

# The Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley

## Volume 12, number 2, August 2007

### Table of Contents

President's Message .....	Wally Macht	2
Dominion Textile Strike 1937 .....	Elwood Jones	3
Plaque Honours the Workers of the 1937 Woollen Mill Strike .....	Dean Shewring	4
Bonnerworth Girls .....	Rob Fortin and Sue Newman	5
Go Round, 4; Molly Stewart, 6		
Auburn Woollen Mills .....	Elwood Jones	6
Our Green Gables and Buck Lake Lodge .....	Mary Jean Forster Lavery	8
Macdonald Papers at the Archives of Manitoba .....	Barry Hyman	9
Peterborough Exhibition Started in 1843 .....	Elwood Jones	11
Queries .....	Diane Robnik	13
Guerin; Hank Williams; Identifying Mystery Photographs; Quaker Oats Fire Followup; Walter Thomas Holden; Vimy Ridge Soldiers Followup; Three Johnson Boys (by Allan and Raymond Johnson); Reminisces on Schooling in Peterborough (by E. H. D. Hall); King Edward School; PCMA and Lang Pioneer Village 40; Diocese of Peterborough 125; Kirkfield Lock Turns 100; Kirkfield Lift Lock Centennial (by Dennis Carter-Edwards)		
Special Issue: Peterborough's Big Bands .....		17
The Big Band War of 1875 .....	Elwood Jones	
Johnston Family Letters Donated to TVA: 3 letters .....	William Johnston	
Fire Brigade Band of 1879 Conducted by Finch Miller Outstanding Musical Unit..	Examiner 1937	
Discordant Question of Band Grants Re-Appears .....	Examiner 1920	
Grand Opera House Thing of Past .....	Examiner 1941	
TVA Archives News I: John G. Weir Diaries .....		26
"Jitney N' Jive" Peterborough's Big Band Era .....	Gina Martin	27
Doors Open Peterborough 2007 .....	Doors Open Committee	33
Doors Open: A Little History .....	John Gerrard	36
Trent Valley Archives .....		37
Conservation Corner: A Japanese Surrender Flag .....	Basia Baklinski	37
Book Reviews .....		38
Fleming, Wartime Letters of Leslie & Cecil Frost; McLaughlin, Ireland to Downeyville; Bates, A Journey through Glamorgan's Past; Humber, Family Sleuthing; Benidickson, The Culture of Flushing; Sisters of St Joseph, As the Tree Grows; Krenz, To Italy With Love		
News and Views: Peterborough Civic Concert Band; Wall of Honour; Little Lake Cemetery Tours ....		41
TVA Archives News II .....		43
Peterborough Foundation; Miller Family Fonds 176; Bradburn Family fonds 170		
Nexicom advertisement; Doors Open 2007; Trent Valley Archives .....		covers

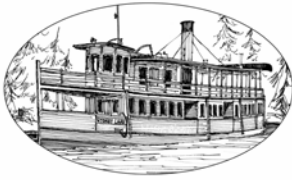
*Front cover illustration: The Kawartha Spirit entering the Kirkfield Lift Lock, July 2007.  
The boat was carrying dignitaries and descendants for the official ceremonies to mark  
the centennial of the Kirkfield Lift Lock. (Photo: Elwood Jones)*



TRENT VALLEY ARCHIVES

Fairview Heritage Centre  
567 Carnegie Avenue  
Peterborough Ontario Canada K9L 1N1  
(705) 745-4404

[admin@trentvalleyarchives.com](mailto:admin@trentvalleyarchives.com)  
[www.trentvalleyarchives.com](http://www.trentvalleyarchives.com)



## TRENT VALLEY ARCHIVES

**Fairview Heritage Centre**  
**Peterborough Ontario K9L 1N1**  
**(705) 745-4404**

[admin@trentvalleyarchives.com](mailto:admin@trentvalleyarchives.com)  
[www.trentvalleyarchives.com](http://www.trentvalleyarchives.com)

Heather Aiton-Landry  
Karen Carter-Edwards  
Bruce Fitzpatrick, V. P.  
Stephen Guthrie  
Elwood Jones  
Doug Lavery  
Wally Macht, President  
John Marsh, Past President  
Gina Martin, Secretary  
Chris Minicola  
Marjorie Shephard  
Toni Sinclair

Keith Dinsdale, Andre Dorfman  
Martha Ann Kidd, Alice MacKenzie  
Don Willcock

**Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley**  
Elwood Jones, editor  
[Ejones55@cogeco.ca](mailto:Ejones55@cogeco.ca)  
Keith Dinsdale, Martha Ann Kidd,  
John Marsh, Gina Martin, Diane Robnik,  
Don Willcock, and others

**Trent Valley Archives Trust Fund**  
Peter Lillico, Michael Bishop,  
Tom Robinson

**Trent Valley Archives**  
Diane Robnik  
Associate Archivist  
[drobnik@trentvalleyarchives.com](mailto:drobnik@trentvalleyarchives.com)

**Reading Room**  
Open Tuesday to Saturdays 10 am – 4pm

The information and opinions expressed are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Trent Valley Archives or its directors. Unless otherwise noted, illustrations are from the collections of the Trent Valley Archives.

©2007 Trent Valley Archives

*Any copying, downloading or uploading without the explicit consent of the editor is prohibited.*

*Classroom use is encouraged, but please inform the editor of such use.*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is my first opportunity to present my musings in this tantalizing magazine and I almost missed the deadline. I call it tantalizing because there are so many stories on the history of this community and surrounding area that just blow me away. The latest example was the story of the Kelly family. How many people knew Gene Kelly, the actor and dancer, spent some of his youth in Peterborough.



Photo: Wally Macht, Bruce Fitzpatrick, Don Caban and Mike Melnik at a Looney Friday in June.

In a way, it is ironic that I am president of Trent Valley Archives, after spending most of my life involved in current affairs, reading, writing and reporting on day-to-day events. On retirement, I stumbled into projects that necessitated research into history, and developed a passion for it.

The first one was a documentary on the Trent-Severn Waterway. Then it was "Days Gone By", a history of Peterborough. By that time, my father was living with us and he constantly talked about his roots and I became interested in genealogy which led me to produce a family video called "From Whence We Came".

In the past few months, I produced three more videos, all of which dwell on history. One was the history of the Kawartha Golf and Country Club which is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year.

Another is the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a group of friends who make the Queen's Plate an excuse for a weekend get-together, and the other was digging into John Badham's past as he celebrated 50 years in broadcasting.

During these retirement years, much of my research was done at Trent Valley Archives and so it is not surprising that I became interested in the organization. Hopefully, I can divert somewhat from history, and in some small way contribute to the FUTURE of Trent Valley Archives.

Each of you have your stories of how TVA made a difference. And thanks for sharing your stories, and helping to make TVA more special.

*Wally Macht*

## Ghost Walks in Eerie Ashburnham

The Trent Valley Archives invite you to their third season of terror-filled walks through East City. Friday's at 9:00 during June, July and August. \$10 per person. Meet at the park by Quaker Oats – Hunter & Driscoll Terrace. Don't let your parents come alone.



745-4404 [trentvalleyarchives.com](http://trentvalleyarchives.com)

## DOMINION TEXTILE STRIKE 1937

Elwood Jones



Gathering outside the Bonner Worth Mill, August 1937. (Photo by Marlow Banks, TVA, Electric City Collection)

In Peterborough 1937, the dog days of summer were marked by the strike of textile workers at the Bonner-Worth and Auburn plants of Dominion Textiles. Peterborough workers had done quite well in the Great War as companies were obliged to pay union scale in order to get government war-time contracts. Workers would also do well again in World War II. *Peterborough: The Electric City* (1987) 42-43 gives a brief history of labour unions. Some 1,700 machinists at Canadian General Electric, De Laval and William Hamilton won a 50 hour week in a dispute that went to conciliation in 1918. In 1919, steam and operating engineers at several plants won a 48-hour week but lost Saturday afternoons. That same year, the year famous for the Winnipeg General Strike, Peterborough workers had a mixed record. Construction workers were getting union scale at Quaker Oats and on the Hunter Street bridge, two of the largest construction projects in local history. However, labourers at F. Walter Green's foundry were unsuccessful in fighting a wage roll-back to 35 cents an hour, and canoe workers could not win union recognition. An Iron Moulders strike from May Day to 10 September slowed construction and led to a successful conclusion. However, only 27 of the 57 strikers were still in town when the strike ended. The following year, 1920, workers at the abbatoir of Matthews Blackwell were entirely unsuccessful. At CGE, men and women in

the armature works won pay equity. However, the conciliation board was split in deciding the fate of several hundred machinists, tool workers, and electrical workers who went on strike. CGE's offer was considered above the Canadian standard, and the company was also allowed to roll back the premium system that had allowed workers to get a bonus for completing work in less time than demanded. Those workers who had not gone on strike were processed more quickly as workers slowly returned to work.

After 1920, the fate of unions in Peterborough was all downhill. Industry wide unions made no headway and the companies played one union off against another, and blacklisted union organizers around town. The number of unions and the number of union workers dropped. By 1930, perhaps as few as 1 industrial worker in 15 belonged to a union.

Manufacturing was very important in Peterborough, and employed in 1930 about 30% of men and 27% of women workers. Women were particularly significant in textiles and in electrical apparatus assembly. Peterborough was the pre-eminent industrial city in Canada for cities with a population under 50,000.

According to *Peterborough: the Electric City*, page 77, the fifteen years after 1920 were marked by the absence of strikes. The Dominion Textiles Strike of 1937 marks the end of a long drought. Workers sought the right to organize and substantial

wage improvements. On 10 August, the company decided to reopen by using strikebreakers escorted by police (OPP special force which unions dubbed "Hepburn's Hussars") with clubs and tear gas. The OPP special force was developed in 1936 to counter CIO incursions into General Motors, and were used in the General Motors strike in April 1937. Thanks to Gordon Young for searching this point.

Another correspondent who worked at Bonner Worth in 1937 and 1938 reports that he was paid 25 cents an hour, but only for the hours he was needed. On average, he says he made \$11 a week and paid \$14 a month for rent. "But I still managed to provide enough to keep my wife and 2 children. Plain fare was the order of the day." He was generally thankful, even in retrospect. But he was one who thought he could not afford to support the union, and so he was a strike-breaker. These came into the factory by climbing in windows; they left the same way. Hepburn believed the strikers were acting illegally and so the police escort was authorized. Hepburn's view was rooted in a long past that believed that unions restrained business; until the 1830s or so unions were illegal in Britain and the United States. Even after unions began to get recognition in the late nineteenth century they operated more as safety nets for unemployment and death benefits than as negotiators for fair wages or shorter work weeks.

So the Dominion Textiles Strike of 1937 was very significant. In Peterborough labour history, it meant that union workers were finding confidence to strike, but union organization was still a hit-and-miss activity, mainly with industrial organizations. Much has changed, generally for the better, in 70 years.

## PLAQUE HONOURS THE WORKERS OF THE 1937 WOOLLEN MILL STRIKE

Ladies and Gentlemen, Brother and Sisters —

Today is the day and the time to acknowledge the contributions of a past generation of workers who were struggling for the same things that many of us take for granted — and too many of us still do not have — UNION RECOGNITION — GOOD WAGES and BENEFITS — and a HEALTHY AND SAFE WORKPLACE.

That's what the 650 strikers at the Auburn Mill and here at the former Bonner-worth Textile Mill were doing when they went out on strike in the summer of 1937.

The Dominion Woollens and Worsteds Company had pinned its hopes for profits on an expansion to dominate the clothing manufacturing industry. Buying the Peterborough mills was a major part of this plan. However, while the Bonner-Worth Mill was relatively modern and profitable, the Auburn Mill had older equipment and the company was not willing to invest further. The results were more pressure being put on the mill workers, particularly Auburn Mill, for

### Go Round

Down Donegal Street to McDonnell  
To the banks of Jackson's Creek  
Dad and I walk to the Bonnerworth Mill  
Six out of seven days every week  
He's had twenty years in the dying house  
And I'm a spinning girl  
Eleven dollars a week folks is barely enough  
To make my little world

### Chorus:

Go round go round like a spinning machine  
Turning tops into worsted wool  
With the warpers and the beamers  
And the spinners and the spoolers  
We'll never make them bobbins full  
But we go round

Great granny came from the Hebrides  
With a Bible and her spinning wheel  
She layeth her hand to the spindle, she'd say  
Quoting the Book of Ezekiel  
And, oh but she could make that treadle fly  
'Til the spokes were just a blur  
That I ended up doing what I do every day  
Would never have occurred to her

This morning I took my bobbins to be weighed  
By the boy at the Toledo scale  
Tells me the piece work rates are changing again  
This happens every time without fail  
Just when you think you might be getting ahead  
They go and change the rules of the game  
We complain they just say it's the depression  
They've always got the times to blame

I'm going with some girls from the Bonnerworth  
To hear a speaker from the C.I.O.  
I wish I could tell my dad about it

But I know he doesn't want me to go  
Times are tough and we need every cent he says  
The union comes the boss'll close down the mill  
But we can't go on with things the way they are  
Otherwise we're all just standing still

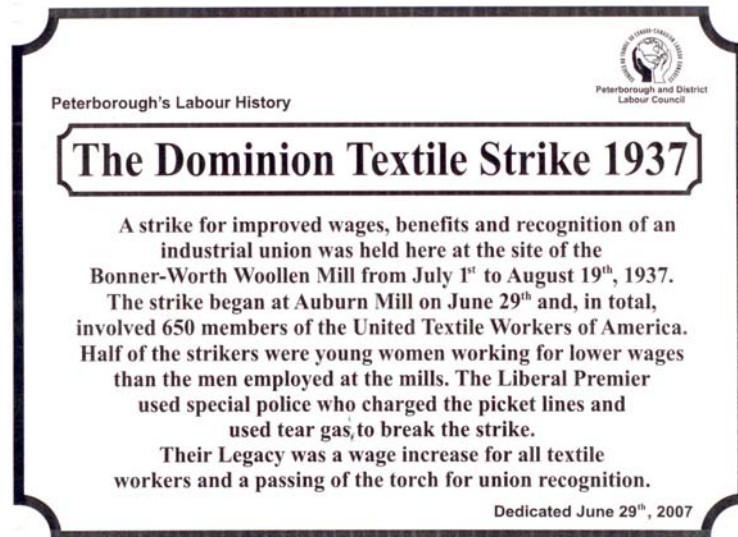
*Dean Shewring*

more production. The workers' resentment was building. The craft workers were organized and the time was now ripe for industrial organizing and to negotiate some serious improvements in wages and working conditions. And why wouldn't they?

1936 had been the most successful year for striking workers in over a decade. The Congress of Industrial Organization had come into Canada in early 1937 and had achieved union recognition for the United Auto Workers in Oshawa in April. Brinton Carpet workers in Peterborough had made substantial wage gains after only two days on strike earlier that same year.

The strike began on 29 June 1937 at Auburn Mill. The Bonner-Worth Mill joined the strike two days later. The Premier of Ontario, Mitch Hepburn, had formed his own special police force to use against the CIO, whom he believed were communists and a threat to his authority. There was an early confrontation at the Bonner-Worth Mill on July 2nd, with the police using force to bring scab workers into

the mill. 12 men and 3 women strikers were arrested. Alex Welch, the CIO organizer at the mills for the United Textile Workers of America, commented: "It is understood that the police are to preserve law and order and avoid violence. If this is the case why did the police not use clubs on one another? We have not contemplated violence and yet we have suffered for it. Heads have been cracked and our men and women have suffered temporary blindness from gas. The public knows who did it and will remember."



Negotiations began with the company two weeks after the strike began when Alex Welch withdrew from the strike committee on the demand of the company. Almost no progress was made on the main issue of improving wages. On August 9th another major violent confrontation with police using force and tear gas occurred at the Bonner-Worth Mill after both mills were reopened by the company. The strike ended a week later. [A final agreement was reached 18 August, and all workers returned to work by 23 August.] There were some gains in benefits and working conditions, but any wage increase would be dependent on a commission set up by the Premier after the strike. This commission recommended a wage increase for all textile workers, but the amount of the increase was quite small.

Why should we be recognizing and celebrating a failed strike? Because its implications and effects still resonate in the Peterborough community. The impact on women workers was particularly powerful. "The percentage of women in the Peterborough labour force was higher than the Canadian average. Companies employing women in manufacturing positions included Quaker Oats, Canadian General Electric, Ovaltine, Brinton Carpets and Westclox. The Bonner-Worth Mill, which opened in 1911, rapidly became a major employer of women. According to

local historian Joan Sangster, 'textiles provided 60 per cent of women's manufacturing jobs in Peterborough by 1931 — a total of 16 per cent of women's work overall.'"

The late Clare Galvin was so affected, he wrote his own recollections of this dynamic time in his childhood: "Mary Aspero started to work at the Bonner at the age of 13 and a half years. She was extended a temporary work permit by Mr. Ferran, the truant officer of the separate school system. At the age of 14 a full permit was issued. Initially Mary earned 13½ cents an hour; after 18 months, 18 cents, and eventually with her own machine she earned 20 cents an hour, or \$11 a week." This higher rate would still only be about two-thirds of what men earned in the mills.

"Often, because of the nature of their work, the girls would cut their hands. They were not allowed to leave the machines without permission from the foreman. A five-minute washroom break happened mid-morning and mid-afternoon. If it was a difficult time of the month for a female, she stood by the machine in discomfort until the straw boss decided on the necessity of a break. In the fall and winter months, heat was kept low, the theory being that a cold employee would move with alacrity."

Also, the impact of this strike still resonates today due to its political role in the introduction of industrial unions in Ontario. In less than ten years, just after the Second World War, a new wave of successful industrial organizing would begin — in Peterborough and all across Canada — becoming a cornerstone of the prosperity that was to follow. I am sure the workers from that time would be proud to see this building became the first campus of Sir Sandford Fleming College and still serving the community today as low cost housing — helping to support the disadvantaged and Peterborough's working families.

*Dean Shewring is a trustee of the Peterborough and District Labour Council.*

## BONNERWORTH GIRLS

*Rob Fortin and Sue Newman*

Two of the following songs, evocative of the lives of textile workers of the 1930s, were composed by Labour playwright and composer Rob Fortin from Peterborough Local 590 of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and his partner Sue Newman. They were sung, 29 June 2007, the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the Dominion Textile Strike of 1937, when a plaque discussing the strike was unveiled at the Woollen Factory on McDonnell Street. These songs are printed with permission of Rob Fortin and Sue Newman, and two are illustrating these stories.



## Auburn Woollen Mills

Elwood Jones

Reprinted from *Peterborough Examiner*.

Wool was a distinguished part of Peterborough's history. The Auburn Woollen Mill was producing high quality wool as early as the 1860s, and its successor companies, notably Bonnerworth and Canadian Woollen Mills, were producing wool here until 1957. There were other woollen mills in Peterborough even in the earliest days, but none was more important than Auburn. Thomas Poole's description in his 1867 history of Peterborough county is quite succinct. The stone mills, about one mile north of the Warsaw Road on the east bank of the Otonabee River, were built by a Mr Stuart in 1862-3, and were large for the time. The main building, 79 x 44 feet was three stories high; a second building was



*The Bonner Worth Mill viewed from Jackson Park (Credit: Meredith Carter, author of the Peterborough Historical Society Paper on Jackson Creek)*

### Molly Stewart

Molly Stewart's a spinner at our mill  
One day she decided she'd had her fill  
It was Saturday noon, her shift it was through  
At the paymaster's window she joined the queue

Was it the grumbling of the others? No, she's used to that  
Was it the grumbling in her belly? No that too's old hat  
Molly Stewart decided she's had enough  
When she saw the flash of a diamond at the paymaster's cuff

She said, "I'm sitting down here and I'm going nowhere  
I'm sitting down here 'til they make my wage fair"  
Molly Stewart, Molly Stewart how did you get so wise?  
"It's easy," she said, "You just open your eyes."

Joe O'Leary's a dyer, he mans the vats  
At home thirteen kids, seven dogs, and nine cats  
He's a hard-working man, proud to provide  
But first Molly Stewart must move aside

She says, "If you're looking to prosper, you haven't a hope  
If you're counting on that pittance in your pay envelope  
Joe O'Leary believe me you've nothing to lose  
Just sit down beside me and you too refuse

Say you're sitting down here and you're going nowhere  
You're sitting down here 'til they make your wage fair.  
Joe O'Leary, Joe O'Leary how did you get so wise?  
"It's easy," he said, "Molly opened my eyes."

Before you know it they're joined by the rest of the gang  
To the factory rooftops their protest out rang  
Like Joshua's trumpets they sound a note of doom

Right to the door of the mill owners' room

So, borrow a page from this spinner's book  
He ain't paying you fair, then your boss is a crook  
Then it's your job the boss to remind  
What the workers will do with his criminal kind

Say you're sitting down here and you're going nowhere  
You're sitting down here 'til they make your wage fair  
And if anyone asks how did you get so wise?  
It's easy, you say, you just open your eyes.

used as a warehouse. Most machinery was driven by water power, but steam power was used for dyeing, scouring and heating. The mill had 40 workers, of

which one-third were female. It had nine looms and 640 spindles at the start, but in 1867 added two self-operating spinning machines with 440 spindles; these were the first such machines in Canada. The plant used 80,000 pounds of wool a year, about one-quarter from local farms. The mill specialized in tweeds, and was highly regarded after winning medals at 1864 exhibitions in Montreal and Dublin. Robert Brodie was the superintendent during the early years and the first lessee was A. Robertson for Paton and Moir of Montreal. The plant began operations 14 November 1862.

Many of the Auburn workers lived in the immediate vicinity of the mills, possibly in places owned by Mrs Hay, one of the daughters of Frances and Thomas A. Stewart. Auburn came to apply to the whole area north of Parkhill, but was first the name for the house owned by the Stewarts.

In 1882, James Dennistoun, the president of the Auburn mill, was welcomed home with a very nice tribute signed by a dozen people at the works: James Kendry, Manager; Roark War, Secretary; Geo L. Jillson, Carder; F. Valley, Spinner; Wm Sommervill, Weaver; J. R. Smith, Waifer; John Donigan, Finisher; Daniel McIntosh, Dyer; Elijah Carter, Engineer; John Metherel, Millwright; and Henry, the Fireman.

We can identify at least 34 people who worked for the Auburn Woollen Mills in 1888. This directory is available on the Trent Valley Archives website, [www.trentvalleyarchives.com](http://www.trentvalleyarchives.com). James Kendry was the manager, and James Burnett was the manager assistant, and J. I. Davidson, the bookkeeper. William Somerville was the weaver boss, and Joseph Mosley, Francis and John Dunn, were weavers and Morris Bowen was a pattern weaver. There were at least three dyers, three carders, one dresser, one designer and two finishers. Eight people were identified as workers. The employees also included a blacksmith, a carpenter, a harness maker, and a

watchman. Considering the complexity of the dam, and the large grounds outside one could have expected a power manager and a gardener. But this was a complex organization no matter how you consider it.

The Auburn mills added new machinery after James Kendry became manager in 1879, and the capacity of the mill was doubled in 1913. The company had competed successfully in provincial exhibitions, winning, for example, for their commercial exhibits in 1903 at both the Peterborough Industrial Exhibition and the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto. In 1919 the company amalgamated with Canadian Woollens Limited.

The Bonner-Worth mill opened in 1911 on McDonnel Street. The city lent the company \$12,000 interest free for 12 years on condition that it purchased a site (west end of McDonnel Street) and built at least an \$18,000 building. The company began with 35 employees and 1,900 spindles; in 1919 they had 275 employees, and 5,700 spindles. The spinning frames were 27 feet long and each held 160 spindles in two banks. The spindles rotated at 6,000 revolutions a minute.

The company was started by Isaac Bonner and Dyson Worth, formerly of Penmans Limited in Paris, Ontario, and specialists in the manufacture of worsted yarns. Bonner soon returned to Penmans, and the business was developed by Dyson Worth. Worth had learned the business in England and Sweden, and his sons Joseph, Edgar and Walter also spent time in Sweden. The plant doubled in 1913, and then with the war moved easterly toward Jackson Creek.

