

# OHS BULLETIN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ISSUE 201

DECEMBER 2016

## OHS UPDATE: MEMBERSHIP SURVEY & CONSULTATIONS

## ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO OPENS NEW ONTARIO 150 EXHIBIT

Photo - Heather Anderson



At the 2016 National Council Meeting of the National Trust for Canada held in Hamilton, Rob Levery and Jacques Archambault, Manager, Canadian Heritage of Québec (CHQ) are seen here after their meeting to discuss the challenges and lessons learned in preventing the demolition of historic buildings in their respective provinces. CHQ became a member organization of the OHS in 2015.

**Sarah McCabe**, OHS Reach Project Manager  
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We asked and you told us! A very heartfelt thank you to all the individuals and institutions who completed the OHS membership survey, and to everyone who shared their thoughts with the Society in stakeholder consultations held across the province. We appreciate all of your input!

The central purpose of the survey and member consultations was to better understand members' and affiliate groups' expectations of the OHS, and to determine stakeholders' needs regarding OHS programs and services, which was a vital component of the OHS Reach project (funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation).

In the context of this study, "stakeholders" includes affiliated and member societies, authors, historians, peer organizations, educators, students, archives, libraries, museums, and other groups and individuals, each having an interest in the Society's work.

What did the Society learn?

Overall, the survey and consultations revealed the following key expected roles for the OHS:

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Photo - Edwin Chiu

The exhibit officially opened October 5, with the Honourable Marie-France Lalonde, Minister of Government and Consumer Services and Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs (second from right), cutting the ribbon with Deputy Minister Angela Coke (far left), Archivist of Ontario John Roberts (second from left), and exhibit curator Jay Young (far right).

**Danielle Manning**, Outreach Officer, Archives of Ontario  
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The lead-up to the 150th anniversary of Confederation in Canada is now underway! Archives of Ontario is pleased to announce the launch of its new free onsite exhibit, Family Ties: Ontario Turns 150—the cornerstone of its Ontario 150 exhibit program.

Family Ties explores how the lives of four family groups in Ontario intersected with the larger historical forces of the Confederation Era. It also reveals how the Ontario government celebrated Confederation's centennial in 1967. The exhibit showcases reproductions of archival records from the Archives' holdings, along with artefacts borrowed from institutions across Ontario. The four families in the exhibit represent diverse lived experiences during the Era of Confederation.

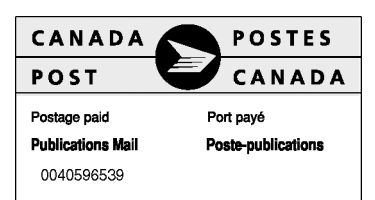
George Brown was a Father of Confederation, the founder of *The Globe* newspaper, and a leading voice in Ontario politics. Records of the Brown family—including letters exchanged between the family members, photographs, and even locks of George's hair—illuminate the political atmosphere surrounding Confederation and the social life of an upper middle class family in Victorian-era Ontario.

Nasa and Permelia McCurdy and their children were a free Black family who fled Ohio and came to Ontario by 1856. They settled in Amherstburg, one of the largest Black communities in the province at that time. Records about the McCurdys reveal how slavery in the United States affected families in Canada, and how immigrants made new lives for themselves in Ontario.

Like many Ontarians, the lives of the Wolverton family intersected with global events. Brothers Alonzo and Newton participated in the American Civil War, while their sister Rose reported on current issues and life back home in Oxford County. The records they left behind include letters

'ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO' CONTINUED ON PAGE 4...

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**Caroline Di Cocco**, President  
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As I settle into my role as OHS President, it is increasingly evident to me how valuable and necessary the OHS is to the legacies and history of Ontario. The OHS engages, empowers, and provides leadership to so many organizations of diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. This provides their community with a voice to tell their stories and preserve their legacies.

The OHS provides programs and services to hundreds of individuals, institutions, and organizations across Ontario. Here are some that I would like to highlight.

- Provide advice on matters relating to good governance;
- Maintain corporate archives of its affiliated societies;
- Publish the scholarly, peer-reviewed journal *Ontario History*; twice a year;
- Publish the newsletter the *OHS Bulletin* four times a year;
- Maintain a reference library of over 4,200 history books reflecting Ontario's diversity;
- Provide consultations and other services to OHS affiliated societies and member organizations which include: examining strategic directions, providing references for grant applications, providing webinars and workshops on topics of heritage matters to members and the broader heritage community, consultation on heritage designations and conservation easements;
- Advocate in partnership with our member organizations, supporting the preservation and designation of heritage assets in local communities across the province;
- Provide access to an insurance program at a reduced cost to members in good standing;
- Bring together the membership from across the province at its annual AGM and annual OHS Honours and Awards Ceremony, which honours individuals, organizations, and authors who have contributed significantly to the preservation and promotion of Ontario's heritage;
- Act as a guardian of the public interest in regards to cemetery preservation in the province;



Photo - Rob Leventy

From October 14 to 15, the OHS participated in the Italian-Canadian Archives Project's (ICAP) Sixth National Conference and AGM in London, Ontario. ICAP is a national network of individual and organizations that promotes a strategy to locate and preserve materials documenting the Italian-Canadian experience. The topic of this year's conference was "Twenty-First Century Approaches to Preserving Italian-Canadian Narratives". The OHS is a founding member of ICAP and congratulates the 2016-2017 ICAP Board of Directors, who are pictured here.

- Since 2005, the OHS has been an EnAbling Change Partner with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario;

It is important we remind ourselves of the services, consultations, and programs provided to OHS members each year. As our groups continue to take on new projects—saving our built heritage, preserving our natural heritage, offering community heritage programming, managing archives and museum collections, and much more—it is increasingly important for the Society to maintain its role in supporting and facilitating their endeavours.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of our donors, members, and stakeholders, not only for your support, but also for the valuable contributions that you make to preserving and promoting our history. Wishing you all a wonderful and joyous Holiday Season!

