HERITAGE GAZETTE OF THE TRENT VALLEY



ASHBURNHAM SCHOOL *(See page 23)*

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As we navigate the changes of Spring and the world around us, the Trent Valley Archives invites you to remember that, as Janice Stein said, "People are looking for anchors." This month, our contributors have provided historical anchors that ground our community and provide the context necessary to navigate the future. Whether exploring architectural blueprints or cinematic milestones, a singular theme emerges across these pages: history as a vital tool. It is not merely a collection of dates and places, but a living resource for connection.

In this issue, Dawn Berry Merriam argues that history is a functional necessity for modern society, acting as a mirror to evaluate progress and a guide for responsible community planning and Mary Smith reflects on the flourishing personal and professional relationships built between Peterborough and Ireland as the community prepared for the Peter Robinson Emigration Bicentennial. Elwood Jones explores the "chaste" Italianate design of the Ashburnham School, accompanied by a beautiful photo of the former building, revisits an 1888 dispute between Henry Calcutt and W.H. Moore, revealing a spirited debate over Riverside Park; and highlights, in a collection of book reviews, new works ranging from the meticulous mapping of the Peter Robinson settlers to a comprehensive field guide on Canadian architectural styles. Additionally, J.A. Forrester takes us behind the scenes of the *Summer of '76*, documenting the production of three major Canadian feature films, including the locally shot *Ragtime Summer*.

The TVA welcomes stories and records from citizens across the Trent Valley area. If you'd like to donate, we'd love to hear from you! In this issue, Elwood also brings us into the archives of Roana Wickenden, Eric M. Grier's letters, the W. F. Payton collection, and more. As you read through these articles, I hope you find your own "anchors" among the stories of our shared past.

As we plan the Summer edition of the *Heritage Gazette*, we welcome stories in the community regarding memories of boating or rowing the Otonabee River or Trent Severn Waterways, camping, summer parties, or any other memories of having fun in the sun!

Correction: Military Rank of Walter G. Ward

In our previous issue, ***Heritage Gazette*, February 2026, Volume 30, Number 3**, we inadvertently misidentified the military rank of **Walter G. Ward**.

- **Correction:** Mr. Ward served as a **Lieutenant-Commander**, not a Lieutenant Colonel as previously stated.

While both are distinguished senior officer ranks, the distinction reflects his service within the Naval rather than the Army or Air Force branches. We appreciate the readers who brought this to our attention, as ensuring the historical accuracy of our local veterans' records is of the utmost importance to us.



Alicia Seppala, M.A. (formerly Bertrand)
Editor-in-Chief, Trent Valley Archives *Heritage Gazette*

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THIS ISSUE OF THE HERITAGE GAZETTE IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

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Thanks everyone.

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HERITAGE GAZETTE OF THE TRENT VALLEY



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ON THE COVER:
The exterior of the Ashburnham School in the early 1890s. See story on page 23.

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER?
See page 7 for membership details.



TRENT VALLEY ARCHIVES
Fairview Heritage Centre
567 Carnegie Avenue
Peterborough, Ontario
Canada K9L 1N1
(705) 745-4404
admin@trentvalleyarchives.com
www.trentvalleyarchives.com
Elwood Jones, *Archivist*
Dianne Tedford, *Reading Room Manager*
Carol Sucee, *Librarian*

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FOLLOW US

Reflections *on* IRELAND CONNECTIONS Leading Up *to the* Bicentennial

BY MARY SMITH

The Peterborough community has so many connections to Ireland, but I would like to reflect upon the personal opportunities I have had to build relationships with people in Ireland since 2013.

In September 2013, my husband Al and I attended an event called "Canada Come Home" at Coollattin House, Wicklow County, Ireland, organized as part of "The Gathering". Also attending were Dennis Carter-Edwards and his wife Karen, of Peterborough, and Eileen Nolan and her husband Lorne Kelsey, of Lakefield. We were told about this opportunity by Lynn Loftus, who organized the event and was travelling across Canada to encourage people to attend. At the time I was Mayor of the Township of Selwyn, so I knew that during this private trip, I could be an ambassador for our community.

In advance of that weekend's event, it was arranged that we would visit Mitchelstown in County Cork to meet with Amanda Slattery, the Tourism and Heritage Officer at Ballyhoura Development CLG. She introduced us to a small group of volunteers who were working on a Peter Robinson Settler project. They were working with John Tierney, who is the director of the Historic Graves project in Ireland, and one of the volunteers had been to visit his relatives in Douro just months before. This meeting was the beginning of the wonderful working relationship that developed with Amanda Slattery



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1) Mary Smith (first row, left) with a local historian at the Canada Come Home event at Coollattin House in Ireland in September of 2013. Back Row L to R: Al Smith, Eileen Nolan, Lorne Kelsey, Karen Carter-Edwards, Dennis Carter-Edwards. Image Credit: Mary Smith. 2) Mary and Al Smith with Amanda Slattery (far left) then the Tourism and Heritage Officer at Ballyhoura Development CLG and their Peter Robinson Settler project volunteers in September of 2013. Image Credit: Mary Smith.

and her volunteers that still exists to this day. Amanda is now the Development Manager at Ballyhoura Development CLG and organizer of the Ireland-Canada Homecoming that took place in 2025.

In March 2013, Jimmy Deenihan TD, Minister for Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht in the Irish Government, came to Toronto to be Grand Marshall of the Toronto St. Patrick's Parade and to turn Niagara Falls green, as part of Tourism Ireland's year of "The Gathering". During our travels in Ireland in advance of the Coollattin event, Al and I had the unexpected opportunity to meet Jimmy Deenihan at Derrynane Hotel in Kerry when we were attending the Daniel O'Connell Summer School. The next day, we met him in Listowel, where he lives, and he drove us around the Ennismore bog and pointed out where Ennismore House was in the past, where


4



3


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3) Mary Smith (right) with Jimmy Deenihan TD (left) then the Minister for Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht in the Irish Government, visiting Listowel in Ireland in 2013. 4) Mary and Al Smith with the Lord Mayor of Cork City, Catherine Clancy (centre), the Administrative Assistant to the Mayor (second from right) and Lorne Kelsey (far right). 5) L to R: Gerry Murphy, Amanda Slattery, Young's Point 200 Years on the Water volunteers Ida Boyd and Brian Boyd and Dorothy Murphy at the Young's Point 200 Years on the Water event as part of their visit to the Peterborough area to attend the Nine Ships Bicentennial Commemoration Week events in August of 2025. Image Credit: Linda Cardona.



Irish historical geographer Christy Roche participating in the 26th Annual Peterborough St. Patrick's Day Parade. He returned to the Peterborough area in March of 2026 to serve as the Grand Marshall of the Parade. Image Credit: Brendan Moher.

the Knights of Kerry lived. Numerous Peter Robinson emigrant families came from the Listowel area and settled in Ennismore, Ontario. I was pleased to give him a copy of the book about the history of Ennismore titled *The Holy Land* by Clare Galvin.

As well, Lynn Loftus arranged for us to meet the Lord Mayor of Cork City, Catherine Clancy. The Irish hospitality that we were shown was outstanding, and it was a privilege for me to be an ambassador for our community.

In the summer of 2015, historian Christy Roche came to Peterborough to attend the Peter Robinson Festival at Morrow Park that Tim Burke and a group of volunteers organized. It was a pleasure to get to know Christy and keep in touch over the years. When he visited again in 2023, I had the pleasure of driving him around to various pioneer cemeteries and meetings with Peter Robinson settler descendants in this area.

During our many planning meetings from 2016 to the present, we connected virtually with Amanda Slattery, John Tierney (regarding his Historic Graves Project) and Nathan Mannion, Head of Exhibitions and Programs at the EPIC: The Irish Emigration Museum.

In February 2024, documentary filmmaker Chris Nikkel, a Canadian living in Ireland, visited Douro and Peterborough and interviewed Nine Ships 1825 board members, Ken Armstrong the organizer of the 1975 commemoration, and other local historians. He filmed the "first reading" of the play "Wild Irish Geese" that Megan Murphy had written, by 4th Line Theatre actors at Traill College, Trent University. Chris returned in July and August of 2025 to record events and conduct more interviews during the Bicentennial, and plans to produce several radio documentaries about the commemoration.

During May of 2024, I travelled to Ireland to have some meetings in advance of our Bicentennial year. My first stop was the Cobh Heritage Centre, then a visit to Christy and Mary Roche. Christy guided me around his area of the Blackwater

Valley and showed me the highlights of the tours they were planning for the Ireland-Canada Homecoming in 2025. He introduced me to CEO Valerie Murphy, and Rural Development Officer Niall Walsh, at Avondhu Blackwater Partnership in The Mill in Castletownroche. We met with Amanda Slattery of Ballyhoura Development CLG in Doneraile and learned how their event planning was coming along. Finally, Christy and I visited the EPIC Museum in Dublin and met with Catherine Healy, the Historian in Residence, to provide her with information about the Peter Robinson Irish Emigration.

During the Bicentennial week of August 1-10, 2025, not only did Amanda Slattery come to Canada for the events, but she brought her husband, 4-year-old daughter, and parents as well. They stayed in Lakefield at the home of Grant and Emma Murphy. Christy Roche came for the week and stayed with Patrick and Maggie Hennessey in Lakefield. North Cork author and historian Gerry Murphy, and his wife Dorothy, came from Ireland for the week and stayed in Peterborough at the Holiday Inn. It was a wonderful gathering of these visitors from Ireland with those from the United States and other parts of Canada.

At the end of the "Ireland-Canada Homecoming 2025" experience in Ireland in September, we knew that there was great potential for deepening our connections with the area of Ireland where the Peter Robinson Irish emigrants came from. Meeting relatives of those who stayed behind and community volunteers from that area where the Robinson Emigrants lived long ago was intriguing. As an example of their interest in learning more about their ancestors who came to Canada, Mary and Ciaran O'Driscoll and Joe Doyle came to our area in November of 2025 to do research, visit museums, meet people and explore.

To this day, these relationships have flourished, and with the help of technology, more connections have been made. Many more people in Ireland are aware that our community is ready to receive all those interested in learning more about where their ancestors settled in Canada in 1825.



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Sustaining	$275
Institutional	$300
Patron	$1,000

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- No tax receipt is given



Two women using the public library, March 29 1972. Image Credit: Trent Valley Archives F340, Peterborough Examiner Fonds.

Supporting FUTURE GENERATIONS *by* PRESERVING *the* PAST:

LOOKING AT HISTORY AS A TOOL FOR THE FUTURE BUILDING OF COMMUNITY

BY DAWN BERRY MERRIAM

Editor's Note: This article complements ongoing efforts to advocate for archives and archival research with the Archives Association of Ontario's Archives Awareness Week and their theme of "Archives Activism: Advocating for Archives Survival".