In 1922 the company joined in the incorporation of Canadian Woollens Ltd; the other partners were the Auburn Woollen Mills and Standard Woollens of Toronto. The Worths then left for Pasadena, California to start a new business. In 1928, this company merged with the Forbes company of Hespeler, which had factories in Milton and Orillia as well, to form Dominion Woollens and Worsted. New equipment was installed in the buildings, as Canada seemed to be booming. However, the 1930s were marked by widespread business depression.

In 1937 there was a strike in the Auburn and Bonner-Worth plants. The strike came after a long period of anti-union activity in the city, and during the 1930s, Canadian governments at all levels treated unions as if they were restraining trade. Consequently during strikes, the managers could call on the support of the local police to ensure safe access for replacement workers. The Hespeler managers took advantage of the minor altercations connected with the 1937 strike to move equipment from the Peterborough plants to Hespeler.

The Auburn plant closed in 1939. There was much unhappiness in the city over dismantling the buildings at the town=s oldest industry. In Council in late November 1939 City Council debated buying the old crayon factory at George and Romaine from the Canadian Crayon Company of Lindsay and was told

that if a use plan were in place they could buy the building for a planned city purpose, such as a south-end fire station. For the Auburn works, the city was blocked from buying the buildings as there was no plan on how to use the buildings. Apparently the city negotiated with a Toronto company to locate there; the city promised to spend \$25,000 on sewers, but evidently thought the law prevented them from doing more. The oldest buildings at Auburn were torn down, in effect, to save \$7,000 in taxes.

In retrospect, it seems ironic that the plant was dismantled three months before the start of World War II. During war, there is traditionally great demand for textiles for uniforms, and military supplies. Indeed, G. Whitaker & Co, a Bradford, Yorkshire based wool merchant, through the agency of Gordon Monkman, who had established its Peterborough branch in 1920, acquired the Auburn site, with its newer buildings still in place. During the war Monkman stored Australian wool in the Auburn mill and the Lakefield cement plant as part of a plan to ensure that the Allied wool supply would remain secure. After a serious 1947 fire at Whitaker=s warehouse at the foot of Simcoe Street, the company moved its local operations to the Auburn site, where it remained until the 1970s. The senior management included Gordon Monkman, Harry Willis, W. A. Brown, W. A. Hamilton and Bill Clark. Their coast-to-coast salesmen were Ken Hambidge, J. C. Bolton, Cyril Monkman and Ray Armstrong.

The Bonner-Worth plant on McDonnel Street continued for another 20 years. As the plants closed workers were offered jobs in Hespeler with the Forbes plant, but few could take advantage of the offer as most were married women. The successive general managers of the McDonnel street plant were John J. Chadwick; James Emmett; William Tinker; David Melton; Robert Merritt, and Fred C. Walker. The Bonner-Worth plant closed on 6 September 1957. After many years as the McDonnel Street campus of Sir Sandford Fleming College, the building has been converted to a co-operative housing project.

Peterborough seemed the ideal place for a strong woollen industry, but the complexities of the wider world cancelled the local advantages.



## TRENT VALLEY ARCHIVES

567 Carnegie Avenue, Peterborough ON K9L 1N1  
705-745-4404 [admin@trentvalleyarchives.com](mailto:admin@trentvalleyarchives.com)  
[www.trentvalleyarchives.com](http://www.trentvalleyarchives.com)

## OUR GREEN GABLES AND BUCK LAKE LODGE

Mary Jean Forster Lavery

The property we knew and loved as Green Gables and later Buck Lake Lodge was assigned by the Crown, 22 December 1880, to William Alvin Vernon Garratt (referred to as William or Vernon in local histories), one of the original English Bloods. After their three years of apprenticeship as farm hands under Captain Harston on lot 23, Concession 14, Stisted Township, each apprentice was assigned a "lot" as a free grant under the Ontario Government. As with other settlers they were required to have "fifteen acres cleared and cropped and a serviceable habitation erected within five years; otherwise the land reverted to the Crown".

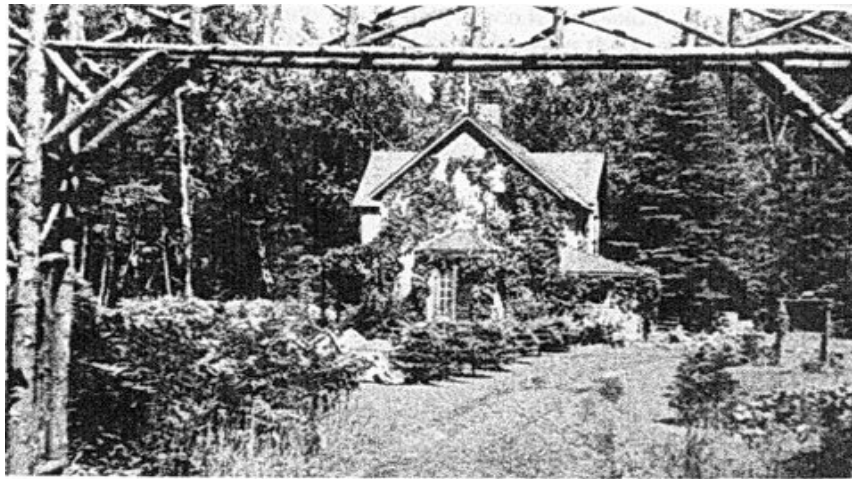


Figure 1 Buck Lake Lodge

Garratt apparently hired local men to build "Green Gables" on his Lot 26, Concession 14, Stisted Township. The English Bloods, as the locals called them, were supported by money from their English families and homeland, which allowed them to hire local tradesman. In the book "English Bloods", written by Frederick de la Fosse under the penname of Roger Vardon, Garratt's house is described as "a most commodious bachelor residence"! We would certainly agree with that description of our lovely green and white Green Gables. In the 1881 census Garrett, at age 26, is listed as owner of a saw and a grist mill located on the shore near where the school and the Ilfracombe sign are located. By 1890 he had accumulated 300 acres on Concession 1 and 2 on the east side of Buck Lake, which supplied the timber for his sawmill. His mills, and the boarding house built for his young workers, provided employment for local young men.

Unfortunately, Garratt's right arm was severed in an accident at his mill. Some local sources believed he had died in this accident. Actually, Garratt and his wife returned to England where he lived to be 93. His wife was a

sister of Frederick de la Fosse's wife and of "English Bloods" Phillip and Tom Bell. In April 1892 Edward Malkin purchased the property and became both postmaster and shopkeeper in Ilfracombe.

Frederick de la Fosse, another English Blood, had left the area in 1883. Following his three year apprenticeship which began in 1878, and after attempting to "farm" his lot at the narrows of Buck Lake, he sought adventures and work in Western Canada. He returned to Buck Lake and found his cabin, which he had loaned to a friend, burnt to the ground. Because of the fire he delayed his marriage to Mary Jane (Janet) Bell for a year. In April 1899, according to land records, de la Fosse purchased Garrett's Green Gables from Edward Malkin for \$500. The names of Frederick's and Janet's four children appear in the school roll of the Ilfracombe School from 1896 to 1899. The family moved to Toronto in 1899, but returned frequently to Green Gables for vacations until ill health forced Janet to

move to California with her youngest daughter; Janet died there about 1902. In December 1903 Frederick Claude Taylor purchased Green Gables from de la Fosse, who then moved to Lakefield. In December 1910, de la Fosse accepted the position of librarian, the first at Peterborough's new Carnegie library. He remained librarian most of his life. He married Amy Vernon Halliday in 1925, and lived to be 86.

Taylor and Malkin are familiar names to us! Both men were married to Garside sisters. Twice widowed Eva was first married to a Whitley and then to Edward Malkin. Her sister Muriel married Frederick Claude

Taylor. By 1924 Green Gables was run as a tourist lodge by the two widowed sisters. Eva's daughter, Muriel Whitley, assisted them and is listed as the owner of the property in July 1931.

In 1942, on the advice of our neighbour Edith Bicknell, my mother, Jean C. Forster, aunt Florence (Dorn) Rawlings, my brother Clark and I, drove to Buck Lake and Green Gables in our grandfather's car. What adventurous women they were! Our grandfather (Robert S. Clark) never drove any of his cars. His two daughters drove and maintained those cars from when they were teenagers! I cannot remember that particular trip – but I know that Dorn turned the car engine off when we reached the crest of hills in order to save gas as we sped down the other side. Gas was rationed of course! Apparently a maximum of 40 MPH was imposed during World War II! That trip, from Toronto to 13 miles northwest of Huntsville, must have taken all day.

Green Gables looked just like its namesake in Prince Edward Island – vine covered and painted green and white. At first there were three guest cabins each with 2 home made beds and small tables, a pot bellied stove for chilly mornings, a coal oil lamp and an outhouse "out the back".



=====

We were summoned to all of our meals, served in Green Gables, by Muriel blowing on a conch shell! A compulsory two hour rest or quiet time after lunch was strictly adhered to – not a foot stepped off the porch!



Green Gables became our summer home for 2 or 3 weeks each summer from that year onward to 1969! My dad joined us after the war – then cousins, aunts and eventually husbands, wives and kids of the original children in our family claimed Green Gables as “ours”! Green Gables was sold, renamed Buck Lake Lodge in 1946, by Martha and Max Moores and Alice and Bob Scott and expanded with more little cabins up and down the peninsula shoreline. Electricity was added, even two piece washrooms and second bedrooms but the “flavour” of the place and the meals never changed.

Buck Lake Lodge was sold again, to Ross and Audrey Brown – and sadly the Lodge burnt to the ground during the winter of 1969.

My brother and sister-in-law and their family continued to holiday on the property – in a housekeeping cabin or a tent trailer – until they and their son bought the severed land right a few years ago, beside the footprint of Green Gables!

Visiting their beautiful home evokes a flood of memories for us. The orange Tiger Lilies still bloom amongst the rocks beside the remains of the foundation of Green Gables; the birches still rustle, the path to the point still requires careful footsteps with the promise of a marsh mallow roast on the rocks beneath the inky black sky - and water lapping at our feet!

How wonderful it is that Buck Lake still “belongs” to our family – all thanks to the “English Bloods” – and Peterborough’s Frederick de la Fosse.

Mary Lavery’s book, *Up the Burleigh Road*, has just been reprinted and is available from the Trent Valley Archives. The book is an insightful and enjoyable read of two centuries of life along the Burleigh Road and has enjoyed good success since published last year. For further information, call the Trent Valley Archives, 745-4404.

## MACDONALD PAPERS AT THE ARCHIVES OF MANITOBA

Barry Hyman  
for Manitoba Historical Society  
Manitoba History, February 2007

Sir John A. Macdonald and his son Sir Hugh John Macdonald need no introduction to members of the Manitoba Historical Society. The father’s memory is perpetuated by the Sir John A. Macdonald Fundraising Dinner held each January. Sir Hugh John’s name is synonymous with Dalnavert, his residence at 61 Carlton Street, Winnipeg, now operated as a museum and visitors centre by the Society.

Sir John A. Macdonald’s personal and political papers were sold to the then Public Archives of Canada in 1914 for \$5,000. His papers have been consulted extensively by historians and archivists and there is no lack of published material on his career. Sir Hugh John Macdonald’s career, however, has been relatively unexamined by historians. An obvious explanation is the father’s celebrity status, leaving his son in the shadows. The father served as first Prime Minister of Canada for about nineteen years, while the son shunned the lime light, serving reluctantly in the federal cabinet under Sir J. J. C. Abbott and Sir Charles Tupper, and as premier of Manitoba for less than a year. Another explanation is that, up to now, there has not been a significant quantity of original documentation on his career. Most of what has existed has survived in the papers of other individuals in repositories across Canada. This situation changed last year when the Archives of Manitoba acquired a small but vital cache of personal, legal, business, and political records of both men.

The records relating to Sir John A. Macdonald include material from his legal practice in Kingston and his personal affairs. The legal documents deal primarily with real estate, including indentures, certificates of title, correspondence regarding land for sale, notices of mortgage interest, rent and taxes due, and promissory notes. Most relate to the estate of Archibald John Macdonell, Sir John’s law office partner in Kingston from 1854 until his death in 1864. Macdonald did not spend a great deal of time in the early 1860s attending to his practice and his partner was often too ill to do so. The practice was in financial trouble, impacted by the failure of the Commercial Bank of the Midland District, to which the firm owed considerable money. In 1863 Macdonald hired James Shannon, referred to in various sources as his chief clerk, attorney and office manager. Shannon was his factotum, responsible for running his law office and, as the records suggest, also attending to many personal matters. Shannon attempted to bring a semblance of order to Macdonell’s office records, as is evident from their organization and numbering. Shannon stayed with Macdonald until at least 1878. He was subsequently proprietor of the *Kingston Daily News*, and mayor of Kingston. More research may determine how

these records came to be in the possession of Hugh John Macdonald. One explanation is that the records were given to Hugh John to organize when Shannon left. Hugh John probably took the records from the law office in Kingston to his office in Toronto, and subsequently brought them to Winnipeg when he relocated in 1882.

The second series consists of personal receipts and correspondence. Receipts, generally speaking, are not retained by archives, but one makes exceptions when they detail goods and services for the prime minister of the country. Included are receipts for home and life assurance premiums, for memberships in organizations, mortgage payments, goods purchased for the home and office, and property repairs. Also included is John A. Macdonald's account book at the Commercial Bank, 1855 to 1859, and a series of cheque stubs for the years 1863 to 1878 belonging to both Macdonald and Shannon.



*Dalnavert, the home of Sir Hugh John Macdonald, 61 Carlton Street, Winnipeg (Photo: Elwood Jones)*

The records relating to and created by Sir Hugh John Macdonald were arranged in three series – subject files on personal matters, miscellaneous office files relating to clients, and records of a number of companies which Macdonald and his legal partners were investors or directors of the company. The subject files are of considerable interest because they contain, among other things, tax notices and receipts from the City of Winnipeg for Macdonald's home at 61 Carlton Street, legally described as DGS Parish of St John, Roll Number 410, Ward 2, Subdivision 132, Lot 3, Plan 129. For 1905 the home was assessed at \$11,400 and the tax bill, less discount, amounted to \$221.25. For 1921, the last tax receipt in the file, his home was assessed at \$15,888 and the tax bill had increased to \$547.87.

The Archives also retains receipts for the years 1927 to 1928. These give insight into Sir Hugh John and Lady Macdonald's personal interests and needs. For example, Hugh John purchased books from booksellers in London, England; Lady Macdonald purchased shoes and hats at the Hudson's Bay Company's new retail store, and roses and lilies from Broadway Florists; they filled prescriptions at W. F. C. Brathwaite, Limited, as well as purchasing every day needs such as Colgate shaving cream and Pepsodent

tooth paste. Home repairs included the replacement of a lock and other locksmith repairs performed by J. A. Lozo; bedroom carpeting was purchased from Leslie's Furniture, and repairs to chairs, fixing clothes closet doors, and Mellor Routh, Carpenter and Contractor fixed new hinges.

The subject files provide much insight into Hugh John's interests and investments. His interests included the Boy Scouts Association, for which he served as Provincial Commissioner, 1914 to 1915 (all dates are given for inclusive dates of surviving records); the Canadian Red Cross Society and the Army and Navy Veterans Association. His investments included mining claims on Croesus Island in the Lake of the Woods, 1897 to 1903, and in the Lake St Martin claim near the Dauphin River, 1903. He was a shareholder of the Henderson Roller Bearing Manufacturing Company Limited, which supplied parts to the Winnipeg Street Railway. The company met "numerous disappointments" and was taken over by Standard Bearing Limited, which was in turn taken over by the American Roller Bearing Limited. For his \$4,000 investment he was offered \$500 stock in the Canadian Center Plate Company which converted iron into steel, 1904 to 1910. He held preferred stock in International Assets Limited, 1911; bonds in the Manitoba Water Power Electric Company, 1905 to 1906; vacation property at Midland Beach, Minnesota, 1911 to 1926. He was at one time the president and solicitor for the Van Bergh Electrical and Manufacturing Company, which attempted to secure patents for inventions of Carlos Van Bergh of Winnipeg, including a sewing machine, power generation and transmission, and wireless telephone and telegraph instruments.

There are a few files on the administration of family estates, including that of his father and his stepmother, Susan Agnes Macdonald. There is a small amount of correspondence with Joseph Pope relating to his father's estate and the sale of his father's papers to the Public Archives, and with the Royal Trust Company on the administration of the Sir John A. Macdonald Testimonial Fund Capital Account. Much of this material on the testimonial fund is in the Macdonald Papers in Ottawa. The Joseph Pope papers at the Library and Archives Canada also contain extensive correspondence with Hugh John Macdonald on the need to sell his father's papers and provide extra income for his stepmother so that "... her last years should not be embittered by any lack of what after all is her own money."

Hugh John Macdonald also invested in real estate, in Winnipeg as well as St James, East Kildonan, and Transcona. The firm of Macdonald, Craig, Tarr, Armstrong were active in many real estate ventures. Macdonald and his partner Edgar Jordan Tarr were shareholders and directors in the companies whose incomplete records were part of the papers the Manitoba Archives acquired – including the Anglo-American Investors Ltd; Assiniboine Valley Land Company; Central Valley Land Company, Confederation Real Estate Company, Maritime Investors Ltd and the Security Mortgage Company. The incomplete records of these companies, for the years 1907 to 1917,

include acts of incorporation, by-laws, minutes of board and annual meetings, proxies, lists of shareholders, share certificates, records of distributions, land agreements, financial statements and the odd banking record.

Also included with the office client-solicitor files are documents for George Albert Glines, a prominent figure in real estate in Winnipeg and Morris, Manitoba. George Bryce in his *A History of Manitoba* (1906) said Glines was "... prominently identified with all movements ... to the development of the material resources of the commonwealth." He is identified with the founding and development of Morris and surrounding areas. He was elected the first mayor of Morris in 1883. A full 12-cm manuscript box contains records of Glines's investments and interests.

My comments are not meant to be a complete inventory of the material. Hopefully these highlights will stimulate interest to conduct research to learn more about the Macdonalds. The collection consists of 1.9 meters of textual records. Of this, 52 centimeters relate to John A. Macdonald, the balance to Hugh John and his legal practice. The records were gifted to the Archives by the Hughes family of Winnipeg. Harley Moody Hughes (1892-1954) joined the firm of Macdonald Craig Tarr Armstrong in 1924 when it was located at 612 Toronto General Trust Building, 282 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg. The firm was in the same office when his son, Joseph Barry Hughes (1928-2000) joined the practice in 1951. In 1960 the firm relocated to new offices at 219 Kennedy Street, the current home of the Law Society of Manitoba. Because there was no space for inactive files the then partners agreed that J. B. Hughes should take the records to his home. When J. B. Hughes died the records were turned over to his son Kelly Hughes to dispose of as he wished. Kelly Hughes recognized their historical value and offered them to the Archives of Manitoba. The donor requested that, as his father had saved the records from destruction, the papers be known as the Joseph Barry Hughes, Q. C., Collection. For this reason all reference tools are described under the name Joseph Barry Hughes.

*Barry Hyman recently retired after 39 years as an archivist with the Archives of Manitoba. He and the editor of the Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley were colleagues at the Public Archives of Canada in the 1960s.*

## **PETERBOROUGH EXHIBITION STARTED IN 1843**

*Elwood Jones  
Peterborough Examiner,  
"Historian at Work", June 2007*

The Colborne District Agricultural Society, the forerunner of the Peterborough Agricultural Society, held its first annual fair in 1843, on the grounds of the Court House Park. Sheriff Wilson S. Conger, also the president of the Society and a veteran of Cobourg fairs, decided this was the ideal place for an agricultural exhibition. Conger's appointment as the

first sheriff of the District of Colborne took effect when the Peterborough court house and jail had been completed in 1842. Conger was exceptionally active in Peterborough's public life. He was sheriff until 1856. He was also a councillor and was the most active proponent of the Fire Brigade, of Little Lake Cemetery, and of closing the North Ward burial ground. His political career was capped as the Member of Parliament, a position he held until his untimely death in 1865.

The remarkable men who surrounded Conger in promoting the fair, many for 40 years, included Robert Nicholls, owner of Peterborough's major mercantile house, and the fair's treasurer; W. H. Wrighton, grocer, who was Vice-president; and Captain James Wallis, host of the 1851 fancy fair. They were supported by several leaders from Smith Township: T.T. Milburn, Thomas Bell, Lewis Davies, Thomas Benson, Emanuel Mann, Michael Sanderson, Jr., William Moore, Isaac Garbutt, and John and Joseph Walton.

The provincial government supported district and county fairs from 1846. After 1854, they supported one fair for each political constituency and so in Peterborough county fairs were supported for the east and west ridings, at Norwood and at Peterborough. Both have endured to the present.

Peterborough's earliest fairs were the quarterly fairs tied to the meetings of the magistrates in quarter sessions. By late 1837, the town had a pattern of spring, summer, fall and winter fairs, usually held the first Tuesday of March, June, and September and the Tuesday before Christmas. These fairs provided opportunities for farmers to sell their horses and cattle. In Peterborough, the local newspapers complained that they were occasions for drinking and fighting. Trades and crafts people could show their wares; manufacturers could exhibit their latest lines. Games of chance and entertainment, food and drink, were natural accompaniments. When all of these things happened it was truly a fair.

The fancy fair held at Merino, James Wallis' impressive model farm, in 1851 featured a ploughing match, fireworks, a band and a Montgolfier balloon. Tents and marquees were decorated with flowers, foliage, flags and banners. Fair visitors could buy clothing, books, braided work, fancy and ornamental work and German toys. Refreshments included cakes, pastry, cooling beverages and "fruits both native and foreign." This fair raised money for St John's Church. It seems likely that Peterborough's annual fair on the Court House green had some of these features, but the county fairs headlined the cattle and horse exhibits.

The three acre Court House park was convenient to the centre of town, and four years later the Colborne District Council in its dying days set the

area aside to be a park in perpetuity. The successor Peterborough County Council wrestled with the meaning of "park" but the area has become Victoria Park, a pleasant oasis in the downtown. While the agricultural exhibits were held at the Court House Park, many of the commercial and craft exhibits were at the Market Square only two blocks down Water Street.

When the park was landscaped by the Peterborough Horticultural Society annually after 1861, the agricultural fair, the cricket grounds and other uses had to move. Livestock was not welcome among the flowers. The fairs then moved annually. In 1862 it was behind the Methodist Church at McDonnell and George Streets. In 1863 it was in Norwood; in 1866, Lakefield. There was concern that the county fair was not held in the county seat, which was both more central and had better hotel accommodation. The Midland Railway grounds were used in 1864, and the Market Square in 1865. The fair grounds were on the site of the former burial ground from 1867 to 1883, when the town decided to create Central Park. From 1885 to the present, the fairgrounds have been located on Lansdowne, from Lock to Park streets.

The fairs were considered to be symbols of modern times and the spirit of progress. The *Examiner*, in 1858, for example, noted "The miscellaneous articles exhibited spoke well for the enterprise and industry of our people,..." Similarly, speaking of the Norwood fair in 1860, the *Review* correspondent commented that the exhibits were "of a character highly creditable to the taste and enterprise of those Townships." In 1868, the *Examiner* reporter lamented that "our mechanics did not show as much enterprise or competition as the town we take demands,..." The 1870 "Show was not what such a wealthy and fruitful county would warrant us to expect." The value of exhibitions was neatly summarized by the Peterborough *Times* in 1875: "... we have more chance of learning from each other, the competitive rivalry will be a strong incentive to efforts to obtain excellence, and the friendly intercourse that is promoted must be both pleasant and beneficial."

Occasionally there were outstanding exhibits that did not match the predefined categories. In 1858 and 1859, Thomas and Robert White, who became famous journalists, won for their illuminated printing. Catharine Parr Traill was recognized for a book on ferns and flowers of Canada. In 1859, M.H. Watson of Millbrook was singled out for his oriental painting upon glass. George A. Cox, later one of Canada's richest men, was commended in 1860 "for unquestionably the best photographs ever shown at the fair."

