

BULLETIN

THE ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LOCAL SOCIETIES COMMITTEE

40 EGLINTON AVENUE EAST
TORONTO 12 ONTARIO

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Comment

"Canadians have scarcely begun to treasure Canada. We have in Canada a vast and vibrant opportunity to achieve something of enduring national value by celebrating, proclaiming and enjoying the worth of our multicultural heritage". This quotation comes from a talk given by Dr. William Taylor, Director of the National Museum of Man, to the Canadian Science Writers' Association Seminar held in Ottawa early in January. He pointed out that much irreplaceable historical and archaeological material has been, and still is, being lost to the nation through the ignorance and irresponsibility of many of those who worship "Progress". He did not suggest that modern development should stop, but he did say that the chief need was for understanding and co-operation between developers and historians and archaeologists.

Disseminating the knowledge of the historical background of our own localities and popularizing this knowledge is one of the most valuable contributions that historical societies can make to the nation. History is not all in books, nor is it all in the past. It is alive and all around us. We have only to look and listen to become aware of our treasures.

Awards

The American Association for State and Local History has announced its awards for 1971. It is gratifying to learn that Canadian groups have taken a number of these awards for excellence in various fields. We offer them our congratulations for a good job, well done.

Award of Merit

1. Museum Round-up, edited by Robert Broadland, published by the B.C. Museums Association, Victoria, B.C.
2. Manitoba Historical Atlas, edited by John Warkentin and Richard Ruggles, published by Manitoba Historical Society, Winnipeg, Manitoba.
3. Reginald H. Roy of Victoria, B.C. for indefatigable and scholarly effort in research and publication of Canadian Regimental histories.

Certificates of Commendation

1. Dundas Historical Society Museum, for the operation of a local history museum whose exhibits illustrate the history of Dundas, Ontario.
2. The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Ottawa, for the production of the motion picture, "Fort Who?".
3. Nova Scotia Sketchbook, by L.B. Jenson, published by Petheric Press, Halifax, N.S.
4. Songs of Miramichi, by Louise Manny and J.R. Wilson, published by Brunswick Press, Fredericton, N.B.
5. Louis Collins, Halifax, for leadership in the preservation of historic Halifax.
6. Evelyn Richardson, of Barrington, N.S. for efforts in preserving the Barrington Woolen Mill and establishing it as a museum.

Nominations for the 1972 Awards should be made as early as possible. If you know of an historical society or museum which has done outstanding work; a new publication of historical merit; or a person who has given strong leadership in historical affairs, do not hesitate to send us full details. If your nomination is meritorious, we will ensure that it reaches the Awards Committee for consideration.

Summer Courses

Summer courses are popping up all over the place. Now-a-days a person can find a course in almost any subject he wishes. There are the credit courses leading to a degree offered by the Universities, and the great variety of refresher courses and craft sessions given at the Community colleges. Several of the American Historical Societies have sent notices of their annual seminars. The Pennsylvania Historical Commission is conducting a four-day workshop on a number of historical topics as well as crafts at the Landis Valley Farm Museum, June 19 to 23. An attractive list of subjects, including Crewel Embroidery and Small Library Management is being offered by the N.Y.S.H.A. at Cooperstown, July 2 to 15. For those who would like to go farther afield, the Department of Adult Education at McMaster University is planning three study tours, - one to Italy; one to Yugoslavia; and one to the Far East. Information about these trips should be obtained directly from McMaster. Prices are very reasonable and you may earn credits or just be an Auditor.

Far too late to be of any use for this year comes word of the Antiques Forum and the Garden Symposium held annually at Williamsburg, Va. Both of these are immensely popular and are sold out on the preliminary announcements, long before the program is issued. If you are interested in either of these for 1973, you should put your name on the mailing list NOW.

We have heard rumours of a number of local societies in Ontario where classes in pioneer crafts are held. Last summer, the Lake Scugog Historical Society ran an informal craft room in one of their buildings, where a person could learn a variety of pioneer skills. We would be much interested in learning if your society has tried a similar venture.

East Durham Historical Society

In the latter part of November, 1971, the East Durham Historical Society held a slide-show of Port Hope spanning the years 1850 - 1971, at the Historical Centre. The place was packed and many were turned away. This set the stage for the Society's participation in the month-long "Old Time Christmas" sponsored by the town of Port Hope. During that time the Society kept open house for three days a week from one to nine p.m. The project was convened by the Vice-President, Miss Anna Retallick. Arrangements were made for receiving memberships and donations but no admission charge was made.

