

# The Giant's Rib

Dedicated to increasing awareness and protection of the  
Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve

Stan Nowak, Editor  
January 2014

[www.giantsrib.ca](http://www.giantsrib.ca)  
Volume 9, Issue 1

## Happy New Year!



Let's give a warm welcome to the year that starts a new,  
cherish each moment that the year shall behold,  
so let's come together and celebrate a blissful  
start to the New Year.

Happy New Year.

**Happy New Year from all of us at the  
Giant's Rib Discovery Centre!**

**May all the blessings and good fortunes this  
New Year may hold be realized by all of you  
and yours in 2014!**

# **The Bruce Duncan Memorial Lecture Series**

This Series, proudly sponsored by the Giant's Rib Discovery Centre, is named in memory of the former General Manager of the Hamilton Conservation Authority and is dedicated to promoting our Niagara Escarpment as an internationally-recognized World Biosphere Reserve and a truly unique topographic element of our natural and cultural heritage.

Upcoming Presentation of the Season: Sunday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2014

## **The House with the Parapet Wall**

With John Terpstra, Celebrated Local Author



**John Terpstra** is the author of *Falling into Place*, a non-fiction work about Hamilton's geography, and in particular the Iroquois Bar, and on the city as *place*. A poem from that book, called *Giants*, is installed as a plaque at the top edge of the escarpment in Sam Lawrence Park by Project Bookmarks.

He has published two other works of creative non-fiction. One of them, *The Boys, or Waiting for the Electrician's Daughter*, was short-listed for both the Charles Taylor Prize and the BC Award for Canadian Non-Fiction. But he is primarily known as a poet, winning the CBC Radio Literary Prize, the Bressani Prize, several Arts Hamilton Literary Awards, and being short-listed for the Governor-General's Award. The latest of his nine books of poetry, called *Brilliant Falls*, was published in 2013.

John lives in Hamilton, where he is self-employed as a cabinetmaker and carpenter.

John's presentation will be based on his upcoming book, coming out this Fall 2014.

This presentation will take place from 2:00 – 3:00 PM at the former Parks Canada Parks Discovery Centre, on 57 Discovery Drive, and now administered by The Hamilton Waterfront Trust.

Parking is free, but there is an admission fee of \$5.00 for this presentation. Refreshments will be provided after the presentation along with an opportunity to talk with our guest speaker.

Copies of *Falling into Place* and *Brilliant Falls* will be available as door prizes!

For further information: Sylvia Zsidi [sylviaz@cogeco.com](mailto:sylviaz@cogeco.com)



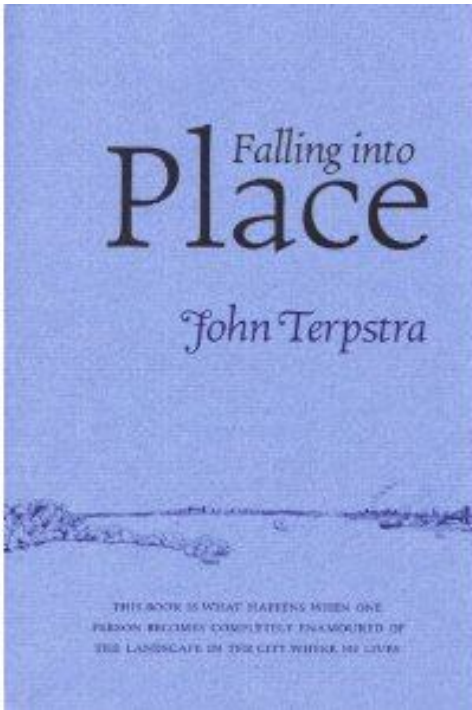
# The Literal Rib

By Stan Nowak

## **“Falling into Place” by John Terpstra**

Listed as one of the Hamilton Spectator's "Best books of the year" in 2002 for its appeal to "aficionados of history, geography, geology, poetic language, fine prose and the landscape around us."

Available at most local book stores and also a copy will be available as a door prize at the next Bruce Duncan Memorial Lecture Series presentation on Sunday, February 9<sup>th</sup> (see previous page above)!



I met John Terpstra when I booked him for a presentation for our Dundas Valley Historical Society, of which I was then President! The presentation was based on this book about the Iroquois Bar, the geological feature that supports York Road between the cities of Hamilton and Burlington.