The best show of vegetables in the 1850s came at the 1859 fair. Highlights included James Grieve's 193 pound squash for which there was heavy demand for seeds. There were also huge beets (Thomas Best), carrots (John Darling), turnips (William Taylor) and parsnip (John Deyell). There seemed to be good competition in apples: E. Mann won two firsts, and John Darling the other, while James Fowler picked up two seconds and a third.

By 1859 agricultural implements attracted great attention. M. Mowry won for his threshing machine and his straw cutter. Whyte, Hamilton and Company had the best rollers, double mould plows, and harrow. Moffat and Company had the best wooden plow and cultivator. James Hamilton had the best horse hoe. In the domestic manufacture categories W. Patterson was dominant in leather; R. Walton and J. Pengelly were rivals for the best harnesses; and James Harvey produced outstanding cloth and blankets.

The fair never had a purpose-built exhibit building until 1885, and the fair seemed to lack community identity. However, from 1885 to 1940, when the fair grounds were pre-empted for military training, the Peterborough Industrial Exhibition ranked as the fourth most important fair in the province. Throughout its history, it was one of the best places for intermingling of rural and urban interests, and this remains an important feature.

There was no Peterborough Fair in 1851, 1884, or from 1941 to 1947. Had the fair been held in those years, the 2007 fair would be the 165<sup>th</sup> edition of the Peterborough Exhibition. See you at the fair during the Civic Holiday weekend.

*Editor's note: All the local media without exception referred to this year's exhibition as the 162<sup>nd</sup> edition. Clearly this is what the current fair people believe, but of course it is wrong. The foregoing article appeared in the Peterborough Examiner, 29 June 2007, in the weekly column, "Historian at Work."*



## TRENT VALLEY ARCHIVES

567 Carnegie Avenue, Peterborough ON K9L 1N1  
705-745-4404, [admin@trentvalleyarchives.com](mailto:admin@trentvalleyarchives.com)  
[www.trentvalleyarchives.com](http://www.trentvalleyarchives.com)



## QUERIES

*Diane Robnik*

### GUERIN

Member is searching for any photograph of grandmother, Helena Margaret Guerin who lived on Clifton Street in East City, Peterborough from 1904 (birth year) - 1926. I believe she was a member of Immaculate Conception church. If anyone thinks they may have a school, church or personal photograph please contact TVA, 745-4404.

### HANK WILLIAMS

We are still trying to figure out the date when Hank Williams played in Peterborough. We are told it was sometime between 1950-52 at the Brock Street Arena but are not sure of the exact date. If anyone could assist it would be greatly appreciated. We contacted Ed Arnold who ran a nice item in his Monday column, and we had three responses from people who remembered the concert in 1952, just months before Hank Williams died after a New Year's Eve party, aged 29. According to one biographical account he was in Peterborough twice, in 1949 and 1950.

We also have the fictional, but very evocative and realistic, account by Derek McCormack in his book *Dark Rides*. There seems agreement that Hank Williams arrived at the Brock Gardens six sheets to the wind. After the band played the music for his signature song, he realized he had forgotten the words. After some swearing he grabbed for the microphone, and instead tumbled off the stage. That was it for Hank Williams. People were offered refunds, or the option of staying for a dance. Some did both. Some have mentioned that Hank Williams was escorted out of town with police protection. Let us know if you can add details to this story, or confirm one part or another of the narrative.

On a recent trip to Winnipeg I walked past the Windsor Hotel several times. On the third floor there is a mannequin dressed like Charlie Chaplin, and on a large mural the hotel claims that Charlie Chaplin decided to shift from vaudeville to film while in Winnipeg. He informed his brother of the decision on Windsor Hotel notepaper.

Peterborough has storied links to show business, too. It was here, legend says, that Stompin' Tom Connors was first given a piece of plywood to shred with his stomping foot. And it became his trademark.

### IDENTIFYING MYSTERY PHOTOGRAPHS

We had quick success in identifying one of the photographs in our collections. We asked Ed Arnold for assistance and he printed the picture in his weekly column. The photo was quickly identified as being the former Port Hope Hospital that now serves as a nursing home. A few phone calls to Port Hope quickly confirmed the story. Thanks to all who offered help.

### QUAKER OATS FIRE FOLLOWUP:

#### WALTER THOMAS HOLDEN

A "shot in the dark" e-mail from someone in England recently led to very happy results and proves once again what a boon archives can be for researchers. Mike Elley of County Essex began his family research a few months ago and, after conversations with his grandmother, learned that Walter Holden, his great great grandfather, emigrated to Peterborough in 1912 but died shortly thereafter. His young widow soon returned to England with their two children and the family was never told the details of the death or of the time the family spent in Peterborough.



Searching for information on Peterborough led Mr. Elley to websites for both Peterborough Historical Society and Trent Valley Archives where he learned about the unveiling of the plaque last October honouring those killed in the Quaker Oats fire of 1916 and also of the memorial service held in December marking the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the disaster. His heart skipped a

beat when he found that a list of the victims included a Walter Thomas Holden and wondered if this could possibly be his lost family patriarch. His e-mail to the Historical Society and forwarded to Trent Valley Archives director Gina Martin was "like winning a lottery". Gina has done extensive research on the Quaker Oats explosion and fire and Mr. Elley soon reported that the information that Gina sent to him from her research regarding Mr. Holden "fit like a glove" with what he knew right down to the names of the wife and children, the hometown of Battle, Sussex and the year of immigration. Mr. Elley and his family were also happy to learn that other members of the family accompanied the Holdens to Peterborough, including Mr. Holden's parents who are buried at Little Lake Cemetery.

The Elley and Holden families "across the pond" are very happy to have found such a large missing link of their history and Gina Martin is ecstatic to have another piece of the Quaker puzzle in place. A "shot in the dark" pays off.

### VIMY RIDGE SOLDIERS FOLLOWUP THREE JOHNSON BOYS

Andrew Allan Johnson and Raymond Johnson

Further to your articles on Vimy Ridge in the May 2007 issue of the *Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley*:

Please add Pte **James Theodore Johnson** (1884-1917) and Pte **Thomas Henry Johnson** (1894-1917) to your list of local soldiers who died at Vimy Ridge 12 April 1917. Both were born in Lakefield, and were sons of Robert (1856-1941) and Elizabeth (nee McKibbin) Johnson (1856-1954), who moved from Smith Township to Pierson, Manitoba in 1900. James was born in Lakefield, 28 May 1884; Thomas, 24 June 1894. Both enlisted 15 January 1916 at Pierson, Manitoba and joined the 44 Bn Manitoba Regiment; both arrived in France in December 1916. Their younger brother, Charles Edwin Johnson (1897-1916), enlisted at Brandon in the fall of 1917.

Two cousins, also from Smith Township, also served in World War I. They were sons of Andrew Johnson (1862-1938) and his wife, Helen (nee Dykes) (1866-1906). The Johnsons farmed on part of lot 26 con 7 of Smith Township until moving to Alberta in 1908. **James Edwin Johnson** (1899-1993) enlisted in the 31 Bn Alberta Regiment in High River, Alberta, 25 February 1916. He arrived in France in early 1917 in time for the Battle of Vimy. When he was severely wounded on night patrol in late June 1918 he was evacuated to England, and at the Armistice was scheduled to return to France. He was home for Christmas 1918, still only 19. His brother, Andrew Allan Johnson (1895-1966) enlisted in High River 25 February 1916, also into 31 Bn Alberta Regiment. He arrived in France in early 1917, became sick, complications from Scarlet Fever, and returned to Canada for his discharge.

The grandparents of the Johnson soldiers were George Johnson (1828-1910) and his wife, Elizabeth (nee Fairbairn). They were also from Smith township and are buried in the Lakefield / Ray Cemetery. The great-grandparents are Robert Johnson (1779-1853) and his wife Mary (nee Gilmour) (1788-1873). They came from Baleyborough, County Cavan, and received a Crown Grant, dated 21 February 1823, for 100 acres on the north half of lot 26, con 6, Township of Smith. They are buried in Smith Township, in the Bickell Cemetery, formerly known as the Johnson Cemetery.

Another cousin, **Percy Willard Johnson** (13 November 1896- 3 February 1972) enlisted on 12 June 1916 at Ottawa, 505218. He trained as a signaller at Ottawa and in England, arrived in France in June 1917, served in Belgium at Ypres II and at Passchendaele, was evacuated to England in January 1918 due to injury from gas attack, returned to training in England until the Armistice, returned to Canada to be discharged at Barriefield Ontario in January 1919. Percy was the son of George Edward Johnson (22 June 1864 - 16 March 1944) and Hannah E. Laing (19 March 1866 - 15 December 1954). He was born at Lakefield (concession 6, Smith Township) and worked for the DeLaval Company in Peterborough from 1921 to 1969.

### REMINISCES ON SCHOOLING IN PETERBOROUGH

E. H. D. Hall

I can remember when there were no schools such as we have nowadays. The first school I went to was kept by Mrs. Flavelle, mother of John William and Joe (now Sir **Joseph Flavelle**), who was a splendid woman and a hard worker. She held classes in her little house, opposite the market square, and was assisted sometimes by her daughter.

Well, my classroom, at that time was the staircase, as the rooms were occupied by older children, and it did very well, though it was a little uncomfortable and perhaps drafty. Anyway, it was there I received some of my elementary education and it was there I believe that I taught **George Hatton** his letters.

Joe Flavelle was often rather troublesome and one method of correction that his mother employed was to dip Joe in the rain barrel holding him by the heels.

The next school I went to was the Public School held in a Methodist Church situated at the corner of Hunter and Sheridan Streets. It was the only Public School here. My class room was in the gallery which was made into a room by boarding up the front of the gallery. The pews were used for seats for the scholars and the favourite ones were the ones near the windows, out of which the lucky ones could watch the timber ribs and saw logs coming down the river. I often looked out of the windows.

I think I went to the new school at the corner of Murray and College when it opened, but I can't remember. Anyway, I went to a private school kept by Mr. **John Nicholls** which was in the basement of the same Methodist Church spoken of before. He taught us English, Mathematics and Writing and was a very strict disciplinarian. He kept a cane handy and used it often. Another form of punishment he inflicted was to send boys to his residence, which he called his "shanty", to saw wood. And this would be after hours. He was very punctilious and when his pupils entered the room they were obliged to take off their hats, bow and say, "Good morning, Mr. Nichols" or an opportunity would be given Mr. N to get some wood sawn or a thrashing given, something he was always looking out for and very quickly taken advantage of. The school consisted of only one room and had dilapidated pine desks and benches.

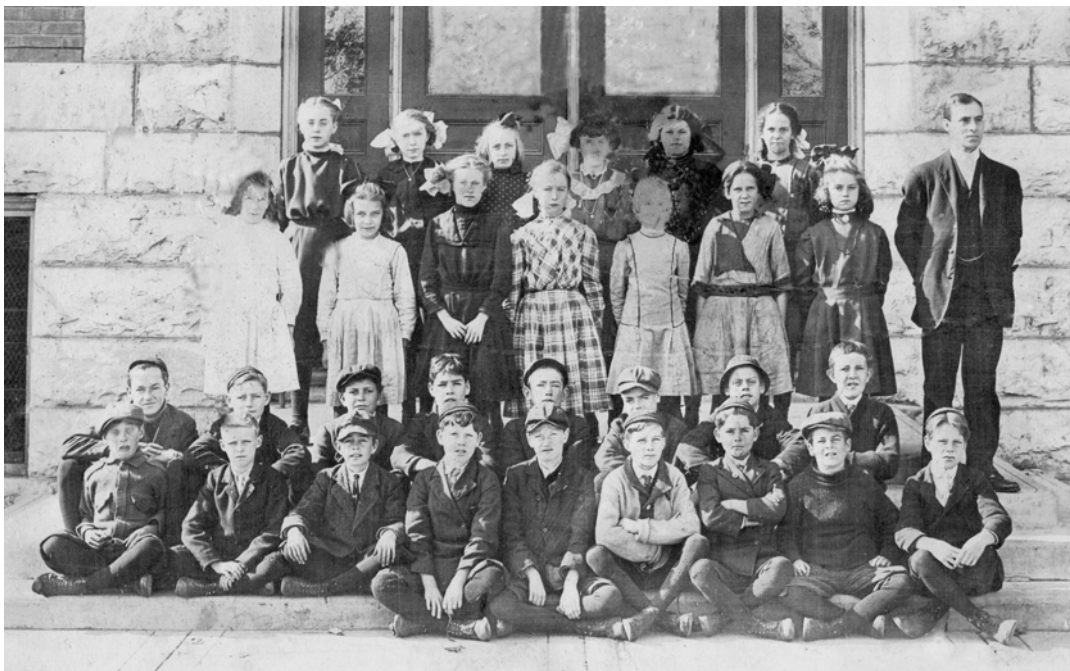
After that I went to the school on the corner of Murray and College. Mr. **John King**, grandfather of Dr. Cort King, was the headmaster. Here I stayed until I was suspended because of a row which took place when I went to the assistance of **George Roger** (the late Judge Roger) where he undertook to prevent one of the masters, a substitute, from thrashing his younger brother. A great commotion occurred, the girls from this room rushing to our room and some of them screaming. We were both suspended until we apologized, which we both refused to do, and here ended my education as far as schooling was concerned. A funny thing too— at this time, Judge Roger - George Roger's father - and my father were both school trustees and they had to pass judgment on us.

George Roger and I started to study law in the office of the late **J.M. Fairbairn**, George Roger's brother-in-law. Among the pupils at Mr. King's school were May Boucher and her sister, also Helen Burnham, Emma Kennan, Herbert Burnham, Andy Tully, Ivan O'Beirne, Tom Rutherford and an Indian afterward Chief Paudash.

*Editor's Note: We printed the E. H. D. Hall's memories of Hazelbrae and the Barnardo children in our May issue, and are now pleased to share his remembrances of early schooling in Peterborough. These memories were dated 1926 and related to the 1850s. The British Wesleyan Church was on the property of St John's Church, but after the 1854 merger of British and Canadian Wesleyans, its members joined with George Street Church, which was then enlarged. Thanks to David Carley for sharing this fascinating story. This building served as a school until 1860 when the new Union School, later known as Central School, opened at Murray and College.*

#### **KING EDWARD SCHOOL**

This 1908 photo of a class of students at King Edward School is reprinted with permission of Linda Hamilton, Peterborough. Comments welcome.



#### **PETERBOROUGH CENTENNIAL MUSEUM AND LANG CENTURY VILLAGE CELEBRATE 40 YEARS**

Congratulations to our two local museums, both celebrating their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. There have been many changes over the years but both have remained true to their mandates. Both have become essential institutions and reminders of the importance of fighting for ideas that promote our local cultures.

For the anniversary PCMA mounted an exhibit drawing attention to some of the really special artifacts in their collection. Lang Pioneer Village had a weekend of pioneer activities on the August long weekend.

Both institutions are looking at different ways to improve and build upon their respective histories. PCMA plans to triple or quadruple its size at its current site, but given the rising prices of new construction they may have to consider other models for growth. If so, a downtown presence would be a smart addition.

We look forward to closer relations between the several archives in the area. It has always been part of our mandate to do so.

#### **DIOCESE OF PETERBOROUGH CELEBRATES 125 YEAR**

The Diocese of Peterborough celebrated 125 years as a diocese with a special mass at the cathedral led by Bishop Nicola de Angelis, as well as guided tours of the cathedral and the crypt and historical exhibits in the old Stone School. Rosemary McConkey produced a history of the diocese and worked on many of the special projects and tours. John Corkery shared his emotional connection with the church which has served all his immediate ancestors since 1847. The original church was built in 1837, and has been expanded at different times since, perhaps most importantly when raised to a

cathedral in 1882. The roof was vaulted in 1931 and the Corinthian columns were added to carry the additional weight. Congratulations to the diocese on reaching this milestone.

#### **KIRKFIELD LOCK TURNS 100**

The City of Kawartha Lakes and the Trent-Severn Waterway had a great party to celebrate 100 years since the Kirkfield Liftlock's official opening 6 July 1907. People commented that

the crowd, an estimated 500, was the largest they had seen at the Liftlock.

The grounds are not large, but there was a festive atmosphere. There was a tent featuring nifty antique and classic outboard motors. There was a puppeteer's tent which featured presentations on changes along the Severn River. There was a face-painting and general interest area. An old lockmaster's cabin featured framed pictures from the past. And there was a large tent serving as an auditorium, and which featured on a fairly steady basis the music of a trio playing traditional and folk music; Peterborough's Rev Ken was in the trio.

The heart of the celebration centered on the "Kawartha Spirit" tour boat. Invitations were sent to dozens of people who were descendants of people who made the canal possible, who were linked to the Kirkfield lock, and who were historians, politicians and government officials, notably from Parks Canada. The dignitaries were greeted with a guard of honour from the local sea cadets (HMCS Hood). In the auditorium tent the guests of honour were Ric McFarlane, mayor of the City of Kawartha Lakes; Gail Scott, MPP for the area; Barry Devolin, MP for Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, who also brought greetings from John Baird and Stephen Harper; Parks Canada historian Dennis Carter-Edwards, and a Mr Jobe, grandson of Willy Jobe, the first lockmaster at Kirkfield. It was noticed that the emcee, from Woodside, was a graduate of Trent University, as were platform guests Scott and Carter-Edwards. In this issue we have printed Dennis' speech prepared for this occasion. We thank him very much for that. Dennis was one of the first students at Trent University, and has been with Parks Canada for most of his career. He is a highly regarded historian.

We learned quite a bit about liftlocks this day. Diane Robnik and I were given a behind-the-scenes look at the control tower and watched the experienced lockmaster through a cycle. His view is spectacular. This new control tower had been built in the mid-1960s and the Kirkfield Lock was re-opened in May 1969. The lockmaster says they get about 30 lockages a day, or I guess three or four an hour. The lockage itself is quite speedy. However, the "Kawartha Spirit" had to do some posing for the people with cameras.

It was a memorable day, though.

### KIRKFIELD LIFT LOCK CENTENNIAL

*Dennis Carter-Edwards*

One hundred years ago this month, the steamer Stoney Lake, crowded with politicians, engineers, canal staff and other dignitaries passed through the Kirkfield Lift Lock, officially opening, in the words of one speaker this "imposing structure and splendid feat of engineering." A crowd of some five thousand people lined both banks of the canal cheering the boat as it descended to the lower level. Over a dozen reporters from the national press were present to record the event. F. H. Dobbin, writing for the Peterborough Daily Review referred to the opening as adding another "link in the chain" of through navigation from Lake Ontario to Georgian Bay. That "Chain" which millions of boaters, residents and day users enjoy today, took a long time to forge. The first wooden lock was built at Bobcaygeon in 1833, the last concrete lock at Couchiching in 1920. Built in stages over an 87 year period as government resources and "public encouragement" allowed, the Trent Severn Waterway must rank as the longest public work, in terms of time if not of distance, in the history of Canada.

The promoters who pressed the government to build the canal, saw the waterway as a great commercial highway passing the riches of the Canadian prairies to markets overseas. Instead, the canal's greatest resource proved to be the thousands of tourists who visited or sailed their boats through the locks each summer.

The Kirkfield Lift Lock section of the waterway from Lake Simcoe to Balsam Lake, proved to be one of the

most challenging to build for the contractors Hubert Larkin and Alex Sangster. Miles of solid limestone were blasted and hauled out to form the canal & pit for the Lift Lock. Thousands of yards of concrete were poured to create the upper entrance. Tons of steel were used by the Dominion Bridge Company to build the chambers and their supporting rams that moved the "tubs" up and down together with the three metal towers to supported the entire mechanism.

The biggest challenge was overcoming the 49 foot change in elevation. Chief Engineer R.B. Rogers and his assistant W.J. Francis adapted the principle of hydraulic lock operation, pioneered in Europe and Britain, to the demands of a topography shaped by the towering glaciers that once covered the region. Drawing on their experience from building the Peterborough lift lock, they made several improvements to the design of the Kirkfield Lift Lock which reduced costs and improved efficiency. Yet, neither man was on the boat that day, having resigned the previous year due to controversy over the project. We are standing here today celebrating the centennial of the Kirkfield Lift Lock, operating much as it did when first opened a hundred years ago this month. That is a testament to their engineering skill and choice of a hydraulic lift lock. An example of one of these improvements, the intensifier pumps used to operate the lock gates, is on display - a tangible reminder of the skill and innovation of Canadian engineers and manufactures in building the canal.

Although changes were made to the Kirkfield Lift Lock in the 1960s to rehabilitate and modernize the lock, much of the original equipment remains and it continues to operate on the same principle used that historic day a hundred years ago. For this reason, the Government of Canada has recognized the Trent Severn Waterway and in particular the Balsam - Lake Simcoe section as being a site of national historic significance. And yet, the story of the waterway is more than just the engineering marvels such as the Lift Lock that we are celebrating today - important as that is. It is also the story of the people associated with the waterway. Engineers like Rogers who pioneered the use of concrete in lock construction, the immigrant workers who with pick and shovel hacked out a canal from the limestone bedrock earning \$1.50 for a ten hour day and the lock masters and their families who, residing in modest dwellings beside the lock, dutifully operated stations like the Kirkfield Lift Lock, often under demanding conditions. We are fortunate to have descendants of these men and women with us here today and we extend a very special welcome to you.

The Trent Severn Waterway is a living testament not just to the evolving technology of canal design and construction employed over the past two centuries but also to the people connected to the canal. Parks Canada, as the agency responsible for the Trent Severn Waterway, is committed to protecting this rich heritage and presenting its diverse history to our many visitors.

*Editor's Note: Thanks to Dennis Carter-Edwards for letting us publish his recent speech. We plan to discuss the lift lock at Danzere-Mondragon in France that is higher than either lift lock on the Trent system. Let us know if you have information or stories about other lift locks that would interest our readers.*



## THE BIG BAND WAR OF 1875

Elwood Jones, *Winners:*  
*150 Years of the Peterborough Exhibition (1995)*

Music became an integral part of the Fair in the 1870s. In 1878, 51 Ontario fairs had brass bands playing concerts, musical interludes or even accompanying military drills by local militia units. The absence of bands at the Peterborough fair in 1877, possibly because the bands had committed to the Central Fair in Lindsay, was a matter of regret and comment. Musical instruments had been displayed with other commercial exhibits: in 1873, there were exhibits by Mr. Pentland and Mr Errett, and in 1883 by E.J. Hartley. The 57th Regimental Band, led by bandmaster A.H. Rackett, was a feature of public events. It appeared on programmes of the Histrionic Club as early as 1858. In 1869, it was featured at the Norwood Fair and at Peterborough's Victoria Day celebrations. Band competitions became a major feature of the central exhibitions; the judging of the bands was open to everyone, even though there were official judges, of varying degrees of competence, as well.

The 1875 Central Exhibition illustrates the importance of the band competition, held that year on the Thursday evening, 30 September. The three competing bands, the Philharmonic Society Band, the Fire Brigade Band, and a band from Lindsay, were to play four tunes; at the request of the judges (Mr Rackett, Mr Henderson and W.H. Cluxton) they played a fifth. The judges on a split decision (Mr Cluxton dissenting) gave the prize to the Fire Brigade Band. In the view of the *Times* reporter, the unanimous opinion of the crowd favoured the Philharmonic Society's Band. The crowd supported Cluxton's dissent, and the secretary diplomatically asked the Philharmonic Band to play God Save the Queen, "after which they received an encore, which was repeated after their next piece." The *Times* reporter added that, "Mr Henderson was confessedly incompetent to give a judgment, but Mr Rackett has destroyed his musical reputation in Peterborough for either he cannot tell good music when he hears it, or as the only alternative, which we would be sorry to adopt, he was a prejudiced judge."

