

NO. 1

FREE ISSUE

SHORE STORIES:

EXPLORE THE LAKESHORE GROUNDS



THEN &
NOW

Featuring the
photography of
Jonny Devaney!



Lakeshore Grounds
Interpretive Centre

CREATIVE
DESTRUCTION

Discover the
history of the
shoreline!

EDITOR'S LETTER



Hello Reader,

Thanks for picking up our Zine. This is our first issue, so we're a little new to this.

The inspiration for an Interpretive Centre Zine came from our Curatorial Intern, Caitie McKinnon, through the 2019 Summer Workshop Series.

For those who may not know, a zine is like a magazine, but is entirely self-created and self-published. With her previous work on similar projects, Caitie easily won over the rest of the team, and gave us the "zine-bug."

At the Lakeshore Grounds Interpretive Centre, we frequently come across tidbits of stories, little updates, and small research projects that we don't get the chance to elaborate on or share in our regular exhibits, tours, and events. A zine allows for individual voices to speak, with the flexibility to share multiple formats.

We plan to publish a new issue three times per year at the end of each semester: Fall, Winter, and Summer. Each issue will be printed on a limited run. It will be available at the Interpretive Centre, WEL104, and be shared digitally via lakeshoregrounds.ca.

We hope you enjoy reading the content as much as we enjoyed writing it for you!

If you have questions or suggestions - or if you are interested in contributing to a future zine - please email info@lakeshoregrounds.ca or drop by and chat in person.

Sincerely,

The Lakeshore Grounds Interpretive Centre Team



#MYSHORESTORY

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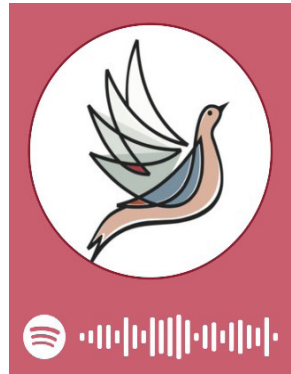
KEEP IN TOUCH 2.

Facebook
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We're new to SPOTIFY, check out our page. It'll come in handy on pages 23 and 24...

@LAKESHORE GROUNDS



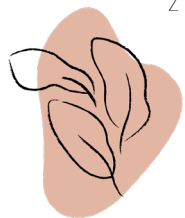
We also have a website you can visit. On the website you can sign up for our monthly newsletter to stay hip with our activities

LAKESHOREGROUNDS.CA

We'd love to have you drop by for a visit:

2 Colonel Samuel Smith Park Drive, Room 104
Toronto, ON M8V 4B6

Or give us a call: 416.675.6622 ext.3801



CONVERSATIONS WITH RON PICKFORD



3.



We recently had the pleasure of meeting Ron Pickford, a long-time resident of the area who attended one of our Film History Tours in the summer of 2019.

At the end of the tour, Ron revealed his own behind-the-scenes memories of the film history of the Lakeshore Grounds and shared a series of photographs with attendees - this chance meeting led to an ongoing series of engaging conversations about the history of the Etobicoke Lakeshore community.



Ron and his parents arrived from England in 1953, staying first with an aunt in Parkdale before eventually purchasing a home on Sixth Street in New Toronto. Only 16 years old when he arrived, Ron worked to support the family. Leveraging his unique knowledge of engines and shorthand, he became the youngest full-time employee in the Air Canada maintenance department. With a head for mechanics, Ron began to repair and rebuild cars in a small garage behind the family home during his spare time. It was his love for cars that tied him to the film history of the area.



The photographs Ron initially shared with our tour group featured a series of cars he had rebuilt, posed in front of signs used during the filming of the Police Academy movies in the 1980s. In subsequent meetings, Ron revealed that he was an avid photographer who had not only captured images of his hot rods on the sets of film productions, but had also recorded both neighbourhood locations and events as well as the destinations of his international travels. Ron estimates he has somewhere in the vicinity of 30,000 photographs in his collection. This is where the magic happened.

continues next page...

Conversations with Ron Pickford...

5.



Where Ron is an engaging storyteller with a memory for detail that defies expectations, Elizabeth, his wife and partner of 57 years, is an archivist at heart. Over three years, Elizabeth sorted, organized, and catalogued the couple's photographs, labelling each with dates, locations, and names. If that were not impressive enough, Elizabeth scanned the collection, adding newspaper clippings, pamphlets, and ticket stubs from key moments in our local history.



