

Winter Edition 2018

# POINT *to* POINT

ARMSTRONG'S POINT COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

*'Tis the Season...  
Happy Holidays to all!*



*Armstrong's Point*  
THE HERITAGE REPORT

## Armstrong's Point Heritage House Tour 2018

Greetings,

The House Tour 2018 most certainly was a community hit! There were new house participants, newly-added events that were VERY well received, a successful Farmers' Market, a really fun ice cream truck. We had great music that I heard guests talking about, fantastic art from our photo artist to paintings, prints, mosaics and film.

We had people who made new friends! If we all had fun and a day to remember it was worth the time and effort!

Thank you ALL for your work and community interest - I am indeed proud to call you my neighbours!

*April McDonald - Kassum  
Chair - Heritage Committee*



# The Guardian of the Gates

by Pat Thomson

*Many of the amenities that we now take for granted in Armstrong's Point exist only because of the APA's considerable efforts.*

When we moved to Winnipeg and "The Gates" in 1982, we were surprised to find such a pleasant residential neighbourhood so close to downtown. We soon learned that a strong community organization called the Armstrong's Point Association (APA) had been working diligently for many years to ensure Armstrong's Point's survival as a vibrant "residential community in the heart of Winnipeg".

The APA was formed in 1955. Crescentwood homeowners started a similar organization in 1952 in response to the demolition of homes along the south side of the Assiniboine to build apartments. Residents in Armstrong's Point feared their community would be the next focus of developers.

Armstrong's Point resident, R.D. Guy, corresponded with the chair of the Crescentwood group, George Richardson (then President of James Richardson & Sons), before drafting a constitution for the newly-formed APA. Though the annual membership fee was set at \$10 (almost \$94 in 2018 dollars), sixty Armstrong's Point households signed up.

Justice Guy's report to the first annual meeting indicates that he had a very busy year as counsel for the APA at Winnipeg Zoning and Appeal Boards, as did APA members who wrote letters and attended hearings. They successfully opposed the following applications: the conversion of one house to six units, one to a



*West Gate c. 1915, Manitoba Archives*

quintuplex, three to triplexes, one to a rooming house, one for an institution (Committee on Alcoholism) and finally, one for a university fraternity. The construction of a new dwelling was turned down because the lot was too small. Three additional applications for triplexes succeeded because the APA approved architectural drawings that "retained the original residential character" and "included safe exits from all units".

Zoning was not the only focus of the early APA. When the second span of the Maryland Bridge was built in 1970, the APA successfully lobbied the City

to close Cornish to through traffic from Sherbrook. Other long-term aims included maintaining a healthy tree canopy and fostering neighbourhood connections through social activities such as the annual holiday party.

In looking through the APA archives, many early issues resurface on a regular basis. Inappropriate institutional expansion has been the focus of much activity, with the APA winning some battles and losing others. Developers learned they would face a tough fight here, however. The APA took a 1961 application for institutional expansion all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada and, although leave to appeal was denied, that institution listened to the community's objections and decided to pursue its plan at a larger, more suitable location.

Many of the amenities that we now take for granted in Armstrong's Point exist only because of the APA's considerable efforts. It responded each time adjoining property owners attempted to buy all three street-ends in Armstrong's Point for personal use. We now have two attractive parks at either end of Blanchard and the APA is investigating improvements at the end of Middle Gate.

Many APA initiatives have been directed at maintaining our beautiful tree canopy. The first Tree Committee was formed in the 1970s and, over the years, the APA has raised funds to plant hundreds of trees. The Coalition to Save the Elms

*Armstrong's Point would be a very different place if the APA had not worked to protect it. These family homes were all threatened with alternate uses ranging from fraternity house to apartment building to fashion boutique/dinner club.*



(now Trees Winnipeg) started as an offshoot of the Armstrong's Point Tree Committee. More recently, as Dutch Elm Disease gains a firm foothold in Winnipeg, Armstrong's Point is one of many communities losing magnificent elms. The City's Forestry Branch cannot replace all the casualties and so the APA Tree Committee has stepped up to plant new boulevard trees.

For this reason, fundraising has become a major part of APA activities. A Garden Tour in 2000 and more recent elaborate Heritage House Tours have raised thousands of dollars to fund APA projects such as the parks and boulevard trees. The House Tours are also real community-building exercises, with over 100 volunteers helping with the most recent event.

Other community groups were helped by APA participation. When Cornish Library was threatened with closure on at least four occasions, the APA rallied the broader community and saved Cornish from demolition by initiating its designation as a Heritage Resource. An APA offshoot called Friends of Cornish Library continues to support the next phase of upgrading and renewal. APA representatives helped to strengthen both Art City and Broadway Neighbourhood Centre and another group that began in Armstrong's Point worked to save Sherbrook Pool. Newsletters such as this one keep residents informed.

After years of effort, Armstrong's Point has recently been nominated as Winnipeg's first Heritage Conservation District. The City's administration report, which says that they chose Armstrong's Point "based partly on residents' long-standing advocacy", sums up the unique characteristics that have made it such a wonderful place to live:

"Armstrong's Point's history, architecture, cohesive streetscape and natural landscape contribute to its recognition as a highly valued district that is worthy of protection."