The back of the book jacket describes this book perfectly!

*“This book is what happens when one person becomes completely enamoured of the landscape in the city where he lives – especially if this person, like John Terpstra, engages the world with the imagination and curiosity of a poet. Terpstra's investigations centre around the Iroquois Bar, a giant glacial sandbar which lies beneath one of Hamilton's busiest transportation corridors. Combining history and geology with gumshoe work and poetic intuition, Terpstra puzzles out just how much the physical and social geography of the area has changed since the sandbar was formed. This close study is nested inside a broader consideration of modern society's constant and often ill-considered alteration of landscape. Terpstra's acute focus on his neighbourhood offers insights of global value in a book that is both provocative and entertaining.”*

This book is both an historical and personal narrative, discussing in a factual and sometimes spiritual and romantic way the natural, geological and cultural heritage of the ancient sandbar between Hamilton and Burlington that today supports the York Road linking the two cities and known as the ‘Iroquois Bar’.

This book reminds me very strongly of Henry David Thoreau's ‘Walden’ in its tone, its passion and its satisfaction upon finishing reading it that you've just finished a virtual field trip that educated you, made you appreciate, made you *feel*, made you *care* and *give a damn* about something precious and doing something – anything – to ‘spread the word’ that this landmark is not just something worth protecting and preserving, but worth *experiencing* - even to this day!

This book has had a most profound impact on me! I've lived in the Hamilton area for most of my life, travelled across this ‘Iroquois Bar’ more than a gazillion times, most times well over the speed limit, and even worked nearby it as an employee of the Royal Botanical Gardens – and never gave it a second thought!

One thing this book has done for me is to raise my level of appreciation of this very special landmark, to stop and take a look every now and again, and to stay at – or even below - the speed limit, when passing through from Hamilton to Burlington along York Road.

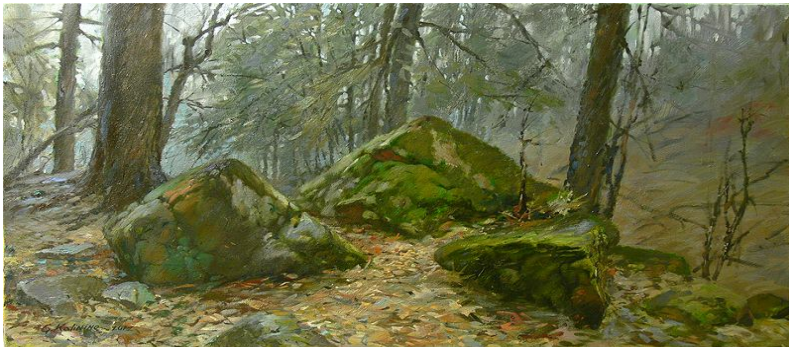
I dare you to read this book and not profoundly understand and fully appreciate what we have right here in ‘our backyard!’

# Art and Photography of the Heritage of the Niagara Escarpment

For the Month of February 2014, featuring the Artistic Works of Guennadi Kalinine



**Guennadi Kalinine** was born in Russia. He graduated from the Art College of Kazan and has a BA in History from Kazan State University. Later, for 15 years he instructed courses on computer graphic design. Also a passionate artist producing dynamic landscapes and traditional orthodox icon paintings. Guennadi immigrated to Canada in 2003, started a career of full-time artist and founded a GK Studio in downtown Dundas, Ontario. Guennadi is also a co-owner of McMaster Gallery with Bert Dorpmans and Stephen Landers. He teaches several courses on drawing and painting at the Dundas Valley School of Art. Since 2003 he has participated in 14 group exhibitions and 5 solo art shows. He was a finalist of International Artist magazine art competition of February/March 2010 and feature artist of October/November 2010. There also were many articles about his work in local and nationwide press: "Hamilton Spectator", "Arabella" magazine (2009), "Hamilton" magazine, "Bluecanvas" magazine (LA. CA. 2012).



Celebrating 'the art' of the natural and cultural heritage of the Niagara Escarpment regularly featuring a local artist at the Dundas Valley Trail Centre, Dundas Valley Conservation Area, 650 Governors Road in Dundas. Saturdays and Sundays only from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Park Entrance is \$9.00 per car, but walk in and bike in is free.