## ACROSS THE PROVINCE

**Dorothy Duncan**,  
Former OHS Executive Director

The holiday season is almost here, and I hope that you are ready for the festivities. Your international cards should be mailed by now, however, December 19 is the deadline for those outside Ontario, December 20 in Ontario, and December 21 for the City of Toronto.

We are happy to announce that the Barrie Historical Archive was launched in September. The archive includes thousands of images, videos, and documents, freely available to the public at:  
<http://www.barriearchive.ca/>

Several organizations are celebrating anniversaries, including the Simcoe County Historical Association, celebrating their 125th anniversary. The Grey and Simcoe Foresters of the Canadian Army recently celebrated their 150th anniversary, with the Barrie Historical Association and the Simcoe County Museum as partners.

In November, the OHS participated in the 150th Celebration of the Grey and Simcoe Foresters in Flesherton. This special event, highlighting 150 years of history and service at home and abroad, was sponsored by Friends of the South Grey Museum (FSGM) in partnership with the South Grey Museum and the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 333. FSGM incorporated in 2013 through affiliation with OHS.

Best wishes for continued success to the Beaverton Thorah Eldon Historical Society and Beaver River Museum, which celebrated their 40th anniversaries in October. We must not forget the members of The Silvershoe Historical Society, who will be celebrating their 20th anniversary in the new year.

Congratulations to Peter C. Newman on the recent publication of *Hostages to Fortune: The United Empire Loyalists and the Making of Canada*. Look for it in your local bookstore!

Our sympathy goes out to the family and friends of Myrna Fox, U.E., a longtime member of the OHS and the Toronto Branch of the U.E.L. Myrna served as Dominion President of the Loyalists from 2002 to 2004.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- January 14: Sir John A. Macdonald Annual Dinner, with speaker Ted Barris, hosted by the Orillia Museum of Art and History. This event will also celebrate the 150th birthdays of Canada and Orillia. For more information or to buy tickets, please call 705-326-2159.
- January 20: On the Bright Side Exhibit: The Stamp Art of Celine Chen, hosted by Toronto's First Post Office. For more details or to register, please call 416-865-1833.
- January 22: Old Card Workshop, also hosted by Toronto's First Post Office, 260 Adelaide Street East, Toronto. For more details or to register, please call 416-865-1833.
- January 29: Ontario Black History Month Kick-Off Brunch, hosted by the Ontario Black History Society at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. For more information or to buy tickets, contact [admin@blackhistorysociety.ca](mailto:admin@blackhistorysociety.ca).
- February 12: Finding 19th Century Black History in Toronto, with Hilary Dawson, hosted by the Toronto Branch of the United Empire Loyalist Association of Canada, at 2:00 p.m. For more information, please call 416-489-1783.

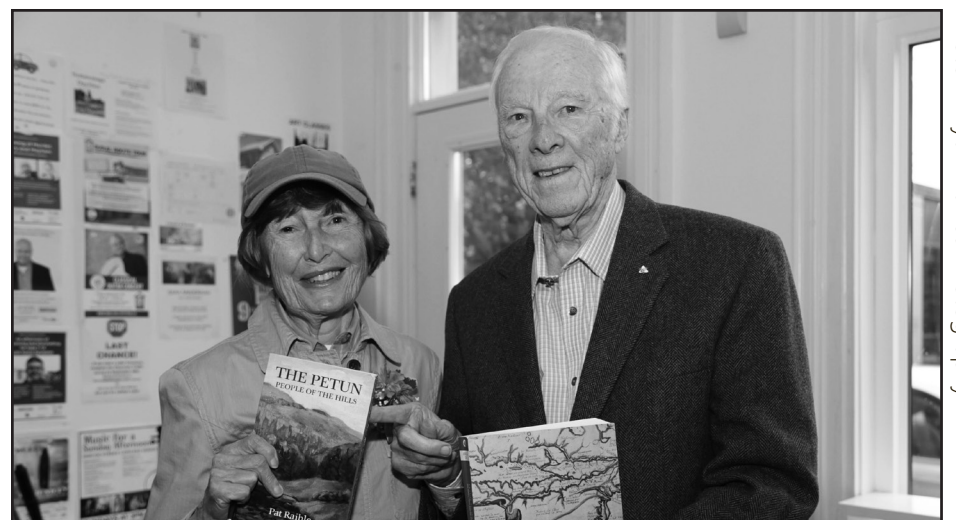


Photo - Bryan Davies Photography

OHS Life Members Pat Raible and Charles Garrad admire each other's books, which both celebrate the history of the Petun Nation. This photo was taken at the launch of Pat's book in Creemore, Ontario, on October 1, 2016. (The book is available from the publisher, Curiosity House Books, [www.curiosityhousebooks.com](http://www.curiosityhousebooks.com)).



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

**Rob Leverty**, Executive Director  
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The OHS has spanned three centuries, and members can look on its accomplishments in 2016 with pride.

After years of planning and preparation, I am pleased to report the successful completion of the slate roof restoration project for John McKenzie House. The scaffolding was erected in April and dismantled in late September. Along with a brand-new slate roof, unpainted galvanized flashings, gutters, and round downspouts were installed and two chimneys repaired. All woodwork, including the broad projecting soffits, the two sunrooms, and the verandah beams and soffits, was repaired and painted where needed. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this inspiring accomplishment, especially: the Museums and Heritage Services' Capital Assets Team, City of Toronto; +VG The Ventin Group Architects; Clifford Restoration Ltd; and Heather and Little Ltd. Thanks to everyone who donated to the OHS Roof Fund. Finally, all the craftsmen who worked on this project were fantastic. Their dedication and quality of work were exceptional and, most important of all, there were no accidents or injuries during construction.

Shortly after the roof project was completed, Roof Tile Management INC (RTM) mobilized at John McKenzie House to repair the original limestone front steps. Architects and tradespeople alike remarked on the high-quality craftsmanship evidenced by the condition of the steps and their foundation, which were built in 1913. The restoration work done by RTM is truly remarkable. This project was made possible with support through the Canada 150 Community Infrastructure Program/Avec l'appui du Programme d'infrastructure communautaire de Canada 150, and by the Toronto Heritage Grant Program.

