

Birth of a subway

Ever since Yonge Street was little more than a dirt highway ending at Lake Ontario, it has been Toronto's main north-south artery. Horse-drawn trams first came to Yonge in 1861, courtesy of Toronto Street Railway Company, followed 30 years later by the electric streetcars.

The idea of running trains beneath the street was first proposed between 1909 and 1912, but it was the Second World War that proved the need for a subway line. Wartime factory workers were pouring onto Toronto's extensive but overwhelmed streetcar system, and Yonge Street became a tangle of multi-car trams and automobiles.

To prevent the city from choking on its own traffic, the then Toronto Transportation Commission proposed a "rapid transit subway" beneath Yonge Street running from Eglinton Avenue south to Front Street where it would connect to Union Station — the city's central transportation hub.

Toronto voters overwhelmingly approved construction of an underground line on Jan. 1, 1946, along with a plan for a Queen streetcar subway. Of the sec-

ond scheme, only an unfinished station exists today, located directly below Queen subway station.

The federal government was expected to subsidize 20 per cent of the costs to build the subway, but the money never arrived. The city went ahead anyway, scaling back the proposal to just the Yonge route.

Thanks to post-war shortages of building material, construction began two years late in 1949. The work launch ceremony took place on Sept. 8 of that year, hosted by Monty Hall, who later became known to North Americans as the host of the television show *Let's Make A Deal*.

At the launch site, Ontario's then Lieutenant-Governor, Ray Lawson, climbed inside a pile driver and pulled a lever to pound the first "soldier" beam into place. All the local radio stations carried the entire event live. The official party then moved to the Royal York Hotel while the workers began the real job of excavation.

"Cut-and-cover" was chosen as the technique to build the underground portions of the 7.4 km line. Far less expensive than using a tunnel



TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

On March 30, 1954, Canada's first subway train pulled out of Davisville station loaded with riders — and witnessed by throngs of spectators.

boring machine, a large trench was dug into Yonge Street, and utility pipes were relocated — some of them with difficulty as they did not appear on any map. Steel cross-beams were used to support a heavy wooden deck, allowing traffic to return to the street.

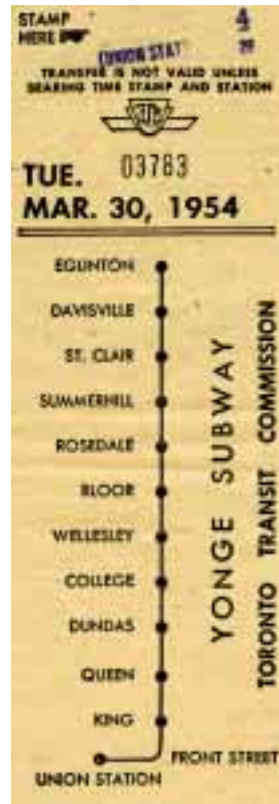
The construction was disruptive not only to automobiles and local business, but to the backbone of the city's streetcar network as Yonge cars were diverted around the work zones to nearby streets. The phrase "Sidewalk Superintendent" was coined for citizens who daily fed their curiosity by watching work in the trench. The TTC even produced a manual for the most avid onlookers, explaining the building process.

As construction headed north from Front Street, crews ran into solid rock, stretching as far north as Queen Street. This required dynamite charges to remove it, and blasts occurred twice daily, at noon and 4:30 pm.

In the end, 1.3 million cubic metres of material was removed from the route, much of it trucked to Ashbridges Bay on Lake Ontario.

About 12,700 metric tons of reinforcing steel and 1.4 million bags of cement were used to create the train tunnels and stations.

The cut-and-cover technique still required the demolition of many homes, although it left developable land behind once the tunnel was complete. When the subway passed beneath buildings that weren't to be demolished — including areas around Bloor and St. Clair stations — great care



Transfer from the opening day of the Yonge subway line.

was taken to support the buildings while work continued underground. Once the subway tunnel was complete, the buildings got their cellar floors back.

