



# The East York Flag

By former East York Mayor Alan Redway

Shortly after I was elected as the Mayor of East York and therefore a Member of the Metropolitan Toronto Council and Executive Committee, I realized that every one of the six area municipalities which comprised Metropolitan Toronto with the exception of East York had a municipal flag.

So I applied for and received authorization from East York Council to hold a design contest for an East York flag. Now every contest needs a prize but I did not want to burden the taxpayers with the cost so I wrote to each of the industries and businesses in the Borough asking for a modest cash donation of \$200.00 each towards the prize. Peak Freans, Bate Chemical, Canada Wire and Cable, Coca Cola, Dominion Regalia and Seel Enterprises responded positively. However one other company sent me a cheque but indicated they thought this was a foolish idea. I promptly sent back their cheque reminding them that this was a matter of civic pride for a very special municipality with an incredible community spirit.

Design submissions came from a great many adults but especially from school children some whose teachers took it on as a class project. The winning design was submitted by a Scarborough resident Raymond Taylor who had learned about the contest from East Yorker Blain Till when they ran together daily in Taylor Creek Park. The prize was \$1000.00 for Mr. Taylor and \$100.00 for the winning student design. Thus our flag was a real bargain. On viewing the design a number of East Yorkers expressed the opinion that the " Y " on the flag also represented the two branches of the Don River.

Once the design was approved by Council, Diana ( Didy ) Erb the wife of the Rector of St. Luke's Anglican Church on Coxwell, the Rev. Canon John Erb made the very first East York flag. Ever after she was known as East York's Betsy Ross. From then on the flag appeared throughout the Borough including prominently on all of our road signs. Unfortunately in its efforts to ensure we are all Torontonians first, the amalgamated city is replacing our East York street signs with large Toronto blue and white signs. One way we can help to keep the very special community spirit of our Borough alive is by flying the East York flag.

The East York Historical Society is selling 4" x 6" East York Flags and will order larger ones if there is sufficient interest.