*Some of the Fire Brigade Band members who won top honours at the 1879 CNE. (TVA, Miller Family fonds)*



=====

The following day, the winning band got to play at the Fair; they also declined a challenge from the runner-up band. However, in response to a petition signed by some 65 leading Peterborough gentlemen, the Philharmonic Band, under the direction of F. Hammerschmitt, played at the town square at the very same hour.

It is a mystery that people got so excited about this event. The Fire Brigade Band, which won first prize at the first Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto in 1879, became a feature of the Peterborough Fair as well. It "enlivened the proceedings" in 1881. In 1882, "the Fire Brigade Band was stationed in the gallery, and rendered some of its best selections, forming a source of attraction that was little less than the exhibits themselves." However, Finch W. Miller, the bandmaster of the Fire Brigade Band, had formerly been a member of the 57th Regiment Band, 1872-4, and had led a fight against Rackett on the issue of whether the conductor should get a single or double share of the pay received at engagements; all but Rackett favoured single. With the assistance of Edward Chamberlain, Miller started his own band which soon was sponsored by the Fire Brigade, even though no band members were ever volunteer firemen, in order to be eligible for financial support from the town. So Rackett may have been apologizing. Alternatively, Rackett may have preferred the sound of the all-brass band. In any event, Rackett's reputation appears to have been eclipsed; the 57th Regimental Band folded probably by 1880. When Rupert Glidden came to town, the 57th was resuscitated; members of the Fire Brigade Band played in the 57th, which became Peterborough's major band for some twenty years.

The Philharmonic Band was fashionable and elitist, and the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra, one of the first in America, was known to Peterborough audiences. In fact the Boston orchestra played at Hill's Music Hall, 1 October 1875, the day after the Peterborough Central Fair's band competition. That Peterborough should have a comparable band was a matter of civic pride and amazement; that it played such fine music was a bonus. On the other hand, there was concern that the band was new, possibly stacked with non-Peterborough players. The secretary of the Peterborough Philharmonic Society insisted that "the only member of their band which has just competed at the Central Exhibition, who is not a resident of Peterborough is, and has been for some time, a *bona fide* member of the Society, and has not been enrolled for the purpose of taking part in this competition.

Professor F. Hammerschmitt and the Parlour Orchestra of the Peterborough Philharmonic Society were favourites at local concerts. Two weeks later, 17 October, it played a Promenade Concert at the Drill Shed with the 57th Regimental Band; Port Hope's String Band of the 46th Regiment [directed by Professor Philp], was scheduled but did not appear. The editor of the *Review* was "confident of hearing some good music." Charles Gehricke, arrived from Hamburg in early October to be soloist on cornet and violin with the 57th Regiment Band, and to teach at Hammerschmitt's school. The editor of the *Times* pronounced Gehricke a "thorough musician," and Hammerschmitt's

accompaniment on piano, "played with great taste." The 1876 concerts were played in the old Methodist church on George Street; the first was Thursday, 13 January 1876. Gehricke and Hammerschmitt, probably in Peterborough at the request of the very musical Lech family, soon moved on. Peterborough did not get another top rank musical school until Rupert Glidden opened the Peterborough Conservatory of Music in 1905.

In 1877, the *Times* offered advice.

*We would venture to recommend to the consideration of the Directors the course adopted by the West Durham and other societies of a similar kind, with regard to the matter of music, and which they maintain is a source of profit to them. That is, to offer two or three good liberal prizes for bands. The result is that immense numbers of people are attracted to the exhibition who would not otherwise go. In West Durham the prizes offered were: 1st \$125, 2nd \$75, 3rd \$50 -- sums sufficient to induce first class bands to compete.*

## JOHNSTON FAMILY LETTERS DONATED TO TVA

Carol Koeslag has rightly treasured a bundle of letters written during 1875 and 1876 from William Johnston, to his son Alfred. And the Trent Valley Archives is honoured to be entrusted with preserving the letters, and seeing that they receive the attention of those who should be interested.

William Johnston (1819-1871) came to Canada in 1842 and settled in Peterborough in 1846. He was one of the earliest volunteers for the 57<sup>th</sup> Regiment and was Captain of No 1 Company, and was considered the best drill instructor in the district. He was a Director and a Secretary of the Mechanics' Institute; during his last two years, he was both a school trustee and a joint assessor for the town. He was an elder at St Andrew's and active in its Sunday School and music. He was active with the Canadian Bible Society, and he was an active supporter of the Loyal Orange Lodge and of the Conservatives in politics. He was a merchant tailor in partnership for several years with his brother, George (1822-1885), who served for many years as Peterborough's police chief. William Johnston undertook many jobs that required lots of writing, notably in the excerpts that follow, as secretary of the Central Exhibition of 1875, a noble experiment that began in 1875.

A. J. Johnston (1851-1931), the son of William and Jane, was a druggist who spent most of his long life in Peterborough. He was in Manitoba from 1875 to 1885, and also lived one year in Lindsay. His drug store, the Nugent Drug Company, was at 386 George Street, just a few doors south of the Bank of Toronto.

The letters merit publishing and fill extraordinary gaps in the history of Peterborough. We have provided a few excerpts from those letters. The excerpts have been chosen primarily for references to entertainment, although even these stories are tinged with politics, which arguably was the great public entertainment of the period.

These three letters are from a period of six weeks in the autumn of 1875. During this period, William Johnston was secretary to the Peterborough Central Exhibition for 1875. I was not aware of Johnston's role in the fair when I wrote about the big band war of 1875. However, I knew that the story was a terrific one for historians because the story was playing at several levels. This is a story about the bands, the audience, the judges and the officials at the fair. It is a story that helps to define how people expressed displeasure. Now I want to follow some more leads suggested by Johnston's letters.

The first letter suggests the ways in which bands could complement the political wars of the day. The third letter contains a remarkable story about the man who decided the closest election in Peterborough elections. Voters go to the polls on 10 October to elect a new provincial legislature. Will voters show such passion as was evident in 1875?

**1 William Johnston, Peterborough, to son Alfred, 25 September 1875**

Dear Alfred

The folks are all about going to bed and I have just commenced to answer your long and welcome letter as I have had no time to write you since I received it on account of being engaged assistant secretary to help Mr Carnegie in making the entries for the great central Fair to be held here next Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. It is going to be the biggest thing ever seen in Peterboro. Mr Joseph Walton the President has been hard at work superintending the work going on at the old Burying ground; they have got a ring made for coursing the horses round by cutting down some of the pine trees, a line of sheds for cattle all round the fence the whole way. They have also got the use of the part at the Catholic School and it will be the next to the Provinces Exhibition. The two Ridings of Peterboro, West Northumberland, East Durham, Townships of Hope, Manvers and Hamilton have all united to make a central Fair at Peterboro. I have been as hard at work as ever I was in my life writing for three weeks past making the entrees and writing the tickets for the articles and for exhibition the Books close tonight and we have 2680 entrees and about 500 exhibitors so you may have some idea of the amount of work I have had to do with very little help as I had to make all the entries in a book first then write out a separate ticket for each article entered and make up for the mail for all the folks at a distance. Mr Carnegie would not help me as he was busy at the East riding Election which was wound up last night with a most triumphant victory for the Doctor, his majority is 358 over Hogan, 375 over Sargent and 17 over both combined. I must explain how we had the three cornered fight which the above names will show you we had. Well you see the "scheming Grits" held a Convention at Norwood and the induced long Jim Hogan to stand so he was nominated by the majority of the convention just to make a "cats paw" of him for after the convention was over we could hear round the streets from prominent Grits that it would be a splendid opportunity for the Protestants to unite and run in a protestant between them thinking "innocent creatures" that they were that conservative protestants would lend an ear to their hints and help

them to slip in a Grit protestant. So to make the thing nice after both Hogan and the Doctor had been both in the fields working for some time when the nomination of candidates came on last week what did they do but some of the very men who had attended the Grit convention which brought out Hogan nominated John Sargent a blacksmith who resided in Norwood as an Independent candidate and an Orangeman and I believe that Sargent himself was one of the members of the Grit convention. They used every means to stir up religious dissensions issuing the most inflammatory circulars to the Orangemen in the Orange parts, and in the whole riding stating that Sargent was brought out by the Conservatives so as to induce the protestants to leave O'Sullivan and vote for Sargent but I am very proud to say they stuck with the Doctor like "Bricks" as they are and the little plot has fallen into their own dish for as you will see by a state of the Poll I send in this, they have about the same numbers of votes. Sargent I suppose took a few hot headed fellows from the doctor but only a few and Hogan took more than they thought he would so that by dividing their own party up so near equally they have played into our party's hands and gave the Doctor a greater victory than the most sanguine of us expected. You know that I always look at the bright side but I had never counted on more than two hundred of a majority at the outside. When the news came in last night to the Review office which we made our headquarters until all the returns came in you may say there was some excitement and then the cry was raised to get to the Conservative rooms and oh! such a crowd, it was crammed full and there was some tall speaking. While it was going on the news came that McCrea was elected by a good majority for North Victoria and that helped up the enthusiasm as that is a Conservative gain in place of a Grit unseated for bribery. The Firemens band turned out and played on the street opposite the rooms and when the overplus steam had been exploded in the shape of speeches all adjourned to the street and Ted Cavanagh of "Election renown" had all the busses and grand carriages in town on the spot and the cry was "All Aboard" they had lamps in each of the carriages and when they once got under way it made quite a grand display, such a night you never saw in Peterboro all sober and jolly good fun round the streets they went and across to Ashburnham as that noble little place had given the Doctor 64 of a majority or 14 of a gain since he won last January....

**2 William Johnston, Peterborough, to son Alfred, 11 October 1875**

Dear Alfred

Although I have written to you since I received a letter from you and as I think we should not count letters with you but should write you when ever we think we have anything to tell which might interest you in that far away western land, I thought best to drop you a line or two as you will see by the Review before this arrives we have had a Grand Central Fair. The two Ridings of Peterboro, South Victoria, East Durham and West Northumberland with the Township Associations of Smith, Dummer, Manvers, Hope & Hamilton all united to make a "Grand Push" as George Brown says, but in an

agricultural sense rather than Political and it has been a great success. I was acting as assistant secretary helping Mr Carnegie for four weeks before the fair taking in the entries and forwarding the tickets for the same to the Exhibitors. For the three days of the fair John Sawers and I sold the tickets of admission and when I tell you that we took in \$2184 for tickets you may form some idea of the number who entered the Drill Shed and grounds. The tickets were twenty cents each and that was one of the few mistakes made as they would have paid the quarter dollar just as willingly and saved the time making change as well as adding about \$500 to the receipts. Everything went off well but the competition of the Bands. Hammersmiths, The Firemens and Lindsay Bands entered for the competition. Walker who had been formerly ours is now Band Master of Lindsay and they have become the Band of the 45 Battalion. The rule about appointing judges was a mistake as each Band got permission to appoint one and the majority to decide. When the firemen found out that they sent off to Kingston and got Rackett for theirs. The Lindsay one got Henderson of Millbrook or Omeme Band and as Mr Rackett is now out of employment and was formerly sent away in disgrace from our Band which is identified as the same with Hammesmiths, he and Walker got their heads together and arranged the matter so that Henderson and he should keep Hammersmiths Band from getting first prize. So after they had all played and every person present even members of the other Bands expressed themselves as satisfied that H's Band was so far ahead of the others that the merest ninnie in music could have told who was best what was the surprise and disgust when Mr Carnegie got up in front of the Band stand and announced that he was forced to make them acquainted with the fact that Mr Rackett and Mr Henderson had signed an award stating that the Firemens Band won first prize, Hammersmiths second & Lindsay third, that Mr Cluxton the third judge would not agree with the decision. Mr C. afterwards publicly stated that it was the most iniquitous decision he ever heard in his life. Carnegie called upon H's Band to give them God Save the Queen and that they would then disperse for the night, the Firemens Band being bound according to the rules to play next day on the grounds. After God Save the Queen had been played it was so much superior to the same tune when played a short time before by the Firemens Band that the whole audience commenced to clap hands and holler "encore" they kept it up until the Band had to give three or four other pieces. In fact it was worth the whole of the prize the ovation they received and the publicly expressed opinions of approval which they received then and there. Next morning they challenged the other Band but they would not accept and at two o'clock the hour at which the Fair broke up by previous arrangement with the managers of the Fair they played on the Court House green so as to draw off the crowd and they had another grand reception there as all the crowd rushed there to hear them and "encored" them repeatedly. ....

I was down at Millbrook last week for two days at uncles book, they are all well and the village is growing up again out of its ashes in grand style. It will shortly be better than ever. You will be likely to get a great

letter from Hattie the next one she writes as she is up in Lakefield since Thursday night. There was no school in her room and she went up to Louisas so that she would be present at a concert where L. was going to sing. Mr Lasher the singing master who is back in town got up one to open a new music hall in Lakefield and asked L. as one of his old pupils of days gone by to help him. I believe it was quite a success and Louisa came out well. Hattie went up on the evening train and took Louisa by surprise as she did not know she was going until she jumped into the dressing room at the Hall and seized her in her arms. So you may look out for some wonderful news when she comes back.

I did not tell you what I got for my work at the show Fair I could not tell as I was still working writing in the prize list for the General Committee meeting on Wednesday and it will all depend on what they choose to give me for my five weeks hard writing....

### ***3 William Johnston, Peterborough, to son Alfred, 8 November 1875***

Dear Alfred

I promised to write you a letter after the Montreal West Election as I thought that perhaps Mr Thos White would have been elected after all his failures heretofore but this must be recorded as another failure for Mr Thomas Workman has been elected by 50 majority and not much wonder as the Government threw their whole weight into the scale to beat White. The Guibord burial case was laid hold of to work upon the minds of the French and placard were issued out with pictures of T. White with his Masonic regalia on him and appealing to the prejudices of the roman Catholic population against him as a Mason and one of the Brotherhood who were under the 'ban' of their clergy from the Pope downwards so it proved effectual as they all voted against him and Free Masons were found recreant enough to vote and work against him even when his connection with their Orders was used as the chief charge against him. One Master of a Lodge went so far as to drive a carriage all day carrying voters against him and working in the most conspicuous manner against him so much for principles.

..... George H. got your letters on Wednesday last in which you seem to have great doubts as to our prospect of success but I suppose you had got my short bulletin of the contest about the same day which would I have no doubt dispel the cloud of blues from your mind. The Grit party have great talk still about protesting it but some old stagers such as Dr. Burnham senr say that it is only some young "pups" who have no money to lose if it goes against them who are talking so. They are talking of getting a scrutiny of the votes but that will cost them just the same as they must petition in any case and it will be the same cost but they all know that a scrutiny will give Scott a majority of from ten to fifteen and if the election was to run over again he would have a majority of fifty as all the weak kneed folks who kept from voting on account of thinking that he could not pull down the majority obtained by Cox at the last election and would therefore be beat would now vote to a man for him. Our party worked well both before the Election on on that day to give you



some idea of it I will give you a few incidents of the contest.

In the Township of Harvey Mr Scott wanted the Sheriff to make two polling places as the Township is cut in two by the Pidgeon Lake and the majority of the voters for Scott lived on the north side and would have to cross the lake in small boats. He refused to do so as he well knew how it would work so they had to cross and before the election they told Scott that if it would be a stormy day not one of them could get over and he might not expect it. So when the day came and it turned out both rainy and windy with white caps on the waves when the voters came to Bobcaygeon to get the boats to cross which Mr Jas. Boyd & J Simpson were to have for them some of them could venture but just as they were about giving it up for a bad job the Emily May steamer came along, chartered by either Casey Wood or the government at Toronto to carry Mr Cox's voters over our lads went on board in a body and tho ordered off protested that no boat should go that day unless it brought them so over they got in spite of the other party and the storm on the steamer provided by the Grits. One man who was late for the boat got into a skiff by himself and commenced to row across, when nearly half way over he was upset and his boat filled with water. He swam to an Island pushing the boat before him and when on land emptied the water out of it then got in again and got safely over and arrived in his wet clothes at the polling place just about ten minutes before the close of poll and polled his vote. A great many say that man won Scotts election. ...

**FIRE BRIGADE BAND OF 1879 CONDUCTED BY  
FINCH MILLER OUTSTANDING MUSICAL UNIT  
WILLIAM F. GREEN LAST OF THE MEMBERS  
RECALLS OLD DAYS OF BAND  
PRACTISED IN HAY FIELD**

*Peterborough Examiner, 6 February 1937*

TVA, Cournoyea Collection

Thanks to Keith Dinsdale

A stranger who paced up and down the bandstand at the Toronto Exhibition waving two fists full of bills and shouting that he was betting the roll on "the bunch of farmers from up in the country," the Peterborough Fire Brigade Band, is one of William F. Green's vivid memories of that afternoon in 1879 when the late Finch W. Miller's bandmen won the competition which was recalled in connection with his recent death as an outstanding achievement during the years of his musical leadership in Peterborough.

"We never heard how much of the stranger's money was covered that day but I recall that the attendants at a big refreshment booth wouldn't let us pay for anything," Mr Green related to the Examiner today. "After a round or two for nothing we enquired why everything was free, and were told that some one was paying for everything the men in the Peterborough uniforms wanted. We found out that the stranger had been bandmaster with a circus, and had been in Peterborough a few weeks before the Toronto Exhibition. He had heard the practicing in the old hay field that is now Victoria Park and he evidently decided we were worth a stout wager."

Mr Green is the only survivor of the champion band of that year.

"Mr Miller joined the band in 1878 as the leader, and the next Spring he talked to us about going to the Toronto Exhibition. We thought he was just fooling, and we laughed at the idea of a bunch from the back woods trying for the Exhibition honors. That response nettled Finch, and his reply was that he knew what he was doing and also what we could do if we would settle down to it. I can remember him telling us that we would have to stand by him and that meant practicing at every opportunity we got, day and night. He sent to England for a lot of new music and out of it he selected a fine march 'Jolly Demons.'

"We used to practice every night in Victoria Park after the weather got fine. The park was then a hay field with no trees except in the upper section where there were cake and pines. It was all fenced in, and later in the summer hundreds of people used to walk up and down outside the fence.

"At the Toronto Exhibition we may have seemed a bunch of rustics. Other bands paraded swankily up to the stand to play their pieces. We were lying around on the grass and Archie Freeman who played the E flat cornet accidentally stepped on his instrument and broke a valve. Mr Miller had really build the band around Freeman, and for a while it seemed that our chances were ruined. However, he went around to some of the other bands and tried out their instruments until he found one that suited him. I think it belonged to the Queen's Own [Rifles]. When our turn came we scrambled up over the railing, and even left our music stands behind us. So we called up fellows from the Queen's Own to hold the music for us. It wasn't an auspicious beginning I suppose but we won the competition with 180 points. Orangeville was second with 130; Eglington 123 and Woodstock 115.

"On our arrival home we learned that we had taken higher points than the military bands professionals who had competed the day before, and Mr Miller suggested that we join the 57<sup>th</sup> Regiment, which we did, becoming the regimental band in 1880.

"The next year, in 1881, we entered a big contest at Ingersoll and were awarded third place behind the 7<sup>th</sup> Fusiliers of London and the 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion band of Hamilton. They were bands of fifty instruments, and in 1878 the Hamilton band had toured the continent all the way to Mexico. They were acclaimed everywhere. In fact I don't think there was a band in the United States at that time equal to them. However we were well satisfied at Ingersoll. We had beaten again the non-professionals."

Mr Green recalled another incident involving the music stands which he mentioned a little reluctantly.

"I guess it will be all right to tell it as it was only a mischance. One of the citizens who was keenly interested in the band was Charlie Huffman. He was around with us so much that we appointed him to look after the music stands. On the train to Port Hope the morning we started for Ingersoll one of the bandmen asked how he was getting along on his job. He suddenly turned pale and exclaimed that he had forgotten the stands and books in the excitement of leaving.

"Bandmaster Miller and the secretary John Fraser, immediately arranged to have the train stop at Fraserville and

sent a telegram to Jack White, afterward a Nile Voyageur, brother of Gus White, to get the outfit to Port Hope as fast as he knew how. It happened that Jack was at the Opera House when the message was delivered to him. He climbed over the back of seats in a dash to the door; raced home to the White House and hitched up a fast team, got the books and stands and arrived at Port Hope his horses in a lather and two springs of the light rig broken. He turned the books over to Bandsmen Jim Billington and Billy Hill just as a freight train was pulling out. The rest of the band had taken the passenger train. The two bandsmen climbed aboard the van, and at once the conductor ordered them to get off. But they weren't getting off. If that train was going to Toronto so were they, and they produced their tickets. They reached Toronto in time to make connection with their train for Ingersoll.

"But the real shock of the trip came later when George A. Cox, president of the Midland Railway at that time heard about the affair, and called us down for not getting in touch with him. He said he would have placed an engine at our disposal instead of having to call on Jack White. Senator Cox was one of the best friends the band ever had, and a cheque for \$60 was always waiting for us when we called on our annual Christmas serenade."



The members of the Fire Brigade Band in 1879 were: Finch W. Miller, director, playing an E flat cornet; John Fraser, secretary, B flat cornet; John Miller, B flat cornet; James Miller, baritone; Archie Freeman, E flat cornet; Archie Brown, trombone; Thomas Kennedy, D flat alto horn; Ed Scott

and John Lasher, B flat tenors; Charles James, solo E flat alto; William Hill, bass drum; Joseph Hill, snare drum; W. F. Green, E flat alto; J. H. Billington, B. B. bass; Joseph Buller, B base; Ernest McCabe, solo euphonium; Alex Paisley, B flat tenor horn; and W. A. Sanderson, B flat cornet.

"It was entirely a brass band without a reed instrument, and its quality was developed by constant training. We all chummed together, and music was our first interest." Mr Green said. "Alex Paisley ran the woollen mill on the old raceway. Our uniforms were made by Andrew McNeill, the leading tailor in Peterborough. They were of blue cloth with gold buttons, and the trousers had red stripes down the side. We wore smart caps, and were as well turned out as any bands of those days.

"We had all kinds of engagements. For a number of years when we were getting our money at the Toronto Exhibition we were re-engaged for the following years. And we played at picnics, lacrosse matches and all kinds of affairs throughout the district.

"The day we won the competition in 1879 the Peterborough lacrosse team wound up its season by winning at the Toronto Exhibition, one of the most successful teams the town ever had, and that same day a Peterborough four-oared racing crew also won the championship at Toronto. The town was certainly put on the map that year. When the Duke of Argyle, the Governor General, heard about the band competition, he expressed a wish to hear the winning band. That was late in the afternoon, and the men had dispersed so they hired livery men to round us up the best way they could. I know I was walking along a street when a cab drove up and I was told to get in. I asked what all the rush was about and was told the Governor General wanted to hear the Peterborough band.

"We all paid our own expenses on those trips, and after we won the championship the council planned a reception for our arrival, but we declined. Some of the men stayed in Toronto most of the week."

At one time Mr Green was the only young man in Peterborough who could play the piano, and some of the engagements he recalls were at church affairs arranged by Senator Cox and J. W. Flavelle, now Sir Joseph Flavelle. He joined the Otonabee Lodge, No 13, IOOF in 1882 and was installed as secretary in 1887 and is the present recording secretary, having held the office from time to time during that long interval.

#### **DISCORDANT QUESTION OF BAND GRANTS RE-APPEARS: DECISION DEFERRED**

*Peterborough Examiner*, 24 March 1920  
TVA, Cournoyea Collection  
Thanks to Keith Dinsdale

After an hour's pondering the problem of how to apportion the \$1,000 appropriation for music in the parks this summer among three bands whose combined requests amount to \$1,700 the Parks Committee last night evaded decision until they ascertain whether or not an unattached \$500 is available from any source wherewith to satisfy the applicants by dividing \$1,500 evenly between them.

Ald Gainey presided with Mayor McIntyre and Aldermen Whitehouse, Copping, Gorden and Crowe present.

The 57<sup>th</sup> Regimental band want \$600 for thirteen concerts and guarantee from 25 to 30 musicians.

The Great War Veterans Band also offer to play for \$600 and the Salvation Army Band ask for only \$500.