This past year, the OHS incorporated seven historical not-for-profit organizations, resulting in the continued expansion of the heritage community and the Society's services to it.

Because of the dedicated work and scholarship of Dr. Tory Tronrud, Editor, and Dr. Alison Norman, Book Review Editor, the OHS published two excellent editions of *Ontario History* in 2016. These two peer-reviewed scholarly journals contained eleven articles and twenty-three book reviews reflecting the diverse, complex, and rich history of our province. We deeply appreciate the generosity, skills and contributions of the journal's Editorial Advisory Committee, all the authors, and everyone who reviewed articles and books for *Ontario History*.

This past year, we published four issues of the *OHS Bulletin*. Our members often remark on the high-quality of writing and content in the *OHS Bulletin*. The Society relies on a group of regular contributors who donate their time and skills, to make this possible. I want to thank the following people for their continued contributions: Marjorie Stuart (Cemetery News), John Carter (Museum News), Barry Penhale (Barry Penhale's Ontario), Dorothy Duncan (Across the Province), and Cynthia Comacchio (From the Bookshelf).

The OHS Insurance Program remains very popular with the Society's membership. For example, in 2015, the OHS held 27 insurance consultations with historical organizations and witnessed a 16.2% growth in the number of new insurance policies issued to member organizations across Ontario. This year, the Society has held over 37 consultations and saw a 19.9% growth in new insurance policies issued.

Special thanks to the York Pioneer & Historical Society (YPHS -1869) for the generous donation to OHS that enabled the Society to buy a new refrigerator and coffee maker. Audrey Fox, Past President, YPHS, also made a donation to cover the expense of repairing our kitchen cabinets.

We remain committed to protecting cemeteries from across Ontario, and this year the OHS/Ontario Genealogical Society (OGS) Joint Unregistered Cemeteries Committee documented and submitted to the Province of Ontario lists of unregistered cemeteries for Manitoulin Island, and Middlesex, Muskoka, Norfolk, and Northumberland Counties. OHS and OGS want these cemeteries registered as soon as possible.

In the struggle for the public interest to preserve our burial sites and cemeteries in their original locations: I salute Rick Hatt and the Cooley-Hatt descendants. After a twenty-year battle, victory is very sweet indeed as the threat to relocate the unregistered Cooley-Hatt Cemetery (1786) for real-estate development has finally ended (see photo below). This was another major accomplishment in 2016.

Our readers will remember that in the Summer 2010 issue of the *OHS Bulletin* with our backs to the wall, we were forced to launch a provincial petition opposing the desecration of this historic cemetery. The Cooley-Hatt petition attracted enormous support from thousands of citizens from over 270 cities, towns, and villages opposing its relocation. All the petitions were tabulated by the OHS and we delivered the original copies to the Legislative Assembly. Many MPPs from all parties joined our champion at the time Jim Brownell (Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry, retired in 2011) in reading and tabling these petitions every day for weeks during the 2010 autumn session.

Our strategy had the desired impact—relocation had become politically unacceptable. However, it took another six years of negotiations and vigilance before this cemetery was finally rededicated. Achievements like this are rare and need to be celebrated. Strong, tenacious local support is crucial. If you do not save your local history, no one else will. The OHS can help, but I can assure you that this battle would not have been won without the fearless, dedicated, and relentless leadership of Rick Hatt. Congratulations Rick!

The OHS is also blessed to have such talented members. In this report, I salute Pat Raible who recently launched her book *The Petun: People of the Hills* (see photo on page 2). I learned so much reading Pat's book and enjoyed it immensely. She has made a significant contribution to our understanding and awareness of Indigenous history.

Thanks to everyone who made it all happen in 2016. Whether we connected by phone, email, reading your articles, books, research, or newsletters, or a visit to your community, I was inspired every day by your work to preserve and promote our history. It remains a great honour and privilege to work on your behalf. Best wishes and good health for 2017!



The OHS gave a presentation to the North Grenville Historical Society (NGHS) in October entitled: Coming Full Circle—Lessons Learned from the History of the Grassroots Heritage Preservation Movement in Ontario. The NGHS incorporated through affiliation with OHS on October 20, 2001. Pictured (left to right) are: Kenneth Mews, President, NGHS; Rob Leverty, OHS Executive Director; Rowena Cooper, Chair, North Grenville Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee and OHS Past President; and Bill Adams, Vice-President, NGHS.

## COOLEY-HATT PIONEER CEMETERY PROTECTED AND REDEDICATED

**Rick Hatt**  
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In May 2016, the Cooley-Hatt Pioneer Cemetery was restored and rededicated. This achievement—20 years in the making—was the culmination of many meetings, a great deal of petitioning (the Ontario Legislature to recognize this important cause), and an OMB Hearing in 2010. Shaune Copeman (of the Cooley family) and I (as a representative of the Hatt family) signed a disposition agreement in 2014.

The Cooley and Hatt families dedicated a bench with an inscription to the late Jim Green, who located the cemetery. Jim got me involved in 1996. One of our central objectives was to prevent the relocation of any graves.

In 2004, the descendant families conducted a level three archaeological review of the site. 99 grave shafts were discovered, 60 of which were the graves of children. The developer followed through with their promise to make the cemetery grounds a focal point of the new subdivision.

Another notable achievement is that the memorial stone for Richard

Hatt II, founder of Dundas, has now been moved from Grove Cemetery in Dundas to the Cooley-Hatt Pioneer Cemetery in Ancaster. Roy T. Woodhouse discovered this stone on a rock pile in 1947. He kept the stone in storage until it was placed in Grove Cemetery in 1967 by the Town of Dundas.