The Yonge subway was to have been finished by 1953, but the Korean War intervened and a steel shortage dragged the work on until 1954. The final cost of the route came to \$67 million.

While work was underway below street level, TTC officials were searching for new subway cars. Turning down trains from the United States, they finally settled on the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Company of Gloucester, England, pur-

chasing technology similar to what was being run on the London Underground. Toronto's first subway cars arrived in the Port of Montreal in 1953, and made their journey to Toronto by freight train.

CANADA'S FIRST SUBWAY OPENS

Ontario Premier Leslie Frost and Toronto Mayor Allan Lamport officially opened the Yonge subway at Davisville station around 11:00 a.m. on March 30, 1954. Metropolitan Toronto Chairman Frederick Gardiner was also in attendance, along with crowds of citizens, TTC employees and print, radio and newsreel journalists. Toronto's first television station did not start broadcasting until August of that year.

In a speech that echoes a half century later, TTC Chairman W.C. McBrien's called for the immediate commencement of construction on the Queen Street streetcar subway and several other sweeping measures to reduce downtown congestion, including fringe parking lots, one-way streets and the adoption of staggered working hours.

In his words, the Yonge Street subway line was "not the final solution of Toronto's traffic problems. It is only the start of combating this monster. Many other (rapid transit) lines will have to be built in the future." The chairman went on to warn that the TTC could not afford to build more subway lines without government assistance.

Finally, the premier and

the mayor together pushed a lever forward, changing a nearby track signal from amber to green. The subway was officially open.

Six hundred invited guests boarded the inaugural train, and Torontonians would take over a quarter million rides that day. "Eglinton to Union in 12 Minutes" the newspaper headlines cried, although the first trip actually took 14 minutes. Previously, that trip on the Yonge streetcar took 30 minutes — assuming traffic was favourable.

At 1:30 pm. the Yonge subway opened to the waiting public. Those who had taken the streetcar to work took the subway home. The Yonge streetcar line, established in 1861, faded from existence between 1:30 pm and 2:00 that afternoon.

JAMES BOW & ED DRASS

FOR METRO TORONTO

SEE PART TWO

OF TTC HISTORY TOMORROW

celebration

- The Special Anniversary train for the public leaves Eglinton Station at about 10:35 a.m. tomorrow. This train will stop at all stations from Eglinton to Union.
- Events at Union station will include:
 - A minute of silence in recognition of those who were injured or killed in subway construction.
 - Unveiling of Canada Post's new TTC subway stamp.
 - Dedication and locking of a time capsule commemorating the event.

Low, LOW TERM LIFE RATES

TEN-YEAR TERM			
Age	\$ 250,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 1,000,000
35	\$ 14.40	\$ 21.88	\$ 38.25
40	17.55	29.44	51.75
45	22.97	41.56	76.95
50	32.81	61.25	118.13
55	50.31	96.25	185.85
60	75.38	144.00	281.25
65	139.73	272.70	538.65

ARE YOU PAYING TOO MUCH FOR LIFE INSURANCE?

OTHER PLANS AVAILABLE:

- Mortgage Insurance
- Term 20 and Term 100 Plans
- Personal Disability Cover
- Universal Life Plans
- Critical Illness
- Flexible RESP's

MAKE ONE CALL.

WE RESEARCH THE PRODUCTS AND RATES BEST FOR YOU.

- Monthly rates shown are for male preferred non-smokers
- Female rates are considerably less
- Lower rates for annual premiums

BEST RATES • RELIABLE ADVICE • PERSONAL SERVICE
Gerson Life Insurance Brokers Inc. • 905 947-9486 • 1 800 465-3601

OMI® LASER and ELOS HAIR REMOVAL

5 Times More Effective than Other Hair Removal Services!



- All skin types
- All hair colours
- Leaves skin silky smooth
- Safe, gentle, permanent
- Electrolysis & Waxing

OMI MEDICAL INC.
416-223-5500
www.OMIhair.com

HAIR REMOVAL • IT'S ALL WE DO and WE DO IT BEST • SINCE 1979

BORROW UP TO \$1000.00 UNTIL PAYDAY

BAD CREDIT? NO CREDIT? NO PROBLEM!