Every year since 1955, sixteen neighbours have volunteered to serve on the APA Board. They deserve our respect and thanks for a job well done.

*Pat Thomson established the APA archives in 1983 and has been collecting and protecting its records for the past 35 years.*

## "Rewilding" in Armstrong's Point

by Darlene Irwin

Mexico City, Boston, Cape Town, Tianjin, Melbourne and Winnipeg - these six non-European cities are partnering with twelve cities and eight institutions across Europe as part of NATURVATION (NATure based URban innoVATION), a four-year, seven million EUR project of the European Commission.



*Attila Katona*

Last August, we were pleased to meet with Attila Katona, doctoral researcher at the Central European University in Budapest. He rode his bicycle to Sherbrook, where, over coffee at our local shop, he explained the aim of NATURVATION: to unlock the potential of nature for improving urban life, and teaching cities across the globe the benefits of nature-based solutions, where technical ones fall short.

While in Winnipeg, Attila visited several sites - Bishop Grandin Greenway, Chief Peguis Greenway, Henteleff Park, the former Domtar site in Transcona, Wildwood and Armstrong's Point, to look into our local initiatives in the global "rewilding" movement, through reforestation, restoring native habitats and protecting green spaces.

Discussion continued while walking through our neighbourhood, observing APA's tree replacement program, touring East and West Blanchard parks and noting with approval how their river access gives us even more opportunities for nature walks and recreation right in the heart of the city.

With his background in environmental engineering and economics, our guest ranged further afield, to ask about the role of the Armstrong's Point Association and any other government, business, finance and stakeholder input, positive

or negative, that we have encountered in our community's efforts to protect AP's natural legacy.

Of special interest was APA's use of Heritage House Tours for fundraising to support its work, quite a novel idea to this visitor, and one he would definitely take away. The concept of residents sharing their homes with the public spoke to him of a community spirit not obvious in his home city. "Hmm...think of all the untapped potential in a historic place like Budapest!"

We in Armstrong's Point are well aware of the benefits of having nature all around us within the inner city. For many, it's a major reason we choose to live here. It doesn't surprise us that parks, green walls, wetland areas and community gardens have the potential to manage flooding, reduce heat stress, absorb air pollution, enhance biodiversity, improve mental and physical health and attract local businesses, as well as create urban space for recreation.



*Wintergreen*

*Photo: Ash Raichura*

The NATURVATION project will share innovations and good practice learned from each city's case study. It will help shape European urban policy, and who knows, perhaps even policy closer to home, with progressive community-based initiatives such as the ones we have here in AP as models. The first words from this well-travelled researcher who has seen what cities around the world are doing, upon entering West Blanchard Riparian Forest that day - "This is EXCELLENT!"

*Learn more @ [naturvation.eu](http://naturvation.eu)*

## BULLETIN BOARD

### Delicious pies for the holidays!

The Twelve Tribes Community at 89 East Gate will be offering delicious pies for the holidays, prepared either ready-to-eat or to bake at home!

Choose from Manitoba Apple, Farm-fresh Pumpkin or Mincemeat, \$25. This summer's Zucchini Relish, \$8, would make a great gift or tasty touch for your special dinner!

Please place your orders by December 6, and choose a date for your pick-up: December 13, 20, 23 or 27. Email orders to [Faith.stahl@TwelveTribes.ca](mailto:Faith.stahl@TwelveTribes.ca), place them in the mailbox at 89 East Gate, or call Faith Stahl at 204-779-1118. Include your name and phone number, quantity and kind of pie and your pick-up date and time.

We look forward to serving you, and

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**



### THE GATES HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

6 EAST GATE  
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2018  
1:00 - 4:00 P.M.

\*  
MUSIC · FOOD · WINE  
SILENT AUCTION  
\*

MEMBERSHIPS AVAILABLE  
(\$35.00 PER HOUSEHOLD)  
\*

RSVP: [jocelyne.hullen@gmail.com](mailto:jocelyne.hullen@gmail.com)  
\*

*Donations for silent auction welcome*  
\*

### APA Board Members:

Diamond Kassum - *President*  
Marvin Tiller - *Treasurer*  
April Kassum - *Secretary*  
Scott Antonation  
Jasdeep Bhangu  
Sandy Butterfield  
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### APA Committees:

#### Heritage Committee:

April Kassum

#### Safety and Security

#### Maintenance and Repairs:

Mark Carlson

#### Newsletter:

Editor: Darlene Irwin

Design: Randy Butterfield

#### Social Committee:

Peter Firlotte

#### Tree Committee:

Ivan Sabesky

## The Gallery ...



*“Art and nature  
collaborated  
last winter to give  
us our first  
three-dimensional  
work, an exquisite  
sculpture formed  
of ice and snow.”*

*Concept and  
construction by  
Charlotte Penner*



Winter in Winnipeg

Photo: Ash Raichura

Are you an event planner, an antiquarian, a tree hugger? Do you enjoy lifting heavy things and moving them around?

Help make our next event the best ever!

Sign up today!

Contact April Kassum: [akassum@shaw.ca](mailto:akassum@shaw.ca)

Point to Point: Armstrong's Point  
Community Newsletter

Send contributions, suggestions to:  
[d.irwin@mymts.net](mailto:d.irwin@mymts.net)