

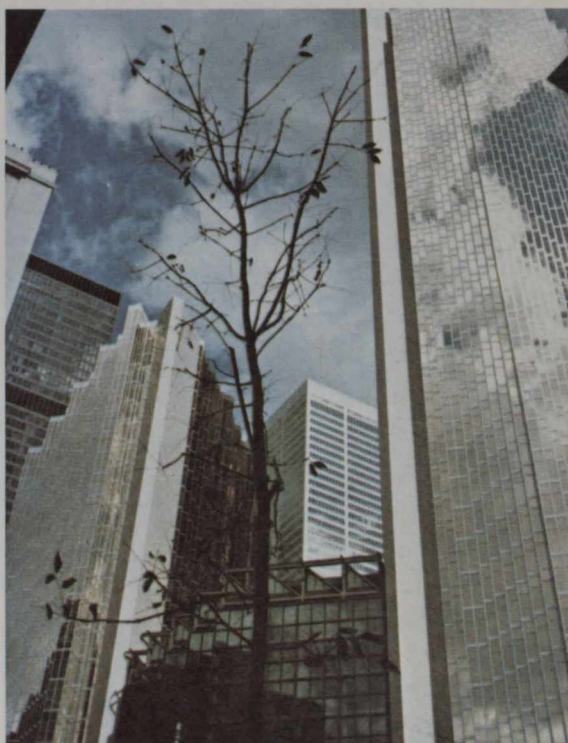
Toronto: Grand and Exciting

Toronto is like a fortunate matron who suddenly lost forty pounds of pomposity, had her face lifted, bought a Givenchy wardrobe, learned to sing in three languages, became a gourmet hostess and started getting love notes in the mail.

She is still perfectly respectable (she doesn't answer the mail), but she can hardly stop looking at herself in the mirror.

The transformation has contradictory elements. First came a surge of spectacular high-rise building: Viljo Revell designed the breathtaking City Hall complex; Mies van der Rohe, the Toronto-Dominion Centre; and I. M. Pei, the Commerce Court. Then came Edward Durell Stone's First Canadian Place, the Royal Bank Plaza by Boris Zerafa and Robin Clarke, and Raymond Moriyama's Metro Library.

After the high rises came the reaction to what John Sewell and the Reform Caucus considered the Manhattanization of the city, and in 1973 David Crombie, Toronto's "tiny perfect mayor," and his council put a moratorium on buildings more than 45 feet high. The Province of Ontario overruled the council, but Crombie still refused all but a few permits for skyscrapers. Toronto today has a mid-city showcase of architectural masterpieces surrounded by small-scale, livable neighbourhoods.



Cabbagetown

The moratorium saved Cabbagetown, a downtown neighbourhood of modest row houses. Cabbagetown was settled and built by nineteenth-century Irish immigrants who planted cabbages in their front gardens. The brick houses are small and sturdy, with stained glass over the doors and flowers in the yard. For most of its long life, Cabbagetown was the home of the respectable working class, but by the 1960s it was turning reluctantly into a slum. Though its renaissance began with the moratorium on high buildings, it received little else in the way of official inspiration. Its attractions were inherent. The solid houses were cheap at a time when new, not particularly well built ones were getting alarmingly expensive, and the location was ideal. The location is still ideal, but the houses are no longer cheap.

decades ago, she moved to No. 31. It cost \$8,500, and she worked twelve years at the Monarch Textile Mill to pay for it. Later she and her husband acquired the house next door as well, and this summer she gave that one to their son. She intends to leave the one she lives in to her daughter. "My husband and I agreed that when they got older, we'd give the houses to them, one each." They are substantial gifts: on today's market each would bring over \$60,000, and prices are rising.



Mrs. Almoze Leclerc, 72, sits in the summer on her front porch in the evening sun. She and her late husband, a travelling organ tuner, came from Quebec to No. 16 Seaton Street in 1925, and she has lived on the street ever since. When they tore down No. 16 some