

# BULLETIN

THE ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LOCAL SOCIETIES COMMITTEE

1466 Bathurst Street

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## COMMENT

This spring has been a busy time for us here in O.H.S. headquarters. Now that we are established in the new office, there is space for our committees to meet and they have been doing just that. Perhaps you do not realize that the Society is run by committee government, and that we have 10 lively functioning committees whose work deserves to be better known and appreciated. For instance, there is the Local Societies Committee under whose aegis this Bulletin is produced. It drew up the form on which affiliated societies are asked to make their reports,- a tremendous help to both the societies and the Secretary who has to record them. The committee arranges the annual Seminar,- this year in Hamilton,- and plans the regional meetings.

Two other important committees also arrange meetings. One has charge of the arrangements for The Ontario Historical Society's Annual Meeting. It works closely with the local society which hosts the meeting. On June 18, 19, 20, 1976, we will be the guests of St. Catharines and Lincoln Historical Society with activities centered at Brock University. All members have a vote at the business session, where you can hear detailed reports of our activities and learn what makes the Society tick. The second group is the Museums Section, which issues its own Newsletter for museum buffs, and holds an annual Workshop devoted to the interests of small historical museums. In October 1976, the Workshop will be in Cornwall,- one of the most historic regions in the province. Present planning indicates that this will be a most interesting workshop.

Two committees are involved in publishing. The better known is probably the one which is responsible for producing "Ontario History". Obtaining articles, editing them and seeing the magazine through the press is an onerous and time-consuming task. Our faces are still red because of the lateness of the December 1975 issue, but it was really not all our fault. Then there is the committee which has produced the four volumes of the "Research Series" and the Index of Publications. Volume #5 of the Research Series is on the subject of the Saugeen Indians and presently is with the printer. Also in the works, and almost ready for the printer is an official history of The Ontario Historical Society. You will be hearing more of these later.

Other committees are concerned with the day-to-day running of the Society,- such things as membership, finances, keeping tab on preservation affairs etc. All this work is done on a voluntary basis by interested people in addition to their individual jobs. We think it proves that history is very much alive.

IN MEMORIAM

We were saddened to learn of the death of Dr. George W. Spragge on March 22nd. Dr. Spragge was a Life Member of O.H.S. and served the Society in an official capacity for many years. A private family service and burial was in Cobourg, Ontario.

GRENVILLE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In his address to the Annual Meeting, the President of the Grenville County Historical Society posed a number of queries which we think every historical society might do well to take under consideration. He noted that this was a time when the role of the local historical society is of increasing importance and significance. Some of the questions crucial to a society's future growth and success are -

1. Have we reached the community? Has the membership increased? Do we really open the doors and take on activities which will catch the imagination of prospective members and serve the purpose of the society?
2. Do the meetings reflect our concern for local history, or have we run dry? Do the programs entertain rather than actively pursue a purpose? Are we over-programmed with too many events, or are there not enough?
3. The on-going work of the society is carried out by a small number of members. How can we involve more people?
4. Much time is spent on developing public relations, both inside and outside the society. A monthly bulletin, for example, involves a great deal of time on the part of a number of people. Is this a worth-while project? Is it appreciated?

The address concluded with the statement that no society can operate on the basis that what was successful in the past must be kept on. New ways must be found to develop strength, to develop credibility in the community and to reach the objectives of recording and interpreting the history of one's own area.

GUELPH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This active society continues to hold its History Workshops at the Public Library every Monday evening and Wednesday afternoon. A sizeable holding of research cards is the result of these workshops, and while good progress is being made in researching the history of the city, many more workers could be used. The February meeting of the society was another "meet the Author" night. Prof. Leo Johnson of the History Department of the University of Waterloo was the speaker. He is writing the "History of Guelph" based largely on the findings of the researchers at the History Workshops.

Although there has been some funding for this project, current inflation has caused an appreciable increase in the original cost. To raise some of the additional money, the society held an Auction Sale at the Legion Hall early in May. Members were asked to donate articles, old, new or middle-aged.

