

“a critical component of cities' watershed and of sustainable development”. All that is required is a willingness to acknowledge a landscape that predates our arrival

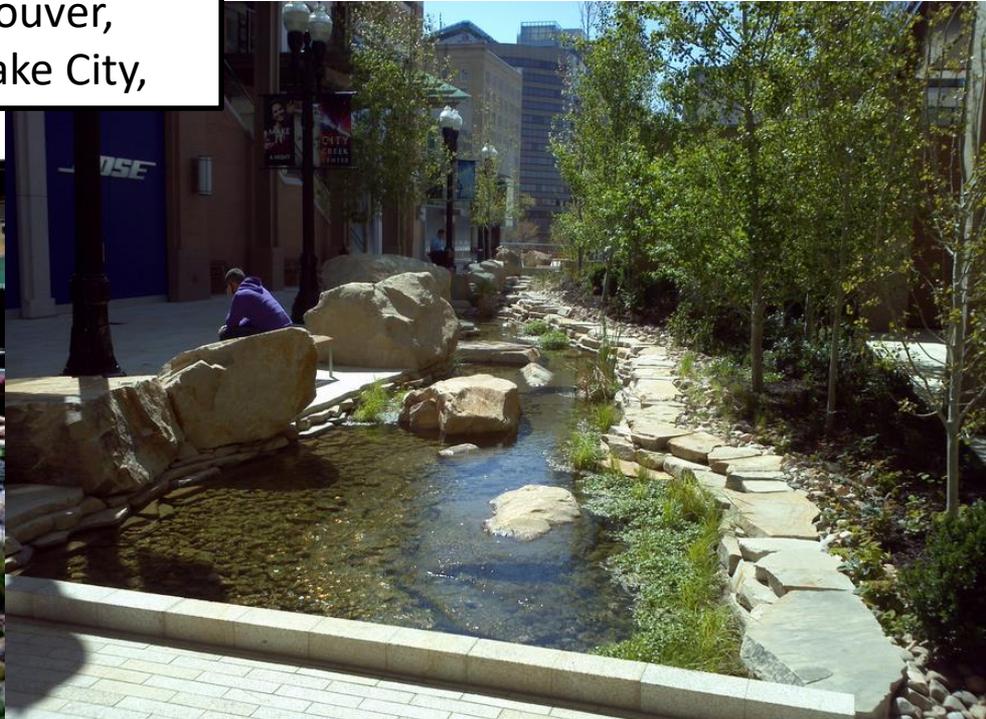
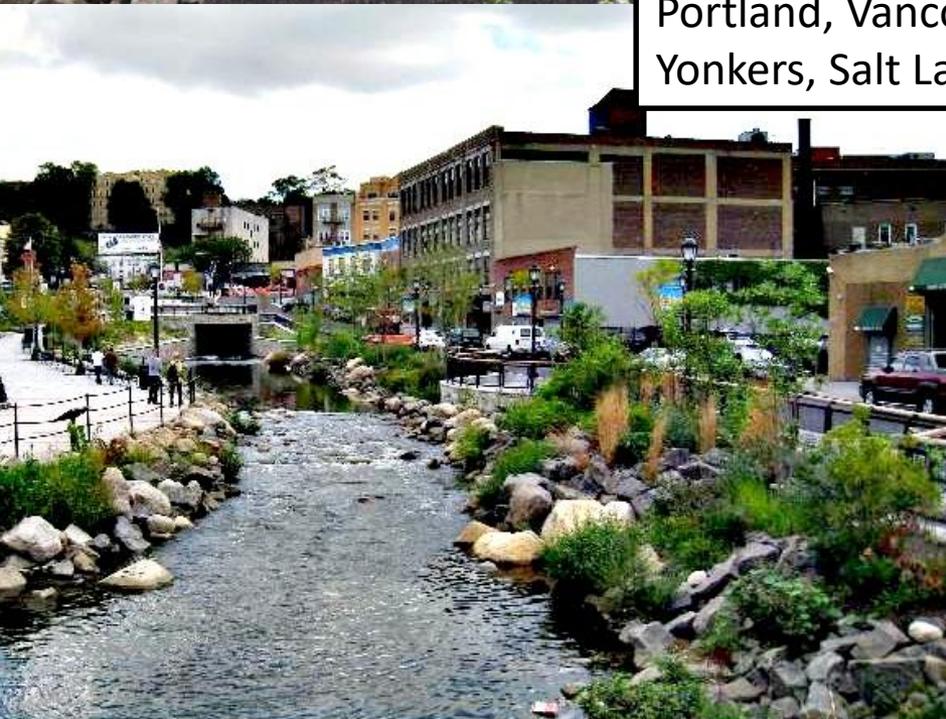
Adam Broadhead (www.daylighting.org.uk).

