

# BULLETIN

THE ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LOCAL SOCIETIES COMMITTEE

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

For the last couple of years the O.H.S. has been passing through a period of change and reorganization. In 1976 our long-term treasurer retired, last year our long-term secretary, now, in 1978, our lease expires and we will have to decide whether to move or stay where we are. Costs will obviously play a big role in the decision; but please let us know your feelings on our office location. Have you found St. Clair and Bathurst convenient, or inaccessible, when you are in Toronto?

Last fall the Local Societies Committee, chaired by Gerry Killan, held a very successful Saturday seminar at Toronto on the revision of the Ontario Heritage Act. Twenty briefs were presented, largely by our member societies, and these have now been gathered into a report for the Minister of Culture and Recreation. If you would like a copy, let Ernie Buchner, our new secretary, know. We have a limited supply.

Gerry is also planning four seminars in the Spring to discuss local society funding from the Ontario government. Heritage Canada will join us in these sessions. The locations chosen and conveners will be: Napanee (Helen Hutchison), Orillia (Allan Ironside), Ottawa (Alec Douglas) and Simcoe (Verna Gamble). Watch for the announcements and mark your calendar to send a delegation. On March 31 - April 1 there will be an archives workshop for local societies at the R.O.M. We are now planning for the future, so let Gerry Killan know what types of seminars you would like us to hold.

Finally, we are sorry to say that the increasing costs of everything, especially publications, have again caught up with the Society and the Executive, reluctantly, as authorized by the Annual Meeting, has been forced to raise the cost of membership by \$2.00. We are sorry about this, but the old rates did not cover the cost of printing and mailing Ontario History and the Bulletin, let alone anything else. Also, the Ontario government, with its financial restraints, cannot greatly increase our grant, although they gave us an extra \$2,000 last year. We are now registered as a charitable organization for income tax purposes, have established new membership categories of benefactor and patron and will be going after corporate donations. We have a busy time ahead! Ernie Buchner will also be mounting a campaign to increase our subscriptions from libraries.

A happy and prosperous 1978 to you all, and, as you can see from the above, let us have your thoughts about the Society and tell us what we can do for you. We seem to have acquired a bit of a reputation of 'don't write us and we won't write you'. Let us assure you that we are always glad to hear from you and we will do our best to try and make the Society the type of organization that you and your local society want and need.

Fred H. Armstrong  
London

#### SECRETARY'S COMMENTS

This issue of the BULLETIN marks three firsts. It is the first BULLETIN to include a message from the President of the Society. I hope that the membership will enjoy this new feature which will bring news of the activities of their Executive, as well as considered viewpoints on some of the concerns facing many of the province's heritage groups.

This is the first BULLETIN since the retirement of Miss Alice Davidson the originator of the BULLETIN. Lastly, this BULLETIN marks the end of my first six months as Executive Secretary. It has been an extremely busy period with almost every day offering a new challenge, yet it has also been a totally satisfying time. I have met a great many interesting people, here in the office, in the "field" and especially during the visits which my wife and I have made to some of the local historical societies.

These visits have been fairly well divided between older, fully established historical societies and new, struggling, but enthusiastic groups. Yet, if the age of the society does not seem to effect the enthusiasm of the members, neither does it offer any guarantee for the survival of the organization. There has to be some reason beyond the presence of the one or two dedicated individuals who are in every society.

An historical society is formed for many reasons. It may have been because of imminent danger to a treasured local landmark; it may have been because of the carelessness or thoughtlessness of local government officials, whose actions stirred some chord in the hearts and minds of local citizens. It could have been something far more simple, such as an interest in the community's heritage and the desire to learn more about that heritage, while sharing the interest with others during an enjoyable evening. Thus, there are the two motivations for a member of a historical society, the task motivation and the social motivation. And these two inclinations are laudible especially when they are recognized by the executive of the society and used to complement each other. That is the secret.



