Briarly: A Century Home in Etobicoke
by Robert Given

On the south side of Dundas Street, a block east of Thomas Montgomery’s Inn stands “Briarly”, one of Etobicoke’s finest century homes. Erected in 1850 of stucco construction, its design shows some of the finer aspects of a Regency house, including tall chimneys linked at the base and boxed cornices with frieze and brackets.

When first erected (for John B. Bagwell by David Lyle Straight) a verandah extended across the front of the house tending to hide the beautiful front door, the upper panels of which are glazed in a delicate frosted design. Decorative sidelong lights complement the entrance. Above is a mullioned transom delicately curved and matching in design the moulded wooden trim above the window.

For many years this was the family home of William Johnson Montgomery, son of Thomas and Margaret Montgomery, and during that time it was affectionately known as the Montgomery Homestead. Today the gate and picket fence and park-like grounds combine with the beautifully maintained house to make Briarly one of the lovely spots of Etobicoke.

The foregoing is from “Sidewalks of History” published in 1978 by the Etobicoke Historical Board.

Since it was written Briarly and its 1.2 acres was sold by the Gunn Estate and drastic changes are being proposed. The first development plan was to move the home forward toward Dundas Street and place 12 tall attached townhouses at the rear and on the side of the lot, aptly called by the neighborhood the “Berlin Wall scheme”. A second plan has been introduced, which will place 9 high free-standing condominium residences on both sides and the rear of Briarly - the “Stonehenge plan” in the neighborhoods parlance. Briarly itself may then be converted into an art gallery and/or office building complete with fire escapes, and off-street parking in the front.

ALL large trees will be eliminated and the green open space will be reduced by more than half. The new units are to be designed with family occupation in mind, but with very little open space. The height of the proposed buildings and their proximity to existing houses will create an invasion of privacy.

Reconstruction schemes such as the above will destroy the home’s atmosphere and permanently sever links with the past. We ask that Etobicoke reopen this issue; the site clearly merits a zealous heritage planning approach.

This year will witness the retiring of our logo pictured above. It is a work of art in its own right: a elevation drawing of the south side of Front Street East from Scott’s Lane to Church Street. It was drawn exclusively for us by former Conservancy President Mr. William J. Moffet, Architect. For years it has served us well, communicating graphically our best expectations of how we wanted our city to unfold: buildings of different styles and periods peacefully coexisting and blending the city gradually evolving in harmony towards a necessarily eclectic future.

Recent developments in the city’s core have indicated that we may be deluding ourselves. We believed that at some point in time the city would be done. The epidemic of demolitions now under way in the financial sector is graphic evidence that the old and the new are no longer thought to be compatible. Intolerance is abroad.

We will commission a new logo, conceivably through a competition. Perhaps someone will volunteer to undertake the design for us. Do you have any bright ideas? Something that speaks of us for us and to us. Let us know, and in the meantime, watch this space!

A.C.T. To Retire Logo

"...Diversity, not sameness, is (also) the keystone of our architectural heritage. Out of many needs for shelter, many climates, many kinds of topography, many nationalities, and many tastes and abilities have come many types and styles and qualities of structure in which we carry out our activities." Wrenn and Mulloy (in "Highrise of Homes", Rizzoli, New York, 1982.)

Calendar of Events

Lecture: The Evolution of Toronto Island
A.C.O. Annual General Meeting
London Geranium House Tour

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Architectural Conservancy
Toronto Region

A.C.T. Newsletter

P.O. Box 7162, Station "A", Toronto, Ont. M5W 1X8.

A branch of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario Inc.

The A.C.T. is one of ten branches which operate under the constitution of the A.C.O. Provincial Council.

All services, such as tours, lectures, written communications, etc., originate at the branch level. The cost of printing the Acorn, the official publication of the A.C.O. Provincial Council, is underwritten by a surcharge of $7.00 per household which the branches donate to the council.

President of the A.C.T.: Alec Keefer
1st Vice President and Chairman of the Awards Committee: Ramish Wilson 923-5492
2nd Vice President: Howard Levine 854-8639
Membership Secretary: Barb Miller 537-3622

Editor of the A.C.T. Newsletter: Gunolen 483-1735
Send all editorial submissions and related correspondence to:
A.C.T. Newsletter
c/o Gunolen
30 Inglewood Dr.,
Toronto, Ont. M4T 1G8.