Last year the Council set aside \$600, and offered the three bands \$200 each. The 57<sup>th</sup> declined this largesse and their share proved a windfall that was promptly spent painting the band stand in Victoria Park.

This annual competition in which successive Councils betray a solicitous regard for the effect of their opinions and votes is of comparatively recent development, and the besetting difficulties present no easy and uncompromising solution this year unless the requests are granted in full or a stray \$500 turns up.


The Salvation Army band had lots of brass. (Courtesy of Gordon Dibb)

in providing bandsmen during June, July and August, and to engage the necessary bandsmen according to the scale of the Musicians Union. This effort was fruitless, and when the preliminary argument offered no easy way out of the dilemma, the committee decided to defer action more or less indefinitely.

Col E. B. Clegg and Maj A. W. McPherson representing the 57<sup>th</sup> Regiment supported the petition of the regimental band and Adjutant Buntin of the Salvation Army appeared alone to urge the claims of that organization.

Col Mills, speaking for the 57<sup>th</sup> Regimental Band, said it had been the city band for practically 50 years.

"For 20 years, I have been intimately connected with it myself. You are aware of the thousands of people who have enjoyed the music in the parks. Since 1914 there has been no regimental band except what the leader and some of the members were able to hold together. We have some 30 members and can get more for special occasions. We want to



THE PETERBORO TEMPLE CORPS BAND

The Peterboro Band is one of the largest and is considered one of the best Salvation Army Bands in Canada. It has been in existence about twenty-eight years, and some of its first members are doing service today. The Band has the proud distinction of being the first Canadian Band to receive members from England. They are men from Reading, Tunbridge Wells, Marylebone, Southend, Kilburn, Leeds, Sheffield and Carlisle. All have made good in Canada.

The Band receives a yearly grant from the City Council. This year it received \$500.00. The proceeds of serenading at Christmas is a great financial help to the Band. Last year \$500.00 was raised by this effort.

The instrumentation of the Band is unique. It includes saxophones, melophones and trumpets. Only thirty of the men are on the L. C. C. trip owing to the heavy expense. This is the most extensive trip any Corps Band has ever taken.

Ald Crowe and Ald Copping opposed the idea of dividing the appropriation. Ald Crowe argued strenuously that Peterboro cannot hope to acquire one capable band by doling out inadequate grants. The citizens he contended desired good music, quality rather than quantity, and at length he proposed a resolution that Mr Rupert Gliddon be given \$1,000 to expend

make the band as efficient as it was before the war. To do that we require money. The expenses are large. We require help to put the band on a good footing and keep it going.

"Government assistance will be forthcoming as in the past, but we don't know what will be given by the city. We are here to ask you for assistance to make the 57<sup>th</sup> band what it

should be, one of the best in Ontario. We won't be satisfied except with an efficient organization.

"Some of the manufacturers promised to engage good bandsmen to help us keep them and with that connection I think we would be in a better position to keep the band going than would other organizations."

Major McPherson assured the committee that the spirit shown in the reorganization of the regiment assured its success. It was an asset to Peterboro and the greater its success the greater the asset it became....

"The 57<sup>th</sup> Band is one of three bands that have been engaged for the last 17 years to play at the Toronto Exhibition," Mr Gliddon reminded the committee. "It played for a week at Scarboro Beach, and was offered a second week's engagement but was unable to take it." ....

"Ald Gliddon was brought here by the 57<sup>th</sup> as a bandmaster," Ald Crowe recalled. "He was selected because he had the degrees and the papers. I was one of those who selected him. There were only 13 in the band at the time. He took hold of it against the opposition of Mr Finch Miller and brought the reeds section to 17 clarinets and the band to 52 members. It traveled all over this part of the province and made a reputation. Mr Gliddon is a musician of the highest standing. Ask Herbert Clark of Huntsville or Slattery of the 48<sup>th</sup> Highlanders, or Peel of St Catharines.

"There are some people trying to say that Mr Gliddon is a German. He was born in England of English parents and he was educated at Leipzig, which was the music centre of the world. His profession is music and he doesn't dabble in anything else. When the 93<sup>rd</sup> Battalion went away they said, 'you stay on the job and when we come back we will be better men, and will be loyal to the 57<sup>th</sup>.' Instead they come back and start another organization. Only little jealousies keep them apart. I take deep interest in the city bands. There is no use putting money in an organization that is here today, and gone tomorrow." ....

### **GRAND OPERA HOUSE THING OF PAST WHERE BEST SHOWS TO VISIT CANADA PLAYED GOES TO WRECKERS**

*Examiner*, Monday, 1 December 1941

Ghosts of great stars of the legitimate stage, long since dead must have huddled together for comfort today, when wreckers started the big job of demolishing the Grand Opera House on George street, the last link with an era that will be remembered for all time by several generations of Peterborough folk who patronized the great road shows of thirty years ago.

The Opera House is located on George street, just north of King, next to J. J. Turner and Sons factory, and the building was erected early in the century by Rupert H. Bradburn at a cost of \$24,500. This was done because Bradburn's Opera House, later known as Victoria Hall, had become outmoded and was inadequate for the business. Some years later the Opera House was purchased by J. J. Turner and Sons at a cost of \$37,500. They operated this showplace until 1 March 1919, when they sold out to the late Ambrose J. Small. That same year Mr Small disappeared in December and his disappearance has been a mystery of recurring interest since then. Mr Small sold the theatre to Trans-Canada Theatres for \$100,000 and in

more recent years it was purchased for less than a fifth of that amount by R. M. Glover and the Gus Hay estate. They sold out to Hanson Theatres, who had planned to renovate the building into a modern motion picture house, but later sold the building to Famous Players Corporation. This week the building was purchased for salvage by the Peterborough Metal and Waste Company [west side of Bethune Street south of Hunter].

A few years ago the seats were removed from the theatre and today the curtain fell for the last time when workers unhooked the ropes high in the rigging loft to send the old curtain tumbling in a cloud of dust to the stage floor, blanketing the footlights that have glimmered across the silk clad legs of a hundred choruses.

The theatre seated 1,500 people, had a main floor, a gallery and a second gallery, known as "the gods" or "nigger heaven" to hundreds of school boys who flocked into the alley just south of the building night after night to squeeze into line and work their way up to the top gallery where the seats were cheapest. There were two completely equipped boxes on each side of the house with one semi-box on each side back of these. The latter two were not canopied. The orchestra pit was directly in front of the stage and the dressing rooms for the artists were located in a basement under the stage proper.

In its heyday this opera house was considered one of the finest in Canada, and its scenery and stage was such that it could accommodate the largest cast then on the road. One of the largest to play here was George White's "Scandals," which had a cast of 90 people and a work crew of seven. Usually there were 45 local men employed at the theatre as stage hands, carpenters, electricians and similar work essential to the show business.

The first show booked to play at the Opera House was "The Little Duchess," in which Elsie Janis was the star, but a few days before the opening night, the rigging loft just back of the stage sagged and they had to transfer the show to Lindsay, where it was staged in the Academy of Music. A special excursion train ran from Peterborough for the event. Later the rigging loft was propped up, and finally made more secure by J. J. Turner, who had two steel beams installed.

The first show to play at the Opera House was "The Yankee Consul," and played to a packed house, seats on the ground floor selling at \$10, in the first gallery at \$5 and \$1 for a sport in "the gods." This was a musical comedy and was rated with the best. From that time on, the theatre averaged three performances a week, getting the best stage shows on the continent. The shows would play Toronto and Hamilton, then hop to Peterborough and Kingston, sometimes Belleville, before having a run in Montreal.

The scenery for this first show was hauled from the CNR station (then the Grand Trunk) to the Opera House by the late Walter Stocker, who used one horse on a cart.

The stage equipment was top-notch and they had 45 sets of lines on head blocks and pulleys for hanging scenery. The Rex Snelgrove Stock Company had a 26 weeks' run in this city, and Kingston and when the show was at Kingston the painter was busy repainting scenery at Peterborough.

There was never a fire nor a panic during the lifetime of this playhouse, but one time stage hands muffed the act when they were faking a snow storm scene. They had a cradle filled with tiny bits of paper high above the stage and by rocking this



back and forth the bits of paper could be made to flutter to the floor like snow. One prop man, however, became a little enthusiastic and upset the cradle. A few seconds later the director of the show let loose a bellow back stage, "My —, I asked for a snow storm not an avalanche," and the audience roared.

Lillian Russell, who made a real hit in "Wildfire," enjoyed a top-ranking popularity with the stage hands. She was late in arriving, and when she learned the stage crew had missed supper she ordered her maid to return to the dining car, where her own cook, a negro, made coffee and sandwiches which were served to the men, on the stage a few hours before the theatre opened its doors.

Many shows came and went, each enjoying varying popularity but many of them were so good they were brought back time and again, and different Stock Companies put on the same shows, such as Uncle Tom's Cabin, all playing to packed houses.

It was a glorious era of greasepaint, cold cream, burnt cork, buxom ladies and gay leg shows and the people loved it. Fine acting was given when various companies staged Shakespearean plays, and even today many middle aged men year for the return of a musical comedy. This desire is not shared by the young generations for few if any of them have any idea of what a musical comedy is. Among the notables who were seen locally were Maude Adams in "Peter Pan"; Lawrence Irving, who with his wife, Mabel Mackney was drowned in the sinking of the Empress of Ireland; De Wolfe Hopper, Lulu Glaser in "Mademoiselle Mischief"; Charles Grapewin in the "Awakening of Mr. Pip"; and this actor is still prominent in the movie world; May Robson, star of Hollywood, in "A Night Out"; George Arliss in "Disraeli"; Dan Ryan in the "Merchant of Venice"; and other great Shakespearean actors; Sir Martin Harvey, Walter Hampden and Henry Mansfield.

Shows which went over big were "Peggy from Paris", "The Burgomaster", "I.O.U." ranked with the best in musical comedies. Others were: "Every Woman", "The Chocolate Soldier", "Robin Hood", "Chu Chin Chow", an extravaganza that enjoyed much popularity and "The Wanderer," a Biblical drama in which 40 live sheep were carried by the company, and used in one of the scenes, "Maid of the Mountains", Eddie Foy and Lawrence D'Orsay in "The Earl of Pawtucket".

Oscar O'Shea, a Peterborough boy starred in "The Little Mother" and as Father Kelly in "The Rosary". The late Dan Simons was seen here in "Bringing Up Father".

There were so many good things seen at the Grand in the olden golden days that memories will flood in upon the citizens who used to gather there. Memories of the lilting music and sparkling comedy of "The Royal Chef"; the "Gingerbread Man" with Ross Snow and other favorites, G. P. Huntley, English comedian in "Kitty Grey", the lanky Richard Carle in "The Tenderfoot"; the whimsical Charlotte Greenwood in "So Long Letty"; "The Chocolate Soldier", "The Quaker Girl", "The Pink Lady", "No, No Nanette" with its favorite "Tea for Two" and "I Want To Be Happy"; "The Student Prince"; "Blossomtime" with the best of Schubert's music; "The Merry Widow" with its immortal waltz; Victor Herbert's classic "Babes in Toyland"; Rudolf Friml's "Katinka"; Blanche Ring with her inimitable singing of "Rings

on my Finger"; "Floradora"; and Leonard and Halliday in "Painting the Town".

Memories too of a different type of music come floating back with the news that the Grand is being razed to the ground. The wonderful contralto of Madame Clara Butt, great English singer, the remarkably fine tenor voice of Edward Johnson, the Guelph boy who climbed to fame as an opera singer and is now the eminently successful director of the Metropolitan Opera Company, the resonant baritone of David Bispham; the piano technique of Mark Hambourg; the wonderful singing of the world-famed Sheffield Choir; the great music of Sousa's band, with his trumpets and trombones standing in line in front of the stage as the band played "The Stars and Stripes Forever" and of Creatore's remarkably accomplished Italian band, all these seem fresh again.

And there will be thoughts too of the humanness of the Scottish songs of Harry Lauder and the drollery of those black-faced comedians McIntyre and Heath in "The Ham Tree"; and of Eugene Lockhart who wrote the words with Ernest Seitz another Toronto boy composing the music, singing "The World is Waiting for the Sunrise" long before it became known to fame and a nameless singer in "The Pierrota", an English concert company singing "It's a Long Way to Tipperary", a year before the Great War made it the marching song of the British Empire.

Remembered also will be the great plays of yesteryear. Margaret Anglin in "Green Stockings", "The White Sister" with one of the greatest casts assembled for a road performance including Viola Allen and William and Dustin Farnum; Clyde Fitch's "The Walls of Jericho"; Ethel Barrymore, the only one of the great stage family to appear here; Edward Terry in "Sweet Lavender", "The Dover Road," Robert Mantell in "King Lear" and other Shakespearean plays, "Experience," "The Man from Mars," Sir John Martin-Harvey in "The Only Way" and "The Bred of the Treshams," "Paid in Full" and scores of others.

And the comedies of the era: "Twin Beds," "Nothing But the Truth," "Fair and Warmer," Etienne Girardot in "Charley's Aunt," Cyril Maude in "Grumpy," May Robson in "The Rejuvenation of Aunt Mary," "Bill's Tombstones" — there must be some laughs still echoing in the corners of the Grand over those two funny sailors.

Then there were minstrel shows who would ballyhoo their arrival by holding a parade down the main street toggled out in show attire. Primrose and Dockstader, Guy Bros., Hills Minstrels, Georgia Minstrels, and a dozen others.

Forbes, Robinson made a hit in a play called "The Passing of the Third Floor Back." George N. Cohen's show "45 Minutes from Broadway" was well-received, and after 1919 many English plays came in, chief of which perhaps was "Hello Canada," featuring Harry Tate. Fine actors of the particular era were Bramsby Williams and Percy Hutchinson. Another grand show which came about the same time was called "Edged Tools."

Roselie Knott was a dramatic star and the stock companies which drew well included the Marks Bros. Stock Company.

"Bringing Up Father" was a perennial favorite. Following the war the Dumbells played here many times, but the writing was on the wall for five theatres were flourishing in



Peterborough as compared to 1905 when there wasn't a single playhouse except the Opera House. There was the Empire on Charlotte Street where the Wine Store is now, the Strand where the Liquor Store is on George street. The Tiz-It was in the building occupied by the Paris Café, and the Royal was located in what is now the Centre.

For a while movies were shown in the Opera House with some success. And then in 1928 when sound movies came into being and the Capitol Theatre installed the new apparatus the Opera House faded into obscurity as far as the public was concerned.

Among the last road shows which played at the Opera House was the Georgia Minstrels and Eugene O'Neill's "The Strange Interlude."

There are a few of the original stage hands still in this city who worked at the Opera House when it first opened, and these are Tom Stenton, Teddy Crowe, Price Adamson, and Curly Noyes. Jimmie Holmes and George McAndrews are in Toronto.

Wandering through the old building today, an Examiner man recalled many happy early days as he climbed up to the gods when he spotted a sign "Absolutely no person will be allowed to take peanuts into the gallery." They were too handy as missiles for the bald heads far below.

On the wall outside the front door over the spot where a canopy used to hang is the sign "Grand Opera House, comedy, tragedy" .... and the most tragic part of it all is that the day of the spoken drama in this city has gone.

## TVA ARCHIVES NEWS I

### John G. Weir Fonds 171

#### Diaries, 1880-1925, 15 inches.

The diary of John G. Weir of Otonabee Township covers the 45 years 1880 to 1925 except for the 1922 diary which was not received. Weir lived on the location that is now known as Burnham Mansion, on Highway 7 at the Keene Road. The diaries contain entries for nearly every day and are written in an aide memoire style. He uses pre-printed journals that measure about 6.5 inches by 8 inches, and have a week per page. Interestingly there is no provision for Sunday entries. His calendars were printed for Brown Brothers in Toronto. Weir purchased his first diaries from John Carnegie at the Review office in downtown Peterborough, paying for 1881's with a load of dry pine on Christmas eve.

The first page for January 1880, on the entry spaces Thursday 1 to Monday 5 reads:

*We are thirteen years married today and just such a day as it was then that is warm and pleasant sunshine with just enough snow to make good sleighing and make every thing outside look clear.*

*The fresh warm air gentle breezes and pleasant sunshine inspires new intentions and desires in our minds and there are three things to admire and three times three to always keep in mind and the three things to admire are Intellectual power, Dignity and Gracefulness.*

*Three things to love: Courage, gentleness and affection.*

*Three things to hate: Cruelty, arrogance and ingratitude.*

*Three things to delight in: Frankness, freedom and beauty.*

*Three things to wish for: Health, friends and a cheerful spirit.*

*Three things to avoid: Idleness, loquacity and flippant jestings.*

*Three things to fight for: Honour, country and home.*

*Three things to govern: Temper, tongue and conduct.*

*Three things to think about: Life, death and eternity.*

The next entry is for Tuesday 6: "Sleighbearing all gone this morning." Then the pages are blank until 29 March 1880. He is evidently getting his diary legs. This week's entries talk of farm tasks of cutting straw, threshing and sawing wood, but the entry for two days is devoted to a poem about "Home" which he copied from the Boston Transcript. The following week, the entries for four days contain only a poem titled "At Home To-day". Then until the middle of April it reads like a farm diary. We even get our first news about market prices. James Brickley sold 20 bushels of peas for seeds for 70 cents. Weir was building a barn and cradling oats and other farm jobs but the entries in the diary were hit-and-miss. By November, the entries are more frequent. He makes several trips to town to sell wood. He went hunting and canoeing. He made many trips to town to deliver wood and to make purchases. Willie Graham visited on Christmas and they spent much of the day shooting.

According to the 29 December 1880 entry:

*I went to the annual school meeting today. Only five of us there, business not very brisk.*

*Lovina and I went to town this afternoon. I made my selections and paid for all my next year's newspapers, the chosen ones are the Montreal "Weekly Witness" Toronto "Globe" Peterboro "Review" and "Examiner."*

*Very cold to day, seven below zero.*

On New Year's Eve, he "went to town to hear Sir Richard Cartwright address the electors on the Canada Pacific Railway swindle."

The back pages of the diary allow him to summarize his financial transactions on a daily basis, and he is using this from April onward. Here are some fascinating items giving insight into local businesses. He went to Bellegem to get pictures framed (\$3.56); he purchased this journal on 14 April for 60 cents; he bought 195 pounds of oats from Mr Flavell; bought a barrel of salt from T. W. Robinson for one dollar; sold wool to James Stevenson for \$13; bought hair tonic for \$1; bought a suit of clothes from H. Lebrun for \$6. And so forth through the year.

The diaries get better as they go along. Without doubt this is one of the finest farm diaries I have seen, and it is even more interesting because Weir lived so close to Peterborough.

Pat Marchand was very alert in discovering this diary when she was working on the Sculley murder case which she shared with readers of the *Heritage Gazette* in 2004. She plans to write a book on this most fascinating murder case and we look forward to reading it. She has a keen eye for detail and has left no stone unturned in doing her thorough research. She has also volunteered to lead a team to transcribe the Weir diaries into the computer. We will keep our readers up to date on this project. And perhaps in future issues, we will have some more forays into one of our most fascinating treasures.

## **"JITNEY N' JIVE" PETERBOROUGH'S BIG BAND ERA**

Gina Martin

On a soft summer evening, the sultry sounds of a romantic saxophone can be heard wafting through the air as gentle and as captivating as waves on a beach. The melodic trickling notes of a piano soon add to the wonder of the moment as a lovely young woman in a velvet evening gown and elbow length satin gloves takes her place at the microphone next to the neatly tuxedoed orchestra. The houselights dim as her lilting voice fills the room and the orchestra leader directs houseguests to the dance floor. *"...Why do breezes sigh every evening? Whispering your name as they do..."* Couples glide rhythmically over the floor as she moves through each stanza of lyrics. *"And why have I the feeling, stars are on my ceiling. I know why and so do you..."* As her song comes to a close there is heartfelt applause as she curtsies and leaves the stage, her audience still basking in the glow of romance. The orchestra leader thanks her for her performance and then motions the musicians to their next number. Suddenly the lights are up and the blare of a single trumpet belts out a lively introduction soon joined by the sprightliness of the trombones and saxophones as the band begins to play "Marie". It's time to jive and the floor begins to fill with lively couples eager to "cut the rug". The lilt of the young woman's voice quickly fades to a memory as the orchestra sways to the rollicking beat and the dancers show their talent and enthusiasm.

One might think this to be Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra playing the Imperial Room at Toronto's Royal York Hotel or even a scene from a silver screen classic starring Gene Kelly or Fred Astaire. Instead, this scene from the past is much closer to home. It's Saturday evening at the Brock Street Summer Gardens in Peterborough with the Del Cray Orchestra providing the entertainment and Vi Wall the beautiful young lady at the microphone. Mr. Cray and Philip "Zip" Marrocco show their talents on the saxophone while Jack Minicola plays drums. There are no impressive paycheques for these fine local entertainers. Instead there is a small cut of money taken at the door and a lot of smiles and cheers as they move from one inspiring number to the next. This is the era of big bands and dance halls. Of jitney dances and swing music. The sounds of Count Basie and Benny Goodman stream into homes via radio while, in the absence of television, people file into the dance halls for an evening of dancing and socializing. During the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, Peterborough, as with any other town in North America, loved dancing and the Big Band sound. Even though this genre of inspired and uplifting music now seems to surface mainly on nostalgia nights and "classic" radio, it only takes a moment to sit back, close your eyes and remember a time when the dance halls boomed and the bands played on.

Both swing music and the big bands became popular in the 1930s and were derived from New Orleans style jazz. A completely new and energizing style of jazz, swing music

introduced string and percussion instruments to the mainly brass presentation of jazz. The beat also changed from two beats per bar in New Orleans jazz to four beats per bar in swing. Improvisation was more restricted in swing as the music tended to be written down and arranged, making a bandleader a required feature of the band.

The popular belief that the terms "swing" and "big band" described the same thing is a myth. "Swing" referred to the style or genre of music while "big band" described the format in which it was presented. Since swing required more instruments to play, it was necessary to increase the size of the bands to include bass players, guitarists and drummers. Bands grew from the usual 3 to 6 musicians of the jazz band to between 8 and 16 for swing. Hence the term "big band" came into popular use.

Swing became wildly popular. Not only was the music itself extremely energetic, it also allowed singing and dancing to be a part of the presentation. The soloist then became a part of many big bands and the houseguest was now more of a participant than a part of the audience. Jitney dances, where patrons paid 10 cents a ticket for each dance, were very popular at the time. Often there was no admission fee but strips of dance tickets were sold at the door. Ticket collectors were positioned at various locations throughout the hall and gathered the tickets as the dancers filed onto the floor. Tickets were usually tucked out of site in a pocket or wallet but the more extroverted patron would cruise the tables with long strips of tickets hanging from his lapel. "Dapper Dans" they were called and every dancehall had them! So it seemed that, with the addition of widespread popular dancing beginning in the 1930s, the classic dancehall was born. It quickly became apparent that the big bands and the large new dancehalls were well matched. Since the microphone was not widely used until the mid 1940s, the larger bands provided more sound to fill the larger venue.

Most music scholars credit Benny Goodman with popularizing swing music. Although there were others before him who dabbled in swing, Goodman put the polish on the style and created the big band to bring it to life. He earned the title "King of Swing", a moniker he still holds today. Many music critics considered the big bands to be playing properly only if they were playing "Goodman style". It was therefore quite a treat for Peterborough music lovers when, on several occasions, Goodman and his orchestra performed locally to a wildly enthusiastic crowd.

Long before swing music became popular, Peterborough displayed a strong musical presence. As early as 1836, Thomas Choate's Singing School was established. Local military units always had well managed bands filled with talented marchers and musicians with the bands of the 57<sup>th</sup> Regiment being the recipients of numerous trophies and awards. The Bradburn Opera House often showcased the musical talent of many Peterborough bands and orchestras, including the Peterborough Civic Concert Band, an

organization that will celebrate its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in June 2008. In 1905, Mr. and Mrs. Rupert Gliddon founded the Peterborough Conservatory of Music in the old Lech home at Hunter and Rubidge Streets, an organization that for many years directed the musical instruction of Peterborough's finest musicians. The Morning Music Club, the Saturday Twilight Musicales and the Peterborough Madrigal Choir were a few of the many musical organizations popular in Peterborough before the era of swing.

