

OHS BULLETIN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ISSUE 208

OCTOBER 2018

MINISTER JONES RECOGNIZES OHS AFFILIATE HOCKLEY HISTORIC CH&C

THUNDER BAY RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY SAVES & RESTORES HISTORIC CNR CABOOSE

Photo - snapd Dufferin



Honourable Sylvia Jones, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport joined the OHS in celebrating the incorporation of the Hockley Historic Community Hall & Church as an affiliate of the Ontario Historical Society on September 20, 2018. Minister Jones is shown above presenting a certificate to Tom Darlow, President, Hockley Historic Community Hall & Church. The certificate reads: *“On behalf of the government of Ontario, I am pleased to congratulate the Hockley Historic Community Hall and Church on its non-profit incorporation in association with the Ontario Historical Society. The passion and care that staff and volunteers have invested in this project will help preserve our local history for all Ontarians.”*

Daniel Dishaw, Communications and Outreach Coordinator
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On September 20, 2018, OHS Executive Director Rob Leverty attended a special reception in Dufferin County to celebrate the recent incorporation of Hockley Historic Community Hall & Church (HHCH&C). A group of concerned citizens first contacted the OHS in January, 2017. After many consultations with Executive Director Rob Leverty, the OHS was pleased to incorporate the HHCH&C on April 5, 2018.

Joining the OHS and the HHCH&C was the new Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport, the Honourable Sylvia Jones. Minister Jones tweeted shortly after the event: “Congratulations to the #volunteers of the Hockley Historic Community Hall & Church who celebrated their affiliation with the Ontario Historical Society. @OntarioHistory <http://www.hockleyvillage.com>.” Minister Jones presented a certificate to Tom Darlow, President of the Hockley Historic Community Hall & Church, recognizing their incorporation and the significant achievements made by this group towards preserving their local history.

The HHCH&C recently became stewards of two historic buildings in

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Photo - James Tocker

CNR Caboose 78175 is freshly restored and is now the bright orange jewel of Prince Arthur’s Landing in Thunder Bay.

Craig Symington
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In the spring of 2015, Canadian National Railway (CNR) Caboose 78175 was sitting at Prince Arthur’s Landing in a state of disrepair. The City of Thunder Bay (CTB) was her owner, and unsure what to do with the rapidly deteriorating caboose. The City had plans to give her away or, worse, scrap her altogether. The railfan community rose up in protest to protect this iconic piece of our railway history.

The story of CNR Caboose 78175 begins in 1929. After amalgamating a large number of Canadian railways into the Canadian National Railway system a decade earlier, the CNR was investing heavily in their caboose fleet. Caboose 78175 was one of 25 cabooses born in the Transcona Shops, in Winnipeg Manitoba. They range from 78170 to 78194. Caboose 78175 served the CNR for nearly six decades before she was retired from service. We aren’t quite sure where she ventured over that time, but it was likely between Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Thunder Bay, Ontario.

In the late 1980s, caboose 78175 was retired from service. She and sister caboose 78246 were given to the City of Thunder Bay and the Thunder Bay Model Rail Association (TBMRA). Caboose 78175 was saved, while 78246 was used as a parts source for the other’s restoration. Members of the TBMRA performed the restoration. On November 29, 1991, 78175 was moved to the city’s Marina Park and put on display. There she sat under the care of the TBMRA and CTB. Unfortunately she deteriorated badly and the local chapter of the CNR Pensioners had to step in to stabilize the caboose and perform a quick restoration in 2009. Around that time, the TBMRA dissolved and the caboose became the sole responsibility of the City of Thunder Bay. A few years later, to facilitate the redevelopment of the Marina Park, the caboose was moved to an undeveloped area of the park.

By spring 2015, the neglected caboose had deteriorated again and the City was looking to get rid of it. I was upset by the City’s disregard for this piece of our history and rallied the railfan community to save caboose 78175. At the time, the political climate in Thunder Bay was shifting dramatically;

‘CNR CABOOSE’ CONTINUED ON PAGE 8...

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Caroline Di Cocco, President
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The Ontario Historical Society is off to a busy start this fall. Several new projects are underway and I look forward to introducing them in the coming months. Most importantly, we are now in the final stages of preparing to launch Phase One of our new web platform, which will include a new, easy-to-use membership management system. We look forward to introducing our new systems and new programs in the final months of 2018. Stay tuned!

I am also pleased to announce that back issues of *Ontario History* from 2013 to 2017 are now available (open access) on Érudit's website at <https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/onhistory/>. This is an exciting development for the OHS. We are thrilled to see more and more people accessing *Ontario History* online, including students and scholars from all around the world. Take a moment to visit Érudit's website and browse through some of our recent back issues. The two most recent editions of *Ontario History* are available exclusively to Érudit institutional subscribers at this time.

As we dive deeper into an increasingly digital world, the needs of the Society and its membership continue to change. In order to establish a more consistent online presence, the OHS had to update its digital branding. Our historic black-and-white seal will remain an important part of the Society's communications and branding going forward, but it does not lend itself well to digital communications and design. The OHS needed a logo and branding that could be used in a variety of sizes, layouts, colour schemes, and applications. I am excited to introduce to you the new OHS logo, which can be seen in full colour on the cover of this year's OHS Honours and Awards nomination brochure (included within this edition of the *Bulletin*). The inspiration for this design came from the most fundamental characteristics of the OHS: the geography of Ontario and our long-standing commitment to working with groups from