OTTAWA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This society lost its first President with the death of Murray Mathieson on February 1, 1976. Mr. Mathieson had been instrumental in laying the foundation of the Ottawa Valley Historical Society. Besides being its first President when it was organized in February, 1955, he played an important part in establishing the Champlain Trail Museum in Pembroke. It was opened in 1958 with Mr. Mathieson as one of the Directors. He had been a Director of the Ottawa Valley Historical Society since its inception in 1955 and was a permanent member of the Executive. A Memorial Service was held in Calvin United Church in Pembroke on February 3rd.

GRIMSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Among its plans for 1976, the Grimsby Historical Society has listed a House Tour of six interesting and architecturally important 18th and 19th century homes in the historic Grimsby area. Last year's most successful Tour, on a beautiful June day was so well arranged that the some six hundred visitors were able to follow their maps from house to house with little difficulty and much delight. The date for this year's House Tour is June 12th. The tickets are priced at \$4.00 and may be obtained from Mrs. G. Lewis, Box 113, Winona, Ontario. This House Tour makes a delightful bus trip and outing for an historical society.

NORTH YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

North York Historical Society planned a two-part program for its March meeting. The first part was a discussion of the questions -

1. Where are the historic sites in North York?
2. What are the historic resources in North York?
3. What is the potential in our own society for historic development?

The second part followed with the showing of the film, "A Future for the Past". This outstanding British National Trust film shows how old buildings can be adapted to suit modern needs, and blend into the streetscapes of urban areas in England.

ETOBICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The February meeting of the Etobicoke Historical Society featured a panel of speakers from neighbouring Women's Institutes. The first Women's Institute was formed by Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless in Saltfleet Twp. in February 1897, and the movement grew rapidly. It is an organization of women from rural communities. The first street lamps in Etobicoke were the result of an Institute delegation to Council offering to pay half the cost of operating 5 electric lights on Dundas Street. The Institutes have contributed greatly to school and community programs. Their Tweedsmuir histories are a valuable source of information for researchers in local history.

NIAGARA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Miss Janet Carnochan was born in 1839 and passed away on March 31, 1926. Her life was devoted to her profession, her church and the preservation of the heritage of the community. For the regular March meeting of the Niagara Historical Society, the President prepared a research paper on her career to observe the 50th anniversary of her death. The Kirk Session of St. Andrew's Church invited the members of the society to hold their meeting in their Kirk Hall to hear this "Tribute to Janet Carnochan".

WOMEN'S CANADIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF TORONTO

This active society had a most interesting February meeting. The speaker, Mrs. Mildred Redmond is the Director of the house ANDUHYAUN, which means, in Ojibway, Our Home. The house is run as a hostel which has room for 12 or 14 resident Indian girls. It was originally run by the Department of Indian Affairs but this proved too costly. The Association of Native Women took over and are trying hard to keep it going. The girls come mostly from Northern Ontario and the idea is to help them become good citizens by finding them jobs or by getting them into school. The program at ANDUHYAUN includes a Sunday "Drop-in", a self-improvement evening and instruction in native crafts. Medical Assistance, Legal Advice, Counselling etc. are additional services provided when needed.

SCARBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The President of the Scarborough Historical Society has sent a letter to the Presidents of other historical societies in the Metropolitan Toronto area. On behalf of his society, he invites all interested historical groups with regular mailings to exchange memberships for their respective presidents. This is to be done as a reciprocal arrangement without payment of any fees. A copy of Scarborough's latest quarterly Newsletter accompanied the invitation.

We feel that this is a splendid idea. It might be carried even further with an interchange of invitations among the societies to their regular meetings. If one society can arrange for an outstanding speaker or has an anniversary to celebrate, why not invite a neighbouring group to share it?

NORFOLK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In its 75th Anniversary year, 1975, the Norfolk Historical Society won two prestigious awards for both the 75 years of accomplishment and for recent efforts in cataloguing, recording, publishing and exhibiting. At the 75th Anniversary party on October 17, Dr. Gerald Killan, Chairman of the Local Societies Committee of The Ontario Historical Society, presented the O.H.S. Award of Excellence and one of the Canadian Historical Association's Certificates of Merit. The two framed awards now hang at the entrance to the Centennial Gallery of the Eva Brook Donly Museum.