Their love for the area has resulted in a unique visual record of years' past complemented by detailed, personal memories. It also led to their respective involvement to protect and preserve our history. Elizabeth was a long-time member of the New Toronto Historical Society while Ron became involved in the fight to save the buildings of the former Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital from demolition. 6.

While Ron describes himself as only a "small fish," the Pickfords exemplify the foresight in the community that was needed to save the heritage we still have access to today. In Ron's words, "we have a treasure here, but nobody could see that treasure."



The Pickfords, like others who have fought to preserve the unique history of the Etobicoke Lakeshore, saw the treasure. We are grateful for their efforts and look forward to sharing more details from the Pickfords' photograph collection with the community this fall.

Jennifer Bazar

CREATIVE DESTRUCTION

7.

What seems like a naturally occurring green space now, is actually the result of extensive lakefilling that took place in the 1970s. It is not uncommon for Toronto to sacrifice historical buildings in an effort to become a modern city. Many community members remember the truckloads of material coming in from the city to build the park that we enjoy today. The Metro Toronto and Region Conservation Authority developed many areas, including what we now know as Colonel Samuel Smith Park. It took roughly two decades of continuous construction to extend the shoreline 1,500 feet into Lake Ontario.

Bricks and other debris from the park's lakefilling roots are distinctly present along the lakeshore. While many assume that these are pieces from the Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital, it is important to note that there is no relationship between the shoreline bricks and the hospital bricks. Looking at these bricks reveals a different part of Toronto's past architectural evolution and development.

In terms of city planning, Toronto has a rather curious history of starting over when it comes to the make-up of its cityscape. Up until the early 1900s, much of Toronto's buildings were made up of wood. However, the Great Fire of 1904 led to wood buildings becoming outlawed and with this law, red and yellow brick became the prominent building material as well as a distinctive architectural attribute of Toronto.

In the early 20th century, there were at least 36 brick manufactures in and around Toronto, based on anecdotal evidence. While we cannot tie the bricks collected from the lakeshore to specific buildings, we do know their century-old manufacturing origins.

8.



John **Price** Brick Maker at 99 Greenwood Avenue in Scarborough operated from 1912 to 1962. Greenwood avenue has an interesting past as it once had more brickyards than any other street in the city of Toronto. The remnants of many brickyards have left their imprint permanently into the ground of what is now known as Leslieville.

Joseph **Russel** Brickyards opened in 1857 and was just up the road from J Price. This particular brickyard was one of the largest in the Greenwood area. In 1894, Russel's son, John, introduced a new continuously-feeding kiln technology to the Greenwood area that could burn all year around, essentially abolishing the brickmaker's season.

Milton Bricks was founded in 1877 when the Credit Valley Railway passed through the west part of the GTA now known as Milton; they closed in 1974. The bricks created here were pressed prior to baking and because of this process, were of a much higher quality. In 1901, they were considered the best bricks available in North America.

Caitie McKinnon

THEN AND NOW



9.

The original photograph of the streetcar line construction was taken on the corner of Kipling and Lakeshore in Etobicoke by Alfred Pearson on November 5th, 1928 and is currently held by the City of Toronto Archives. The contemporary photo was taken in the Summer of 2019 by me (Jonny), almost a hundred years after the original.



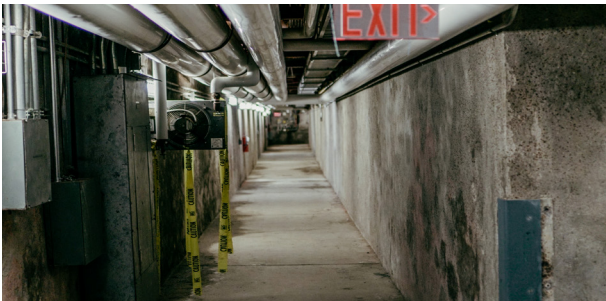
Both photographs were shot from the same location and perspective. Blending the two photos together creates a unique image that combines the past and present into one.

Jonny Devaney

JONNY'S TOP PIC(K)S

10.

Jonny Devaney



THE LOST VOICE



11.

