

## CAPTURED ON CANVAS

## Exploring our past through the work of Clara Harris

Over the Doors Open weekend (May 28-29, 2017) two key landmarks, Lambton House and Montgomery's Inn, will host an innovative exhibition of work by early twentieth-century Humber Valley artist Clara Harris. Each site is displaying a selection of original works by Clara Harris, documenting the local landscape. At Lambton House these will be accompanied by other items related to Clara, including her diary while at Montgomery's Inn. Harris' paintings join contemporary photographic images of the present day locations captured by students from Etobicoke School of the Arts. These contrasting images offer local demonstration of the ways in which Canada has been transformed over the last 150 years by urban growth.

## CAPTURED ON CAMERA

## Contemporary responses to the landscapes of Clara Harris May 1 to May 31

Grade 12 students, Krystyna Poremba and Georgia Mackay are graduating as Contemporary Art majors at Etobicoke School of the Arts. As Contemporary Photography minors, they have developed the ability to take photographs that capture more than just an image; these artists reflect on their personal experience, the experience of others, and their knowledge of the world to make art about subjects they are passionate about.

Following the brushstrokes of Clara Harris, a fellow local artist, has given Poremba and Mackay a renewed perspective about the history of art in Etobicoke and York. The city through Clara's painted lens provided a snapshot into historic landscapes often lost to us today. By exploring Etobicoke and York through Harris's works, Krystyna and Georgia have captured history through art, a language accessible to all.

## CLARA HARRIS (1887-1975)

## A brief biography



Clara Harris was a prolific early twentieth century artist and lifelong Ontarian. She was taught by J.W. Beatty, a colleague of the Group of Seven artists; attended the Art Institute of Chicago, Ontario College of Art and the Port Hope Summer Art School. Harris participated in exhibits in Canada and the U.S. alongside the Group of Seven, Emily Carr, Frank Panabaker, Winslow Homer and Edward Potthast. Her works, many documented with the locations, dates and time of day, offer a valuable record of landscapes long gone. Her portrayals of Etobicoke and York are snapshots existing nowhere else. Although Harris' work is little known her legacy includes over 350 paintings, sketches and ephemera significant to Canada's past. This exhibit provides one of the few channels available to view her work.

**To learn more about Clara Harris visit:**  
**[claraharrisart.com](http://claraharrisart.com)**

**Or contact the site Curator, Verna McLean at:  
curator@claraharrisart.com**



**DOORS OPEN**

In 2000, the City of Toronto launched the first Doors Open event in North America, offering people the chance invited to discover first-hand Ontario's hidden heritage treasures, some of which have never been open to the public. The 2017 theme is Fifteen Decades of Canadian Architecture and features highlights from each decade since the 1860s, as well as a pre-Confederation cluster.

## DOORS OPEN

Montgomery's Inn, another former Inn, was built for Irish immigrant Thomas Montgomery in the early 1830s. It stands at 4709 Dundas Street West, on the southeast corner of Islington Avenue and Dundas Street West in Etobicoke and offers a glimpse into 19th century life in a continually evolving urban landscape. It is one of 10 historic museums operated by the City of Toronto, and as well as offering tours and school programs and a range of activities has a monthly pub night and all year round weekly farmers' market. [www.toronto.ca/montgomerysinn](http://www.toronto.ca/montgomerysinn) phone 416-394-8112 email [montinn@toronto.ca](mailto:montinn@toronto.ca)

**MONTGOMERY'S INN**

Lambton House is the last of the public buildings relating to the milling era in the valley of the Lower Humber River. It has been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act as an historic structure and federally for its association with Sir William Pearce Howland, the only American-born, naturalised Canadian Father of Confederation and Ontario's first full-term Lieutenant Governor. Lambton House at 4066 Old Dundas Street is open for visits and tours, holds monthly pubs, heritage talks and is available for rent. Please visit [www.lambtonhouse.org](http://www.lambtonhouse.org), e-mail [admin@lambtonhouse.org](mailto:admin@lambtonhouse.org) or call 416-767-5472. The Warren Park 55 bus from the Jane Subway Station stops at our door.

**LAMBTON HOUSE**





1. Malton Road

Malton Road is now Rexdale Road; it's a very flat area and the elms are now gone. Clara was on the south side of the road when she painted this view, looking into the afternoon shadows



2. Church Street, the Kingsway, Morning, May 16, 1934

Royal York Road was formerly Church Street and this view looks north towards Dundas through the surrounding farms. Oil on board would have been easy to handle for outdoor work.