A.C.O. Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of our parent organization, the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, is scheduled for the weekend of May 13-15 and will be hosted by the A.C.O. London Region Branch. Scheduled events for the weekend include workshops on conservation of slate and brick, on the A.C.O.'s publication "Acorn", and on A.C.O. Budget and Finance. There will also be presentations from each branch and a bus tour of the London area on Sunday. Those interested should fill out and return the enclosed coupon as soon as possible! There is a conference registration fee of $12 before April 11; this rises to $20 after that date. Billets are available at the University of Western Ontario for those who register before April 11. For further information, phone Mr. Bill Hitchins of the London Region Branch, at 519-672-3124.

London Geranium House Tour

The A.C.O. London Branch is holding their Geranium House Tour this year on Sunday, June 5, from 1 to 5 p.m. It will encompass 8 historic buildings including the 1826 Grant House. The A.C.O. will be organizing a bus to take us as a group to this event. The cost will be $21 per person. Tea will be served at a local church at a small additional charge. R.S.V.P. as soon as possible with the enclosed form and cheque to ensure your place. The A.C.T. bus is scheduled to leave from the Grant House and return to the A.C.O. at the Pleasant Boulevard side of St. Clair subway Station at 11:30 a.m.

Enoch Turner Lecture Series

The Enoch Turner Schoolhouse is holding this series of lectures and site visits to a number of historic buildings that once were a part of Toronto's waterfront. Tours will include visits to: the Gooderham and Worts Distillery, the Becker Castle, Texas Opera Centre, Young People's Theatre, St. Lawrence Hall, the Gooderham Building, and others. The series is part of the programming offered in co-operation between the Toronto's First Post Office and The Enoch Turner Schoolhouse. For more information and registration please call Mark Warren at 863-0012.

Mike Foley Looking For Street Names

Columnist and historian is on the hunt. If you have any interesting anecdotes or facts on street names, please write to him and let him know. His address is 61 Dennison Ave., Toronto, Ont. M2L 1M9.
Lecture: The Evolution of Toronto Island

Date: Sunday, April 17 at 3:00 p.m.
Place: Hydro Auditorium, Hydro Place at College Street and University Avenue
Speaker: Sally Gibson

The Architectural Conservancy Toronto Region will hold its Annual General Meeting following this lecture, in order to precede the A.C.O. meeting in London in May.

The Toronto Island has witnessed a rich historic procession intimately intertwined with the city whose harbour it shelters. Long before the settlement of Toronto, the island was a landmark for Indians, French explorers, missionaries, and voyageurs. The wife of Governor John Graves Simcoe painted there, leading the way for generations of enthusiastic artists. From the 19th century until after World War II, a lively and sophisticated community grew up on the island, comprising summer cottages, hotels, and cultural and sports facilities. Over three centuries, the Island has witnessed an abundant human pageant: dramatic rescues of shipwrecked sailors, a Royal visit by the future King Edward VII, the rowing heroes of Ned Hanlan, early aviators, workers on relief during the Depression, and various fires, floods, and other disasters.

Sally Gibson was educated at Vassar College and Yale University. She came to Toronto and joined the Bureau of Municipal Research in 1970, writing studies on a variety of urban issues. She was commissioned in 1973 by the City of Toronto to write a report entitled Toronto's Island Park Neighbourhoods, which formed the basis of the City's enlightened policy toward the Islands. In the summer of 1974 she lived on the Island. In 1981 she received a Ph.D. from the University of Toronto for a thesis entitled Sense of Place - Defense of Place: A Case Study of the Toronto Island. Dr. Gibson is the author of the splendid book More Than an Island: A History of the Toronto Island, the cover of which is shown above.
Please reserve me ___ place(s) on the A.C.T. bus for the London Geranium House Tour. I enclose a cheque payable to the Architectural Conservancy Toronto Region for ___ at the rate of $21.00 per person.

Name(s)__________________________

Address__________________________

City, Prov._______________________Postal Code_______________________

Mail to: A.C.T., P.O. Box 7162, Station "A", Toronto M5W 1X8.
The bus leaves from the Pleasant Boulevard exit of St. Clair subway station on the Yonge line at 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, June 6.

Please register me for the A.C.O. Annual General Meeting in London on the May 15-16 weekend. I want ___ place(s).