OF THE PASSENGER PIGEON -PART 1

Extinction of a species marks an irrevocable loss in the world's diversity. The Passenger Pigeon became a flagship species of extinction after the last individual, Martha, died in captivity in 1914.

In the early 1900s, when it seemed all but a few Passenger Pigeons had vanished from the wild, Wallace Craig visited one of the last captive flocks in America to record the sounds and body language of the species. His efforts resulted in a musical transcript of the Passenger Pigeon, with detailed descriptions of contextual body language.



While Craig was unsure if the species was extinct in the wild, through hindsight we know he was recording the last calls of the Passenger Pigeon. His work raises questions about how we hear what cannot be heard. Museums host exhibits that display taxidermy models paired with elaborately written descriptions of behaviour and facts, but how else can we come to understand a lost species?

Upon coming across Craig's work, Jennifer and I found ourselves unable to translate the complex language of the score to something we could associate with the specimen in the exhibit. We needed to find a musician. Fortunately, as often happens within the Arts and Culture world, we "know a guy." So, over Easter weekend in 2019, I went home with my laundry and Craig's printed score in hand to ask my dad a favour. Colin, a graduate of Saint Michael's Choir School of Toronto 1982, (more or less) readily agreed to act as translator and record the score's audio for the exhibit *In the Wake of the Passenger Pigeon*. 12.



Craig described the calls of the Passenger Pigeon as distinctly "unmusical." The closest instrument at our disposal was a piano. Some of Craig's notes were marked as flat, or sharp, or up a key but produced essentially the same note. Our piano was unable to translate the nuances of sound he described. Some liberties needed to be taken in assuming certain keys and in maintaining the condensed, rushed rhythm of calls which our piano (and fingers) were not equipped. Keep in mind, this was not a scientific endeavour, but an artistic one intended to bring to life the lost voice of the Passenger Pigeon.

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The Lost Voice of the Passenger Pigeon, Part 1...

13.



specimen on loan from Regional Municipality of Halton

Our efforts to recreate the calls of the Passenger Pigeon have played a prominent role in the exhibit, notes reverberating throughout the space for visitors to explore. Framing the musical section, on the left a specimen of a male Passenger Pigeon sits unhearing and silent near the entryway while a recreation of a flock in flight passes overhead - courtesy of The Lost Bird Project - to contextualize the single song as amplified by thousands of voices. After 3-5 short seconds, the recording ends, and the room falls back into silence.





Craig's unique contribution to the story of the Passenger Pigeon allows our visitors to engage with sound, accompanied by the printed score on the wall. Rather than reading an account of someone who once heard the bird, visitors are able to "hear" (with some imagination) the call of the species echoing over a hundred years of silence.

There is something tangible about the experience of hearing the recordings while seeing the specimen that cannot be conveyed through writing. It gives the visitor something to recall on their next walk in the park, or to whistle to themselves between the shuffle of life's playlist, perhaps pausing long enough to reflect on the species who will never return for an encore performance.

Nadine Finlay



THE LOST VOICE

OF THE PASSENGER PIGEON -PART 2

15.

When Nadine first came across Wallace Craig's 1911 article, I was immediately captivated. I was intrigued with the opportunity to "hear" the song of a bird that has been extinct for over a century. My attention was distracted by questions about the origins of the compositions.

Who was Wallace Craig? Why would he take on such a project? And why wouldn't he have used a recording device?? While Nadine headed home to convince her father to lend his musical talents to our exhibit, I spiralled into research mode.

It turns out that Wallace Craig (1876-1954) was a Toronto-born experimental psychologist who was raised in Chicago. The Passenger Pigeon wasn't his first or only attempt to capture the song of a bird species through composition. Craig's doctoral research at the University of Chicago was a comparative study of the song, utterances, and other "noises" of different pigeon species.

While carrying straw to nest.



His primary argument was that voice is a means of social control in birds, specifically, that birds use vocalizations to influence the behaviour of others in order to elicit cooperation. His dissertation (PhD, 1908) was limited to the Blond Ring-dove, but he later published articles on closely related species, including the Mourning Dove and the Passenger Pigeon.