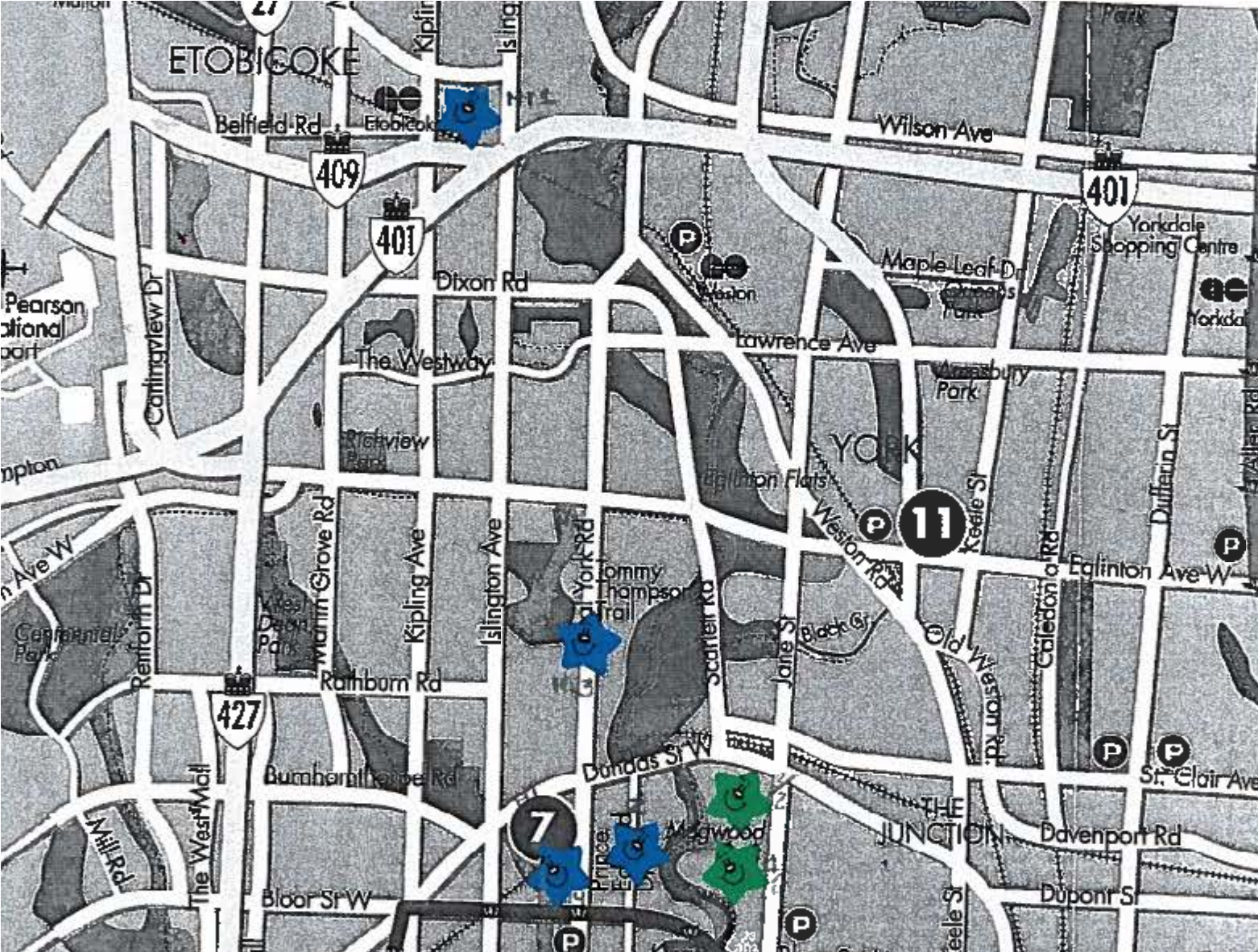
3. Royal York Road North

This view is probably looking north on Royal York Road, near the Jewish Cemetery on a cold afternoon. The shadows flow across from the west and the road dips to the north



4. Spring Break Up, Etobicoke Creek, before Hurricane Hazel

This view looks north from the east bank of the Creek. The west bank is high and the falls would be around Bloor Street. In 1954 Hurricane Hazel swept away the buildings



5. House in Snow, Raymond Avenue

This view looks up the hill and across Humbercrest Lane. Clara lived one block north of here. It looks like Clara painted this early in the day before the children had disturbed the fresh snow.



6. Elms in Winter

This shows Magwood Park north of the Pumping Station. Anderson's Farm House is still standing along the lane. Eric Anderson loved to cross country ski



7. Little Falls at Lambton in November, Humber River

This view looks north from the west bank, at Fisher's Mill, near what is now public washrooms. The elms are gone, as are the farm buildings, and a weir replaces the falls



8. Valley Road

This view looks west from Lessard Park. Clara would have walked here along Humbercrest Lane, and looked down Humberview Road over the houses on Langmuir Plateau, to the River.