Canon Peter Davison of St. James Anglican Church in Dundas officiated at the dedication ceremony in May of this year. The Hatt and Cooley families have had a great relationship with this church over the years. The Ontario Historical Society's Executive Director Rob Leverty spoke about the significance of this achievement and the importance of protecting endangered cemeteries across this Province. Marjorie Stuart, Co-Chair of the OHS/OGS Unregistered Cemeteries Committee, was also in attendance to celebrate the rededication. Members of the United Empire Loyalists Association of Canada were also present, as were 90 members of the community, including family descendants.

To see this cemetery now, knowing that our families can continue to rest in peace, is a most gratifying achievement. The signage for this cemetery will be completed by the City of Hamilton in 2017.



The preservation and rededication of the Cooley-Hatt Pioneer Cemetery is an impressive achievement, twenty years in the making.

Photo - Rob Leverty



# LUCIE AND THORNTON BLACKBURN CONFERENCE CENTRE LAUNCH

**Daniel Dishaw**, Communications & Outreach Coordinator  
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On November 9, the Ontario Black History Society (OBHS) and George Brown College officially opened the new Lucie and Thornton Blackburn Conference Centre.

After escaping their Kentucky slave owners in 1831, the Blackburns began a new life in Detroit, Michigan, only to be recaptured by slave hunters two years later. A group of Detroit abolitionists intervened on their behalf and helped the couple escape once more, this time to Upper Canada. In a



Photo - Daniel Dishaw

The OHS joined representatives from the Ontario Black History Society, George Brown College, Toronto City Council, and Members of Provincial Parliament to celebrate the official opening of the Lucie and Thornton Blackburn Conference Centre on November 9. Cutting the ribbon on behalf of George Brown College and the OBHS were George Brown College Chancellor Sally Horsfall Eaton, (fourth from the right) and OBHS President Nikki Clarke (third from the right). The OBHS incorporated through affiliation with the OHS in 1979.

precedent-setting case, the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, Sir John Colborne, refused an American extradition order for their return.

Once in Toronto, the Blackburns quickly established themselves as leaders in their community. They started Upper Canada’s first taxi-cab company, became founding members of Trinity Church on King Street, and served as prominent proponents of the anti-slavery movement in Toronto.



Photo - Daniel Dishaw

Students from the George Brown School of Design stand in front of their impressive mural at the conference centre, which depicts the Underground Railroad journey undertaken by the Blackburns, from Louisville to Toronto. Student mural-artists Justin Heymans, Adriel McPherson, Jamie (Jung Yoon) Choi, and Huda Tariq stand with Dr. Magdalena Sabat, Research and Creative Advisor.

In explaining the significance of the Blackburns, the president of the OBHS Nikki Clarke told *The Star* that “This goes beyond the incredible story of a couple fleeing slavery to seek freedom in Canada, building incredible community partnerships, and opening up the doors to Blacks in Toronto. Their story runs parallel to many people’s stories: taking refuge, seeking safety, and trying to start over in a new country. It resonates with many.”

The Blackburns’ legacy is one of community, leadership, philanthropy, diversity, and activism. These seem fitting symbols for a college that welcomes students from all over the world, and for a conference centre that will serve as a vessel for the exchange of diverse ideas and values.

## ...‘OHS REACH PROJECT’ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

### 1. OHS AS A CONNECTOR

- To act as a connector of people and groups with similar interests
- To publicize members’ accomplishments, activities, and events to a wider audience
- To facilitate communication within the heritage community (including the academic community), keeping Ontario’s vast geography in mind

### 2. OHS AS AN INFO HUB

- To be an authoritative and robust source of practical information
- Members are interested in a great variety of topics, from accessibility requirements and planning, to electronic access to the *Ontario History* journal and the *OHS Bulletin*

### 3. OHS AS A TECH LEADER

- To advise and assist with social media, setting up websites, and digitization projects
- However, the OHS must also remember the needs of offline members

How have the results been used?

The OHS will use the findings of the survey and stakeholder consultations to better serve the needs of the Society’s members and the heritage community in general. The information gathered has been reviewed and analyzed by OHS staff, and has already proven valuable.

For example, key trends from the survey have been incorporated into the OHS’s new Strategic Direction, which was adopted by the OHS Board of Directors in June 2016. Members’ responses also evidenced a growing demand for online programs and services. This information has been of great value as the OHS designs an information technology build plan for its new online platform. Securing adequate funding for the implementation of this platform, including a robust and updated membership management system, is of primary importance in the new year.

Many thanks again to everyone for your participation and generous assistance. The OHS welcomes your continued feedback and suggestions for innovative ways to better serve your needs as individuals, institutions, and organizations.

Please stay tuned as the Society moves forward.

## ...‘FAMILY TIES EXHIBIT’ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

exchanged by the siblings, showing a personal side to the world affairs that helped drive Confederation in Canada.

The Families of Shingwauk section shares the story of Chief Shingwaukonse, an Anishinaabe Chief of the Ojibways at Garden River, who envisioned an educational centre for the mutual sharing of knowledge between European settlers and the Ojibway people. However, when the Shingwauk school opened in 1874, it ignored Chief Shingwaukonse’s vision and became similar to other residential schools across Canada that separated Indigenous children from their families and aimed to remove their culture, language, and traditions. Records of the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre archives in Sault Ste. Marie document the school’s origins and its lasting impact on Indigenous families.

“Family Ties aims to inspire visitors to explore their own family stories and personal connection with Ontario’s history,” said exhibit curator Jay Young. Visitors can indulge in 1960s nostalgia in the Centennial Ontario section of the exhibit, lured through the exhibit’s time portal from the 1860s to the 1960s by the catchy “Ontari-ari-ari-o” theme song of *A Place to Stand*, the Academy Award-winning film commissioned by the Ontario Department of Economics and Development for the Ontario pavilion at Expo 67 in Montreal.

As she toured the exhibit, Minister Lalonde commented, “I can’t think of a better way to discover our province’s past and reflect on its history.”