History isn't simply about the past, but about how it can be used to plan communities and their futures.

A quote from Janice Stein, University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, made me reflect on the importance of history and its diverse uses:

> *"We're going through a period of intense change. Everything is up for grabs. In that context, people who have a historical memory matter more than they otherwise would… People are looking for anchors. I think having people with experience, people who've seen it or know about it, is valuable because we're all anxious right now."*
>
> — Janice Stein, University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy courtesy of Steve Paikin, host of The Paikin Podcast, August, 2025.

When you research, Google or ask someone: "**Why is history important to the functioning of present-day individuals, systems, communities and the world?**", you would find many different answers.

Here are a few examples:

- The study of history is necessary for the education of responsible citizens and intelligent human beings. Historical knowledge is our collective memory. Without individual memory, a person literally loses their identity.
- You can study history to understand how to become a change champion, learn from past mistakes, and appreciate the impact of ordinary people in history.
- History provides context for understanding the present, and helps us develop critical thinking skills.
- Studying history enhances our civic awareness and fosters a deeper understanding of different cultures and perspectives.
- History is the story of change over time. Understanding this change allows us to see how things have evolved and where they might be heading.
- History provides a framework for understanding the world around us. By examining past events, we can identify patterns, trends, and the origins of current issues.

> *"The records don't just preserve the debates and the decisions. You also must be able to understand the influencers and how the decisions were made. When you're looking at a decision made by the Supreme Court of Canada in 1932, if you look at that decision only in the context of today, instead of the legal framework they were working within back then, it is hard to understand the reasoning for the decision and what the dissenting views would be."*
>
> — Dr. Leslie Weir, Librarian and Archivist of Canada.

In essence, looking at what history and archival remnants of the past are used for reveals their value in providing context for:

- The present
- Developing critical thinking and analytical skills
- Fostering a sense of identity and global understanding, and
- Offering lessons from past mistakes and successes to inform future decisions and actions.

In fact, it is what helps guide future generations. History provides the answers to: why? when? how? who? And archives are often referred to as a country's "memory house".

How is history used daily? Who actually needs this old information?

There are many different sectors of life and the workforce that utilize historical records in different ways. The importance of historical record keeping, and storytelling, is expressed by the authors' friends and colleagues in the excerpts below.



Two people looking at an x-ray c. December of 1964. Image Credit: Trent Valley Archives F340, Peterborough Examiner Fonds.



Two men inspecting a building site c. February of 1964. Image Credit: Trent Valley Archives F340, Peterborough Examiner Fonds.

Nursing and Health Services

Knowing a person's family history, and their health conditions, is the only way for staff in an emergency ward to begin putting a care plan in place. Keeping records and having access to that information can be a matter of life and death.

A doctor uses a patient's history to establish a baseline of health, identify the root cause of symptoms, and develop a personalized diagnosis and treatment plan by gathering subjective data from the patient about their past illnesses, medications, allergies, family medical conditions, and social and lifestyle factors. This information helps the healthcare team understand the patient's experience, recognize risk factors, and prevent potential complications during care.

From a health system perspective, monitoring and documenting trends has resulted in breakthroughs in medical intervention, and the ability to plan for future population needs.

> *"When someone comes into the emerg[ency] department staff need to understand what underlying conditions will need to be considered before care continues."*
>
> — A registered nurse practicing in an emergency department.

Human Resources

The role of human resources involves providing expert guidance to businesses on various HR-related matters, including recruitment, employee relations, performance management, and compliance with employment laws. Historic information is vital in human resources for tracking an organization's evolution, understanding current trends, making informed decisions, guiding future policies, ensuring compliance, and providing context for strategic planning. By analyzing past data on employee relations, productivity, and development, HR professionals can identify what has worked, anticipate challenges, and adapt strategies to support business goals. Knowing the background and employment history of a person helps ensure a successful employer and employee outcome, explains a Recruiting Manager in Human Resources.

> *"Unless you have an idea of a person's experience, skills and limitations, it is really hard to match them successfully for a new job. It's also not fair to the employer to send someone for a job interview who is not going to be a good match. Records help put things into perspective."*
>
> — A human resources expert.

Community Planning

History is essential to understanding a community's past development, informing policy, managing growth, and ensuring heritage preservation. Planning a community includes looking at patterns in urban and demographic structure, evaluating past planning successes and failures, and recognizing how historical social inequities and environmental conditions continue to shape present-day needs and future development. Historical records of land use, legislation, and community needs are critical tools for creating more equitable, livable, and sustainable communities. The voices from the past guide the planning of tomorrow's communities.

> *"The other aspect of history as it relates to community planning is how long planning takes to "play out", we are still managing and dealing with the planning policy decisions and choices of 50-80 years ago (i.e. fully embracing urban sprawl principles in the 1950's). The planning choices we make now, won't be fully realized for another 20-30 years. If we don't understand where we've been, or why planners made the choices they did back then, we don't know how to properly manage our planning policy now."*
>
> — A municipal planner's experience.

Law and Legal Services

Lawyers use history to establish legal precedents and interpret contemporary laws. Law is a dynamic system that evolves through precedent and evolving societal needs. Lawyers use historical documents and legal principles to build arguments, provide context for current legal issues, and understand the development of legal concepts and doctrines over time. Additionally, lawyers utilize history to anticipate future legal challenges and frame public memory, ensuring that the past informs the present and future conduct of law.

> *"Personally, I think it would be hard to overstate how integral "history" is to the functioning of the modern legal system. As you referenced in your paragraph, lawyers couldn't possibly make legal arguments in court cases without knowing the history of the law at issue and how courts have applied it over the years. But even more broadly than making arguments in court, you could argue that fundamentally what we think of as "the law" is effectively an amalgam of decisions made throughout history – decisions about what powers the government can exercise over its citizens, decisions about which sorts of behaviours the government wants to incentivize or disincentivize in its citizenry, etc."*
>
> — A local lawyer's expert advice.

Farming and Agriculture

Farmers rely on history to inform current practices by studying past agricultural successes and failures, such as crop yields, crop rotation, and responses to environmental disasters and economic downturns. They learn from the innovations of past farmers and the evolution of agricultural tools and methods. They can then apply these lessons to contemporary challenges and opportunities in farming.

> *"Farming is one of the most multi-generational professions in society and the learnings and memory of the experiences of past generations helps maintain our food production as well as advocating for saving our lands from being paved for development."*
>
> — A food advocate and fifth generation farmer.

Environmental Planning

Environmental planners acknowledge that history is crucial for Ontario's conservation and resource planning. It provides vital context for cultural, natural, and ecological values, enabling the identification and protection of significant heritage sites and landscapes that contribute to the province's identity, economic prosperity, and quality of life for current and future generations. By understanding past land-use practices and environmental changes, planners can develop more effective and sustainable long-term strategies for managing resources and protecting ecological integrity. Further, this knowledge is used in managing development in areas such as flood plains and thus building a community that is safe.

> *"By incorporating historical data, planners can anticipate future environmental challenges and develop resilient land-use and conservation plans that account for long-term sustainability."*
>
> — A hydro-geomorphologist and environmental planner.

> *"In my recent novel "*The Road to Goderich*" I was able to draw on the wealth of material that exists in literary and historical accounts about life in the early 1800s in Upper Canada in order to create an accurate picture of life at that time."*
>
> — Linda McQuaig, well-known investigative journalist and nonfiction writer.

What about the **environmental conservation** perspective? A community-engaged conservationist has stated that she learned that conservation is as much about people as it is about land.



Men operating a corn cutter c. August of 1959. Image Credit: Trent Valley Archives F340, Peterborough Examiner Fonds.



Above: Mrs. Graydon McIntosh serving a customer at her general store in Coldsprings, September 23, 1972. Image Credit: Trent Valley Archives F340, Peterborough Examiner Fonds. Below: A teacher reading to her students c. October of 1964. Image Credit: Trent Valley Archives F340, Peterborough Examiner Fonds.



Our region's heritage lies not only in forests and shorelines but also in the relationships that have shaped how we care for them. When local organizations, governments, schools, and citizens work together, we build a living legacy of stewardship — one that honours both ecological and cultural histories while preparing our communities for the future. She sees how deeply our region's history informs today's environmental decisions. The patterns of settlement, industry, farming, and recreation that shaped the Kawarthas continue to influence how we manage both land and water. By learning from that shared past, we can strengthen today's partnerships to ensure the lands we love remain healthy and connected into the future.

> *"History gives us the roots to grow a more resilient landscape, one that reflects both where we've been and what we choose to protect together."*
>
> — An advocate for environmental conservation.

Business

Businesses find that historical information is key to being successful, "like a lifeline". Whether it's looking up past purchases of a customer to help meet a current need or planning for increasing inventory, businesses rely on past information. Furthermore, it is by studying historical trends that businesses can build a successful commercial endeavour.

> *"Historical information was key at (an electrical supply distributor), like a lifeline really cause you could look up what brand a plant was using for PLC's or drives, any equipment really and know whether to tell them about the latest new and improved upgrade or see if they had a spare on hand in their inventory or look up repair prices to have ready for what equipment was running. It was a way in to see the plant manager if you could look up enough history and come up with savings for them. When I got into the repair side of things, I used historical information nonstop and got their attention with the numbers I could put in*

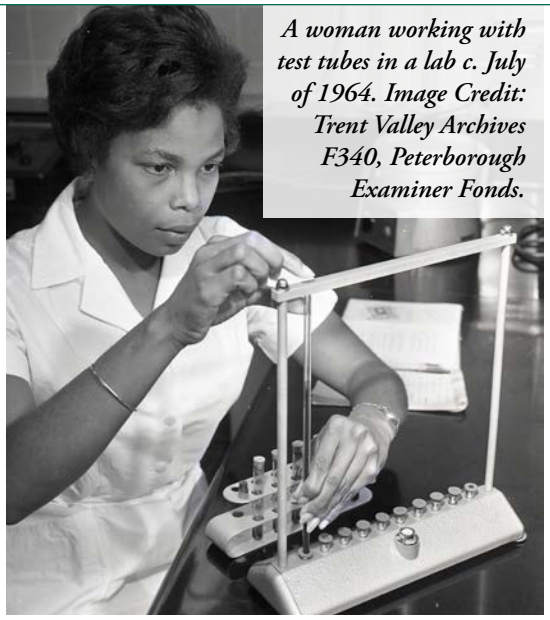
front of them to show savings when comparing a new purchase to repairing the existing unit or even buying a refurbished one."

— A private entrepreneur.