A birder from a young age, Craig's research was based on birds living in captivity. His inaugural work with pigeons took place under the mentorship of Charles Otis Whitman (1842-1910). Whitman was an influential zoologist who was best known for his work with pigeons and the extensive aviary he maintained at his home in Chicago. Working under Whitman's guidance, Craig's research focused on the unique calls and bodily movements of different species of pigeons with the goal of reconstructing their shared evolutionary origin.

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Craig believed that the Passenger Pigeon's vocalizations and characteristic calls had adapted over time as a result of the immense size of the flocks in which they travelled. The flocks have famously been described as being so large as to "darken" the sky or "eclipse" the sun as they passed overhead. Within a community so large, the soft cooing associated with most dove and pigeon species would hardly be heard. Instead, the Passenger Pigeon adapted a series of harder calls - kahs, clucks, and chats - that would stand out more easily from the crowd.



Still an important question remains: Why did Wallace Craig compose the songs of the species he studied? Sound recording technology existed - Edison invented the phonograph in 1877 and it was not an uncommon piece of equipment in the Psychology laboratory at the turn of the century.

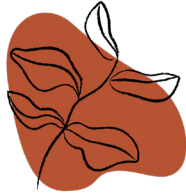
Although I have not found an explicit answer in Craig's published works, I suspect there are two factors at play in his decision. First, early recordings were of a low fidelity and captured a limited range of the sound spectrum. It is likely that the available equipment was simply not nuanced enough to record the distinctiveness of sound that Craig observed in the aviary and was therefore of little practical use. A second factor may explain his choice of musical composition: Craig reportedly had a lifelong interest in music and played both the violin and flute.

Craig's work on the Passenger Pigeon would be published a year after Whitman's passing. Although well-received, Craig would struggle throughout his career: he found himself unable to establish his own aviary due to financial limitations and an unsympathetic landlord. He bounced from position to position, and faced severe hearing loss by the early 1920s that made his auditory observations impossible. Craig planned to write a book on his comparative research across pigeon species. He planned to include illustrations and musical notations to capture the inseparable relationship between body language and vocalizations, but the manuscript was incomplete at the time of his death. It is unknown whether any parts of his manuscript still survive.

Jennifer Bazar



RETRO REVIEWS



19.

I came to the Lakeshore Grounds Interpretive Centre on a freezing winter film tour. At the end, I heard someone asking if there was a way to volunteer, and my imagination said "Hey, I can do that!" Since I'm retired, I was looking for stuff to keep me out of trouble. This seemed pretty good.

Movies have always interested me. They are to me what books are to other people. Where some people can get lost in a book, I get lost in a movie. My whole career was centred around reading for IT computer support. Since I was reading every day, all of the time, the last thing I wanted to do was read for recreation. Movies became my brain-candy downtime and a great enjoyment.

Movies are fantastic visual records, or time capsules. The Film Project at the Interpretive Centre is a study of different productions that have used the Lakeshore Grounds to film scenes for movies and television from the late 1970s to today. They show more than the story, but also the locations and buildings as they were in the past. Some of the movies filmed on the grounds have not aged well, but I am not watching them for the plot or dialogue. My favourite part of the film project is going through each scene and tracking down where they filmed it as precisely as I can. I enjoy the detective work of putting together where things were, and where they are now.

Some areas of the grounds don't exist anymore, some look different. A reference point of the lake in a scene doesn't help, because you can't see the lake from the cottages today. Another difficulty is that the scenes are often very quick, with the cameras focused on the actors and their dialogue. We're left with quick glimpses at the beginning and the end of the scenes, or when they flash to someone else. We're hunting for a few quick few seconds of scenes. 20.



The most I've watched a single scene is 10 or 20 times for a clip that is just a few seconds long. I just kind of jump through it using a mouse, because we're not using an editing software suite where you can spin frame by frame by frame. Since most scenes are so short, it is easy to jump too far, or too soon, or right out of the scene. It's a lot of careful fiddling for a two second glimpse to identify "that's what that looked like", or "that's where that was."

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Retro Reviews...

The Film Project's value is in keeping a record of the history of the area. For some areas there is almost no visual record - like the inner circle of the cottages. There are few photographs of the "service" side of the cottages. Most people took prettier exterior shots for their photos and postcards. When we find movie scenes showing the walkway, or the parking lot, it shows a lot of things that aren't there. It can be hard to visualize or place certain scenes or references.

21.