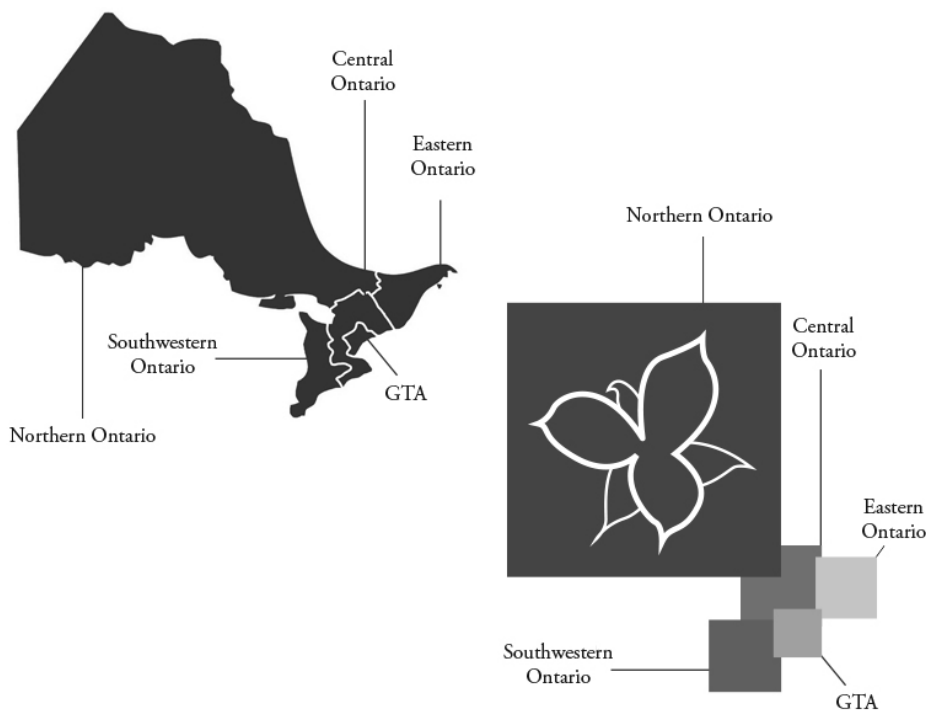


Photo -Kathy Grant

OHS board member, Janie Cooper-Wilson was one of 100 Accomplished Black Canadian Women from across Canada recognized, as role models for their various contributions to Canada. The Honorees were presented at a Gala and Book Launch, held on September 15, 2018, at the Woodbine Banquet Hall & Convention Centre in Toronto. Janie is pictured above (far left) with the authors of *100 Accomplished Black Canadian Women - 2018*, Hon. Jean Augustine (centre right), Dr. Denise O'Neil Green (center left), and Dauna Jones-Simmonds (far right).

every region of this vast province. The shape of our new logo represents our regional diversity, and the diversity of our local histories within those regions. These shapes and colours will help OHS staff create exciting and well-branded communications moving forward. The historic seal of the Ontario Historical Society will continue to play an important role for the OHS, while the new logo will help the Society adapt to an increasingly digital landscape and thus, reach as many people as we can.

On that note, I would like to welcome a new OHS student intern joining us for the fall semester. Rolando Gomez Baez is a fourth-year history student at Ryerson University who will be assisting OHS Communications and Outreach Coordinator Daniel Dishaw in developing a new programming initiative. Welcome, Rolando! The Society also has plans for a student intern from York University to join us for the winter semester. I am pleased to see a constant flow of such talented students coming through the OHS office. I know our staff work hard to provide them with meaningful placement experiences, and I'm delighted that our organization continues to play an important role in training and educating the next generation of historians.

I want to congratulate OHS board member Janie Cooper-Wilson on being named to the 2018 list of 100 Accomplished Black Canadian Women from across Canada (see photo and caption above). Janie is Chair of the OHS Cemeteries Committee and has worked tirelessly to protect pioneer cemeteries in Ontario. She was also instrumental in the preservation and restoration of the Oro African Methodist Episcopal Church in Oro Medonte. Janie has been a valuable partner and volunteer to the OHS for many years, joining the OHS Board of Directors in 2016. She co-founded the SilverShoe Historical Society, which incorporated through the OHS in 2007 and has been working to restore Old Zion Presbyterian Pioneer Cemetery in Clearview Township, Simcoe County. Janie has written an article about some recent developments at Old Zion Cemetery, which you'll find on page 4 of this issue.

Thank you all for your continued support and engagement. Have a wonderful autumn 2018!

...‘HHCH&C’ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Dufferin County: the Community Hall and a historic church. The group is committed to ensuring that these buildings are preserved and protected for



Photo - snapd Dufferin

On September 20, the Hockley Historic Community Hall & Church (HHCH&C) held a reception to celebrate the people who contributed to the creation of HHCH&C as a not-for-profit corporation through affiliation with the Ontario Historical Society (OHS). Seen here with the new HHCH&C Board of Directors are: (centre) Hon. Sylvia Jones (MPP Dufferin-Caledon), Minister of Tourism, Culture & Sport; Mayor Laura Ryan, Town of Mono; Mayor Mary Small Brett, Deputy Mayor Doug Little & Councillor Ward 2 Ambrose J. Keenan, Township of Adjala-Tosorontio and OHS Executive Director Rob Leverty.

future generations. The church and Community Hall are used for weddings, showers, workshops, meetings, classes, and more; making them vital assets to the local community. The Hall was completely renovated and restored in 2003 and is able to accommodate up to 100 people. The church, which features original pews, woodwork, windows, and floors, can accommodate 100 people (seated) and has been beautifully maintained.

In addition to being valuable community gathering spaces, these two buildings represent important connections to the region's local history. The Community Hall was constructed in 1894 by the Hockley Loyal Orange and was used as an Orange Lodge (a Protestant fraternal order) until 1972. The space was then utilized and operated by the Hockley & District Senior Citizens Club until 2018, and has served as a general community gathering space for local residents since the mid 1990s.

The church, founded as a Primitive Methodist Church in 1869, was originally built on Airport Road, north of Hockley Road. After closing in 1884, the church remained out of use for a few years until it was acquired by the Hockley Methodists and moved to a new location in the winter of 1887. This process required cutting the building into four sections and transporting each piece individually by horse-drawn snow sleds. The church held regular Sunday services until 2015.