Education

Teachers use history as a major learning tool. Preserving and understanding our history is important because it is the only way that we can learn from or celebrate our collective experiences. Just as an individual reflects on past experiences to shape future decisions, so must a society. We need to remember how quickly we forget. While history doesn't repeat itself exactly, circumstances continually arise which are similar to things that happened in the past. Most of the good and bad things that happen in our world, and most of the things that people value, are not entirely new. Democracy is not new, for example, and neither are the threats to democracy that we see happening now. War is certainly not new, nor are many of the ideas and circumstances that cause it. The question becomes: do we, both as individuals and as societies, see value in learning from our mistakes, and celebrating our successes? Will we just allow the people who do learn from history be those people who learn better how to destroy the things most of us value? Because, of course, it is possible just to learn the wrong things from history. Despots certainly learn from history how to control their populations better and, not surprisingly, one of the ways in which they do this is by rewriting history to suit their own agendas. Or, we might learn to build a better tank having observed the failings of existing ones on the battlefield, but it could be argued that just learning better ways to kill each other is not really progress.

"As with individuals, societies who do not remember past mistakes run the risk of making those same mistakes again, with devastating consequences. People like Hannah Arendt have written eloquently about the "banality of evil" that occurs when we don't understand that moral progress must also be made, and to do this we need to understand the consequences



A woman working with test tubes in a lab c. July of 1964. Image Credit: Trent Valley Archives F340, Peterborough Examiner Fonds.

of our past and current actions, which we cannot do if we don't know history. Back in 1905, George Santayana (Spanish philosopher, essayist, poet, and novelist) wrote that "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

— A retired educator.

Oral Stories

"Storytellers and grandparents use pictures and memories of events to build the future generation's knowledge of the world — both the past and present experiences of multigenerations coming together enrich the lives of all involved. Sitting with a scrapbook that once belonged to a child's great-grandparents helps them appreciate events of those past generations. Likewise, today's version of that scrapbook may be digital, but it will still be that connection through the years and bring those generations together."

— A proud grandparent and a talented storyteller.

Scientific Studies

"In science, history is important because what previous scientists have discovered and published pushes our understanding of the world forward, and influences what current scientists focus their research on, and those historical findings (SHOULD) inform current thinking and actions.… the word SHOULD because in terms of what I consider the most pressing issue of NOW, climate change, many are surprised that the first scientific paper published on the topic appeared in 1896, written by Svante Arrhenius. That paper SHOULD have had a major influence on the future. In this case "we" (collectively) are ignoring the warning, and have been for over a century…."

"As a graduate student at Carleton University studying bat ecology, we were encouraged (even forced) to do a lot of outreach....giving public talks and demonstrations on bats to school groups and naturalist clubs. It was important because, as my supervisor said.. 'if you can get a grade 5 student to understand the science of echolocation or bat ecology, then you really understand it yourself.' He was right and my experience influenced how I supervised my own grad students and got them involved in elementary school presentations and demonstrations at Provincial Parks and other organizations."

— An internationally renowned biologist, University of Calgary.

Archives

Archives are often described as a society's memory, safeguarding historical documents, photographs, and artifacts that tell stories about our collective past and shared experiences.

They:

- preserve unique materials of lasting value, different to everyone.
- provide documentation and evidence of past activities and the history of people, organizations, systems and societies.
- serve as a collective memory, fostering a sense of identity, sustaining cultural heritage, and ensuring accountability.

By providing access to primary source materials, archives support historical research, journalism, genealogical studies, and legal claims, while also ensuring that crucial information is available for future generations to understand and

learn from. They are pivotal to building programmes, processes and systems for future generations.

As society and communities change, the role of history and archival documents play a major role in helping shape the future for future generations but also in reconciling with the past. When you look at Canada's efforts to understand Indigenous Peoples history, archives play a critical role in reconciliation. The documents act as agents for truth-telling, healing, and decolonization by supporting Indigenous control over their histories and oral traditions, and often as written confirmation of their oral histories. This is guided by Canada's Archives Reconciliation Framework, which focuses on building reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities and re-evaluating archival practices related to access, description, and education to better reflect Indigenous perspectives and priorities.

Finally, the role that history and archival information can play has been a subject of interest for decades, centuries and generations. For example, Sir John A. Macdonald's views on the role of history were complex and reflected his belief in using the past to build a strong, unified Canada, while simultaneously holding views considered racist and supremacist by modern standards. He saw history as a foundation for national identity, arguing that the nation's accomplishments should be remembered to inspire present and future generations, and that attempts to "erase" the past are destructive and prevent understanding. However, he also viewed history through the lens of his own era's prejudiced beliefs, particularly regarding Indigenous peoples and Chinese immigrants, as evident in his comments on race and assimilation, which many view as a deeply problematic and discriminatory application of historical justification.

How do you deal with this type of historic situation? You deal with it by placing the actions within the context of the times. Trying to attach current attitudes to past circumstances will always result in an unfavourable outcome. It is important to look at the entire picture of events that happened during a time in history and in so doing learn how the social infrastructure for each generation changes with the times.

> *"We do have a bit of a problem in this country in that we are afraid to build a national mythology. All our national icons are recognized first for their flaws and mistakes and then for their accomplishments. A little Flag waving looks pretty good sometimes".*
>
> — A retired book collector/bibliophile.

Circling back to the first quote in this article by Janice Stein, I asked a colleague involved in community change the same question: "**Why is history important to the present-day functioning of individuals, systems, communities and the world?**" Here's her response:

> *"Daily I ask myself, why people are now so impatient, rude and demanding? Leslie Charles addresses the anger epidemic in her book,"Why Is Everyone So Cranky?." Leslie describes the pressure of today's hurry-worry lifestyle and how some people have been chronically angry for so long it has become an accepted way of life. By having a historical perspective, we can review the path to see how we got here and how we can course correct for the future."*
>
> — A colleague involved in community change.

I believe the anger epidemic started when we lost our sense of community. In the fifties, we respected and looked up to our leaders and life was structured with clear boundaries and expectations. We knew our neighbours and felt safe in our neighbourhoods; we were connected to our community. In the sixties, television became entrenched in our daily lives and competed with family time. In the seventies, television expanded our desire for what we wanted instead of needed, and we saw the rise of consumerism. The eighties introduced the personal computer that expanded that reach and we became plagued with too many choices that overloaded us. Technology in the nineties drove sensationalism where we began to notice cultural diversity and created a wedge between the have and have nots. So, we have seen it coming, but our collective mood has only gotten worse.

> *"Community is not what it is used to be. As individuals, we are trying to balance selfcare, family, and work. We are thinking, how can we incorporate community into an already busy day: it is easier to worry about yourself, than to worry about others. However, historically life was harder. Tasks were harder and we still had to balance selfcare, family, and work. If we lived a simpler life like in the past, with the assistance of modern technology and medicine we could all benefit."*
>
> — A colleague involved in community change.

Can we go back and consider how community and life has changed and learn from the past to improve the future?

So, how does history and archival material translate into building a new programme or service for the benefit of a new world? What follows is an example of developing learning experiences through archival material and the history of community:

Nurtured by Nature was founded by Child and Youth Care Practitioner Stefanie Swift-Doyle, with the goal of educating the whole child by empowering them to reclaim their innate attachment to the Earth, and all it has to offer. She developed this educational programme through researching history and using archival information.

> *"Altogether, I use history not as something distant or abstract, but as a living thread. It helps me guide children in seeing themselves as part of an ongoing story: one that stretches behind us, grounds us in the present, and calls us to be thoughtful stewards of the future."*
>
> — From the perspective of a youth care practitioner and programme developer.

The goals of the programme are listed below and the use of history and archives are provided:

GOAL	HOW IT WAS ACHIEVED
Honouring Indigenous History and Land Stewardship	• Recognizing that Indigenous peoples were the first caretakers of the land and continue to be knowledge keepers. • Sharing with children how Indigenous communities lived in deep relationships with the land—teaching respect, reciprocity, and gratitude.
Understanding the Local Landscape Through Archives	• Looking at old maps, photos, or accounts of the Blackfriars Bridge and the Thames/Deshkan Ziibi area to see how the land and riverside have shifted over time. • Using this history to help children notice how human activity changes the land, and to imagine what their play space looked like hundreds of years ago. • Making connections between natural landmarks and the stories they hold from the past.
Reviving Traditional Seasonal Practices	• Drawing from past methods of maple tapping, shelter building, or food preservation as hands-on activities. • Teaching how people used natural signs—bird migrations, budding trees, ice melting—to mark seasonal changes before calendars and apps. • Helping children recognize that many modern practices are rooted in ancestral ways of knowing.
Exploring How Past Human Choices (industrialization, pesticide use, hunting, resource extraction) Affect Today's Ecosystems	• Showing children examples of invasive species or local extinctions to connect the past to the present. • Discussing how learning from history equips us to make more sustainable choices for the future.
Building a Sense of Continuity and Belonging	• Sharing stories of how children in the past played outdoors, foraged, or cared for animals—helping kids see themselves in a long line of people connected to nature. • Using local folklore, archival stories, or even old children's games as a way to build connection across generations. • Helping kids recognize that when they plant seeds or care for the land, they are becoming part of the ongoing story of their community.
Encouraging Critical Thinking About Progress	• Looking at what's been gained (medicine, comfort, technology) versus what's been lost (time outdoors, biodiversity, connection to land). • Asking children reflective questions: *"What would it be like to live here 200 years ago? What would be harder? What might be more joyful?"* • Using the past as a mirror to think about the kind of future they want to help create.

Thank you to the following contributors who provided their insights and reflections:

- Robert Barclay, Faculty of Science, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Calgary (retired)
- Robin Barclay, Storyteller and Grandparent Extraordinaire
- Dawn Berry Merriam, Community Advocate and Planner (and 5th Generation Farmer)
- Jayne Culbert, Seniors Specialist, Aging with Positive Energy
- Teresa Friar, Educator
- Jocelyn Hunt, Analyst, ATIP Branch, Library and Archives of Canada
- Geoffrey Keelan, ATIP Branch, Library and Archives of Canada
- Val Koning Keelan, Author
- Kathleen Kylie, Barrister and Solicitor
- Stephen P. Kylie, Barrister and Solicitor
- Marjorie Macdonald, Environmental Advocate
- Rose McGriskin, Private Entrepreneur
- John W. Merriam, Environmental Planner, Merriam & Associates
- Bob Newland, Book Collector/Bibliophile
- Kate Swift, Registered Nurse
- Stefanie Swift-Doyle, Child & Youth Care Practitioner
- Brad Walsh, Human Resources Recruiting Manager
- Meghan White, Senior Planner, Planning Department, Town of Newmarket

Three Canadian *Feature Films* Shot During the SUMMER OF '76

BY J. A. FORRESTER

August this year marks the 50th anniversary of the production of a Canadian feature film shot in the Village of Lakefield, primarily at Lakefield College School (LCS). During the summer of 1976, I was a student journalist and Associate Editor of *The Canadian Review* magazine in Ottawa, working on a special issue on Canadian film. I considered writing an "On the set" article covering one of three Canadian feature films being produced that year. To choose from there was the NFB's *One Man* directed by Robin Spry in Montreal, *Who Has Seen the Wind* directed by Allan King in Saskatchewan, and finally *Ragtime Summer/Age of Innocence* (UK title) directed by British director Alan Bridges in Lakefield.