Sometimes the productions have the best record of how the Lakeshore Grounds have changed over the years. It's not just the past that the productions are preserving, with film crews still coming to the Lakeshore Grounds, they are also preserving the grounds as they are now. Maybe one day we can be a fly on the wall for some filming to help preserve the history. More like a fly-on-the-wall-with-a-camera, to keep building the historical record.

See the project: lakeshoregrounds.ca/history-film



Jim Tate

THE WAR ON STARLINGS



22.

The War on Starlings was an infestation of “millions” of European Starlings, reported between 1935 and 1945. The flocks consumed Hospital and homegrown crops indiscriminately, crushing the trees of Long Branch and New Toronto under their combined weight. The conflict rose to a crescendo when the birds started to peck away the mortar of the Hospital’s buildings. It was clear who was winning the war.

Despite the magnitude of the crisis, few mentions of the war make it to newspapers, but in a deliciously scathing letter, an anonymous local wrote to the Toronto Star, stating that the Government’s inaction up until that point was “shameful.” As a token effort from the City, the roosting trees were sprayed with a mixture of soft soap and coal oil to reduce the flocks’ presence in the area. The impact of the spray was unclear, but it had no effect on avian populations. The spray was apparently more of a danger to voters, rather than Starlings. In his final lines, the author calls for the City to face the truth and admit that it was the birds who were ruling the city.

The trail goes cold here, fading into time like a migrating flock fading away over the lake. But the next time you see a Starling hopping across the grass, be wary for they are the victors of the War in Long Branch and New Toronto.

Nadine Finlay

OUR FAV BIRDSONGS

Nadine Finlay

Our 2017 exhibit, *Bird's Eye View*, featured a continuous loop of bird calls - a fun auditory addition for the visitor but a different type of "memory" for our team. To the staff, the melodious songs of warblers were a welcome part of the day, but the jarring notes of the Red-necked Grebe still haunt our nightmares... Okay, Nadine's nightmares.

So we made a Spotify playlist of our favourite bird calls! Check them out next time you head to the park, and impress a friend or two with your bird-identification knowledge. It's cool - we swear.

1. **Whimbrel**
John Neville
2. **Red-Necked Grebe**
John Neville
3. **Cooper's Hawk**
John Neville
4. **Mourning Dove**
John Neville
5. **Snowy Owl**
John Neville
6. **Northern Flicker**
John Neville
7. **Tree Swallow**
John Neville
8. **Yellow Warbler**
John Neville
9. **American Goldfinch**
John Neville



SOUNDTRACK TO BIRDING

24.

Jennifer Bazar

While Nadine was putting together a collection of bird songs, I was on the search for a soundtrack for the birder. The result is a bit campy, a bit fun, but perfect for those early mornings while you crane your neck to identify the feathers flying overhead. After all, we need a little more theme music in our lives.

1. **I Like Birds**
Eels
2. **House Wren**
Owl City
3. **Birdwatchers of the World, Unite!**
Little Cinema
4. **Birdwatching**
The Telethons
5. **Birdwatching**
The Shelters
6. **Birding**
Sweet Shop Boys
7. **I'd Rather Be Birdwatching**
The Gallant Trees
8. **Your Local Hot Shot Birder's Best Kept Secret**
Funkmammoth
9. **Little Brown Jobs**
Monica Grabin
10. **Birders' National Anthem**
Matthew Halley



CONNECTING THE DOTS



25.



In a city like Toronto, a common question we each typically hear is: "What's your background?" It's usually a pretty simple one that gets a straight answer. Mine, on the other hand, is a slightly complicated story of heritage.

It was easier when I was younger, a teenager in an inner city high school surrounded by first generation immigrants struggling to carve out a small place for themselves in this society. Add on teenage hormones and angst, fueled by hard rock music along with black clothes, and you have a concoction that focused on television, movies, and where we're going to spend the weekend rather than heritage.

It wasn't until I was well into my twenties that it dawned on me. I was born in a country that doesn't exist. I was stamped with the nationality of a country that I've never been to, and in search of a safer and better life, my "motherland" didn't accept me anymore. That's when I realized that the connections I need to build in order to find and establish myself are like small seeds that I have to plant in most fertile environments. I knew that there is no place better to do that than Canada.