In order to take ownership of the buildings, the HHCH&C had to incorporate through affiliation with the Ontario Historical Society and become a not-for-profit corporation. Thanks to a dedicated group of volunteers, these historic community assets will continue to serve the public interest for years to come. For more information or to make a donation, please visit their website at www.hockleyvillage.com.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Rob Leverty, Executive Director
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OHS LAUNCHES THE “DOROTHY DUNCAN LIBRARY FUND”

The OHS is a not-for-profit publisher. Since 1899, the Society has been publishing the scholarly journal, *Ontario History*. The journal constitutes the largest single collection of articles about Ontario’s history, a priceless asset used and recognized by an international subscriber base. *Ontario History* is the only peer-reviewed scholarly journal dedicated to provincial history in Canada and the only journal that publishes history specific to the province of Ontario.

For over a century, the Society has also provided invaluable support and encouragement to publishers, authors, and researchers who have made a dedicated commitment to public awareness of Ontario’s history. Through book launches, hundreds and hundreds of book reviews, Society-initiated publications, and our Honours and Awards program recognizing outstanding authors, the OHS continues to celebrate the documentation, research, writing, and publishing of Ontario’s heritage.

In short, the OHS loves books and deeply respects and admires the writers who create them, and these combined efforts have made a vital contribution to the intellectual infrastructure of the province and Ontario’s knowledge-based economy.

On behalf of the OHS, I have been invited to countless events and workshops hosted by our member organizations over the last three decades. Invariably, I have either been given their latest publication for speaking, or personally bought one or many books. I have been so impressed at the high standard of research and writing of all these local history publications, which in most cases have a very limited print run. This is why, over the years, I have carefully stored this diverse treasure published by our local historical organizations at the John McKenzie House.

In 2009, according to the wishes of Dr. Jean Burnet (former Editor, *Ontario History*), her Estate donated her rich collection of multicultural history books to the OHS. In 2013, the family of the late Dr. Jane Irwin donated her unique collection of built heritage and cemetery books to the OHS.

Needless to say, boxes of books were beginning to pile up at our headquarters. Therefore, in 2014, I asked my colleague Sarah McCabe to begin assembling over 2,000 books into an Ontario history reference library. The collection’s catalogue was made available online (please see our website for a link). Since then, the OHS library has become the trusted recipient of even more valuable materials from individual donors, local historical societies and museums, government ministries, and universities and businesses downsizing their libraries (including the CBC), plus many brand new publications by way of the Society’s Honours and Awards program.

In 2016, author, historian, and former OHS Executive Director Dr. Dorothy Duncan OOnt. visited our new reference library, which by then had grown to over 4,000 items, not to mention two complete sets of all the issues of *Ontario History* published by the OHS since 1899. Dorothy was impressed, remarking to me, “This



Former OHS Executive Director Dorothy Duncan and current OHS Executive Director Rob Leverty met on April 25, 2018, to discuss the Dorothy Duncan Library Fund. Dorothy and Rob have worked together both professionally and as volunteers on behalf of the OHS since 1988.

is a rare and priceless collection ... also unique because it is in one location ... would the OHS like my books?” I immediately replied, “We would be honoured.”

I’m delighted to announce a significant new donation to our library, and an exciting new initiative. Last spring, Dorothy called me and said that she was going to move to Milton and were we still willing to take her books and copies of her lectures and presentations. Over a six week period, my colleagues Sarah and Heather Anderson joined me on trips to Orillia to sort and box a treasure trove of Ontario’s history.

In total, Dorothy has donated over 750 works to the OHS, plus an inventory of 36 titles of her papers and presentations, collected and published over a lifetime of reading and writing about Ontario and Canada. Ranging from the 1830s to today, subjects are diverse, covering topics such as Indigenous peoples, the fur trade, food and drink, education, museum history, and many more. Many items are rare and unpublished, coming directly from Dorothy’s professional and volunteer work.

Thank you, Dorothy, for your incredible generosity to both the OHS and Canada. We are also thrilled that Dorothy has made a generous financial donation to help support the growth of the collection by covering the Society’s initial transportation and cataloging expenses.

However, there are other costs associated with accepting this sizable collection, including expert staff time and expanding from the current library space into the main room of the Coach House to properly care for, display, and provide access to our reference library.

Therefore we are launching a “Dorothy Duncan Library Fund” and any financial contributions to it are deeply appreciated. Cheques should be made out to the Ontario Historical Society, and mailed to: Ontario Historical Society, 34 Parkview Avenue, Willowdale, Ontario M2N 3Y2 (please mark on your envelope Attention: Dorothy Duncan Library Fund) or you can call our office at 416-226-9011 to donate by credit card.

All donations to this special fundraising campaign will receive a charitable tax receipt. Thank you again for your continued support and encouragement. Enjoy autumn 2018.

UPDATED HONOURS AND AWARDS CATEGORIES FOR 2018

This year the OHS has updated its award categories to be more inclusive to a variety of organizations, projects, and individuals. While the Awards for Authors remain the same as in previous years, we have updated our Awards for Outstanding Achievement. Details and eligibility parameters for the new/updated categories can be found in the brochure included with this *Bulletin*.

To nominate, please visit ontariohistoricalsociety.ca. Alternatively, you can fill out the brochure included in the *Bulletin* and send it (along with all supporting materials) to 34 Parkview Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M2N 3Y2. Supporting materials may also be emailed to ddishaw@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca.

The following awards will be open for nomination this year:

OHS PRESIDENT’S AWARD

Recognizing an outstanding contribution to the preservation or promotion of Ontario’s history.

CARNOCHAN LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Recognizing a lifetime of achievement in heritage preservation and public history.