97% Instantly Approved by phone/fax/internet

50% off 1st loan with this ad

645-LOAN (5626) or **www.tgipayday.ca**

1436 Danforth Ave.

TGI...payday

PAGER PLUS

a friend can always reach you, your family knows how to find you

- Choice of numeric pager
- Free Voice Mail!
- Free Activation!
- Service From \$5.00 Per Month
- FREE SAMEDAY DELIVERY!

For Only **\$30** incl tax

Call Today! **416.798.7271**

DO YOU HAVE LOTS OF CREDIT CARDS & LOANS AND YOU CAN'T HANDLE THEIR PAYMENTS??

- All your income going to bills.
- Everyday there is fight & argument at home.
- Creditors and collection agencies are calling you and they are threatening to take legal actions.
- Your salary is being garnished.

THERE ARE OTHER OPTIONS TO BANKRUPTCY

We can save you from threatening phone calls, garnishment and reduce your debts to 40% interest free

Call us and live a peaceful debtfree life

Confidentiality Guaranteed

CREDIT MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Phone: **(416) 780-1020**

FORGET PIN NUMBERS, JUST DIAL 10-10-620.

Italy 6.7¢ as low as per minute*

*First 15 minutes for \$1 each additional min 8¢. Rates to cell phones may differ.

TALK MORE, PAY LESS!

Call toll-free **10-10-620-0** or visit **www.1010620.com**

10-10-620

Call the WORLD for \$1

ARE YOU A PARENT WITH FAMILY LAW PROBLEMS?

Osgoode Hall Law School of York University

The Parent Information Program offers FREE seminars led by lawyers and social workers to help parents:

- learn about where to find more legal information
- find out about alternatives to using the courts
- understand legal terms like custody, access & support
- learn about the effects that separation may have on adults
- learn about the effects of parental conflict on children

CALL (416) 650-8104 TO SIGN UP!

www.pip.yorku.ca

Free child care and interpretation services can be arranged.

De Oliveira HAIR CARE SYSTEMS INC.

Specialized in Hair & Scalp Treatments

Losing your HAIR, or lost most of it?

De Oliveira can help you gain it back with our special blend of all natural ingredients. In over 25 years the De Oliveira Hair care Systems has successfully treated over 10,000 clients.

Call for your free consultation, for teenagers, men and women of all ages. After all what have you got to lose? Also available treatments for Psoriasis and Dandruff.

BEFORE **AFTER**

Call for your free consultation

788 Adelaide St. W.

Tel: (416) 504-8967

or 1-888-GRO-HAIR

www.deoliveirasystems.com

Products also available at 2368 Lakeshore Rd. W. Oakville 905-338-1951

ALL NATURAL PRODUCTS

Nothing painful, surgical or taken internally

Mariana De Oliveira, CEO

Recipient of the 2002 International Platinum Star Award for World Quality Commitment

Recipient of the 2001 International Gold Award for Excellence and Business Prestige

Recipient of the EuroMarket Award 2002 for Outstanding Business Performances and Managerial Achievements while Adapting International Standards

Subway 50 today

Fifty years ago today, Torontonians went below street level to marvel at their modern new subway. At 2:30 p.m., the very last Yonge streetcar — until then a very common sight with its passenger trailer — departed Eglinton for Front Street.



TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE PHOTO

Signs proclaiming it to be the last run were so large that most of the invited party of rail enthusiasts rode in the second car, just to be able to see out.

Subway Day, or "S-Day," heralded the end of streetcar service not only on Yonge, but on many lines that would eventually become bus routes. With the subway, the TTC's electrical demands created a strain on the city's hydro-electric supply — hastening the eventual withdrawal of streetcars from Church, Front and Bay Streets. The phenomenon of disappearing Toronto trams would not cease until citizens rallied to protect them two decades later.

