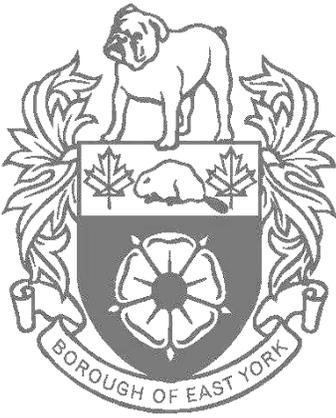


East York Tidbits

Stories About East York Presented by the East York Historical Society

THE NAMING OF DIEPPE PARK

In the early morning of August 19, 1942 about 6,000 Allied troops embarked on 250 vessels from southern England on a daylight raid on the German occupied French resort town of Dieppe. Almost 5,000 of the troops were young Canadian men. They were well trained, but lacked battle experience. Along with the Canadians were British and French commandos and American Rangers, the first Americans to see action in Europe in the War.



The aim of the raid was to land on the beaches in and around Dieppe, occupy the town for about 12 hours and withdraw to England with as many German prisoners as possible. Another explanation for carrying out the raid was to test German defences for an upcoming Allied invasion of Europe.

The raid on Dieppe was a failure. Of the 5,000 Canadians who embarked on the raid, almost 4,000 were killed, wounded or taken prisoner. Only a few of the men who landed on the beaches of Dieppe made it into the town.

Of the 1,000 men who returned to England, 600 of them were wounded. They brought back with them a handful of German prisoners.

Inadequate information about German fortifications and poor Allied planning and equipment are two main reasons for the failure of the raid. No matter the reasons for failure, the fact remains that the failed raid on Dieppe is remembered with sadness about the lost of young Canadian men who, without hesitation, faithfully served their country.

About 4 months after the raid on Dieppe, on January 11, 1943, East York Township Council named the park site on Cosburn Avenue Dieppe Park, in honour of the brave men who participated in the raid. The Council passed the following resolution.

“WHEREAS East York Township’s manpower have responded to the call of the Country in this time of War. And Whereas East York men were present at the Battle of Dieppe which was the opening Battle of the Allied offensive, and Whereas we have several park sites set aside in East York Township as yet unnamed.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the East York Council name the park site that has been known as the Smith Property to Dieppe Park in honour of our men who fought the gallant battle also to those men who gave their lives, and at some future time a suitable plaque be placed in the park setting forth this purpose. And the Seal of the Corporation be hereto affixed.”

The naming of Dieppe Park is a significant chapter in East York’s long and proud history of supporting the men and women who served our country.

A plaque at Telscombe Cliffs, East Sussex, England has the following poignant inscription dedicated to the Canadians who fought in the raid on Dieppe:

"Is it nothing to you, all ye who pass by

**A tribute to the memory of those gallant goodhearted Canadian boys who
passed on fighting for us on the Dieppe Raid.**

August 19, 1942, knowing what ought to be done and doing it at all costs.

They were worthy of their country.

**They shall be greatly remembered for God proved them and found them worthy of
himself."**

**Prepared by John Michailidis
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The East York Historical Society is dedicated to preserving and sharing information about East York’s rich past. The Society meets 5 times a year usually on the last Tuesday in January, March, May, September and November.

INTERESTED IN THE EAST YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY, CONTACT Martin Rainbow, President, 416-757-4555, email mrainbow@rogers.com
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