One Man (NFB production)

The *One Man* production was the closest location to Ottawa, and well within the travel budget, so that is where I drove to document the location-filming taking place at a factory in Verdun near the waterfront. The main thread of the plot involved children being poisoned by a nearby chemical plant, and a crusading TV journalist trying to expose the culpable industrialists. The final production seems like just another "made-for-TV/movie of the week," which you can stream on NFB.ca. However, *One Man* won seven Canadian Film Awards (predecessor of the Canadian Screen Awards). Director Robin Spry was a celebrated NFB documentary filmmaker who quit working for the board in 1978 and formed Telescene Film Group, producing, and directing commercial work, for television. He died prematurely in a Montreal car crash on March 28, 2005, at the age of sixty-five.



Production photograph from* One Man*, taken on location at a factory in Verdun. Director Robin Spry is on the right. Image Credit: J. A. Forrester.

Who Has Seen the Wind (Allan King Associates/Souris River Films)

In addition to working at *The Canadian Review*, I wrote for trade journals including *Motion* magazine and *Cinema Canada*. I approached Crawley Films VP Graeme Fraser for travel expenses to the August 1976 film shoot of *Who Has Seen the Wind* in Arcola, Saskatchewan. On June 22nd that year, F. R. "Budge" Crawley announced that he was withdrawing his funding and would not act as Executive Producer of the feature film, as he did not feel confident in the inadequate script and backed W. O. Mitchell as the screenwriter. That was the end of my summer movie junket.

When I interviewed Crawley in 1981, he mentioned, "I have an autographed copy of *Who Has Seen the Wind* [illustrated by Kurelek] from Bill waxing sentimental … 'To Budge Crawley, the most honourable man I ever met.' "

On the positive side, Allan King's film won the Golden Reel Award for the Canadian feature film with the biggest box office gross for the year 1978 ($1.2 million according to *Variety*). In terms of critical response, it too was reasonably positive, although Vincent Canby in *The New York Times* stated that the film had a "lack of narrative sophistication." In terms of its reputation, it's interesting to note that the film never made the TIFF Top 10 Canadian Films of All Time list. I would recommend that you read Barbara & Orm Mitchell's excellent 2005 biography *W.O. Mitchell* (2 volumes) for the details behind the production. The final word goes to

W. O., who refused to watch the finished film and referred to it as, "Who Has Seen the Waltons." The 1976 edition of the classic 1947 novel with illustrations by William Kurelek remains the best depiction of Mitchell's novel so far. I hope that someday a Canadian producer will venture to support a new feature film of the book, more in line with the original work and W. O.'s 1976 screenplay. The film rights to the novel have now reverted to the Mitchell family.

Ragtime Summer/Age of Innocence (Judson Pictures Inc./Rank UK)

The final film in the trilogy had the working title *Summer Rain*, based on a script by Ratch Wallace, who was a student at Lakefield College School from 1957 to 1961. Ratch began as an actor at the Crest Theatre Toronto, and Stratford Festival, before launching into a solid supporting actor film career. With the encouragement of fellow actor Sterling Hayden, he made an unusual "mid-career adjustment" and became a Master Mariner working on the Great Lakes and the BC coast. "Captain Hollywood's" first assignment was on the 1925 SS Seguin from the Gravenhurst harbour in Muskoka. His final captaincy was the *Canadian Empress* on the St. Lawrence out of Kingston, where he died on duty at the bridge on October 16th, 2011. He was 66 years old.

According to *Cinema Canada*, the production was originally scheduled to begin filming in 1975 with veteran Canadian director William Davidson at the helm and a slightly different cast, including Donald Pleasance and Patricia Gage. However, Canadian Secretary of State Hugh Faulkner (who also happened to be the MP for the Peterborough riding from 1965 to 1979) signed a UK-Canada Coproduction Agreement in London, England on September 12, 1975. It may have been this



Above: Who Has Seen The Wind ***promotional poster. Image Credit: Astral Films/Allan King Associates/Souris River Films.*** **Above right: Who Has Seen The Wind** ***book cover. Image Credit: MacMillan Canada.***

added enticement to partner with the UK-based Rank Organization, which forestalled the filming of Wallace's script until 1976. The Liberal government had already increased the capital cost allowance from 60% to 100% and encouraged a voluntary quota with the theatre chains to show more Canadian films.

In 1976, I associated Lakefield with Margaret Laurence, who retired to the village in 1973. When her novel *The Diviners* was published in 1974, *The Canadian Review* had not one but two reviews of the landmark novel. CR also published an interview with Hugh Faulkner in the July 1975 issue. At that time, I didn't anticipate that our family would relocate to Lakefield and live in this community for the last 35 years, including 30 years spent documenting the Lakefield Literary Festival.

The first Anglo-Canadian co-production was shot largely on the LCS campus and surrounding locations from August 8 to September 4, 1976, with a UK crew, British TV director Alan Bridges, plus two well-known English actors, David Warner and Honor Blackman. The supporting cast were Canadian actors, including Lois Maxwell, Trudy Young, Tim Henry, Cec Linder, Patricia Hamilton and John Friesen.

Locally cast young actors were recruited to play the residents of the boy's school, known originally as The Grove. One of them, Spencer J. Harrison, played the student "Villiers" and he went on to become a Canadian visual artist who worked at both Trent and OCAD University. Robert Mavor, who appeared as a "Town Dignitary" (uncredited) posted a memoir of his first experience of working on a film production:

"I had attended Lakefield College School some 17 years earlier and a friend of mine Ratch Wallace had written the screenplay … The local newspaper was calling for "extras" and so I phoned the listed number and sure enough they were eager to hire people, although with a budget of some $750,000, I figured that it wouldn't be the biggest movie made to date."[1]

The two principal actors, most of the crew, the director and both producers are now gone, but I was able to find a 1977 *Motion* magazine interview with Canadian producer Deanne Judson discussing Co-productions:

"From 'I want the part,' to 'I need money to make a film; endorse me,' I guarantee to deliver a film that is showable and of high quality. We are young here and we need to

1. French Lycos Cinephilia 2003 [Robert Mavor memoir of Ragtime Summer], https://web.archive.org/web/20080219190246/http://membres.lycos.fr/cinephilia/rs/robert.html
2. *Motion* magazine, Volume 6, Number 3, (1977) "About Co-productions" by Helen English, p. 38-39.

learn from experienced people in the field as in any other profession. There will come a time when we will be independent and then we will all be stars."[2]

Hollywood films usually try to disguise Canadian locations. For instance, David Cronenberg's 2005 action/thriller, *A History of Violence*, magically gets transported to Millbrook, Indiana. In the case of this production, the designer repainted the Lakefield train station sign to read "Rockfield," which is undercut when the final frame of the film indicated that filming took place at LCS. (Images 3 and 5).

The *Peterborough Examiner* reported from the LCS set with photographs. Film reviews were generally positive following the world premiere in Peterborough on April 28, 1977, and subsequent openings in 20 Odeon theatres across the country. Michael Walsh, the long-standing film critic for *The Province* in Vancouver, decided to file a minority report:

"It is Bridges, of course, who must bear the final responsibility for the film's dramatic failure … Here, he is trying to evoke a period he neither understands nor can identify with. Wallace's script may have started out as discount D. H. Lawrence, but Bridges's cold direction turns it into bargain basement Ibsen. The combination undercuts what should have been an effective and affecting film. It's not hard to believe what happens in Ragtime Summer; it's just hard to care."[3]

Toronto critic Gerald Pratley interviewed Director Alan Bridges, who commented: "But I can see that, successful or not, it doesn't do very much to further Canadian production. You've simply got to make your own films with your own people."[4]

Full disclosure: I was a motorcycle rider for 45 years, so by my standards, the star of this production is a 1923 Excelsior-Henderson motorcycle, which makes an appearance in virtually every scene, except for the bedroom. Lead actor David Warner was terrified of motorcycles, so a body double stunt rider had to do the riding scenes, which were shot from a distance. The scene below was shot on the back of a trailer barreling down a country road. (Image 7).

I now realize that these three motion pictures, while not examples of the best Canadian filmmaking can accomplish, do illustrate that there was a transition going on in the late 1970s. The two Canadian directors, Robin Spry and Allan King,


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1) Producer Deanne Judson converses with then Secretary of State Hugh Faulkner on the set of* Ragtime Summer/Age of Innocence. *2) Shooting* Ragtime Summer/Age of Innocence *on location are David Warner (getting on the motorcycle) and continuing to the right, Tim Henry, Gord Langevin, Ken Vick (on the boom), Ken Withers and director Alan Bridges. 3) A still from* Ragtime Summer/Age of Innocence *showing the "Rockfield" train station. Image Credit: Judson Pictures Inc./Rank UK. 4) One of the photographs taken by the* Peterborough Examiner *photographer on the set of* Ragtime Summer/Age of Innocence*, August 14, 1976. Image Credit: Trent Valley Archives F340, Peterborough Examiner Fonds. 5) Opposite page: A still from* Ragtime Summer/Age of Innocence *showing the location credit. Image Credit: Judson Pictures Inc./Rank UK.

3. *The Province* (Vancouver), May 25th, 1977, "Ragtime Summer" (review) by Michael Walsh. 4. *Cinema Canada,* Dec-Jan. 1977, "In and Out of The Movies" by Gerald Pratley, p. 17

were both documentary filmmakers trying their hand at making their first fictional feature film, while Alan Bridges was a veteran UK television director hired to pull together an experienced crew and follow the script. All three films were made during the Tax Shelter Era (1974-1982) and the producers benefitted from the increased flow of film financing available to them. Peter Morris, Piers Handling and Ted Magdar in a *Canadian Encyclopedia* entry summarize the positive aspects of the Tax Shelter years:

"Some benefits did emerge from the tax shelter era. The increase in production provided valuable experience to a growing industry of craftspeople. A number of prominent producers, including Harold Greenberg, Garth Drabinsky and Robert Lantos emerged as Canada's leading movie moguls. David Cronenberg credited his tax-shelter films … with launching his career, though he also recognized the overall scheme as a failure."[5]

"We All Begin in Little Magazines" was the title of a short story by Canadian ex-pat author Norman Levine, which appeared in the July 1976 issue of *The Canadian Review* magazine. After the publication left the University of Ottawa's "hot house environment" for rented premises, things appeared to be more businesslike on the surface, but it was the Canada Council grants which kept us afloat.