The rooms were suitably decorated with the traditional Christmas decorations, and the historical exhibits were changed from week to week. Featured were old toys; a century of fashion; a rare complete set of dated 1887 Queen Victoria Jubilee china; and an outstanding collection of papers and documents dating back to the 1830's. Two Women's Institutes in the area set up a display of articles showing all the types of handwork done by the women of early days, from quilting to hairpin lace.

The members, both men and women, in charge were in costume. During weekends, you could meet horse-drawn vehicles and people on the street who looked as if they had stepped from the plush-covered album in the parlour.

The whole venture involved a great deal of planning and volunteer work, but was considered a successful part of the town's activities. A record of visitors was kept for future reference, and the many people from other places interested in the preservation of history provided contacts for future research.

Essex County Historical Association

At the first meeting of the Essex County Historical Association for 1972, the past-president, Mr. H.J. Lassaline, presented a very concise and informative review of the work of the Association over the past twenty years, 1952 - 1972. It is a record of which the Association can be proud. Mr. Lassaline notes that, "The accepted agency for recording local or area history is the historical society or association." That this group takes its responsibilities seriously is shown by its emphasis on publications dealing with the history of the area.

Of more than local interest is the Association's sponsorship of a reprint edition of The Windsor Border Region, by Rev. E.J. Lajeunesse, C.S.B. This fine volume of reference material covering the 18th century was first published by the Champlain Society in 1960. It sold out very quickly, with the result that it has been unobtainable for some years. Now it is available again. If you want a copy, send \$10.00 to the Secretary of the Essex County Historical Association, Mr. J.D. Cadwell, 451 Park Street West, Windsor.

Essex County Historical Association is one of two or three societies which send us copies of the minutes of their meetings, and our thanks go to the few who do so. As a general rule, we are not concerned with who says what at the meetings. We are interested in learning about the historical activities and interests of the societies in that particular part of the province.

Ontario Genealogical Society

The Ontario Genealogical Seminar for 1972 will be held in Ottawa, on May 19, 20 and 21 with many members staying over until Monday, since these dates coincide with the long 24th of May weekend. The members will be welcomed on Friday evening with supper, informal groups, exhibits and book sales. On Saturday morning there will be a tour of the Public Archives of Canada, which is celebrating its centennial this year. After lunch, at the University of Ottawa, where members will be staying, the speaker will be Dr. Kenn Stryker-Rodda, President of the National Genealogical Society and Associate Editor of the Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey. He will speak on the inter-relationships in research between New Jersey, New York and Canada. After coffee, Col. Strome Galloway will tell about Heraldic Genealogy in Canada. The Annual Dinner speaker will be Dr. W.I. Smith, head of the Public Archives of Canada. On Sunday morning, M. Roland J. Auger, Chief Archivist of the Archives of Quebec, will speak about co-operation in English and French Canadian research. Mr. Hugh Taylor, former Provincial Archivist of New Brunswick, and now a Director of the Public Archives of Canada, will give some insight into research in the Maritimes. The Annual Meeting will follow lunch.

This should be a fascinating and very informative weekend for all those interested in Family History.

Waterloo Historical Society

Through the interest and enthusiasm of one of the members of this very active society, an unusual project was planned and carried out last summer. Fifteen students in the Geography Club of one of the local Secondary Schools became Waterloo County Tour Guides. The students were on call through the local Chamber of Commerce office to guide bus loads or car loads of visitors who wished to see Waterloo County.

In 1972, the 60th anniversary of the Waterloo County Historical Society, the Society will be hosting The Ontario Historical Society's Annual Meeting, June 22 - 24. Planning has been going on in preparation for this event for some time. There will be bus trips to the northern part of the County and to the southern part, as well as a visit to Doon Pioneer Village, and if you have not experienced Waterloo County hospitality, you just haven't lived.

Peterborough Historical Society

The Peterborough Historical Society Bulletin reports the talk given at the November meeting of the society by Mr. Paul Ross of the Community Planning Branch of the Department of Municipal Affairs. After noting the necessity for educating the public as to just what historical preservation was all about, the speaker developed his talk around two themes. The first part stressed the need for legislation to protect our neglected heritage of early Ontario buildings. This was illustrated by slides of various scenes in Kingston, Amherstburg, Niagara-on-the-Lake and others to show just what should and can be done to preserve this aspect of our heritage. The second part of the talk described proposed preservation legislation, which it is hoped will be enacted in 1972 or early 1973. A series of "flow charts" showed the critical path that should be followed in saving a building of historical value slated for demolition.

