

# Fourth Stop – Lake Promenade & Long Branch Ave.

## Long Branch Hotel

The Long Branch Hotel burned down in 1958.

We know that, from a news report, in 1958, in the Toronto Daily Star, describing the fire. The article includes photos of the fire, including a photo of rats escaping the fire, and running for their life.

We also have eye-witness reports, and archival photographs, underling that the fire occurred in 1968.

I mention the year, because some print publications, and online accounts, like to repeat the false news that the fire occurred in 1954.

The eye-witness accounts of the fire are striking. Among other things, residents of Long Branch, who were children at the time, recall seeing large, hefty rats fleeing the fire, as fast as their legs could carry them.

A blowtorch used to thaw some frozen water pipes set the building on fire, according to Bill Rawson of Oakville, who lived close to the hotel in those years.

In the years after the fire, the remnants of Long Branch Park were demolished, and the land was repurposed for apartment buildings.

In those years, infill was used to extend the shoreline, where the beach serving Long Branch Park had been located, southward into Lake Ontario.

The park that now occupies the infill is called Long Branch Park, a reminder of the vastly larger tract of land, which the original Long Branch Park occupied, starting with its development in the late 1880s.

With regard to what remains, of the original Long Branch Park, we can also note that a good number of buildings in the area – such as numbers 2, 4, and 6 Long Branch Ave., by way of example – are now on the Heritage Register at the City of Toronto.

An online map, at the City of Toronto website, indicates which houses, along the route of today's Jane's Walk, are listed at the Heritage Registry.

As we will note at our Sixth Stop, along today's Jane's Walk route, however, being "listed" does not necessarily guarantee that a house will not be torn down and rebuilt.

Agassiz Street S.W. corner S.T.A. STREET BRANCH  
 ROAD TO STATION 212 STABLES  
**LAKE SHORE ROAD**  
**EDGEWOOD ROAD**  
**ELM ROAD**  
**CHURCH RESERVE ARBOUR RESERVE**  
**PARK ROAD**  
**BEACH ROAD**  
**LAKE ONTARIO**

**LONG BRANCH**  
**SUMMER RESORT**  
 LOT NO. 9, GREEN FRONT CONCESSION, ETOBICOKE  
**VILLA LOTS**  
 For Villa Residences, Summer Cottages, Camping, Etc.

**THE LONG BRANCH PROPERTY** comprises about 600 acres, mostly rich soil, in a strategically situated on the shore of Lake Ontario at Long Branch, Ontario, Canada. It is bounded by the Lake to the west, by the City of Toronto to the east, and by the City of Etobicoke to the south. The property is divided into lots for villa residences, summer cottages, camping, etc. The lots are of various sizes, and are situated in a beautiful and healthy location. The property is well watered, and is surrounded by a dense forest of trees. The climate is pure and bracing, and is well adapted for the health of all classes of people. The property is well situated for the enjoyment of all the pleasures of a summer resort. The property is well watered, and is surrounded by a dense forest of trees. The climate is pure and bracing, and is well adapted for the health of all classes of people. The property is well situated for the enjoyment of all the pleasures of a summer resort.

**ADDRESS**  
 108881 S. W. CORNER S. T. A. STREET BRANCH, ETOBICOKE, ONTARIO.

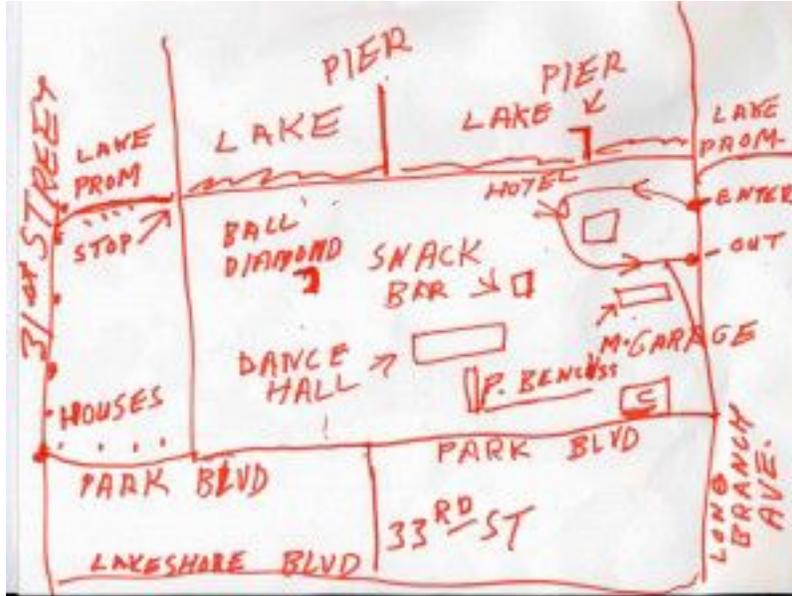
Plan showing relative position of LONG BRANCH

Alexander & Clark, Ltd. Supts.  
 Printed by the Toronto Star, Toronto.