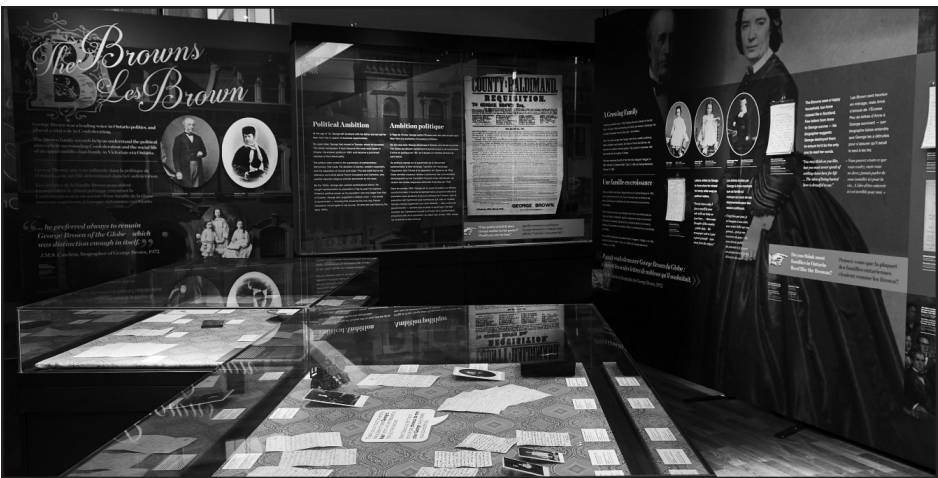


Photo - Edwin Chiu

Come for a visit! The exhibit is free to view in the Archives’ Helen McClung Exhibit Area, located on York University’s Keele Campus at 134 Ian Macdonald Blvd. in Toronto.



## MUSEUM MILESTONES

**Dr. John Carter**  
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Interpretation and education are fundamental and important functions in the operation of every successful museum. Through exhibitions, programming, publications, and special events, museums can serve as centres for learning in their communities.

The lead article in this issue's column describes one such forward-looking interpretation and education initiative offered through the Dufferin County Museum & Archives. Education Programmer Julie McNevin explains this digital history program being offered to secondary school students in Dufferin County.

The Museum Town project is another example of technology being used to enhance the museum experience. This project is the result of a partnership between the Tay Township Heritage Committee and the Huronia Museum in Midland. In an effort to help preserve the identity, memory, and history of Tay Township, 20 plaques have been placed at various locations throughout the municipality. They can be accessed on foot, by car, or on a bicycle. Each plaque has a QR (Quick Response) code that can be scanned by a tablet or smart phone. This provides access to a virtual library, with information about each site that can be added to or updated. This is an excellent way to take heritage out of the museum and into the community, making it accessible to all. It also provides visitors and residents with an opportunity to learn more about the community's history. A great improvement over traditional historic plaques, and something you should consider installing.

I am saddened to report the recent death of Lynn William Caldwell. Lynn was a former president of the Bruce County Historical Society, one of the founding members of the Bruce County Heritage Association, and a strong supporter (along with his late wife Marguerite) of the Treasure Chest Museum. I would like to extend my condolences on behalf of the OHS to the Caldwell family.

## DIGITAL HISTORY AT THE DUFFERIN COUNTY MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES

**Julie McNiven**  
Education Programmer, Dufferin County Museum and Archives  
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Located in rural Mulmur at the corner of Highway 89 and Airport Road, the Dufferin County Museum and Archives (DCMA) is an unconventional place for a high-tech, internet-based education program. There is an interesting juxtaposition created when a class of high school students connect their laptops to a fibre optic internet connection from inside an 1861 Loyal Orange Lodge structure. And yet, it all works.



Photo - Courtesy of DCMA  
Ajay researching on DuffStuff.

In partnership with the Upper Grand District School Board, the DCMA hosts and facilitates a unique and innovative four-credit program for secondary students from Dufferin's three area high schools. Courses taken during the semester include Canada: History, Culture & Identity (CHI4U), Native Studies (NDA 3M), Interdisciplinary Studies (IDP 4U), and Data Management (MDM 4U).

Students' coursework is housed on the Desire2Learn (D2L) platform, traditionally used by post-secondary institutions for online courses. While using D2L as a hub for learning, students make ample use of museum databases, exhibits, and resources to develop research skills and complete museum-based projects. In total, students spend 10 weeks at the museum, with constant access to course content and related material through databases, email, and discussion boards.

Museum staff have found that resources like the DCMA's DuffStuff search portal, Ancestry.ca, and Library and Archives Canada databases are uncharted territory and often intimidating for students. At the onset, the thought that all the answers won't be contained within one Wikipedia article generates a lot of uneasiness. Students are often unsure what they should be looking for, where to look for it, and how to utilize what they do find. Even simply generating questions to guide and focus their research can be an enormous undertaking. There is no doubt that the learning curve is steep because the expectations for the program were set to challenge students to develop research and historical inquiry skills. To gain confidence and experience working with and managing online resources, students have the opportunity to email questions and make consultation appointments with museum staff.

During their time at the museum, students engage in two museum-led projects. The histories crafted by students are presented, displayed, and archived at the museum. The first museum-based project, completed in April, is called "The Canada Case." This year the topics selected were Temperance and Prohibition, Confederation, Technology 1910–1930, and Immigration 1900–1950. Students were presented with a number of artefacts or archival documents pertaining to their topic of choice. Their tasks were to examine and collect information about these objects, much like a curator or archivist, and generate a research plan. Students then use their resources to create both digital and physical exhibits, which are displayed within the museum. Students were also tasked, as part of their math course, to use historical information from Statistics Canada and integrate an infographic into their project.

The Canada Case assignment has challenged students to expand their research and critical thinking skills. They learn valuable lessons including: how to "read" an artefact, that historians often find themselves with plenty of unanswered questions, and that work presented to a public audience requires editing and revision. The anxiousness and uneasiness students grapple with because answers do not readily present themselves via a Google search is one of this project's greatest challenges, but also its greatest reward. The final step for students at the conclusion of the project is to present their information to audiences that include museum staff, volunteers, and members. Digital exhibits for 2016 are available to view at [digitalhistorianproject.wordpress.com](http://digitalhistorianproject.wordpress.com).

