

# The Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley

## Volume 11, number 3, November 2006

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Cover photo: RoseMere Manor, September 2006 by Elwood Jones

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## President's Report

The International Plowing Match has come and gone. After over a year of preparation, this impressive event was over very quickly, but, by most accounts, very successful, with some 80,000 people attending. The TVA had an exhibit in the County of Peterborough tent. It consisted of a timeline illustrating 200 years of local, national and international history, as well as a display of the Historical Atlas of Peterborough County, and TVA publications, notably the special issue of the Gazette and Diane Robnik's new book on the Mills of Peterborough. The exhibit was staffed by Diane and several volunteers every day, all of whom deserve hearty thanks. Many people from near and far came by and as usual they often provided interesting tidbits of local or family history. The invitation of the County for TVA to participate in this event, and its support of the Gazette are gratefully acknowledged.

There was no shortage of historical exhibits at the Plowing Match. Most of the local township historical societies had exhibits. There were wonderful collections of historical artefacts ranging from working steam engines to restored tractors, even a display of old oil cans and coat hooks! Some photos of the Plowing Match and a variety of printed materials from the Match have been added to our archival collections.

Concurrent with the Plowing Match was a reunion of the White family of Northumberland County. It was timed to coincide with the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of the first White in the area just south of Rice Lake. The organizer, Jackie Crerar, kindly invited members of TVA to join the reunion boat cruise on Rice Lake, the lunch at the historic Victoria Inn at Gore's Landing, and a car tour of places associated with the White family. These included an interesting cemetery, a century farm and the sites of several saw mills. It was exciting for some participants to see for the first time the graves of some of their ancestors. White's Island, that was viewed from near Roseneath, was named after this family. People came from across the country to attend the reunion, many meeting for the first time and enquiring about who they were related to. This was another example of family history tourism. At the recent press conference for the release of the

Peterborough and the Kawarthas tourism strategy I was pleased to hear explicit recognition of this type of tourism.

In September, I led our last tour for 2006 of Little Lake Cemetery, as TVAs contribution to Arts Week in Peterborough. We are now considering the publication of an illustrated booklet on the cemetery. Around Halloween we are offering more of our ever-popular Ghost Tours, and near Christmas we hope to present some version of the Winter Stories event we held last year.

While at a recent antiquarian book fair in Toronto I picked up a Wanamaker's Diary for 1915. This was published by the Wanamaker department store chain and most of the text and advertising, though interesting, related to Philadelphia. However, I was excited to discover that the actual daily diary had been filled in every day during 1915, with comments on the weather, farming, travel and family life. Furthermore, the person responsible, Mrs. Fred Bell, was from Moscow in eastern Ontario. On showing it to a friend at Trent University, she told me that not only did she know of the Bell family, but that she had found an entry that mentioned her own grandfather! A copy of the diary is being kept at the Trent Valley Archives, but enquiries will be made to see if any descendent of the family would like to have the original diary. Such are the fortuitous rewards of pursuing historical interests!

*John Marsh*

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## A History of RoseMere Manor

**F. H. Kim Krenz**  
*RoseMere Manor, Lakefield*

I became a resident of RoseMere Manor in April, 2005, three months after the death of Kate, my wife of sixty-four years. I had been a resident for just a week when I caught Marilyn McCarthy, the co-owner with her husband Richard, in the kitchen of the Manor preparing the evening meal for the residents, and said to her, "Marilyn, I wonder if you and Richard ever stop to think what a wonderful thing you are doing in providing a home for all these people." I was filled with gratitude myself for the shelter the Manor was providing for me. Before Marilyn could answer, a visiting nurse, who was filling out forms at the kitchen table, looked up and said "I agree."

I had put our house in Lakefield up for sale in February, and looked around for some place to stay. Kate and I had never had children, and though she had presented me with a wonderful extended family, I felt that I should look after myself. Kate and I had, in past years, many times passed the Manor, without taking notice of it, on our way to buy corn from the Edwards' farm on the Old Young's Point Road, just north of the Village of Lakefield. For years, however, that road had held an inexplicable attraction for me. I was always pleased to be traveling on it. Now it was the road to my home.

Set in twenty-five acres of rolling farm land, the Manor stands among trees far back from the road at the end of a straight driveway lined on both sides with elms and maples. Mowed lawns fall away on either side of the building, which presents the viewer on the road with an elegant façade in Victorian brick, inviting closer inspection. It was not surprising that I turned first of all to RoseMere for accommodation.

I was in luck. There was a vacant suite on the second floor of the building in the southwest corner, with large windows looking out over open fields to a distant row of trees on the south, and looking to the west to a picturesque red barn. The suite was large and airy, with ten-foot ceilings. My decision was almost immediate. I paid a deposit to hold the suite, and proceeded at once with plans for the move to RoseMere.

The rest, as they say, is history. I closed the sale of the house on the thirty-first of March, and moved into RoseMere on the first of April. I soon fell in love with my accommodation and with my surroundings. I found I was quite happy to sit in my living room, enjoying my favourite paintings around the walls, or enjoying the view from the three large windows. I soon discovered that the other ten residents, varying in age from 71 to 98, were equally happy to be here. I began to learn their stories, and discovered that, though we were a collection of rather ancient retirees, we had as a group made significant contributions in our lifetimes. That knowledge lent a certain dignity to our gatherings.

I began to wonder, too, about the building itself. It dated from 1907, and was soon to be a hundred years old. It had been extremely well-built. The stairs, after nearly a hundred years of usage, were still solid and did not creak. The windows

were still perfectly true and square. A new one, installed in my living room at my request, fitted, to the surprised delight of the installers, perfectly into the rough opening left by the removal of the old window.

I began to wonder about the history of the building. Why was it built? Who built it? Why was it situated where it was? What was the history of its use? As I began to seek the answers to these questions, I became more and more interested in the story of RoseMere, and resolved to record it as much for my own satisfaction as for posterity.

### Early Beginnings



*Wellington County House of Refuge set the standard for Ontario's other houses of refuge. Credit: Wellington County Museum*

The early years of the nineteenth century saw a wave of emigration from England, Scotland, and Ireland to the Canadian colonies. Although in a few cases emigrants came from well-to-do backgrounds, the majority came from a life of hardship in the Old Country, and some emigrants were in a desperate state. A poor harvest had sometimes brought financial ruin. There is the story of the farmer whose crop was so poor that he had no feed for his cattle. His neighbor, in an act of compassion, gave him some hay. For this kindness the neighbor had to flee the country, for the terms of his lease from his landlord did not extend to gifts of fodder. It was an unforgiving era.

Many of the immigrant farm workers came to Canada with nothing more than the clothes upon their backs. Many of these had little more than they came with, in the way of worldly goods, after a lifetime of farm work in the new country. A growing population of indigent people, too old to work, began to pose a problem for the fledgling governments of Upper Canada. Churches and other benevolent organizations provided some help, but were unequal to the task of meeting the needs of an increasing number of indigent people. Government action was required. Poor Houses were established on the pattern of what was being done in the Old Country. These were also called Houses of Refuge. The first of these, built in the 1830s, were in Toronto and Hamilton.

After Confederation, the problem was tackled anew. Houses of Refuge were built in counties around the Province of Ontario. There were nine County Houses of Industry and Refuge built before 1890. Of these nine, there is only one

building remaining, situated in Wellington County between the villages of Fergus and Elora. Built in 1877, it was known to the community as "the County Poor House," a name that was inscribed over the original entrance. It was established in fifty acres and run as an Industrial Farm, with livestock and thirty acres under cultivation. The official name, "House of Industry and Refuge," a name chosen to assure the public that the poor it housed were the "deserving poor," who were expected to work as much as possible to maintain themselves. A government inspector was appointed to inspect each house at regular intervals to insure that "loafers" and the "chronically lazy" were given short shrift and tossed out. The House of Refuge Act of 1890 was enacted to insure that more of these Houses of Refuge would be built in counties that, up until then, did not have them, and a government grant of \$4000 was given to new building (as well as to existing buildings that met provincial standards). The Incorporated County of Peterborough, was among those without a House of Refuge, but it was not until after the turn of the century that action was taken.

The County records of December 1905 show, in the Warden's address of that date, that he had been asked by the authorities of the Protestant Home to consider the question of a House of Refuge for the County, and to appoint a deputation from the County Council to act in conjunction with a similar deputation from the City Council, and with officers of the Protestant Home, to consider the whole matter of a local house of refuge. Clearly, the burden upon the Protestant Home was becoming more than it could handle.

The Warden went on to say that a deputation from the Protestant home would be "waiting on Council" to put the whole matter before them at the coming session. Proposals

had been made to erect a House of Refuge either at Lakefield, Norwood or Peterborough, but since the Act did not call for an institution to be in place until January 1908, there would be ample time to consider fully the location of the House.

Within a month from the date of the Warden's address, a deputation to the County, including many prominent Lakefield names, supported by thirty ratepayers of the Village of Lakefield, asked the County for the House of Refuge to be built in Lakefield.

County Council, 24 February 1906, discussed the different sites that had been proposed for the House of Refuge. It was the general opinion of Council that a site of at least one hundred acres be purchased if possible. No reason was given for so large a property, but it was clear from existing Houses of Refuge that the institution would need to be supported by a farm supplying many of the necessities of the inmates, as well as producing produce that could be sold. The Grover farm, near Norwood, was advocated by Mssrs. Buck and Andrews of Council. Mr. Moloney favoured the Strickland site near Lakefield, and Mssrs. Shaw, Stinson, Webster and Garbutt supported the Preston farm just outside of Lakefield. Buck moved, seconded by Andrews, that the House of Refuge be built on the Grover property near Norwood, and that the purchase of the property be made by this Council. Stinson moved an amendment, seconded by Moloney, that the House of Refuge be built in the vicinity of Lakefield on the Preston property; and that purchase of the same be made by this Council. The amendment, having six votes, was declared carried.

This bare statement of what happened in County Council gives little indication of the proposals, presentations and counter presentations that were made supporting the competing locations. However we have appended some of the newspaper response which does show that the infighting had been intense by the time the matter was brought up in Council. Council went on to appoint a Building Committee for the House of Refuge, including Mssrs. Webster, Garbutt, Shaw, Menogue, and Andrew, with Garbutt as chairman. This was H. C. Garbutt of Lakefield. Shaw was Robert Shaw, a representative of Harvey Township on Council, who was to play a major part in the decisions affecting the Lakefield House of Refuge. Both Garbutt and Shaw became later wardens of the County.

The property in question was in the Township of Smith, including parts of Lots 25 and 26, Concession 8. It is shown in the sketch map of Fig. 1. The land had been granted by the Crown in 1823 to the brothers Joseph and William Clark, after a survey made in 1818. In the intervening years it had passed through several hands, being at one time in the possession of Thomas

Steele, gentleman farmer, whose handsome pink granite monument is to be seen in the little Christ Church cemetery in Lakefield. It came into the Preston family when George bought



First Board of Management, l to r, R. S. Scott, P. McNulty and Robert Shaw. Original hangs on wall at Rosemere Manor.

the property in 1870.

The Prestons, Alex and George, had come from Scotland to Lakefield in 1832, when Alex came to be manager of Harriot's mill in Lakefield. Alex later bought two hundred acres in the northern part of Lot 26, where he built a fine, stone house in the Scottish tradition, still to be seen on Old Young's Point Road at No.1446. The George Preston property was willed, upon the death of George, to his children, William, John, Mary and Sarah. John died and left his share to William, so that when the County sought to negotiate for the property, it belonged to William and his two sisters. To simplify matters, Mary and Sarah made over their shares to William. The sale was concluded on 23 April 1906 for a consideration of \$6250.

William and his sisters moved into a house at No.16 Nelson Street in Lakefield, where they lived for the rest of their lives. The last died in 1920. There is no No.16 on Nelson Street today, but Nos. 14 and 18 have a rather large space between them.

**Construction begins**

On 14 April 1906, H. C. Garbutt's Committee for the House of Refuge met to discuss and resolve a number of issues. They inspected the plans proposed by John E. Belcher, the County engineer/architect. Belcher was one of Peterborough's most prolific architects. He designed the Market Hall, Peterborough Collegiate Institute, as well as many of the downtown buildings. He was accredited by the Ministry of Education to design and build schools. There were, of course, precedents to the Lakefield House of Refuge. The Elora House of Refuge in Wellington County had been built in the 1870s, and, aside from details, bore a close resemblance to what was to be built at Lakefield. The plans submitted were similar to those of a school. There were many advantages to this. The cost was minimal, as the plans were already in existence. The plans had already been used for schools (Queen Alexandria in Peterborough, Lindsay Central

Senior appear likely candidates) and the pricing of labour and materials had been done. The Committee approved the plans with minor changes, and moved that they be forwarded to the provincial Inspector of Prisons for his approval. This somewhat ominous proposal apparently elicited no comment from members. It was in keeping with the tenor of the times. The principle of "control" underlay the design of prisons, schools and houses of refuge. The design enabled the warden, principal, or superintendent to "control" the flow of individuals in and out of the building by placing him or her in a commanding position.

It was decided that the foundation be built of cement to the ground level, and that the balance of the foundation was to be of a material suitable to the Committee (it is actually limestone). All walls were to be brick. (In fact, the ground story is three bricks thick, the second story, two bricks, and the top story, one brick.) Red brick was to be used on the outside of the building.

News of the plans was published in the *Peterborough Examiner* of 16 April 1906 under the headline "The House of Refuge...Will Be A Fine Building." The structure was to be 78 feet by 40 feet and three stories high, and would accommodate 75 inmates (a term in keeping with the then current concepts of the residents). The building was to have "a very handsome entrance." (In fact, for most of the life of the building the entrance had the appearance of a gaping maw into which one entered, never to be seen again!) The Matron's room was on the first floor to the left of the entrance, as were also the men's ward and laundry. The other side of the first floor contained a large reception room, a day room, the women's ward, laundry, and a well-equipped pharmacy.

The second floor was to be reserved for bed rooms, the men's on one side and the women on the other. (In practice, there were locked doors separating the men from the women.)

The rooms were of a "comfortable" size, and "plenty of conveniences" were to be provided for the inmates.

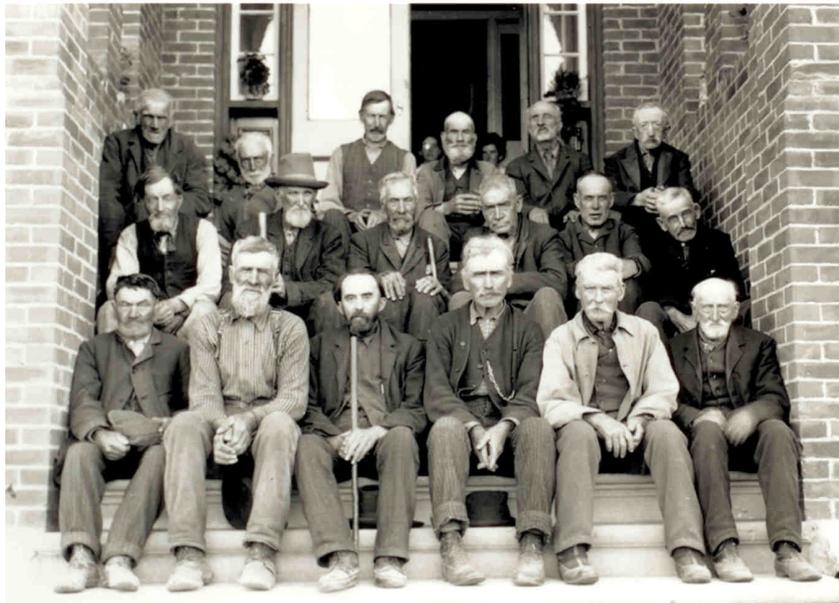
In the basement were situated the kitchens and dining rooms, as well as large wards for men and women. The building would be "on most modern lines possible."

Advertisements calling for tenders for the House of Refuge were put in the *Examiner* and the *Review and Times*, six times in each daily. Advertisements were also placed in the weekly *Lakefield News*, *Norwood Register*, and *Havelock Standard*. The deadline for tenders was to be Thursday, 17 May 1906.

Only two tenders were received on the appointed day, one from James J. McPherson, of Peterborough, for \$ 18134.00, and one from W.J. and G.A. Baptie for \$ 18093.00. The Baptie Brothers' tender was accepted by the Committee. There appeared to be no comment on the closeness of these bids, a difference of only \$ 41.00, or about 0.2%. As noted above, the pricing for the construction from these plans was well known. There may also have been some little collusion between the tendering parties, for the contract was later shared

between the Baptie Brothers and MacPherson.

William J. and George A. Baptie were the sons of Peter Baptie, carpenter and builder, who came to Lakefield in the



The male inmates, possibly on the occasion of a board visit. Credit: Richard McCarthy.

mid-eighties and built many of the homes on Regent Street, including the large gray brick home on the corner of Regent street and Baptie Lane. Peter Baptie had a planing mill that, in the hands of his sons, was extended to become a sash and door factory. The father was ahead of his time in producing prefabricated homes that could be used in remote regions.

On 17 May 1906, the County of Peterborough also passed By-Law 886 to provide for the issue of debentures in the amount of \$30,000 for the purpose of building and equipping the House of Refuge on the Preston property. In the preamble to the By-Law, one finds the statement

...pursuant to the provision of 3, Edward Seventh (Ontario) Chapter Thirty-Eight, it is necessary for the County of Peterborough to erect and establish for the said County a House of Refuge for the reception of persons of the classes in Section 526 of the Municipal Act and amendments thereto." What is being referred to here is Chapter 38 of the statutes of the Province of Ontario "An Act respecting Municipal Houses of Refuge", assented to on 12 June 1903. The Act begins "His Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, enacts as follows..

The statute goes on to list, in a series of six clauses, the requirements to be met in erecting a House of Refuge. A copy of this statute was found by Gary Booth in the Law Library in Peterborough, possibly the original copy used by the County.

It thus appears that the accession of Edward to the throne in 1901 was followed by still further exhortations to provide Houses of Refuge. A possible provincial grant of \$4000 was offered as additional enticement. The debenture was to be paid off in twenty equal, annual payments, calculated at 4% interest. The By-Law was to come into force on 30 June 1906.

Further meetings of the Committee were held during the summer of 1906 to decide such matters as the heating and wiring of the building. The contracts for these installations were given to F. J. R. McPherson, of Peterborough. Also Henry Beavis was to be employed to oversee the work of grading and to make himself generally useful. Henry Beavis had been appointed under By-Law 899 (22 September 1906) to be the first Keeper of the House of Refuge when it opened. His wife, Jane, was to be the Matron. He was to be paid \$300 per annum, while she was to be paid \$250.

The *Examiner*, 30 July 1906, reported John Belcher as saying that the building would be up to the first floor within that week. He was apparently very pleased with progress and with the quality of the work being done by the contractor. Mr. McPherson, who had the contract for the masonry, was also making satisfactory progress, and was doing "good work."

A summary of the work of the Special Committee up to 30 November 1906 was given to County Council by the chairman, H. C. Garbutt, on that date. He reported that the farm had been duly purchased from William Preston and that arrangements had been made through the County solicitor to rent the farm for the current year. The work allotted to minor committees had gone well, and the completion of the building was anticipated before the end of the year. Building material had been hard to get and skilled labour had been scarce. Owing to these factors, and due to some unforeseen difficulties, an extension of time was allowed the contractors. In general, the project was in satisfactory condition to be handed over to the new Council next year.

It may be remarked that the completion of a building the size of the House of Refuge in the period from mid-May to the end of December, using the equipment of the day, was no

mean feat, even by modern standards. We have already remarked, in an earlier section, that the construction was extremely well done. Good materials were used and there had been no cutting of corners. The unforeseen difficulties may have included the legal action brought against the County by Curtis Brothers of Peterborough, who supplied the bricks from their works on the Otonabee in Peterborough. There seemed to be some concern over late payment for the bricks supplied to the Baptie Brothers. Charles Curtis eventually proceeded against the County for the sum of \$790.76 for the 247,650 bricks used for the House of Refuge. The matter was settled with a payment made by the County a few days after Christmas. Normally, payment should have been made by the Bapties, the chief contractor on the job. It may have been that the money came out of funds owed the Bapties by the County.

On 1 December 1906, By-Law 904 was passed by the County, "to establish and provide Rules and Regulations for the Government of the House of Refuge for the County of Peterborough." The severity of these rules and regulations has been a matter for comment by most writers on the subject of Houses of Refuge, though the rules may merely have mirrored the expectations of the times. They may have been patterned on the regulations of existing Houses of Refuge in the province, built in an even more Spartan era, or they may have been drawn up on the basis of comments from the Inspector of Prisons. There is no record of their having been proposed by the Special Committee, though, for reasons unknown, I have an instinctive feeling that Robert Shaw had a hand in them. The By-Law is signed by the Warden, T. J. Johnston. We will visit the principal rules and regulations below, and, from time to time, comment on them parenthetically.

The buildings and the Preston property on which they stand were to be called the House of Refuge and House of Industry for the County of Peterborough. (We have noted that, in the case of Elora, the original "Poor House" was renamed the House of Refuge and Industry to reassure the public that it was not housing laggards). This is, however, the first mention of Industry in the Lakefield project.

All poor and indigent persons incapable of supporting themselves, and without the means of maintaining themselves, could be committed to the House of Refuge, provided such person had been a resident of the County for at least two years. (It may be noted that, in the first years of operation, the log-book maintained a record of the number of years each inmate had lived in the County. As time went on, the entries became more perfunctory, and "2 years" was recorded after every name.)

No person was to be admitted who failed to pass the test of sanity, or who might bring infectious diseases into the House of Refuge. A medical examination by the Medical Officer of the House had to be passed. (It is a matter of record that a series of physicians over the years generally reported that things were in good order.)

No child between the ages of two and sixteen years was to be received as an inmate, or being less than two years of age received as an inmate. Any child in the House, upon reaching the age of two was to be transferred to the Childrens' Aid Society. (There appear to have been exceptions. Jim Moore, for instance, spent his entire life in the Lakefield House of Refuge.)

The expense of sending someone to the House of Refuge was to be borne by the municipality from which he or she came, as was also the expense of returning the person to the municipality. Each municipality was to pay fifty cents a week to the House for each inmate from that municipality, the payment to be made on or before 30 December in each year

of occupancy. (We will review some of the payments later in this article.)

There were to be appointed each year, at the first session of County Council, two persons (who might be members of Council) to act together with the Warden, as a Board of Management (chairman to be named by Council) to manage the maintenance and running of the House of Refuge. (The first Board comprised Peter McNulty of Norwood, the Warden, Robert Shaw of Harvey and R. L. Scott of Smith, members. A flattering photograph of these three hangs in the third floor of RoseMere Manor.)

A Superintendent was to be appointed by Council to oversee and manage the running of the House and the companion farm. (He was instructed to till fields as well as manage people, keep records, make reports, etc. The regulations gave him enormous powers over the lives of inmates. We have seen above that Henry Beavis was the first Superintendent appointed. His wife, Jane, was to be the Matron, whose duties were also spelled out in considerable detail.)

A Physician was to be appointed by Council to superintend and direct the sanitary arrangements of the House of Refuge. He was to visit the House at least once a fortnight, or upon request from the Superintendent. (These visits are also recorded in the log-book of the House, and become more and more routine and cursory as time passes.)

Some Rules for the Inmates are of particular interest:

46. At the ringing of the morning bell, every inmate (the sick and those confined excepted) must rise, dress, wash and be in readiness to proceed to work

47. The bell will ring ten minutes before each meal, when all will leave their work and be in readiness, with clean hands and faces, for the ringing of the second bell, when they will repair to the dining rooms and take such seats at the table as are assigned to them by those in charge, where they must observe silence, decency and good order.

48. At the ringing of the bell after meals, every inmate shall immediately repair to work.

49. No inmates shall be allowed to loiter about the kitchen nor shall any provisions or food (except at regular meals) be carried to any part of the House without the consent of the Superintendent or Matron, nor shall any cooking be done except in the kitchen.

50. At nine o'clock in the evening, at the ringing of the retiring bell, the inmates must secure the fires, put out the lights, and retire to bed in their respective apartments.

51. No inmate shall be allowed to exchange clothing or any other article ...

52. All inmates shall diligently and faithfully perform the duty or the task allotted them by the Superintendent.

53. Any inmate guilty of drunkenness, disobedience, immorality... shall be punished as the case may deem to demand.

54. In all cases of solitary confinement...the food of such prisoners shall consist solely of bread and water, unless otherwise ordered by the Board or Physician.

55. Any person who shall have communication either directly or indirectly with any one thus confined, without permission, shall be subject to punishment by a like confinement.

56. No inmate shall go beyond the limits of the farm, unless by permission of the Superintendent...

57. The Sabbath day shall be strictly observed...

58. All persons willfully absenting themselves from the place of meeting, or violating the Sabbath day, shall be subject to prompt and severe punishment.

59. In the case of an aged husband and wife who are admitted to the House, the Superintendent, with the consent of the Physician, may allot them the same sleeping accommodation.

NOTE: This was a departure from earlier, less sympathetic practice. There is a heartbreaking, nineteenth century English print of an old couple, walking hand in hand to the poor house where they must part to enter separate doors.

Article 68 is a lengthy description of the penalties to be applied for serious offenses. A fine of not less than fifty cents or more than twenty dollars was to be charged to these penniless inmates for such offenses, which, if not paid, resulted in their being sent to the common jail in Peterborough, with or without hard labour, for a period not exceeding twenty days. A serious offense consisted of any infringement of the By-Law or any other matter judged offensive by the Superintendent. To accommodate those committed to solitary confinement (Rule 54) a room in the north-west corner of the basement of the Lakefield House of Refuge was reserved as a local "jail." To emphasize its punitive character, bars were put on the windows.

While these regulations put horrific power over the lives of the inmates into the hands of the Superintendent, the Matron, and the Board of Management, it must be remembered that these were human beings, neither fiercer or more dove-like than anyone else, and that it was probable that situations were usually dealt with as humanely as possible under the circumstances. It is not easy to explain something to an older person who cannot hear properly, or to provide for someone who is incontinent. Certainly, the reputation of the House of Refuge in later years, particularly during the administration of Albert and Lila McConnell, who managed the House for twenty-five unbroken years, did not indicate hardship and mistreatment among the inmates, many of whom had relatives and friends in the adjacent Village of Lakefield.