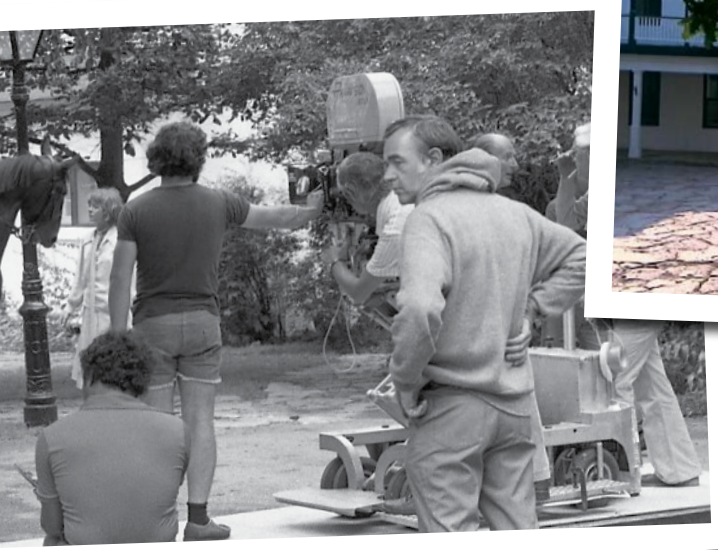
However, in time reality set in, the magazine folded, and most of the editorial staff relocated to London, England, where the publishing prospects improved exponentially, and remuneration was involved. By the late 1970s this was a well-established tradition, where Canadian writers and editors sought employment elsewhere, following their apprenticeship on Canadian literary magazines. Our Editor E. Graydon Carter decamped to NYC in 1978, becoming a reporter for *Time/Life* magazine, and eventually the long-time editor of *Vanity Fair* plus the founder of *Spy* & *Air Mail* magazines.

Inevitably, someone upon hearing the name *The Canadian Review*, for the first time, asked me "of what?" There was an assumption that the publication was some kind of academic journal. There's no Wikipedia entry for *The Canadian Review*.


6



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6) Another photograph taken by the Peterborough Examiner photographer on the set of* Ragtime Summer/ Age of Innocence*, August 14, 1976. Image Credit: Trent Valley Archives F340, Peterborough Examiner Fonds.
7) A still from* Ragtime Summer/Age of Innocence *showing the 1923 Excelsior Henderson Motorcycle. Image Credit: Judson Pictures Inc./Rank UK.

5. Source: https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/canadian-film-history-1974-to-present

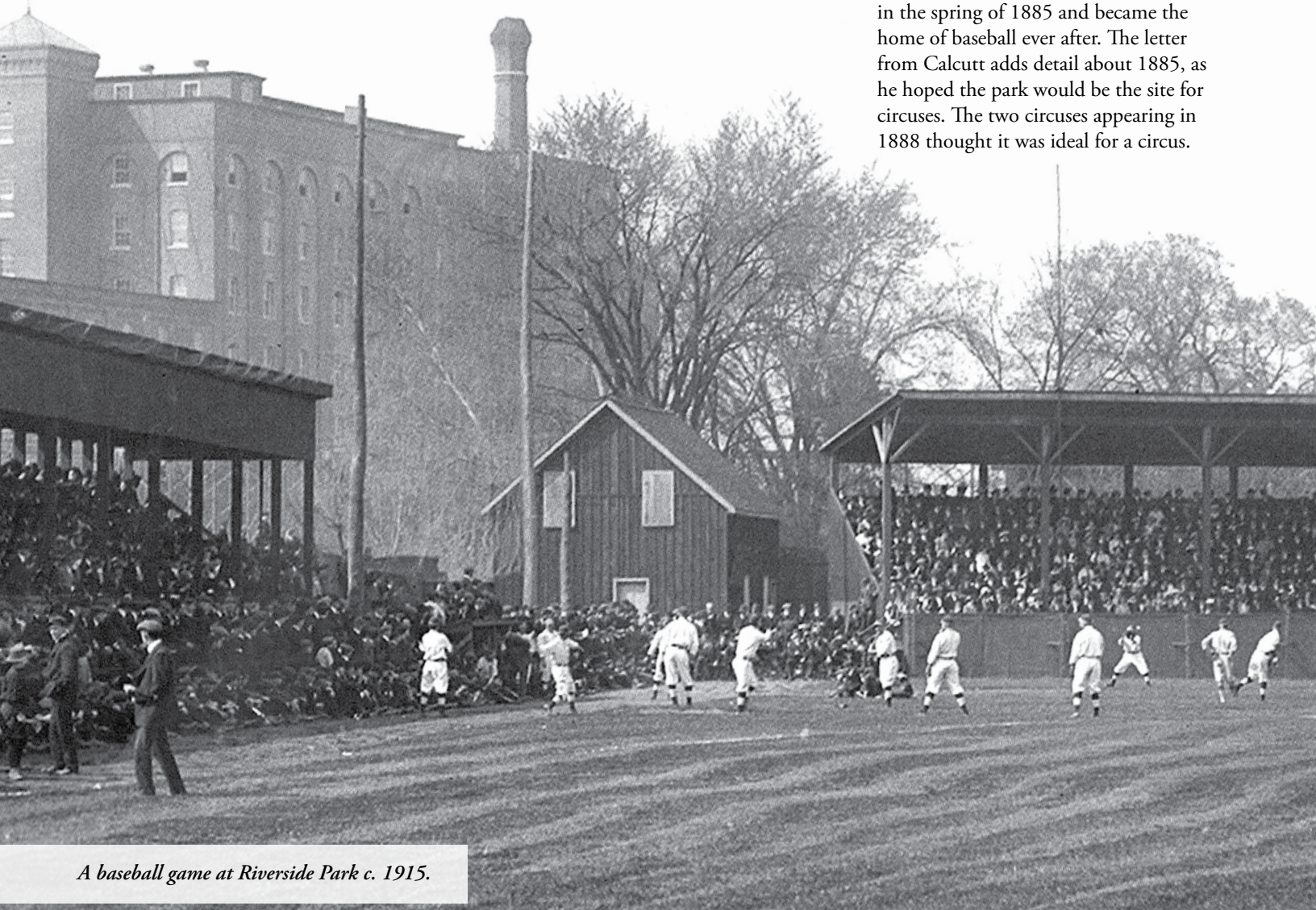
HENRY CALCUTT *and* *Riverside Park*

BY ELWOOD H. JONES

Riverside Park, now a part of the James Stevenson Park, sometimes better known as the East City Bowl, was Peterborough's main sports field from 1884. F. H. Dobbin, writing in 1930, and reprinted in the *Heritage Gazette* in May of 2020, commented that the town lost control of its waterfront to manufacturing interests. It had changed so much since 1818 that "hardly a vestige remains of the original contour and proportion." Dobbin traced the early history of the east side of the river south of the Hunter Street Bridge as described by Catharine Parr Traill, as altered by the raceway from the Rogers mill, and the building of Calcutt's brewery, as well as early houses for Marcello Mowry and others.

Dobbin agreed in 1930 that the city should acquire the property that it could earlier have had for a song. The city had expropriated the property adjacent to the Hunter Street bridge. After it was used for gravel storage and the construction of the bridge, it became the James Stevenson Park.

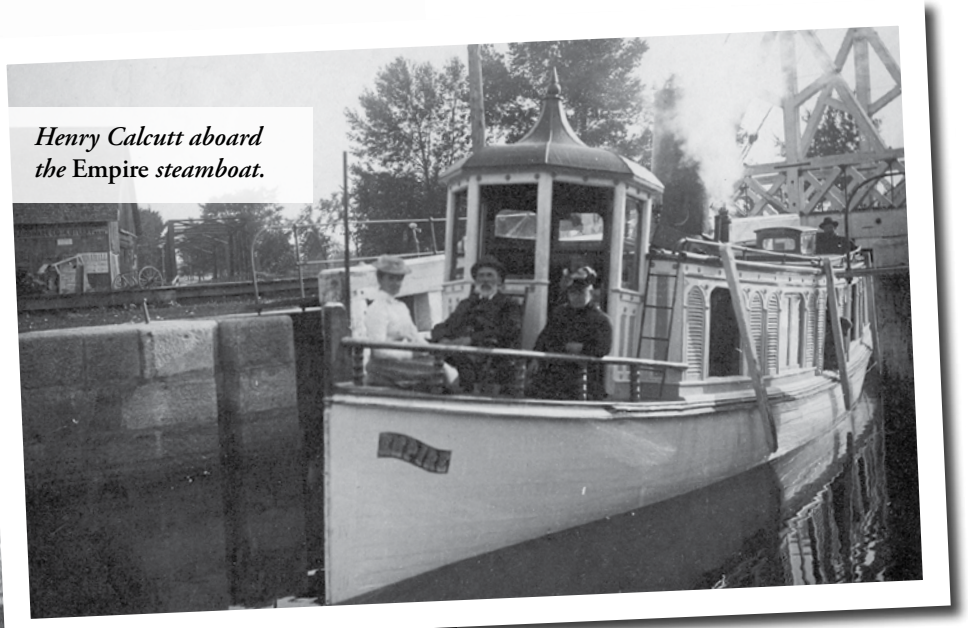
Riverside Park was leased to the Peterborough Amateur Athletic Association in the spring of 1885 and became the home of baseball ever after. The letter from Calcutt adds detail about 1885, as he hoped the park would be the site for circuses. The two circuses appearing in 1888 thought it was ideal for a circus.



A baseball game at Riverside Park c. 1915.

The Miller and Freeman Circus in August of 1888 was the only one that happened at Riverside Park. The Exhibition grounds at Morrow Park was the most common site for circuses after the 1880s. The railway cars could unload very close to the grounds, and it provided a good base for the circus parades, which could go to the city centre either by Lock Street or George Street.

Letters to the Editors of the *Peterborough Examiner* and *Daily Review* newspapers in August 1888 between Henry Calcutt and W. H. Moore may give readers some insight into the time. Henry Calcutt erected a brewery on the property, and ran steamboats that carried tourists to Rice Lake and back. W. H. Moore was a prominent lawyer, a native of Smith township, whose house on London Street later became part of Traill College.



Henry Calcutt aboard the* Empire *steamboat.



DEGRADING AND UNDIGNIFIED GREED.

To the Editor of the Examiner

Peterborough Examiner, 7 August 1888

Sir,—About three years ago I thought that the piece of ground in Ashburnham, then known as "Mowry's Point" and now as "Riverside Park," could be improved so as to provide a playground for baseball, lacrosse, etc., and a capital circus ground. I accordingly expended a very considerable sum in levelling the ground and fitting it up, and today it is a great contrast to its former state. I cannot say that the financial results I anticipated have been realized; but the citizens of the neighboring town of Peterborough fully appreciate its advantages, and play baseball, lacrosse, etc., upon it without payment.