Advance Notice

A Primer on the History, Construction and Preservation of Early Buildings - the origin and development of buildings in Upper and Lower Canada outlined for beginners is to be published in late May or early June. This is intended to be a basic text for students or laymen who have an interest in preserving Canada's architectural heritage. It is profusely illustrated with photographs and line drawings and has a useful bibliography. The author, Mr. John I. Rempel, is an O.H.S. member who has been concerned for some time in working out the basic criteria which a laymen can apply in making a judgment about the preservation of a building.

The Museums Section

The Museums Section originated in 1953 as a Committee of The Ontario Historical Society and at the 1956 Annual Meeting was raised to the status of a Section. From that time it has never looked back. Today it has its own Executive Committee, chaired by Miss Olive Newcombe of the Dundas Museum; its own excellent monthly Newsletter, ably edited by Mrs. Roberta Gilbank; and it continues to convene its October Workshop Weekend. To this weekend come museum workers from all across the province, to exchange ideas, to seek solutions for their problems, and to find out how other people operate.

To become a full voting member of the Museums Section, one must first be a member of The Ontario Historical Society, and then pay an additional fee of \$3.00, most of which goes to pay for the Newsletter. All fees should be sent to The Ontario Historical Society at 40 Eglinton Avenue East, Toronto 315.

In 1972, the Weekend Workshop is being held in Owen Sound, under the aegis of the Grey-Owen Sound Museum. Planning for the work sessions, the entertainment and the Section's Annual Meeting and Banquet has been going on for some time, and a most interesting and profitable weekend seems assured.

Old Atlases

County atlases were prestige items on farmhouse parlor tables in the Victorian age. They began in the United States where a farmer of the 1860-1880 era enjoyed the feeling of substance he got from seeing his name on his own lot on a township map. Some farmers paid a higher subscription rate to have a picture of himself or his farm buildings included in the volume.

There are several sources from which facsimiles of these old atlases can be obtained and, of course, the price of a facsimile copy is only a fraction of the cost of an original. Atlases of Bruce County, Grey County, Carleton County, Lincoln and Wellington Counties, Simcoe County, Wentworth County and Muskoka and Parry Sound have been issued at a very reasonable cost by:

Ontario Atlas Reprints,
Mark Cumming,
Port Elgin, Ontario.

A good reproduction of an 1877 atlas of Ontario County can be obtained from:

Wilaw Publications,
43 Mill Street,
Pickering, Ontario.

The Mika Studio, 41 Dussek Street, Belleville, has published 1878 atlases of Frontenac County, and Lennox and Addington Counties, and are presently working on an atlas of Hastings and Prince Edward Counties.

One of the East Durham Historical Society projects for this year is selling copies of an atlas of Durham and Northumberland Counties. This has proved highly successful as historians, genealogists, lawyers and even real estate people find them very useful in their work.

Newspapers

A number of local societies have undertaken an interesting, as well as a profitable project. They sponsor the re-printing of an old newspaper of about a hundred years ago. This is a relatively inexpensive job and the papers can be sold as souvenirs or as items of local historical interest. The East Parry Sound Historical Society recently sponsored a reprint of the August 26th, 1908 edition of the "Powassan News". They paid \$15.00 per bundle of 100 copies and had little difficulty in selling the single copies for 25¢ each. This was fascinating reading, as can be seen from some of the ads - "Four Brothers Heave Cure for Coughs & Colds - for sale at Williams Drug Store". A dry-goods store advertising clothing for men and women states, "Our reasonable prices are bringing more customers. Come with the multitude and bring your Butter, Eggs, Potatoes, Cash and anything you have to sell and get GOOD VALUES".

There is a column of short sermons such as, "The definition of a true friend is one who knows you are no good but is able to forget it", and "A character is not so easily made as a complexion".

We liked the following joke which appeared at the end of a long list of Court Judgments - "I am sorry to hear, Captain Salter, that your wife left you so unceremoniously". "My mistake, Sir, I took her for a mate and she proved to be a skipper".

We have seen Centennial copies of the Napanee "Beaver" and the Port Perry "Star". Because of the large circulation of a newspaper, this seems like an excellent means of putting your society and its local historians before the general public.

Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society

"History Hourglass" is the title given to an evening meeting for junior high school social studies teachers in Buffalo and Erie County, held in the Historical Society's Auditorium last February. The meeting was designed to familiarize the teachers with the loan materials and facilities of the Society available to them. Information on the Society's resources material on Western New York State was available, and the program included the presentation of the slide program "Sights and Sounds of Erie County". This meeting was by invitation only, and was particularly oriented to the teaching of local history in the schools. This seems like an especially happy idea, and we would be pleased to hear from any Historical Society in Ontario which may have tried out a similar plan.