#### **The House of Refuge Opens**

On 11 January 1907 (it is shown as 1906 in the County minutes, but this must be a typographical error) it was decided at a meeting of the Special Committee that the formal opening of the Lakefield House of Refuge would be on Monday, 21 January, at 2:00 p.m., and that it would be free to the public. The Visitors Register of the House of Refuge shows that, on this date, there was a large group of visitors to the House. Those from nearby Lakefield included R. M. Graham, J. J. Bickell, D. Darling, James Jory, H. C. Garbutt, J. W. Botterill, Walter Madill, E. Millage, W.J. Charlton, all well-known Lakefield names, with the exception of Darling, who was from Warsaw. H. C. Garbutt was, of course, the chairman of the Special Committee. One can easily imagine him, a substantial figure, pointing out to his friends the special features of the House, and speaking authoritatively on their history and merits.

The Register also shows that the first visit of the Board of Management, the Warden Peter McNulty, members Robert Shaw, and R. N. Scott, was on 21 January.

The visit is commemorated by a collage of posed photographs of each of the three, taken by the Roy Studio, mounted and framed, that hangs in the third floor corridor of RoseMere Manor. The photograph confirms that R. N. Scott was chairman of the Board of Management. More realistic

photographs of these men were taken during a second visit of the Board to the House on the third of April, when the three are seen standing on the steps of the entrance in the company of Jane Beavis and her assistants. It was probably during this visit that group photographs of the men and women inmates were taken. The excellent quality of all the photographs suggest that they, too, were made by the Roy Studio. They include photographs of two infants, who are also seen in the group photograph of the women inmates. They may be identified from the census of 1911 as Kate Pearson, the daughter of Lena Pearson (of Port Dalhousie, who is the youngest woman of the group) and Jim Moore, who was to grow up "simple," and was to spend his entire life in the House of Refuge. There appears to have been some elasticity in the Rules and Regulations, even in the early years.

It was on this visit that Ed. M. Elliot, County Clerk, was added to the Board of Management. He was to remain *ex officio* for several subsequent Boards.

W. D. Brown, M.D., of Lakefield, had been designated "surgeon," or medical officer, for the House, and had conducted the first medical examination of the inmates, as a group, the preceding February. His report "Everything in good condition." was to be repeated by himself and subsequent physicians during the early years of operation of the House of Refuge. Their visits were of two days' duration, and were to be made once a fortnight. They were to be recorded in a Register of Physicians. Part of the Register, dating from 1934, exists in the Lang Village archives. Unfortunately, the part of the register, from 1907 to 1934. is missing.

In October 1907 R. N. Scott made a special report to the County on the costs and management of the House of Refuge, noting that, as it was the first year of operation, a number of items cropped up that would not appear again. He noted that the money realized from the sale of debentures, amounting to \$ 29,214, as well as \$ 1,950 raised from a second sale, together with the provincial grant of \$ 4000 had all been paid out or earmarked. An extra \$ 500 for improvements to the water supply would have to come from "current monies."

There were now twenty inmates in the House. There had been two deaths, but he was "thankful to say that the remainder are in fairly good health and apparently happy." Arrangements had been made with the Lakefield Cemetery Company to reserve a large plot for the burial of all unclaimed bodies from the House of Refuge. The plot exists, and is currently maintained by the Lakefield Cemetery. The cost of a burial in 1907 was \$20. Burials were made in plain wooden boxes and identified with a simple stone marker at the head of each grave. David Butterworth tells of one resident, Bill Purdy, 6 ft 8 in tall, who had been a soldier with the Coldstream Guards. Purdy presented a burial problem because of his height. The problem was solved, apparently, for his grave is marked in Row 5 of the plot. The headstone indicates that he was buried in 1952.

Compared to the \$35,164 paid out or ear-marked for construction of the House of Refuge, the Special Committee's expenses totaled \$ 540.85, or about 1.6%. The Auditor's report for January 1908 listed the total assets of the House of Refuge, Farm and Equipment at \$ 31,900.00. The report showed that the County was carrying insurance on the House of Refuge and outbuildings with several companies to a total of \$21,400.

*On 21 April 1909 Robert Shaw, acting chairman of the Board of Management, signed an authorization for Henry Beavis to buy some ornamental trees for the*

*barren grounds around the House of Refuge, the amount expended not to exceed \$ 30.00. A later report of expenses showed that the trees were planted in May by one L. Short at a cost of \$10.75.*

On 14 June, the Board recommended to the County Council the provision of \$ 5,704.36 for the year 1909, being \$ 2,354.70 to meet the liquidation of debentures, and \$3, 349.66 for general maintenance and permanent improvements. The Board also agreed that, in future, funeral arrangements would be "divided equally between the old Bickell firm and the Hendren firm." The Hendren Funeral Parlour is operative to this day.

In January of 1909, R. N. Scott once more presented a report on the House of Refuge for 1908, showing a list of revenues from the farm, noting that "the harvest and stock and work of the farm was done at very little cost, so far as farm wages were concerned." Little wonder, as inmates did most of the work, old and sometimes frail as most of them were.

| PRODUCED AT THE FARM 1908       |            |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| 600 bus. of oats .....          | \$ 240 00  |
| 175 of peas .....               | 157 50     |
| 100 of barley .....             | 45 00      |
| 75 of buckwheat .....           | 45 00      |
| 20 tons of hay .....            | 240 00     |
| 2500 bus of roots .....         | 250 00     |
| 125 bags of potatoes .....      | 93.75      |
| 17 bus of beans .....           | 17 00      |
| 10 bus of onions .....          | 10 00      |
| 5 of garden carrots .....       | 1 00       |
| 800 lbs of pork .....           | 64 00      |
| 29,044 lbs of milk .....        | 275 00     |
| 15 pigs, 3 months old .....     | 45 00      |
| 32 young turkeys .....          | 30 00      |
| 73 dozen eggs .....             | 14 60      |
| 5 calves (one thor'bread) ..... | 94 00      |
| 50 chickens .....               | 1 0 00     |
|                                 | <hr/>      |
|                                 | \$ 1633.00 |

The Farm was therefore a serious operation, contributing substantially to the maintenance of the House of Refuge. The total cost of maintenance for 1908 was \$2539.41. The total of inmates and staff came to 34 for the year. The individual cost of maintaining an inmate or staff member worked out to \$1.43 / week.

The auditor's report for 1909 showed that Maud Beavis, eldest daughter of Henry and Jane Beavis, had been added to the staff, and was being paid \$15 a month.

The Board of Management made a report to the County for 1909, under the heading "Interesting Figures." Up to 31 December 1909, fifty inmates had been admitted to the House of Refuge. Of these "nine have been discharged or absconded (sic) twelve have died, and on December 31st twenty-nine remained in the house."

Also "Your Board have made the requisite number inspections provided by the rules, and the results of our observations, in the main, have been satisfactory, very little complaint having been made by the old people, and whenever made, was generally the emanation of eccentricity."

The report goes on to list a number of improvements, including an extension to the hog barn.

In the years following, the only references to the House of Refuge in the County Minutes occur in the Reports of the Board

of Management and in the Auditors' Report for each year. At some point in this period, inspections of the House began to be conducted by a "Grand Jury," whose members were officers of the townships paying rates to the House of Refuge for inmates from their townships. The rates could be substantial. For instance, in 1911, the Township of Asphodel paid \$ 634.04, while that of Otonabee paid \$ 1204.87. The total paid by all sixteen townships was \$ 5658.37. The members of the Grand Jury apparently wanted to see for themselves how well their money was being spent.

These visits of the Grand Jury are not reported in the County Minutes, but are found in the Visitors Register of the House of Refuge, though the entries become vaguer with time.

Robert Shaw, now chairman of the Board of Management, reported to the County in January, 1911, that the year 1910 had been successful. Extra expense had been incurred owing to the flattening of the feed crops by a hailstorm. Very little sickness prevailed "beyond the usual that will exist among a lot of old people." The new septic tank was a credit to the Baptie Brothers, who had built it. The produce from the farm being used for the House was being charged to the inmates, as requested by the Inspector of Prisons and Charities. Inmates were paying, in other words, for produce earned by the sweat of their brows.

On 20 June 1913, William Tucker, now chairman of the Board of Management, reported to the County on the condition of the stables that were in need of renewal. He describes a condition that would be familiar to any manager of such premises. "... the cleaning away of the cow stables revealed to us the fact that the adjacent horse stable was all but done, so we decided to have it all cleared away, and a new set of stables of a modern and substantial character built throughout..."

The cost of maintenance of inmates had now become \$2.20 per week.

In 1914, Fred. McKee had become chairman of the Board of Management, and reported to Council that there were twenty-six men and eleven women in the House of Refuge. The cost of maintenance of inmates was now \$ 2.72 per person. The room in the attic had been finished, and was now occupied by two of the old men, who were "otherwise somewhat troublesome."

The years of World War I must have seen a gradual deterioration of physical plant, and, possibly, of the care given to inmates, for the *Peterborough Examiner*, 18 June 1921, published a scathing report to County Council by the Grand Jury, stating:

We found things generally in bad shape. The walls and woodwork are badly in need of repairs... the plaster is off in several cases and three closets are out of repair. The chairs are not suitable, and ones more comfortable should be provided for old people.

We believe the arrangement of things in general could be improved. In extreme cases, patients should not be confined to the attic of the House."

We would recommend complete destruction of most, if not all, of the mattresses, and the most modern method of fumigation applied so as to make the same fit to live in.

The Grand Jury urged that the report produce action, instead of being filed away without attention. They had evidently tried earlier to get some action out of the County.

Henry Beavis and his wife, Jane, were no longer

Superintendent and Matron when this sorry state of affairs was reported. These positions were held by Fred and Mary Bullied, who had become Superintendent and Matron in 1920. The Bullieds came from the Apsley branch of the family. Their tenure at the House of Refuge gave rise to an incident that is one of the stories of the House.

Young Jim Moore, whom we left as a baby, had become a strapping eighteen year old who worked in the barn with the horses. Mary Bullied had taken a liking to the boy, and made much of him, perhaps giving him what little maternal affection he had ever received. Fred Bullied was very hard on Mary, forcing her to work on the farm as well as in the kitchen. Jim Moore happened upon an ugly scene between them in the barn, and tore into Fred Bullied, throwing him into the pig-sty and "just about killing him."

Bullied retaliated by having Jim certified and sent to 999 Queen Street in Toronto. They kept him there for a year, and having decided that there was nothing wrong with him, aside from being a little "slow," sent him back to the House of Refuge. The Bullieds had then been replaced by Mr. and Mrs. Maize. Someone had given Jim a pair of policeman's trousers with a red stripe down the side, that he wore with great pride, claiming to be a "policeman." We shall return to him later.

### Life at the House of Refuge

*The Peterborough Examiner*, 5 December 1923, published a report of a visit to the House of Refuge by a W. Duggan, who may have been a reporter, though his florid prose suggests otherwise. The headline reads "They Have Weathered The Storms of Decades and Cast Anchor at Last in a Peaceful Haven Where Best of Care Helps Closing Years."

Duggan rhapsodised:

"Twenty-seven souls there are, which have endured the stormy blasts of decades, and now linger in the sere and yellow leaf of their lives' late autumn. They linger, some with the fires of desire still touched, and some with some semblance of the courage that drove them forward. Twenty-seven ancient children playing out the last stages of the hide-and-seek game of life..."

"Eight old ladies with restless fingers that interlocked and fingers that twitched with eager gestures. One could almost hear the click of needles and see the swift, certain movements of the capable hands as they fashioned a sock or a mitten of soft, warm yarn..."

"Nineteen gentlemen, full of years, bent with the weight of years, seamed and wrinkled with years, sitting on benches and telling of years which are no more; men dwelling in the past, ever reminiscent. No need here for further mortal experience. The cycle is complete. The wheel has turned its full circumference..."

"But, withal, they are happy! Revelling in experience with men and women cast by the same throw of circumstances, they pass the weary hours readily enough. Through the blue-gray fumes of tobacco smoke the men see what might have been. They are, again, limned in reality, portraits of the past, and exchange these precious views with friends who understand the pride of achievement and the poignancy of failure..."

"Mr. Maize and his wife are the foster parents of these unfortunates, and have come to hold their work in high regard. Mrs. Maize said 'Some of them are irritable and cross at times, while others are always good humoured. We, my husband and I, cater to their wants as much as possible, and, if we humour

them, they will do anything for us. I never knew any people to be as grateful for slight kindnesses as these old people here.

"These good people are resting, awaiting, possibly with impatience, for the day of launching into dark and uncharted waters. They sit still and ponder on lost days, the sloes of sorrow dissolving in the wine of joys experienced. They know that the wings of contentment are wide and capable of supporting them in the last flight toward peace.

"And the task of caring for them, making the last days brighter than some that have gone before, is a duty devolving upon the County where they made their homes. The remembering of them at this Christmas season is the privilege of every member of Peterborough County."

Well said, Mr. Duggan! The Superintendent and the Matron were Mr. and Mrs. Maize. This is my only reference to the couple that succeeded the Bullieds.

In an earlier edition, 7 June 1913, the *Examiner* reported the flight from the Lakefield House of Refuge of a young woman. "Bertha Reid, 20 years of age, with fair hair, odd-looking, and not well dressed, has taken French leave of the House of Refuge, Lakefield, where she has been confined (my italics) and they are at a loss to locate her... She is a well-known character in this city, and if anyone sees her, they are to communicate with the police."

It appears that the House was the repository of the occasional vagrant. Life for a young woman confined with all the aged people must have been unbearable. We have no record of how this story ended.

The *Examiner*, 15 March 1930, describes a resident of the

House of Refuge, James Hendley, who, at 108 years on the above date, was the oldest man in the County. He had been a seaman, lumberman, and farmer. The photograph shows him to be an erect old man, well bearded and with a full head of white hair, holding a cane that does not seem to be needed. His birthday celebration was somewhat marred by the fact that he had been taken to St. Joseph's hospital when he refused to obey the orders of his doctor.

"But his illness is not serious, Mrs. Fry, Matron of the House of Refuge, hastened to assure *The Examiner* yesterday. She said that they would have put him to bed in his quarters at Lakefield if they could prevent him from disobeying doctor's orders and climbing out again."

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Fry had taken over from the Maizes in 1930 and were the Superintendent and Matron. Ralph Millage, of Lakefield, was a friend of the Fry boy, and remembers that Mr. Fry gave each of them a nickel for every groundhog they shot on the premises. Mr. Fry also supplied the 0.22 ammunition. According to Elayne Byers, who later worked at the House of Refuge, and used to walk over the fields from her home to work, the place was "alive with groundhogs." Time and local brush wolves have reduced them to a single groundhog family, living near the barn at RoseMere.

The article on James Hendley continues: "With unabated interest the old centurion continues to watch the stream of life whirl and eddy by through clear blue eyes that yet do not require the assistance of spectacles. He walks about with a firm, straight carriage, displaying the sprightliness of a man forty years his junior...Deafness is the only affliction that he has to bear... Ask him if he likes to smoke, and you will get an eager response in the affirmative. He will say 'I smoke when ten year old.' That was nearly a century ago." So much for tobacco carcinogens!

There was even a marriage between residents of the House of Refuge. Newspaper clippings, provisionally dated November 1939, tell of the marriage between John "Doc" Deremo, aged 78, and Hattie Williams, aged 76, both residents of the House of Refuge. The wedding was performed in the face of stiff opposition from County Council. Because of this opposition, the wedding got off to several false starts before finally being concluded in the home of Mrs. Laura M. Storms on Lake [Park] Street in Peterborough. How the bride and groom were whisked away from the House of Refuge is not revealed. It is clear that there were accomplices. Mrs. Laura Storms is described as "one of those when a feller needs a friend types." The wedding was conducted in her living room, with the Rev. F. W. Craik, pastor of St James United Church, officiating. The

responses of the bride and groom were positive and firm, but, when it came to signing the register, Hattie became so nervous that she couldn't remember how to spell her name. It was no use. Hattie just couldn't do it. The excitement and tension had been too much for her. The whole affair had been conducted in the shadow of County disapproval. Mrs. Louis Fry, Matron of



Board of Management visited the House of Refuge, 8 April 1907, and posed for a Roy Studio photographer. Standing, l to r, R. H. Scott, Jane Beavis, Maud Beavis, Robert Shaw, a woman, Peter McNulty. Henry Beavis is sitting with two young men and a dog. Credit: Richard McCarthy.

the House, was among those pointedly not invited to the wedding.

"Doc" Deremo got his medical appellation from the fact that he was an ardent proponent of a salve he was selling. The reporter from *The Examiner* noted "There is nothing mercenary about the 'Doc.' For instance, he could have got married in a church, and given a little sales talk about his salve before saying 'I do,' with a last informal plug before signing the register."

No story of the House of Refuge would be complete without reference to Billy Larvery, a resident who had had both legs amputated just below the knees. He wore his boots "backward," that is, with the heel of the boot under his stump, and the toe pointing to the rear. He amazed everyone by getting around nimbly with this arrangement. He worked in the barn and helped in the kitchen. We do not have the story of how he lost his legs, or of what became of him.

There was no dearth of characters in the 1950s, either. Vera and Ada were unmarried sisters who lived together in one room of the House, while saving the other room for their collection of dolls. Each acquired a new doll at Christmas. Both were deaf and dumb, but this was no indication of their intelligence. They took part in all the activities of the House. On Sundays they would get out their hymn books and, after their fashion, sing hymns. Marg Greystock, who worked in the House at that time, has remarked on the strangeness of the sounds produced.

We return to Jim Moore in closing this chapter. Now 58 years old (in 1965) he was riding on the back of a farm wagon when it hit a bump going at full speed. Poor Jim was thrown out on his head and was killed instantly. His death may have triggered the County's decision to get out of the business of running the House of Refuge.

The County records show no discussion of the issue, but there appears to have been a gradual closing down of the House of Refuge. A study of the burials in the County plot of the Lakefield Cemetery shows that, by the 1930s, burials of indigents from the House of Refuge were declining and becoming increasingly sporadic. The main purpose of the House of Refuge, that is, of providing refuge for those in dire need, had been served in the years between 1907 and 1930. Increasingly, it appears that the House was used for members that could not be provided for by their families, either for financial reasons or because of the need for special treatment. This was certainly the case among families in Lakefield who had family members in the House of Refuge. When these members died, they were not buried in a pauper's grave in the County plot, but were buried by the family. Their admission to the House of Refuge had, of course, to be authorised by the Medical Officer. When Dr. Hugh Gastle, of Lakefield, held this position, he used the power of the position to provide admission to the House of Refuge for individuals he considered to be deserving of the special services available.

By 1978, the County was ready to close down the House of Refuge. There was a ceremony on 29 November 1978, when a handsome plaque was formally presented to Albert and Lila McConnell, the Superintendent and Matron, recognizing twenty-five years of faithful service. The McConnells had been well received in Lakefield, and were popular with their neighbors. Ab McConnell came from a race of big men, and his only son, Robert, took after him. Robert was known locally as "Diesel," in view of his size and disposition. Lila McConnell, according to Donna Peacock, was a wonderful cook. She was active in the local I.O.D.E. The McConnell's tenure, though generally very successful, was

not without criticism. When Dr. McMillan was the examining physician in the mid-fifties, he gave the House a clean bill of health, but was sufficiently concerned about the treatment of the old people that he asked his Registered Nurse to spend a week in the House to observe the treatment of inmates. The nurse was not popular with the McConnells, and gave a negative report at the end of her stay. One wonders whether she fully appreciated the difficulties of looking after old people. It is difficult to speak quietly and politely to someone who can't hear. It was also true that Minnie Argue was allowed to sit in only one chair in the House of Refuge, but, then, she was incontinent. This same Minnie Argue was very outspoken and, according to Donna Peacock, "swore like a trooper," an accomplishment that set her apart from other inmates on the distaff side. She was tongue-tied as well, and this added a special flavour to her swearing.

Bruce and Phyllis Black, of Rosemere, Quebec, were in the region when the County decided to relinquish the House of Refuge. The Blacks had a long experience of the management of retirement homes in Québec. Like so many Anglophones, apprehensive as to what René Levesque might be up to in Québec, they had decided to emigrate to firmer ground in the Province of Ontario. In the County minutes of 1978 an entry, designated as 78-390, records that a proposal of sale to Bruce and Phyllis Black had been presented to Council by Bill Domm. The Black's interests were represented by Doug Galvin of Peterborough. The Land Office records show that, in January of 1979, the Blacks bought the House of Refuge from the County for the sum of \$70,000. From this time to the present day the House has remained in private hands.

#### **RoseMere Manor**

When Bruce and Phyllis Black bought the House of Refuge from the County, it had been standing empty for several months. For a year, it had been used for the Katimavik programme, and may have been put from time to time to other uses. The Blacks moved their motor home and their two boys into the courtyard behind the House of Refuge, and lived in the motor home while Bruce had the interior of the building gutted completely. He rearranged and refinished the building, putting in new equipment. At some places he found the walls thicker than the length of his arm. We have a copy of his application to the Township for a permit to renew the plumbing in the Manor, dated 11 April 1979, at a cost of \$ 40,000. Sherman Edwards, a neighbor, got to know the Blacks well, and tells the story of Bruce Black's problems with Al Crowe, the local fire marshal, who was giving Bruce a hard time with his renovations. Bruce scheduled a general fire inspection to which he invited a third party. When Crowe vowed he would never give a permit to the establishment, the third party chimed in with "On what grounds?" "Who are you to ask?" said Crowe, only to find that he was speaking to the chief fire marshal of the Province. It then seemed possible to reach an agreement on what was permissible at RoseMere Manor.

What had bothered Crowe was the central stair leading from the basement up through the building. In the event of a fire in one of the kitchens, the stairwell could act as a flue and set the whole building on fire. The solution adopted was to have a heavy steel door, capable of sealing off the top of the basement stair, held back by restraints of a low melting alloy that would melt at low heat and let the door down over the opening.

The Blacks called the remodeled place "RoseMere Manor" after their home at 299 Westgate Crescent in Rosemere, Québec. The name Rosemere had been given to the Québec town in 1880 by J. P. Withers, an officer of the Canadian Pacific

Railway, who had made his home there, and who appreciated the abundance of wild roses in the region. Withers later registered the name for the town in Ottawa. From this point onward we shall refer to the House of Refuge as RoseMere Manor.

Phyllis Black recalls a memorable accident one winter when the Blacks were operating RoseMere Manor. The building was heated with steam, as it is now, from a boiler in the boiler room under the rear wing of the building. The boiler had two relief valves discharging to the out-of-doors. The Blacks kept a light bulb burning in the cupboard for the relief valves to prevent them from freezing. This proved insufficient one cold winter's morning. They must have both frozen, for the boiler exploded, literally raising the ceiling of the boiler room and the floor of the room above it, where a ninety-three year old lady was in bed asleep. The bed went up to the ceiling of the room and came back down to be balanced precariously on the floor joists that were all that was left of the floor. Bruce Black, at considerable danger to himself, edged along the floor joists until he could reach the bed, whose occupant was awake, but confused. She was rescued by Bruce, who brought her safely to the undamaged part of the floor. Her main concern during the operation was that the dress she was sleeping in was pulled above her knees.

In June 1981, the Blacks sold RoseMere Manor to Vern Tewsley and Associates for \$ 423,377.50, the Bank of Montréal holding the mortgage. Not only had the Manor been completely renovated, but the Blacks handed it over with a full complement of residents. The Blacks went on to build Peterborough Manor, in Peterborough, and proceeded to other ventures.

Vern and Eileen Tewsley operated the Manor from 1981 to 1986. We have very little information about this period of operation. There appears to have been some difficulty between the partners, leading to their separation and the selling of RoseMere Manor to a numbered company, 645647 Ontario Inc. It was under this ownership that major changes were made to the building.

The long flight of entrance stairs was removed and an entry made into the building at ground level. The gaping front of the entrance was enclosed in glass up to the second story, giving the entrance a gracious appearance. In February 1987, an elevator was installed, serving the three floors of the building. Standing among trees, at the end of a long straight

driveway leading up to the manor from the Young's Point Road, RoseMere now gave the impression of an elegant estate.

The Manor was now operated by a firm in Oakville, Compleat Health Care Inc., a firm with six retirement homes in the Province. Things were going well, and RoseMere was breaking even in spite of the heavy expenditures described above. The mortgage was still held by the Bank of Montréal, though the account was managed by the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce in Lakefield.

*Rosemere Manor, September 2007. The pergola on the roof had been removed by the mid-1950s, and the entrance had been softened even then by the addition of the third floor sunroom. Now the entrance has been glazed and catches the reflection of the sky and trees. The steps have been removed and one now enters directly on the ground floor. Photo by Elwood Jones.*



On 20 June 1990 disaster struck. The rug was pulled out from under RoseMere Manor. The CIBC declined to meet the payroll. The Manor was to be closed down. The twenty-eight residents and nineteen staff had twenty-four hours to vacate. Although RoseMere had been doing well itself, the controlling firm of Compleat Health Care Inc. was being bankrupted by their other retirement homes.

The trauma of getting twenty-eight seniors packed and moved can be imagined. Donna Peacock says the staff stayed on without pay to help with the move. Ida Watson remembers the nightmare of getting her father, Albert Wease, and his wife, out of their suite and into temporary quarters. Many of the seniors were moved to Peterborough Manor.

RoseMere Manor became a property of Central Mortgage

and Housing Corporation, and remained empty for two years, until it was bought from CMHC by Richard and Marilyn McCarthy of Peterborough. Richard had the idea of transforming the two upper floors into independent suites. He spent six months "researching" the building, and became convinced that his plan was feasible. When he opened the front door, the building had stood empty for a little over two years. Everything was just as it had been left. Beds were still made and turned down. Nothing had been touched in the two years the building had been standing empty.

With an architect, Richard Tucker, of the firm of Roode Moulton, the McCarthys designed and built eleven individual, self-contained suites in the building, each with bath, kitchenette and large, airy rooms, with windows looking out upon twenty-five acres of rolling farmland. The central staircase was removed, as the elevator, and stairs at each end of the building, made it unnecessary. The suites give the occupants complete independence. The first resident to move into a suite was Frank Coyle, of Lakefield, who had been waiting impatiently in a retirement home in Peterborough for the alterations to be completed.

The McCarthys operated RoseMere successfully for twelve years. There came a time, however, when it seemed necessary for fresh energy and fresh ideas to be injected into the operation of the Manor. They found purchasers in John Crawford, a business man, and his sister-in-law, Joan Garnier, R.N. Under their direction the Manor has taken on new life, and promises to expand and continue in the tradition established by the McCarthys. It is unique among retirement homes in this part of Ontario in its location in open country, its luxurious accommodation, and its historical significance.

