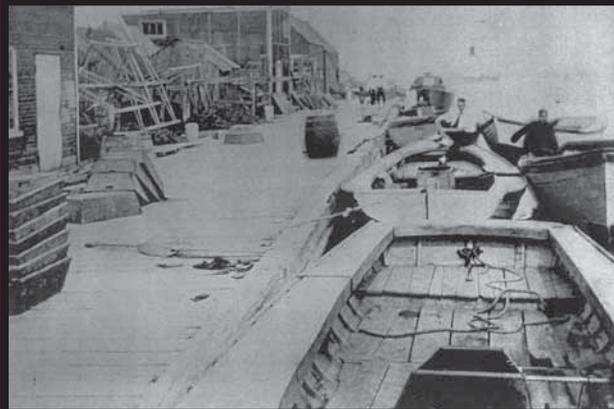


# Bronte Fishermen's Memorial

*Facts and History*



*"Old Tom" by H. Lloyd Carpenter*

## Bronte Fishermen's Memorial

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The Bronte Commercial Fishermen's Memorial is a granite monument dedicated to those hardy fishermen who battled wind and waves on an unforgiving lake to earn a living for their families and help establish Bronte's history as a fishing community.

Standing six feet high, the monument displays seven plaques etched in black granite depicting scenes from the fishing era of the late 1800s in Bronte Village. It also includes an etching of prominent Bronte fisherman Tom Joyce sitting on Bronte pier, pictured on the front of this brochure.

The money to build the memorial was raised from more than 90 private and corporate donors by a committee of Bronte residents led by Ward 1 Town Councillor Ralph Robinson and Ken Pollock (pictured), and Maureen Dobson.



## Bronte's Fishing Era

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Commercial fishing in Bronte thrived in the later part of the 19th century, after trade in wheat and lumber through Bronte Harbour, built in 1856, dwindled to nothing as a result of the completion of the Grand Trunk Railway and falling export prices.

Bronte fishermen were a rugged, hard-working group who set out daily in unprotected open boats in good weather and bad, summer and winter, sometimes risking or sacrificing their lives to earn a living from the herring, lake trout, whitefish and ciscoes that they cleaned at the dock, packed in ice and shipped to markets in Toronto, Hamilton and New York City.

## Tragedy Off Bronte Pier

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*December, 1886*

A storm wiped out the pier from Bronte to Port Credit and overturned the fishing boat of brothers William and Byron Dorland, ages 24 and 26. Their bodies were never recovered.

*February 1, 1935*

*The Dalton* had set out from the harbour with three men on board, but did not return that night. Friends and relatives gathered on the veranda of the Glendella house and fired a shotgun into the darkening sky in an attempt to communicate with the fishing craft as it drifted further out into the lake. Each time the gun boomed they would hear the men onboard, Roney Dorland, Ken McDonald and Mike Joyce, shout out in return, until they were too far away to hear. *The Dalton* had broken a propeller shaft in ice and the men were stranded for two days and nights in the frigid weather.

After ice-breakers and airplanes failed to locate them in the low, thick fog, Bill Bray and other fishermen who knew the lake and its currents set out from Bronte Harbour and rescued the men just off Port Credit.

***Come learn  
Bronte's fishing history  
for yourself by visiting the  
Bronte Fishermen's Memorial.***

## Location

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The Bronte Fishermen's Memorial is located in Bronte Heritage Waterfront Park at Bronte Road and Ontario Street in Oakville.

For more information, contact Ken Pollock at 905-827-2922, or Ward 1 Town Councillor Ralph Robinson at 905-827-7659.