LONDON & MIDDLESEX HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The London & Middlesex Historical Society reports, with sorrow, the loss of its Treasurer, Philip Chapman, on December 30th, following heart surgery. He became Director of the society in 1962 and has been Treasurer since 1967. He was also the society's representative on the Western Fair Board and on the Constitution Committee. He gave of himself in many fields,- in church work, in the Canadian Army and in Municipal office. He was an Alderman of the City of London for six years and was President of the Middlesex Municipal Association. He was deeply interested in amateur rowing, and held office in several Rowing Associations. He organized the water events for the summer games last August in London. He was an authority on Municipal Law and will be sadly missed at Jeffery & Jeffery legal firm, which he joined in 1947. He left a legacy of work well-done in a quiet unassuming manner that won him many friends.

ORILLIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The February meeting of the Orillia Historical Society was spent with Estelle Cuffe Hawley and her ancestors. It began in the recent and flashed back to the remote. It was nostalgia updated. Mrs. Hawley's forebears were educated English-Irish immigrants who faced all the struggles and hardships common to the pioneers. They lived close to their God and at times, even closer to bare subsistence. Through it all they refused to lose their cultural heritage even if it meant carrying a baby in one arm, cooking over a wood stove with the other and listening to poetry the while. Mrs. Hawley is the amalgam of this background. She chose to become an early feminist - polite, non-militant, but determined to open opportunity to women capable of seizing it. Those who heard her considered her talk to be Ontario social history at its best.

PRINCE EDWARD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Prince Edward Historical Society has a section entitled "It is a Fact" in the monthly news sheet. The March issue gives some interesting data on the cost of living. In 1892, a house in Belleville rented for \$7.00 a month. In Picton, in 1904, room and board for two could be had for \$7.00 per week. At the same time, a cleaning lady charged 30¢ for half-a-day's work. The best butter was 25¢ a pound; milk was 5¢ a quart; bread was 5¢ a loaf and eggs were 17¢ a dozen.

We hope that the account book from which these facts were taken is being properly prized. It should really be microfilmed for safety's sake. Authentic data of this kind is becoming more and more valuable and it should be carefully preserved.

ESSEX COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Last year the Department of History at the University of Windsor organized a meeting where members of the Windsor and Essex County community interested in history could meet instructors and students of that Department. The event proved very successful in that the exchanges between teachers of history from outside the University and their colleagues inside, were especially fruitful. There seemed to be good reason to make such an evening a more regular feature. Early in March, the Essex County Historical Association again co-sponsored a similar meeting. Dr. A. Metcalfe, the historian of the Faculty of Human Kinetics spoke on "Sport in Essex County, 1867-1940". Afterwards a reception was held and refreshments were served.

PETERBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A major achievement of the Peterborough Historical Society in 1975 was the publication of the Illustrated Historical Atlas of Peterborough County, under the sponsorship of the Historical Society and the Centennial Museum Board. The Atlas was produced as a permanent commemoration of the County's sesquicentennial year, marking the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the Robinson settlers. The minute detail in the book is proving to be of great interest to readers both within and beyond the County borders. The Atlas is a handsome volume and those members of the committee who put in so many hours in its compilation are to be highly commended.

GLEANINGS

Bruce County Historical Society "Notes" tell us that the 1976 International Ploughing Match is to be held in Bruce County in September, on the farm of Mr. Earl Johnston, about two miles west of Walkerton. The Historical Society has been invited to have a display there. The President of the Society is actively engaged in the organization of the Ploughing Match.

For some of the smaller societies which have a tight budget, producing and sending out a monthly newsletter is almost an impossibility. One local group in the U.S. has solved the difficulty by asking a variety of local businesses to sponsor one issue each. This gives good advertising for the business concerned and good publicity for the society.

The Historic Charleston Foundation (S.C.) announced its 1976 Festival of Houses for March 18 to April 17 in Charleston. Over 85 houses were open for inspection, and there were candlelight tours and evening programs. For those who are interested in old homes and their furnishings, this is a super-holiday.

Simcoe County Historical Association is listing its research sources in a series to appear in several ensuing issues of its "News and Views". The first part of the series is in the March 1976 issue. It lists the Anglican Church records for Simcoe County held at the Diocesan Archives on Adelaide Street, in Toronto. The Registers of St. James Cathedral in the Cathedral office may also be consulted. They date from about 1807 and are very helpful for the early years.