I would rather they would pay for the use of the ground, but that is not the way the citizens of Peterborough care to deal with us villagers; they prefer to take all they can lay their hands on gratis and then want more.

I thought at all events the circus business would help to pay for my outlay, but the corporation of Peterborough looked with a jealous municipal eye upon my little enterprise, and after one circus had ventured to use what the proprietors described "as the best circus ground in Canada," it was decided, if possible to prevent a repetition of so glaring an act of injustice to the town.

The council of the town therefore, in order to punish me for daring to compete with them in the circus business, passed a by-law charging a license fee of $100 for a street parade to any circus that did not exhibit in the town. The result was satisfactory to this enterprising corporation, for the circuses did not patronize me anymore. On one occasion they went to Monaghan instead. As I was not interested in these grounds, the town remitted the $100 license.

Howe's circus which was here recently arranged to occupy my grounds, after finding the town rate too high, and we agreed upon the price; but the town in order to beat me reduced their license to $15.

The circus at present exhibiting here got the Riverside Park at a very low rate, which I was obliged to give to compete with the corporation. The corporation were very stiff in adhering to their by-law and on Saturday insisted on $100 being paid for street parade, which the circus men declined to pay. This morning the corporation, seeing that the circus was, in spite of their by-law, actually going to exhibit on Riverside Park, sent them word that they might parade for $20. This was also declined.

Now, Mr. Editor, I write these lines, as I think its proper that the public should know how matters are managed. I may have been guilty of presumption and even of high treason against the corporation of the town of Peterborough in investing my money as I have stated and deserve to be crashed out, but I leave it to the public to decide. It seems to me that it is degrading and undignified for a wealthy corporation like the town of Peterborough to devote

its energies to depriving me of a return for what I and many others think was a commendable enterprise.

Yours truly,
Henry Calcutt.
Ashburnham, August 6th, 1888.

MR. CALCUTT AND HIS PARK.

To the Editor of the Daily Review

Review, 9 August 1888

Sir,—I regret that Mr. Calcutt, in yesterday's Examiner, should have so quickly dispelled the notion that he was largely moved by a public spirit and a kindly feeling towards his fellow men, in throwing open Riverside Park. That it was from the first a commercial adventure is the only deduction I can draw from his communication and there can be no complaint that it should be such, only it would perhaps have been preferable that the citizens of Peterborough should have so understood it. It would have relieved, no doubt, from the imputation that our townspeople "prefer to take all they can lay their hands on gratis, and then want more" and that the town was guilty of "degrading and undignified greed."

It is quite true that the town claims a license fee of $100 for a circus exhibiting in Peterborough, but it is contrary to the fact that it wishes to keep such questionable concerns to itself or out of Riverside Park. Had Mr. Calcutt called on the Mayor, he would have learned that both the Howe "side show" and the last "Aggregation of Wonders," including the "great balloon ascension," were informed that they were not wanted here, that we had no suitable grounds for their great moral shows, and that the only place to be got in the vicinity was Riverside Park. He would also have found that $20 was from the first, the sum asked for a parade, and that there was a memorandum in writing of it, and further that when the show that went into Monaghan some years ago, and which the town forgave the usual fee, as he says to do him out of it, that what the town did was to give the Agricultural Society the benefit of that fee.

We have not sought to obtain, but rather to exclude, every circus from the town, as the high license fee indicates, and late experiences I am certain are not likely to make us zealous to secure their company hereafter, nor to increase our faith in the desirability of their presence.

Of the Howe crowd, one remains in our gaol to be tried for murder, committed on our market square. The management of the last great combination of marvels I know nothing of, but much of the "following" it had was indisputably a combination of gamblers and blacklegs, the equal of which I'm sure never entered the country, and who, with their thimble-rigs, sweat boards and whip swindle, lightened the pockets of the unwary, to the tune of hundreds of dollars.



Miller and Freeman's Monster Railroad Shows Balloon.

If such things must be, and if circuses will come to the county, I don't say Mr. Calcutt will do wrong in having them at his park, or that he should not get the largest fee possible from them, nor will the town, I believe, object to them going there, but would suggest that the Corporation of Ashburnham should, for its good name in the future, look up the rogues who are ever present at such affairs, to swindle the public.

Yours,
W. H. Moore,

Peterborough, 8th Aug., 1888.
(*Review* 9 August 1888)

Ashburnham School

BY ELWOOD JONES

Ashburnham Village had a school as early as 1864 on Robinson Street next to the first town hall at the corner of Mark Street. The school trustees decided that the village needed a bigger and better school. The architect, James Arthur Barchard (1833-1877), was active in Peterborough during the last two years of his brief life. His most noted project was building the grand mansion on Edinburgh Street, between George and Water, for Thomas Menzies. The Ashburnham School is in a popular symmetrical Italianate style and was built by William Wand, a name associated with a house on Burnham Street, and a factory in the industrial park between Driscoll Terrace and the Otonabee River. In 1876, Wand's factory was on Murray Street.

The school was designed with four classrooms, even though only one was needed at the time. The *Peterborough Examiner* described the building as "chaste" when visiting in August 1876, when only one room was finished and was being occupied by the principal, John Wood, who lived on Mark Street across from the hall and the school. Wood's son later built a grand house for his father on Belmont Street at Hunter.

As the *Peterborough Examiner* noted, "The trustees have wisely erected a larger building than is at present required, and hence as the village grows there will be ample accommodation for the increase of children of school age. In the end this will be a very great saving of money to the people…. Mr. Wand has done his work well, and the villagers ought to feel proud in having such a school building erected for their accommodation of their children."

Ashburnham joined Peterborough in 1903, and in 1905 the largest town in Canada became a city. When King George School opened on June 1, 1913, the Ashburnham School was acquired to be used as a separate school, and was named Immaculate Conception. This school was demolished in the 1960s and replaced by a new school that was enlarged in the 1990s.

This photo of Ashburnham School was taken by George Sproule, the leading photographer of his day. The photo has been in the Wickenden family and was recently donated to Trent Valley Archives. This is the best photo of the school that I have seen. The photo was taken in the 1890s; Sproule moved to Montana in 1896. For more information on George Sproule, see Gina Martin's article, "George Buchanan Sproule: Peterborough Photographer", in the *Heritage Gazette*, Vol. 15, No. 3, November 2010.



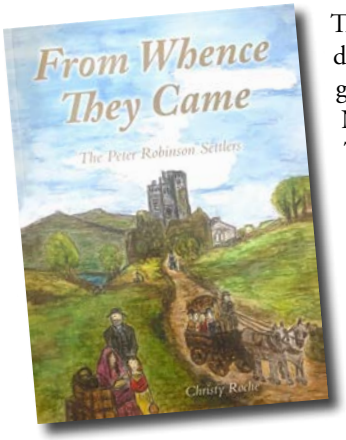
The exterior of the Ashburnham School with the school's staff and students standing in front, taken by the photographer George Sproule in the early 1890s. Image Credit: Trent Valley Archives, Wickenden Family Fonds.

William Wand. Image Credit: Trent Valley Archives.

A PLETHORA OF BOOK REVIEWS

BY ELWOOD JONES

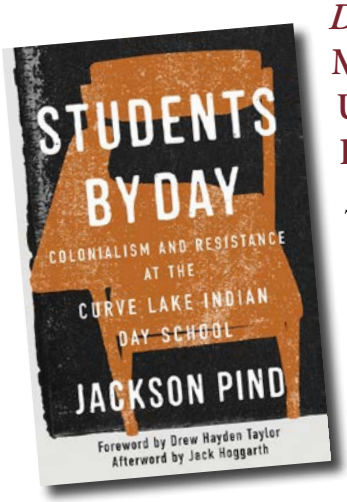
Christy Roche, *From Whence They Came: The Peter Robinson Settlers,* Ballyhoura, 2025, Pp vi, 224.



This is a timely book from a distinguished Irish historical geographer who has studied North Cork for over forty years. The author visits every place from which Irish emigrants left North Cork in 1823 and 1825. Each place contains a list of the emigrants and two photos of historic buildings taken by the author that relate to the persistence of 1825, as each of these buildings existed at the time of the emigrants' departure. As well, he has produced a colourful map used as endpapers that show the number of emigrants from each place they left in 1823 and in 1825. This emigrant list was matched with the one produced by Nine Ships 1825 Inc. The book will be treasured by anyone travelling to that part of Ireland, perhaps more so for people tracking their family roots. Delightful and dependable.

The book is available at the Trent Valley Archives in soft cover for $45 and hard cover for $75.

Jackson Pind, *Students by Day: Colonialism and Resistance at the Curve Lake Indian Day School,* Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2025, Pp vii, 262.



The title of this book is clever. It suggests that one could retain cultural identity after school while learning much about the wider world in school. The book begins with the new school in 1901, after 1885 when the New England Company transferred the land and assets to the federal government and local Curve Lake control. Jackson Pind, working with a narrow sample, argues that even though the school was never a residential school, its students faced the same pressures and negative consequences as those who attended one. The best chapter, titled "A Legacy of Neglect: The United Church of Canada's Day School" begins in the summer of 1926. Here, Pind argues that under the church's leadership, the quality of teachers was poor and the objective, as with earlier teachers, was assimilation. The school was administered federally and archived correspondence in RG 10 of the National Archives provides a solid foundation for this chapter. The school had trouble getting and keeping teachers, had poor infrastructure, and was using the council hall for teaching. In addition, federal policy from the 1920s to 1930s was marked by frugality. A new school was built in 1935, but there were immediate difficulties, particularly highlighted by septic system problems. Local authorities, with the band council and the Indian agent, had difficulty competing with the bureaucrats in Ottawa. Before the 1950s, it was difficult for students to get a high school education.

The story is strongly argued.

The book is available on Amazon.

Jane Dugan, *Songs for Sighs,* J. A. Dugan, 2025, Pp 76.

This revised version of the poems of Rosa Matilda Bateman (1888-1958) contains about 30 poems inspired by local events in Peterborough County, and by the rhythms and beliefs of rural life. Janie Dugan, her artist granddaughter, has added commentary, and some very interesting illustrations based on her artwork and her travels.

Of particular interest to our readers are the poems about Peterborough's centennial in 1950, and a tribute to the steamship *Islinda*. A model of the *Islinda* is in the reading room at the Trent Valley Archives. One of her poems is a tribute to the poems of Eddie Guest [Edgar A. Guest], who had a syndicated column in newspapers. Another poem is a conversation between the poet and the painter: some songs are pictures and some pictures are songs. I liked her tribute to little boys, and to roses. On scrapbooks, she observed, "Joys have been best when shared."