In January 2007 the Manor will be in its hundredth year. Plans are afoot for an appropriate celebration of a centennial. This history of RoseMere Manor has been written for the occasion.

**Burials from the House of Refuge**

- 1906 Jos. Mitchell; Phoebe Tomlinson
- 1907 Geo. Newton; Henry Argue
- 1908 John Nelson; Henry Thompson; Harriet McMillen; Thos. Holten; William Hartley
- 1909
- 1910 Ellergence Perry; James Brown
- 1911 Jansen Hoxey; Agnes Armstrong; Geo. Balderson
- 1912 Samuel Small; Ephraim Lindsay; Benjamin Haines
- 1913 Jane Hampton; John Hawley; Betsy Cunningham; Sarah Dingan
- 1914 Richard McBride
- 1915 Eli Badroux; Jos. Woodcock
- 1916 Sarah Newton
- 1917
- 1918 Letie Clarke; William Lyon; Rockland Purdey; Jas. McMillan
- 1919 Abigail Brown
- 1920 Jas. Howden; Wesley Morrow; John Latchford
- 1921 Geo. Robinson; Mary Purdy; Albert Ferguson; John Lytle; Amos Wright
- 1922 Paul Godfrey; John Dodds; Robert Johnston
- 1923 John Wood; Henry Vanderberg; Eliza Brown; John Vardey; Ann Scholdice
- 1924 John Crapp; Geo. Carter; Alex Franklin; Geo. Holley; Elizabeth Clark
- 1925

- 1926 Mrs. A Fry; Jas. Little; Thos. Shouldoige; Andrew Moffit
- 1927 John Pratt; Anne Payne; John Montgomery
- 1928 John Moore; Mrs. E. Sloan; Peter Moffet; Samuel Sloan; Sarah Graydon
- 1929
- 1930 Fred Bickel; John Clarke
- 1931 T. Linton
- 1932
- 1933 Robert Mitchell; Richard Bell
- 1934 James Carew
- 1935 John Doig
- 1936 Angus McEachern; Chris Johnston
- 1937 Alice Oliver
- 1938 W. Lawrence; William Duncan
- 1939 Mrs. Carter
- 1940
- 1941 Robert Smith
- 1942
- 1943
- 1944 Hubble
- 1945
- 1946 M. A. Bishops
- 1947
- 1948 E. P. Sayers
- 1949 C. Craig
- 1950 McIlmoyle; G. E. Solmes
- 1951
- 1952 W. Purdy; F. Lindsay
- 1953 Thos. Wilson
- 1954
- 1955
- 1956
- 1957
- 1958
- 1959 Harry Watson
- 1960 Edith Little
- 1961
- 1962
- 1963
- 1964
- 1965 William Harpy; James Moore
- 1966
- 1967
- 1968 John Maurer
- 1969
- 1970
- 1971 Burwell Finlay
- No date Sarah Graydon

**Acknowledgements**

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Without the interest and cooperation shown by these people and these organizations this History of RoseMere Manor could not have been written.

Kim Krenz, who now resides at Rosemere Manor, Lakefield, after a long career with Atomic Energy of Canada. He has a wide knowledge of military and political issues but likes to write about the world around him. He is the author of *Miss Moore: A Memoir*. Lakefield, 1997. (For Stanford School of Education.) *The Luck O' Lakefield*. Lakefield, 2003. (A series of 12 columns for *The Lakefield Herald*; *Deep Water: the Ottawa River and Canada's Nuclear Adventure*. McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004. He is currently revising *Our Love Affair with Italy*, Kate Krenz's memoir of their stay in Italy in the early 1950s.

## House of Refuge in the News 1906

PCMA, Committee Meetings,  
Care of the Poor or House of Refuge

1 December 1905: A meeting was held and it was felt that "a city-county House of Refuge was needed and both councils should co-operate.

### A HOUSE OF REFUGE

*Peterborough Evening Examiner*, 20 January 1906

Will the County Council, at the forthcoming session, grapple with and settle the question of the erection of a House of Refuge for the County of Peterborough? There seems to be three main reasons for the erection of such a building. First, the law of the province demands it; secondly, the law of humanity demands it; and thirdly, the law of self-respect demands it. In regard to the second a letter appearing in the *Examiner* of a recent date emphasises with a sad directness the duty of the county towards the suffering poor. An old man, decent, sober, respectable, but poor, was driven, much against his will – for his pride revolted at the idea – and by necessity, to apply for admission to the Protestant Home. But there was no room for him there – all the available accommodation was occupied by others. Disheartened, he by some means, provided himself with laudanum to put an end to his earthly troubles, if the jail should refuse him shelter. On his application the police magistrate committed him to jail as a vagrant – much against the official's will no doubt, for he must have felt how shameful it was that in a wealthy county, in a Christian land, an honest and responsible and worthy citizen guilty of no crime, should be housed with criminals in

a place designed and fitted for criminals only. Can a County Councillor who denies his brother the shelter which a House of Refuge would afford, die in his bed and sleep in peace when he knows that his brother by the same Heavenly Father – is lying in jail – as the measure of his conception of the duties of Christian charity.

The law of self-respect demands a House of Refuge. Peterborough is surrounded with practical reproaches for its parsimony and slowness. Victoria County has provided a House of Refuge and the County of Northumberland and Durham has filed with the Government at Toronto plans for a House of Refuge. Is it not a blow to our self-respect, that the County of Peterborough which surpasses in wealth, in prosperity, and in progressiveness both of these counties, should be behind both in the matter of a House of Refuge. It is difficult to see, considering everything, how this county is to longer evade its duty and responsibility in this matter. It is to be hoped that the expectation is justified that at the coming session of the County Council the matter will be dealt with in a practical and satisfactory manner.

### VILLAGE AFTER HOUSE OF REFUGE Lakefield News Makes a Strong Plea For Institution Thinks Peterborough Has No Right to Expect It

*Peterborough Evening Examiner*, 20 January 1906

The Lakefield News in this week's issue has an editorial article on the question of the House of Refuge, which will in all probability be dealt with at the meeting of the county Council next week.

The question of building a House of Refuge in the County of Peterborough will come up at the meeting of the County Council next week and it behoves the Council and the merchants of the village to bestir themselves in the matter if they are desirous of having the institution located in Lakefield.

We see that Norwood, alive as usual to its own interest, is making every effort to secure the House of Refuge for itself. Norwood already possesses the High School, but apart from this it is situated at one side of the county, whereas Lakefield, in addition to being a more important place as regards population, is situated in the centre of the county, between the two ridings, and is far more accessible from the back country. It possesses, besides several excellent building sites, splendid water, and is at a higher altitude than either Peterborough or Norwood.

We understand that Peterborough also is making a great effort to get the proposed institution located close to its borders. On what grounds it is attempting to obtain this advantage, we are certainly at a loss to discover, as the House of Refuge is distinctly a county institution, and if any benefit is to be derived from its possession such benefit should certainly go to one of the smaller towns in the county. Why should Peterborough merchants obtain for nothing an advantage for which merchants of the county have to pay?

The action of the county councillors in this matter will be watched very closely by the ratepayers of the county.

We believe that the village council appointed a committee to arrange for a deputation to interview the County Council, but we have not yet heard that they have taken any action in the matter. We would respectfully suggest that a public meeting be called for Saturday or Monday evening to discuss the matter in all its bearings.

### Many Claimants For the House of Refuge Heard By the Council / Deputation of Fifty Persons Waited on the County Council This Morning From Lakefield to Ask for

**Location of New Institution for That Village – Present Claims in Enthusiastic Terms – Norwood Also After It – Some of the Arguments Advanced by Deputations**

*Peterborough Evening Examiner*, 24 January 1906

This morning two deputations waited on the County Council in reference to the location of the House of Refuge, each asking that it be erected at the village represented by them. These deputations were from Norwood and Lakefield, the latter numbering about 50 persons, who took the County Council by storm. They gave reasons why, in their estimation, the House of Refuge, which they assumed the Council had decided to build, should be erected in that village. The Norwood deputation was not a large one, but the members were equally enthusiastic over the advantages possessed by their village. Those comprising the Norwood deputation were Messrs E. P. Cuffe, president of the Board of Trade; John Finlay, MP; J. L. Squire; Dr Robertson and J. B. Pearce; while those who represented Lakefield were: Messrs R. Strickland, Wm Graham; Reeve Moore; and the council, and cloerk, H. G. Fitzgerald; Gerald Fitzgerald; John Hill; Dr J. R. Fraser; Dr Baker; R. Johnston; F. E. Kline; R. P. Davidson; J. F. Lillierap; E. R. Tate; A. Fairbairn; J. P. Strickland; O. A. Langtry; Geo S. Hilliard; Geo Payne; F. M. Delafosse; W. F. Trude; A. J. Kidd; M. Fisher; Levi Payne; Geo A. Baptie; A. Hendren; S. Wallace; J. Griffin; W. Harper; J. H. Sherin; J. S. Fitzgerald; J. H. Davis; A. D. Hill; Rev T. H. Leggett; Ven Archdeacon Warren; Rev E. A. Campbell; and a number of others.

**Norwood Deputaion**

Mr E. P. Cuffe introduced Mr J. H. Pearce, who addressed the Council on the question of the House of Refuge. He presented the claims for Norwood as a location for the new institution. A very desirable site could be procured near the station, which would be admirably suited to the needs of the House of Refuge. He took it for granted that the Council had decided to erect the House, and the only question was that of location. Mr Pearce recalled that the \$40,000 bequeathed to the county to be used for its poor by the late Mr Foley, had been accumulated in that part of the county.

Mr J. L. Squires also addressed the Council and corroborated the statements made by Mr Pearce in reference to the desirable location referred to. Norwood had the endorsement of the surrounding townships and the village of Havelock as well, and he felt sure that the Council would carefully consider the matter, and that the claims of Norwood would be given due attention.

Mr John Finley, MP, referred to the peculiar claims of Norwood, and stated that, in his opinion, no more desirable place in the county could be found.

Mr E. P. Cuffe, president of the Board of Trade, said that he could not help feeling that Norwood was the very best location for the House of Refuge. The village as far as population was concerned was very close to the centre of the county, and on the main line of the CPR which would make it easy of access. Peterborough, he thought, had little in common with the county, and, therefore, had no particular claim to it; while it could be maintained much cheaper at Norwood, than in this city.

Mr Cuffe said that he had received assurances from the Reeves of Dummer and Havelock that they would support Norwood's claims.

Mr Joseph Johnston, reeve of Belmont and Methuen, addressed the council briefly and stated that he was fully in accord with the request of the former speakers.

Dr Robertson also spoke along the same line, and advocated the claims of Norwood.

**Lakefield's Request**

After the arrival of the train from Lakefield, the Council Chamber was filled to overflowing with those who were supporting Lakefield's contention that it was the only location for the county institution.

Reeve Moore was the first speaker of the deputation and stated the object, in waiting upon the council, briefly. He called upon Mr Strickland.

Mr Strickland congratulated the warden upon his elevation to that office. He was sure that the council would give the matter of the selection of the site of the House of Refuge, their serious attention. The deputation felt that Lakefield was a central location, and there were a number of available sites which would be suitable for the location of this institution. He was sure that Smith and Douro, and the northern part of the county, would support the claims of Lakefield.

Ex-Reeve Tanner followed, and spoke along the same lines. They had come to point out that Lakefield, or its immediate vicinity, was the most desirable location for the House of Refuge. Lakefield in the past had received practically nothing from the county, while Norwood had the High School; and the interests of the county as a whole would, he felt sure, be best served by the erection of the proposed House of Refuge in Lakefield, which was the largest contributor to the funds of the county. He pointed out the many advantages which Lakefield offered for the establishment of an institution of that kind.

Councillor Cornish considered that Lakefield was the most healthy place in the county. It possessed the best water and air – two necessary requisites for the location of a House of Refuge. There were, too, a great many good sites in the vicinity of Lakefield than in any other municipality in the county. The accessibility of the village was also referred to, and he thought that since Lakefield was such a growing and progressive place it had superior claims to the establishment of such an institution. He invited the council to send a deputation to that village to see for themselves the advantages possessed by it.

Mr John Hull, Mr George Payne, Dr Fraser, William Graham, and A. O. Langley all spoke briefly on the question, and on motion of Councillor Moloney, seconded by Councillor Stenson, the matters dealt with by the deputation were referred to the Finance Committee.

**HOUSE OF REFUGE**

*Editorial, Peterborough Evening Examiner*, 26 January 1906

Both Lakefield and Norwood are putting in strong claims for the site of the House of Refuge which, it is hoped, the County Council at its present session, will decide to construct. A correspondent, whose communication appears in another column, points out that Peterborough for the reasons he gives, is the most suitable place for such an institution. In the abstract, Peterborough can afford to be generous in dealing with the claims of both Norwood and Lakefield, but the real point of issue is, the location of the House of Refuge where the greatest usefulness can be developed. If Lakefield or Norwood can furnish the conditions which our correspondent suggests as desirable, there would be no great objection to the House of Refuge being built at either of these places. What the council has to consider is the best means to serve the interests involved, and that consideration alone should influence their decision in the matter of site. Whatever is best for the county should be decided upon – after careful investigation and consideration of the circumstances.

**COUNTY COUNCIL VIEWS SOME PROPOSED SITES  
For the New County House of Refuge – Visited Norwood  
To-day and Were Introduced by Board of Trade –  
A Number of Available Sites Were Looked At.**

*Peterborough Evening Examiner*, 29 January 1906  
Norwood, January 29<sup>th</sup>. --

To-day the Norwood Board of trade and the citizens are interviewing the members of the Peterborough County Council, who came here for the purpose of looking up the various available sites for the erection of a House of Refuge.

Those were are here representing the county are Warden Johnston, Councillors Andrews, Buck, Carey, Menogue, Shaw, Garbutt, Stinson, and Moloney; E. A. Peck, the county solicitor; and J. E. Belcher, C. E., county engineer.

They arrived on the noon train and were taken in hand by the Board of Trade, Mr E. B. Cuffe, the president, doing the honours.

They were driven around the town, and visited a number of sites which the citizens considered were adapted to the location of the proposed House of Refuge.

The members of the council declined to express any opinion as to the location, except that the sites shown were in many respects well adapted to the purpose, but they would have to see the other sites proposed before making any decision.

The majority of the council will leave on the 4:40 train this afternoon for Peterborough and they will visit Lakefield to-morrow.

**House of Refuge to be Erected by County  
Norwood and Lakefield After It  
Institution Will be Built at Once**

*Havelock Standard*, 1 February 1906

At their session last week the county Council decided to erect a House of Refuge, and appointed the whole Council a committee to consider the questions of a site for the location of the institution.

Norwood and Lakefield are both eager to obtain the House of Refuge, and it will be erected at or near one of those villages. On Monday the [members of] Council were the guests of the village of Norwood, where they inspected six sites, and on Tuesday Lakefield received them with open arms and pointed out the advantages of locating there.

After the site has been decided upon, the Council, or a committee representing it, will go to the places where Houses of Refuge have already been erected and will obtain particulars in reference to the construction of the building and other information in connection with the question.

The cost of the proposed House of Refuge will be in the neighborhood of \$25,000 or \$30,000.

**Lakefield Gets House of Refuge  
Braden Property Decided Upon  
Price to be Paid Will be About \$4,500.**

*Havelock Standard*, 8 February 1906

The new County House of Refuge will in all probability be erected in the vicinity of Lakefield. It is understood that the County Council has practically decided on the selection of the site known as the Braden farm, which is situated on the west side of the river, about half a mile from the village. It comprises fifty acres, and the cost, it is stated, will be in the neighborhood of \$4,500, Mr Braden reserving five acres for his own use. It is understood that the Council has an option on this property, and all except two or three of the Council are in favour of the purchase of that site.

Another site under consideration is one owned by Mr. Strickland, north of the village, but it is understood that it has been practically decided to purchase the Braden lot.

A definite decision will be reached, however, on Saturday, when the tenders will be opened.

**House of Refuge Site Not Yet Determined**

*Havelock Standard*, 15 February 1906

The County Council met on Saturday last to consider the House of Refuge situation. Tenders were opened from property owners in and around Lakefield and Norwood, offering lots for the site of the House of Refuge. Various lots were offered, many of which would no doubt be suitable for the purpose intended. The prices ranged from \$4,000 to \$7,500, the prevailing figures being from \$65 to \$100 per acre.

The Council, after the tenders had been read, went into a thorough discussion of the different sites. There was great difficulty experienced in coming to anything near a decision on the subject. Warden Johnston was of the opinion that the Council should wait a while before going ahead with the project. There was plenty of time, and he had been informed that several lots near Peterborough were available which might be advantageously considered.

The members of the Council then entered into a general discussion on the subjects of sites. The question of locating near Peterborough was considered, but the Council were not favourable to establish the institution there.

The discussion continued until noon, when the Council adjourned to luncheon. No decision was arrived at, the members, it is said, being divided in opinion between Lakefield and Norwood.

The Peterborough side of the question did not receive much attention, the main argument being between the Norwood and Lakefield factions. It is said that the Lakefield supporters are in the majority of six to four. The members of the Council who are, it is said, in favour of Lakefield being selected are Messrs Shaw, Garbutt, Stinson, Menogue, Moloney and Webster, while Messrs Buck, Andrews, Carey and Warden Johnston are holding out for Norwood.

The Council met again after luncheon and after much discussion on the subject on which no decision was reached, the Council adjourned for two weeks to allow other property owners to send in tenders in view of the fact that none had been from people of North Monaghan and Peterborough.

**Lakefield Gets House of Refuge  
County Council Decides to Purchase Preston Lot There  
Pay \$6,500 for 100 Acres**

*Havelock Standard*, 1 March 1906

The County House of Refuge will be built on the Preston property at Lakefield.

Such was the decision reached by the County Council at a meeting held on Saturday afternoon to decide the question which has been occupying the attentions of the Council for the past few months.

Those present at the meeting were Warden Johnston and Councillors Garbutt, Stinson, Moloney, Webster, Menogue, Carey, Shaw, Andrews and Buck.

At the beginning of the meeting it looked as if no decision would be reached, the councillors discussed the question in a general manner and showed no signs of bringing the matter to a head.

Councillors Buck and Andrews agreed that Norwood should be selected, saying that the building could be constructed at \$2000 less at Norwood than at Lakefield.

The question of water power was also much in Norwood's favor, according to the advocates of that town. Councillor Garbutt pointed out similar advantages that would be found in Lakefield.

The following sites were selected as the five most suitable:

At Lakefield: –

Braden farm, 45 acres, \$5000  
Strickland farm, 75 acres, \$7500  
Preston property, 100 acres, \$6500

At Norwood: –

Grover property, 100 acres, \$5500  
Robb property, 45 acres, \$3600

It was moved by Councillor Buck, seconded by Councillor Andrews, that the new House of Refuge be built on the Grover farm at Norwood.

It was moved in amendment by Councillor Stinson, seconded by Councillor Moloney, that in the mind of this council it is advisable that the County House of Refuge be erected on the Preston property.

The amendment was put first, and carried on the following vote:

Yeas: – Councillors Garbutt, Stinson, Webster, Moloney, Menogne and Shaw. Nays: – Councillors Andrews, Buck and Carey. ....

**Further Opposition to Lakefield Property / It was Claimed that Lot Contained 96 Instead of 100 Acres By-law Confirming Purchase Was, However, Passed ...**

*Peterborough Evening Examiner, 11 April 1906*

The County Council held a special session to-day at which several important matters came in for discussion. At the morning session a bylaw was passed confirming the resolution passed by the Council in reference to the purchase of the Preston property at Lakefield as a site for the House of Refuge. Opposition was offered by Councillors Moloney, Buck and Andrews, on the ground that the site contained only 96 acres instead of 100. This was accounted for by the fact that Mr Preston wanted to sell part of the roadway as his property. After considerable discussion the by-law was passed.

At this afternoon session the matter was again dealt with. / On motion of Mr Shaw, seconded by Mr Moloney, the warden and Councillor Garbutt, chairman of the Building Committee, were appointed a committee to have the property measured.

The question of letting the land for this year was brought up and on motion of Mr Shaw, seconded by Mr Moloney, a committee, composed of the warden and Councillor Garbutt, was appointed to arrange for the renting of the farm, and buying seed for this year's seeding down.

Councillor Buck, chairman of the special committee appointed to deal with the matter of the late Mrs Foley's will, reported that it would be necessary for the Council to appoint a committee to act with a committee from the City Council in reference to securing the money available for charitable purposes from the estate of the late Mrs Foley. On motion of Councillor Shaw, seconded by Councillor Menogue, a committee composed of Councillors Carey, Buck, Stinson, Webster and the warden, was appointed, the first two to act for two years.

On motion of Councillor Shaw, seconded by Councillor Stinson, Councillor Buck was added to the Building Committee. / The Council then went into committee to deal with these plans for the House of Refuge, and also for the two new steel bridges.

**Plan of the House of Refuge Will Be a Fine Big Modern Building**

*Havelock Standard, 19 April 1906*

Mr John E. Belcher, County Architect, presented his first plans for the House of Refuge to the Building Committee of the County Council on Saturday, and they with a few modifications were approved of.

The plans show the new building to be a fine structure, and one that ought to answer all demands made upon its accommodation.

The building will be 75 by 40 feet and will be three stories in height, giving accommodation for 75 inmates. It will be of red brick, with a foundation of concrete and stone. The building will have a very handsome entrance. On the ground floor on the left side will be found the matron's room, and the day room. The men's ward will also be found on this side, and there will be seven beds, as well as clothes closets and a laundry. The other side of the ground floor will contain a large reception room, a day room, women's ward, laundry, clothes closet, etc., and a well-equipped pharmacy.

The second floor is reserved for bed rooms, the men sleeping on one side of the building and the women on the other. The rooms will be of comfortable size, and plenty of conveniences will be included for the use of the inmates. There will be baths, clothes closets, and a laundry also on this floor.

In the basement will be found the kitchen and dining room, as well as large wards for the men and women.

The building will be complete in every detail, and will be on the most modern lines possible.

**Will Advertise For Tenders For House of Refuge Plans Were Approved of by the Building Committee**

*Peterborough Evening Examiner, 4 May 1906*

A lengthy session of the House of Refuge Committee, of the County Council, was held yesterday in the County Treasurer's office to look after the plans and specifications, and to complete arrangements for advertising for tenders.

Those present at the meeting were Councillors Garbutt, chairman; Buck, Andrews, Webster, Shaw, Menogue; County Solicitor E. A. Peck, County Engineer Belcher and the treasurer.

The plans and specifications submitted by the architect were carefully and minutely considered and approved of, and the committee decided to advertise for tenders for the new House of Refuge.

May 16<sup>th</sup> will be the last day for receiving tenders, and the committee will meet again the following day for the purpose of issuing debentures, providing for the erection of the new building.

The work will commence shortly after that date and will be pushed forward as rapidly as possible, so as to have the building completed by the month of November.

**NOTICE TO Contractors**

*Havelock Standard, 10 May 1906*

Sealed Tenders will be received by the undersigned up to Wednesday the 16<sup>th</sup> inst. for the Erection of a House of Refuge near Lakefield. Plans and Specifications may be seen at the office of John E. Belcher, C. E., County Engineer and Architect City – The Tenders to be accompanied by a marked cheque for 2 ½ per cent of the amount of their tender which will be subject to forfeiture in case of failure on the part of the contractor to enter into a written contract if called upon to do so.

The lowest or any Tender not necessarily accepted.  
ED. M. ELLIOTT, County Clerk, County Clerk's Office



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#### **Baptie Bros. Get Contract For House of Refuge at \$18,093 / Mr James MacPherson, of Peterborough, Was the Other Tenderer / By-law for Issuing of Debentures Amounting to \$30,000 Passed Third Reading ...**

*Peterborough Evening Examiner, 17 May 1906*

The County Council met this morning in the County Chambers for the purpose of receiving the tenders for the erection of the House of Refuge. The Building Committee retired to open and discuss the tenders and remained in committee over two hours. Only two were received and the contract was given to the Baptie Bros. of Lakefield, for \$18,093. They were only \$41 below James MacPherson, of Peterborough....

Those present were: - Warden Johnston, Chairman Garbutt, Councillors Andrews, Buck, Webster, Menogue, Shaw, Carey, Stinson, Moloney; County Solicitor, E. A. Peck, and County Clerk, E. M. Elliott.

The Council met at 2:15, and the first business taken up was the provision for the issuing of debentures for the erection of the House of Refuge.

It was moved by Councillors Buck and Andrews that a bylaw be prepared for the issuing of debentures to the amount of \$30,000 to cover the cost of the site and the building of the new House of Refuge, to be paid at yearly instalments of \$2,207 p.a., extending over a period of 20 years. The bylaw comes into force 30 June 1906. The bylaw carried and was signed and sealed. ...

#### **To Select House of Refuge Site Building Committee Left This Morning for Lakefield**

*Peterborough Evening Examiner, 17 May 1906*

The House of Refuge Committee of the county council went up to Lakefield, accompanied by Engineer John Belcher, to select a site for the new House of Refuge. The location on the property has become a very important question. The matters which the committee will have to consider very carefully will be the location where the water supply will be the best, and also the sewage facilities greatest.

The property will be visited this afternoon and the committee will return this evening.

#### **County House of Refuge**

*Havelock Standard, 24 May 1906*

Messrs Baptie Bros. of Lakefield will build the new House of Refuge for the County of Peterboro, the contract being awarded to them by the building committee on Thursday last. The price is \$16,093, not including the plumbing and heating.

#### **Superintendent of House of Refuge Mr Henry Beavis of Dummer Appointed**

*Havelock Standard, 27 September 1906*

The County Council were in special session on Friday last, when they appointed Mr Henry Beavis of South Dummer, superintendent of the House of Refuge. Other applications were in from J. J. Crowe, North Dummer, Thomas R. Wilson, Warsaw, and J. Paul, Lakefield.

....

*Havelock Standard, 17 January 1907*

The County House of Refuge will be formally opened on January 21<sup>st</sup>. The building, including the 100 acre farm, has cost \$33,000, and is said to be a credit to the County.

#### **County Council Grants Havelock \$100**

*Havelock Standard, 31 January 1907*

....

The House of Refuge by-law was amended so that that institution will now be a free one, in that the municipalities from which inmates come will not be asked to pay anything toward their maintenance. The whole cost will be met the County.

