

FOR THE GHOSTS OF RICHMOND PAST

Poem and photograph by Lee Ann Eckhardt Smith

I come to this place seeking
evidence
remnants
and yes, the ghosts
who must surely inhabit this location
so central to life as they knew it.

This was the landing site.
This was a main road.
This is where the logs were laid:
leaky walls of shelter in the
new homeland.

But the air today
brisk and fresh
holds nothing but my own fancies.

Still I try:
I close my eyes.
I open my heart.
And I hear
not a message,
just whispers from leaves.

I sense
not gentle fingers,
just the breeze on my arm.

And as the breeze erases
the heat the sun has raised on my skin
I think about
Time:
the most powerful eraser of all.

A little smile plays at the corners of my lips
as I turn away.
And I send greetings out over this place
just in case any ghosts linger.



Lee Ann Eckhardt Smith is a professional writer from Richmond. During Richmond's 200th anniversary year, she is sharing with Richmond Hub readers some photographs she's taken around the village along with the poems the pictures inspire her to write.

This photo was taken looking east on Strachan toward King Street. The intersection once marked the southeast corner of the "Government Reserve" lot, which held the commissariat, Colonel

Burke's office and other buildings of importance to the original Richmond settlement. Modern houses now sit on part of the lot along Martin and Cockburn streets, and the rest is unused grassland bordered by this path. Thanks to Marion Scott for her maps and factoids, which enabled me to find this site!