The second museum-based project is completed between May and June. Before the inception of DHP, students who registered for a European Battlefields tour researched local Second World War Veterans and contributed information back to the Archive's virtual war memorial. As part of their research, students complete a standard template, but are encouraged to go above and beyond. This includes requesting information from other archives, and arranging meetings with Veterans or living descendants. Thanks to dedicated time at the DCMA, students now have greater ease of access to the archives for "low-tech" research that supports online resources. This has resulted in stories that not only tell of a Veteran's war experience, but also in many cases a telling of their life story. Students become emotionally invested in these stories and have taken great ownership over commemorating the Veteran's war service. Students presented their research and biographies to an audience of museum-goers in June, and again on their trip to the Juno Beach Centre during their battlefield tour in November.



Photo - Courtesy of DCMA  
DHP Student Jordyn consulting with Curator Sarah Robinson about the radio she is studying.

The DCMA is proud and honoured to have a significant and meaningful role in this innovative program. In its inaugural year, 2015, the DHP program was recognized on a national stage with a History Now: Government of Canada History Award for Teachers, which was presented to program creator, Neil Orford.



Photo - Capt. George Romick  
OHS Vice-President Dr. Michel S. Beaulieu opened the 5th Annual Military Symposium: Exploring Diversity, with Lieutenant-Colonel David Ratz, commanding officer of the Lake Superior Scottish Regiment, and Lieutenant-Commander Robert Cooke, commanding officer of the HMCS Griffon. The OHS was a supporting partner of the symposium, held at the O'Kelly Armoury in Thunder Bay.



# BARRY PENHALE’S ONTARIO

## SHE IS ONE OF US: RECALLING LOUISE DE KIRILINE LAWRENCE

**Barry Penhale**  
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It seems most appropriate, with Canada’s 150th birthday celebrations so close at hand, to honour Louise de Kiriline Lawrence (1894–1992). Louise was undoubtedly the most extraordinary person I have been privileged to know, which is quite a powerful statement when I reflect on my good fortune in having known more than my share of remarkable people.



Nurse de Kiriline used a dogsled to make her rounds in Bonfield, Ontario, during the late 1920s and early '30s.

when assignments took me to North Bay and I found myself a visitor to the Trout Lake residence of Hartley Trussler, a much-beloved northern Ontario personality whose family background around Trout Creek and Powassan has often been cited by writers documenting the life of the area’s pioneers.

I had long been aware of Hartley’s own nostalgic accounts of the past, which had become popular features under his name in the *North Bay Nugget* newspaper and smaller community papers that are now extinct. As my genial host mixed me a drink, I perused an inviting bookshelf and spotted a few works by none other than Louise de Kiriline Lawrence. To my great surprise, upon mentioning her name, Hartley responded “Oh yes, my good friend Louise.” He chortled when I said that I had been informed that the lady in question was reclusive and did not welcome visitors, then reached for the phone and paved the way for the first of what became countless visits to the Loghouse Nest at Pimisi Bay, near Mattawa—visits that, over time, were to take me in unanticipated and unbelievably enriching directions. Indeed, in many special ways, my life was to change forever.

Born in 1894, the daughter of a university-trained naturalist, Sixten Flach, Louise grew up by the Baltic Sea on a country estate in central Sweden. Noted ornithologists and prominent painters including Bruno Liljefors were regular visitors, and a close family friend, Prince Carl, also shared her father’s nature interests. It is perhaps not surprising that it was her childhood environment that Louise drew upon years later, as she gained prominence as an internationally recognized naturalist and noted author. But before such fame was to come her way, following her beloved father’s death, Louise Flach joined the International Red Cross, and found herself working as a nurse at a Danish prisoner-of-war camp. It was here that she would meet and fall deeply in love with a wounded White Russian soldier, the dashing Lieutenant Gleb Nikolayevich Kirilin. Years later, the Canadian writer Marilyn Mohr would most aptly compare Louise’s love affair to *Dr. Zhivago* and *Reds*. Mohr’s splendid feature article “To Whom The Wilderness Speaks” in a 1989 issue of *Harrowsmith* deservedly won the coveted Greg Clark Outdoor Writing Award.

A turbulent period followed Louise’s marriage to Gleb and, the couple found themselves ensnared in the horrific Civil War pitting Reds against the White Russians. Separation, imprisonment, and more separation followed during that historic time in war-torn Russia. Gleb’s fate was to be put to death by the Bolsheviks as part of a mass execution. These were the events Louise attempted to put behind her when, after a lengthy period of nursing in Russia, she made her way to Canada in 1927. Fluent in five languages, Louise almost immediately found herself nursing in predominately French-speaking northern Ontario communities. In record time she became a familiar figure on her errands of mercy—travelling by dogsled in winter and in her Model-A with its rumble seat in the other seasons. When remembering

those days, old friends and patients all agreed, “She went like a bat out of hell!” Not surprisingly, the Nurse de Kiriline, as she was known by this time, became somewhat of a legendary figure, and, in 1936, the obvious choice of Dr. Allan Dafoe to take care of the celebrated Dionne Quintuplets during their critical first year. But Louise could only put up with the incredible invasion of privacy created by worldwide interest in the five baby girls for so long. She was ready to retire from nursing to settle in a rustic log house built for her by Finnish carpenters on a property at Pimisi Baynear Mattawa, east of North Bay .

During over half a century of daily observations of the natural world around her, Louise de Kiriline Lawrence was to derive great satisfaction from what may have been her most productive period. Her “Loghouse Nest” site was to be both the locale and the inspiration for seventeen scientific papers, more than 500 reviews and six internationally acclaimed books on nature. One of her most widely read books, *The Lovely and the Wild*, received the prestigious John Burroughs Memorial Medal for distinguished writing in natural history in 1969; she was the first Canadian to receive the award.