*Editor's note: The publisher's copy of the Havelock Standard is housed in the Trent Valley Archives, and this seemed a good opportunity to illustrate how it could be useful to researchers. The paper was the organ for T. P. Lancaster, a prominent and successful Liberal politician.*

## G. Whitaker & Co. Ltd Warehouse Fire of 11 July 1947

*Cy Monkman*

The Canadian Office of **G. Whitaker & Co. Ltd** was opened in Peterborough, Ontario by **Mr. Gordon Monkman** in 1920. The firm's Head Office was in Bradford, Yorkshire, England. They already had a North American office in Boston, Massachusetts. The principal business of the company was that of a wool merchant. In Canada, as in England, they purchased raw wool (usually in the grease but sometimes scoured i.e. washed or in "top" form) from many of the major wool producing countries of the world such as Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. In addition the Canadian company purchased domestic wool from Canadian farmers mostly situated in Ontario and the western provinces. Whitakers were also wool "top" merchants. A "top" is a midway product of worsted yarn manufacturing.

The wool was usually transported to Peterborough for storage, grading and sorting although sometimes (e.g. tops) it was shipped direct to the customer being a woollen or worsted textile mill. So wool merchants required a warehousing facility for storage and also for the grading and sorting of raw, greasy wool in fleece form. This required a staff of warehousemen, graders and sorters, the latter two being recognized skilled tradesmen.

In 1947 Whitaker's warehouse was a four-storey brick exterior building at the foot of Charlotte Street next to and owned by **Dewart Milling Company**. The floors were wooden and often coated in wool grease in places. All forms of wool were initially stored in the building in burlap bales. The raw greasy wool was graded and sorted and then kept in large piles in open bins until it was repacked and shipped out. The wooden floors, grease and burlap were all potential fuel for a fire.



Sometime before 11 a.m. on 11 July 1947, a warm summer day, fire broke out on the ground floor of the Whitaker warehouse. There were 25 men employed in the building at the time. It spread so rapidly that practically all the men above the ground floor were trapped and had to escape

using the exterior fire escape or a back stairway. Every window in the warehouse was belching dark smoke within an hour after the fire had been noticed. The fire department trucks arrived soon after the alarm went in and many hoses were soon pouring tons of water on the smoking building, using nearly every water source available. By 11 a.m. the entire Whitaker warehouse was aflame. The flames raced north into the Dewart Milling building and after noon hour had penetrated the small elevators due east of the seed mill. The two top floors of the seed mill became an inferno shortly after 12 noon and were soon destroyed along with the roof. The firemen had some success containing the damage to the flourmill.

It soon became apparent after a roll call that three Whitaker employees were missing and it was feared that they did not get out of the burning building. They were:

**James Hawthorne**, 48, time keeper of 163 Antrim Street  
**George Colbran**, 42, wool grader of Water Street, and  
**George Clements**, 50, labourer of 373 Bethune Street

Harold Harding, age 16, working with Jim Hawthorne, saw him head for the telephone in spite of his frantic appeals to him to just get out. That was the last time he saw him. Employee Tom Dalton (who escaped the Quaker Oats fire in 1918) entered the building later in a vain attempt to locate Hawthorne. Constables Andre Dalton and Clair McGillen and firemen also joined in the search but without success. One report stated that George Colbran was seen outside the burning building and then re-entered it in an attempt to locate and save Jim Hawthorne. He was never seen again. The following headline appeared on the front page of the 12 July *Globe and Mail*: "**HERO DIES IN WOOL FIRE TRYING TO SAVE MATE**". George Clements was believed to be working along side Hawthorne. Firemen poured water inside the burning building through broken windows in hope of assisting any or all of the missing men to escape. It was soon decided that there was no chance of saving any of the men and the search was called off.

Both night and day shifts of the Peterborough Fire Department were on the job headed by **Chief George Gimblett** and **Assistant Chief George Smith**. In addition the CGE plant fire department and the Lakefield Fire Department responded with pumpers and men. Firemen climbed up both the Whitaker warehouse building exterior fire escape and the Dewart Milling grain elevator metal ladder to the east with their hoses to better direct streams of water on the flames. As the fire burned through the wooden floors it became apparent that the walls of the Whitaker warehouse were in danger of collapsing.

Just to the north of the burning buildings was the city gas plant with storage tanks and there was a fear sparks from the fire could ignite the gas resulting in an horrendous explosion which could have caused wide spread death and injury amongst the many spectators. Such a disaster, under similar circumstances, had occurred in Texas with a large loss of life years earlier.

Because the Whitaker building was used to store raw wool it resulted in a fire and cleanup with different circumstances. Mr. Gordon Monkman, Canadian General Manager at the time explained that wool does not burn but carbonizes and smoulders resulting in dense yellow smoke. The lighter coloured smoke was from burning wood. After the fire was extinguished there were huge piles of wet, warm and steaming rotting wool, having dropped from the upper floors, which gave off a most offensive odour akin to rotting eggs.

It was under these conditions that the search started for the bodies of the three missing men as soon as the fire

departments had put out the flames and cooled down the debris including piles of soggy, wool that had accumulated on the lowest floors, having dropped from the burnt floors above. But early in the afternoon of Monday July 14<sup>th</sup> Fire Chief George Gimblett ordered volunteer searchers from the ruins of the warehouse having worked for 72 hours up to this point. It was felt that there was a very real danger of the remaining parts of the upper floors collapsing on top of the workers along with piles of wool clinging to these upper floors. The volunteers who were taking part in the search were employees of G. Whitaker & Co. Ltd., firemen, police officers and ordinary citizens. And amongst the volunteer searchers was the son of Jim Hawthorne, **Jim Hawthorne junior**, a New York Broadway singing star and **Norman Clapham**, stepson of George Clements. More than 25 men from Whitakers worked over the weekend removing wool from the building. Firemen and police officers were also on duty. Gordon Monkman, general manager of Whitakers said: "great credit is due to all the men engaged in this difficult task – firemen, policemen, volunteers and our own staff. They all deserve the highest praise for their tireless energy under the most difficult and dangerous conditions". Public appeals were made for more volunteers to aid in the search.

The search for the missing men resumed shortly after the Fire Chief deemed it safe for the volunteers to re-enter the building. Working under floodlights on Tuesday night the volunteers recovered the bodies of two of the three missing men. A buckle on his belt identified the body of Jim Hawthorne. The body of the second man was not immediately identified but they were together under piles of soggy, steaming wool. It was later identified as that of George Clements. On the morning of Wednesday July 18<sup>th</sup> the body of the third victim, George Colbran, was located only 15 feet from where the other bodies were located and lodged in a pile of wool. Funeral services for all three men were held the same week at Nesbitt Funeral Home. "Fire of unknown origin and suffocation" were given by a coroner's jury in their verdict as to the cause of the three deaths. Spontaneous combustion was ruled as extremely unlikely. Given the rapid spread of the fire it was a marvel that so many men got out. None of the employees testifying at the inquest had called the fire department and times varied as to when each one noticed smoke or fire. Jurors also felt that the building should have been sprinklered.

The monetary cost of the fire varied but generally estimated at between \$1,000,000 and \$1,500,000 resulting from loss of or damage to the two Dewart Milling Company owned buildings and stocks of wool in the Whitaker warehouse and seed and flour in the Dewart portion. Fire Chief George Gimblett later said that this fire was the worst during his term as Chief.

At the time of the fire G. Whitaker & Co. Ltd had three other warehouse locations in the city. The main one was the Auburn building near the Peterborough Golf & Country Club (now demolished and part of the Triple T condominium complex) to which main operations moved as soon as the clean-up was complete. The Auburn building, site of a woolen mill since the 1860s, had been purchased during World War II and used to stock pile wool (as were other locations including Lakefield cement works) due to the fear that Australia would be invaded by the Japanese and wool supplies cut off from that primary source.

The Peterborough fire was the second in a series of disastrous property damage events that G. Whitaker & Co. Ltd. suffered. On 31 August 1942 German aircraft made a

rare bombing raid over Bradford, England and the parent company's warehouse was hit taking a five storey slice out of the building. On 26 February 1948 the same warehouse in Bradford, England caught fire resulting in a major blaze and thousands of pounds worth of building damage and wool loss. By a strange stroke of fate the gap left by the bombs in 1942 and still unrepaired prevented the fire from spreading and destroying the whole block.

## Growing up at Auburn

R. E. Geale

I am now an Australian but as a Canadian youngster living in Port Colbourne we annually travelled to Peterborough. My parents both came from Peterborough. My father, Charles Norman Geale, the adopted son of Edward A. Peck was brought up in Ashburnham and lived at 304 Rogers Street. My mother Alice Seabourne Hamilton spent most of her youth at Auburn and was married from there.



**AUBURN**

*"Please note this picture is a more recent picture than in my days in the thirties. At my time the driveway went right up to the veranda steps. Also the side, white doors were never there. Verandahs look alright but glassed in entry appears to have gone.*

From as way back that I can remember, and that's literally eons in history the family visited Auburn staying there for a couple of weeks each summer before going on to our cottage on Lake Catchacoma. The Auburn visit was too me one of the highlights of the year. My last visit was in 1942 as the following year I joined the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm and went off to sea for the next forty three years.

Each year towards the end of June our family would make the long trek by car and in those days it was along slow trip to Peterborough. And the final last mile was always greeted with relief but for myself Auburn was something special, another world, and I could not wait to get there.

The drive up the long driveway, don't suppose it was that long, through the orchard, past the cricket pitch with its net beckoning, on up and around the small circular garden in the middle of the drive way we would come to a halt in front of Auburn itself.

Auburn was an old rambling two storey building with a verandah running along the front and half way down both sides. In front of Auburn was the lawn with its miniature golf

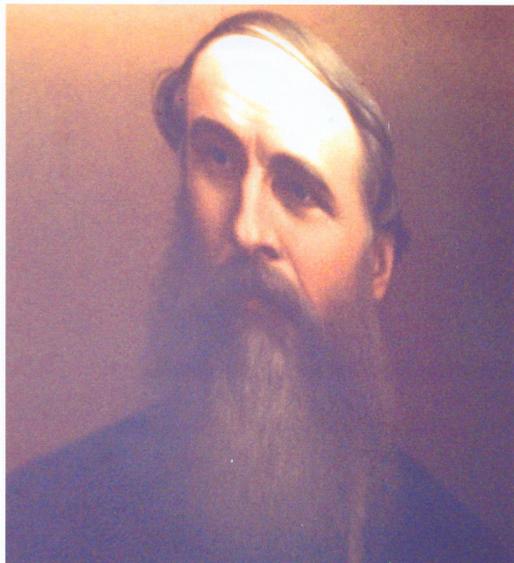
course. Golf and Cricket were the Hamilton sports of that era.

Auburn , the house was like Topsy as it appeared to have grown over the years. Today when I pass an old Australian country home with their large verandahs surrounding the house I am always reminded of Auburn , even though it was sixty four years since I last stayed at Auburn.

In those days we usually arrived in the early evening and as on entered the house a long hall greeted us with its pictures , bugle, trophies of war hanging on the wall, and in those days in the low light to a young lad the walk down to the back of the house could be a wee bit daunting but by next morning it was a different place. On the river side of the house two doors off the hall , one by the main entrance and one further down gave one access to the Drawing Room, my Grandmothers room, it was large something like a ballroom , with lovely polished floors , a piano on one side , chinz chairs , corners with nick nacks ..... and the don't touch feeling .... And a fireplace I believe, provided my memory still holds a white marble fireplace, for young lads it was definitely an off limits place, still I did get to see it but usually on more sombre occasions.

In those days across the hall was an unused room known as the Morning Room , in which in better days the servants served breakfast to the family .

At the end of the hall on the right hand side a very wide stair case had been built turning half way up to gain the second floor . Along the walls of the stair case were large paintings of some very , to me at the time big men , looking down and all with frowns on their face. I understand these were relatives , grandfathers who had served with the Hudson Bay Company and my mother when Auburn was sold presented these paintings to the Hudson Bay Company, who I gather now display them in their museum. I believe the painting shown below was sent to HBC.



Robert Hamilton

Once the dreaded climb upstairs had been accomplished you were on the second floor where the bedrooms were. I do remember when I was at last given my Uncles bedroom , he had gone off with his regiment, I thought I had fallen into a gold mine ..... books , boys books, Henty , Percy Westorland , Boys Own Journal ..... my reading improved vastly that year

and it is possible that some of those tales made an impression on my life and started me on my to be lengthy naval career.

But back down stairs. As I mentioned the house gave me the impression that at some time, probably in early days it had been added onto .On the other side of the stair case wall there was another but thinner staircase, without pictures going up to the second floor, I believe at one time it was the servants staircase to their quarters. A short set of stairs took you down to the cold room . I do well remember waking up one night when one of my uncles Ginger Beer started exploding , he was a they say in Aus not ahappy vegemite!! By the time I had arrived on the scene the servants were a thing of the past.

Across the hall from the staircase was my Grandfathers study where he could work at his desk and smoke his pipe in peace. He was , too me a big man and grandmother a little lady .... but she ruled the house.



My parents and Grandmother Hamilton

Later when I was allowed you could find me in there reading through Punch Magazines, Illustrated London News and winding up and playing the ol Gramophone I found there along with a stack of records. I remember one of thos records was the "Old Contemptibles " and for a long tie I never knew who they were.

But back to our meander through the house heading as we say in the Navy ... aft ...we opened a door onto the dining Room , the formal dinning room, where when I was promoted from the pantry to this I soon wish I had not . For a young lad formal dinning with all its elegancy , manners etc akin to sent to purgatory . Although I have had a life time of formal dinning, mess dinners, dining etc I never got to really enjoy that part of life .

But off to once side was the pantry where as youngsters we ate under the guidance of my Aunt Peggy , not too much older than me, who could be great fun .

And in the rear of the house was the galley, the Kitchen where my Grandmother, mother and Aunt worked wonders .

In those days there was no plumbing and one of my tasks was going out to the pump to get the water. My grandfather always appeared to have a dog usually a big friendly collie who always came with me when I roamed around the estate.

Behind but off to west there was a large barn where at one time the horses had been kept but during my time a number of arrogant Turkeys ran the roost. Down at the bottom of the field across from the Golf Course there was a small red one room school , I would now assume long gone.



*Hamilton Children in the 1910s*

On occasions my young aunt, the young lady shown above would take us across the tracks and down the field to the Otonabee River for a swim. On other occasions I would walk the tracks with my Grandfather down to Nicholls Oval where he would invariably be asked to umpire the Cricket and I soon learned all about the game and now live where Cricket is King, in Australia.



*E.A. Peck*

Often when I was sent on a chore I walked across the dam to catch the bus and into town to cadge a soda off Grandad Peck at I believe a place called Hoopers and afterwards before heading back would go along to Drummonds Garage and say hello, he gave me my first dog.

One year there was a very nasty strike at the Auburn Woollen Mills and I had a first class seat when the Police and strikers clashed as the gate to the entry to the Mills road

abutted my Grandfathers field and I just happened to have wandered up at the right time. My parents unfortunately were totally unimpressed when I wandered home to Auburn to tell them all the exciting story.



*LCDR(O) R.E. Geale, M.B.E., RAN(rtd)  
As Commanding Officer of 851 Tracker squadron in  
1980*

## **Beaverton's Hamilton House Hotel and "Preservation Works"**

*Rae B. Fleming*

The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (ACO) has another good plan to protect heritage buildings, "Preservation Works". Sponsoring organizations pay the ACO \$250 for administration fees and another \$100 for incidental expenses; provide historical research; and obtain the co-operation of the owner(s) of the heritage building in question. ACO chooses an architect to examine the building, meet with the principals and write an assessment of the building in question and strategies on how to preserve it. The idea behind Preservation Works is prevention through co-operation. In other words, it is a proactive approach to heritage preservation which strives to encourage owners and heritage-minded people to work together before the owner destroys the building by unsympathetic alterations or demolitions.

Our local historical society, the Beaverton Thorah Eldon Historical Society (BTEHS), thought this might provide a good opportunity for a solid assessment of the former Hamilton House Hotel, a splendid 1870s building that is one of the main anchors of Beaverton's downtown. This once grand hotel had a splendid dance and banquet hall, Alexandra Hall, on its second floor. Many people have great memories associated with the hotel and the hall. The BTEHS and many local residents are interested in preserving at least the façade of the hotel, a three-storey building with one rare Palladium window that allows southern light to bath Alexandra Hall. The façade

also features a two-storey verandah-portico leading to the main entranceway on the ground floor. The buff brick was most likely made locally, as the area was the home of several brick works that used the local clay.

The current owners of the hotel, the Burneys, operate their real estate business on the main floor, and a well-equipped gym operates on the second floor in the Alexandra Hall. Beaverton, a beautiful town on Lake Simcoe, boasts several other heritage buildings including an Italianate town hall, under threat from the municipal government that governs from a new hall in nearby Cannington in the Township of Brock. Amalgamation has resulted in too many town halls.

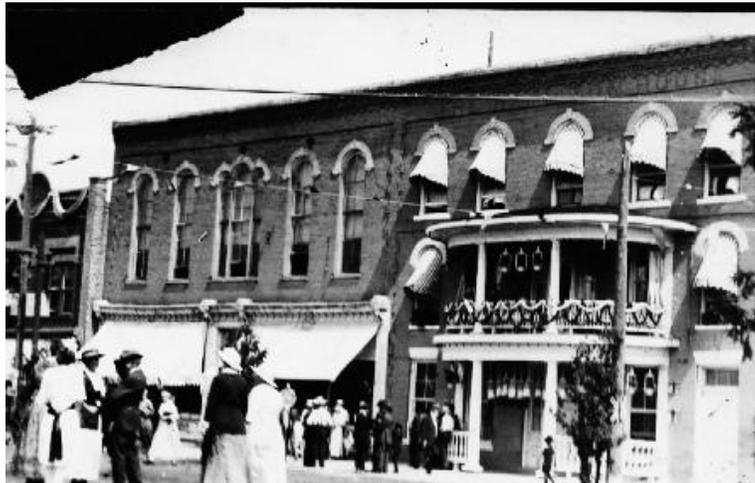
During the Fall of 2005, BTEHS filled in the ACO's application form and obtained the consent and signature of the Burneys. Though our cheque was promptly cashed, the short staffed ACO lost our application form. Several puzzled enquiries from the Society were met with polite promises to carry out the work. When I attended a talk by Catherine Nasmith, President of the ACO, in Peterborough last April, she seemed a bit surprised and indeed slightly provoked when I asked if the ACO was working on the application. She had driven three hours from Muskoka in order to form a local branch of ACO in Peterborough. Nasmith is a busy heritage architect and a tireless advocate and journalist for Ontario heritage causes. As I learned later from John Barber's report in the *Globe and Mail*, 5 August, Nasmith resigned from a committee interested in preserving historic Muskoka summer places. Nasmith told Barber that "Anytime we recommended something be protected, it came down".

Members of the local historical society were frustrated and vexed at the long wait before ACO even appointed an architect for our file. However, in early June it appointed Phil Carter whom we gradually learned was an exceptionally fine choice. Carter was the chief architect on the preservation of main street Port Hope, as well as countless other heritage projects. His reputation in heritage circles, so Jane Burgess told me, was non pareil. (A few years ago, Burgess was the consulting architect when Beaverton and area restored the historic Old Stone Church, east of Beaverton. The church dates from the 1840s, and is now designated a national treasure.)

A few days later, he and his wife Sheilagh drove up to Beaverton, joined several members of our Society, along with Ian Burney, for lunch, then spent several hours carefully examining the old building.

One of our initial requests to the ACO was that the examining architect would return to speak to our monthly meeting the last Sunday in June 2006. Phil Carter was more than pleased to do so, and our Meeting Place was packed, one of the largest audiences ever for a monthly meeting. We knew we had the support not only of our membership but of a goodly part of the community at large. Importantly Ian Burney was there. During the hour before the meeting, he had conducted a tour of the Hamilton House Hotel.

A few weeks later, Phil Carter's sensitive and intelligent report arrived, nicely illustrated. After a brief history of the town and the hotel, the architect assessed the condition of the building and made recommendations for preservation.



*Hamilton House, Beaverton, Ontario.*

*Thanks to Rae B. Fleming*

Obviously the architect and the Society would like the owners to go the whole way and to turn the ballroom back into a ballroom, and to return the hotel bedrooms back into bedrooms. He recommended structural improvements, and of course the removal of all signs of the late twentieth century while at the same time keeping the building up to twenty-first century building codes.

The recommendations might not be entirely realistic in view of the great expenses the owner would have to absorb. Still, we hope that the owners will take to heart Phil Carter's maxim that vinyl, aluminium and other "long-lasting" materials never last as long as good, old wood and are poor choices for people striving to save maintenance expenses. We also hope that the façade will be preserved. It is important to maintain good relations with the Burneys, who have shown themselves most sympathetic to the heritage of the building and amenable so far to practical improvements.

So, was the exercise a positive one? Could it be improved? Was it worth the cost? These questions must remain unanswered for a few years. We must see if the program works to save at least the important parts of the hotel.

The exercise cost the Society not just the initial \$250 paid to the ACO for administrative expenses. When the three copies of the report, a CD, travel expenses and so on were added, the total was just over \$500. That's high for many historical societies. We are lucky, for we have managed to operate in the black each year, thanks to constant fundraising and government grants.

The initial frustration was unnecessary. It would be nice to have an accessible list of interested heritage architects, even if such a list made the ACO less important or redundant for such projects. It seems excessive to pay the ACO almost 50 percent of the total simply for shuffling the application form, and then, eventually, naming a consulting architect.

On the other hand, Phil Carter gave us excellent value in his assessment, his report and in his generous gift of time and resources to return to Beaverton the last Sunday in June to speak to our Society. He has offered to help the Society if we want to attempt to have the main street of Beaverton a Heritage District.

Time will tell.

## Queries

*Diane Robnik*

### Where are the Park Fountains? Not in Central or Victoria Park

#### Editorial Introduction

In our August issue of the Heritage Gazette we asked readers for help to identify a public fountain visible in two snap shots c 1923 supplied to our Queries editor by Jean Olajos. The feedback suggested that the fountain adorned Victoria Park and was built possibly around 1920 by Fred J. Tuggey, a stonemason who came to Peterborough in 1911 and who served as an alderman, 1930-36. We were able to confirm from the minutes of the Railways and Parks Committee of the city council at the City of Peterborough Archives that Fred Tuggey did make granite stone urns for Victoria Park in 1923, and the style of the urns (which are still visible at his long-time residence) was such as we saw in the photos and which match the gates to Nicholls Oval at the corner of Parkhill and Armour Road in Peterborough. However we found no information or pictures to confirm this fountain was in Victoria Park.; nor is it in Confederation Park.

We were however pleased with the amount of information we were able to gather about the two parks and as a public service we share these references. There is a real need for a study of city parks that placed the stories in very wide contexts of urban development, aesthetics and practical issues.

We are now appealing more widely for information that people might have about this local landmark. Were there other fountains in Peterborough that were built by Fred Tuggey, or in his style?

#### Town Council – Regular Session [held Tuesday, 17 March 1885]

*Peterborough Examiner*, 19 March 1885

... From J. H. Roper, President of the Peterborough Horticultural Society, soliciting of the Council a grant of \$300, to assist in beautifying Court House Park. Received.

#### ... COURT HOUSE PARK

Mr J. H. Roper addressed the council in reference to beautifying Court House Park. He stated that the County Council would give a lease of the park for 21 years and make a grant of \$75 per year. The Horticultural Society has considered the matter, and proposed laying out the park and adorning it with walks, flowers and fountains. One gentleman, he said, had offered to furnish a fountain, and the Water Works would supply water. The society expected that the council would give \$300 and the former would aid the project according to its ability. He detailed the importance and necessity of such a place of resort. In answer to Mr Rutherford he stated the Society did not propose to do anything with the Central Park. Ultimately a new fence would be placed around the Court House Park. The public would be freely admitted, subject to regulations for preserving the beauty of the grounds from wanton injury.

Mr Stevenson said the place had for years been an eyesore and a source of disagreement. He had appealed twice to the county council on the matter. He was ashamed of the lack of such a place as a decent park when strangers came to town. The Society proposed to get a competent man to lay out the grounds, and the county council

had agreed to the utilization of prison labour. As to a fountain he (Mr Stevenson) and Mr Cox would see that a fountain was provided. (Applause.) He agreed with Mr Roper in suggesting that the council appoint a committee to act with the Society. He hoped the council would deal with the latter in a liberal spirit.

Mr F. J. Lewis endorsed what had been said, and he thought the council as well as the citizens generally were interested equally with the Horticultural Society. The matter was referred to the Finance Committee.

....

#### TOWN COUNCIL [for Monday, 27 April 1885]

*Peterborough Examiner*, 30 April 1885

#### ... COURT HOUSE PARK

Moved by Mr Kelly, seconded by Mr McClelland, that the sum of \$200 be granted to the Horticultural Society to be devoted to beautifying Court House Park.

Mr Cahill did not oppose the beautifying of the Court House Park, but we had the Central Park and we could not afford to bonus both parks. The School Board needed grounds for a new building for a High School and we had better dispose of the Central Park and devote the proceeds to a larger piece of land for a park.

Mr Rutherford said the town had no power to sell the Central Park. He moved in amendment, however, that the amount be reduced to \$150, but he got no seconder at that time.

Mr McClelland took a similar view of the matter as Mr Cahill. He advocated the sale of the Central Park. The beautifying of the Court House Park was an easy matter. It had natural advantages equivalent to the expenditure of a thousand dollars to make the Central Park equal to it, to begin with.

Mr Hartley strongly advocated the grant. The Council should not be small in the matter. The citizens demanded a park and their demands should be met.

Mr Yelland thought that, to begin with, the sum proposed was too small. The first year's expenditure would need to be heavy.

Mr Menzies said in view of the possible cost we might be put to in connection with the North West war, the town should move cautiously. Still, he was in favour of having Court House Park improved.

Mr Dumble was heard, and recited the long continuous efforts he had been making towards park improvements. He advocated the raising of the soil of the Central Park by street scrapings and the soils of cellars. A strip wide enough to plant at least a row of trees, to begin with, should be so raised. He was in favour of making the town a cheap and beautiful place to live in. The town should be made so pleasant that our children would love to remember it; a place that country people should be glad to come to live in; the people needed a breathing place, and he made a strong and eloquent appeal to the Council to make the town worthy in point of beauty of its commercial importance. He urged the Council not to be niggardly in the matter of beautifying the town, the people wouldn't thank them for it. As a public body the Council should lead in the matter.

Mr Douglass advocated the improvement of the Central Park that belonged to the town.

Mr Yelland pointed out that the preparation of the Park would give employment to labouring men and thus benefit that class directly.

Mr Kendry not only advocated the grant to the Court House Park but also a grant to the Central Park.

