

Oakville Park and Trail Name Origins

The following list includes parks and trails within the Town of Oakville that have been named in honour of an individual or in commemoration of an event or theme. The list was compiled and is maintained by the Heritage Planning section of the Planning and Development Department in collaboration with the Parks and Open Space Department. It is continually updated by staff as parks and trails are given names with historical or cultural significance.

Many parks not included in this list are named after the street on which they are located. For the origin of street names in Oakville, check out the **Oakville Street Name Origins** document.

Name	Origin
Busby Park	Named in 1946 after William Busby, who ran a jewellery store owner at 191 Lakeshore Road for over 40 years and was a well-known community member. Busby was instrumental in turning what was the town dump along the river into Busby Park in 1946, which at that time was much larger and included the area now covered by Water Street, the library and Oakville Centre.
Centennial Park	Named in 1967 for Canada's Centennial, as part of the development of the new Central Branch of the Oakville Library, a Centennial project.
Chris Vokes Memorial Park	Named in 1986 after Chris Vokes, a senior Canadian Army general who fought in World War II who later commanded the Central Command of the Canadian Army in Oakville, Ontario.
Colonial William Pond Parkette / Trail / Woods / Woods Parkette	Named in 2005 after Colonel William Chisholm, who founded Oakville as a European settlement village in 1827.
Coronation Park	Named in 1953 in honour of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.
Dingle Park	Named after the Dingle family who emigrated from Wales to Oakville in 1914. Dr. Dingle was a physician, and his son Adrian was a prolific painter who was widely respected as an illustrator, teacher, and landscape artist.
Donovan Bailey Park	Named in 1996 after Donovan Bailey, a retired Jamaican-Canadian sprinter who once held the world record for the 100 metres. Bailey immigrated to Oakville at age 12 and went to the former Queen Elizabeth Park High School nearby.
Edgemere Promenade	Named in 2011 after the former estate on the property known as Edgemere. The estate was developed in 1906 for Toronto jeweller James Ryrie. "Edgemere" means "edge of the sea". The estate house was demolished in 1992 but many of the original outbuildings and landscape elements remain.
Emily Cline Park	Named in 2011 after Emily Cline, former resident and owner of the property (Concession 1 NDS Lot 20) in the 1800s.
Erchless Estate	The name given to this historic estate, historically owned by the Chisholms, Oakville's founding family, from the 1830s to the 1960s. The estate was named after the Chisholm family castle west of Inverness in Scotland. It means "by the water" in Gaelic. The estate property is now a public park and museum.
Featherstone Parkette	Named in 2020 for the Featherstone family who farmed on Burnhamthorpe Road for about 175 years. In 2013, the family barn was dismantled and materials from it were salvaged and re-used to build the current shade structure in the park.
Fireman's Park	Named for the fire station that was once located on the site.
Fisherman's Wharf	Named in 1968 for its historic use as a fisherman's wharf. Bronte was a commercial fishing port for nearly a century and had one of the largest fishing fleets in Ontario in its peak years.
Forster Park	Named in 1947 after Harvey Weltmer Forster, land developer and former long-time resident of the area.
Fourteen Mile Creek Trail	Named after Fourteen Mile Creek, which was named by early settlers for its distance in miles from the Head of the Lake (where Hamilton is located today).