The era of swing and big band thrived because Peterborough had so many popular venues for musical events. Just as important as the orchestras and musicians were the large number of dancehalls that opened and became home to so much of the swing culture. Peterborough and the



*Peterborough Civic Concert Band 1959* (Thanks to Peterborough Civic Concert Band)

surrounding area was home to quite a number of venues considering its relatively small size, probably owing to the fact that the town was blessed not only with a rich musical base but also a vast and healthy cottage industry with many cottagers looking for entertainment. Venues such as the Pines Pavilion in Bridgenorth and Rye's Pavilion along the Otonabee River in the south end were popular long before swing and the big bands. Later, the growth of swing music led to such popular venues as the Brock Street Summer Gardens and the Club Aragon. Looking at the local venues is integral to learning about the era of swing and big band.

Chemong Park in Bridgenorth was home to four of the earliest pavilions and dance halls in the area. Bridgenorth native Dan Sullivan for years operated a pavilion on the old Communication Road that saw music recitals and organized picnics bring in people from as far away as Cobourg. The pavilion was built in the late 1880s and was moved to the Communication Road site in 1907. This pavilion burned down in 1926 but not before the Rendezvous Pavilion opened across the street. By 1922 dances were held there almost nightly and many of the top bands from many parts of North America played there. Alas, the Rendezvous also burned and all that remains of it today is a burned out stone fireplace standing in a grove of trees and brush.

The Palace Pavilion, more affectionately referred to by many locals as "the Barn", was built in 1940 and had the shortest run of the Chemong pavilions. The Palace also saw many big name bands and performers and remained popular

into the 1950s. Musicians who performed there stayed in a house next door where they enjoyed home-cooked meals and hand-made linens. After the Palace closed, it served as an apartment building before being demolished in 1970.

The largest and longest running of the Chemong pavilions, The Pines, was built in 1946 on a 4.5 acre site on Communication Road. Owner Herb Payne built the structure from old drill sheds and Bridgenorth resident Gordon Ray built the gleaming hardwood dance floor. Payne sold The Pines in 1956 to Douglas MacPherson who later sold it to Peterborough bandsman Bobby Kinsman and his partner, restaurant owner Jeff Purvey. The Pines saw many big name bands and a myriad of popular events in its more than 50 year tenure and only closed its doors a few years ago. It made the successful

transition from swing music to Rock and Roll and enjoyed packed houses week after week right to the end of its run.

In 1922, Harold Rye built The Rye Pavilion on the riverside at Lock and King George Streets in Peterborough next to his boathouse where, since 1901, he had manufactured canoes and paddles. A wooden, barn like structure built on posts, Rye's Pavilion ran dances six nights a week during the summer. Once

furnaces were installed in the 1930s, dances ran year round with many orchestras providing the entertainment. Many visitors to Rye's will remember the sign posted on the old stone chimney that read, "Stop. Smile. Dance a while." This simple invitation seemed to set the tone for events at Rye's. It had a comfortable, welcoming atmosphere where good clean fun and entertainment was the main draw. As a side note, Harold Rye was credited as a pioneer of corporate advertising. In the early years of the pavilion he approached Ovaltine and asked if they wanted to advertise on the back of the dance tickets, the first dancehall in Ontario to do so. In 1937, busy with his boat business and thriving dancehall, Harold Rye decided to sell the pavilion to Herb Payne who would later open The Pines in Bridgenorth. Although Payne made some changes to the way the dancehall was run, he kept the name Rye until the end of World War II when he closed the pavilion and tore it down. There were many unhappy dancers and musicians the day that Rye's Pavilion closed its doors.

One of the most popular and widely remembered dancehalls of Peterborough's past was the Brock Ballroom or simply "The Brock". Located on Brock Street between Aylmer and George Streets in the same building now housing the Price Choppers grocery store, the Brock Street Summer Gardens was built in the late 1800s as a skating arena and, from 1934 to the mid 1960s, did double duty as a hockey rink and dancehall. The idea to convert the arena to a dancehall during the summers when hockey took a break was the brainstorm of former *Peterborough Examiner* owner Roland Glover and his business partners Sarsh Sheedy and E.V. Warn. The three men were co-owners of the arena during the 1930s and were looking for a way to keep the arena active during the

summer months. They hired Peterborough native Osias LaPlante to manage the dancehall during the summers of 1934 and 1935. When LaPlante died in 1936 they contacted Andy Rutter, a popular MC and musician with the local Mose Yokum Orchestra who also organized many musical events in Peterborough. When Mr. Rutter took over management he made many significant changes to the Brock adding an elegant atmosphere to the venue. He put down a new 4,000 square foot parquet floor and a large boardwalk around the perimeter. He also had a new stage built to facilitate the largest orchestras and hung a number of large crepe chandeliers from the ceiling. After purchasing the Brock Arena in 1937, he continued to add class and ambiance to the building with the addition of a fountain and an illuminated arbour inside the front door. All the big name orchestras played at the Brock including Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey and Count Basie as well as many popular local bands including those of Del Crary and Hal McFarlane.

Andy Rutter sold the Brock in 1938 and the building enjoyed a prosperous existence as a dancehall for another twenty years. But it was difficult to sustain profits once rock and roll began to replace swing as the more popular genre of music. Rock and roll highlighted the bands and the music more than the dancing and, although many rock and roll bands played successfully at the Brock during the late 1950s and early 1960s, it was obvious that the large building could not be maintained as in the past. The Brock closed its doors as a dancehall in the mid 1960s and was converted to a grocery store.

In 1932, one of the longest running pavilions in the Peterborough area opened its doors at Sturgeon Lake. Martin and Vi Thurston opened The Greenhurst Dance Pavilion next to Thurstonia Park Resort and various owners kept it alive until 1997. A two floor barn-like structure, Greenhurst had a games room complete with darts and pinball machines, a soda fountain and a huge wooden dance floor with a raised stage on the top floor. During the summers, dances were held every night and cottagers poured into the hall for an evening of dancing, often after enjoying dinner at the Thurstonia Park Restaurant. Many of the area cottagers staying at the resort picked up extra money selling jitney tickets at the door. In 1952, the Thurstons sold Greenhurst to Fred and Helen Lines who ran it very successfully into the late 1970s.

The changeover from swing to rock and roll was a much more successful endeavour for Greenhurst than it had been for the Brock Summer Gardens. The dance floor was much smaller and the building itself was easier to finance than a cavernous hockey arena. The 1960s and 1970s were tremendously big decades for Greenhurst as it became one of the principal rock and roll centres in Ontario. The pavilion changed owners several more times and enjoyed many more successful years before it was tragically set on fire by an arsonist in 1998 and torn down in 1999.

On 30 August 1946, a very new and different sort of establishment opened in Peterborough. More than 1,500 people attended the opening of the Club Aragon, a combination restaurant and nightclub owned by Jack and Gertrude Wineberg. Located on Lansdowne Street East, where Trentwinds now operates, the Aragon was an immediate success. With its classy décor, fine dining and impressive

entertainment, the slogan "It's nice to be seen at the Aragon" printed on the menu and brochures seemed very fitting. Entertainers such as Duke Ellington and Nat King Cole headlined there, making it one of the most popular nightspots in Ontario. Over the years, motel units, a banquet hall and a lounge were added. After the Winebergs sold the business in the early 1970s, the Club Aragon became known as the Miss Diana Motor Hotel and, with another change in ownership in 1991, became Trentwinds.



*Photo: Mose Yokum Orchestra*

Of course, during the era of swing and big band, there were many more dancehalls in the Peterborough area in addition to the ones named above. Even the smallest nearby communities had dancehalls including Hastings, Havelock, Lakefield, Bobcaygeon and Stony Lake and they all boomed with activity. There were many local orchestras and musicians who, with their talent and dedication to fine music, brought these venues to life. Some were professionals who later moved on to bigger name bands. Others remained in the Peterborough area throughout their musical careers. Many were Peterborough natives while others moved here after hearing of Peterborough's superb musical base. All shared their love for swing music and their desire to bring it to life.



*Mose Yokum Band 1941, from Zip*

When swing music came into vogue Peterborough musicians set up a variety of talented and entertaining orchestras. Mose Yokum, one very popular musician and orchestra leader, was among the first to set up his own "big band". A Peterborough resident from a young age, Jimmy "Mose" Yokum was well trained in classical piano and taught classes from his home. He formed his first orchestra when he decided that classical piano alone could not afford him the type of living he had in mind. In 1934, the Mose Yokum Orchestra included local musicians Al Phifer, Gord Robertson, Andy Rutter, Emmett McGrath, George Gatfield, Hal McFarlane, Curly Gibson, Tap Thirnbek, Pat Connell and Jack Thackery. Later such talents as Zip Marrocco, Paul Rochetta, Joe Barber, Harry McDonnell, Ted Everett and Dick Eason joined ranks with Mose Yokum as they played such venues as the Brock Street Summer Gardens, Rye's Pavilion, The Palace, The Rendezvous, Greenhurst and the YMCA.

In the mid-1930s, Joe Watson and Perc Atkinson formed the Watson Atkinson Orchestra and played regularly at the Melody Manor, Knights of Columbus Hall on Simcoe Street. Some of the musicians in this band included Tap Thirnbek, Jack Telford, Jimmy Duffus, Bert McFadden, Del Crary and Darcy Carter. The band also played at The Palace and the Empress Hotel. Both Jimmy Duffus and Del Crary went on to form their own orchestras.

Jimmy Duffus, of the Duffus Funeral Home family, was a popular and multitalented drummer whose band "Jimmy Duffus and his Music" was the first live band on CHEX radio. In the early years the band included Del Crary on saxophone, Wally Parnell on trombone, Burt McFadden on bass and Cecil Hughes on trumpet. It was Jimmy Duffus' band that officially opened The Pines and, for some years, was the house band at that location. Duffus also played Brock Street Summer Gardens and the Empress Hotel. His brand of swing was said to be very close to the style of Benny Goodman himself.

Del Crary was one of the most charismatic and loved musicians to ever hail from Peterborough. Growing up in an elegant home at the corner of Park and Murray Streets, Del very early chose the saxophone as his instrument of choice and, as a young teenager, the pleasing sounds of his sax could be heard throughout the neighbourhood as he perfected his talents from the family living room. He was one of the youngest musicians to join the big bands of the early 1930s. Del Crary played with such orchestras as Watson Atkinson, Mose Yokum and Jimmy Duffus.

Crary soon formed his own orchestras for which others were eager to play. His natural talent for music and his easy way with people made him an instant success both with his band mates and with his audiences. In 1938 he put together a band that played the summer at Morgan's Point Pavilion in Port Colborne with Emmett Kearney on piano, Jack Minicola

on drums, Zip Marrocco, Harry McDonnell and himself on saxophone, Lloyd Boddison on guitar, Ted Everett on trombone and Dick Eason on trumpet. The boys travelled about in a Dodge Phaeton and were well received in the Niagara area. In Peterborough, Crary began booking into other venues and continued to play when possible with Mose Yokum.

When World War II broke out, Del Crary signed up and trained with the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders. Along with many other Canadian musicians, he joined the Armed Forces entertainment troupe and became a part of the Canadian Army Show, a group of army musicians who entertained first in Canada and then overseas. One of Del's favourite sayings was, "I chased Hitler around Europe with a saxophone." On the train out of Peterborough he met his future wife, Peterborough native Noreen O'Toole, a member of the Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWAC), who was a dancer with the Army Show. Del and Noreen were in the same unit in the Army Show and worked in many of the same shows. They married in Italy in 1944 and returned home to Peterborough after the war to raise their family.



*Del Crary Orchestra*

While in the Army Show, Del Crary met many other Canadian musicians and singers and formed many life-long friendships. He persuaded a number of these people to move to Peterborough where they could enjoy its rich musical opportunities. Coincidentally, while in the Army Show, he found himself in the same unit as another local musician who became one of Peterborough's celebrities. Del had known Bobby Kinsman for several years before the war and their time together in the Army Show allowed them to become more familiar with each other's styles, paving the way for them to work together on many future projects.



After the war Del Crary immediately put together another orchestra and it headlined at the Brock Street Summer Gardens and played the Kawartha Room at the Empress Hotel upon its grand opening in 1948. When the Club Aragon opened, Jack Wineberg hired Del to lead the house band, a project that very much excited him. Del wanted to put together the finest band that he could for the new club and drew on many of the acquaintances that he made in the Canadian Army Show to do just that. He invited Army Show musicians to Peterborough and be a part of the new orchestra. Local singers Vi Wall and Bernie Morin both sang with Del's orchestra at the Aragon and enjoyed fine musical careers into the 1970s. Orville Wainman also sang and Paul "Streak" Konkle played bass.



Although music was always central, Del Crary was drawn into many different areas of Peterborough life. This remarkable man did so much for the Peterborough community. With his easy manner and silky smooth voice he became the CHEx morning radio announcer, thus beginning a long, respected career as a Peterborough broadcaster and celebrity. For 25 years he hosted "Dance Party", a show for teenagers, filmed live on CHEx Television. Del Crary soon became Peterborough's Dick Clark! Many Peterborough residents, both young and old, have fond memories of this show either as a spectator or participant.

A wonderful facet to Del Crary's career was his tremendous charitable work. He became the principal organizer for many of Peterborough's charity campaigns and was able to use his influence in both the radio and musical world to help raise funds. Del worked tirelessly for many different charities but was especially involved with fundraising for crippled children. His work with Easter Seals and the Ontario Society for Crippled Children culminated in an annual

event of his own design, The Timmy Show. Broadcast live on CHEx from the Peterborough Memorial Centre, the Timmy Show was a fundraising telethon. He booked many entertainment acts for the telethon including a number of the local orchestras and singers as well as dance troupes and comedians. Each year, the Easter Seals picked a new "Timmy", a crippled child to represent the campaign and one of the most touching parts of the telethon saw Del Crary on bended knee talking and laughing with the smiling youngster. He worked closely with famed Canadian wrestler Whipper Billy Watson, a Toronto native and celebrity also known for his charitable work, particularly with crippled children. Billy often appeared on The Timmy Show with Del and the two became life long friends. The Arts and Water Festival came to life under the direction of Del and his friend Fred Anderson who remained with the festival until his death in 2005. Unlike today's impressive show, the first festival took place over one weekend at Point St. Charles Park with a flatbed truck as the main stage. It was a fun, well-attended weekend with local talent and great music. Each year the festival improved and the crowds grew. Today the event takes place over the entire summer as thousands of people attend performances of high-profile entertainers. Point St. Charles has been turned into a fine waterfront park with a large permanent band shell and a beautiful, developed harbour front.

Sadly, Del Crary did not live to see the huge success of his festival in the park idea. After suffering kidney problems for nearly ten years, he died prematurely in 1978 at the age of 59. For his talent and contributions to the community Del Crary received many accolades but his modesty never allowed him to rest on his laurels. He was Peterborough's Citizen of the Year in 1961 and, in 1979, Point St. Charles was renamed Del Crary Park to honour the man who once again put summertime Peterborough on the map. Rest in peace, Del.



As with Del Crary, Bobby Kinsman's name became synonymous with entertainment in Peterborough. Kinsman was born in Fonhill, Ontario and took up the saxophone at a very young age. He put together a number of big band

orchestras in the Niagara area and played his brand of swing music in dancehalls such as Morgan's Point and Crystal Beach. He moved to Peterborough in the mid-1930s and for three summers provided the house band at Greenhurst on Sturgeon Lake. After the war he went home to the Niagara Peninsula and thought seriously of moving out of music into a different type of work. Del Crary changed his mind. After Del became involved with CHEX radio he wondered if he would be able to keep up all the rehearsing needed to fulfill his role as orchestra leader at the Club Aragon. He asked Bobby if he might move back to Peterborough and take his place. Kinsman agreed to the request and, for the next 25 years, he provided the house band at the Aragon. Orville Wainman and Streak Konkle remained in the band and people such as Paul Minicola on saxophone, Norman "Buzz" Buzzell on trumpet and Doug Romaine, a comedian from the Army Show, joined the ranks. Bobby Kinsman gave work to many struggling young musicians who benefited from his tutelage and, when the swing era ended, he put together many popular nostalgia nights where, once again, the sound of swing reigned supreme. Bobby Kinsman died in Peterborough in 2002.

Another of Peterborough's fine musicians during and after the age of swing was Paul Minicola. A charming man whose talent on the saxophone, clarinet and trumpet caught many an eye, Paul and his brother Jack were well-known in the Peterborough musical world. Their father, Joe Minicola, was a very accomplished musician on several instruments and for years was the choirmaster at St. Peter's Cathedral. He taught the boys music and gave them many opportunities to play at dances and concerts. Paul Minicola formed his own orchestra and played in such venues as the Pines, the Club Aragon with Bobby Kinsman and the Empress Hotel. However, he is perhaps best known for the many years that he headed the house band at Greenhurst Pavilion. It is said that no one could play "Blue Moon" like Paul Minicola and his orchestra! Swing music was his specialty and he played it with zest and enthusiasm. Paul's daughter Lisa has wonderful memories of her father's years in the big bands. Whenever he would be getting ready for a performance, she and her sister were in charge of shining his shoes. One of the little girls would put both feet in one shoe and the other would shine. They would then switch places for the other shoe. She also remembers the nights when she would accompany her mother to the Empress Hotel on nights her father would be performing there. When the band took a break her father would take her onto the dance floor and, with her feet planted firmly on top of his, would dance a waltz with his daughter. She remembers the sounds of swing circulating throughout the house during her childhood and said that her father lived for the sound of the big bands.

There were many other musicians and orchestras who took the spotlight during the era of swing. Fred Coupland played swing for more than 40 years, 18 of them as leader of the house band at the Rock Haven. There was the Mart Kenney Orchestra and the Robert Farnon Band. Countless other musicians played solo as Peterborough and surrounding area jitneyed and jived to the sounds of swing.



*Fred Coupland*

When rock and roll began replacing swing as the music of choice and television became a viable form of entertainment, many of the fabulous dancehalls closed their doors and fine local musicians were delegated to playing only on nostalgia nights. There were some who made the switch to the new genre and others, such as Bobby Kinsman, who seemed able to keep playing the music they loved. But few were able to leave the big band behind as they hung up their instruments and took jobs within the community. It is sad to think that such a vibrant part of musical history both in Peterborough and around North America can now be found only in photographs and classic radio. But the one place where the big bands and the sounds of swing will always remain active is in our memories. We are fortunate in Peterborough to be able to look back on a past rich with the sounds of Mose Yokum, Paul Minicola and Bobby Kinsman. How many married couples can say that they met on the dance floor at Rye's or the Brock? Can we go to Del Crary Park and not think of the man who provided us with so many wonderful evenings of swing music?

The young lady in the velvet gown and satin gloves may have finished her turn at the microphone but her song will forever linger.

*It truly was a wonderful and enjoyable experience researching this particular topic.. I would like to thank the following people who shared their memories and expertise and made the research so fascinating:: Darlene Crary; Bob Crary; Dominic Marrocco; Frank Marrocco; Tony and Pat Basciano; Eric Basciano; Lisa Minicola Belfry; Gerry Rye; Jeff Rye; Richard Rye; Norman "Buzz" Buzzell; Andy Rutter; and Dee Sullivan*

*Thanks for the memories! Gina Martin, July 2007.*



## DOORS OPEN PETERBOROUGH 2007

There are many places that people only visit when they have reason to do so. Doors Open is the splendid annual opportunity for people to visit those places just to enjoy the historical associations and to appreciate the fine architectural details that make them special and make them part of our collective well-being. Doors Open Peterborough will be held 29 September from 10 am to 4 pm. Buildings featured are in the Traill College area, in the north end of downtown (Hunter to Brock along George), and at the Canadian Canoe Museum. Many of the stops will have special features or events. You are invited to take in as much of the great celebration as you can. Guided tours behind-the-scenes are a popular part of their Doors Open presentations.

The Trent Valley Archives is proud to be a sponsor of Doors Open. Collectively we have had a strong interest in the architectural fabric of Peterborough, and TVA is home to the Martha Kidd fonds. Martha Kidd was a founder of the Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (PACAC) and her papers are among our most treasured archival holdings. We also are continuing her work of documenting buildings of architectural and historical interest.



*Sadleir House, George Street*

Don Willcock will be the guide on a special bus that will allow people to move between the areas that have

buildings featured in Doors Open Peterborough 2007. The bus will begin at Sadleir House, on George Street and stop at Wallis Hall, the Pig's Ear and the Canadian Canoe Museum. Don, one of Peterborough's most informed local historians will share stories between the sites and answer questions that riders might have more generally. Peterborough is a fortunate city for so much of its history in all generations is still visible.

Doors Open depends on the efforts of countless volunteers, as well as the city, and the businesses and organizations that make their buildings open for this very special day. They all deserve our grateful thanks.

**TVA Bus stop 1 Sadleir House** Constructed in 1892 by builder J.C. Rutherford for his brother-in-law, James Kendry, an industrialist and well-known 19<sup>th</sup> century Peterborough politician. Other owners have included: James R. Stratton, owner/publisher of the Peterborough Examiner and MPP, and Richard Sheehy, a noted contractor. In 1963 the building was sold to Trent University and became the principal building of the Peter Robinson College. The original house, with its turret on the northeast corner, is an extremely well preserved example of the ornate Queen Anne Revival style. It is illustrative of an era in Peterborough's history when industry was flourishing, and wealthy politicians, industrialists and merchants sought physical manifestations of their success and power. The rear coach house was built by the second owner of the house, James Stratton, to accommodate his hackney horses and carriages. The original house and coach house are connected by a wing designed by noted Canadian architect Ron Thom at the time he was designing the main campus for Trent University. The wing was built in the 1960's when Sadleir House became the main building for Trent University's Peter Robinson College.

### **TVA Bus stop 2 Traill College Wallis Hall**

The modern addition to the Traill College campus was completed in 1968 and named in honour of Katherine E. Wallis, the noted sculptress and poet. Miss Wallis, born in 1861, was raised at the large family estate known as Merino, which still stands today and is designated as a heritage property under the Ontario Heritage Act. After leaving Peterborough, she studied art in Europe with the sculptor Auguste Rodin. Her work has received international renown, and she was the first Canadian woman to be elected *Societaire* of the prestigious *Societe des Beaux Arts*. Wallis Hall is just one of many buildings designed for Trent University by the acclaimed architect Ron Thom. The influence of American architect Frank Lloyd Wright is evident in the building's horizontal lines and use of wood and stone. It has served as a residence for Traill College, and also provides faculty offices and common rooms.

This historic building with modern additions was originally constructed in 1864 for W.S. Conger, a prominent early citizen of Peterborough. Mr. Conger was the first sheriff of the Colborne District, a vigorous advocate for the opening of the 'back country' and the development of the Trent Canal. He served on Peterborough's first Town Council, becoming Mayor in 1856, and was one of the founders of Little Lake Cemetery. The house was sold to Thomas Bradburn in the

early 1870's, who moved his family into the house from their home above his shop on George Street. Bradburn eventually withdrew from the shop and turned to real estate; by the time of his death in 1900, Bradburn was the largest individual owner of property in Peterborough. In 1909, Mrs. Bradburn sold the house to the City of Peterborough, who used it as St. Vincent's Orphanage. Later it became the Balmoral Nursing Home, until it became part of the Traill Campus as student residences.