Mr Stevenson was heard and said he was the first man to plant public trees in the town of Peterborough. He was one of the largest ratepayers in Peterborough, and the expenditure on the Court House

Park would mean an addition to his taxes. He deprecated the action of the Council in trying to balk the matter. The Court House Park was held in trust by the County Council, for Park purposes, and that trust had been transferred to the Horticultural Society. He had used repeated exertions in reference to having Court House Park beautified, but if the Council refused to take action, the park would be in the negligent condition it had done for years past, as far as his further action was concerned.

Mr Davidson moved, in amendment to the amendment, that \$100 be given to each the Central and Court House Park.

Mr Kelly said this amount was absurd; if the Society could not get \$200 they would take no action. The Mayor and Mr Stevenson had given a fountain for the park, the electric light had been offered, and the water works would supply water, and he thought it small on the part of the council to give so small a sum.

Mr Cahill did not oppose beautifying those parks but he thought the first attempt should be to make the town healthy. He did not think it fair to beautify one part of town, leaving the south part of the town afflicted with a plague spot in the shape of Spaulding's Bay. He was in favour of giving a grant to one park, but he could not consent to grant to two parks lying so close together.

....

#### **A Park for the People**

*Peterborough Examiner, 7 May 1885*

The Peterborough Horticultural Society has amply justified its existence by the excellent work it has done, in developing a popular taste for the beautiful and useful by promoting the creation of interest in both culture and horticulture. But in now way has it earned the gratitude of the public of Peterborough more nobly than in the persistent, energetic and successful efforts it has made to secure the opening of the Court House Park for public use. The directors and prominent members of the society have for years been working in this direction and it is due solely to their exertions that the County Council, who are the custodians of the enclosure, have consented to give a lease of it to the society in trust for the people, and to devote an appropriation of \$75 per year for its maintenance. In like manner the town council has been induced to make a grant of \$200 per year for the same purpose. These sums will be supplemented by as liberal a grant as practicable from the funds of the society. The directors are ready to enter upon the work of beautifying the park in a manner worthy of its natural advantages. The formalities of securing the lease of the park are now all that stand in the way of beginning operations. Of course the first year the work done will not show to very great advantage. It is intended to do the work thoroughly, and therefore the matter of drainage, etc. will have to be attended to. We believe the plans proposed embrace the terracing of the grounds, laying out walks and flower plots, and planting ornamental shrubs and trees. Through the liberality of two citizens, Messrs Stevenson and Cox, a fountain will be placed in the park; it will be lighted by electric light, and altogether the programme of improvements suggests the creation of a place of recreation of rare beauty and attractiveness, which the citizens will delight in resorting to. The funds available for the object are unfortunately not as large as could be desired. While this will somewhat limit the operations of the Society, it will present an opportunity to public spirited citizens to render valuable assistance without any appreciable trouble or expense. There are hundreds of our citizens who could from the surplus growth of their grounds and parterres, supply ornamental perennial flower plants and ornamental shrubs. These will cost nothing to the donor, for every spring large quantities of these are thinned out and thrown away. A little

thoughtfulness in saving them for the purpose of park decoration, would be an assistance that would be highly appreciated by the Society, and would materially assist in the beautifying of the Court House Park. We trust that every citizen will take an interest in the matter, for it concerns all. It has been argued that it was not advisable to tax the poorer ratepayer for the establishment and maintenance of a park, but it is for his benefit especially that this is done. The wealthy taxpayer has grounds and gardens of his own, and while he will pay the larger share of any grant of public money made, he will not receive the pleasure and benefit from a park, such as the average citizen will derive, whose only breathing place and place of resort must be found in a public park. It is to be hoped that the Horticultural Society will receive every assistance and encouragement in their praiseworthy endeavour to give beauty and attractiveness to the town and to promote the pleasure of the citizens.

#### **Court House Park**

*Peterborough Examiner, 21 May 1885*

The beginning of the operations for beautifying Court House Park is at hand. A meeting of the Directors of the Peterborough Horticultural Society was held in the office of the Bank of Toronto on Saturday afternoon last. The lease of the grounds from the county to the society was read, discussed and approved, and the President and Secretary of the Society were empowered to sign it and take the necessary steps to give it effect. The lease covers a period of 21 years. A committee composed of Rev Mr Clementi and Messrs J. H. Roper, D. W. Dumble, J. Stevenson and John Burnham, with power to lay out the grounds and to expend to the best advantage the available funds, which now amount to \$325, the society making a grant of \$50 from its treasury. Volunteer plans for laying out the grounds, from Mr Sabine, were submitted and referred to the committee. Persons desirous of contributing to the fund for improving the park may communicate with Mr Roper, President of the society.

#### **The Central Park**

*Peterborough Examiner, 3 March 1886*

Can nothing be done to put the management of this park into better hands? Last year the scrapings of the street were put on it. So far so good; but what about there planting, etc.? To put in such unsuitable trees as were planted last year – and especially planting in June – is useless expenditure. The Court House Park will soon be a credit to its managers. Surely something can be done to make Central Park more worthy of us than it is. Let it be handed over to a committee who energy and good taste will secure better results. It would cost little if the expenditure is well-managed, but such management as last year means expenditure, without any corresponding benefit.

#### **The Brown Memorial**

*Peterborough Examiner, 3 March 1886*

At a meeting of the Brown Memorial Committee, held yesterday afternoon, it was decided to erect a Ohio sandstone drinking fountain, from plans furnished by Mr J. E. Belcher. Col. H. Rogers is prepared to receive tenders, at the post office, for the contract of building the fountain.

#### **Horticultural Society**

*Peterborough Examiner, 12 April 1886*

A well-attended meeting of the directors of the Peterborough Horticultural Society was held in the offices of the Bank of Toronto on Saturday afternoon, the President, Mr J. H. Roper, in the chair. Mr

John Carnegie, MPP, was present, and explained that, according to the amended Agricultural Act, the Horticultural Society, by failing to make its annual report to the Government in August, would thereby cease to exist. In the meantime it might re-organized so as to include Ashburnham. In this way the grant of \$140 hitherto taken from the funds of the West Riding Agricultural Society would be taken, pro rata of membership, from the funds of both the East Riding and West Riding Societies. The directors decided upon taking this course, and the secretary was instructed to call a public meeting for Monday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, at 4 pm, in the Council Chamber, to reorganize the society. The present society can assign to the new society its rules and regulations and by-laws, its interest in Court House park, etc. A deputation was appointed to confer with the Town Council on this and kindred subjects, and also to press the matter of an additional grant.

#### HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

*Peterborough Examiner*, 12 April 1886

A meeting will be held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER, in the Town of Peterborough, On Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> Inst. at 4 p.m., for the purpose of organizing a Horticultural Society for the Town of Peterborough, and the Village of Ashburnham, under the provisions of the Agricultural and Arts Act. A full attendance of all parties desiring to assist or become members is requested.

JAMES STEVENSON, Mayor of Peterborough  
JOHN BURNHAM, Reeve of Ashburnham  
Peterborough, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1886

#### The Brown Memorial Fountain

*Peterborough Examiner*, 12 April 1886

The Brown Memorial Committee has accepted the plans of Mr J. E. Belcher, architect, for a stone drinking fountain, to be erected to the memory of the late Capt. T. Brown, killed at the battle of Batoche and have instructed the task of carrying out the design to Mr Burgess. Judging from the plans the fountain will constitute a very handsome adornment. It will be made of Ohio free stone, will be 11 ft 6 in high with a base of 4 ft 6 in by 3 ft. The Gothic style of architecture has been adopted with top of finial in the centre of the gable with which the fountain will be surmounted. Four buttresses, with pinnacles, will appear at the angles. The gable has a boldly moulded coping, relieved by quarterfoil pannels. The water will flow from a bronzed lion's head attached to the stone in a deeply recessed and richly moulded Gothic pannel, the arches of which will spring from dwarfed marble shafts. The buttresses and pannels will be elegantly carved and moulded. The deceased soldier's name will appear on a marble tablet at the base of the gable. The back and sides will be relieved in the same manner as the front. The whole structure will rest upon a limestone base seven or eight feet square, the projection beyond the base forming steps. As the contract price is about \$50 over the amount already subscribed toward the fund, those who are in sympathy with the movement and who have not already contributed have an opportunity of assisting. The Treasurer, Mr E. B. Edwards, is prepared to receive further contributions. A site has not been decided on as yet, but it is understood that an effort will be made to secure the Court House Park.

#### Horticultural Society

A Union Society for Peterborough and Ashburnham Formed Under the Amended Act

*Peterborough Examiner*, 20 April 1886

According to announcement, a public meeting was held in the Council Chamber yesterday afternoon for the purpose of organizing a Horticultural Society for the town of Peterborough and the village of Ashburnham, under the provisions of the amended Agricultural and Arts Act. The meeting was fairly well attended by prominent citizens who take an active part in such matters.

His Worship Mayor Stevenson was voted to the chair, and Mr J. H. Roper acted as Secretary *pro tem*.

Moved by Rev V. Clementi, seconded by Col H. C. Rogers, that a society be now organized under the name of the Peterborough and Ashburnham Horticultural Society. Carried.

The following officers were elected for the ensuing years: President - J. H. Roper; 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President - James Stevenson; 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President - John Burnham, MP; Secretary - J. D. Collins; Treasurer - F. J. Lewis; Directors - Dr Burnham, John McClelland, D. W. Dumble, J. R. Stratton, George A. Cox, W. Van Every, Col. H. C. Rogers, Rev V. Clementi, and Rev C. W. Bradshaw.

Rev V. Clementi, J. H. Roper, and Mayor Stevenson were appointed a committee to revise the old by-laws and prepare a new set for the new society.

A committee composed of Dr Burnham, J. R. Stratton, John McClelland and D. W. Dumble was appointed to collect membership subscriptions and also to collect subscriptions to meet the deficiency caused by the large expenditure on the Court House park last year.

Mr H. Nesbitt was appointed caretaker of the Court House Park.

On motion of Mr Dumble seconded by Col H. C. Rogers, Messrs Dr Burnham, John McClelland, John Burnham MP, George A. Cox and the Mover, were appointed a committee to ask the Council to appoint a Park commissioner.

Mr Roper suggested the advisability of the members taking advantage of Arbor Day. Mr Dumble intimated that he had ordered 200 elm trees from Rochester, which would cost 34 cents each delivered here. The chairman added that he had ordered 50 trees for the Central Park.

A committee composed of John Burnham, D. W. Dumble, and John McClelland was appointed to prepare a petition and have it signed, asking the council to submit a by law to the ratepayers for their approval, as required by the Act, with regard to the imposing of a rate, not to exceed half a mill, the proceeds to go toward beautifying the grounds and to be applied by the society.

Col. H. C. Rogers addressed the meeting with regard to placing the Brown memorial drinking fountain. It was almost unanimously decided that the Central Park should be the place for its location, a fountain having already been placed in the Court House Park.

The President and Mr D. W. Dumble were appointed a committee to wait upon the council, with a view to securing an increased grant for the society, also with regard to the changing of rules and the imposing of a fine on impounded cattle for damage done.

The meeting then adjourned.

#### Horticultural Society: Special Meeting of Jubilee Directors

*Peterborough Examiner*, 11 June 1887

A special meeting of the Peterborough and Ashburnham Horticultural Society was held in the office of the Manager of the Bank of Toronto, on Thursday afternoon. There were present: - Mr J. H. Roper, president, in the chair; Rev V. Clementi; Dr George Burnham; Rev W. C. Bradshaw and J. R. Stratton. A communication was read from the Secretary asking, on behalf of the Jubilee Committee, the use of the Court House Park on the morning of June 21<sup>st</sup>. The request was agreed to, and the Secretary was instructed to

communicate with the Mayor to request him to appoint a sufficient force of special police to see that the grounds were not injured by the crowd.

Mr Stratton stated that the President of the Peterborough Electric Light Company had kindly offered to supply a sufficient number of lights to brilliantly illuminate a suitable tower in the Court House Park on Jubilee night, that could be erected by the Society at the cost of about \$40 or \$50. He proposed that the tower, which could be made a permanent structure, be erected somewhat after the model, but much higher than a windmill. This he would furnish with electric lamps, which, placed on the highest point of the park, would be seen for miles in every direction.

On motion of Rev Mr Bradshaw, seconded by Dr Burnham, Mr Hazlitt's proposition was accepted and the president and Messrs Burnham and Stratton were appointed a committee to procure funds for the erection of a jubilee tower. ...

#### ELECTRIC LIGHTING

*Peterborough Examiner*, 11 June 1887

As will be seen by the report of a meeting of the directors of the Horticultural Society held yesterday afternoon, the society decided to place a permanent tower on the highest point of Court House Park, so that advantage might be taken of the generous offer of Mr Hazlitt, manager of the Peterborough Electric Light Company, to place thereon a cluster of lights, which will form a beacon that will lend a vivid blaze of glory to the night and be a conspicuous object for miles in the surrounding country. The tower and lights are to be ready for the evening of June 21<sup>st</sup>, and the light-crowned tower will be a conspicuous feature of the general illumination which will mark the evening of Jubilee day. There is no doubt that the electric light is the illuminator of the future, as far ahead of any other light as a gas jet is ahead of a rushlight, and the general adoption of it by the town for lighting the streets would result, not only in the service being as cheaply done, in proportion to the amount of light secured, but far more effectively than by the use of any other known illuminant. We hope that Peterborough, which takes a lead as a town in every other respect, will let her light so shine, and that the town authorities will take practical steps toward adopting the electric light generally as a means of lighting our streets. We have no doubt that the Electric Light Company will meet them, at least, half way in any reasonable proposition which may be offered with that end in view.

#### The Drinking Fountain Question

*Peterborough Examiner*, 16 June 1887

There seems to be a good deal of uncertainty about fixing the responsibility for the Central Park Drinking Fountain being dried up – the public are thirsting for information as well as water, and there seems to be as great a probability of getting the one as the other. It is absolutely necessary that the question should be settled one way or the other at once. But in the midst of the muddle there is one thing certain – one thing about which there can be no doubt – and that is the Gough, the wonderful cheap man, is giving the most monumental bargains in ready made clothing ever offered in this town, district or province. His \$18,500 worth of ready-made clothing of the first quality, bought for 40 cents on the \$, is yielding unheard of bargains. No one who wants to get double value for his money in ready-made good can afford to neglect the chance of the coming thirty days. Remember that the place where one dollar has the buying power of \$2.20 is at the sign of the Quadruple Dudes, George street.

#### The Park Tower

*Peterborough Examiner*, 17 June 1887

Mr William Forsyth, the contractor, has pushed the construction of the electric light tower in Court House Park so rapidly that it will be completed by Saturday at noon. The tower has a base of 15 x 15 feet and is 75 feet in height to the platform which supports eight electric lamps; an addition of eight feet supports two more lamps – making ten in all. Above this will be placed a flag staff 17 feet in height, giving the tower a total altitude of 100 feet. The electric light company are ready to do their share on the completion of the tower.

*Peterborough Examiner*, 18 August 1887

Operations going on at the old burying ground to transform it into a local park. Walks laid out. Flower beds put in. Paths graded around the monument to Captain Brown. To be known as Central Park.

*Peterborough Examiner*, 4 July 1890

Town council orders Committee to have erected the first public drinking fountains (or basins) at \$25 each at the corner of Water and Simcoe Streets, on Hunter at the creek, at north-east corner Central Park.

#### A BAD APPEARANCE

Has Central Park – A Little Attention Would not be Misplaced

*Peterborough Review*, 3 June 1895

Central Park might receive some attention from the corporation men with good advantage. Peterborough has now several parks of which it may be justly proud, breathing places where the heated, tired citizen may gain an hour's rest in the shade and cool. All these parks are now in first class condition, things of beauty and neatness, except Central park. Although this is perhaps the most prominent park in town, it receives, judging from appearances, the least attention. It is the only one the town has under its own particular care.

At present the grass is growing wild, and presents almost an unbroken field of dandelions. The boulevard in front is uncared for, while the fountain monument looks like the remains of a ruin. The authorities might give a little attention to Central park with good advantage. It would cost little and make a great difference in the appearance of the park.

#### GRAND JURY MAKE IMPORTANT RECOMMENDATIONS RESPECTING COURT-HOUSE

Jury Empanelled in Connection with the June Sittings of the County Court Recommend the Removal of the Buildings and Fence to the North of the Court House – Visited the Public Institutions

*Peterborough Examiner*, 12 June 1913

The Grand Jury empanelled in connection with the June sittings of the County Court have recommended the removal of the sheds to the north of the Peterborough County Courthouse. Also the large board fence and the replacing of the same with more modern equipment. ....

The care bestowed upon the Court House and Jail is noticeable, and provision for the prisoners appears to be well-considered, but we feel, however, that certain repairs and improvements are very necessary, particularly the unsightly and unsafe conditions of the buildings and fence north of the Court House. These are old, and as a fire risk, a menace to the surroundings. The removal of the fence and buildings and the replacing of the same with more modern equipment appears a necessity....

REPAIR CENTRAL PARK FOUNTAIN

And Set Up Drinking Fountain at its base in Victoria Park

*Peterborough Examiner*, 8 May 1923

Since taking over the Parks Committee, Alderman [J. J.] Turner has discovered what his recent predecessor learned, that the water and drainage connections to the fountain in Central Park were not registered on any known blue print. The outlet pipe has not been located, and no one seems to have the plans, Ald. Turner told the Council last night. The search will be continued, and a drinking fountain costing about \$70 will be set up at the base of the spray fountain's rockery. It is also intended that the big fountain shall be put in working order.

PCMA, City of Peterborough, Committee Minutes  
Railway and Parks Committee  
excerpts, not direct quotes

2 May 1923: It was moved that the City Engineer should examine the band stand in Victoria Park and report back.

29 May 1923: The chairman was to procure two urns for Victoria Park; wire waster paper containers for Victoria and Central Parks. The Victoria Park bandstand was to be straightened and repainted.

27 June 1923: G. H. Duncan won the contract to paint the band stand.

20 September 1923: The city was repairing the municipal fountain in Central Park; F. J. Tuggey was paid \$20 for a large stone urn in Victoria Park.

15 February 1924: The city paid \$800 for two granite pillars at the entrance to Jackson Park and to Nicholls Park.

3 May 1924: Repairs were proceeding on the Brown Monument at Central Park.

Park Fountain Inactive For 50 Years

*Peterborough Examiner*, 26 June 1948

More than 70 years ago, Victoria Park was a field of long grass and weeds surrounded by a white picket fence. A rough cart road twisted over the top of the hill to the Court House, and heavy stones with rings fastened to them tethered the horses while the riders were in at Council meeting. Along side of the present steps, several of these stones remained as objects of interest for years.

Then the city decided to take over the beautifying of the Court House, and in a resolution, the County put the acre or so of land that is Victoria Park, under the supervision of the city. And between the years 1886 and 1891, when Mr James Stevenson was mayor of Peterborough, the basis was laid for the present grounds.

It was the same mayor who gave the fountain, which stands in the middle of the park, to the city. It is a graceful piece of artistry, and would be a tremendous asset to the city if it operated. But it has not done so for half a century. It seems that children used to play in the small pool at the top, and the fountain, instead of a thing of beauty, was nothing but a glorified mud puddle. So the water was shut off.

Since then the Court House has been repainted, and reshingled. The three flight of steps going up the hill have appeared through the donations of local citizens. The flower gardens have grown, the walks laid out, and the stone flower pots provided. But the fountain still refuses to take its part. One citizen suggested a strong and ornamental fence high enough to keep the youngsters out, then perhaps the fountain could be put in operation again without detracting from the beauty of the park.

Small Sidewalk Superintendents

*Peterborough Examiner*, 26 June 1948

Small sidewalk superintendents, on their way to afternoon classes at Central School on Tuesday [8 November], watched a crew from the City Parks Department dismantle the old fountain, a landmark in Victoria Park since 1885. The city proposes to replace it by a more modern structure which will retain some of the old fountain's fixtures, but will spout water and perhaps be illuminated. The old fountain had not played for a generation. [This was caption for a neat Examiner Staff Photo.]

Suggested Peterborough Statues

[Four satirical cartoons by "Bailey" showing possible fountain statues featuring Prudence Peterborough appeared in the Examiner, 15, 17 and 19 August 1949 and 29 September 1949.]

Park Fountain Discarded, No Statue Yet

*Peterborough Examiner*, 25 August 1949

"It won't go out of the Old Country." This was the flat prediction made by Mayor M. J. Swanston at a meeting of Parks Committee of the City Council Wednesday night when yet another round was fought in the battle between Peterborough, London (Ontario) et al over the statue of Queen Victoria now lying in storage in Dublin, Eire. His Worship made the remark after the chairman, Alderman Dr Herbert Young, had read a letter from the County Council in which that body had expressed willingness for the city authorities to remove the ornamental fountain in Victoria Park. Alderman Young's suggestion that the location of the fountain would be a good place for the statue prompted the mayor's prognostication.

It was the consensus of opinion of the committee members that the fountain was not worth repairing and that its present condition was "dangerous". Thereafter, it was decided to have employees of the Parks Department remove it from its present site immediately.

The much discussed statue of Britain's longest reigning monarch also came up for debate at a City Council meeting earlier in the evening, when City Clerk E. A. Outram read a letter on the subject from Hon L. B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, in reply to one which the council recently despatched to him. Hon Mr Pearson, who had been asked to use his good offices in trying to secure the statue for this city, replied that he has asked the Canadian High Commissioner to take the matter up with the Irish government. Mr Pearson pointed out, however, that final disposition of the statue was a matter entirely at the discretion of Dublin and that other centres were also contending for it.

The letter was ordered filed.

Hope to Replace Fountain By Something More Modern

*Peterborough Examiner*, 24 September 1949

Now that the Queen Victoria statue in Dublin has lost its attraction for Peterburians, attention is once more focused on repairing the fountain in Victoria Park. And if present plans go through a new fountain – this time with water – will be operating by late Spring.

An informal meeting Friday afternoon under the cahirmanship of Alderman Herbert Young came to this conclusion after a 30-minute conference.

Planned is a slightly fountain with the same cast-iron column being re-used, but topped with an ornamental figure, preferably human but not necessarily female. The vast rock file now forming the base will be dragged away and a cement pool for children to wade in will be substituted.

If possible lights will be installed to add to the aesthetic appeal after dusk.

Property owners who customarily groan at unforeseen civic expenditure need only emit a sigh of relief this time, the committee reports; for the total cost is set at \$500.

Not only that but it is hoped that after the County Council takes a peek at the blue print it will contribute a few dollars toward the beautification of the park.

(At the last meeting of the County Council the city was granted permission to repair or replace the fountain in Victoria Park, but there was no offer of financial aid. The property remains that of the county so long as it is used as a park.)

A new pipe will be sunk down the centre of the column and it will be linked up with the water line of Water Street. Both the Utilities and the Parks Department are not sure of just how the fountain worked many years ago, but they expect to unravel the mystery when the present structure is torn down.

(As a matter of interest they wanted to know if any reader of the Examiner had an old postcard or photo of the present fountain in working order. Despite the active interest shown by several Water Street residents in the rejuvenation of this landmark, members of the committee seemed unaware of its history.)

Armar Butcher of the Parks Department said he would demolish the old fountain this Fall, preserving if possible the old column for future re-assembling.

The short meeting concluded with a general discussion of bizarre fountains found in European centres somewhat less inhibited than Peterborough.

#### Ring-Around-The-Fountain

*Peterborough Examiner*, 14 March 1952

Ring-Around-The-Fountain, on skates, is the popular pastime with young people these days in Victoria Park. The area is ice-covered, bumpy and provides thrills aplenty. In the above tableau, are, left to right, Ernie McLean, Allan Reid, Dorothy Bannon, Isabel Sanders, Allen Paton, Terry Higgins and Jerry Sedwick. [Caption for an Examiner Staff Photo.]

#### It's Shady, Comfortable and Damp

*Peterborough Examiner*, 30 June 1952

It's shady, comfortable and damp at Victoria Park's Fishing Boy fountain that had water turned on this weekend. Three boys in passing found it a diversion for a few minutes. Brian Dunford and David Irwin were contented to sit and paddle while Peter Dunford helped himself to a drink from the catch basin. [Caption for an Examiner Staff Photo.]

## Closing the Old Burial Ground

As we reported earlier the North Ward Burial Ground in what is now Confederation Park closed in 1854. As we went to press there was still no report from the provincial authorities about whether the burial ground will be declared closed again, 152 years later. While our research had been in the original sources and newspapers, we thought readers would like to know the views of Dr T. W. Poole, author of the 1867 history of Peterborough. He agrees with our position.

Poole, *Early Settlement of Peterborough County*, page 67

"Towards the close of the year of 1851, a by-law of the County

Council was passed, instructing the Wardens to execute and transfer a deed, in trust, of the general Protestant burying ground in Peterborough to the Town Council, the said ground consisting of lots one, two and three on the south side of McDonnell street and west of George street, and lots one, two and three north of Murray street and west of George street; and also to transfer for school purposes to the Town Council lot number five on the south side of London street, and lot number ten on the north side of King street, both being west of George street, but such official transfer appears never to have been actually made, or if made not registered."

Poole, *Early Settlement of Peterborough County*, page 68

"Soon after the incorporation of the town, in 1850, an agitation was commenced for the closing of the old burial ground; – a result which was not formally accomplished until 1854."

## New Queries:

### David Thompson and the Shaw family

2007 will mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of David Thompson breakthrough over the Rockies as fur trader, surveyor and explorer extraordinaire. The search for an elusive original photograph of David Thompson brought organizers to Peterborough where one of Thompson's daughters was married to George E. Shaw. Mrs Shaw was one of two sisters still living in 1927 when the Toronto Star Weekly, 28 May 1927, marked the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death with an article on the remarkable Thompson. It was accompanied by a photograph of Thompson, likely taken in Montreal in the 1850s. There are several internet sources wrongly reporting such a photograph does not exist. The photo was apparently supplied by one of the daughters of Mrs Shaw, of which Mrs Tate and Mrs Sheldrake both lived in Toronto. We are not certain which descendent had the unique picture to pass on. However, one of the threads to the mystery passes through Peterborough and we have done some research to see what might be possible. The question: Is there a descendent now living who might possess the original of this image? TVA volunteers, including Jill, Andre, Toni, Susan and Elwood, set out to unravel what was known, and what might be knowable. We are grateful, as well for the co-operation of the people at the Little Lake Cemetery and Dennis Carter-Edwards of Parks Canada.