The Bloor-Danforth line opened in 1966, when this photo was taken of a TTC guide explaining the new route to riders

After years of detours, dust and inconvenience, a Yonge Street reopening ceremony was scheduled for Oct. 20, 1954, only to be derailed by Hurricane Hazel.



ANDREW STAWICK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Although technically only a tropical depression by the time it hit Toronto, the disaster caused more than \$24 million in property damage and killed more than 80 Torontonians. The reopening ceremony was quickly reorganized into a fundraising event to assist the storm victims.

The first train on the Sheppard line breaks through the banner at Don Mills station on Nov. 22, 2002.

The Yonge subway, however, was an overnight success. Riders flocked to try out the line, and commuters continued to use it long after the novelty wore off.

Two-car "Gloucester" trains were supposed to operate during periods of low ridership, but four cars quickly became the minimum, and six-car trains the standard. Eventually, "Red Rockets" of eight cars rolled Monday through Saturday from the early morning to early evening.

The line increased. A skyscraper boom in the sixties created a sprawling complex of shopping concourses beneath the streets known unofficially as the "Underground City" — now the PATH system. The subway's route actually became visible from the air as new buildings sprouted above many of its stops.

The Yonge subway stations were modern but functional, with the walls covered by Vitrolite tiles in a simple design.

The terminus was also built to handle large crowds, being the transfer point for suburban buses. The station's half-century old bus bays are actually set to close this weekend — a retrofitted bus terminal will open next door.

The TTC opened its new headquarters on top of Davisville station in 1958, and construction began the next year to extend the Yonge subway under Uni-

As Toronto's downtown grew and redeveloped, use of the line increased. A skyscraper boom in the sixties created a sprawling complex of shopping concourses beneath the streets known unofficially as the "Underground City" — now the PATH system. The subway's route actually became visible from the air as new buildings sprouted above many of its stops.

versity Avenue from Union Station to St. George and Bloor.

The University subway was initially underused, and until the opening of the Spadina subway extension in 1978, the downtown line closed nightly at 9:45 p.m. and all day on Sundays.

After the Yonge line began transporting passengers a half century ago, expanding the underground train network became an ongoing preoccupation for the city.

The end of streetcars on Bloor Street came in 1966 with the opening of the Bloor-Danforth subway and by 1969, construction began on the North Yonge extension, taking trains into suburban territory north of Eglinton station.

As the network expanded and ridership increased, the original Yonge subway began to suffer from success. By the early 1980s, some parts of the line were handling as many as 40,000 passengers per direction per hour, beyond its designed capacity.

The University route had been built to double the volume of the downtown Yonge subway, but it too was nearing capacity.

STORY CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

Condom Sense?

Read, learn, discuss. We've got your complete guide to safer sex.

TODAY, ONLY IN YOUR

TORONTO STAR

It's where you live.

TORONTO STAR

25¢ off! Redeemable only at Mac's **7-11** and its family of convenience stores.

(Valid Mon. - Fri. only)

Mac's Convenience Stores Inc. stores: Submit coupons to your head office in the usual manner for full credit. MCSI will batch and submit to Toronto Star.

Store number:

Limit one coupon per customer purchase. Valid until December 31, 2004. Not redeemable for cash. No cash value. Coupon cannot be used in conjunction with other coupon offers. Coupon cannot be used as a discount against home delivery. Discount is applicable against the full retail price of the newspaper including GST.

25¢ off

**50 YEARS OF TRANSIT,
CONT. FROM PAGE 6**

To try and relieve the pressure, the TTC brought forward a number of plans — including an early 1980s proposal to construct a “Downtown Relief Line” from Pape station on the Bloor-Danforth subway to Union Station.

When the Network 2011 proposal was released in 1985, the TTC predicted that the \$500 million line could be open by 1998. Stalling from Queen’s Park delayed the approval of the plan, and support for the relief line evaporated.