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Gairloch Gardens	Named around 1973 after the former estate that occupied the property known as Gairloch. The estate's owner, Toronto banker James Gairdner, bequeathed the land to the Town of Oakville in 1972 to be used as a public park and art gallery.
George's Square	The oldest public park in Oakville, the land was conveyed the land to the Town to be used as a public park in 1873. It was originally named by William Chisholm after his father, George.
Hillmer Park	Named in June 1997 in honour of the Hillmer family who were deeply rooted in the history of Oakville. It was formerly known as "Navy Flats", because of its location on the lowlands next to Navy Street.
Hogs Back Park	Named so for the "hog's back" curve of the Sixteen Mile Creek nearby.
Holyrood Park	Named in 1965 after the home on the street owned by Dr. W. T. Stuart that was named for Holyrood Castle in Scotland. The park contains landscape remnants of the estate, including its original entrance gate pillars. The original estate house is located nearby on Holyrood Avenue.
Homecoming Trail	Named in 1997 in memory of Hagood Hardy (1937-1997), internationally renowned musician, who made Oakville his home for many years. <i>The Homecoming</i> , was one of Hardy's most popular hits, achieving Gold certification in Canada.
Iroquois Shoreline Woods Park	Named in 1982 for its location along what was historically the edge of Lake Iroquois, a prehistoric proglacial lake that existed at the end of the last ice age. The lake was named after the Iroquois, or the Haudenosaunee, who were the original inhabitants of the area.
Josef Petriska Forest	Named in 2007 after Josef Petriska (1929-2015), a Romanian-Canadian sculptor and environmentalist who resided and worked in Oakville.
Joshua Valley Park / Joshua's Creek Trail	Named after Joshua Leach, a carpenter who arrived in the area around 1797. He and his family owned 200 acres of land in the Joshua Creek area and had a saw and thrashing mill on the creek.
Kaitting House Parkette	Named in 2013 after the Kaitting family and the family farmhouse located on Lots 17 and 18 in Concession 1 NDS, Trafalgar Township. The park contains a portion of the original farmhouse brick walls.
Lakeside Park	Established in 1897 as a public park, and likely given its name around the same time. One of Oakville's earliest parks, it is also home to two of Oakville's earliest buildings and is part of the Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District.
Lawson Park	Named around 1970 after the Lawson family who ran Ballymena Estate, a horse farm that extended from Lakeshore Road to north of Lawson Park and from Dunwoody Drive to Morrison Road. The barn in the park is a remnant from this farm and once housed thoroughbred horses. The farm was donated to the Town of Oakville by the Lawsons in 1969 for use as a community park.
Lions Valley Park	Named in the 1950s after the Lions Service Club who developed the park for the community in the 1950s.
Lisonally Promenade	Named in 2016 after Lisonally Farm, a former farm and estate on the site, developed by industrialist Sir Frank Baillie and his wife, philanthropist Edith Baillie. The former estate was developed into a residential subdivision in the 1990s. Remnant gate pillars from the estate remain on Lisonally Court and the former farm manager's cottage remains at 1110 Lakeshore Road West.
Market Square	Named in 2000 as part of the Town of Oakville Millennial Project to create a system of heritage trails. The square was established in 1835 when Oakville founder William Chisholm set aside the land to be used as a market square for vendors. The site once held the town hall and jail (built 1859) and the market building with stalls for butchers and farmers (built 1862). The buildings were all gone by 1913 and the property remained as a public park. At one time it was called Civic Park.
McCraney Creek Trail	Named after the McCraney family, early European settler who had a farm at Fourth Line and Lakeshore Road. The creek was named after them, as was McCraney's Corners, a former hamlet historically located at Fourth Line and Rebecca Street.

McDuffe Park	Named in 2020 after the McDuffe family who operated a farm nearby on Burnhamthorpe Road from 1840 to 1926.
Memorial Park	Named in 2005 for its Trafalgar Memorial, a war memorial recognizing almost 700 veterans from the former Trafalgar Township who served during WWI, WWII and the Korean War. The memorial was constructed using the frontispiece from the former Trafalgar Memorial Hall once located on the southeast corner of Dundas Street and Trafalgar Road.
Merton Parkette	Named in 2018 after the former hamlet of Merton, once located nearby at the intersection of Bronte Road (then Station Road) and the QEW (then Lower Middle Road). The hamlet was established by settlers as early as 1810 and was named Merton in 1852 to commemorate Admiral Horatio Nelson, who died in the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. He was from Merton, England and had a family estate known as Merton Estate.
Morrison Valley Trail	Named after the Morrison family who immigrated from Scotland in the 1800s and had multiple farms in the area. The Morrison brothers, James, Peter and John, were cattle ranchers and trade exporters, shipping cattle back to Scotland. Morrison Road is named after the family.
Munns Creek Trail	Named for the Munns Creek which was named after the Munn family who founded the former village of Munn's Corner at Sixth Line and Dundas Street.
Old Mill Parkette	Named in 2002 in recognition of the former mills that once dotted Sixteen Mile Creek, and for the remnant flywheel in the park from the former Oakville Basket Factory. The centre of the park is designed in the shape of the flywheel and includes plaques on Oakville's industrial history.
Ortona Park	Named in 2013 after the Ortona Barracks, a Canadian Department of National Defence facility historically located at the northeast corner of Bond Street and Kerr Street. The historic building used for the barracks remains in that location today. This site was home to a military housing community for the barracks staff from 1952 until 2009.
Palermo Park	Named in 2009 after the village of Palermo, located nearby at Dundas Street and Old Bronte Road. Palermo, founded as Hagartown by the Hagar family, was renamed in 1836 to commemorate Admiral Horatio Nelson, Lord of Palermo, who died in the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805.
Perkins Passage	Named in 1999 in honour of Eldon Perkins, a local businessman and volunteer firefighter whose family ran a florist shop and greenhouse nearby at Macdonald Road and Balsam Drive. The park is a 'passage' as it covers the land that was once the laneway for the Oakville & Milton Humane Society to Maple Avenue before Cornwall Road was constructed.
Petro Canada Park	Named after Petro Canada (now Suncor Energy) which leases the lands on the edge of their refinery to the Town of Oakville for a public park. It was formerly known as Optimist Park.
Post Park	Named after the Post family, early European settlers who had a farm in the area, and who helped settle the hamlet of Postville, also known as Post's Corners or Trafalgar, formerly located at the corner of Trafalgar Road and Dundas Street.
Queen Elizabeth Park	Named in 2009 after the former Queen Elizabeth Park High School, which opened in 1971 and was named in honour of Queen Elizabeth II. The former sports fields became a public park when the former school was purchased by the Town of Oakville in 2007 for use as a community and cultural centre.
Queen's Plate Parkette	Named in 2020 after the Queen's Plate (now the King's Plate), Canada's oldest and most prestigious thoroughbred race. James White owned a large farm known as The Woodlands – the historic farmhouse remains nearby at 1242 Bronte Road. White was a breeder and won the first Queen's Plate in 1860 with his horse Don Juan.
Raymar Promenade	Named in 1985 after the Raymar Estate, a former lakeshore estate property owned by the Gordon family. The estate was named after their daughters Ray and Marjorie.
Samuel Curtis Parkette	Named in 1984 after Samuel Curtis who purchased the land in the area in 1847 and whose family ran a dairy farm for over 100 years on the site. The farm was divided for subdivisions in 1984; the original farmhouse still remains next to the park at 3536 Wass Crescent.
Saw Whet Park	Named in 2018 after the former Saw Whet Golf Club, previously located in the same location.