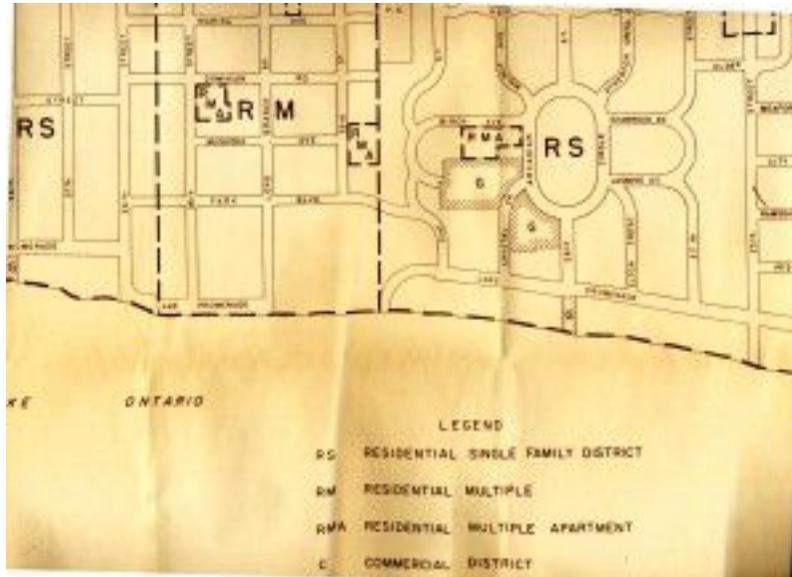
“Long Branch Summer Resort lot no. 9, broken front concession, Etobicoke villa lots for villa residence, summer cottages, camping, etc.”



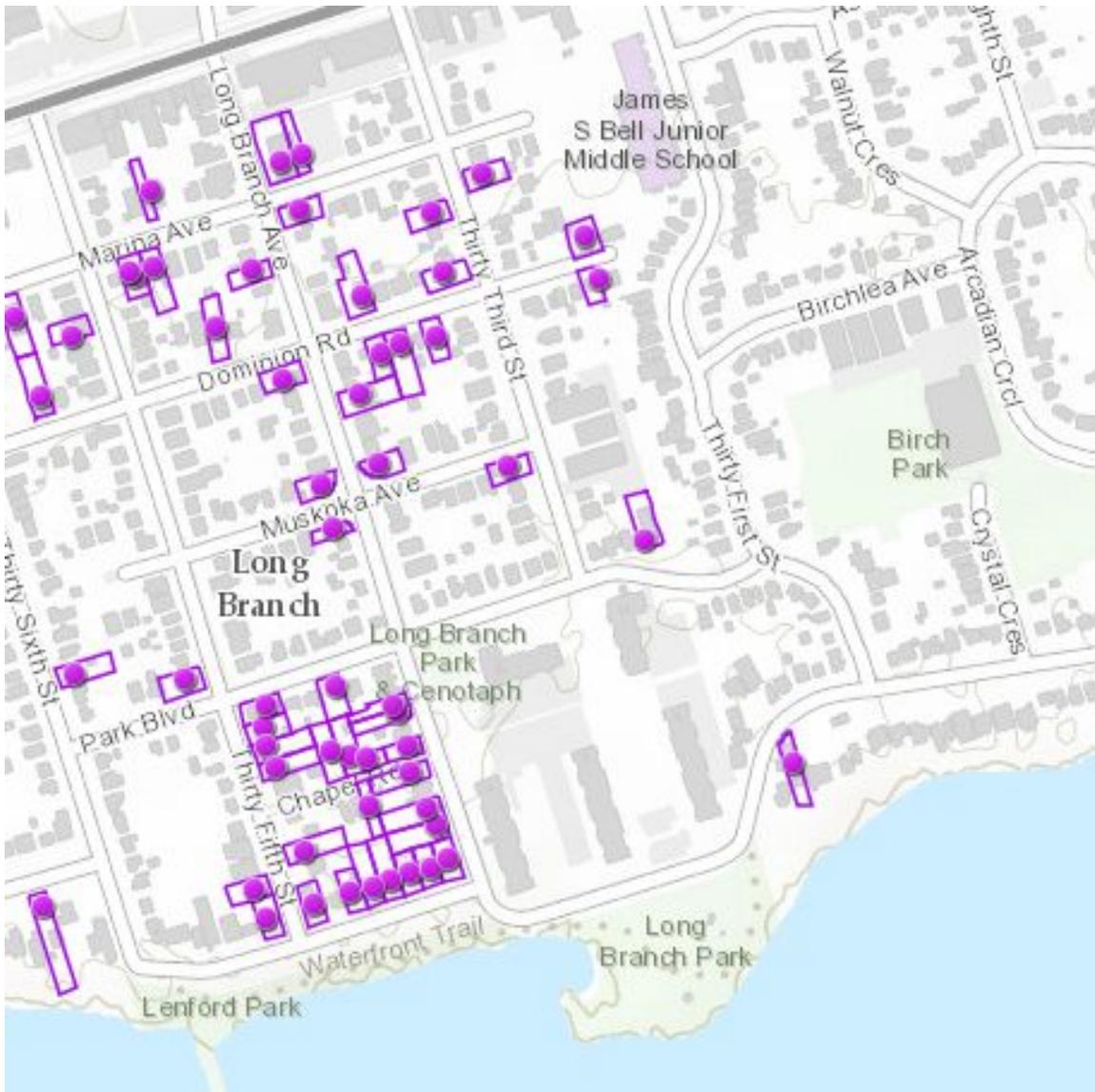
Archival photo of Long Branch Hotel. The image has been scanned from Villages of Etobicoke (1985).



Long Branch Hotel map. Bill Rawson, May 2013



A map from the Long Branch Historical Society shows the shoreline of Lake Ontario as it existed during the years before the Long Branch Hotel burned down.



Heritage properties in the area are marked in purple. Source: City of Toronto online Heritage Registry