Your parking fee supports the Dundas valley Conservation Area and can be used towards any other Hamilton conservation area that same day.

There is no admission fee to view the exhibit, but donations are gratefully accepted.

For more information: Robert Gerritson [rigerritson@cogeco.ca](mailto:rigerritson@cogeco.ca)



# Waterfalls along the Niagara Escarpment

by Joe Hollick



**Stonewall Falls** (also called Lower Maple Falls) is located in the Greensville section of Hamilton on the same unnamed stream as Maple Falls (GRDC Waterfall of the Month for December 2013), but below it.

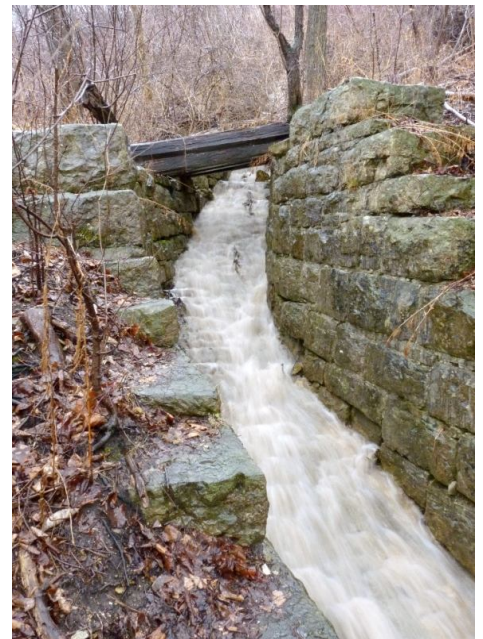
Maple Falls flows into a culvert which passes under the railway tracks and outlets on the lower side, forming Stonewall Falls with a width of 4 ft. or 1.2m. Stonewall Falls consists of two sections with the upper section located between the railway tracks and the Bruce Trail considered a Cascade type waterfall (height is 21 ft. or 6.4m) while the lower section below the Bruce Trail is considered a Ramp type falls (height is 13 ft. or 4m). This waterfall is often dry and has flow only after heavy rainfalls or during the winter snow melt.. The name of Stonewall comes from the armour stones that line the sides of the channelized stream.

Its Latitude and Longitude Coordinates are 43° 15' 47" N, 80° 0' 1" W.

To reach Stonewall Falls from Dundas, follow King Street (Hwy #8) westward up the Niagara Escarpment into Greensville.

Turn left at the first street, Hillcrest Avenue, then left again onto Park Avenue, which then turns 90 degrees to the right and becomes Maple Avenue.

Follow Maple Avenue to the very end and there is parking for a couple cars on gravel beyond the paved roadway and last house. Follow the pathway to the south going down the escarpment to the railway tracks.



Carefully cross the tracks to the continuation of the path. This lower path connects with the Bruce Trail in about 15 metres, then turn right and you will reach a very small wooden bridge which crosses over Stonewall Falls.

# Happy Waterfalling!

# Teachers' Corner

by Ken Hall

During the winter months most of our birds have left Ontario to seek better climatic conditions farther south. However it is amazing how many birds remain and struggle through the cold conditions and the shortage of food. I thought I would give you a list of birds that often stay in Ontario.

Your students could work through an exercise of learning to identify these birds, (a few bird books would be all that they would need) and then keep a list and pictures of how many they actually see during the month of February.

With the shortage of vegetation it is often easier to spot them in the winter.

Here is my list of birds that your students might see in winter.

Canada Goose  
Long Tailed Duck  
Bonaparte's Gull  
Great Black-backed Gull  
Sharp-shinned Hawk  
Red-tailed Hawk  
Ring-necked Pheasant  
American Robin  
Eastern Screech Owl  
Snowy Owl  
Long-eared Owl  
Northern Cardinal  
Downey Woodpecker  
Pileated Woodpecker  
Northern Shrike  
White-winged Crossbill  
Common Raven  
Snow Bunting  
Brown Creeper