RUSSELL K. COOPER PUBLIC PROGRAMMING AWARD

Recognizing a programming initiative that has brought greater public awareness to an aspect of Ontario's history in the past three years.

DOROTHY DUNCAN PUBLIC HISTORY AWARD

Recognizing an outstanding public history project completed or presented in the award year.

HERITAGE CONSERVATION AWARD

Recognizing an exceptional contribution towards the conservation, preservation, or restoration of a built-heritage or natural-heritage site in Ontario.

INDIGENOUS HISTORY AWARD

Recognizing significant contributions towards the promotion or preservation of Indigenous history or heritage in Ontario.

CEMETERY PRESERVATION AWARD

Awarded to an individual or a not-for-profit heritage organization for having demonstrated an outstanding commitment to the preservation and protection of cemeteries in Ontario.

ANOTHER MILESTONE FOR THE SILVERSHOE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Janie Cooper-Wilson, Director
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August 18, 2018, marked another amazing day and another great milestone for the SilverShoe Historical Society (SSHS) and for the history of Clearview Township. The inactive Old Zion Presbyterian Pioneer Cemetery, located on the outskirts of the town of Stayner, was re-dedicated and officially unveiled to the public, following an intense six-week overhauling. Dating from 1833, this Pre-Rebellion cemetery was the first to be established in Clearview Township (known then as Sunnidale Township) and contains 75 burials of some of the Township’s earliest pioneers and officials. The last recorded burial took place in 1901. Then, as time moved forward, like so many others across the province, the cemetery fell into serious disrepair. The municipality assumed legal ownership of the abandoned cemetery in 1974 and initiated restoration of the site. Fallen and deteriorating grave markers were collected and secured in a semi-circular cement base, flowerbeds were planted along the front,



East to west view of the restored Old Zion Presbyterian Pioneer Cemetery.

and sunken graves were backfilled, in keeping with accepted methods of the time. Regular grass cutting was maintained over the next 43 years; otherwise, little interest was paid to the ongoing preservation of the site. Over time, the people and a wealth of crucial history, once again, faded into obscurity, hidden beneath a dense overgrowth of weeds and barely recognizable from the busy highway, only a few feet away.

In late October 2017, SSHS Executive Director, Janie Cooper-Wilson presented a proposal to Clearview Township Council requesting financial assistance to return the cemetery to an aesthetically pleasing state and to preserve what remained of the site. Council, realizing their legal and moral obligations, looked upon the proposal with favour and voted to set up a \$5,000 fund specifically earmarked for the preservation of local inactive cemeteries within the jurisdiction of Clearview Township. The organization was subsequently awarded \$2,000 from this fund to accomplish the task.



Posing with the new Community Partners Sign at Old Zion Presbyterian Pioneer Cemetery (L - R): SSHS Secretary, Diane Kobs; SSHS Maintenance Supervisor, Charles Schell; Project Lead, Janie Cooper-Wilson; Clearview Mayor, H.W. Christoper Vanderkruys; Clearview Councillors, Connie Leishman and Deb Bronée; Deputy Clerk, Brenda Falls; Councillor Doug Measures; and SSHS Maintenance Volunteer, Scott Smith.

Serious difficulties were encountered immediately after the project was put in motion on June 20, 2018. Luckily, the possibility of grave invasion was not an issue; the difficulties were quickly resolved and work was completed just in time for the scheduled re-dedication on August 18th. Encouraged by the success of the preservation project, the SSHS intends to draft an application for historic designation of the Old Zion Site.

The Rt. Rev. Jeremy Sanderson of Emmanuel Presbyterian Church, Nottawa, Ontario, officiated at the Old Zion re-dedication ceremony.



SSHS Team Members (L-R): Scott Smith; Janie Cooper-Wilson, SSHS Executive Director/Project Lead; Charles Schell, Maintenance Supervisor; Diane Kobs, Secretary; and Sharon Dunn, Treasurer.

Rt. Rev. Sanderson also officiated at the 21st Annual SSHS Memorial Candlelight Service at Bethel-Union Pioneer Cemetery in New Lowell. The lives and contributions of all of Old Sunnidale’s early pioneers were honoured in a cross-cultural, non-denominational ceremony, which included several respected speakers and talented musicians—many of whom travelled some distance to participate in this very special event before a capacity crowd. The evening also included a moving tribute to the late, Edlin Earle, SSHS Co-Founder and Charter Member, who passed away on November 9, 2017, following a long illness.



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MUSEUM MILESTONES

Dr. John Carter
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It is always gratifying to hear from museums about major upgrade projects at their sites. This is a sure sign of a robust and continually growing museum community in Ontario. Such is the case of the major redevelopment at the Joseph Brant Museum in Burlington. Barbara Teatero's article (see below) provides details and an update about this exciting initiative. Congratulations to Barb, her staff, and the City of Burlington for seeing this major capital expansion through to completion.

The Museum of Dufferin (MoD), formerly the Dufferin County Museum, has issued its very attractive 2018/19 promotional handbook. This booklet outlines new exhibits, events, and programming that are now offered to the public. Of note are the Temperance and Temptation exhibit, and the new Corn Flower Glass Gallery. This publication is a good example of local

JOSEPH BRANT MUSEUM UNDERGOES MAJOR TRANSFORMATION

Barbara Teatero, Director of Museums
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The Joseph Brant Museum is Burlington's community museum. It is a replica of the original homestead of Joseph Brant 'Thayendanegea' (1742-1807). In 1798, King George III granted the Mohawk and British captain 3,450 acres at the head-of-the-lake (Burlington Bay), for his services to the Crown during the Seven Years War and the American Revolution.

The museum was built to commemorate Joseph Brant as Burlington's first citizen. Construction began in 1937, with the official opening of the museum on May 22, 1942. Committed to the preservation and promotion of Burlington's past, Joseph Brant Museum is a place where local residents and visitors can explore a wealth of cultural traditions, stories, and ideas that inspire within and beyond our borders.

