

Barrie Arboretum

Between 1974 and 2007, members of the Garden Club developed and maintained the Arboretum, located at the corner of Cundles and Sunnidale Roads in Sunnidale Park. Prior to this, the site was part of the 7th, 8th and 9th holes of the original Barrie Country Club. There were two solitary trees – a red maple and red oak, both are still with us, but now surrounded by hundreds of others. Over the years, gardens evolved to reflect the interests of our members.

The founders of the Arboretum had a dream, and Jim Savage, who spent much of his retirement planting and tending for the young saplings, captured their vision in a poem. Take a walk through the Arboretum and see if you think that the Arboretum looks like its founders imagined it would.

Like islands in a fretful sea
The Place of Trees is tumult free;
A place of rest and quiet joys
Surrounded by the city's noise.

Where man and Nature work in tune,
And growth continues late and soon;
A beauteous thing, a joy forever,
A worthy goal of man's endeavour.

When're man builds, destruction starts
Crumbling his homes, machines and arts,
But trees increase, improve, expand—
Advance the efforts of his hand.

Here in their youth are to be seen
The maple, oak, and evergreen,
The elm, the ash, the birch trees white
Spreading their leaves to catch the light.

Memory's trees are tended well,
For they have much of love to ell
Of those whose lives we'll ne'er forget:
Their influence is with us yet.

In days to come, great trees will spread
When those who placed them all are dead;
Great trunks will rise, and branches merge
Arching above the grassy verge.

Now through the trees long vistas seep
Where squirrels chatter, shy birds peep:

Rivers of sunlight, pools of shade,
And long barred shadows in emerald glade.

And here and there a white birch clump,
And here and there an ancient stump,
And cobweb nets bejeweled with dew,
And tree-top cones against the blue.

Here strolling couples courting come,
And those who sigh, and also some
Who linger while their children run
Among the trees for sport and fun.

Her nesting birds their secrets keep
Where poplars whisper, willows weep
And here the weary come to find
Rest and refreshment for the mind.

In time to come these things shall be,
Woodland beauty for all to see,
And many will walk where the founders trod
Far from the futile: nearer God.