Name(s)__________________________

Address__________________________

City, Prov._______________________Postal Code_______________________

Phone __________________________ Conference Registration Fee before April 11 $12.00( )
Dinner Friday night $20.00( ) after April 11 20.00( )
Saturday night 22.00( ) Bus tour Sunday, incl. lunch 25.00( )

Accommodations: ____________________________

Billet at U.W.O.: Single $22.00( ) Single $22.00( )
Double 34.00( ) Double 34.00( )
Breakfast 5.00( ) Breakfast 5.00( )

Please check off items desired and mail with your cheque payable to
A.C.O. London Branch, to: A.C.O. London Region Branch (Conference),
P.O. Box 22, Station "B", London, Ont. N6A 4V3.

Please reserve me ___ place(s) on the A.C.T. bus for the London Geranium House Tour. I enclose a cheque payable to the Architectural Conservancy Toronto Region for ___ at the rate of $21.00 per person.

Name(s)__________________________

Address__________________________

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The bus leaves from the Pleasant Boulevard exit of St. Clair subway station on the Yonge line at 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, June 6.

Please register me for the A.C.O. Annual General Meeting in London on the May 13-15 weekend. I want ___ place(s).

Name(s)__________________________

Address__________________________

City, Prov._______________________Postal Code_______________________

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A.C.O. London Branch, to: A.C.O. London Region Branch (Conference),
P.O. Box 22, Station "B", London, Ont. N6A 4V3.
Eaton Auditorium Update

A committee has been struck by our organization in conjunction with other interested parties. Its purpose is to orchestrate public opinion and lobby for the restoration and reopening of the Eaton and Round Room Complex. Chaired by A.C.T. member Dr John Stanley it has named itself OPEN THE 7TH FLOOR COMMITTEE.

Pictured is the preliminary design for a lapid button which may be a component of our campaign. A.C.T. is also pleased to announce that we have purchased the original organ console from Mr Jim Leworthy in exchange for a tax receipt. We will keep you posted about further developments.

A BRACING EXPERIENCE

90 Yonge Street - Fairweathers Store
1918-1919 - C. S. Cobb

We offer the picture to the left as further documentation of the process that developers must go through in an apparent attempt to qualify for architectural perks under the Heritage Act of the Province of Ontario. Mr. Cobb, it will be remembered was the architect of the Registry Office (Albert St.), one of the strongest Beaux Arts statements, the city once possessed, was demolished to make way for the new City Hall.

899 Queen Street West

The coat of rough cast which now covers all sections of 899 Queen St. West is a device used to induce uniformity. In fact this home is composed of three distinct buildings which have been welded into a whole. The front left (east) part of the structure is a two-storey square with a very steep undecorated gable facing east. The west gable disappears into the roof of section three. A square brick chimney rises through the centre of the roof. All six windows (four on the east, two on the front top) are in 2/2 format with elliptical tops. The verandah which crosses the front of this wing protects two doors. The main opening being on the right with its carpenter-like transom and side lights, and the auxiliary French door on the left, have squared tops. Does the presence of these two doorways a few feet apart suggest the Regency influence or was the pair required to incorporate an office?

To the rear of this first section lies a one and three-quarter storey wing whose gable end, undecorated, faces south. The walls of this "kitchen" wing are more modest in scale than the first section but have 10 openings. This probably betrays the rabbit's warren of small rooms necessary to operate the Victorian household. Once again the tops of the windows are elliptically finished, even those on the second floor, where the trim is out of scale to the size of the opening and all but completely obscured by the overhang of the eave.

The third section, at the front right, thrusts its gable out with Gothic enthusiasm provocatively toward the street. As with 905 Queen, the west wall of this section is windowless. The windows in the bay on the ground floor extend the match pair of single windows on the rear ground floor and the rear second floor hall landing window are round topped. The second floor front pair above the bay are squared, where we might have expected some design concession to the tall gable, e.g. a Gothic treatment. No attempt was made to harmonize the roof angles of this third section with those of the first section.

A through examination of the interior of 899 Queen Street West will most certainly give some answers to the curious anomalies which this building possesses. Mr. Ferr's Brewery, built on the floor of the Garrison Creek Valley a very short distance from 899 Queen, could be entered at the second floor level from Queen Street, the roadway having been elevated with landfill. The site is presently occupied by a late 19th century commercial block numbered 875 through 899 Queen Street West. Mr. Ferr started his business in the 1820s. Sources indicate he also constructed a house of "Broin logs caesed over with clap boards" at the same time.