For over 30 years, the need to improve the museum facilities has been a well-documented priority. In 2016-17, three levels of government and the Burlington Museums Foundation were able to make this long-awaited objective a reality by committing to the Joseph Brant Museum Transformation project.

The total project cost is \$11.4 million, with \$4.5 million coming from the Government of Canada, \$1.5 million from the Province of Ontario, \$2.9 million from the City of Burlington, and \$2.5 million from the Burlington Museums Foundation.

In 2016, Chamberlain Architectural Services Limited began the detailed design phase, and the City of Burlington issued a request for proposals on the expansion and renovations project. We moved into action and an amazing team of museum staff, volunteers, friends, and families began the monumental task of packing up and emptying the Joseph Brant Museum. Everyone worked so hard! I was very proud to stand beside all of these wonderful people who volunteered countless hours to get the job done, and get it done properly.

In November 2017, our first preconstruction meeting was held in the now-empty Brant House with Aquicon Construction. Curator Kimberly Watson

businesses and museum supporters, assisting with the costs of production of a useful guide. Phone 519-941-1114 for further details.

Elizabeth Durham, a long-time executive member of the Meldrum Bay Historical Society and former curator of the Net Shed Museum, has re-located from Meldrum Bay to Ottawa.

After 28 years, Susan Hughes has retired from working in the museum and heritage sector at the City of Toronto. She was first curator at Todmorden Mills Museum, and was subsequently appointed as Project Manager of Archaeology. One of her major responsibilities was the development and implementation of the Archaeological Management Plan for the city. This position is now held by Alison-Torrie Lapaire. Susan is also a former member of the OHS Board of Directors.

Nicole Weppeler has received the "Lifetime Achievement Award" from the Town of Gore Bay. This honour was bestowed in recognition of her long service as curator of the Gore Bay Museum and of the Gore Bay Harbour Centre. Congratulations, Nicole!

I look forward to hearing from you with news from your museum, historical society, or heritage group.



Photo - Courtesy of the JBM

The Joseph Brant Museum before the addition and renovations.

and I went through health and safety training, ready to don hard hats, safety vests, and construction boots as the shovels hit the ground.

Every time we are on site, I marvel at how quickly the new building is taking shape. All exterior work should be completed this month, including the green roof, sidewalks, and landscaping.

In June 2018, Kubik Inc. was the successful bidder to provide professional interpretive exhibit design planning, fabrication, and installation for three new gallery spaces in the new addition to Joseph Brant Museum. The Burlington Gallery will feature Joseph Brant Thayendanegea, and will look at the development of Burlington from immigration and early industry to modern development. The Costume Gallery will mirror a 'fashion show' experience. Costumes on the runway will contextualize social history, focusing on the time of the famous Brant Inn and the big band era. The Discovery Gallery will be a place dedicated to children, where they can touch, play, and learn.

Our temporary gallery space will house travelling exhibits that will bring international scope and attract local residents as well as out-of-town visitors.

The Joseph Brant Museum Transformation Project has been a long time coming. I am so excited for the future of this institution and all the opportunities it will bring. Our dream is now a reality!



Photo - Courtesy of the JBM

An artist's rendering of the new site after the completion of all renovations and new construction.

BARRY PENHALE’S ONTARIO

HATS OFF TO THE HOITO, 1918-2018

Barry Penhale

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Nothing smacks of the city of Thunder Bay quite like the legendary 110-seat Hoito Restaurant, though Finnish camp life with the requisite sauna could place a close second. My friend, the well-known Canadian writer Charles Wilkins, discovered the existence of thousands of Finns when, in 1991, he moved with his family to Thunder Bay. He soon joined the sizeable ranks of regular (many daily) patrons who had twigged to the generous and authentic Finnish cuisine long associated with one of this country's most historic restaurants. The Wilkins tribe, Charlie, wife Betty, and young children Matthew, Georgia, and Eden, quickly learned that by showing up during off-hours, it was possible to avoid line-ups and thus snare an inviting table. Charlie estimates that by the time his book *Breakfast at the Hoito* was released in 1997 (an instant regional bestseller), he had eaten approximately 300 meals there. It was Charlie Wilkins who introduced my wife, Jane, and yours truly to the much-celebrated eatery that is marking a major milestone this year. It was Jane who, while savouring coffee from a treasured Hoito mug one morning, grinned across the table with her discovery that this is the fabled Hoito’s 100th birthday year. The Hoito’s survival is indeed a great achievement in the Canadian hospitality field, which regrettably is known for unfortunate and frequently unexpected closures. So, along with Charlie and others, we respectfully tip our hats in the Hoito’s direction.

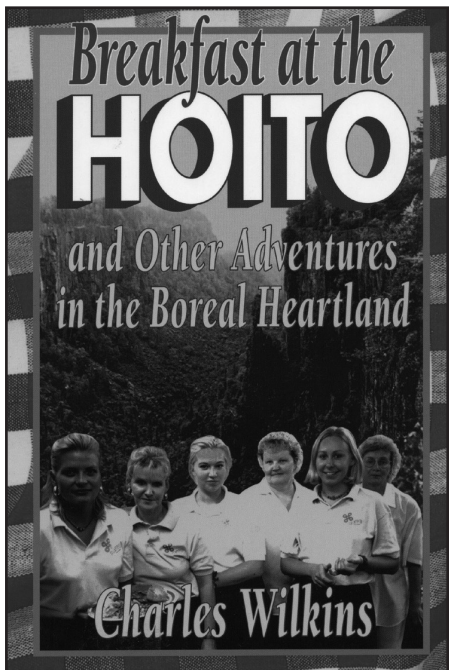
Photo - Betty Karpick



Author Charles Wilkins was captured in this photo prior to the 1977 publication of his book *Breakfast at the Hoito*.