At the October meeting of the Toronto Branch of the United Loyalists' Association, when the Rt. Hon. D. Roland Michener spoke, a T.V. crew for WNET Channel 13 New York, recorded the meeting and informally interviewed several members about their Loyalist ancestors for an educational T.V. Series. The episode, "Paths of Rebellion" contain portions of the meeting and was shown over some 8 local stations on March 20th. at 7:00 p.m.

The Etobicoke Historical Board has published a pictorial booklet about Etobicoke's Century Buildings. It can be obtained from Montgomery Inn for \$2.00. Ask for "Sidelights of History".

The 10th Annual Conference of the Society for Historical Archaeology and 8th International Conference on Underwater Archaeology will be held at the Government Conference Centre and Chateau Laurier Hotel in Ottawa on January 5-8, 1977. Information can be obtained from 1600 Liverpool Court, Ottawa, K1A 0H4.

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission has announced its 20th Annual Institute of Pennsylvania Rural Life and Culture to be held June 22-25, 1976 at the Pennsylvania Farm Museum near Lancaster. The Institute's theme will be developed through a series of Seminars and Workshops where the techniques of traditional craftsmanship will be introduced.

Waterloo Historical Society has set up an Education Committee to handle the many requests from students who would like information about the area. It is hoped that an education committee would serve a very useful purpose in alleviating the increasing work load of the few who have been involved. Copies of the research done will be kept for answering future requests.

In order to avoid confusion, the society which meets in the Port Credit Library has changed its name to the South Mississauga Historical Society. The March meeting featured a fascinating illustrated talk on "Folk Medicine Through the Ages".

Glengarry Historical Society is collecting its folk lore in the hope that, someday, it can be published by the society. Folk lore is the interesting, unauthenticated "history" of the area and Glengarry is full of it. Members are asked to write down sayings and stories, and a program of tape-recording is being planned.

Wisconsin State Historical Society has just completed a four-session sewing clinic on the basic construction of the 19th century costume patterns published by the society. Those attending were shown how to cut and fit a muslin bodice and stitching techniques for each pattern were demonstrated.

Are you "An Adventurer in History"? This summer the Minnesota Historical Society is offering its members a choice of 7 guided Adventures, ranging from one-day excursions in Minnesota, to 9 and 10 day charter tours to Rome and Peru. Sounds exciting!

An Authors' Reception was sponsored by the Ridgetown & District Historical Society to introduce "The Old Town Forever", co-authored by two members of the society. Over 300 persons attended. The society also produced a brochure to be handed out to visitors when registering during the Homecoming Weekend. A reproduction of an 1873 newspaper was used for the front page. A short history of Ridge House Museum and a detailed map of places of interest were on the inside.

The first annual Head-of-the-Lake Historical Society award was presented this year to the student of grade 7 or 8 who wrote the best composition about the history of the region around Hamilton. The society hopes that this award will be continued for many years, encouraging the young people to be aware of their rich historical background.

The Smithsonian Institution announces a Bicentennial program entitled "Kin and Communities" for the middle of June. By means of a series of workshops, panels, seminars and public lectures, the Smithsonian will focus on the Family,- the original social unit from which the nation has evolved. Genealogists will be especially interested in this program.

"Checklist of Parish Registers" is a guide to all the parish registers available on microfilm at the Public Archives of Canada. Of particular interest to those pursuing genealogical research, this booklet lists a wide range of records from registers across Canada and a number from early French settlement in the eastern U.S. The booklet can be obtained from Information Canada for 75¢.

Ancaster Twp. Historical Society sends out the most attractive announcements for the meetings. In February, there was an illustrated talk, "The Story of Hamilton Harbour and the Desjardins Canal". The announcement of the meeting was superimposed on a map of the area, showing the location of the sites mentioned in relation to present-day highways, creeks and the Bruce Trail.

If you have been a member of the Executive of an historical society, have you checked your files and handed to your successor, all correspondence, photographs, etc., that have come to you? This material should be clipped together in date order. It is most important that this be done every year to ensure the proper continuity of society records.