

SAHRA Information – July 30, 2015

Happy Simcoe Day Information (compliments of Ward 22 Councillor Josh Matlow)

In 1968, Toronto City Council officially declared the designated Monday in August as “Simcoe Day” to honour Major-General John Graves Simcoe who was appointed the first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, a province created on September 12th, 1791.

As one of Toronto’s earliest historical figures, John Graves Simcoe was more than a regional Governor. Under his leadership, he founded York (now Toronto) and was fundamental in establishing institutions such as courts, trial by jury, English common law and freehold land tenure. Today, his most visible legacy is seen through the grid system of Toronto's streets that run north/south and east/west.

One of John Graves Simcoe's greatest achievements was to establish a town with a vision and steadfast commitment to the abolition of slavery. He ended slavery in Upper Canada before it was abolished in the British Empire. Through his efforts, there were no slaves in Upper Canada by 1810, even though slavery was not abolished throughout the Empire until 1834.

Simcoe Day is an opportunity to reflect on John Graves Simcoe's role in advocating for the end of slavery and forging ties with the Aboriginal community. He is a great example of the positive impact one can make for future generations to come.

Here are a few activities provided by the City of Toronto that you may enjoy this long weekend.

Outdoor swimming

Drop by your local outdoor pool, splash pad or wading pool on Monday. All City outdoor pools, wading pools and splash pads will be open. More information about locations and hours of operation is available at <http://toronto.ca/swim>.

Golf

All five City-run golf courses will be open and offer holiday rates on August 3. More information about hours and locations is available at <http://www.toronto.ca/golf>.

Riverdale Farm (Located at 201 Winchester St.)

Riverdale Farm features a variety of traditional farm animals. Visitors can tour the grounds, visit the barns and paddocks, and meet the farmer at 11:30 a.m. for a farming demonstration on the lower level of the Francey Barn. The farm is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and admission is free. More information is available at <http://www.toronto.ca/riverdalefarm>.

High Park Zoo (located on Deer Pen Rd. in the park)

Toronto's oldest zoo has been entertaining people for over 120 years. The zoo houses domestic and exotic animals such as bison, llamas, highland cattle and reindeer. Visit the new arrivals, including our new baby yak, reindeer and bison. The zoo is open daily from 7 a.m. to dusk. Admission is free. More information is available at <http://www.toronto.ca/parks/zoo/>.

Toronto Islands (ferry located at the foot of Bay Street)

The Islands are Toronto's largest downtown park. The park offers a variety of fun – a great place to walk, cycle, explore and view the city skyline. Visit <http://www.toronto.ca/parks/island> for more information.

Getting there by the ferry is half the fun. Toronto's ferries can carry more than 4,000 passengers an hour to and from the Islands. Arrive early to avoid long line-ups or check peak hours and wait times online at <http://www.toronto.ca/ferry>.

Greenhouses (Allan Gardens located at 19 Horticultural Ave. and Centennial Park located at 151 Elmcrest Rd.) A wide variety of flowers are in full bloom at Allan Gardens Conservatory and Centennial Park Conservatory. Both conservatories are open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free. More information is available by calling Allan Gardens Conservatory at 416-392-7288 or Centennial Park Conservatory at 416-394-8543 or online at <http://www.toronto.ca/conservatories>.

Simcoe Day at Toronto's Historic Sites

Three of the City's 10 historic sites will offer events, activities, and tours on Simcoe Day. Programming highlights for the open sites listed below. All of the City's historic sites will be open with many activities over the long weekend. Times and activity details will vary by location. More information is available at: <http://www.toronto.ca/museum-events>.

Fort York National Historic Site (250 Fort York Blvd)

Fort York celebrates Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe, who founded the town of York (Toronto) in 1793 and was the first Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada (Ontario). Simcoe also lived at Fort York, the birthplace of Toronto. Experience the history of Toronto with sounds of musketry, cannons and fife and drum music. Admission is free. Fort York is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Gibson House Museum (5172 Yonge St.)

Visitors can take part in games on the lawn, taste hand-made ice cream and tour the 1850's home of David and Eliza Gibson. There will also be activities and performances designed by the museum's youth volunteer team and visitors can make a craft to take home. Admission is pay what you wish. The museum is open from noon to 4:30 p.m.

Spadina Museum (285 Spadina Rd.)

The museum will be open and will have afternoon tours themed on the Austin family, who originally made Spadina Museum their home. Regular admission applies. The museum is open from noon to 5 p.m.