Now living elsewhere in Ontario, the author and journalist is quick to admit that the Hoito draws him back on fairly frequent visits to Lake Superior country. His travels and discoveries within the area labelled by local CBC Radio as “The Great Northwest” have inspired many broadcasts, countless magazine articles, and memorable books. As a passionate chronicler of the Near North’s past, he has given Indigenous folk, along with Finnish and Italian Canadians, their rightful place historically in their chosen unique part of Ontario. As for *Breakfast at the Hoito*—an estimated 1,500 copies of the book have made their way to Finland as gifts to relatives from proud northwestern Ontario-based Finlanders.

Photo - Courtesy of Natural Heritage Books/Dundurn Press



Breakfast at the Hoito book cover.

Housed in the large Finnish Labour Temple at the intersection of Bay and Algoma, the Hoito is the principal tenant in a sprawling building whose construction got underway in 1908 and was fully completed by March 1910. Also known as the Big Finn Hall or Finlandia Club, the site, in addition to the restaurant, houses a museum and boasts a spacious stage and dance floor plus meeting rooms. Much more than a local hub of Finnish culture, the commodious complex was officially designated a National Historic Site in 2011. The building is a landmark that simply cannot be missed in Thunder Bay’s Finnish quarter, and, as a worker’s hall,

it has historically played a significant role in the political life of Northwestern Ontario. If only the walls could speak they would resonate with stirring reminders of much earlier years when radical labour unions relentlessly campaigned for economic and social change. All the while under surveillance by RCMP security from an upstairs vantage point opposite the busy hall. Their principal interest for a time being the Industrial Workers of the World—known by the colourful moniker “the Wobblies.” But even during such turbulent times the Hoito was an essential meeting and eating place for those emigrant Finns drawn by the prospect of work in and around the twin cities of Port Arthur and Fort William—now Thunder Bay. In good times and bad (all too frequently the latter) Finns made their way to the familiar collective at 314 Bay Street—known simply as the Hoito, to this day perhaps Canada’s best-known pancake house. The whopping dinner-plate size pancakes, of the kind believed to



Photo - public domain

The Finnish Labour Temple building in Thunder Bay at 314 Bay Street, home to the Hoito. is shown as it appeared in 1910

have originated with the lumber camp cooks of a much earlier time, remain the Hoito’s biggest seller to this day. Elderly Finns, athletic cross-country skiers, Lakehead University students, first-time visitors, and, yes, my old friend author Charles Wilkins make up the eclectic and appreciative clientele.

The grand old lady, though remaining a revered local icon, has not been immune to a financial crisis or two and in recent years an uncertain future loomed on the horizon. But successful crowd funding among other initiatives saved the day—much to the delight of many who swear there is nothing quite like breakfast or brunch at their beloved Hoito. Above the Hoito’s door is a carved-in-stone inscription of the restaurant’s motto: Labour Omnia Vincit—Work Conquers All. How very appropriate for a 100-year-old building steeped in a history that has always known her share of sweat equity!

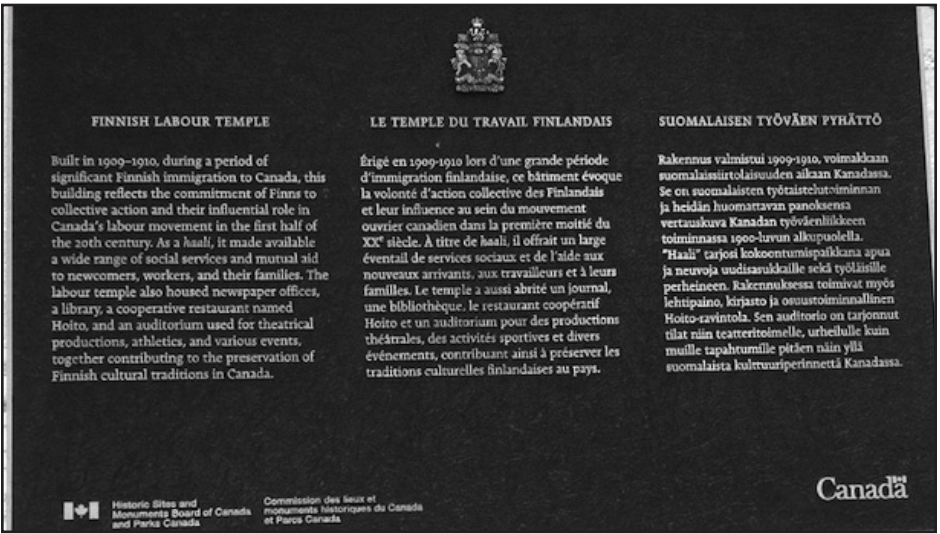
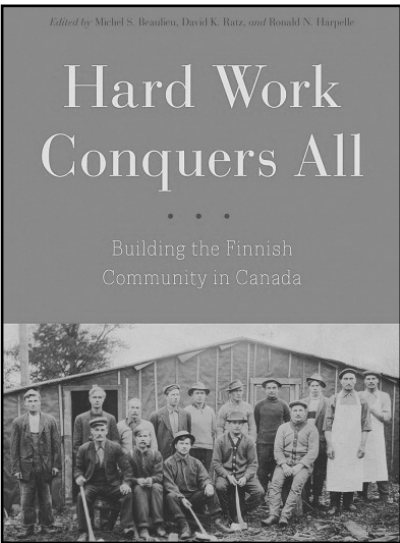


Photo - National Historic Sites and Monuments

A much deserved National Historic Site recognition came to the Finnish Labour Temple site when this plaque was erected in 2011.