The last 25 years brought a drought of new subway building. The Spadina line, which still does not run at full capacity, was the last major project until the Sheppard subway opened in 2002. The Sheppard route was the only survivor of an ambitious plan laid out by successive Ontario governments since the late 1980s.

Schemes with eager names like “Let’s Move” called for continuous extensions of all lines, including trains running to York University and to Sherway Gardens. When a new Conservative government under Mike Harris took over at Queen’s Park in 1995, the already-started Eglinton West line was cancelled, its first excavations filled in.

The Sheppard line, originally slated to travel east to Victoria Park, stopped short of Highway 404. Subway riders now board buses that often get caught in traffic jams as they head into Scarborough.

Current plans still call for a longer Sheppard line, and a northward push from Downsview station towards the City of Vaughan — but the TTC has more pressing problems.

Transit funding was already faltering by the time the Conservatives took power, and by the late 1990s the TTC had lost all provincial subsidies for its day-to-day operations. Streetcar and bus frequency was being reduced even before the last decade of the century had begun — and transit patronage took a dive after a series of fare hikes.

Even if a single new subway line were given the green light today, it would not be ready for riders in less than five years. Before then, the TTC needs billions just to replace the subway cars and buses it now has. That leaves no room for expanded service across the city.

JAMES BOW AND ED DRASS
FOR METRO TORONTO

For photographs and information on the history of the TTC, consult the Transit Toronto website at <http://transit.toronto.on.ca>

Ottawa’s bilingual gap **Tory tempest over name**

English is still the dominant language in the capital, despite years of effort to put French on an equal footing in the federal workplace, Official Languages Commissioner Dyane Adam said yesterday.

Adam spoke to reporters after release of “Walking the Talk: Language of Work in the Federal Public Service,” a study that found, despite decades of effort, it is still a

challenge for French-speaking public servants to use their own language in the National Capital Region.

Of francophone employees surveyed, almost 20 per cent felt they were not free to speak French to their supervisor, and 30 per cent did not feel free to speak French at meetings.

By contrast, 2 per cent of anglophone employees felt

they could not use English to their supervisor, and 4 per cent felt restricted about using English at meetings.

Many francophones said they “preferred to work in English to ensure that their performance is more fully . . . appreciated. Moreover, English seems to be recognized as the language of professional advancement.”

Torstar News Service

Conservative Leader Stephen Harper, who helped merge the Canadian Alliance and the federal Progressive Conservatives into the Conservative Party of Canada, lashed out yesterday at the fledgling Progressive Canadian Party, saying people might mistakenly vote for the new PC Party.

Formed by disgruntled Tories unhappy with the merg-

er, PC Party hopes to field 50 candidates, the minimum for party rights and privileges under the Elections Act.

Former Niagara Falls Tory MP Joe Hueglin, an organizer, tried to secure the name “Progressive Conservative” but was turned down by Elections Canada. He said his party is a “centrist, moderate” alternative to the Liberals.

Torstar News Service

Mobility Business Solutions**Give your staff a better way to share airtime.**

With pooled airtime, \$0 phones* and unlimited FREE local calling between plan members,** shared airtime from **Mobility** is a great way to give your staff the freedom of wireless and cut costs at the same time.

- Unlimited FREE calls between members
- \$0 phone for every plan member on your team
- Local or long distance options available
- Up to 4 months unlimited local calling
- One simple bill each month for the whole team

Call **1 866 BELL-BIZ**
Visit www.bell.ca/sharing or any
Bell World or Bell Mobility store



Making it simple.™

Certain conditions and restrictions apply. Offer subject to change without notice. Offer available only on new activations with a 24-month contract. Applicable taxes, System Access Fee, 9-1-1 emergency access fee, long distance and roaming charges are extra and may apply depending on rate plan. Cannot be combined with any other offer. *Only available for certain handsets while supplies last. **Free calls between members are limited to Bell Mobility territory.