I have noticed from my visits and from reading the literature which many local societies send into the office, that a healthy social programme combined with a well planned task programme is very important to the continued growth and well being of a society. Yet, how many local societies are there which relegate all of their energies into one camp or the other? Then they wonder why they always have a dwindling number of members. I would suggest to these societies that the social evening is important to building and maintaining the sense of camaraderie. People want the fun as well as the rewards of belonging to the local historical society. If such an evening is well run and well publicized, it is an excellent way of attracting that most necessary of commodities, the new member. Needless to say, the activities of such evenings are only limited by your imagination and certainly should not be limited by the old "saw". "Well, we've never done anything like that before". Why not try it and then pass judgement. We all learn from our mistakes.

Conversely, it is equally vital that a society maintain a set of goals, possibly in the form of a project or a range of related projects, upon which the society can continue to focus much of its efforts. These will give the members a sense of value for their work, and when completed, a lasting sense of accomplishment. A good job well done is something which every member can point to with pride no matter how large their part, or how complicated the project. New undertakings by a society can serve as a magnet for attracting new members with new skills and this can benefit both the task at hand and the society. Lastly, a successful track record of completed projects will add to the lustre and the prestige of the society, to say nothing of the credibility of the society when it approaches fresh funding sources.

Thus a vital ingredient for a successful historical society is the careful blending of work and play. It is an old formula, but which nevertheless works.

Since June our office has been extremely busy and the overall results of all the efforts are encouraging. The number of inquiries coming into the office has been steadily rising, almost to unmanageable proportions, but I would like to encourage the members to contact me if there is anything with which I can be of help. There are a great many sources of information and aid available, yet sometimes it is hard to know just who to contact about a given situation. I cannot promise any miracles; but I might have discussed your problem with someone else and this experience might have given just the answer you need. The office does not have a large reference library, however it can still be helpful by putting you in touch with the people who can give the answers to your questions.

Nevertheless, all of our services, including this one, have generated a new batch of needs and pointed out some short-comings in the office. Right now we are desperately in need of a new typewriter and a photo-copier. Both are required to allow the office to give faster, more efficient, more useful service to our members, while further permitting a widening of the range of assistance available through the office. Of course, all such things cost money and we would like to raise \$5,000.00. Since the Society is a registered charitable organization, any donations are tax deductible. So while you think of it, why not send in your donation right now and help your society to help you in preserving your heritage.



IN MEMORIAM

Dr. O.B. Dickinson, Scarborough - Life member.

Mr. Allan G. Talbot, London - Annual member.

PROVINCIAL GRANTS INCREASED TO LOCAL SOCIETIES

Good news was received just a few days before Christmas when the HERITAGE ADMINISTRATION BRANCH of the MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND RECREATION announced that the maximum level of the annual grants to local historical societies had been raised from \$550.00 to \$1,500.00. Most of the increase comes in the area of extension activities carried on by the societies. The regulations for qualifying for the grants remain much as they were and this should give an extra incentive for societies to either become incorporated as non-profit corporations or to affiliate under the incorporation of the O.H.S. If you or your society have any questions about incorporation or affiliation, contact the Society's office.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

A number of new publications have been received in the office and they are all well worth bringing to the members' attention.

THE NORTH YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY recently published The Gibson House. It is their first book and it is excellent. The Gibsons were a prominent family in the early history of the Borough of North York and both they and their house have been vividly captured in the text and the drawings of the book. The sketches were drawn by Carol Richards while the text was researched by Louise Clark. The editor was Una Abrahamson. I think this book is an outstanding example of the first rate effort of which a local historical society is capable. Copies can be ordered for \$3.50 each from the North York Historical Society, Gibson House Museum, 5172 Yonge Street, Willowdale, Ontario.

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF Mecklenburg, U.C. has just published the third edition of The German Canadian Yearbook. Earlier editions have proved to be invaluable for researchers working on the German community in Canada and this edition should be no exception. The hardbound book can be ordered from The Historical Society of Mecklenburg Upper Canada Inc., P.O. Box 406, Station "K", Toronto, Ontario for \$15.00 plus \$1.00 postage.