*Bradburn House*



*Kerr House*

The oldest house of the Traill College properties, Kerr House was built in 1853 using stacked plank construction, a building technique common in Peterborough during its lumber boom in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. For many years, Peterborough produced more board feet of lumber than any other town in Ontario creating a great surplus, as only first grade timber was shipped out leaving culled boards with knots for home consumption. As the name implies, stacked plank construction is a method of stacking 1 x 10 inch undressed planks one on top of another until the desired height is achieved. The planks are dovetailed at the corners and secured with spikes. Every other plank is recessed one inch leaving indentations on both the exterior and interior surfaces that act as lath to hold the stucco sheathing. In 1870, Edgecombe Pearse bought the house, and added the Gothic Revival addition at the north end of the house. Pearse was well known in 19<sup>th</sup> century Peterborough, as he served as the County Clerk and Treasurer for over 30 years. Pearse's descendants lived in the house until 1967 when Lillian Pearse Kerr sold the property to Trent University.

### **Scott House**

Built in 1882 for Thomas Robinson, Scott House was designed by John A. Belcher. Belcher was Peterborough's leading architect and engineer of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the house was designed in the Victorian Italianate style he used on many of the houses he built in the same era. The house was considered quite handsome and had the modern conveniences of running water and gas lighting. Unfortunately, the Robinson's soon encountered financial difficulties and the house was taken over by the Ontario Bank, and then sold to Adam Hall, who was a prosperous manufacturer and dealer of wrought iron stoves and tin ware. In 1916, the house was sold to the Margaret and G.A. MacDonald, who was the head of Quaker Oats in Peterborough. In 1963 Trent University acquired the property and architect Ron Thom, who later also constructed Wallis Hall on the Traill Campus, adapted the building for college purposes. It is named after Jeanette Scott, the daughter of local pioneer miller, Adam Scott.

### **Langton House**

In 1857 Thomas Dumble, a surveyor who took part in the surveying of the Canada (New Brunswick) and Maine boundary, built his family home, Dromore, in Cobourg. His son, David W. Dumble, used the Dromore as the model for his own home in Peterborough, built in 1868. David Dumble was a barrister with numerous real estate ventures in the City, and became Police Magistrate in 1882. He and his wife Mary raised their 10 children in the house, celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary there in 1912. In 1931 the house and surrounding lots were acquired by the City of Peterborough for taxes, and in 1964 Trent University purchased the property. Like many of the buildings on the Traill Campus, Ron Thom was hired to adapt the building to meet the needs of the college, but much of the exterior remained intact. The Victorian Gothic details of the house include the steeply pitched gable roof, heavy bargeboard trim, and lancet windows.

### **Crawford House**

Built for William H. Moore, a barrister, in the early 1870's, this house remained in the Moore family for over 50 years. It was then sold to Thomas C. Ephgrave, and remained the Ephgrave family home for almost 40 years. Only 2 families occupied this simple Victorian house before it was acquired by Trent University in 1965. When Trent purchased the property, architect Ron Thom remodeled the house for use as offices and residences. The intact carriage house to the rear has become a lecture hall. Trent University named the building in honour of Isabella Valency Crawford, one of Canada's first great woman poets.

### **TVA Bus stop 3 Downtown The Pig's Ear**

Opened in 1865 by Dolphus Faucher as the St. Maurice Saloon, the Pig's Ear is one of the longest continually running taverns in Peterborough. Known throughout the years as the St. Lawrence Hotel and then Windsor Hotel, as well as the Bucket of Blood, due to its proximity to the Matthews Blackwell butcher shop at the corner. The fourth floor of what was originally a four-storey building was never rebuilt after being seriously damaged in a fire in the 1930s. Hank Williams once got so drunk at the Pig's Ear he fell off the stage at the old Brock

Ballroom and there was no show. To protect him from the locals, the RCMP gave Williams an armed escort out of town. Current proprietor John Punter has many more stories to tell! Or you can join one of famed Friday night pub crawls sponsored by the Trent Valley Archives.



*Windsor Hotel, aka The Pig's Ear*

### **Miranda Studios**

Three consecutive generations of the Roy family documented almost every facet of life in the Peterborough area for nearly a century (1896-1992). Throughout, the Roy Studio remained at the same location on Hunter Street. In 2000, the Roy Studio Collection was purchased for the City with the generous assistance of Mr. Jim Balsillie, a Peterborough native and now CEO of Research in Motion.

140 Hunter Street West is now Miranda Studios. Visitors on the Doors Open tour will see the original camera from Roy Studios and the backdrop used by the Roys in the portraits. Visitors will also be able to tour the second and third floors of the building where they will see the original darkroom and original portrait studio and the original reception room. Volunteers from the Peterborough Centennial Museum and Archives will be available to answer questions about the collection.

### **Former TD Bank Building**

The first part of the building was erected in 1862 after an August 1861 fire had destroyed most of this block. Various commercial tenants including a clothier and watchmaker occupied this building during its first thirty years. In 1891, the building's most notable tenant, the Bank of Toronto (the Toronto Dominion Bank after 1955), moved into the 400 George Street storefront and remained there until 2000. Formerly a four storey building, it lost its striking French Second Empire details including the Mansard roof and corner tower in the 1920's. The

remaining building was in the Classical revival style, with pilasters flanking the main entrance. Medical and dental offices were located in the second and third storey offices between 1925 and 1967, alongside insurance companies and barristers. In 1949, the building housed the firm of Blackwell and Craig now the longest continually running architectural firm in Canada. This firm evolved into Craig, Zeidler and Strong in the 1960's and then as Zeidler Partnership Architects moved to Toronto. Zeidler designed such notable structures as the McMaster University Medical Building, and the Eaton Centre. The second and third floors of the building are open for guided tours during Doors Open.

### **The Spill**

Built in 1862 for developer James T. Henthorne, 414 George was a confectionary shop for over 75 years, owned and operated by Harry Long from 1883 to 1906. In 1907 the business was taken over by Thomas Hooper, who ran an award winning confectionary and catering business until his death in 1961. Hooper's business had the reputation as "the finest retail confectionery stores and grill rooms between Montreal and Toronto", and he won first prize for his slab cake in an Ottawa competition in September 1927. His successful 'Palm Room' was a preferred site for catered banquets and events. The brick building features a cornice with scroll-sawn

brackets, and narrow windows with regular and segmental arches above them. The original white stamped ceiling with interwoven floral and geometric designs is visible inside 414 George Street.

### **Pappas Billiard**

Built in 1867 by George A. Cox, Pappas Billiards at 407 George Street North has a long history of commercial occupants. One of the earliest occupants of the building was Adam Hall's Stove and Wrought Iron business, which occupied 407 George Street North for over thirty years in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. C.M. Moncur Drugs took over the store in 1911, and in the 1930's the longest billiard hall in the City of Peterborough opened. Pappas Billiards is an excellent representation of a 19<sup>th</sup> century commercial building. Details such as the elaborate hood moulding surrounding the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> storey windows are essential elements of the Victorian heritage of the building. The building continues the facades of three-storey structures of 19<sup>th</sup> looking north on George Street.

### **TVA Bus stop 4**

#### **Canadian Canoe Museum**

With more than 600 canoes and kayaks and 1,000 related artifacts, the Canadian Canoe Museum's collection is the largest of its kind. The unparalleled collection began in 1957, when a friend presented Kirk Wipper with a dugout made circa 1890. His collection grew and in the late 1960s, a building was constructed to house the collection at Camp Kandalore, a residential summer camp near Dorset, Ontario. Even with additions to the building, the collection outgrew its space. A new home was needed. In 1996, the Outboard Marine Corporation of Canada donated eight acres of property and two buildings to the museum, which opened its doors to the public on July 1, 1997. In this, its tenth year of operation, the Canoe



Museum celebrates the canoe being short-listed for CBC's "Seven Wonders of Canada" by CBC.



*Canadian Canoe Museum exhibit*

## DOORS OPEN PETERBOROUGH 29 September 2007

Ride the bus from area to another. The bus, with host Don Willcock, will travel to the four key locations and people can enjoy commentary on the bus and from the guides at the sites.

For Information phone 1-800-461-6424.

*The information related to Doors Open Peterborough has been provided by the committee. The project depends on the help of countless volunteers, many associated with the sites that are open for viewing; others tied to the organizing committee.*

### DOORS OPEN: A LITTLE HISTORY

*John Gerrard*

It all began in France.

In 1985, or thereabouts, its Minister of Culture, Jack Lang, agreed that the public should be allowed to visit the interior of certain historic buildings occupied by government departments and which would otherwise remain little-known. The initiative instantly proved popular and there was soon a demand for other buildings of many kinds, likewise hard to visit, to be added to the annual national programme.

This infectious idea quickly spread to a few neighbouring countries and so sparked off the interest of the Council of Europe, the organisation formed to coordinate the continent's cultural affairs.

Thus in September 1989 my wife and I happened to be visiting Groningen, a small university city in the north-east Netherlands, where she had been invited to give a lecture. Much to our amazement on that Saturday morning we found its local 'Open Monument Day' in full swing.

Ancient almshouses, usually kept very private, could be visited as could the grander parts of the old University. The tour of the Courthouse began with the police cells in the basement after which one ascended a narrow stair to arrive for the first time in the courtroom,

standing in the dock like a prisoner about to undergo trial. Meanwhile a great mediaeval church resounded to brass band music and a sense of enjoyment seemed to pervade the whole town.

No news of this excitement seemed yet to have spread across the Channel to the British Isles but we saw an opportunity to try it out first in Scotland, knowing that Glasgow was preparing to celebrate the following year as the chosen European City of Culture.

As an employee of the Scottish Civic Trust, a built environment charity, I happened to know those in charge of the art and architecture programme and found it not too difficult to interest them in testing what it was decided to call 'Doors Open Day' on the unsuspecting Glasgow public.

About 30 buildings and their owners took part on that first September Saturday in 1990. One participant was the Port Authority responsible for the docks and shipping on the River Clyde whose opulent head office contains some magnificent interior decoration. It is told that a Director, when leaving the building on the day before, reminded the caretaker that a few people might call in and that it would be good to offer them a cup of tea. When the last Doors Open Day visitor left he had admitted around 2000 inquisitive members of the public.

When all the other results were added up, no more convincing evidence was needed that, at least in Glasgow, Doors Open Day had come to stay and that, given the right encouragement and funding, all the other parts of Scotland should be ready to enjoy the same experience.

The rest, as they say, is history.

In 1991 the Council of Europe officially adopted the scheme under the banner of 'European Heritage Days', making the whole of September an annual opportunity for around 40 countries to emphasise and celebrate their built heritage together in a great variety of different ways.

The rest of the United Kingdom soon followed Scotland's lead and the scheme has grown to include archaeological sites and educational ventures in addition to the opening of buildings.

And of course the story doesn't end there. In the mid-1990's it first moved westwards to Rio de Janeiro and then in 2000 my (Canadian) wife and I had the great pleasure of taking part in the hugely successful Doors Open Toronto, North America's first finger in the pie. Imported from Glasgow after a visit of discovery by city delegates in 1999, it has, I hear, gone from strength to strength and of course has fathered further healthy offspring in other parts of Ontario, not least in your city of Peterborough.

So, from our side of the Atlantic divide, here's to the great success of your 2007 Doors Open. May it be as enjoyable and inspiring as the very first we undertook all those years ago.

*John Gerrard worked 1969-1999 for the Scottish Civic Trust, based in Glasgow. He trained as an architect at Cambridge and Edinburgh and studied urban design at Cornell University in Ithaca NY. He describes the Scottish Civic Trust as a "built environment trouble shooting charity."*

## TRENT VALLEY ARCHIVES

Mark your calendar as September 7th is the next **Scandals and Scoundrels pub crawl**. If you haven't experienced one of these, you are truly missing a piece of Peterborough's "Scandalous" history. Tours are led by the always animated Bruce Fitzpatrick who will make sure you stay entertained for the evening. Tickets can be reserved by calling 745-4404.

The **Eerie Ashburnham Ghost Walks** have been very popular this season with 40-50 people attending weekly. Thanks to the Theatre Guild for allowing us to tour their "haunted" facility and to the tour guides for their enthusiasm. If you would like to take part, join us Friday nights at 9pm at the corner of Hunter St./Driscoll Terrace. Tickets are \$10. No reservations necessary.

The **Little Lake Cemetery tours** continue every Sunday at 4pm to the end of September. There are 3 tours available: Seats of the Mighty, Tragic Tales and Victorian Mourning.

Many thanks to Don Caban for driving his 1938 silver Chevy for us at the 1 July **Canada Day parade**. I have never seen so many people take photos! We had a great time participating in this event and Basia and Diane handed out over 800 brochures to the crowds.

We are pleased to announce that we have reprinted *Up The Burleigh Road*, the sprightly history of Burleigh and Anstruthers which Mary and Doug Lavery wrote with loving care. The book sold out in soft and hard copies and we reprinted the soft cover. Some changes were made and the new book is selling for \$35 at the Trent Valley Archives and fine local book stores. Inquiries welcome.

### LOONIE FRIDAY

Thanks to CRUZ Radio (Mike Melnik and John Badden) for naming the Trent Valley Archives the charity of the week for a Loonie Friday in June. Between 7 am and 9 am, Elwood Jones, Wally Macht and Bruce Fitzpatrick shared stories about the Trent Valley Archives and the importance of archives generally. It was a fascinating experience, and we hope we get an opportunity for a repeat sometime. Such occasions are important to us, and it is always gratifying to meet new friends. Some very interesting people dropped by to plug their events. This was great for our profile and raised \$300.



## TRENT VALLEY ARCHIVES

567 Carnegie Avenue, Peterborough ON K9L 1N1  
705-745-4404, [admin@trentvalleyarchives.com](mailto:admin@trentvalleyarchives.com)  
[www.trentvalleyarchives.com](http://www.trentvalleyarchives.com)

## CONSERVATION CORNER

### CONSERVING A JAPANESE "SURRENDER FLAG"

Basia Baklinski

I have just completed working on a very interesting project. A Japanese "surrender flag" had been given to the owner by his grandfather who had acquired it in Burma during World War II.



My client brought it to the lab to see what could be done to preserve it. We pulled it out of its tiny case and spread it out on the table for examination. The flag was on unbleached cotton, and was about 36" wide and 29" long. It had a red rising sun in the centre and radiating from this were lines of Japanese characters written in black ink. The flag was severely creased, worn through in some areas and had many stains, some lumpy accretions and large tide-lines indicating water damage. After some discussion we decided that the only treatment necessary was to try to flatten the flag to a degree where it could be framed. All the stains and marks were to be left as they were all part of the original history of this very unique piece.

The first part of the treatment involved humidifying the flag to relax the creases and folds. This was accomplished by sandwiching the flag between layers of gortex, blotter-paper dampened with distilled water, and inert polyester film. After several days of repeated dampening the flag was ready for flattening. Because of the age and condition of the flag, application of direct heat would have been detrimental to the fibres and ink, therefore ironing was ruled out. Instead, I pinned out the edges onto a large piece of felt and re-introduced moisture to specific "trouble" areas. This process was completed after several days and the flag was framed.

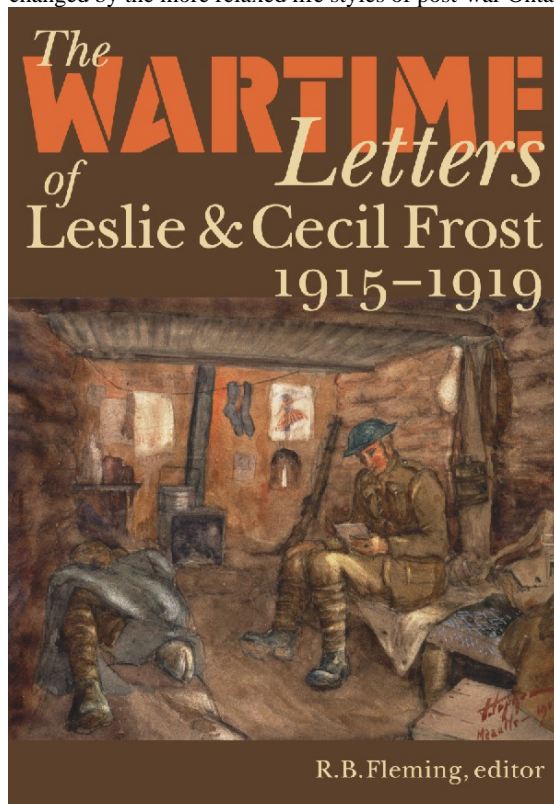
During the course of treatment I was able to discover (with valuable assistance from Steve Guthrie) that this type of flag, "hinomaru yosegaki" was often signed by friends and relatives at the time a young man was leaving for military duty. He would carry it in his pocket as a good luck charm.

It was a privilege to have had the opportunity to conserve such a wonderful and important piece of family (and world) history.

## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Wartime Letters of Leslie & Cecil Frost, 1915-1919*, edited by R. B. Fleming, Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2007; Pp xxxvi, 384. ISBN 1-55458-000-5, Life Writing Series, hard back, \$38.95.

Marjorie Porter remembered the letters of her father and her uncle as joyful, and quite a contrast to the bleakness of some war memories. Thanks to the deft editorial work of Rae B. Fleming, we have a chance to experience the war as it seemed for Leslie and Cecil Frost. Her uncle, Leslie Frost, was the premier of Ontario during the 1950s, and was the first chancellor of Trent University in Peterborough. Her father, Cecil, loved politics as well, and the two of them helped make the Conservatives extremely popular in the former Victoria County. Orillia and Lindsay were the poles of their political lives. This book allows us to glimpse how much their view of rural Ontario was defined before 1914, how much was redefined in the blast furnaces of war, and how much was changed by the more relaxed life styles of post-war Ontario.



Leslie and Cecil are great letter writers, and the originals of these letters have been in the Trent University Archives since 1971. The letters are illuminating and fascinating, and take us every step that the brothers followed. Their wartime lives, perhaps like their subsequent lives, ran in parallel tracks that interconnected more frequently than one would expect. As captivating as that might be, this book offers much more. Rae Fleming is aware that the editor needs to re-create the environment in which the letters were written. We need to know about Orillia, where the mother and father had a

downtown jewelry store. We need to know about temperance and religion that defined the politics of rural Ontario. We need to know about the ambitions and ideas of Leslie Frost, and his brother. We need to know why it was important to fight in this war, and what people thought they were achieving.

This is a delightful book with rich insights that I read and traversed in a single sitting. The writing is that good. The editorial introduction is fast-paced and covers all the ground that was needed. Then we have the treat of a second introduction written by Thomas H. B. Symons, who knew Frost very well as both played key roles in the founding of Trent University. As well as the letters from the brothers, we have too few letters from the parents. As well, Leslie Frost added comments to the letters after he retired from politics and became an adept historian of this area. Fleming has added a useful commentary on names mentioned in the letters.

The book has some apt illustrations, tending to suggest that the Frost brothers are representative of the Canadian war experience. He comments on the fiscal conservatism of the period, but also suggests that the British belief in superiority had unsavory aspects, such as racism. Great visions were touched with narrow-mindedness. We do not have to agree with all the observations. Fleming raises many ideas and reflections, flowing out of his close reading of the letters, and lets us see the ways in which letters from a narrow slice of time, really four years, cast light on a century of Ontario thinking.

The letters themselves are generally superb. The Frosts were evidently a family that only talked when they had something to say, and they did not talk about things that would upset others. As Fleming points out very clearly, the letters do not detail the loss of life, or the violence of battles. Leslie and Cecil were nearly silent on the role of drinking in the lives of soldiers, for their parents were strong temperance people, and no one drank or smoked in their homes.

Many letters are worth reading again. Of the letters written by Leslie, I really liked one dated 17 November 1916. His letter to his parents opens with metaphors about epidemics, partly because Orillia was experiencing a typhoid epidemic. He then described how he spent a seven-day leave. He was in London for an interesting parliamentary debate on the Irish. He met Cecil in London and they took the "Flying Scotsman" to Edinburgh and to Melrose Abbey, of Sir Walter Scott fame. They visited York and struck up a friendship with a Glasgow broker, and back to London for another visit at the House of Commons. He then gave a remarkable defense of Sir Sam Hughes, who had just resigned. Leslie favoured a Canadian Expeditionary Force and had critical remarks about English officers of the new armies. He thought Sir Robert Borden was a bit like Woodrow Wilson, both "watchful waiting." Canada would be wise to raise and run its own armies; it is okay to support Imperialism in Canada, but in England, Canadians were treated as inferiors. What a spectacular letter! However, many other letters are equally informative about what it was like where the sons were, in England, in France or Belgium, or in hospital.

Rae Fleming is a superb editor. He found ways to let the letters speak for themselves. However, by clever use of the introduction, the informative chapter endnotes, and the appendix on names, he opens a world of insight.



As I read the book, I was struck by the different ways in which archives can open past worlds to those who take the time. At the Trent Valley Archives, we have a collection of photographs taken on the Western front in 1917 and 1918. We have some letters from World War II veterans, and newspapers. But the letters in this volume seem more literate and more substantive than others that are written home. Maybe we need more historians shining lights in such dark places.

Rae Fleming is a member of the Trent Valley Archives and we are selling this excellent book. We believe that family history is enriched when placed in context, and Fleming proves the proposition admirably.

**Margaret Therese McLaughlin and Larry Francis McLaughlin, *Ireland to Downeyville: a Lucas Family History* (Peterborough, private, 2007) varied pagination**

Congratulations are in order for a splendid family history of the Lucas family. It is a meticulous effort, and it looks great right from the wrap around cover of Doonagore Castle and a coastal view looking to the Isles of Aran. There is a healthy mix of photos and documents, family trees, obituaries and lots of details. The project was a family labour of love as Therese recruited support from her husband, and hours of labour from her son, Larry. The book is doubly special since the research for the book was done largely at the Trent Valley Archives.

The book does not have a single pagination system so an overview is in order. The book opens with a brief view of County Clare, Ireland. Then we go to Downeyville, where the Lucas family first moved in 1842 after a two year stint in Cavan County. There is a history of St Luke the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church, which includes a detailed account of the re-opening of the church in 1895; the original log church dated from 1842. We then get a tour of Downeyville buildings, including the church, rectory, general store, and a special treat, the Lucas Hotel, built around 1840. There are several photos of Lucas family entertainers in the Knights of Columbus Hall. There are also class pictures of school classes, with nearly every pupil identified!! Joseph Lucas and his wife and four children came to Canada as part of an Ennis Emigration Scheme that was clearing tenants and laborers from the estate of Colonel Wyndham; a copy of a neat 1838 poster is included. There are also some interesting pictures and copies from a ship list and baptismal records. Between the second and third generation stories there are several very interesting photos of farming life, of the families, and of a disaster when eight cows were killed by lightning, 1930. There are also several photos between the fourth and fifth generation. Several photos of cemetery markers, in Downeyville Pioneer Cemetery, follows the discussion of the fifth generation. Then she summarizes her sources, provides an index to individuals, and then prints the Lucas Family Descendant List.

The book will be treasured by members of the family for sure. Some families supplied more information than others, and the slackers will probably regret not assisting this project. For historians, the book provides insight into size of family and the persistence

and mobility of families. A lot of this family stayed pretty close to Downeyville, but she has documented the lives of some family members who moved to distant parts. I noticed some ventured to Michigan, New York, Massachusetts, Ohio, New Jersey, Washington, Wyoming, Minnesota, Alberta, and British Columbia. Prominent surnames include Callaghan, Herlihey, Lynch, Meehan, Milaney, Morrissey, O'Neill, and Perdue. Mostly, it is about the Lucas clan in Ontario, and mostly at Downeyville, to be sure.

The book is available for researchers at the Trent Valley Archives. And we can relay inquiries to Therese.

**Elva V. Bates, *A Journey through Glamorgan's Past* (Gooderham, Bates and Charters, 2007) Pp ix, 326; pb \$25 ISBN 978-0-9737826-0-8 Available from Trent Valley Archives Bookstore.**

Elva Bates has shared some of her stories of the Gooderham area of Haliburton county with readers of the Heritage Gazette, and it is great to see her book published. Elva, former Clerk-Treasurer and Reeve of Glamorgan, has always lived in Haliburton County, and has been in Gooderham since 1957. She well-qualified to write his story. It has helped as well that we now have local archives.