For more information about the Finnish Community in Thunder Bay, the Finnish Labour Temple, and Finnish history in Canada, readers of the *Bulletin* may want to check out *Hard Work Conquers All: Building the Finnish Community in Canada*, edited by (OHS Vice President) Michel Beaulieu, David K. Ratz, and Ronald N. Harpelle. *Hard Work Conquers All* is a social history of Finnish immigration and community building in Canada during the twentieth century, published by UBC Press in 2018. For more info, visit www.ubcpress.ca/hard-work-conquers-all.



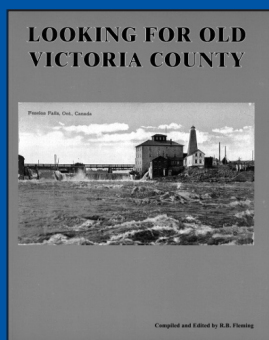
FROM THE BOOKSHELF

Dr. Cynthia Comacchio

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As a quarterly publication, the *Bulletin* arrives in our members' homes roughly in rhythm with our seasonal transitions. The autumnal equinox has just passed. It still feels very much like summer in my home territory of southwestern Ontario, with sunshine, temperatures in the high 20s, and the inevitable humidity that goes with them. Not to mention ragweed! Nonetheless, I think Oscar Wilde's words best sum up what is taking place: "... all at once, summer collapsed into fall." The nights are definitely longer and cooler, the leaves are turning gloriously, and pumpkins of varying size and hue seem to be everywhere. So pick up one of these new publications and enjoy the new reading season.

The histories reviewed below share their basis in community, most directly as presented by R.B. Fleming and Lynne Porter. Michael Hill's subject matter is the symbolic community created among the "folkies" who performed at the renowned Mariposa Festival and attended faithfully. All three selections capably trace the connections, continuities, and changes that have taken place over the time that they consider. All three are wonderfully illustrated as well; Lynne Porter's *Oxenden* showcases the author's own detailed line drawings to depict "the way it was."



Looking For Old Victoria County

Compiled and edited by
R. B. FLEMING

Orillia: Rose Printing, 2017.
Paperback; 232 pp.
trentvalleyarchives.com

Rae Fleming's name is undoubtedly familiar to OHS members and local historians who appreciate his long record of contributions to the study of Ontario's past. His latest edited collection, *Looking for Old Victoria County*, once again demonstrates his ongoing interest in, and devotion to, uncovering the issues that imprinted, shaped, and often disrupted the lives of "ordinary" people in the province's townships and villages, and the ways in which their past has shaped our present. He has imaginatively selected 28 pieces contributed by 17 authors that offer an array of intriguing glimpses into the social histories that, as he acknowledges, have been somewhat neglected by local historians. Fleming's own contribution, "The Woodhill Town Hall Shoe," tells as much about prevailing sociocultural customs of the early twentieth century as it does about the shoe itself. The tiny shoe, exquisitely rendered in royal blue ceramic trimmed with gold, was made to commemorate the new town hall. A precious artifact in and of itself, the shoe's immediate purpose was to acknowledge the momentous local event represented by that institution's inauguration in the midst of a February snowstorm in 1904. More than that, its various travels across the nation and then back to its current location in Beaverton at the historical society headquarters bring to the fore stories about courtship and marriage and the middle-class passion for collectibles, about gender, family, class, race, domesticity. Some of these themes and topics are picked up in other selections, such as those of Bev Ewen on courtship letters, Isabell Wessell on collecting cancellation postal marks (with Rae Fleming), Fleming's biographical sketch about local historian Archie Tolmie, and Brenda O'Keefe on the county's historical society, to name only a few of the 28 included. And while each story can easily stand alone, they come together in an overview of time, place, and community that is compelling, eminently readable, and richly illustrated.



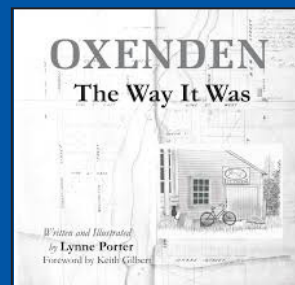
The Mariposa Folk Festival: A History

MICHAEL HILL

Toronto: Dundurn, 2017.
Paperback; 240 pp.
www.dundurn.com

Few annual events in post Second World War Ontario history are as storied as the Mariposa Folk Festival, lovingly brought to light in Michael

Hill's telling. Ontarians "of a certain age" will immediately be familiar with the annual festivities whether they ever attended, though naturally all the more so if they were participants or at least folk aficionados in what might be termed the genre's "second awakening" in the 1960s. The story of Mariposa, now approaching its sixtieth anniversary, is detailed in all its ups and downs, including the perennial problem of such outdoor events: the devastating potential for bad weather, or even erratic weather, for which Ontario is well known, and its impact on revenue, planning, and the entire festival experience. Most readers will know that the festival took its name from Stephen Leacock's Orillia-based stories; many will likely not know that despite Orillia's association with the original festival, the town actually banned it when an unexpectedly large and boisterous turnout in 1963 overwhelmed organizers and offended local residents, no doubt worried about the sudden influx of young folkies and the potential for disorderliness. After stints at Innis Lake and Centre Island, it returned to Orillia in 2000, where it remains. Although still a vibrant element of the folk scene, Mariposa is quieter and more subdued than in its heyday—as, no doubt, are the original folkies some fifty years later. This is a lively recounting of Mariposa the institution and Mariposa the experience, much of it from an insider's behind-the-stage perspective—Hill is the festival's artistic director—that captures the evolution of a mainstay of Ontario popular culture whose reach has extended far beyond provincial bounds.



