

Hidden Gem - Toronto Irish Famine Memorial

Toronto's Harbourfront area is one of the city's most modern and vibrant neighbourhoods. However if you head to its westernmost end, at the foot of Bathurst Street, you'll find a small park filled with some of the most hauntingly beautiful sculptures in the city.

Toronto's Irish Famine Memorial is a little known gem that really is hidden. If you don't know it's there, you'd never think to look for it behind the derelict Canada Malting building. Less than a decade old, it is also one of the newest parks in the city.

From 1845 until 1851, Ireland suffered its worst famine in history. The Great Famine destroyed a way of life and caused the death of over one million Irish and the emigration of two million more. During this time nearly 40,000 desperate Irish immigrants came to Toronto, a city whose population at the time was barely 20,000. It was an influx that forever changed the face of Toronto.

Most of the immigrants first arrived at Reese's Wharf and were initially accommodated in "fever sheds" near Bathurst and Front Streets, only a couple of blocks from where the park is located today.

Designed by architect Jonathan M. Kearns, the Irish Famine Memorial is not your typical Toronto Park. Instead it is meant to stir emotions and memories of destitute ancestors arriving from a ravaged land in hopes of a new and better life. The stark, stone architecture intends to recreate the bare landscape that was left behind and to show the contrast of hope versus devastation. Sculptures include, "The Woman on the Ground," "The Orphan Boy" and "The Apprehensive Man."

The Toronto Irish Famine Memorial is open year round. For further details you may also see the [website](#).

This week's hidden gem from Les Clef's d'Or is by:

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