at Wildbachstrasse, Zurich. March 2011

<https://www.facebook.com/DaylightingUrbanRivers/photos/a.495680830447374.131890.495423393806451/624000634282059/>



Daylighted Streams
Portland, Vancouver,
Yonkers, Salt Lake City,



What next for Black Creek?





<https://globalnews.ca/news/3009482/private-donors-step-up-for-lower-don-ravine-super-park-project/>



The boundaries of home?

A river is not just a blue line on a map, but rather the focal point of a geographical community, a mosaic of ecosystems that includes all the people, plants, animals in the area drained by the river, its WATERSHED, as well as the non-living parts, such as rocks and soil and of course water. Water flowing from the high points to the low points in the river system connects everything and transports anything that is put into it

For 8,000 years until about 200 years ago, the Garrison Creek watershed was home to diverse forests and to birds fish and animals that supported the people who lived here or passed through on ancient trading routes.

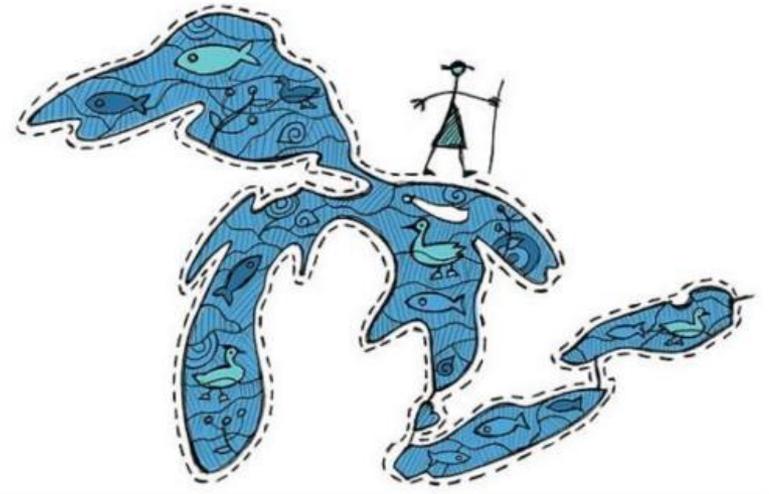
Where did all the water go?



**A river is not just a
blue line on a map**



"In the effort to raise awareness and consciousness about pollution, laws and any issues that impact water, and for the Spirit of the water, Nohkomis Josephine Mandamin has walked the shorelines of all five Great Lakes ... she has literally walked more than 20,000 kilometres for the water — equal to nearly half the earth's circumference."



http://www.motherearthwaterwalk.com/?page_id=2286

She hopes that the water walks will remind people of their connection to water and encourage people to preserve it.

"You as an individual, no matter whether you are indigenous or non-indigenous, you can take steps in your day to day life in ensuring there is clean water for future generations."

<http://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/unreserved-radio-indigenous-on-cbc-radio-one-sept-6-1.3215919/water-walkers-indigenous-women-draw-on-tradition-to-raise-environmental-awareness-1.3216495>

**There is no door at the edge
of the ravine where nature
begins and the city ends**

From Lost Rivers to Rivers Rising

Communities, Watersheds, Urban Ecosystems, Neighbourhoods and the creation of a Blue Green City





RAINscapeTO.ca

SLOW IT • FLOW IT • GROW IT



 Toronto Green Community

Lost  Rivers



Depave Paradise





INDIGENOUS WATERWAYS



**There's lots to
do
We hope
you'll join 😊**



The End