A Smile
The thing that goes the furthest
Towards making life worth while
That costs the least and does the most
Is just a pleasant smile
The smile that bubbles from a heart
That loves its fellow men
Will drive away the cloud of gloom
And coax the sun again
Its full of worth and goodness too
With manly kindness best
Its worth a thousand dollars
And doesn't cost a cent
Lt Col A E Bulcher
President the W E Loyalists of Canada
year 1915

A New Book

As part of its continuing program of publication, The Ontario Historical Society has initiated a series of Research Publications. These are graduate theses which have been brought up-to-date and carefully edited. Number One in the series is Ethnic Groups in Canada, by Jean Burnet. This is a topic which is particularly timely, as great attention is being given to it by Government agencies as well as by private groups. The book is an attractive, paper-covered volume, which can be obtained only from our office, for \$2.25 postpaid. Three future volumes are in preparation and the Publications Committee of The Ontario Historical Society is looking forward to a wide acceptance of the series by serious students of history.

Oxford Historical Society

At its January meeting, the Oxford Historical Society asked its members to protest the widening of Vansittart Avenue in Woodstock, from 34 feet to 46 feet on the following grounds:-

1. It is an historic street.
2. Beautiful shade trees would have to be removed.
3. It would be turned into a speedway for heavy traffic.

If all this sounds familiar, one should remember that "constant dripping wears away the stone". It is up to our historical societies to persist in their attempts to preserve the traditional character and beauty of our Ontario towns.

Niagara Historical Society

Niagara Historical Society reports a very successful year in 1971. In addition to regular meetings, this group organized two annual events - The Simcoe Ball and the "Kettledrum", both of which are set in the times of Governor Simcoe. Much preliminary preparation is done for these events in order to make decorations, costumes, food and dancing authentic.

The August Civic holiday this year, was celebrated as Simcoe Day at the Museum with a "Tea with Mrs. Simcoe". About one hundred people came to this. The Junior Simcoe Dancers danced on the lawn during the afternoon. Brigadier and Mrs. Moogk took the parts of Governor and Mrs. Simcoe and received the guests.

In addition to all this, the Society has raised sufficient funds to start renovations in the museum, where the work is proceeding quite quickly. The basement has been dug for a link between the two buildings, and reorganization is being done in Memorial Hall.

Grenville County Historical Society

At the Board Meeting of the Grenville County Historical Society held on February 6th, concern was expressed about the careless disposition of historical material frequently noted at estate auction sales. A letter is to be written to the Public Trustee with a request that historical societies be notified when such an event occurs. It might perhaps, be more effective if historical societies could educate auctioneers about such material and have them notify the appropriate society. At a recent sale we were distressed to see two family Bibles containing family records dating back to the early 1800's. As it happened, one of the relatives was contacted, with the result that the Bibles were withdrawn from the sale.

Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Historical Society

We wish you could see the beautiful annual report for 1971 which the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Historical Society sent in. It could be set up as a model for local society annual reports. It contains the agenda for the Annual meeting; the list of new officers and committee chairmen for 1972; a list of the names and addresses of the members; reports of the Secretary and Treasurer; report of the Museum curator and a list of the acquisitions during 1971; the historical data of the McLean House in Cornwall; a most entertaining article on buttons and button collectors; and the inventory of the waterfront. This inventory was a result of controversy over the disposition of the Cornwall Canal and is an attempt on the part of the society to outline the historical significance of the waterfront area. All this material was put together and neatly clipped into a black cover bearing the name of the society and the date. There is nothing in the whole format that any society could not do. A bit of time is needed, but the result more than makes up for that.

Annual Report Time

It's Annual Report Time again for all affiliated societies. If you have not already mailed your report for 1970-1971 to The Ontario Historical Society office, please do so as soon as possible. If you include all pertinent information, it will not be necessary for us to mail our individual requests later. The report should contain the names of Officers and members of the Executive; the number of members in your society; a brief account of your meetings and activities during the year; and a financial report.

Several affiliated societies have not as yet sent in a report for 1970. This puts The Ontario Historical Society in a very awkward position. We are required to send in our report plus a fee to the Provincial Secretary before June 1st of each year. If we fail to do this our Incorporation would lapse and this would involve all affiliated societies.

If you have any question about the status of your society, please write and ask. We have a complete listing of all societies which have affiliated since 1898.