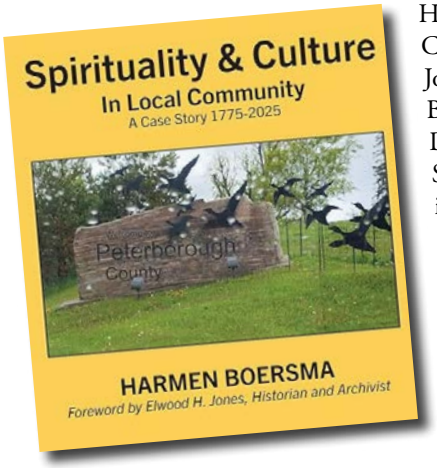


Janie's artwork is varied, and I have one of her paintings, "Ocean Vortex." Some of the paintings echo the poetry's references to roses and butterflies. A couple are landscapes of Italy and Edmundston, and one is a host of roses in tribute to her late brother. Her concern for climate change inspires most of her paintings. There are family photos as well.

The book is available at the Trent Valley Archives for $20.

Harmen Boersma, *Spirituality & Culture in Local Community; A Case Story 1775-2025, Peterborough, 2025, Pp 92.*

Harmen Boersma undertook to explain the changing relationship between religion, culture and politics in Peterborough County for 250 years. He chose five representative people to express the ideas of their time and place, and then assessed both change and continuity of culture over time. This ambitious project was breathtaking in its scope, and its insights weighed against a hope for a religious future. Colour me impressed!



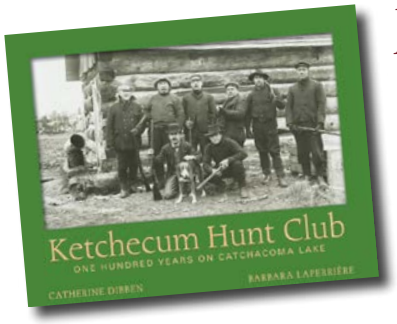
His five key figures are Chief George Paudash, John Gilmour, Richard Birdsall Rogers, Robertson Davies and Sylvia Sutherland. Each is placed in the context of five long periods of history. The choices work well as each is representative of their respective period, and each is remarkable personally. Their insights are entries into the spirituality of the culture of their period. Boersma's hope is that people will be inspired to take action in their communities.

The sweeping history of the growth of Peterborough drives the narrative, which is enriched by detours to place local events and writings in a wider context. His writing style is vigorous and the historical summary is quite refreshing. Between his biographical profiles, he summarizes the trends of the periods and quite bravely comments on possible solutions or questions that deserve consideration. The book is a useful commentary on local city and county history. He is optimistic that even in the face of changes in local culture, the resolve to tackle issues remains.

It is one of the best books on Peterborough and the county, and deserves to be in the hands of thoughtful leaders.

The book is available at the Trent Valley Archives and other places for $35.

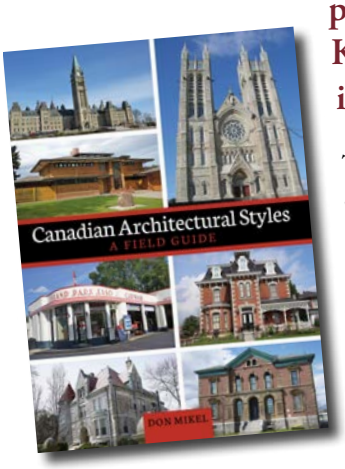
Catherine Dibben and Barbara LaPerriere, *The Ketchecum Hunt Club: One Hundred Years on Catchecoma Lake,* Peterborough, 2025, Pp vii, 200.



This is the attractive story of a Peterborough-based hunting club that spent its first 100 years on Catchecoma Lake and is still active now at Jack Lake, close to Apsley. The well-designed book explores the history of the hunting club, which was formed in 1901 when it built a clubhouse. Hunting parties were a feature of autumn in Peterborough since the 1860s. The authors explore issues related to hunting, regulations, local businesses, gender and the community as a whole. There are interesting profiles on hunters, their connections to businesses and their professions. There are also some photographs of the camp over the years. The authors have researched newspapers and archival sources, but much of the story comes from interviews with well-informed hunters. The book has been anticipated for several years, but the final product justified the wait.

Available at the Trent Valley Archives and elsewhere for $30.

Don Mikel, *Canadian Architectural Styles: A Field Guide,* Toronto, James Lorimer, 2025, printed and bound in Korea, Pp 304, about 1,000 illustrations.



This is a field guide to architectural styles across Canada from the earliest days to 2000. The book comments on individual buildings, either distinctive or representative of trending styles, and draws attention to how to identify architectural characteristics. There are examples drawn from Peterborough, sometimes with surprising observations. While Peterborough has been developing an admirable catalogue of distinctive buildings, it would be timely to produce a comparable book using Peterborough examples for the various styles. As admirable as the book is, it does not include works by our architects such as Blackwell, Belcher, Craig, Thom and Zeidler. The format and design would be great models for such a local book.

Available on Amazon, $39.95

Recent Events AT THE TRENT VALLEY ARCHIVES

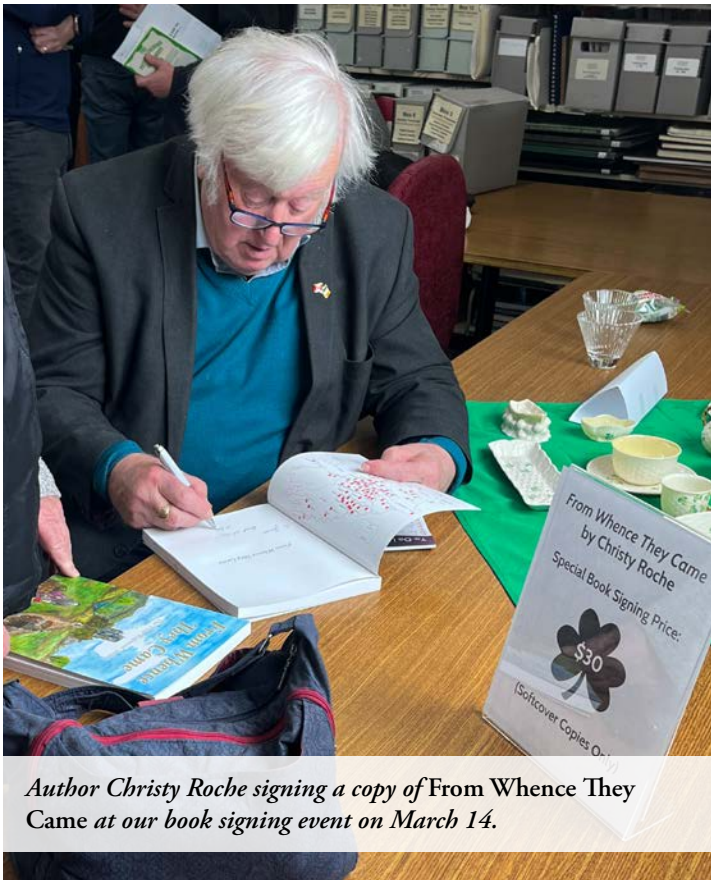
BY MADISON MORE

We are always pleased to support projects related to local historical topics at the Trent Valley Archives. This is reflected in our two most recent events, which illustrate the wide range of ways in which stories about our community can be told.

BOOK SIGNING WITH CHRISTY ROCHE

On the afternoon of Saturday, March 14, we hosted a book signing event with Irish historical geographer and author Christy Roche. Christy travelled from Ireland to the Peterborough area to serve as the Grand Marshall of the 26th Annual Peterborough St. Patrick's Day Parade, and to support other Irish Heritage Week events in the community. At our event, he chatted with visitors and signed copies of his latest book *From Whence They Came: The Peter Robinson Settlers* (which is reviewed by Elwood Jones in this issue). The book was published in 2025 to coincide with the Bicentennial of the Peter Robinson Irish Emigration in 1825. The event was a huge success and we sold out of copies of the book! The TVA is arranging for more copies to be shipped over from Ireland this year.

In addition to participating in the parade and our book signing event, Christy Roche also gave a presentation on Monday, March 16, at the Knights of Columbus Hall entitled "The Rich Heritage of the Blackwater Valley". The presentation covered the over 5,000-year history of the geographical region in Ireland he calls home. The presentation was recorded in full and is available to watch on the Nine Ships 1825 YouTube Channel. Many community members and organizations were pleased to host him throughout the week he was here, and the connections made between our two communities were further strengthened by his visit.



Author Christy Roche signing a copy of From Whence They Came *at our book signing event on March 14.*



One of Gilbert Painter's paintings, the "Lady in Red," featured in the Peterborough Theatre Guild production of Gibson and Sons. *Image Credit: Peterborough Theatre Guild.*

PAINTER'S PORTRAITS FILM PREMIERE

In 2025, we were approached by local filmmaker Nick van der Graaf, who wanted to produce a short documentary film about our Gilbert Painter fonds. The fonds contains dozens of portraits of members of the Peterborough community painted by Painter in the 1970s, and have captivated all who have seen them. Painter, who worked as an engineer at Canadian General Electric in Peterborough, devoted his retirement to honing his artistic abilities and has left a lasting legacy with this body of work. The portraits now hang on the walls inside the Trent Valley Archives, and one, fondly referred to as the "Lady in Red," was recently featured in the Peterborough Theatre Guild production of *Gibson and Sons*.

We enthusiastically supported this project and it has resulted in the creation of the 15-minute short film *Painter's Portraits.* The film features insightful interviews with Painter's son Robert, Trent Valley Archives Archivist Elwood Jones and artist Alex Bierk, and an excellent soundtrack composed by musician Allan Kirby. It offers a rare look into one of our more unique archival fonds and positions Painter's body of work within the context of the community that shaped it. To celebrate the completion of the film we hosted a premiere at Bagnani Hall at Traill College (Trent University) on the afternoon of Saturday, March 28. We hope that the film will also screen at film festivals and other venues in the region, where both Gilbert Painter and the work we do at the Trent Valley Archives will receive recognition.



