

# ROCK AROUND THE BLOCK PARTY

Residents in the Edgewood community threw on their cowboy hats for a lively day of country music outside their community residence. Both, new and long-term residents gathered outside for a BBQ and live music from "Melody Ranch." The social gathering encouraged residents to come enjoy an afternoon of music and activities, all while getting to know their neighbours a little better. What an inventive way to stay in touch with your neighbourhood!

Event by Lee Waddington  
Event code: pe6xmb



Becca, Brooke and Shannon



Matthew and Joseph



Ross and Amhad



Rick was on the grill cooking up dogs and burgers for guests

## SNAP SNEAKS A PEEK THE LITTLE SYNAGOGUE THAT COULD

by: Jillinda Greene

There is a structure that sits with quiet grace at 109 Kenilworth Avenue. Slightly set back from the street, the exterior of the building boasts a large circular window with a large star of David and beautiful stained glass windows. The building, originally built as a Baptist Church in 1895, was moved from its north facing position on Queen Street in 1911. Repositioned to face West and stand south of Queen on Kenilworth is where the Beach Hebrew Institute or the Beth Jacob stands to this day.

After building the Baptist Church in 1895, the congregation relocated to 129 Waverley Road in approximately 1907 and began Waverley Road Baptist, leaving the structure at Queen and Kenilworth vacant. During the next few years the church was used as a warehouse and community centre. On October 25, 1919, with the support of twenty-six Jewish families an offer to purchase the building was accepted. A deposit of one thousand, five hundred dollars, collected from the families and two mortgages totaling four thousand, five hundred dollars, secured the ownership of the Beach Hebrew Institute within nine days.

Between 1924 and 1926 it was decided that the synagogue needed to be expanded. Partially financed through a fund raising dinner that raised one thousand eight hundred dollars, the renovations began. A second floor addition was constructed for women to worship and the red brick front wall was added to make the church look more like a synagogue.

Just before and during the war many Jewish families living in the Beach moved to Forest Hill and northern locations reducing the attendance at the community synagogue. The Beach Hebrew Institute suffered on and off over the years with financial woes and low attendance, then in the late 40's and 50's a flourish of renewed activity provided by young new families moving into the community was enjoyed only to fluctuate once again in the 60's as families moved to the Bathurst area and the graceful brick building again endured lean times with little attendance.

The beginning of the 70's brought serious consideration by the elders to sell the property. Fortunately a renewed influx of popularity experienced by the Beach at that time drew new young Jewish families once again to the little synagogue.

In 1982, the synagogue was designated a historical site, by the 1990's membership had climbed to almost 150 families and in 2000 the synagogue joined hands with local churches providing drop-in lunch programs for those less fortunate.

The vibrant congregation uses the synagogue for bar and bat-mitzvah parties, weddings and celebrations of all kinds.

The best celebration is the continued use of the Beach Hebrew Institute, the legacy of a faith not only based in religion but in the perseverance of a graceful, petite structure that has struggled to survive, thrived, lasted, evolved and lovingly shared a lingering and enduring history of triumph.

Email [jillinda@jillindagreene.com](mailto:jillinda@jillindagreene.com) or contact her at 416-230-3849 to give her your ideas about unique landmarks in our communities and to see your Sneak Peeks in the pages of SNAP in upcoming issues.



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