In 1970, Laurentian University in Sudbury bestowed an Honorary Doctorate of Literature upon Louise de Kiriline Lawrence. A privately sponsored non-fiction book award in the amount of \$500 bears her name and is presented annually by the Ontario Library Services-North. Most recently, on August 18 of this year, about one hundred people were present in Bonfield, Ontario, where an Ontario Heritage Trust provincial plaque honouring Louise De Kiriline Lawrence was unveiled. The Nipissing Naturalists Club and local author Steve Pitt must be commended for efforts resulting in this most recent recognition of a truly amazing woman. For me, it was an honour to have been her publisher and friend. Throughout her lifetime, Louise de Kiriline Lawrence was extremely proud to be a Canadian citizen and a northerner. Nothing mattered more to her than to be considered “one of us,” and we who live in Ontario are the beneficiaries of her creative, principled life—one that was fully lived. She made a whole lot of history in her ninety-nine years.



The extraordinary birth of the Dionne Quintuplets on May 28, 1934, led the attending physician, Dr. Allan Dafoe, to appoint Nurse de Kiriline as the nurse in charge during that critical first year.



Nurse de Kiriline was very fond of the Dionne Quintuplets and their parents, but very distressed at their being put on public display, and resigned after that first year.



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## CEMETERY NEWS

**Marjorie Stuart**

cemeteries@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca

We have witnessed some outstanding events this fall. The first was a sacred ceremony led by the Chief and Elders of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation to honour their ancestors at Sand Hill Burial Site, near Yonge and Bloor Street, in Toronto.

The rededication of the Cooley-Hatt Cemetery in Ancaster took place in late September. Rick Hatt and his family worked for twenty years to preserve their family burial ground on their ancestors' farm (see article on page 3).

The City of Toronto and the Board of Heritage Toronto presented the Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital Cemetery with the Award of Excellence and the Award of Merit in October. The preservation of this Etobicoke cemetery took nearly twenty years to secure. Thanks to a group of very dedicated volunteers led by Ed Janiszewski, these grounds have been protected for future generations.

A Remembrance Day Ceremony led by Robin McKee took place at Hamilton Cemetery in November. This year's event marked the 15th year of this ceremony and the guided Hamilton Veterans Tour that follows.

Laura Suchan, Executive Director, and Melissa Cole, Curator, of the Oshawa Museum have launched a new book, *Until Day Dawns: Stories from Oshawa's Union Cemetery*. The book explores the stories, personalities, and history that shaped the City of Oshawa and surrounding areas. Laura Suchan

also has an article published in the most recent edition (Autumn 2016) of the Ontario Historical Society's scholarly journal, *Ontario History*, entitled "Useful Ornaments: Form and Function at Demill Ladies' College".



At the October OHS Board meeting, Directors (left to right) Janie Cooper-Wilson and Carolyn King were appointed Co-Chairs of the OHS Preservation and Cemeteries Committee. Carolyn King is a former Chief of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation. In October 2016, Carolyn received Heritage Toronto's Special Achievement Award for her decades-long efforts to preserve the history of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, and to celebrate and share First Nations heritage in the Greater Toronto Area. Janie Cooper-Wilson is the Executive Director of the Silvershoe Historical Society, a non-profit heritage organization dedicated to the preservation of Bethel Union Cemetery in Clearview Township, Simcoe County. She was also a driving force behind the restoration of the Oro African Episcopal Church, which was reopened in August, 2016.

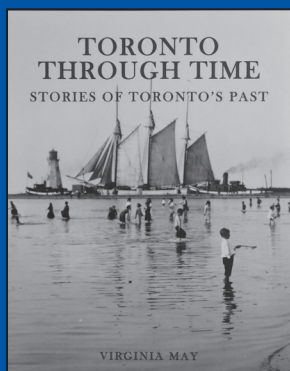
## FROM THE BOOKSHELF

**Dr. Cynthia Comacchio**

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### LOCAL HISTORY: PIECING TOGETHER THE BIG PICTURE (PART 2)

Local histories bring us insightful studies that often very much reflect their authors' personal passions, not only for a place, but also for particular elements of local identity (Cobalt's development as a mining town), for changes and continuities through time (Toronto), and for critical, and controversial, events and issues (Malvern). The books in this section remind us how much we continue to learn about the province, and the nation, from studies focused squarely on the community.



### *Toronto Through Time: Stories of Toronto's Past*

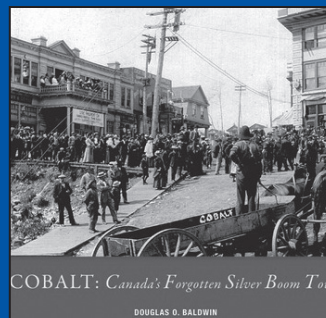
**VIRGINIA MAY**

Caledon: Virginia May, 2016  
Hardcover; 351 pp. \$39.95  
[www.amazon.ca](http://www.amazon.ca)

Classifying Toronto's history under a "local history" category is somewhat problematic, given that the city's story in so many ways extends beyond its own geographic boundaries. For the most part, Toronto's development over several centuries is that of Ontario's, and their relationship over time has been mutually supportive, despite recurrent clashes between the city and successive provincial governments. As a national metropolis, much of what has emanated from Toronto over the twentieth century and to this day—in medicine, public health, social policy, technology, media, education, style—has widely influenced Canadian society. Virginia May aptly observes, in this beautifully produced, written, and illustrated book, that if the city provokes as much disparagement as it does affection in the rest of us, it has always been, without doubt, "very interesting."

*Toronto Through Time* is not simply a lavishly illustrated narrative (750 illustrations, most in colour) tracing the city's path since its colonial beginnings: this is very much a personal creative project. May has put her considerable talents to effective use here, having researched, written, painstakingly selected the many visual materials, and self-published. To say the least, that is an impressive accomplishment. But what makes it even more so is the quality of the finished project, an achievement both scholarly and accessible: if this book serves as an introduction to Toronto history, it also goes a long way towards informing readers about Canadian history writ large. Despite the focus on individual historic buildings, many attached by name or money to elite society, it manages to bring to the fore the ordinary people who took part in their making, and the ordinary lives that were affected.