The book is divided into seven sections. The first two chapters lay down the historical and geographical bearings; she even travels up and down the roads of Glamorgan Township. She then takes us to the village of Gooderham. Next comes a chapter on timber and mining. She then has chapters on local governance and on organizations, orphanages, waterworks and telephones. She pulls her story together with a discussion of the evolution of the community to the present.

Elva then presents useful appendices. The first discusses early settlers families in 60 pages. There are no dates but she identifies all the children in the families.

The book is loaded with information, anecdotes and photos. She has relied on land records and conversations with lots of people. The book fills a long-time void for a good township history in this area.

**Charles J. Humber, *Family Sleuthing: Chasing Sunsets and Falling Leaves*, (Mississauga, Charles Humber Consulting, 2006) Pp ii, 439; hc \$100. ISBN 0-9694247-9-5**

The production quality of this volume is overwhelming. It was printed and bound in India, and the quality and clarity of the pictures and the many documents is exceptional. The book is a pleasure to read. The project was begun in 2001, and a query appeared in the *Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley* in 2002. Charles J. Humber is well-known for his extraordinary helmsmanship in the production of *Loyal She Remains*, a book that honoured the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Loyalist settlement in Ontario.

This book is ambitious in different ways. It focuses on a string of the family that begins with David Hess Humber and Leah Draper. The book is threaded around the families of successive generations: Cornelius Biddle

and Elizabeth Fry; Samuel Jarvis and Valletta Blair; William B. Scott and Marry Ann Farr; Charles H. Humber and Lizzie M. Biddle; John G. Jarvis and Mable A. Scott; Charles M. Humber & Gayle Jenkins.

I have travelled across the great Humber bridge that joins Lincolnshire and Yorkshire and naturally thought this family would come from that region. However, the seed of this line is the Isle of Wight. Charles Humber takes us in his footprints as he searches for his family in the archives of the Isle of Wight. He includes a nice picture of an incredibly neat Newport Records Office. He reconstructs the life of the agricultural laborers of this area, and notes the bind of the family to the Bible Christians, a tie that was particularly important when they emigrated to the Bowmanville area in 1848; later near Harwood. Some members of the family stand out. The terrible death of C. A. Humber who died of an accident while pulling a bathtub down stairs; when a stair collapsed he fell and suffered a concussion on a radiator. The book includes excellent copies of the oil paintings of him and his wife painted by George F. Hargitt (1838-1926). His wife was an Amey, a Loyalist and Huguenot family.

Angelina Humber married into the Fife family of Peterborough county. Several members of the family that emigrated to Bowmanville area settled in the area around Rice Lake.

The story moves quickly to other parts of the province: Goderich, Stratford, Stony Creek. We also get visits to China and to the Canadian west. Subsequent sections of the book take us to many other areas. The branches of the family seem to converge on the counties of Norfolk and Haldimand and then branch out from there.

Humber is a storyteller and the book is very readable, if somewhat daunting given the pantheon of heroes. The mobility of the family might be representative of other families. Families moved constantly even as the parents of successive generations found a permanent home. The book is also distinguished by its high production values. It is indeed rare to see a book that be filled with snapshots and newspaper clippings that look like professional shots. The clarity of the images is remarkable, and refreshing.

I like the book as well for its wide-ranging approach, its efforts to track down every member of the wider family. We have two exceptional collections at the Trent Valley Archives in which researchers reflect similar instincts. Doug Miller has done the history of the Miller family, and in the process developed about thirty other family trees. John and Mary Young travelled to the places their families had been and returned with remarkable stories, photos and memorabilia. Neither, though, envisioned a book as venturesome as Charles Humber's *Family Sleuthing*.

**Jamie Benidickson, *The Culture of Flushing: a social and legal history of sewage* (Vancouver, UBC Press, 2007) Pp xxiv, 404 ISBN 978-0-7748-1291-7**

Two years ago, Jamie Benidickson gave one of the highlight papers at the Edwardian Peterborough Conference, which was held at Traill College and spear-

headed by the Peterborough Historical Society. He discussed the difficulties of bringing modern plumbing to cottage country, and of ensuring that waste would not pollute the lakes. Now the book has appeared, and it is encyclopedic in its knowledge and advice about the history of sewage handling in Canada. It is interesting to consider whose rights have priority? If a community dumps sewage into a river it reduces the quality for all places downriver. Benidickson moves easily between jurisdictions: local, provincial, national and even different British and American jurisdictions. He reflects on changing technology and on changing perceptions of the rights of individuals as opposed to the community at large. People's ideas about disease also changed through the nineteenth century, especially after the discoveries of bacteria and viruses in 1885.

One interesting chapter builds on the Edwardian Peterborough discussions. In "Streams are Nature's Sewers" he explores the sometimes fine line between natural streams and sewers. Polluters were generally allowed to pollute sewers, but not natural streams and so the distinction became important in legal cases. In one key and protracted case Pennsylvania coal interests argued winningly that coal was natural and when put in a natural stream caused natural contamination.

Peterborough's first environmental movement was in the 1880s when the Anti-Sawdust League was formed to draw attention to the sawdust that was clogging the Otonabee River. Islands in the centre of town were created from the sawdust debris of that era when Peterborough was one of the top producers of lumber. This movement is not mentioned in *The Culture of Flushing*. However, the context to research that moment is clearly laid out. Jamie Benidickson is a rare person. He is both an accomplished lawyer and a brilliant historian. This book is loaded with insights, and is indispensable reading for anyone who wants to know the history of our fight for a clean environment.

***As the Tree Grows: Sisters of St Joseph of Peterborough 1890-1990* (Peterborough, Sisters of St Joseph 1993) Pp iv, 492 ISBN 0-9694683-2-6**

There has been considerable speculation about the future of Mount St Joseph, as the Sisters of St Joseph plan to sell the huge rambling complex that has been their motherhouse since 1895 and continue in a new purpose built residence. When the Sisters celebrated their centenary in Peterborough, they produced this lavish book which appeared before the birth of the Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley and which remains essential reading. Sister St Damien, one of the founders of the Trent Valley Archives and also the archivist of the Sisters of St Joseph, was a key player in the production of this book.

This is a complex history for the Sisters of St Joseph played crucial roles in the running of St Joseph's Hospital and in what was then the Separate Schools. There were many nurses and teachers in their numbers. St Joseph's Hospital was founded in 1890 and the building was expanded in major respects in 1922, 1950 and 1964. Today it is the Rogers Street site of the Peterborough Regional Health Centre, and is slated to be phased out completely after the new hospital opens.



In 1895, the sisters purchased for \$6,300. a fine mansion, "Inglewood", with ten acres of land, on the west side of Monaghan at the end of McDonnell Street. Since then, the grounds were expanded with the purchase of 35 acres, in three transactions, between 1912 and 1932. The Mount was enlarged three times, most notably in 1911, and in 1934, when the magnificent neo-Gothic chapel was built. In 1952, Eastwood Construction built the rather large wing which housed the infirmary, and in 1969 they opened the wing to the south which housed the Academic and Music Departments, a new infirmary, and later, the archives.

The nuns purchased in 1924 their first motor vehicle, a Ford coach, from Duffus Motors.

The book contains a succinct summary of the history of separate schools, of the House of Providence, Marycrest and St Vincent's Orphanage. St Vincent's was purchased from the Bradburn estate in 1909; the province introduced new rules that forbid housing children under 16 in the same building as old people. There was a second orphanage in Cobourg, and in the 1930s and 1940s each housed up to 40 children.

The Sisters of St Joseph worked throughout the diocese, and so a large part of the book is devoted to discussing institutions as far afield as Port Arthur and Fort William. The diocese, which celebrated its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary in July 2007, once stretched that far, and included Muskoka, North Bay and Sudbury.

The Sisters of St Joseph also served in other dioceses and their work there is also discussed.



They served in most parts of Canada and in Brazil.

One chapter discusses the General Superiors of the Peterborough Congregation, 1890-1993. They were Sister Austin Doran, Mother Clotilde McGuinnis, Mother Aldeonde McKeon, Mother Carmelita Hurley, Mother

Irene Coogan, Sister Bernardine Farry, Mother St Robert Donghue, Mother Anita Breen, Mother Ursula Harrington, Mother St Rose Cullen, Mother Loyola Begley, Sister Cecilia Maloney, Sister Veronica O'Reilly, and Sister Irene Baker. The book contains many individual names but no comprehensive listing of those who served.

This is a pretty impressive book, even 15 years after it was written.

**Kim Krenz, ed., "To Italy, With Love": a Memoir by Kate Krenz (Calgary, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Press, 2007) Pp 279, \$39.95 ISBN 0-96811749-1-4**

Kim Krenz, known to Heritage Gazette readers for his history of Rosemere Manor, has lovingly edited Kate Krenz' *Our Love Affair With Italy* in this new and updated edition. This is a travel memoir with a difference. The Krenzes spent two years in the 1950s on the Lake of Varese in northern Italy. While Kim was working, Kate was navigating a new world eventually with a sense of accomplishment and joy. This is delightful reading. It is interesting to consider the little things that seem so important or worthy of comment.



## NEWS AND VIEWS

### Peterborough Civic Concert Band

The Peterborough Civic Concert Band will mark 150 years with special events in 2008. In preparation for their sesquicentennial they are asking people to share their memories and mementos. The band sees itself as the linear successor to the series of military bands beginning with the 57<sup>th</sup> regiment Band. The Peterborough Fire Brigade Band is also one of its forbears.

Also, many members played with other bands in the area, or band members got their starts in bands such as the Omeme Boys Band, such as in the picture shown. For this picture, I am grateful to Marlyne Fisher-Heasman who is making progress on her own history of Omeme seen from the ground.

Please send any information about these bands or members of these bands to [ejones55@cogeco.ca](mailto:ejones55@cogeco.ca) Thanks.

---

**WALL OF HONOUR, PETERBOROUGH***Elwood Jones*

The Canadian Legion Branch 57, in Peterborough, proposed in 1998 that a Wall of Honour containing the names of all those who served in the three 20<sup>th</sup> century wars, and who were from Peterborough. From the outset it was proposed that the wall be well-designed and in close proximity to the War Memorial housed in Confederation Park. The Wall had wide community support from the outset, and good leadership from Dave Edgerton, Wally Smith and other. The project was endorsed by City Council, which agreed to assume the costs if the private committee could raise the first \$100,000. As well, the committee has developed an excellent web site and a solid historical research program to ensure all who served will be remembered.

The project dragged on for reasons that remain unclear. Perhaps, there was some resistance, or mixed voices, in City Hall. In due course, the Ontario acting director of cemeteries, Michael D'Mello, turned down the application. He ruled that the wall is a building under the terms of the Cemetery Act, that the cemetery was not closed in 1851, and that the city must apply to have part of the cemetery closed, and bodies removed from the area defined as the footprint of the wall. The application was denied on grounds that the wall could be built elsewhere, and that it was not in the public interest to close part of the cemetery for this project. The tribunal had incorrect information about the former burial ground.

The proposed site was in former times, 1825 to 1854 (perhaps slightly longer) a town burial ground; half Roman Catholic, half Protestant. The Town Council closed the burial ground in 1854, a move made possible because the Little Lake Cemetery had opened in 1851. When the cemetery was closed it was fenced and the area lay fallow for about 12 years. People were permitted to remove bodies to other cemeteries, but it was considered unhealthy to remove bodies generally.

Over the years the former burial ground developed into a major centre of local activity, something that was sealed when the City Hall was built across the street in 1950. Currently the Armoury and PCVS are on the site of Roman Catholic burial ground and Confederation Park with its War Memorial, memorial to Batoche, and a survey marker. In former times, the grounds housed a drill hall and a Roman Catholic separate school. In the past, bones have been discovered, sometimes related to excavation, and sometimes related to the bones rising through the soil over time.

City Council decided to appeal D'Mello's decision. There was a consensus that no other site that would be appropriate. This park has the War Memorial, and really Peterborough's only public square.

Those opposed felt that the decisions of D'Mello had to be accepted, and also believed that the proposed wall would disturb former burial sites.

Those in favour of the Wall, both before and after the provincial decision, felt that the Wall was an appropriate complement to the well-established uses of the park, and consistent too with the way in which ideas about cemeteries have evolved. Cemeteries can be lively places as long as there is respect for those

associated with it. Little Lake Cemetery is a landscaped cemetery in which people are encouraged to walk and talk. Moreover, it was felt by some that the Wall of Honour could be redesigned to be less intrusive. Moreover, the public interest would be served by recognizing that Confederation Park has a well-established history both as a public park and as a pioneer cemetery.

Since the official appeal was sent to the provincial authorities in July, the city and the Legion committee have agreed that objections could be reasonably met if the Wall were constructed on the right-of-ways at the edges of the original burial ground. Dalton McGuinty agreed that the site was appropriate for the plans and promised to put the premier's office behind the proposal; this promise has since disappeared.

No records related to the burial ground have emerged from the various people researching the history of the burial ground. This underscores the sad point that local and county governments have not developed credible archival programs. In recent years (i.e. since 1993) the city and county have declared museum archives to be municipal archives but have not yet invested designated resources to the development of archives. Consequently, we have been unable to find even the rudimentary plans and registers that would have been standard and should have passed from the district councils to the county and town in 1851. Research from church and census records suggests that some 500 people were buried in the burial ground. There are memorials identified with this burial ground that were transferred to the Little Lake Cemetery, and perhaps elsewhere. No bodies have been buried here for over 150 years. There is no reliable estimate of the number of bodies that were removed, or how clean the removals were.

It appears that the Cemetery Act did not envision that urban cemeteries with histories that could be documented by historians would fall under its terms. The provincial tribunal was poorly informed on the history and was not aware of the importance of local circumstances and traditions. We could have been saved a great deal of difficulty had either the county or the city had a reliable archival record of the burial ground and of the actions taken by their councils. The rediscovery that the cemetery had closed in 1854 came from the Trent Valley Archives, which had digitized summaries of local newspapers 1847 to 1960. That information was shared with local media and published in the Heritage Gazette in May 2006.

It now appears that the city and the special committee are pursuing two lines of action. First, the Wall of Honour should be built at Confederation Park, whether in a central or perimeter position, as no other site would meet the needs. The project has been developing over nearly a decade, and many people have donated money for the building of the wall. Second, the appeal needs to continue because the recent process has raised doubts with city staff about what the City is permitted to do in order to maintain the park and public square aspects of Confederation Park.

Confederation Park is important both as a memorial and as a public square. Appropriately enough, with the Wall of Honour its histories merge.

## LITTLE LAKE CEMETERY TOURS 2007

Trent Valley Archives is again running topical historical tours at Little Lake Cemetery, Peterborough's landmark picturesque cemetery, Ontario's oldest privately incorporated cemetery, founded in 1851. The site is remarkable in its own right. The battle of Nogojiwanong was fought here just before 1700, and in the early years of the town it was known as Moe's Point as it was Cheseman Moe's place until he died in 1838. The cemetery was surveyed by F. Passmore, a Toronto surveyor, and he designed the curved lines that followed the lines of the ancient drumlin. He even anticipated the neo-Gothic chapel that was built over 25 years later.

We have known for several years that the cemetery was ideal for historical interpretation

focused on the lives and interconnections of those who buried there. The Peterborough Historical Society, in 1997, offered a celebration of the lives of Daniel McDonald, Isabella Valancy Crawford, Mossom Boyd and the Barnardo Children. The Trent Valley Archives tours are conceived as narratives threading beads together. Each year we offer three different narratives, and each year two new scenarios are developed. Our popular Tragic Tales [TT] tour has added names and stories, and perhaps some refinements. Mostly, though, our tours are offered for one season. We could, however, make special arrangements to present any tour that has been previously offered: Military Veterans from Waterloo to the present; Sports Heroes; Edwardian Peterborough; Peterborough Elites; and Hot Time in the Old Town. We also try to get into different sections of the cemetery, while keeping the walking reasonable. We have noticed that many of the tours stay quite close to the roadways.

This year the new tours were on the cemetery monuments [VM] and on the "Seats of the Mighty [SM]." Each tour takes considerable time and effort to research, design and fine-tune. We aim to deliver the tours in an hour or so, but some have gone over 90 minutes. Our leader teams are VM Diane Robnik and Steve Guthrie; SM Elwood Jones and Karen Carter-Edwards; TT Toni Sinclair and Louis Taylor.

We have been very pleased with the responses to the tours and we plan to include a sampling of the tours in a forthcoming history of Little Lake Cemetery.

The following sites were included on the "Seats of the Mighty" tour. Some have been omitted and others



added depending on circumstances and interactions with the tourists.

1 Wilson S Conger; 2 [towards chapel one sees the James Hall family; James Irwin; and Morrow]; 3 Lundy, Cheseman Moe; 3A Capt John Armstrong; 4 Amys; William Lech; 5 George Hilliard. William Snyder; 6 Belleghem [also see near 16]; 7 John B. McWilliams; 8 William Cluxton; 9 James Hamilton; 10 James Stratton, William Faint, Elias Burnham; 11 Milburn; 12 Joseph A. Dixon [Margaret Bown]; 13 Benjamin Shortly; 14 Morrow mausoleum (just below); 15 D. F. Rosco Downey, school inspector (1875-1966); 16 Comstocks; 17 Ackerman; 18 Medd; chapel; 19 Bradburn (cf 35); 20 Ingram / Butcher; 21 John Carnegie; 22 Captain Simon Fraser; 23 Sandersons (Dyer); 24 Lillico; 25 William Hall / Adam Hall (d 4 Oct 1881); 26 Stafford Kirkpatrick / James Wallis; 27 J. W. R. Beck / George S. Boulton; 28 John J. Turner; 29 John P. Methers; 30 William Hall; 31 S. J. Carver / William Clotworthy; 32 Robert and Charlotte Nicholls; 33 Mann family; 34 James Stevenson; 35 Bradburn; 36 Joseph Walton; 37 T A S Stewart; 38 Weller; 39 Edward Chamberlen (1774-1848); 40 Dr Walter Horatio Burritt MD / John A. I. Young and Mary Young; 41 Rev Mark Burnham; 42 Peter Connal and others; 43 Judge Deyman (seat).

One feature on the tours this year is commentary on monuments that have been moved from the old North Ward Burial Ground to Little Lake Cemetery.

The tours run at 4 pm Sundays until the end of September, and cost only \$5. Hope to see you there.

## TVA ARCHIVES NEWS II

We have been very busy in the Archives section of the Trent Valley Archives. We now have nearly 180 archival fonds ranging in size from a single document to 200 linear feet of shelf. Our shelving is generally uniform metal shelving that accommodates 10 cubic feet of records to a shelf. We have about 1500 linear feet of records, some 60,000 photographs, and several dozen microfilm reels related to the manuscript censuses, archival documents (such as the records of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Peterborough and St John's Anglican Church, Peterborough), and several pre-1840 newspapers published between Toronto and Montreal.

Over the years we have assembled an impressive collection of genealogical records, as well as periodicals and a research library that have made our facility one of the best places to do research on any questions related to the history of Peterborough county, and we have some strengths in other counties (Victoria, Northumberland-Durham and Haliburton).

### Peterborough Foundation Grant for Land Records

The Peterborough Foundation granted \$10,000 to the Trent Valley Archives to proceed with preparing a nominal index to the Peterborough County Land Records. Alice MacKenzie and Don Willcock, who, with Gina Martin, have been our land records specialists have agreed to take on the project. It is the logical continuation of the basic digital finding aid that Alice has been creating. As well, Don played an herculean role in reboxing and repairing the land records that had been affected by the flood of 2004, and for which TVA received generous support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the City of Peterborough. Gina comes from a long background of working

in land records in assessment offices and has been a crucial cog in our operations.

The Peterborough County Land Records are TVA's largest collection, and they come with an abstract register which was the user-created finding aid that allowed people to find documents identified by property description. The new finding aid will allow us to identify properties associated with any name that appears in the land records. This will make the land records even more valuable to genealogists, who often lack the specific land descriptions for the property of their ancestors. We have used surrogate records to help us identify property, but this will remove the guess work, and be more reassuring about completeness.

### Miller Family Fonds 176

Doug Miller Jr has been gathering information and writing about his family and other matters for at least 30 years and he has now donated his research to the Trent Valley Archives. This fascinating collection, of about 3 metres in extent, still requires processing and the creation of useful finding aids. As well, there are several items, including a sometimes fascinating autobiography that we will want to publish in future Gazettes.

He has traced this Miller family back to 1720 Cambridgeshire, and has added extensive genealogies on about three dozen families he encountered along the way. Some of the more important research has related to Adams, Ebbs, Ephgrave, Warren and Westrop families.

His individual family histories are quite fascinating. The stories of visits to the various places associated with the families are accompanied with photos, maps and documents. Occasionally there are anecdotes to share, and sometimes old village histories yield details that are added to the family's story. Considerable effort has been expended on identifying people in the photographs, and Miller has a keen eye for making connections. The Ephgrave family history guides us through the family of Polly Miller who married Finch Miller, Peterborough's most famous bandmaster.

Finch Miller (1848-1937) was born in Waltham Abbey in Essex. There he married Mary "Polly" Ephgrave, 1 April 1871. Finch's father and some of the family came to Canada, settling in Millbrook, in 1870. Finch and his family came to Canada after 1873 to accept an offer of bandmaster in Peterborough and served in Peterborough as a bandmaster, a relief officer, and as a boot and shoe maker. Their 12 children included Thomas Miller, who had a son Thomas Douglas Miller, whose name is associated with Miller's Bowl. His son, Doug Miller Jr, describes himself as a tool designer, carpenter, executive and author.

The story of Finch William Miller gets special attention from Doug Miller. Finch's father, James, was a shoe maker, and the family home was in the shadow of Waltham Abbey. Both Finch and his older brother, David, worked at the Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield Lock by the time they were 7 or 8 years old. The 2000 employees in this factory, in 1860, produced 90,707 rifles and the Enfield name was synonymous with British rifles. Finch's mother died when he was only 7 and the family had to cope; the father remarried. In 1860, David and Finch (then 16 and 12) joined the Enfield Lock Rifles and its newly-formed brass band and a drum and fife band led by a Mr Etherington, the bandmaster.

### Bradburn Family fonds 170

The Bradburn family papers relate to several members of the Bradburn family. 1) Land records relating to nearly fifty properties owned by Peterborough's Bradburn family through four generations from the 1870s, together with a register of all the properties ever held by the family. Some of the properties were held in Cobourg, Port Hope and Manitoba, but most are in Peterborough or the Peterborough vicinity.. 2) Manuscript materials related to the family, and providing insights into the Opera Halls owned by the Bradburns, Quaker Oats, and Linda Helm Bradburn. 3) Photographs. 4) William Cumming manuscripts and family photo albums. 5) Two engineering drawing books of William Helm, and two cooking books related to his wife. 6) Family Bible. 7) Books.

Among highlights not otherwise evident are photos (and negatives) of the plans for the Bradburn Opera Hall; the special Liftlock edition of the Peterborough Review, 9 July 1904; Duncan McLeod's platform for the 1886 provincial election, and an original cartoon supporting Oliver Mowat.

The two engineering books by William Helm provide splendid insight into the training of a man who became a major figure in Victorian Peterborough, and whose iron foundry produced many of the cast iron pillars that supported the three-storey downtown buildings.

We are grateful to Bill Bradburn for this fascinating donation. We have already shared some items related to the papers, but processing is incomplete.

One item might be mentioned. The property files often contain many documents, and one file relating to the corner of Hunter and George contains the will of Thomas Harper, fulling describing the buildings in the quarter block that was most seriously affected by Peterborough's most extensive nineteenth century fire in August 1861. Those writing the history of Fighting Fires in Peterborough, a book being prepared by the Peterborough Fire Department for the 1908 centennial of the professional fire department, will include this information, never before used by historians. Close attention to research and documentation will likely reveal countless other stories, previously untold.



## TRENT VALLEY ARCHIVES

567 Carnegie Avenue, Peterborough ON K9L 1N1  
705-745-4404 [admin@trentvalleyarchives.com](mailto:admin@trentvalleyarchives.com)  
[www.trentvalleyarchives.com](http://www.trentvalleyarchives.com)