Shell Park	Named in 1989 after Shell Canada, which ran a refinery on the site until 1982. The land was de-commissioned and cleaned and later occupied by a residential community, industry and Shell Park.
Shevchenko Park	Named in 2021 after Taras Shevchenko, a Ukrainian poet and artist. The lands on which the park is located were once the site of the Taras Shevchenko Museum and Memorial Park, remnants of which remain today in the park. Nearby streets are named in honour of the original memorial park.
Shipyards Park	Named for the site's historical use as a shipyard where many boats and schooners were constructed in the 19 th and early 20 th centuries.
Shorewood Promenade	Named in 1999 after the Shorewood Estate, a former estate property on the site that was owned by the Hindmarsh family who founded the Toronto Star.
Sir John Colborne Park	Named after Sir John Colborne (1778-1863), a British Army officer and commander-in-chief of the armed forces in British North America. He also served as Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada and founded Upper Canada College.
Sixteen Hollow Park	Named after the former hamlet of Sixteen Hollow that was located in the valley (or hollow) along Sixteen Mile Creek where Dundas Street crosses the river.
Sixteen Mile Creek Sports Park / Trail	Named after Sixteen Mile Creek, which was named by early settlers for its distance in miles from the Head of the Lake (where Hamilton is located today). The Mississauga name for the river is "niizhozaagiwan" or "Nesauga y-onk", which means "two outlet". The French colonizers referred to the river as "Rivière de Gravois", or "gravelly river".
Sovereign Park	Named after the Sovereign family, one of the earliest European settler families to arrive at the mouth of Twelve Mile Creek (Bronte Creek). The Sovereigns were farmers and owned large tracts of land in the Bronte area.
Squire Parkette	Named in 2013 after Squire James Appelbe, a successful politician and businessman who built the heritage house on the corner of Postville Road and Squire Crescent.
Tannery Park	Named in 2019 after the former leather tannery that operated on the site from the 1850s to the 1920s. The tannery produced a wide range of leather goods, including interiors for automobiles, and was a significant employer in the town for many decades.
Towne Square	Named in 1994 when the site was developed by the Town as a public square. Previously it had contained a service station.
Trafalgar Park	Named after Trafalgar Township, which was named after the 1805 Battle of Trafalgar.
Twelve Mile Creek Lookout	Named after Twelve Mile Creek, which was named by early settlers for its distance in miles from the Head of the Lake (where Hamilton is located today). Today it is known as Bronte Creek.
Veronica Tyrrell Park	Named in 2022 after Veronica Tyrrell, founder and longtime leader of the Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton (CCAH). Recognized for her tireless efforts to deep the community's knowledge of local Black History, particularly Oakville's role in the Underground Railroad.
Wallace Park	Named in 1950 to acknowledge a \$15,000 donation by J. M. Wallace to install floodlights and additional seats in the park's baseball diamond. Wallace was the owner of the Oakville Basket Factory. The park was formerly known as Victoria Park and was the site of the Oakville Fair.
Water Works Park	Named after the water purification plant nearby. The original pump station and reservoir on the site were built between 1908 and 1909 to supply water for the town. The site has retained its same use ever since. In its early days in the 1800s, the site was a quarantine camp when Oakville was a port of entry to Canada.
William Rose Park	Named in 2015 after William Rose, early settler who purchased 200 acres on which the park is located (Concession 1 NDS Lot 11) in 1806.

Sources:

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- Oakville Historical Society files
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