The book is prefaced by an evocative poem by Stacey LaForme, of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, whose ancestors populated the area and flourished before European contact and colonization. Commencing with their story, the true beginning of Toronto, and working her way through the centuries "Before Toronto," May sets this relatively familiar story within the vital context of "The Changing Face of North America." The rest of the book is structured around individual historic buildings or sites, with one chapter devoted to each of the nine selections. But this is more than a history of architecture and commemoration, intrinsically interesting as those are. The author deftly contextualizes each building within the unique sociocultural and political moment that it represents. An artist who has captured a number of the city's historic buildings on canvas, Virginia May brings a "painterly eye" to Toronto's stories, and very much succeeds in capturing the gaze of the reader. *Toronto Through Time* is erudite, elegant, and very enjoyable, too.



### *Cobalt: Canada's Forgotten Silver Boom Town*

**DOUGLAS O. BALDWIN**

Charlottetown: Indigo Press, 2016  
Paperback; 362 pp.  
[www.indigopresscharlottetown.ca](http://www.indigopresscharlottetown.ca)


Douglas Baldwin, author of many acclaimed historical studies, and recently retired from Acadia University, uses his skills to produce a comprehensive history of Cobalt. Most Ontarians know that Cobalt is a northern mining town, but likely have no idea of its importance in opening up the province's northern regions, rich with mineral resources, in the early twentieth century. As a town, Cobalt took shape in response to the needs of the prospectors and mining companies that preceded it.



The area is known for its remarkable silver deposits. The author points out another fact that is probably little known: the silver rush in Cobalt actually surpassed the gains of the fortunate few who “struck gold” in the famous Klondike Gold Rush.

Baldwin’s first foray into the town’s history, in 1975, uncovered an enormous cache of buried historical materials, most notably in the town hall’s vault and in the archives of the Cobalt Mining Museum. Many publications and several decades later, Baldwin was invited by the Historic Cobalt Mining Camp project to continue his earlier research on the town’s beginnings. By the time he returned to it, the town had come back into history, so to speak. Its significance in Canadian mining history was officially acknowledged by the federal government’s heritage and historic preservation agencies. The Cobalt mining district was named a National Historic Site in 2002 and, the following year, Parks Canada made its silver mining camp (some 12 square kilometers) a nationally designated historic industrial site.

In fourteen very readable chapters, the author discusses the town’s origins and evolution to roughly 1920, focusing on some of the events that affected its residents and the wider community, such as the great fire that is mentioned in many history texts but rarely discussed in detail. He also considers the everyday life of townspeople and miners, education and local politics, the war effort, organized labour, and strikes. The concluding chapter, “After the Silver Vanished,” tells of the town’s fate. The text is highlighted by numerous photographs, both historic and contemporary, reproductions of historic documents, and maps. There are easily read text boxes in the page margins that sketch some interesting asides, numerical charts, newspaper clippings, and “voices from the past.” Although the book’s subtitle indicates that much has been forgotten about the thriving mining town that Cobalt was, Baldwin takes readers through a fascinating trip to recover much of historical significance about Cobalt, and also about the important role of mining in building the province’s industrial prosperity.



*A Radioactive Waste Dump in Malvern: A Citizen’s Account*

**GEORGE R.E. HEIGHINGTON**

Scarborough:  
GH Technical Services, 2016  
Paperback; 264 pp.

This is a meticulously researched, comprehensive, and truly harrowing account by one of the litigants in a lengthy grievance against the Government of Ontario initiated by the residents of Malvern, an east Toronto neighbourhood. The situation, put briefly, concerned the discovery that the houses built in 1974 on McClure Crescent, expressly for low-income home buyers and with provincial funding, were permitted despite the government’s knowledge that the soil was contaminated. It had been used as a radium disposal site in 1945, but the toxic materials were not dumped with due care. Although the province authorized a thorough search for radioactive waste, its examination of the subdivision’s land was haphazard to the point of negligence. The result, in 1980, was the revelation that McClure Crescent was contaminated by radioactive waste. At that point, the residents were assured that there was little danger.

For nearly a decade, the community made various attempts to obtain compensation. Their first victory came in 1983, when they successfully presented their case to the Ontario Municipal Board to lower their taxes to a \$100 nominal assessment. The Malvern case had, by this time, received a great deal of media coverage, inspiring other communities to actively contest prospective radioactive dumps in their vicinity. Finally, in light of a similar case in Surrey, British Columbia, that was decided in favour of the affected residents, the Malvern Radioactive Account Committee initiated litigation. The government’s feeble attempts to buy out the homes and thereby resolve the lawsuit out of court were not accepted by the litigants. After a few failed attempts in court, at both federal and provincial levels, the case was brought before the Supreme Court of Ontario.

Heighington vs. Ontario, as this first-hand account by the Committee’s Corresponding Secretary testifies, became an enormously complex case. The litigants argued that the Ministry of Labour, through its Atomic Energy division, knew the location of the radium dumps in the province and nonetheless forged ahead in its housing development without due warning to prospective buyers. In July 1987, the case was resolved in favour of the Malvern residents. The story does not end with that victory, however; more homes in the neighbourhood were found to be radioactive, leading to ineffectual attempts to remove the contaminated soil. After a number of twists and turns, there were further legal actions, including an appeal by the Ontario Government and various limited remediation projects, before the story finally ended with the Supreme Court decision being upheld.

Over a decade of struggling to be compensated, the residents of this planned community saw their property devalued, and their health and peace of mind “shattered”, as the author aptly sums up the situation. No doubt their faith in the government and the legal system was equally undermined. Ultimately, the nightmarish story of Malvern, told here from an insider’s perspective, serves to warn us all about the ongoing human costs of environmental degradation.

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