This is what we know of the George E. Shaw connection. David Thompson and some of his family are buried in Mount Royal Cemetery in Montreal. There are several people buried in the Shaw plots [Section A, lot 5, Range 2N] at the Little Lake Cemetery in Peterborough; there is no marker.

1. George E. Shaw (1827-1880)
2. Mary E. Shaw (2 April 1827-1906) wife of 1, daughter of David Thompson
3. Frances "Fanny" McLeod (1801-1884) sister of 2
4. Charlotte Emma Shaw (1852-1921) daughter of 1 and 2
5. Mary Louise Sheldrake (1866-1941) daughter of 1 and 2 [next of kin was Mrs Tate]
6. Isabelle Grover [Mrs T. B.] Tate (1868-1947) daughter of 1 and 2 [next of kin was Gladys Langford]
7. Gladys Langford (1892-1967) daughter of 5 [next of kin was nephew Percy Lingard]

There is a memorial window to George E. Shaw in the nave of St John's Anglican Church, Peterborough.

There are several sources that were available, including

the excellent Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online article [www.biographi.ca](http://www.biographi.ca) hosted by the Library and Archives Canada and J. & A. Gottred's article found at [www.northwestjournal.ca](http://www.northwestjournal.ca). David and Charlotte (nee Small) Thompson had 13 children of whom this article lets us identify the first six in order, Fanny, Samuel, Emma (d 1814), John (d 1814), Joshua, and Henry. Emma and John died in 1814, and in 1815 David and Charlotte moved to a farm in Williamstown and had seven more children including Mary, the second last.

The Shaws had eight children, of whom seven survived the father. The first two daughters were Charlotte and Emma; then the three sons William (bc 1856), George (bc 1859) and Charles, followed by the last two daughters, Mary Louise and Isabelle. Three of the daughters, all living in Toronto when they died, are buried in the Shaw plot. The fourth daughter, Emma, married C. W. Kempf, and she died in Detroit at the age of 29 in November 1884. She is also buried at Little Lake Cemetery, in the plot belonging to the parents of her husband. Although all the daughters are buried at Little Lake Cemetery, evidently none of the sons were.

We next turned our thoughts to George E. Shaw, who died very suddenly in 1880, aged 57.

#### A VERY SUDDEN DEATH

Mr George E. Shaw, of the Ontario Bank Dies Suddenly of Heart Disease

*Peterborough Daily Review*, 28 October 1880

At an early hour this morning a rumour gained circulation throughout the town, with great rapidity, that Mr. George E. Shaw, the well known and popular Manager of the Ontario Bank in this town, had died very suddenly during the night. Upon inquiry we learned that the report was only too true, and that one of our best citizens had passed away from this "vale of tears." It appears from the information which we have received, that the deceased gentleman was in the enjoyment of the best of health yesterday. In fact he was in the REVIEW office during the day, and appeared to be in rather jovial mood. During the afternoon he attended a funeral and in the evening retired to bed, apparently in full enjoyment of the best of health. Shortly before four o'clock this morning Mrs Shaw noticed that something was wrong, and thinking that he was suffering from an attack of nightmare, to which he was subject, raised him up after he had fallen over on his face. He gasped twice, and without saying a word, died in her arms. As soon as she noticed something wrong, Mrs Shaw alarmed the household, and one of the sons, Charles, went in haste for a physician. Dr King, who resides close by, was immediately summoned, and although he went at once, upon his arrival he found that the deceased was beyond all human aid, and he thinks that he must have been dead only about two minutes. Dr Boucher was also called in, but on his way to the house he was informed that all was over. The deceased gentleman was born in the township of Cramahe, County of Northumberland, in the year 1823, and was consequently in his 57<sup>th</sup> year at the time of his decease. His father was Captain George Shaw. Mr Shaw was connected for some years with the Ontario Bank at Bowmanville and Oshawa, from which place he was promoted to the agency of the same institution in this town, assuming that position on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July, 1869, succeeding Mr Eastwood. He has held the place ever since with credit to himself and profit to the company. He was probably as well known both in town and surrounding country as any other citizen we have, and was well liked on account of his prepossessing manners. He has held many positions of honour, to which he was appointed by

his fellow citizens. At the time of his decease he was, as he had been for many years, a churchwarden of, and he had several times been a lay delegate to the Synod from St John's Episcopal Church, Treasurer of the Peterborough Branch of the Bible Society, President of the Mechanics' Institute, a member of the School Board appointed by the Town Council, ex-President of the St George's Society, and a director of the Peterborough Real Estate Investment Company. He took an active part in all our charitable and social institutions, and in fact was always ready to give his time and services for the benefit of the public. He will be sadly missed and his place will be hard to fill. He leaves a widow, three sons, and four daughters, one of the latter being married to Mr C. W. Kempf. The bereaved family have the heartfelt sympathy of the public for the great loss that they have suffered. His sudden demise is an apt illustration of the saying that "in the midst of life we are in death." The funeral will take place from his late residence, Stewart Street, at 3.30 o'clock p.m., on Friday, and will proceed to the Little Lake Cemetery. The Board of Education will attend in a body.

Funeral of the late Geo. E. Shaw

*Peterborough Daily Review*, 30 October 1880

The funeral of the late George E. Shaw, Esq., took place on Friday afternoon, and was one of the largest that ever took place in Peterborough. The cortege was a very long and imposing one, comprising upwards of one hundred vehicles. The members of the School Board attended in a body, and the other societies and institutions of which he was a respected member were also largely represented. As a mark of the great esteem in which he was held by all classes of the community, the places of business along the route of the funeral were closed until it passed by. The following gentlemen acted as pall-bearers: - Messrs R. Walton, A. P. Poussette, Richard Hall, F. J. Lewis, T. G. Hazlitt and J. H. Roper.

#### DIED OF HEART DISEASE

Sudden death of Mr George E. Shaw, of the Ontario Bank

*Peterborough Times*, 30 October 1880

We are this week called upon to chronicle the death of Mr George E. Shaw, the well known manager of the Ontario Bank here, which occurred at his residence in this town, on Thursday morning last, of disease of the heart. From what we can learn the deceased gentleman was enjoying the best of health on Wednesday, and was observed to be particularly light-hearted. In the afternoon of that day he attended a funeral, and retired at night without appearing in the slightest degree indisposed. About four o'clock in the morning Mrs Shaw observed something wrong, and thinking he was dreaming, tried to arouse him. Failing in this she raised him up when he gasped twice, and without uttering a syllable, died in her arms. Knowing that something was wrong, she alarmed the household, and a messenger was dispatched at once for Dr King, he being the nearest physician, who upon his arrival pronounced him to be past all human aid. Dr Boucher was also summoned, but on his way to the house he was informed that his services were not required. Mr Shaw was in the 57<sup>th</sup> year of his age, having been born in the township of Cramahe, Northumberland County, England, in 1823. The deceased gentleman was for many years connected with the Ontario Bank, first at Bowmanville, then at Oshawa, and latterly in this town, where he has been in charge of that institution since July 1869. He was universally respected and liked, and his family have the heartfelt sympathy of the whole community in their sad and terribly sudden bereavement. His remains were escorted to the Little Lake Cemetery yesterday by a very large number of citizens, the Board of Education, of which he was an

important member, attending in a body.

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We notice that the two accounts vary on where Mr Shaw was born. Peterborough's third newspaper, the Peterborough Examiner, was a weekly, and the edition for 4 November 1880 is not on the microfilm, and the story did not make the edition of 28 October. Peterborough enjoyed three solid newspapers for a generation, and for several years all three published daily editions. This is a great help for historians and genealogists. Sometimes the details vary; but at least one of the three will cover the important stories.

The burial records at St John's Parish Archives, Peterborough, show that George E. Shaw and his daughter Emma were buried from there. It appears that the funeral which George E. Shaw attended on the Wednesday was that of Mrs Ann Macdonald, a 64 year old widow, who had been born in India. We did not find any other Shaw family entries during our search in the St John's parish records. The Ontario Vital Statistics records accessed through Ancestry.com confirmed the death of George E. Shaw, aged 57 years and 9 days, whose death was confirmed by Dr Richard King and by Shaw's eldest son, W. P. Shaw. Using the same source we confirmed that Charlotte Shaw was single when she died at 30 Rathnally Avenue in Toronto on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day 1921/22.

Toni Sinclair discovered J. B. Tyrrell's comments which were published in his introduction to the Champlain Society publication of David Thompson's journal. He had talked to the Shaw descendants and learned that there was no photograph or image of David Thompson. However, the descendant gave Tyrrell a print of John Bunyan, famed author of *Pilgrim's Progress*, which looked remarkably like David Thompson.

It is good to be reminded of the Peterborough connection to David Thompson and to be brought up to speed on the plans for celebrating the Thompson bicentennial over the next four years.

Any information or suggestions will be gratefully received by Elwood Jones, [ejones55@cogeco.ca](mailto:ejones55@cogeco.ca) or Diane Robnik, [admin@trentvalleyarchives.com](mailto:admin@trentvalleyarchives.com)

## White Family Reunion

*Jackie Crerar*

We all met on Saturday morning, 23 September 2006 to celebrate the history of the early settlers of Cobourg (Josiah White and wife Catharine Chrysler) ca. 1813 in Cobourg, ON. Cobourg at that time was referred to as 'Hardscrabble' because it was on the shores of Lake Ontario and was gravel and 'hard' to grow anything except trade and boat traffic. Josiah White settled on Burnham land with his wife and entered into business with the Burnhams. Originally, Josiah White came from NY state and his skills were in lumbering, trading and farming. He was first recorded in Hastings County and we are still trying to connect him to William White and his confirmed son Cornelius White of Prince Edward County. Members descended from both Josiah White and William/Cornelius/Reuben White attended the Celebration, as well as members of the Trent Valley Archives and Allied Family Members. We enjoyed a tour of Rice Lake on board the Rice Lake Tour Boat leaving from the renowned Victoria Inn. We enjoyed 2 and a half hours of seeing the lake as our ancestors may have seen it when they arrived. We went up river (towards Peterborough) and then back into Rice Lake. We arrived back at the Victoria Inn to have a lovely Luncheon of Corn Soup, Sandwiches, salads and refreshments before

Bill Smith led us on a westerly tour of Alnwick and the small still existing Church at Roseneath where many relatives are buried with cared for head stones. Much to some attendees surprise, we found family members who had previously been lost!

We came together at St. Peter's Anglican Church in Cobourg where we met and shared our family histories and genealogies. Both Randy Saylor and Peter Johnson gave key note presentations before our dinner and were both very well received. Peter was in full 'kit' representing the Revolutionary War 'King's Men' and Randy gave a presentation regarding the early William White and Quaker connections in settling Upper Canada. We enjoyed a lovely banquet and found many more connections with our 200 year history and it was once again wonderful to share friends, family and history with those who cherish history.

Many thanks are extended to the Trent Valley Archives, the White and Allied Families, Rice Lake Boat Tour, Victoria Inn at Gore's Landing and St. Peter's Anglican Church for their support for this grand and rewarding event.

## HUTCHINSON

Looking for information on my Great Grandparents, John and Odile (Adelia) Hutchinson. My GGF John b.1825 in Ontario according to census, probably in Prince Edward County as this is where his father Amos (b.1805 NB) and mother Hanna (Lerry, b.1811 ON) resided. However it is known my GGM Odile (marriage record O De, Singworth)(oral family history Lemoir) was b.1845 Quebec, perhaps Metis thus the confusion with her name. My father b.1918 knew her name to be Odile Lemoire. John was a Laborer and travelled to Peterborough. Their marriage was registered in Peterborough County Wes Meth Church Hastings, their residences being in Hastings Village. My GF Frederick's b.1872 birth certificate reads place of birth Hastings, Northumberland County and baptism record Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Hastings.

## PEARSON HILL KINGDON

A member seeks information on her grandparents Harvie Allen Pearson and Edna Hill who were married in Peterborough in 1908. Edna's mother was a Kingdon and William Hill was with General Electric for many years in the 1920s and 1930s. She notes many members of the family are buried in Little Lake Cemetery and that some markers need to be raised for visibility.

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## Trent Valley Archives

567 Carnegie Avenue  
Peterborough ON K9L 1N1  
705-745-4404

[www.trentvalleyarchives.com](http://www.trentvalleyarchives.com)

Home of the Little Lake Cemetery tours; the ghost walks; Scandals and Scoundrels pub crawl; book publishing; Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley; archival and library collections; genealogical resources.

*Without archives there is no history!*

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## *Gift Memberships to the Trent Valley Archives*

This Christmas consider introducing a friend to the Trent Valley Archives with a gift membership. Membership entitles free access to our research facility, invitations and news regarding upcoming TVA events as well as four issues of the Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley. Send all gift requests to the Trent Valley Archives, 567 Carnegie Avenue, Peterborough ON K9L 1N1 accompanied with payment of \$42.40 for single membership and \$53.00 for family. Remember to include the name, address, phone number and, if possible, the e-mail address for each recipient. A gift card will be sent for each gift membership. What a wonderful way to say Merry Christmas!



### **Carrier Boy's Address**

*Peterborough Times* 6 January 1883

A Merry Christmas and New Year,  
Of happiness without alloy,  
We wish you, 'Midst your festive cheer,  
Pray don't forget the Carrier Boy.

We've brought the TIMES week after week,  
Through snow or sunshine, rain or dust,  
So now some recompense we seek,  
And ask it not in vain we trust.

For fifty Saturdays and two,  
We've borne you paper without fail,  
Bringing your always something new,  
As each week told its varied tale.

Of battles, murders, mill-dams burst,  
Of fires and cars dug out of snow,  
Of floods and people parched with thirst,  
Of storms above, earthquakes below.

The town has grown, new buildings rose,  
Public and private everywhere;  
And many mansions' built that shows,  
Good work and cheap, a thing that's rare.

To make the Valley of the Trent,  
A route for bearing Western grain,  
To hungry Eastern mouths is meant,  
We've told you so, and will again.

We've brought you also all the news,  
Of filling nauseous Spalding's Bay,  
Of grading to suit private views,

Of contracts given not to pay.

The passing news through us you know,  
Elections, poll booths closed by force,  
Regatta races, big U.S show,  
Deaths, marriages, and birth of course.

You learn from us where you can buy,  
Clothes, oysters, axes, groceries and nails,  
And in our columns you espy,  
Moonlight excursions, auction sales.

Contests for Members or for Mayor,  
Gala days at some hotel,  
Creditors meetings, (claim your share)  
Gay wedding chimes, and funeral knell.

Sunday School fetes, shows, sermons, balls,  
Games of Cricket, whatsoever calls,  
For notice and your interest claims

The water pipes have now been laid,  
From Hilliard's mill all through the town,  
Now they've been tried, but some 'tis said,  
They've given the company renown.

Snow shoe races, ball and sprees,  
You'll always in our columns find,  
In summer months, or when we freeze,  
In winter's cold and bitter wind.

The same small voice that whispers yet,  
Of fashion's force of battles fought,  
Of tales you never will forget,  
Still fills your heart with kindness fraught.

In short, within the TIMES you've found,  
A brief epitome of life,  
Some news we've brought each weekly  
round,  
To interest yourself and wife.

Then don't forget us at this time,  
Of festive cheer, of mirth and joy,  
Be lenient; take this simple rhyme,  
And remunerate the Carrier Boy.

The Trent Valley Archives developed a very entertaining package of Christmas readings which were presented at Cinema 379 in downtown Peterborough last December. This year we plan to take the program on the road to senior citizens' centres and other groups that might be interested. There will be a group charge and the proceeds will go towards the outreach work of the Trent Valley Archives. For details contact Diane at the Trent Valley Archives.

### **Trent Valley Archives**

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567 Carnegie Avenue  
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admin@trentvalleyarchives.com

## Christmas at "Hazel Brae"

A. H. Harris

*With thanks to Ivy Sucee*

[Originally published in the Barnardo's magazine, *Up and Downs*, January 1908.]

**ANY** of our girls who have spent a Christmas at "Hazel Brae" knows just what it was this time, for our programme is the same year after year, only the faces around us change. Sometimes fresh plans are suggested, but in the end nothing seems pleasanter than the old way.

We have quite a large party. Besides those in residence we had several visitors for the holiday week: Maud Paris, Sarah Freestone and Margaret Marshall were among the number. Nora Connor and Martha Scott deferred their visit to the New Year. Many others came in just for the day. Our three little invalids in the Nicholls Hospital were all well enough to enjoy their share of gifts. I don't know at what hour Christmas began for the girls. Some of us were wakened quite early by sweet voices of the tinies singing carols in the hall. Then shouts of "Merry Christmas" at each door, and off they scamper, and then great excitement over some presents to and from various people, the result being evident later on tables spread with pretty gifts.

Mr Smith had once more made hall, dining-room and school-room gay with flags and evergreens. A party of visitors and younger girls started in spite of the snow-storm for the service at St John's. By the time they returned tables were spread and there was just time to put on white pinafores and new ribbons before the dinner-bell sounded.

Friends in town had sent up several fine turkeys, and the Christmas pudding was all a pudding should be, and blazed up finely. It wasn't only plums that pudding contained! Some people rose from the table richer than when they sat down. And last of all we pulled our crackers and donned the enclosed headgear. I wish someone had taken a "snapshot" then for UPS AND DOWNS. During the morning Mrs Foster and willing assistants had dressed the tree, and all agreed the result was charming. So many gifts from friends in town and from our older girls had come in that we were able to distribute quite lavishly to all. A large box of dolls and pretty fancy articles from girls in Toronto was the largest consignment, and was much appreciated. The doll was dressed by Laura Addis, and so excelled in beauty it was hard to decide on the recipient; but all, I think, were pleased to see it handed to little Ada Harford.

Rev Canon Davidson and Rev E. A. Pearson kindly spared time to be with us in the afternoon, and gave a little "Christmas talk" to the children. Then began the distribution of gifts from the tree, and a pretty sight it was to see the children's bright faces and full hands. Some more sweet singing followed, a cantata, sung by the older girls, winning flattering comment from our visitors.

At six we gathered again for tea, and at eight began our evening entertainment. Some "tableaux vivants" had been prepared by the girls, and everyone was a success. Mary Prendergast, Maud Smith, Maud Catterick, Lily Weaver, Florrie Slee, and others took part in "The Seasons" and "The Days of the Week." and there were some really beautiful representations. The tinies, too, had their share, and Emily Cayger as "Little Boy Blue" and Lillie Nockles as "Tom Tucker" brought down the house. Soon after ten good-nights were said with the pleasant reflection that New Year was still to come.

## LAST PARTY OF DR. BARNARDO'S GIRLS IN CITY For 40 Years Hazel Brae Has Echoed to the Sounds of Youthful Laughter / TO CLOSE IN JUNE

*Peterborough Examiner, 25 May 1922*

Hazelbrae will soon be closed up. Sometime along the third week of June, the whole big place will be empty and silent. For nearly forty years now, it has echoed and reechoed to the sound of young feet and young laughter, and here doubtless many a homesick youthful English heart has had its first glimpse of the chill of Canadian winters and the beauty of Canadian summers. And now the big place is being vacated. Even the cat, that, during the successive generations made the house more home-like for arriving parties, is no longer there.

Last Saturday, the final party arrived in Peterboro: 22 girls, in years ranging from eleven to seventeen, the smallest party in the memory of the place. Perhaps the largest number came out in one party in 1911, when 175 girls arrived together. Rev Dr R. C. Blgrave at St John's Church, extended a cordial welcome to the newcomers last Sunday evening, when he expressed the feeling of his church towards the young girls "from the country where people have warm hearts., saying that he was sure they would find good homes, experience Christian love and kind treatment from all with whom they came in contact in Canada.

This last party, the rear guard of hundreds that have come and gone in years that are past, was a healthy happy-looking group, with the roses of England in their cheeks, bright eyes and cheerful faces. The Examiner representative arriving just at their tea hour, there was probably a shade more cordiality in their "good-bye" than in their polite welcome, because, owing to a little unnecessary formality, they waited with empty plates until the visitor departed. The girl in charge of piles of thick bread and butter and other eatables hovered in the background in the interim, but the children chattered happily, one girl with a dark bobbed head relating stories that brought mirthful response from the group at her table. They had their first taste of ice-cream that afternoon, "Canadian castor oil", some of them call it, and are looking forward to sampling Eskimo Pie for the first time, during an afternoon walk, a horse drawing a buggy, which is not a common sight in England. They considered that the horse was much too big for its conveyance, which looked just like an "umbrella", they said. Mosquitos, also, are a novelty, and a very unwelcome one, to the little ladies, the small pests taking advantage of the unsuspecting nature of the new arrivals to get in some good work in the pedal extremities. These girls are brought out for "domestic service", but many of them marry well, or work into other occupations. Their opportunities are unlimited in this free land. According to their guardian, Sister Smith, a traveled young lady, who spoke in terms of acquaintanceship of the bad habits of Polish mosquitoes as experience by herself, of work in war time in France, but who never yet had been to "America", as she called the U.S. A., all sorts of inducements are being held out to the Barnardo parties to emigrate to Australia, in preference to Canada, the Australian authorities paying passage of boys to their country.

The work of the Barnardo Homes since the Doctor discovered the first stray waif hidden under a barrel, has been going on since 1866, and first party of children sent to Canada in 1882. A book published in 1893, giving a brief review of the Homes, gives the sum of ten pounds as the entire cost of sending a boy or girl to Canada, placing him or her in suitable employment in Ontario, including outfit, rail fares and ocean passage. After a lapse of nearly 30 years,

the average cost of outfit and passage to Canada is placed at \$185, and increase in that space of time of about 270%. The cost then, (1893) of feeding, clothing, lodging and educating a child in the Homes in England was placed at ten pence, three farthings per day. Now, the cost of the average stay in the English Homes, before being sent to this country; at least four and one half years, is placed at \$700.

All the children, both boys and girls, will be sent after this, direct to the new Barnardo's Homes in Toronto, the War Memorial Building, situated at 538 Jarvis street, a beautiful establishment affording every convenience and comfort for the arriving parties.

## Trent Valley Archives Close-up Marlow Banks, Fonds 128

Marlow Banks has a life-long association with Peterborough where he was for many years the owner of Banks' Bicycles on Aylmer Street near Charlotte Street. He served as president of the Peterborough Historical Society and retained a strong interest in the historical change of the downtown. His stories and photographs have appeared in the local papers, and as an avid genealogist he produced a very fine book on the Banks Family. His wartime service with the Royal Canadian Air Force gave him a lifelong interest in airplanes and military matters. He was also one of the most avid fans of the Peterborough Petes; for many years Banks' Bicycles sponsored a Petes' award.

Since September 2005, Marlow has been donating his recent scrapbooks and some books and memorabilia to the Trent Valley Archives where they have been placed in Fonds 128. The scrapbooks date from the 1940s to the present. They generally follow a chronological pattern, but there are many flashbacks, some as far back as 1891, usually captured with aged news clippings or old photos. We will be making a finding aid for the collection, but for the moment we think the following dates represent earliest and latest items in each scrapbook.

Marlow has prepared his own index of 729 obituaries which brings researchers to the appropriate scrapbook. He has five obituaries from the 1940s, and a total of 14 preceding 1980. He usually includes the age of death in his index. The scrapbook appears to be items of compelling interest that came to Marlow's attention while checking obituaries; in any event, the scrapbooks and the obituaries are most thorough after 1985. The scrapbooks also contain memorabilia, ephemera, including tickets to events or venues. Marlow has made annotations, often typed, to many items and these add to the personal historical value of the scrapbooks.

- 1 1891-1960s;
- 2 1967-1989
- 3 1990-1992
- 4 1992-1994
- 5 1994-1995
- 6 1995-1996
- 7 1996-1997
- 8 1997-1998
- 9 1999-2000
- 10 2000-2002
- 11 2003
- 12 2004
- 13 2005
- 14 2005

15 2005

16 2005-2006

I have had a chance to peruse the scrapbooks and a few observations might be in order. Anne Nighswander and Janet Cobb are preparing a finding aid. Scrapbook 1 is the most diverse. And is rich in photos, annotations, Christmas cards and menus, all of which help to capture the flavour of the times. He has also several clippings relating to the Toronto press coverage of the fire at Peterborough's Zack's Department Store that cost the lives of four firemen. Scrapbook 2 captures the retirement of both C. R. Banks and Marlow Banks a generation apart, and contains other information on Banks' Bicycles. He became president of the Peterborough Historical Society during the early 1980s and the scrapbook starts including historical articles: on Lang Pioneer Village, Joseph Scriven, the "100 Points of View" Artspace Exhibit celebrating the Market Hall, and the Cox Terrace. Jack Marchen was writing interesting profiles in the *Examiner*. In Scrapbook 3, the Peterborough Petes and the RCAF were evident. The historical interest dominates. He has the interesting flashback of a flashback entitled "When Trees Grew on Charlotte Street" (which we reprinted in a very early issue of the *Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley*). He showed a personal interest in articles on the one-night revival of the Friday Night Club. There was an interesting feature article on the 1929 PCI rugby team, the Raiders. He also has tipped in some old memorabilia, including the program for the night the famed Edmonton Grads played Peterborough and kept alive their amazing women's basketball winning streak. He caught some of Janet Baal's memory columns, and a feature article on Don Frise's successful initiative to restore the 1883 CPR station being used as the headquarters for the Chamber of Commerce. Scrapbook 5 contains some historical items on the 1939 royal tour of George VI and Queen Elizabeth, as well as several family weddings from the 1940s. Marlow clipped some of his own articles. This book has some good items related to RCAF, the Petes and Banks' Bicycles. By Scrapbook 6 there were many articles by Martha Ann Kidd and Mary Hetherington; and there was one by Marlow Banks on the local Big Bands era. He has clippings on he two sad fires of early 1996: the YWCA and the Cheese Shop (known to historians for connections with Hill Weddell and Hills Insurance, the Confederation era office of Sidney Smith, and the old Croft Hotel). There were really good articles on Nesbitt's Hotel (aka the County Jail), Johnson's Greenhouse, Kingan's Hardware and Sylvia Sutherland. In Scrapbook 7 there was interesting material related to the campaign to get the Roy Studio collection for the city. There were articles by Murray Paterson, Karen Hicks, Clare Galvin and Martha Ann Kidd, as well as some fine stories about Ken Armstrong, Moira Whalon and Gordon Best. In Scrapbook 8 there were more articles, some appearing in *Prime Time* and *Peterborough This Week*, most with an historical bent by Martha Ann Kidd, Mary Hetherington, Jim Barker and Elwood Jones. Marlow Banks' walk down Charlotte Street appeared again. There were flashbacks in this volume, most memorably a 1950 article on his father, C. R. Banks, one of Peterborough's pioneer car dealers before turning to bicycles.

