

This Week's Walk by Margeree Edwards

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"And now for something a little bit different..."

From warm to cold this week. Mushy snow and wet mud. Two of my previous columns describe walks that are very suitable for this weather as they are both on paved trails. See [TransCanada Trail at Little Lake](#) and [Big Strange Snow: The Rotary Trail](#).

Another good alternative is to walk in neighbourhoods with their clear sidewalks. A neighbourhood I particularly enjoy is in the square formed by Parkhill Road W, Fairbairn Street, Bellevue and Donegal. During the years between 1941 and 1944, droves of soldiers were returning from the war to a city that had very little housing available. Quickly, 550 war time houses (also called Victory Houses) were built. Most were in the style of a Cape Cod Colonial although there were 'Strawberry Houses' so called because they were the shape of the box the fruit came in. Many of all these houses still exist in this area.

My granddaughter (12) and I walked this neighborhood recently and found fun in a game we invented. Clara had never seen war time housing and was surprised to learn that the houses had all started out looking exactly the same. The game was for her to identify any part of the house today that still shows part of the original home and to say what the owners had done to change the size and appearance of the house.

The Walk

If you start at Parkhill and Fairbairn you can find parking on the lower level of the small road to the west, right at this intersection.

Starting at Fairbairn, head north to Bellevue Street (north of Wolsely.)

Walk east on Bellevue and turn south on Stomont Street.

Turn east on Wellington for a good example of the Strawberry Houses - a whole line of them.

Where Wellington meets Donegal Street, turn south and go on Donegal to Wolsely

Go on Wolsely to the west until you reach Gilchrist

Gilcrest will take you south to Parkhill Road (where there is no sidewalk so go carefully).

Go west on Parkhill Road to Park Street and north on Park Street to Wolsely

Go west on Wolsely to cross Fairbairn at the traffic light.

About the houses

The original War time houses were 4 to 6 rooms and 600 - 1200 square feet.. They were usually white clapboard siding. They rented for \$22 to \$30 per month. The original idea was that they would be torn down or moved eventually. Those on the Burnham Point were cleared away; those on the west end of Charlotte were sold and moved. Eventually 30,000 houses were sold to tenants.

Do you have favourite walks in Peterborough you would like to share? Please send me an email with some of the details and tell me where I can contact you by text and/or phone.

Thanks,

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