

March 1: Chair's Opener and Introductions

It is my immense honour to welcome all of you here this afternoon to "Claremont by the Park"! (Formerly known as Claremont at the end of Runway #33)

My name is Alexis Whalen and I am the new-ish/newer Chair of Land Over Landings. I may be an unfamiliar face to many of you but I've been kicking around the Lands since 1987. Don't worry, Mary Delaney is right here too. Our incredible Past Chair will be speaking very shortly, and will of course catch me if I fail to meet this moment.

We've assembled a collection of voices to share a few words with you this afternoon to try and capture the depth and breadth of this historic and transitional time. We've ruthlessly asked our speakers to keep their remarks extremely brief so if they seem breathless, it's 100% my fault.

I acknowledge that there are many more of you who have something to share and I apologize that there isn't time for everyone to speak today. I would encourage you to write down your sentiments in our guest book, or send us a note afterwards. We do truly want to document this day with as many voices as possible.

In case anyone must slip away before the speeches are over, I'd like to recognize:

- Mary's Country Kitchen for keeping us nourished today.
- Apples of Glasgow for the refreshing local cider.
- York Region Environmental Alliance, Waterfront Regeneration Trust, and Wildlands League for helping get this party off the ground.
- The Lions Club of Claremont for generously hosting us.
- And last but not least, endless appreciation to Green Durham Association for always having our back!

And now, without further delay...

Please join me in welcoming one of the leading proponents of ending the airport era and hastening an expanded and more robust Rouge National Urban Park, The Honourable Gary Anandasangaree, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Northern Affairs, and MP for Scarborough-Rouge Park.

Minister Anandasangaree... [speech]

I'm so honoured to introduce The Right Honourable Senator Robert Black, of Ontario, long-time agricultural expert, instigator behind the 2024 Senate report *Critical Ground - Why Soil is Essential to Canada's Economic, Environmental, Human, and Social Health*, and advocate for a secure agricultural future for the remaining lands.

Senator Black... [speech]

I'm so proud to invite to the podium, a true champion of the "no airport" movement, a woman who has wholeheartedly supported this cause throughout her *entire* political career, and who **never gave up** on this file, or on us! Join me in welcoming the Member of Parliament for Pickering-Uxbridge, Jennifer O'Connell.

MP Jennifer O'Connell... [speech]

And now, a woman who needs little introduction, but just in case you're just joining us, please welcome the Past Chair of Land Over Landing, the endlessly articulate and incredibly passionate, Mary Delaney!

Mary... [speech, during which she introduces Brenda Davies' son, Crispen Pemberley-Pigott, and briefly turns the podium over to him, and then introduces Toronto's former mayor...

David Crombie [speech and laughter-prompting interchange with POP's Doug Turner].

Rounding out our incredible line-up of powerful voices this afternoon, the Honourable Pauline Browes, former Minister of State for the Environment, Chair of Rouge National Urban Park, and a politician of vision, strong environmental values, and a deep commitment to a bigger, better, more dynamic Park region.

Pauline Browes... [speech]

March 1, 2015