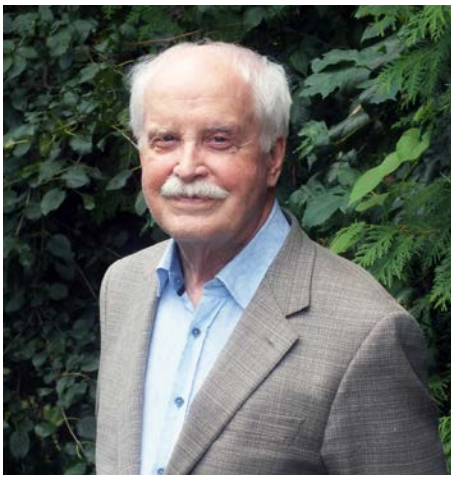
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BY ELWOOD JONES

Roana Wickenden

Roana Wickenden (1921-2018) lived at 114 Maria Street at Mark Street in a brick bungalow across from the Mark Street wharf. The property was triangular because of the CPR crossing, and there are photos at the Trent Valley Archives that show a spectacular garden. Other highlights include Roana's Home Economics notebook, 1937, and a history of St. Luke's church 1902, that belonged to her grandmother, Mrs. J. R. Scott. A three-generation family portrait shows the Scott and Wickenden families. A photo album shows the building of the Lift Lock, c. 1900, as well as cyanotypes of Little Lake, the floating bridge, and family homes in Port Hope and Ashburnham. There is also a print of the "Bessie Butler" at the Lift Lock. Other photos include family members, the house at 114 Maria, and the Ashburnham School.

[Cyanotype photography is a historical photographic printing method that uses iron salts and ultraviolet light to create images in deep Prussian blue. It is a non-silver process that begins when a surface is coated with ferric ammonium citrate and potassium ferricyanide.]



Masquerade at Gore's Landing, 1933. Image Credit: Trent Valley Archives F1295, Fred Payton Fonds.

Eric M. Grier

Eric M. Grier, the father of Kathy Hooke, local historian of Stoney Lake, was working for Canadian General Electric in Toronto in 1919-1920, where he worked in the automotive accessories department. The outgoing correspondence contains letters commenting on the availability of automotive parts. CGE still maintains automotive supplies, but it was a surprise to see these 70 letters.

Etude Magazine

The Etude was an American print magazine dedicated to music, founded by Theodore Presser (1848–1925) at Lynchburg, Virginia, and first published in October 1883. Presser, who also founded the Music Teachers National Association, moved his publishing headquarters to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1884, and his Theodore Presser Company continued the magazine until 1957.

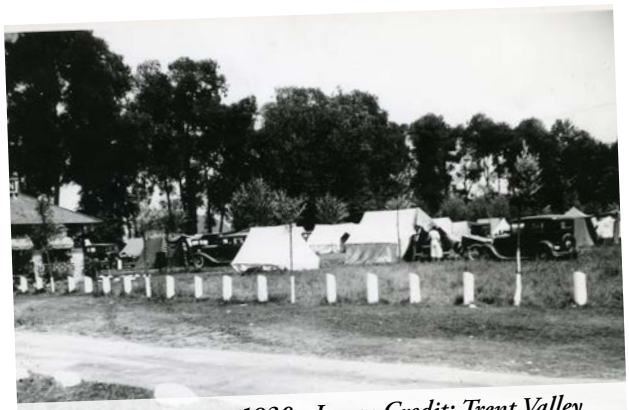
Aimed at all musicians from the novice to the professional, *The Etude* printed articles about both basic and more-involved musical subjects, as well as write-in advice columns, and sheet music (instrumental and vocal) for all performer ability levels — totalling over 10,000 works.

Helen Tretbar edited the magazine in the late 1880s. James Francis Cooke was editor-in-chief from 1909 to 1949. The sometimes conservative outlook and contents of the magazine may have contributed to a decline in circulation in the 1930s and 1940s, but in many respects it moved with the times, supporting the phonograph, radio, and eventually television; by the late 1930s it had fully embraced jazz. Guy McCoy succeeded Cooke as editor-in-chief after over two decades as an assistant, and the magazine's musical content became more closely in-step with the contemporary world.

Our fonds contains six issues, three from the 1920s, and three from the 1940s. It is a surprising magazine that appeals to teachers, students, professional musicians, songwriters and music lovers, nearly always in the same issue. The general interest magazines are a great addition to the musical archives at Trent Valley Archives.

Fred Payton and Rice Lake

This photo collection contains 46 prints related to the Rice Lake area in the 1930s. There are photos related to Anglican churches in Gore's Landing, Harwood, Perrytown, Bewdley and Bowmanville. There are photos of a Bewdley Regatta, c. 1935. Clergy include the Rev. T. F. Summerhayes, W. F. Payton, and Archbishop Derwyn T. Owen. Individuals noted are Mrs. Perrin; Spencer Wilson



Bewdley Regatta c. 1930s. Image Credit: Trent Valley Archives F1295, Fred Payton Fonds

and daughters Mary and Bernice; Suzanne and Lorraine Wilson; Barbara, David and Gordon Wilson; Charles; Edward Gibson; and the funeral of Mrs. J. B. Drope.

One difficulty the TVA faced when cataloguing the collection was how to define the provenance of this collection. The fundamental rule is "return to sender" which, in this case, would be Payton in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. The collection came via Gail Corbett, Lakefield. Rev. Lloyd Delaney was an active Gore's Landing historian, and we pondered if he might have taken such photos. The Wilson and Payton connections deserve more exploration.

Still, this is a useful collection of photos from the 1930s showing people in different celebrations.



Eileen Maloney (nee Hickey) with students at the Brickley School, October 10, 1946. Image Credit: Trent Valley Archives F1286, Eileen Maloney Fonds.

Brickley School 1946

Eileen Maloney (née Hickey) treasured a photo, dated October 1946, taken while she was a teacher at the Brickley school about ten miles south of Hastings, Ontario. The teacher is in the midst of the 13 pupils who appear to range in age from six to eighteen. The photo is enchanting for its rural setting, but the sense is that the pupils are anticipating something important. There were eight girls and five boys in this school that autumn. Thanks to Janice Maloney for sharing the photo.



Don Willcock (Left) with Dennis Carter-Edwards portraying Peterborough strongman Daniel MacDonald at our Little Lake Cemetery Pageant in 2017.

DON WILLCOCK JOINS THE TRENT VALLEY ARCHIVES AS AN ARCHIVAL ASSISTANT

BY ELWOOD JONES

Don Willcock, a native of Harwood, attended the former Cobourg District Collegiate Institute East and came to Peterborough in 1979 to study history at Trent University. After spending some years in the food services industry, he enrolled in Sir Sanford Fleming College's Museum Management and Curatorship Program. He was an intern at CFB Borden Military Museum, where he whetted his long passion for military history. Since 1997, he has held positions at the Peterborough Museum and Archives.

He has been affiliated with Trent Valley Archives since the early 1990s as an incredible volunteer and board member. He was a key volunteer in the Land Records project, scanning photos in collections. He has written often for the *Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley* and is a long-time member of the Publications Committee. More recently, he has been identified with developing and leading ghost tours, cemetery tours and walking tours. He has also portrayed characters in our Little Lake Cemetery Pageants, including strong man Daniel Macdonald, Charles Rubidge and Wilson S. Conger.

Don is well known in the local historical community for his vast knowledge of local and military history and architecture, is a key volunteer at Hutchison House food events, and is the current president of the Peterborough Historical Society.

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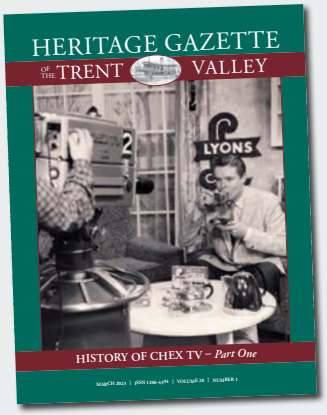
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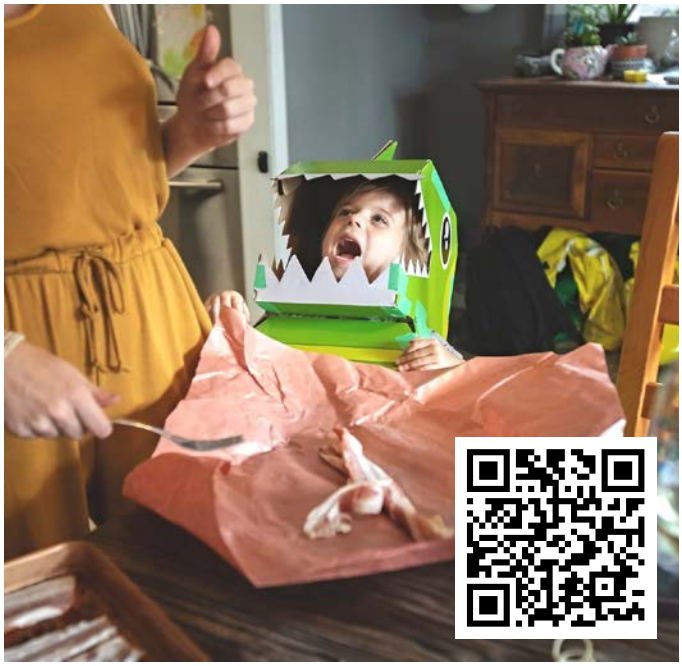
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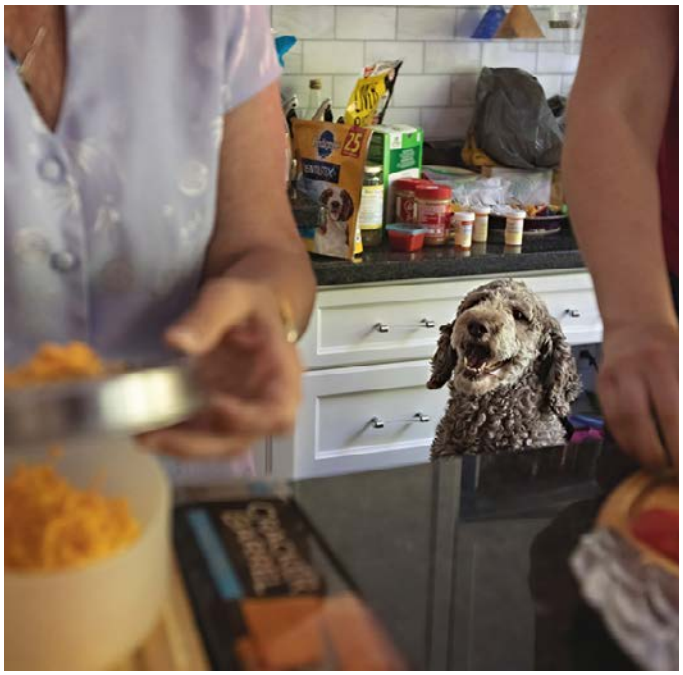




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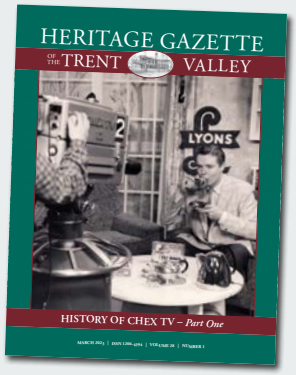
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