Also we know that in mid-life Mr. Ferr returned to England for an extended stay, leasing his business to someone. It is a sensible supposition that 905 Queen Street West was built upon his return. Is some portion of 899 Queen Street West his original log home? A tantalizing thought!

While 899 Queen Street West does not possess any unifying design components, it epitomizes all that is most wholesome about vernacular architecture in Ontario. It is the product of a series of skilled carpenters who adapted various styles to expand and modify the building to suit the particular needs of the families who lived there.

The Farr Family (7) 1820-1872
The Cornell Family 1872-1887
The Carter Family starting 1888

899 and 905 Queen Street West are a dynamic duo. They afford this city a unique opportunity to document side by side the two main opposing currents of our architectural evolution, the vernacular 899 and the professionally designed 905. Sited as they are on a piece of property 210' by 100' and facing the City Arboretum in Trinity Bellwoods Park they recreate graphically and exactly the spatial requirements for life in our 19th century city. We are extremely grateful to the Polish National Union who have maintained these buildings free of bowdlerization. We hope they will aggressively explore all options as they cast about for solutions to their need for expansion room. We must convince them that the demolition of 899 or 905 Queen Street is unnecessary and unacceptable.
A Masquerade on Adelaide Street

In the hierarchy of architectural conservation, everyone seems to agree that the ideal is preservation of whole, intact buildings on their original sites. For many of us this is the only acceptable goal. Others will acquiesce to authentic replication of sections of a structure as part of the preservation package. A third alternative is retention of a noteworthy facade or two as part of new, unrelated construction. Fortunately at this latter practice was touched on briefly in the November A.C.T. Newsletter. As we tried to point out there, such appliques may be art, but they are no longer architecture. At its essence, preservation of architecture is preservation of volume, that is space where activity takes place. Apropos of that column, several parties have expressed interest in hearing a more detailed exposition of our reaction to the high-rise constructed by Counsel Trust at 39 Adelaide Street East around and atop the two now-masked facades of the historic 1870's Millichamp-Building.

Over the past several years the Counsel Development Corporation has purchased and restored several buildings around the intersection of Toronto St. and Adelaide St. E. The latest is a three-storey former Consumers Gas Building of 1876 at 17-19 Toronto St. It is an award winning, stellar restoration. No. 36 Toronto St., a 10-storey pioneer skyscraper designed by E. J. Lennox in 1911 for Excelsior Life, was equally restored with respect and care. Its polished dark granite base and white terra cotta shaft dazzle again much as they did in the early years of this century. The Millichamp building was - and still is - an entirely different class. Built by the Millichamp family at the southeast corner of Victoria and Adelaide Streets, this modest three-storey buff brick building with chasalised pressed metal and wooden details represented a good example of Victorian Toronto vernacular commercial architecture.

Sharing the block with Excelsior, Millichamp's "preservation" was contingent on the addition of more office space to make the whole project economically viable. Further clouding the plan was an interest in somehow linking the two buildings both physically and aesthetically. The result is even worse than functional because not one part of what we see today reminds us of the Millichamp building of old. Millichamp was demolished except for the north and west exterior wall surfaces. These pieces of bricks were supported for many months by enormous steel braces which completely dominated the sidewalk while a modern building was erected to replace the floors, ceilings, joists, lath and plaster which were hauled away in dump trucks. Above rose the new "Millichamps", a 10-storey glass tower whose size and shape tried to duplicate the Excelsior.

The original Millichamp buff brick was arguably the most significant feature of its design, chosen no doubt to complement a long list of distinguished buildings of that material constructed in this part of the city, beginning in the 1850s with St. Lawrence Hall, the Courthouse and St. James Cathedral, store and continuing with a host of others. But a decision was made not to highlight this evocative material. Instead, the surviving skin of the Millichamps was covered so that it approximated the appearance of the Excelsior. The floor ground walls were painted grey while the two floors above were painted glossy white. We are always skeptical of any restoration that requires the painting of bricks. They are best left naked. Mr. Lennox's use of granite for the base of the Excelsior and terra cotta for the shaft was dictated by an appreciation of the technological properties of the materials as well as aesthetics. Without any basis in technology or history, the fragment that remains of the Millichamp building, in being asked to masquerade as the Excelsior, in fact becomes a ham masquerading as an exhibit. Not only do we not have an historic building intact, nor an historic building rebuilt, (cont'd next page)

The Living Dead or Live Wires, Overhead

440 College St. now Scotia Bank, formerly Metropolitan Bank designed by Darling and Pearson, 1913 (Courtesy Charking)

The 1988 B. Napier Simpson Jr. Memorial Lecture stated for this fall will specialize in the building material terra cotta, its fabrication, installation and restoration. In preparation for that event, Mr. Charles Kinghorn, one of our photographers has been busy busting out on the streets recording significant examples. It is the Conservancy's hope that all Charles' excellent work will lead to an exhibit and explanatory booklet.