Mallard Duck  
Common Merganser  
Ring-billed Gull  
Bald Eagle  
Coopers Hawk  
American Kestrel  
Ruffed Grouse  
Northern Mockingbird  
Great Horned Owl  
Barred Owl  
Short-eared Owl  
Red-bellied Woodpecker  
Hairy Woodpecker  
Brown-headed Cowbird  
House Finch  
American Crow  
Evening Grosbeak  
Red-breasted Nuthatch  
Carolina Wren

European Starling  
Red Breasted Merganser  
Cedar Waxwing  
Northern Harrier  
Northern Goshawk  
Peregrine Falcon  
Wild Turkey  
American Tree Sparrow  
Song Sparrow  
Swamp Sparrow  
House Sparrow  
Red-winged Blackbird  
Common Grackle  
Purple Finch  
Blue Jay  
Common Redpoll  
Horned Lark  
Black-capped Chickadee  
Golden-crowned Kinglet

*Good Luck!*





# Giant's Rib Photo of the Month



## \*Frost as Fog\*

At 20-25 degrees below zero Celsius, fog on the water is actually frost floating above the water.

Jeff Moreau and I were fortunate to get out to the edge of the Peninsula just as the sun was making one of its few short appearances during our 3-day adventure.

We began our hike in the dark with snowshoes and crossed around the edge of a lake and a forest trail to get there.

For many people it's easy to look out the window and say "not today, cloudy and freezing cold again". But I find the most amazing moments happen when the clouds break, even for a few minutes.

Bruce Peninsula National Park in January © 2014 Ron Clifford

# Come Join the Giant's Rib Discovery Centre!



**Do you love the  
Escarpment too ?**

## **The Discovery Centre Needs Your Help!**

Are you interested in the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve? Do you want to learn more about it and contribute to its protection?

Volunteering with the Giant's Rib is one way you can do that. We have positions available for volunteers on weekends at the Centre, and Director openings as well. We're growing and expanding, so if you're excited about the Niagara Escarpment, this is the place to be.

Please visit [www.giantsrib.ca](http://www.giantsrib.ca) to learn about available positions.

### **About the GRDC**

The Giant's Rib Discovery Centre tells the story of the Niagara Escarpment through interpretation at the Centre on weekends and through our public outreach programs. These include a weekend Arts and Photography Series featuring a local artist each month, guided interpretive hikes, the Bruce Duncan Memorial Lecture Series, and we offer a Grade 4 curriculum-based Rocks and Minerals unit to elementary schools free of charge.

We require interpretive volunteers to work half-days on weekends at the Centre (located within the Dundas Valley Conservation Area at 650 Governor's Road in Dundas) and co-ordinators to manage public programs and support our annual fundraiser in June.

For detailed descriptions, please visit [www.giantsrib.ca](http://www.giantsrib.ca)



**If you are interested in any of these positions, or if you have a specific skill set you feel may assist us, please contact Chris Hamilton at [chamilton@giantsrib.ca](mailto:chamilton@giantsrib.ca)**





## **Your Giant's Rib Discovery Centre's Board of Directors for 2013 - 14**

### **Executive Officers**

**Chris Hamilton**, President      **Ken Hall**, Past President  
**Warren Beacham**, Treasurer      **Joseph Hollick**, Secretary

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<b>Kenneth Hall</b>	Co-ordinator, Friends of The Giant's Rib Director, Education Committee
<b>Chris Hamilton</b>	Outreach Co-ordinator A / V Presentation Co-ordinator
<b>Joseph Hollick</b>	Co-ordinator, Niagara Escarpment Waterfalls Research Co-ordinator, Site and Building Development
<b>Robert Gerritsen</b>	Co-ordinator, Art and Photography of the Heritage of the Niagara Escarpment
<b>Ernie Kuechmeister</b>	Co-ordinator, Recognition Program
<b>Jennifer McPherson</b>	Marketing and Fund-raising
<b>Kyle McLoughlin</b>	Co-ordinator, Field Trips
<b>Naomi Mahaffey</b>	Volunteer Co-ordinator
<b>Stan Nowak</b>	Newsletter Editor
<b>Sylvia Zsidi</b>	Co-ordinator, Bruce Duncan Memorial Lecture Series

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Please don't print this Newsletter  
unless you really need to.***

***But, by all means, please feel free to share your newsletter  
with other friends via e-mail.***