Scrapbook 9 includes interesting items related to the *Examiner* photo contest marking the end of the century. The photo of the century was taken at Walkerfield farm in the 1930s with Peterborough in the near background. Second prize went to an interesting photo showing a very busy beach culture at Inverlea Park. The city acquired the Roy Studio collection, thanks to the generosity of Jim Balsillie. Other interesting articles related to the Peterborough Pathway of Fame, the PCMA archives, the Lift Lock, Barclay

McKone, Gwen Brown and Charlie Schultz, who had just retired from drawing new Peanuts cartoons. The remaining volumes carry the story through to the present, with a discerning eye to news articles related to Peterborough's history especially with heritage organizations.

Marlow has given some of his historical materials to other repositories. Much of his collection on the Peterborough Petes is in the Trent University Archives. A part of his photo collection was given to the Peterborough Centennial Museum and Archives illustrating how Peterborough streetscapes had changed between the 1930s and the 1960s.

Marlow Banks index of obituaries is very useful; the following names are of people who died by 1989.

|           |                      |        |
|-----------|----------------------|--------|
| Adamson   | Stanley              |        |
| Banks     | Charles Richard      |        |
| Banks     | Dayna                |        |
| Banks     | Rachel Lillian (Rae) |        |
| Barton    | Wallace Stanley      |        |
| Buck      | Wilfred              |        |
| Collins   | Clare                |        |
| Darling   | Kenneth              |        |
| Dawe      | Beverly              |        |
| Dawe      | Everett              |        |
| Dawson    | Gerald               |        |
| Dorner    | Harold               |        |
| Emary     | Anthony (Tony)       |        |
| Gamble    | Warren Dr            |        |
| Gilbert   | Tammy Lynn           |        |
| Gilbert   | Winn                 |        |
| Glover    | Maxwell              |        |
| Grey      | Edith                | Wills  |
| Huggins   | Russell              |        |
| Irwin     | Roy                  |        |
| Janes     | Jeannette            | Allan  |
| Johnston  | Stan                 |        |
| Kingdon   | Reg                  |        |
| Legon     | Arthur               |        |
| Mason     | Ron                  |        |
| McFadden  | Millie               |        |
| McFarlane | David                |        |
| McFarlane | Elizabeth            |        |
| McIntyre  | Helen                |        |
| McIntyre  | Margaret             |        |
| McMillan  | Ruth                 |        |
| Morrow    | Clifford             |        |
| Morrow    | Harold               |        |
| Northrop  | Harry                |        |
| Perry     | Walter               |        |
| Pruner    | Doris                |        |
| Redmond   | Eddie                |        |
| Ringer    | George Richard       |        |
| Robertson | Dorothy              |        |
| Seabrook  | Marguerite           |        |
| Seabrooke | Ronald               |        |
| Sidwell   | Helen Margaret       | Banks  |
| Simpson   | Thelma               | Buller |
| Spencley  | Earl (Doc)           |        |
| Tanney    | Douglas              |        |
| Toole     | Henry                |        |
| Wasik     | Joseph               |        |
| Wedlock   | Bill Dr              |        |
| Wilson    | Garth                |        |
| Yelland   | Ray                  |        |

## Johnston's Hotel

The Marlow Banks scrapbook contain a version of a favourite local folk tune that was first named Nesbitt's Hotel, in honour of the keeper of the Peterborough County gaol. Edith Fowke printed a version in her excellent book on Kawartha folk songs. The following version relates

to the time of his successor, Dalton Johnston. The references include a local police magistrate, O. A. Langley, of Lakefield. There are also references to several police constables and sergeants: Billy Wigg, Gordon Puffer and Johnny Dainard. The popular folk song was adapted to include those connected with local law enforcement.

On the banks of the Otonabee, there's a nice little spot,  
 There's a boarding house there where you get your meals hot,  
 And across from the Quaker comes a corn-flaky smell  
 To remind you you're boarding at Johnston's Hotel,  
 Oh, you're up in front of Langley and he's reading your charges  
 "Oh, my daring young boy, you've been running at large."  
 Oh, you're up in front of Langley, the truth you must tell,  
 And he gives you your pass to Johnston's Hotel.  
 Oh, the rooms up at Johnston's they are heated by steam,  
 The finest apartments I have ever seen.  
 The rugs and the carpets they are simply swell –  
 Don't you wish you were boarding at Johnston's Hotel?  
 Oh, the meals at Johnston's, you get such a horde,  
 If you want to cut beefsteak, you borrow a sword.  
 It ain't much to look at, but oh, it is swell,  
 Just to be boarding at Johnston's Hotel.  
 Oh, there's old Johnny Dainard, not a bad scout, you know,  
 And old Billy Wigg, he ain't bad also,  
 And there's Percy and Puffer and Mahar as well,  
 And they're looking for boarders at Johnston's Hotel.  
 Oh, there ain't much to do – just clean up the park,  
 And other odd jobs from daylight till dark  
 And then after that I must simply tell,  
 You go right to bed up at Johnston's Hotel.  
 If you want free board in the Johnston's Hotel,  
 Just ramble down George Street a-raising blue hell  
 Dry bread and water don't cost you a cent;  
 Your lights and your water go on your back rent.  
 If you want to get into this palace so neat,  
 Just drink Calcutt's lager and get drunk on the street.  
 Old Charlie McGinty will help you pack your trunk,  
 And you'll get thirty days in the lock-up for 'drunk.'

## Heritage in bricks and mortar; wins, losses and draws

*Elwood Jones  
 Peterborough Examiner, 20 February 1995  
 TVA, Marlow Banks fonds 128*

The Peterborough Historical Society would like to take this opportunity to thank City Council and City Hall staff for its commendable sensitivity to heritage elements of our collective history. We have great hope that there will be support for initiatives from the new Heritage Committee. We appreciate that you share our concern for the future of the Roy Studio photo collection. Sensitivity to heritage considerations emerged in the discussion of the new parking garage.

That said, we realize that heritage has not got as high a profile in Peterborough as it ought to have. Government departments – including the police department and city clerk's office – do not have policies, for example, on the systematic preservation of the historical records of our city. We miss many opportunities to develop a meaningful persona for the city.

However, my main interest at present is to relay the Peterborough Historical Society's unflagging support for initiatives that will ensure the heritage preservation of the Morrow Building.

We support the appeal made by the Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee, and as with them we are willing to offer our services for mediating, for promoting, and for fund raising.

The Peterborough Historical Society is proud of its heritage record. Its Old Buildings Committee was the forerunner of Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee, and Martha Kidd, one of our members, gave exceptional leadership.

We fought a losing cause to preserve the Cluxton Building on the south west corner of Hunter and George.

We fought a winning battle for Peterborough Square: our position was that any new construction on a site that had been the public market since 1825, and that anchored a George Street commercial district had to meet some standards: it had to be brick, it had to front on to George Street, it had to be sensitive to the prevailing streetscape (considerations of height, fenestration and design were the focus of our comments), and it had to permit public access to the riverfront. Happily all these conditions were met. [The developers also saved the market hall and the Peterborough Club, two buildings for which we made the strongest arguments.]

As well, we have, in co-operation with others, designed and produced historical walking tour maps, and given guided walking tours to several generations of students and tourists. Most recently, the society in co-operation with the Smith Township Historical Society, prepared a monument on the Smithtown hill honoring the early English settlers [from Cumberland 1818.]

I would like to see us do more; for one thing we really need a dramatic downtown reminder of the city's pre-European history. The area was known as Nogojiwanong, the Ojibwa word for "at the foot of the long rapids," and a significant battle between Ojibwa and Iroquois was fought on the present location of Little Lake Cemetery. A plaque or re-naming of the park at the foot of Simcoe Street might be a suitable reminder of that era.

The Morrow Building is significant for countless reasons. First, the building is a symbol of the Peterborough business community of the 1880s; its successes and its failures. The building was an effort to draw the downtown northward towards the agricultural fair grounds (now Confederation Park); it was specifically a response to the Bradburn Opera House in the old market square. The building was built in a dramatic Second Empire style that became ubiquitous in Peterborough's downtown; and yet this is the last remaining vestige that was so.

On George Street, we have lost the Cluxton Building, the top two floors of the National Trust building (kitty corner from the Morrow Building). As well, we have lost the distinctive mansard roofs that were added to many buildings, such as the Bank of Toronto building on George and Hunter.

The strategy for the building was developed by George A. Cox (1840-1914) and William A. Morrow (1835-1887); both were married to daughters of Daniel Hopkins, one of the prominent Liberals of town. W. George Morrow (1869-1939), his son, took over most of his father's responsibilities: from secretary-treasurer of the school board to managing the local Toronto Savings and Loans Company and other Cox companies.

The Cox companies were built on family and Peterborough connections, and contributed to the phenomenon that Michael Bliss has noted: in the 1880s, Toronto passed Montreal as the most

important business centre in Canada because Montreal did not have a Peterborough ninety miles away.

W. G. Morrow was a mayor of Peterborough, a founder of the Peterborough Public Library, and donator of the estate that made this city hall a reality in 1951. So the building is key to understanding the booster strategy of two critical generations in our history.

Second, the building anchors one of the most remarkable heritage streetscapes in the province. But for the sad building on the southwest corner of Brock and George, the east side of George street to Peterborough Square is dominated by buildings built between 1856 and 1863. During those years, Peterborough was an extraordinary lumbering town, and the town took on an American character, reminiscent of the Erie Canal towns and Buffalo.

The buildings, for all their differences, were united by elements of cornice and fenestration design, brick and iron construction, and a three storey height. In the days before Otis invented the elevator, buildings in Peterborough went as high as a building ought to go.

Third, the building has architectural pretensions that ought not to be ignored. It was never representative of the best of Second Empire design, but it is a faithful reminder of how ambitious towns could harness themselves to modest versions.

I have often commented that Peterborough, at different times and in different ways, was average; what I have discovered, however, is that average is very unusual. No other town had our pattern of religion, occupation or architecture. We need to understand our history, and see how people dreamed and how people coped.

Fourth, buildings such as this tell us about our people. This building was the post office for ten years. That is part of the political rivalry of Peterborough's downtown. [The two blocks between the Liberal north-end and the Conservative south-end defined the fighting ground for Peterborough's post office; the compromise post office at Hunter and Water cut the difference.] It is also a reminder of the importance of a post office when people had to go to the post office to get their mail. Being near the post office was an advantage that businessmen understood very well.

The building was the first home of the Peterborough Club and of the YMCA. The building is built in two parts because it proved so popular it had to be expanded. In a later generation, it housed a Matthews and Blackwell butcher shop that sold everything except the Pig's Ear.

Others may have their reasons for saving such a fine building. But it should be recognized as a part of the strategy that defined a town, as a key component of a remarkable streetscape, and as a building fascinating both as a building and for what people did there.

Whatever we can do to forward strategies sensitive to these considerations, we will do so. I suggested that if the commercial avenues being pursued do not work out, a heritage alternative might be considered. There are several outstanding heritage objectives which could be met creatively in this one building.

For example, the site could be all or some of the following: 1) an interpretation centre for tourists; 2) a branch of the Peterborough Centennial Museum and Archives; 3) home of the city and county archives; 4) the offices of Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee; 5) the repository of the Roy collection of photos; 6) a research library for the Ontario Genealogical Society, Peterborough Historical Society and Trent Valley Archives.

There are many obvious advantages to this arrangement, but clearly some discussion would be necessary with all principals to determine the degree of interest and commitment possible....

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## A Human Story: The Victims of the Quaker Oats Fire

*Gina Martin*

During my time as a grade 10 high school student in the early 1970s, history teacher and local historian Don Barrie assigned me an interesting topic for my second term research project. In the space of just over four weeks I was to come up with everything I could on the spectacular explosion and fire at the Peterborough Quaker Oats mill of December 11, 1916. Of course, being a naïve 15 year old, I assumed that a quick trip to the Quaker Oats head office on Hunter Street would provide me with all the information I would need to produce an A+ paper. Well, not exactly! With the exception of a few photographs of the fire which they kindly agreed to lend me for my project, the folks at Quaker Oats had little in their files that could help and were very pleased that I was attempting to find out more about Peterborough's worst disaster.

Over the next few weeks I became a fixture at the Peterborough Fire Department and the local library where I spent hours looking over the minute books and newspaper reports. I conducted my very first interviews as a young aspiring local historian and spoke with my neighbour, Sheriff Stanley McBride, a most kind and generous man who seemed to me to know all that there was about Peterborough history. I am happy to report that, after all my efforts, I did indeed secure the A+ that I was looking for. But more importantly I found a topic that now, more than thirty years later, still fascinates me as I continually seek to learn more about the event which, during the Christmas season of 1916, took 22 lives and forever left its tragic mark.

A few months ago, I became involved with yet another research project involving the Quaker Oats tragedy as I was asked to prepare a list of the victims for a commemorative plaque being unveiled by the company. The unveiling ceremony will take place on Monday, October 23, 2006 at Quaker Park and comes about three weeks before the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fire. Shortly into my research I made an amazing discovery. Over the past three decades I have looked at what I thought was a very conclusive list of topics involving the fire. I have examined the causes, the chronology of events for that day and the inquest that followed. I have looked at photographs, floor plans and a whole waft of minute books and ledgers. I have talked to both witnesses and participants and published several articles. But, until now, I had not looked at the "human" side of the tragedy. That is, I had always known that there were 22 men who died within the week of the fire but had not really looked at who they were and how their deaths impacted both their families and society in general. It is high time that I corrected that error. I began my latest research by again looking at the microfilmed copies of the Peterborough Review and the Peterborough Examiner where lists of the dead, injured and missing were updated on a daily basis. I imagined the angst of the families as I saw names moving from the missing to the dead or injured. But perusing the papers also provided valuable context and gave me a glimpse of what life was like for Peterborough residents in December 1916. While the Quaker tragedy unfolded, the First World War raged in Europe and, through the newspaper reports, I soon discovered that sons and brothers of some of

the fire victims were overseas "doing their bit". How difficult this must have been for the families who worried about their loved ones overseas and assumed that their men here were safe only to have them killed or maimed at their jobs. Another point that struck me was that, in December, Christmas was fast approaching. Interspersed with newspaper articles about the events of the war and the devastation at the Quaker Oats were Christmas advertisements from local merchants and notices of upcoming Christmas services at area churches. While Christmas cedar boughs appeared on many Peterborough doors, others displayed black ribbons signifying the death of a soldier or a mill worker. In the words of Charles Dickens, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times."

Having gleaned what I could from the newspapers, I began examining the death records from the Vital Statistics of Ontario. One thing that struck me as I read through the records was the diverse backgrounds of the victims. Ranging in age from 21 to 72 years, these men were sons, brothers, fathers and grandfathers. Some were long time employees and some had been at the mill only a few months. A few were actually occasional employees during busy work periods. Most were general labourers but some were foremen. Many had multiple family members working at the mill while others lived a distance from home sending money to their families at regular intervals. There were Catholics and Protestants, English and European. One thing was certain. This was no discriminatory disaster as it affected lives from all walks.

So who were these men who lost their lives and whose families were suddenly thrown into chaos? Although only their names will appear on the plaque in Quaker Park, it is their lives and memories that will actually be immortalized. Following is an alphabetical list of the victims along with brief biographies and family information.

### **Filippo Capone**

Filippo Capone was just 22 years old when he died. He was born in 1896 to Leonardo Capone and Maria Antonia LeDonne in a small town in the Italian province of Foggia known as Roseto Valfortore. Peterborough seemed a natural calling for Capone. His two older sisters, Mrs. Maria Basciano and Mrs. Carmela Aspero, had already settled here where they had married and were raising families. His brother-in-laws had worked on the building of the Lift Lock and the Trent Canal. The Minicola family, who did very well in the grocery business in Peterborough, had been neighbours of the Capones in Roseto Valfortore and Filippo had heard the stories of their success in Canada. At the tender age of 16, Filippo boarded the steamer "Italia" in the port of Naples and landed at Ellis Island in the port of New York on May 11, 1912 en route for Peterborough. He moved in with his sister Carmela and her family on Victoria Avenue and easily secured work at the Quaker Oats where his brother-in-laws were employed. A year later, his father Leonardo and younger brother Donato came to Peterborough and they too soon became employees of the Quaker Oats. In late 1915, his father and brother returned to Italy not realizing that they would not be seeing Filippo again.

At the time of the fire, Filippo was a bachelor and was employed in the grain room where he operated the rolling machines. When the grain dust ignited, Filippo received deep multiple burns and was taken to Nicholls Hospital where the next day he died of shock. He was buried in St. Peter's Cemetery.

### Richard Chowen

The son of Richard Chowen Sr. and Betsy Jury, Richard Chowen was born in Tibridge, Devonshire, England on April 8, 1849. His family immigrated to Canada about 1860 and settled in Lakefield. On February 6, 1873 he married Jane "Jennie" Montgomery in Lakefield who was the daughter of Andrew Montgomery and Elizabeth Braden. They had four known children and, at some point, moved to Peterborough living at 420 Stewart Street at the time of the fire. Their children were Bruce, Kenneth, Clayton and Hazel Etta.

Richard Chowen was a blacksmith by trade and had worked about two years at the Quaker Oats. It is not immediately known where in the mill he worked. He was rescued from the burning mill on the morning of December 16<sup>th</sup> and taken to Nicholls Hospital where, on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, he died of heart failure and severe burns. He was 67 years old and was buried in Little Lake Cemetery. His widow went to live with her daughter Hazel who, in 1911, had married Raymond Percy Best. Mrs. Chowen died January 16, 1934 and was buried next to her husband.

### John "Jack" Conway

I have not had a great deal of luck with information on Jack Conway. He was born on June 8, 1879 in Galway Township to Joseph Conway and Margaret Buckley. This would make him 37 years old at the time of his death. The family later moved to the Village of Kinmount in Haliburton County where he married Mary Jane Grady about 1902. Several children were born to the couple including John Percival, Simon Clarence and Bertram. At the time of the Quaker fire, Jack Conway lived in Kinmount. The *Peterborough Examiner* reported that he was probably killed instantly in the explosion and that his body was not recovered.

### Vincenzo Fornaro

The second of three Italian immigrants who died in the Quaker disaster, Vincenzo Fornaro was born March 29, 1885 in Francavilla al Mare, Italy to Andrea Fornaro and Maria Febbo. As a teenager he served in the Italian merchant navy and soon married Emilia Febbo of Francavilla. In October 1913, Vincenzo and Emilia came to Canada and settled in Peterborough where Emilia's brother lived. Two children were born to the Fornaros. Andrew Mark Fornaro was born April 25, 1915 and Mary Fornaro on July 29, 1916. Interestingly enough, Andrew eventually married Angeline Aspero, the niece of Filippo Capone. The Fornaros lived in Peterborough on Jackson Avenue. At the age of 32 years, Vincenzo died of infectious burns at St. Joseph's Hospital on December 15, 1916. He was buried at St. Peter's Cemetery. The following year, Emilia Fornaro married Victor Miccoli at St. Peter's Cathedral but then died in 1931. She is buried next to Vincenzo at St. Peter's Cemetery. Descendants of Vincenzo Fornaro still reside in Peterborough.

### James Foster

The son of Matthew Foster and Harriet Cauley, James Foster was born the eldest of eight children in Hackney,

Greater London, England in 1852. Later, he and his wife Mary Ann lived at 41 Dove Row in London and became the parents of 6 sons and 4 daughters. James and Mary Ann along with some of their younger children immigrated to Peterborough sometime between 1901 and 1911. They appear in the 1901 census for Greater London at 2 Dudley Road but then are listed at 634 Union Street, Peterborough in the 1911 Canadian census.

James Foster was a stoker in the boiler room at Quaker Oats and was one of a number of men who died in that area of the mill. He was killed instantly in the explosion and his body was one of the first recovered. He is buried at Little Lake Cemetery.

Mrs. Foster was a widow with much to bear. At the time of her husband's death at age 64 she had 4 sons and 4 son-in-laws serving overseas. Sons William, Matthew and James Jr. were all fighting with English regiments having not come to Canada with the rest of the family. Son John was with the 8<sup>th</sup> Canadian Mounted Rifles while one son-in-law was a prisoner of war in a German camp. Her daughters MaryAnn, Rose, Jane and Louise all had husbands overseas. Sons Richard and Thomas were at home. Mrs. Foster died in 1921 and is buried next to her husband.

### James William Gordon

James Gordon was born in Peterborough to William James Gordon and Ann Martin on July 4, 1875. He was the oldest in his family with a younger sister, Ann, born in 1885 and one adopted brother. He held various jobs in the Peterborough area as a general labourer before commencing work at Quaker Oats in 1914. That same year, he married Mabel Ann McKnight of Fraserville, Ontario, a daughter of Samuel McKnight and Margaret Green. James and Mabel were married at St. Peter's Cathedral, Peterborough on April 20, 1914 and lived at 253 Stewart Street. They had no children. James William Gordon was killed in the explosion and buried at St. Peter's Cemetery, Peterborough. He was 41 years old.

### William Hogan

At 72 years of age, William Hogan was the oldest victim of the Quaker Oats explosion and fire. He was born in Smith Township on June 20, 1844 where he farmed most of his life. About 1862 he married Annie Carey, daughter of John Redmond Carey and Ann Logan. Five sons and four daughters were born to William and Annie. They were James, John Redmond, Richard, Austin, Walter, Winnifred Cecelia, Agnes, Julia Lauretta (Laura) and Anastasia (Ann). A strong Catholic family, both Agnes and Ann entered the Sisters of St. Joseph in St. Paul, Minnesota. Laura married Dennis O'Brien who also died in the Quaker Oats fire and will be discussed in another section of this article.

William Hogan worked only a few months at Quaker Oats. He took the job in order to earn some extra money for



Christmas. He was killed instantly in the explosion and his body was removed from the boiler room late on December 11<sup>th</sup>. He was buried at St. Peter's Cemetery. His widow died in March 1926 and is buried next to him.

#### **Walter Thomas Holden**

Walter Holden was born the second oldest of seven children to Thomas Holden and Mary Ann Alderton at #2 East House Cottage, Thorpe's Plot, Battle, Sussex, England in November 1883. The family left England on board SS Ivernia on March 13, 1912 and arrived in Boston harbour on March 25<sup>th</sup>, en route for Peterborough. Holden immediately secured a job as a feed packer in the grain dry house at Quaker Oats where he worked until he died of severe burns at Nicholls Hospital on December 11, 1916. He married in England and had two small children at the time of his death at age 33. In 1916 the family lived at 606 Bethune Street but later moved to Hamilton, Ontario. Walter Thomas Holden was buried at Little Lake Cemetery where his parents were later interred.

#### **Joseph Leo Houlihan**

Joseph Leo Houlihan was born in Peterborough in January 1880 and was the son of James Houlihan and Julia Shine. On November 5, 1903 he married Teresa Harrington of Emily Township and moved to a farm near Downeyville. Joseph and Teresa had one daughter, Mary Hazel Houlihan, born in January 1906.

Joseph was employed in the grain dry house at Quaker Oats and died of severe burns at St. Joseph's Hospital on December 29, 1916. He was buried in St. Luke's Roman Catholic Cemetery in Emily Township.

#### **Edward Howley**

Edward Howley was born at Norwood, Ontario on August 15, 1864 to Patrick Howley and Bridget Dacey. His parents were both from Swinford, Kilconduff, County Mayo, Ireland. On November 1, 1893 he married Margaret Heffernan of Douro Township who was a daughter of Patrick Heffernan and Jane Fitzgerald. Edward and Margaret had 3 sons and 5 daughters and lived on Sutherland Avenue in Ashburnham. The children were John James, Ellen, Mary, Florence May, Jane Aloisia, Patrick Gerald, Bernadine and Edward Ambrose.

Howley was the foreman in the boiler room and, just minutes before the 10:00am explosion, was seen taking buckets of coal from a truck and carrying them into the building. His body was removed from the wreckage of the boiler room on the morning of the 11<sup>th</sup> and was later buried at St. Paul's Roman Catholic Cemetery in Norwood.

#### **John Carter Kemp**

John Carter Kemp was born at Kent, England on December 28, 1849 and had lived in Peterborough for 30 years. He was the son of John Carter Kemp Sr. and Ann Simmons. On August 27, 1877 he married Jemima Northcott at North Monaghan Township. They had one daughter, Fanny Kemp, born October 3, 1880 who later married Wilbert McMillen. John Kemp was a proud and active member of the Canadian Order of Foresters and lived at 595 Division Street. John Kemp worked for several years in the grain dry house and feed room at Quaker Oats and it was thought that, in spite of his burns, he would survive. However, he died of heart failure caused by infection on December 14<sup>th</sup> and was buried at Little Lake Cemetery. From his hospital bed at Nicholls Hospital he was able to give a detailed account of what he saw the morning of the fire. He said that he saw sparks from machinery ignite the grain dust resulting almost instantly in a 15-foot wall of fire. He was certain that combustion was the cause of the disaster.

Initially there was great fear that Mr. Kemp's nephew, Wilbert Kemp of Sherbrooke Street, may also have died in the

fire. He had left home earlier that morning en route to Canadian General Electric in search of employment. When told they had nothing at the moment he mentioned to someone there that he would then continue his search at Quaker Oats. When he failed to return home that evening it was thought that perhaps he had gone to Quaker at the wrong moment. However, he turned up the next day, having taken a train to Burleigh Township where he was given work on a road-building project.

#### **Domenico Martino**

There is little information for Domenico Martino. He had been in Canada just a short time and boarded in a house at 284 Smith (Parkhill) Street. He was married with a wife and baby son in Italy. Just two weeks before his death he sent money back to Italy instructing his wife to come with their son to Peterborough. He was employed in the boiler room and died the morning of the fire of shock and smoke inhalation. He does not appear to have been buried at St. Peter's Cemetery or any of the other Catholic cemeteries in the area. His wife did not have time to make the trip to Peterborough before her husband's death so one speculates as to whether she may have used the money she had been sent to bring his body back to Italy.

#### **Joseph "Alphonse" McGee**

The youngest of the fire victims, Alphonse McGee was just 21 years old when he died on December 11<sup>th</sup>. He was born in Galway Township on December 29, 1895 to John McGee and Frances Buckley and was the fifth of 10 children. As a child, "Allie" McGee moved with his family to Chandos Township and later to Peterborough where he and his brother boarded at 175 Douro Street. He was unmarried at the time of his death and was buried at St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Cemetery in Galway Township.