One of the greatest constraints that this city imposes on our photographers is attempting to capture the buildings we all love without also including those ugly black monsters, hydro poles, that carry electricity into our buildings.

Sometimes this is an impossible quest or only possible by forcing the photographers to stand on their heads.

Once upon a time cities felt they had to put up with this primitive method of supplying energy; a necessary evil. Decades ago some cities, Montreal for example, evaluated the situation and opted to put the wires underground, bury them. Toronto has allowed these monstrous instruments to continue to dominate the area over our heads frequently destroying the visual enjoyment of our streets. The Architectural Conservancy of the Toronto Region hopes that those in control of policy at Toronto Hydro will see the error of our ways and inter them.
John Duncan House Update

On February 8, 1988 at 8 pm the council of the City of North York voted (13 to 3) to allow councillors John King to negotiate with the North York Board of Education concerning the subject building. This was a reversal of the position council took in November of 1987 for demolition of the Duncan House. The building could be located under this scheme a few yards from its original site on land owned by the Board of Education where it would be operated by them as a classroom and museum. Available insurance funds are to be utilized in its restoration. A deal is to be concluded involving Mr. A. Gorzanic who will assist in the rebuilding process after a small parcel of land located elsewhere in North York is transferred to Perwick Investment. This deal is subject to three time constraints. The North York Board of Education must be approached concerning the project at its meeting in March. The John Duncan House must be located on its new site by July 1, 1988 and restoration must completed by November 1, 1988.

The Conservancy wishes to convey its sincere appreciation to all the friends of the Duncan House who have worked so hard to advance the cause. The Toronto Region Branch has volunteered to assist in the ongoing discussions. Mr. R. Scherban, Chairman of the A.C.T.'s Heritage Fund, has communicated that economic enticement be necessary to save the building, he would convene the Fund's Board to discuss their potential involvement. We'll keep you posted!

A.C.T. Nominees Win Heritage Award

In the fall of 1987 the A.C.T. nominated Ms. Patricia Foran, Deputy Solicitor to the City of Toronto, and Mr. Steven Offer, M.P.P. for Mississauga South, for the Parks Canada Heritage Award for their role in the formulation and subsequent passage of Bill PR-57 which guarantees demolition control for designated buildings in the City of Toronto.

On February 14, 1988, in Saint John, New Brunswick, the Hon. Tom McCil-لام, Minister of the Environment announced that our two candidates had been successful.

We fervently hope that the Minister will repeat the presentation ceremony for the Awards in the City of Toronto, preferably inside a significant historic site. We are offering to co-host this event which we feel is necessary to gain the media's attention and to bolster the preservation movement.

A.C.T. Supports Umbrella

A new umbrella organization for heritage groups in the Metropolitan Toronto area is about to come into being. It will co-ordinate joint activities by heritage and historical groups on a variety of concerns in this region.

Among the issues to be addressed are the provision of funding for heritage activity under different government jurisdictions, the Ontario Heritage Policy Review, planning for the proposed Museum of Toronto, and the need for a comprehensive inventory of heritage in the region. The A.C.T. wholeheartedly endorses this effort. The formative meeting for the umbrella is on April 9 at the parish hall auditorium of the Bloor Street United Church, Bloor and Huron.

Troubled Waters Around Wychwood Park

In May of 1987 the executive of the Toronto Region Conservancy voted that an Award of Merit be offered to the Trustee of Wychwood Park (roughly at the northwest corner of Davenport Road and Bathurst Street) for successfully obtaining the first Historic District Designation in our city. Our Executive thought that preserving provincial legislation coupled with good will and common sense would be sufficient to control and direct development issues around Wychwood Park. A controversy developed around a proposal to sever and then build on a piece of land immediately to the east of the historic front gates of the Park. Several members of the A.C.T. approached your Executive and encouraged us to comment on the proposed building site and on the process by which the Park arrived at their ultimate decision to tolerate a new house on this unlikely and environmentally fragile site. So strongly was the A.C.T. Executive opposed to this matter that we elected to pursue this troublesome situation even as far as the Ontario Municipal Board stage, where our cause was regrettably unsuccessful.