Oxenden: The Way It Was

LYNNE PORTER

Port Elgin: Brucedale Press, 2017.
Paperback 96 pp., 4 archival maps,
41 drawings by the author
www.brucealepress.ca

Lynne Porter's charming study of Oxenden, to which she was drawn while succumbing to the lure of family history—both her own and that of her husband—will captivate readers from beginning to end. All the Walpoles among pioneer families in the early nineteenth century are related to her, and her husband's Porter relatives were also numerous: her database ultimately contained 46,669 names. From that enormous genealogical record, and her own childhood recollections (as well as those of her children), she was inspired to piece together the stories of the county's early settlers—their homes, families, work, and community—into a thoughtful and delightful little book made all the more readable because it is illustrated by her own sketches of local places and spaces, including every town's heart and centre—the General Store—as well as the Oxenden Hotel and the post office, the mills and local residences and farms, and the commercial buildings and the natural landscape. She begins with the natural beginning, in a time when Oxenden and its surrounding area were home primarily to Indigenous communities, takes us through the vicissitudes of white settlement, the Victorian-era arrival of railways, local newspapers and mail delivery that signified modernization, through to the middle of the twentieth century, so impacted by two world wars and an international Depression. Her approach is both biographical, presenting brief stories about some of the foremost early settlers, but with equal attention to the social history that is recounted in stories about schools, churches, the Orange Lodge, and the early merchants and their various commercial enterprises. Once again, as noted for the Fleming compilation, what comes through the various voices and perspectives is the history of a community in which the foremost historical agents are the people themselves.

If you know of any recently published works on Ontario's history that specifically deal with local or regional history, please contact *Bulletin* Editor Daniel Dishaw at ddishaw@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca

A note to authors: Though we are pleased to accept your submissions for review, the timeline for publication in the *Bulletin* may vary. Due to a high volume of submissions, please be patient. We will publish a review for your book as soon as we can!



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other historical assets in the City were under threat, prompting members of the community to put pressure on their local politicians to start saving the City’s history.

We approached the City Manager with an offer to repair the caboose ourselves. That offer was conditional on the City abandoning their plans to give away or scrap the caboose. A slew of meetings with City officials didn’t provide much traction. Thankfully, a couple of local politicians took an interest in the project and we finally began moving forward, albeit very slowly. On the recommendation of other historical organizations and heritage professionals in the area, we decided to contact the Ontario Historical Society (OHS). After talking with Rob Leverty, our direction became clear: we needed to become a not-for-profit incorporation to move forward. We soon did so through affiliation with the OHS, establishing a board of directors and a constitution. Rob personally attended our incorporation meeting in Thunder Bay on October 15, 2015, and the Thunder Bay Railway Historical Society was born. That really caught the attention of local politicians. The backing of the OHS gave us legitimacy and propelled us forward.

By the summer of 2016, we finally had an agreement in place with the City and began the restoration process. That agreement included a long list of conditions that the City wanted us to meet as well as a grant from the City to cover those costs. Once the conditions were met, the TBRHS would own caboose 78175 and have a long-term lease for the plot of land the caboose sat on.



Neglected CNR caboose 78175 sits waiting for new owners and an extensive restoration job.

Our contract with the City stipulated that we finish the exterior restoration by July 1, 2017. That only gave us one year! We began by removing all the windows for off-site restoration. We contracted a local sawmill to mill replacement siding. By the time the snow started flying, the windows were restored and all the siding had been primed and partially painted. We had a “caboose kit”. It was too late for installation, so the caboose was carefully boarded up for the winter.

Spring 2017 brought about another flurry of activity. All the siding was removed, the internal structure was repaired, and new siding was installed. We also finished rebuilding the cupola and installed the new windows. The toolbox was repaired and the roof walks replaced. The entire caboose was painted to match its appearance from the 1950s. We used modern paints matched to original CNR paint samples. Up to five coats of paint were applied in all areas to ensure the caboose would be well protected for years to come.

By the time our July 1 deadline (for the completion of exterior restoration work) rolled around, we had completed the exterior restoration of Caboose 78175 and therefore fulfilled our agreement with the City. The Thunder Bay Railway Historical Society took ownership of Caboose 78175 after two years of fierce advocacy and hard labour. The caboose is now in the caring hands of a not-for-profit historical society that will ensure her preservation for future generations.



Thunder Bay Railway Historical Society volunteers Bill Gillin and Larry Ezack replacing the siding on caboose 78175

CNR Caboose 78175 now sits at the south entrance to Prince Arthur’s Landing in Thunder Bay, Ontario. What was once considered trash is now the bright orange jewel of the City’s flagship park. The park redevelopment has expanded around the caboose and she sits there as a beacon to honour the City’s railway history. Under challenging conditions, our crew of dedicated volunteers have finished the most extensive restoration of Caboose 78175 to date. Every detail was painstakingly researched, and executed with great care and enthusiasm. She probably looks better now than she ever has. This same group is currently restoring the interior of Caboose 78175 to match its 1950s appearance. I’d like to personally thank everyone who had a hand in saving and restoring Caboose 78175. They are a fine group of craftspeople!



This summer the OHS hosted and welcomed many friends and colleagues at the historic John McKenzie House. Seen here after a business meeting with Coptic Museum of Canada (formerly St. Mark’s Coptic Museum) / Musée copte du Canada (www.copticmuseum-canada.org), which incorporated through the OHS in 2017 are (left to right): Monna Bechai, Coptic Museum of Canada Board Director; Heather Anderson, OHS Executive Assistant; Helene Moussa, Coptic Museum of Canada Volunteer Curator; and Rob Leverty, OHS Executive Director.

The *OHS Bulletin* is the newsletter of the Ontario Historical Society (OHS).

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Types of membership in the Society are: Individual \$45, Institution/ Organization \$50, Life \$500.

Membership is open to all individuals and societies interested in the history of Ontario. The *OHS Bulletin* is sent free of charge to all members of the OHS. The OHS’s biannual scholarly journal, *Ontario History*, is available to members for an additional \$31.50 per year; member organizations,

institutions and non-member individuals for \$42.00; and to non-member organizations and institutions for \$52.50. Membership inquiries should be directed to Cristina Perfetto at members@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca.

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