With this realization, I got into exploring the wilderness and everything that surrounds me; not only in the urban jungle, but also out on the lake, or up in the mountains. I spent several years trying to get away from the city, building more and more connections to this earth and all the people that loved and enjoyed their own life. I tried to hone the skill of savouring each moment in life and looked for ways to pass that feeling of simple happiness along.

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Connecting the Dots...

When it came time for me to go back to school full time, I knew that location was incredibly important to me. The Lakeshore Grounds, which hosts Humber College's Lakeshore campus, is quietly nestled away just minutes from the hustle and bustle of downtown Toronto - it was the perfect place.

I already knew of the incredible natural habitat that exists so close and the eclectic architecture full of its own history, but upon meeting the people behind the Lakeshore Grounds Interpretive Centre, I instantly made a connection and wanted to get involved.

I have led tours before, being a volunteer docent with the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), and have extensive knowledge about the film industry and production, especially in Toronto.



It was a natural jump into leading groups of people around the Lakeshore campus on a journey into a film production environment that is so deeply ingrained into the surrounding area. Being a very small part of many different histories that the Lakeshore Grounds has to share, film history has become a close and personal subject to me, even though I'm not professionally involved in the industry.

Through all of my volunteer dedication I allow myself to explore different environments and genuinely try to reach people. Sharing stories is not just about transferring information, it is about bridging the understanding between people and the things that surround them. Often, it's the smallest of inclinations that will stand out and make a story into something real, a memorable experience, a connection. Maybe this connection will even teach you something about yourself that you had no idea about. I know I'm still learning.

28.

Alex Sein





Jennifer Bazar

Jennifer is the Curator of the Lakeshore Grounds Interpretive Centre and a proud Long Branch resident. Incapable of separating her personal interests from her work world, Jennifer is an amateur birder working on building her life list, an avid collector of asylum postcards, and recently wrote her first play for the Etobicoke Historical Society's inaugural History Live event.



Nadine Finlay

Nadine is the Assistant Curator of the Lakeshore Grounds Interpretive Centre. In her free time, she has been completing her Master's at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Information (only one year to go!). A resident of New Toronto, Nadine is an early morning riser who can often be found running the shoreline with members of the MiBody Runners team.



Caitie McKinnon

Caitie is a recent graduate of Humber's Arts Administration and Cultural Management program. Among the projects she has completed as our Curatorial Intern, Caitie ran the third season of our annual Summer Workshop Series and has recently created a series of displays about the changing shoreline of Colonel Samuel Smith Park.

*Although we are sad to say goodbye, we wish Caitie all the best as she continues her education at Queen Margaret University in Scotland this fall! (*sniff*)*



Jonny Devaney

Jonny is a fourth-year student in Humber's Film and Media Productions program, who works with the Interpretive Centre as our Content Creator. Jonny is an outgoing, self-described "friendly human being," just like his dog, Thor. You may recognize him from our events (behind the camera) or by his work featured in this Zine, our social media channels, and website.



Jim Tate

Jim is very happily retired. With the joys of retirement, he frequents the Interpretive Centre as a volunteer, with specific interests in the film history of the campus. He is known for his keen eye in spotting scenes and angles that feature the Lakeshore Grounds. His current claim to fame is that he is 1-0 with Jennifer in the "Great Location Debate" which they engage in regularly when trying to pair photographs and film scenes to specific locations on the grounds.



Alex Sein

Alex is a Humber student, studying in the Bachelor of Commerce program. You may recognize him by his distinctive moustache or impressive collection of pins and buttons. Alex is a natural born storyteller who has traversed Toronto, guiding tours for TIFF, Humber College, Tour Guys, Urban Adventures, and of course the Lakeshore Grounds Interpretive Centre. From a keen personal interest in movies and TV, working with TIFF, and as an extra in several productions, Alex usually has the most up-to-date information on what is filming in the area!

TO OUR TEAM:

Thanks for the help!

Shore Stories is a collaborative zine and we deeply appreciate the time and creativity shared by our staff and volunteers.

Special thanks to Jem Cain for sharing her keen eye for typos (any remaining errors are our own).

Designed by: Caitie McKinnon
Edited by Nadine Finlay

To you, we say:

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!





Experience History

Please keep, pass on, or recycle this zine
to help reduce paper waste.

Thanks for reading.