The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario Inc. is deeply committed to the concept of the Heritage District. The Toronto Region Branch has watched with sympathy as the clouds gather over that gem of a town, Niagara-on-The-Lake, and also over Kingston. While we appreciate the time and effort that the Wychwood residents have expended in their attempt to satisfy the whole exercise a costumed travesty.

of even the most minimal criteria that we find the wants and needs of the builders of the proposed house we feel the spirit, indeed the principle, for which the Park should stand, has been severely compromised. The acrimony that was one of the byproducts of the discussions that took place around the proposed construction process was unnecessary. The A.C.T. Executive has now voted to place our offer of an Award of Merit to the Wychwood Community under review. We fervently hope that some same mechanism can be devised to contain hostility. The A.C.T. wishes to extend its warm appreciation to Mr. John Stokes, Architect, who, understanding the dire significance of the situation, appeared before the O.M.B. to help communicate our position.
Award of Merit: The Pantages Theatre

This award was to have been presented in April, but as we go to press, Cineplex Odeon has purchased the other half of the theatre from Famous Players. The presentation of the award will take place when the restoration of the entire building is complete. The date will be announced in a future newsletter.

The facility will be used as a 2,000-seat live stage theatre, competing with the Elgin/Winter Garden, the Royal Alexandra, and the O’Keefe Centre.

On Tuesday, February 2, 1986, the Executive of the Architectural Conservancy Toronto Region voted that an Award of Merit be given to Garth H. Drabinsky, Chairman, President and C.E.O. of Cineplex Odeon Corporation, for the purchase and renewal of the Pantages Theatre, 244 Victoria Street, Toronto, built in 1920 by N. L. Nathanson, Charles Lamb, Architect, and the Jackson-Lewis Co. Ltd., Construction Managers.

This will be the fourth in our first series of twelve Awards of Merit. The Awards were instituted by the A.C.T. to honour "persons and institutions who interfere in the real estate market at a crucial moment of a building's existence."

David Mesaric, Architect and Peter Rothen, Professional Engineer, will also be congratulated for their skilled regeneraton of the structure.

We preservationists must often act in a manner somewhat similar to real estate brokers, "selling" individual buildings of merit to municipal councils throughout Ontario in order to ensure that our past does not disappear under the wreckers’ ball.

The people of Toronto have voted with their pocketbooks since the opening of the restored Pantages Theatre, and by their attendance have clearly indicated their desire for a first-class theatre at the 244 Victoria Street location. We believe that the popularity of the theatre with the public reinforces the Toronto Historical Board’s assessment as to the architectural importance of the theatre.

The following is excerpted from Mike Filey’s column in the Sunday Sun, Dec. 27, 1987, page C20:

Toronto’s magnificent Pantages Theatre opened on Saturday evening, Aug. 28, 1920, and as the evening Telegram newspaper of the following Monday (there were no Sunday papers in those days) reported it “never before has a Toronto theatre had such a gala opening.”

Pantages was a combination house — both vaudeville acts and motion pictures were presented to its audience of 3,700.

On that summer’s evening 67 years ago, six vaudeville acts were featured on the stage, including monologue entertainer Fred P. Allen, the Marconi brothers, Maude Earl and company, McGrath and Deeds, followed by a play titled On The High Seas (as one critic reported “a dramatic wartime playlet with an explosive and patriotic finale”) and two silent films — Stick Abed with Wallace Reid and High and Dizzy starring Harold Lloyd. Admission: Matinees: $2.25, evening $3.45, including tax. The evening was a smashing success. Toronto’s newest theatre was off to a great start...

Within a decade following the Pantages opening, the theatre’s name had been changed to the more regal-sounding Imperial, a name that was changed again, slightly, to Imperial Six after the 3,700 seat hall was converted into six separate theatres for Famous Players by Toronto architect Mandel Sprachman in 1973. Thirteen years later, in 1986, the theatre was closed following a dispute between Famous Players and Cineplex Odeon, the latter company having purchased a portion of the theatre including the 900-seat balcony of the original Pantages.

It is the Cineplex Odeon portion of the theatre that was recently restored and reopened with the theatre’s original name back up on the marquee.