#### **William Henry Mesley**

William Henry Mesley was born August 28, 1864 in Trenton, Ontario and was the son of John Mesley and Naomi Elliott. On November 29, 1890 he married Emma Jones in Trenton and, a few years later, moved to 171 Douro Street in Peterborough. Two sons and six daughters were born to John and Naomi and, eventually, they moved to a house at 247 Westcott Street. Their oldest son Ernie Mesley had been wounded in France earlier in the year and returned home just weeks before the fire. The other children were Lula Marjorie, Leitha Pearl, Gladys May, Edna, Ellen and an unnamed boy who died at birth.

William Mesley was a foreman at Quaker and his body was found in the boiler room where the explosion killed him instantly. All six of his daughters were employed at Quaker Oats and, miraculously, all escaped the fire unharmed. Mesley was buried at Little Lake Cemetery.

#### **William Miles**

William Miles was 64 years old when he died on December 11, 1916. He was born in Dummer Township in 1851 to Frederick Miles and Mary Elizabeth Rae. On January 5, 1876 he married Eliza Jane Drain of Dummer and became the father of 6 children. They were Frances Ann, William (died in infancy), William Noble, Mabel Eliza Jane, Allan Wesley and an unnamed boy who died at birth.

After farming most of his life in Dummer, William Miles moved to a house at 471 Rogers Street in Peterborough after securing a job as a stoker in the boiler room. One of his sons also worked at Quaker Oats but managed to escape the fire without injury. William Miles was buried at St. Mark's Cemetery in the village of Warsaw, Dummer Township.

#### **Dennis M. O'Brien**

Dennis O'Brien was born in Ashburnham on August 13, 1876 to Maurice O'Brien and Catherine Hobbins. On 18 October 1905 he married Julia Lauretta (Laura) Hogan, daughter of William Hogan who was also killed in the Quaker fire. The O'Briens lived at 552 Harvey Street and were the parents of six children. They were Joseph Maurice, Irene,



George Stanley, Mary Catherine (Kay), Michael and Dennis Jr. Mrs. O'Brien was pregnant with Dennis Jr. at the time that her husband died, giving birth on 31 May 1917.

Dennis O'Brien was employed as a motor grinder in the feed room and initially escaped the fire relatively unharmed. Twice he returned to the burning building to carry injured coworkers to safety. Witnesses said that he went back in a third time and never came out. His body was never found. After the fire, the two men that he rescued visited Mrs. O'Brien at her home and told her of her husband's heroism.

*Photo: Family of Dennis O'Brien. Thanks to Gina Martin.*

#### **Patrick O'Connell**

Patrick O'Connell was born in Lakefield to Dennis O'Connell and Mary Leahy. In 1892 he married Emma McCauley of Lakefield and they had 5 children. They were Vincent Leo, Walter, Alice Helen, Kathleen Mary and Mary Rita. The family lived in Peterborough at 479 Parnell Street and attended Sacred Heart Church. Patrick was a member of the Canadian Order of Foresters, St. Peters Court. He died at age 47 at Nicholls Hospital on December 13<sup>th</sup> and was buried at St. Peter's Cemetery.

#### **Thomas Parsons**

Thomas Parsons was born in Birmingham, England in April 1867 to Charles and Mary Parsons. He and his wife, Mary Townsend, had 5 children before immigrating to Peterborough in 1913 where they lived at 459 Chamberlain Street. The children were John, Arthur, Edwin (Ted), Elizabeth and Fred. The Parsons were long time members of Knox Presbyterian Church. The year 1916 was a trying one for the Parsons. In May Mrs. Parsons gave birth to twins, Benjamin and Marjorie, who were quite sickly. Benjamin died on September 16<sup>th</sup> and

Marjorie on October 8<sup>th</sup>. At the same time, their son John was overseas with the Canadian army, having lied about his age in order to enlist. Their daughter Elizabeth had been born with a congenital heart defect and took a bad turn in the spring of 1916. She recovered only to die on February 2, 1923 at the age of 14. Thomas Parsons worked in the boiler room at Quaker Oats and was on the missing list on the evening of December 11<sup>th</sup>. His body was found on the 12<sup>th</sup> and was buried at Little Lake Cemetery.

#### **Albert Ernest Staunton**

Albert Staunton was born on September 23, 1879 in Beaverton, Ontario where his father worked on the Beaverton railway. He was one of eight children of William Anthony Staunton and Margaret Hussey. His siblings were William Robert, Sarah Elizabeth, Harvey James, Alice Maude, Wilfred, Alfred Myles and Alexander Clarence. The family came to Peterborough when Albert was 7 years old and moved into a spacious house at 20 Benson Avenue where the family lived for many years. They attended St. John's Anglican Church.

Albert Staunton never married. He was reported missing the afternoon of the fire and his body was never found. The family held a memorial service for him at St. John's and put up a marker to his memory at Little Lake Cemetery.

#### **William John Teatro**

William Teatro was born on February 14, 1857 in Kingston, Ontario to Michael Teatro and Johanna Noonan. On October 1, 1892 he married Julia Murray in Peterborough. They had no children.

Mr. Teatro was pulled from the Quaker wreckage and taken to St. Joseph's Hospital where he was treated for severe burns. For a while it looked as though he would survive but he succumbed to blood poisoning on Christmas morning and was buried at St. Peter's Cemetery. His wife died on January 1, 1927 and was buried next to him.

#### **George Wellington Vosbough**

Born in the village of Castleton in nearby Cramahe Township on June 12, 1885, George Vosbough came to Peterborough as a very young man and worked on the building of the canal system including the Lift Locks. He was the son of Samuel Vosbough and Ida Ellis. On August 15, 1906 he married Harriet M. Kellogg at Campbellford, Ontario and later moved permanently to Peterborough where he resided at 352 Simcoe Street. The Vosboughs had no children.

George Vosbough worked as a checker in the boiler room at Quaker Oats and was reported missing on the evening of December 11<sup>th</sup>. In spite of the fact that his body had not been recovered, the coroner filled out a death certificate giving the cause of death as "burned to death". Presumably they felt that, with all the carnage in the boiler room, it was quite probable that this would have been Vosbough's fate. However, when his body was found two weeks later, there were no signs of burns. A farmer shovelling snow in a field outside the boiler room found the body half buried in the snow and ice. It is likely that Mr. Vosbough was thrown from the building when the north and east walls of the plant blew across the river. His body was returned to his family in Castleton where he was buried in the Vosbough family plot.

#### **William J. Walsh**

Mr. Walsh was born in Douro Township on January 5, 1880 to William Walsh and Margaret Meade. He married Margaret Maude Quinlan on November 27, 1900 and lived on Rogers Street in Ashburnham. Eight children were born to William and Margaret. They were Madge, Leo, Willie, Roy,

Lillian, Kathleen, Freddie and Aileen. The family attended Immaculate Conception Church and William was active in the Canadian Order of Foresters, St. Peter's Court. Before working at the Quaker Oats, William Walsh worked on the Trent Canal system. Mr. Walsh was the foreman in the dry house and, like others, was expected to survive his injuries. This seems an amazing thought given the fact that witnesses saw him being hurled many feet into the air through the blown out wall and landing on the banks of the Otonabee River. He suffered minor burns but had a broken leg and jaw. Sadly, gangrene developed in the leg and he died at St. Joseph's Hospital on 27 December 1916. His funeral mass was held at Immaculate Conception and he was buried at St. Peter's Cemetery. He was 44 years old.

With such prolific loss of life it goes without saying that the town of Peterborough was deeply affected by this tragedy. Evidence of the carnage could be seen for years as many survivors walked the town bearing unsightly scars and burns. Ashburnham was particularly devastated as many of its inhabitants worked at the mill. With so many of his parishioners employed at Quaker Oats, The Very Reverend Dean McColl held a special mass at Immaculate Conception on the evening of December 11<sup>th</sup> for the dead and injured. There were children of various victims who were suddenly unable to finish school now having to go to work to support their families. This was especially true if the older brothers in the family were currently in Europe. Even the families of the survivors were now in dire financial situations since, with the mill gone, everyone was now out of work.

There is one question that bears asking. Did the number of Quaker Oats victims end at 22? Some of the survivors were so badly injured that they were never able to work again. Some may even have succumbed to their injuries years later. We know this to be true in at least one case. Richard Healey of 328 Euclid Avenue received a severe skull fracture that day and was never able to return to work. His wife, the former Adela Sullivan, had 7 children to look after and relied heavily on the help of her oldest son, 11 year old Leo. Mr. Healey, just 32 years old at the time of the fire, lived for another 12 years suffering from severe headaches as a result of the fracture. He died from pressure in the cranium on May 1, 1928 and was buried at St. Peter's. So while technically he did not die in the fire, his life was certainly cut short as he suffered for years from an injury that eventually ended his life at age 44. How many other "victims" like Richard Healey were there?

In view of my recent research into the victims of the Quaker Oats fire I must say that I am very much looking forward to the upcoming plaque unveiling on 23 October. Not just because such a plaque is long overdue. Not just because it will commemorate a huge event in the history of Peterborough. The truth is that in the last few weeks I feel I have developed somewhat of a bond with each of these men. I have spoken with some of their grandchildren and great grandchildren and felt the huge void left by so many untimely deaths. I have looked at their photographs and seen ordinary men who suffered extraordinary fates. But most of all, I have determined that there has never been a group of people more deserving of plaque that commemorates their lives and honours their deaths.

### **Trent Valley Archives Has Successful Year: annual appeal for special support**

For all of us associated with the Trent Valley Archives, 2006 was a banner year filled with good news. As with any organization we depend on our volunteers and our friends. We need people to help around the centre, and we had them. Keith Dinsdale remains our point man on physical issues around the place. Our financial affairs are monitored by Jeannette Cooper, working with Dave Edgerton and Wally Macht. Our website has continued to improve, and is considered the best place to start work on the history of Peterborough and its people. Art Dainton, Susan Kyle, Diane Robnik, Jeff Dafoe, and Chris Minicola have played key roles on this front.

Our terrific publications program which led to new books on the Burleigh Road and on the Mills of Peterborough County, as well as more obituaries from the Examiner, and our ambitious reprinting of part of Mulvany's classic 1885 work called for the work of dozens of people led by Susan Kyle, Doug and Mary Lavery, Diane Robnik, and Elwood Jones. The books on the Burleigh Road and the Peterborough Mills gave us credibility in local publishing that we have never had before and suggest that we could do well by looking for other titles that promote history and genealogy in this region. The *Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley* has been much appreciated by our memberships and the cumulative improvements have led to a 40 page quarterly with colour cover. The diversity of the materials in each issue has been the subject of favourable comment from our members and we have been encouraged by our members making suggestions for future issues.

Even as we work with other organizations, we have strengthened our position with respect to regional genealogy. We have made Ancestry.com available to our members without additional fees. Andre Dorfman continues to ensure the growth of our database of county genealogies. Toni Sinclair, Rosemary McConkey, many individual researchers sharing their findings and data have contributed immensely to our sense of well-being.

We supported the County of Peterborough's sponsorship of the International Plowing Match; John Marsh, Diane Robnik were the point people on this project but we had several people volunteer at our booth, and several people aided Elwood, John and Don in producing the Time Line Chart that gave added interest to our location. The county was also pleased that we produced a special issue of the *Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley* which focused on the history of the Plowing Matches, and on rural themes, most notably the barns. We took a very proactive role in the International Plowing Match, and have reached our widest audience ever. We have secured our reputation as the best place for starting historical research on any topic that relates to Peterborough County or its people.

We expanded our walking tours with the immensely successful Scoundrels and Scalawags. We launched new cemetery walks that have solidified our reputation for effectively communicating the importance of cemeteries to an understanding of local people, and placing them in manageable themes that expand people's understanding of what was important about our past. We have made progress in getting the safe return of the documents that were affected by the July 2004 flood. We have improved our visibility in the local media, with good TV coverage, and good articles in the *Examiner* and *Peterborough This Week*; all made possible by the solid research, visionary program planning, and the

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## **News, Views and Reviews**

continual activities. We co-operated with the Examiner in the production of their major initiative to mark the centennial of Peterborough becoming a city.

We have made improvements to our storage areas by the addition of shelves inside existing units; we have fewer boxes piled on top of other boxes. We have engaged Carol Sucee to be the TVA librarian and she is looking for ways to make our collection of books and periodicals more accessible; we need to upgrade to library software and we are currently looking at possible programs. We have continued to make improvements in our website, and are very thankful for a new agreement with Nexicom that will ensure continuing improvements.

For some months we explored the possibility of moving to a larger facility. We have been in this facility since September 1998, and so it is time to consider and develop our new ten-year plan. We learned that we need to have some funds or angels available to ensure that we can move fast and quickly on good situations. Had we been able to move in March we could have secured a move that became impossible in August. If we decide to stay where we are, then we need to look at strategies for growth within this site. Success has a way of creating fresh problems and fresh opportunities.

We also continued looking for ways to ensure a future for county and regional archives in our area. Since our founding in 1989 we have learned a great deal. And we have learned that there are limits on what we can ever achieve. However, we are encouraged by our rewarding experiences working with, among others, the Burleigh Road Historical Society, the Peterborough Historical Society, the Ontario Genealogical Society, the Archives Association of Ontario, the new Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, Peterborough branch, the City Heritage Branch, and with the county of Peterborough.

Over the year we made additions to our genealogical resources, our archival fonds, and our library holdings. Elsewhere in this issue we have included news about the Marlow Banks fonds. We have received many other collections and are working on developing finding aids for all of them. Peter Adams has donated his historical research on Peterborough provincial and federal elections. Dr John Martyn has donated his medical history archives which has proved to be immensely important, and quite complex. Bruce Hodgins donated a scrapbook of official World War I photographs, together with captions for the newspapers. Among genealogy collections we might single out the research of the late Walter Dunford; his study of the Scott and Dunford families was exemplary and tells much about how genealogical research could be carried out in former years.

The work of creating finding aids remains time-consuming. However, we have good news on that front, too. Alice McKenzie is compiling a guide to the abstract registers in the Peterborough County land records. Anne Nighswander has developed a useful digital finding aid to the scrapbooks of Leitha Kidd. We have different people working on the finding aids for the Peter Adams papers. Jill has begun work on the Trent Glass architectural collections; we have plans of several buildings for which the company supplied new windows. We are working on the excellent photograph collection accumulated by the family of C. Hillier Williamson, author of the history of Omeme.

It takes the support and effort of many volunteers and friends to make an organization hum like this. It also helps that we have had such strong leadership from our only paid staff person, Diane Robnik. She has gone the extra mile in so many ways, perhaps, most notably for her initiative and organization

in making our ghost walks a terrific must-see for visitors and residents of Peterborough.

At this time it is fitting that we remind readers of our annual campaign for donations to ensure that The Trent Valley Archives has the financial resources to support all of these efforts and more. We think our target of \$12,000 would be easily met if each member gave an extra \$50 at this season of good will. But we will gratefully receive all donations for the cause.

If you have appreciated receiving your *Heritage Gazette*, or if you are glad that we have produced great books, or that we continue set the standard for helping researchers, or enjoyed one of our interactive cemetery tours or ghost walks, or found really useful information on our website, or for whatever reason, your support at this time will be really appreciated.

It is worth knowing that our Trent Valley Archives Trust Fund will accept memorial gifts or endowment gifts if you have a specific project that you would like to support over a long time period. Our trust committee can give assistance on how to plan long-term giving, too.

**Send gifts to Trent Valley Archives, 567 Carnegie Avenue, Peterborough ON K9L 1N1.** If you wish to give a gift to a friend or relation, you might do that at the same time. Some people like to tie their gift to their membership renewal and that too is very helpful. Thanks to all of you. Your support means the world to TVA.

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## International Plowing Match

Mather's Corners was busy during the week of 19-23 September when the International Plowing Match determined Ontario's best plowmen for this year. Peterborough County had previously hosted the IPM in 1931, 1941 and 1964 and the August issue of the *Heritage Gazette* gave the history of those events. We certainly had the best of the field on hand. However, for most people the Tented City provided the main focus. Here were the exhibits, demonstrations, food places and washrooms. The Trent Valley Archives booth was in the Peterborough Regional Exhibit. Our backdrop was a ten-foot time line display of key moments in the history of this area. The timeline more or less began in the 1690s when the Battle of Nogojiwanong took place, but there were references to the rock formation and the Petorglyphs that suggested an even older history. The exhibit highlighted developments in industry, farming and technology, and featured many illustrations that would be familiar to readers of this magazine. We used the occasion to sell our books and to promote the *Heritage Gazette*, mostly by showing and selling the current issue which was special for the occasion.

The Examiner produced a special section on the IPM and the Trent Valley Archives had an advertisement in it, mostly to symbolize that we felt we were part of the history of this local event.

Since the site was so large, everyone has different memories. I was able to visit other exhibits in our tent: the city and county exhibit; Lang Pioneer Village; Canadian Canoe Museum; and some Made in Peterborough exhibits. I also visited the exhibits of Hazelbrae-Barnardo, Peterborough Historical Society, and some other county historical exhibits. I enjoyed visiting commercial displays aimed at farmers and some of the demonstrations, especially of the chainsaws – scary stuff. However, the scariest part for me was wondering if my car would navigate the sea of mud. This was even more

memorable as I spent a day getting the mud out of the recesses of my car and once again seeing the burgandy paint job I thought was gone forever.

Let's hope the next match will come sooner than forty years. For us, it was our best-ever opportunity for meeting a general public.

## TVA Politicians

David Edgerton is running for mayor in the upcoming city elections, 13 November. Dave was our treasurer for the past two years and was an excellent generator of fresh ideas. He was featured in a biographical profile in the *Peterborough Examiner*, 23 September. For eight years David has been the sparkplug for the proposed Wall of Honour, whose website [www.wallofhonour.com](http://www.wallofhonour.com) is hosted by Art Dainton and Susan Kyle's company. David has served one three year term as alderman, and has picked up a world of experience in his volunteer efforts and in his years with Canadian General Electric and as a financial planner. Good luck David.

Bruce Fitzpatrick has been a friend to TVA in countless ways, but will be best-known for serving on our board, and for developing and delivering our exceptionally energetic and successful pub crawl fundraiser, "Scoundrels and Scandals." Bruce was, on the eve of the IPM, chosen as the Progressive Conservative candidate for Peterborough in next year's provincial election. We have had lots of opportunity to see Bruce at work and we believe he has the drive, skills and personality to be a very good MPP for Peterborough. Good luck Bruce. We noticed that the *Peterborough Examiner* reporter even in the course of one report could not keep his name straight. At least they know he is a Fitz. And that fits his slogan.

## Peterborough's CPR Station Glass Restored

Gordon Young, Lakefield Heritage Research



Recently, Lakefield Heritage Research was asked to research the stained-glass windows at the Chamber of Commerce office, formerly the CPR station. The Peterborough station was designed by T. C. Sorby in 1883. The stained glass windows in the transoms and upper windows most likely came from the Stained Glass Works of Montreal, 27-29 Jurors Street, now Viger Avenue. John C. Spence, the proprietor of Stained Glass Works, lived at 136 Saint Urbain, as did William Spence, a glass painter. Both Frank Spence, a glass stainer, and artist Miss A. B. Spence lived at 390 St. Dominique, around the corner from the shop. The coloured glass is arranged in a geometric design and none of the glass is etched. Contemporary glass windows in Peterborough designed by William Morris or Robert McCausland, generally for churches, are more complex and of higher quality

Still the transom glass and the upper window glasses are exquisite. The Chamber has an example of how the coloured glass pieces looked restoration. Keith Borland and thirty-one



students from Sir Sandford Fleming College restored fifty-two windows. Twenty-three professional stained glass restorers finished the remaining windows. They are honored on the plaque at the Chamber office. There are fifty-two replicas of such high quality they cannot be easily distinguished from the originals.

We are indebted to these folks for preserving our rich heritage. Next time you are at the Chamber office look up and appreciate our heritage.

*Photos courtesy of Lakefield Heritage Research, G. Young, Editor; information on Montreal supplied by Benoit Morin, Reference Librarian, Westmount Public Library.*

*Ed note: I did some extensive research on Thomas C. Sorby and will report on this in the next issue of the Heritage Gazette.*

## Noted in passing

Brooklyn's historic Green-Wood Cemetery runs scary night-time Hallowe'en tours that last for 2½ hours.

There is a debate raging in London, England, as to what is the most important landmark in Trafalgar Square – the statue of Admiral Nelson or the pigeons being fed by the Pigeon Action Group.

The Ontario Heritage Trust's Heritage Matters featured a story on the historic plaque to Catharine Parr Traill; Robertson Davies was on hand for the 1958 unveiling of the plaque.

Rosco and Rosco has returned most of the 10,500 Roy Studio images which the Canadian Conservation Institute restored and protected at a cost of \$1 million. The images were endangered by the July 2004 flood which broke the basement window at the Peterborough Public Library. Since then PCMA has made technical and space adjustments at their main location atop Armour Hill. Now, the Trent Valley Archives hopes that it will soon be able to arrange the return of records that we had sent to Rosco after the flood.

Pepsi QTG will unveil a plaque honouring 23 people who died as a direct result of the Quaker Oats fire, 11 December 1916, Peterborough's most deadly and expensive fire. The ceremony at Hunter and Driscoll was scheduled for 11 am, and Gina Martin who wrote the excellent collective biography of those people and their families for this issue of the Heritage Gazette will be on hand to represent Trent Valley Archives. Gina is working on a major study of the Quaker Oats fire and we wish her well in research and writing.

Enid Mallory is writing a biographical study of Robert Service. At the September meeting of the Peterborough Historical Society she shared her findings about Sam McGee, one of Service's most famous characters. The real McGee was from a farm between Bobcaygeon and Fenelon Falls. David Bierk commemorated Service and McGee on a hot 1976 stamp. David Bierk and his wife Liz both died too young.

On 17 September, there was a grand military parade and celebration at Queen's Park in Toronto to mark the unveiling of the Veterans' Memorial, a 30-metre long wall of art designed by Allan Harding MacKay. Clearly, Peterborough's proposed Wall of Honour was fashionable.

Lance Anderson at *Peterborough This Week* did an interesting article on the ward system in Peterborough, and did some of his research at the Trent Valley Archives. Elwood Jones has been a proponent of the ward system since the 1970s. There will likely be a fresh shift of the ward boundaries in the new year.

The *Peterborough Examiner*, 23 September, devoted a special section to Freedom of Information, and how difficult it is to get information from all levels of government. We are still a long way from transparency, quick turn-around of information. Persistence is generally rewarded.

Mel Barns of the Peterborough Concert Band (for over 50 years) shared some of his memories of the local music scene with Ed Arnold, *Examiner*, 25 September. His interesting tidbit was prompted by the Royal City Saxophone Quartet's tribute to the Six Brown Brothers, a Lindsay act that performed around the continent. One of the pieces they arranged was Asa Huycke's 1916 "March Irresistible." Huycke was based in Peterborough for some time, and the Trent Valley Archives has recently acquired a picture of the Belmont Club which contains Huycke's portrait; it will be featured in our next issue of the *Heritage Gazette*.

The Art Gallery of Peterborough, 3 November - 7 January, is featuring an exhibit of Jo-Ellen Brydon's colourful and evocative folk-style art inspired by the 1909 visit of two Roma groups whose story was recorded in Fred Roy's Gypsy Series of postcards, and examined in Elwood Jones' occasional paper for the PHS. During the run there will be special events including talks by Brydon and by Ronald Lee, a Roma scholar at the University of Toronto. Writers, actors and musicians have collaborated to produce a dramatic piece in which people in 1910 recall the events of a year earlier in a theatre setting. The story, as always, is as much about the observers as about the participants. Brydon spoke to the Edwardian Conference in May 2005 and her comments will be part of the new occasional paper that the PHS plans to launch on 3 December.

The Peterborough Historical Society is publishing its 27<sup>th</sup> occasional paper in 27 years, and this one is the largest ever. *Edwardian Peterborough* contains the proceedings of the Edwardian Conference and most of the papers presented at it. The conference marked the centennial of the city of Peterborough becoming a city; the result is a book-length examination of aspects of life in Peterborough and area during the years 1895-1915. It should make a good gift for history buffs on your Christmas list. The book will be launched at Hutchison House, 3 December.

Other suggestions for Christmas are the three new books that the Trent Valley Archives has published or promoted during the summer and fall. Mary and Doug Lavery, *Up The Burleigh Road*; Diane Robnik, *Mills of Peterborough County*; and Grace Barker, *The Bad-Luck Robbers*. All of these books have done well, and the feed-back from readers has been outstanding. The Burleigh book is nearly out-of-print but the handsome hardcover version which came out later is available. The mills book is well-illustrated and will become an indispensable guide for anyone trying to locate the sites of grist and saw mills in the area. The Havelock bank robbery of 1961 has appealed to people interested in detective work, as well as those who remember however faintly the events of that late summer. These books are available from Trent Valley Archives

and some from local bookstores including Titles, Trent University, Smiths, Happenstance and Chapters.

The largest-ever recreation of the famed 1066 Battle of Hastings marked the 940<sup>th</sup> anniversary of William the Conqueror's victory over King Harold II, 15 October 2006.

Bruce Lindsay, a licensed funeral director, shared his extensive knowledge of the history of embalming at the October meeting of the Peterborough Historical Society.

Just as we were going to press Mike Peterman gave me a copy of *Winona; or the Foster-Sisters*, a new book from Broadview Press selling for \$19.95 in paper. This is a reprint of Isabella Valancy Crawford's first novel which appeared in serial form, but never in a book. Crawford won a contest for a novel rich in Canadian themes but despite a court victory in Peterborough, her home town at the time, she never got the entire \$500 prize. The publisher's summary is: "*Winona*, first serialized in a Montreal story paper, provides a gripping plot, a suggestive range of female characters, and a surprisingly sympathetic villain. The novel focuses on the lives of two foster sisters raised in the northern Ontario wilderness: Androsia Howard, daughter of a retired military officer, and Winona, the daughter of a Huron chief. The suspenseful story unfolds in and around Toronto and the Thousand Islands and employs the classic elements of sensation fiction: family secrets, bigamy, violence, and an implacable detective."

Abebooks.com the Victoria BC based company selling used books for 13,500 booksellers worldwide has inventoried 100 million books.

Doors Open Peterborough, held the last Saturday in September, was a great success according to reports.

## Trent Valley Archives

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Home of the Little Lake Cemetery tours; the ghost walks; Scandals and Scoundrels pub crawl; book publishing; Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley; archival and library collections; genealogical resources.

*Without archives there is no history!*

**Don Willcock**, a free-lance researcher specializing in Peterborough local history and in topics in firefighting and military history, can be contacted through the Trent Valley Archives, 705 745-4404.