A very attractive new publication has come from the GREY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY. It is entitled Eminent Women of Grey County and provides a timely addition to the growing list of books on Canadian women. The book could also be of interest to genealogists with familial ties to Grey County. Inquiries should be directed to the Grey County Historical Society, Mrs. Loretta McNally, Secretary, R.R. # 1, Clarksburg, Ontario.

THE HEAD-OF-THE-LAKES HISTORICAL SOCIETY has just published Volume 12 in their series, Wentworth Bygones. Copies are available for \$4.00 each, by writing to Mrs. Dorothy Hudson, Secretary, 49 East Seventh Street, Hamilton, Ontario, or, Miss Mary Farmer, 83 Charleton Avenue West, Hamilton, Ontario.

THE WATERLOO HISTORICAL SOCIETY has sent a copy of Volume 64 in their series and a very attractive issue it is.

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF ALBERTA has sent word of their new book on the journals and letters of the Reverend Robert T. Rundle who was the first resident missionary in that province. The collection covers the period 1840 to 1848 and should be of interest to those with familial or other connections in the west. Copies can be ordered for \$10.00 each from the Historical Society of Alberta, Box 4035, Station "C", Calgary, Alberta.

A number of books from individuals have been received in the office. Notable among them are three in particular. Half Century of Farming in Dufferin and Fifty Years of Rural Life in Dufferin County are two books by John Ewing Marshall which will be of interest to people with a fondness for Ontario's rural history. In contrast, John Lutman's new book, The Historic Heart of London, looks at the development of one of Ontario's leading urban centres with special emphasis on the architectural gems still extant in the area which illustrate the manner in which a town developed. All three of the books are enhanced by the great number of illustrations. Mr. Marshall's books are available from the author, while orders for John Lutman's book can be sent to City Clerk's Office.

THE ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY has introduced a new policy and new prices for its publications. Effective January 1, 1978, O.H.S. members are able to purchase the Society's publications at a forty per cent discount off the retail price. The establishment of member and non-member prices means that membership numbers must be included when ordering from the office. In addition, the prices of some of the books have been reduced. Prices for Society publications will now be as follows:

	<u>Retail</u>	<u>Member</u>
<u>Ethnic Groups in Upper Canada</u>	\$ 4.00	\$ 2.25
<u>The Simcoe Papers (5 vols.)</u>	49.00	25.50
<u>Profiles of a Province</u>	7.25	5.25
<u>Prohibition in Ontario</u>	4.00	2.25



	<u>Retail</u>	<u>Member</u>
<u>The Canada Land Company</u>	\$ 4.00	\$ 2.25
<u>Preserving Ontario's Heritage</u> (official history of O.H.S.)	4.00	2.25
<u>Bishop Alexander Macdonell and the Politics</u> <u>of Upper Canada</u>	4.00	2.25
<u>The History of the Saugeen Indians</u>	4.00	2.25
<u>Index to the Publications of the O.H.S.</u>	5.25	3.25

Please note that pre-paid orders will be sent post paid.

#### NEWS FROM AROUND THE PROVINCE

##### Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal Winners

Congratulations to those members of historical societies who were awarded medals commemorating our Queen's Silver Jubilee. The awards were made to individuals who had contributed outstanding service to their communities over the years on the recommendation of their fellow citizens.

Among the winners were Mr. Lindsay Thornburn of the Bruce County Historical Society, Taylor Evans, Alf. Hayes and Verne McIlwrath, all of the Guelph Historical Society, and Tom Bouckley of Oshawa, a member of our Museums Section.

##### Architectural Concern Growing

The public's concern to retain certain structures in their community because of the building's architectural or historical significance appears to keep right on growing. So too do the efforts of this society and many of the local historical societies throughout the province to ensure that the public is better informed of the problems and possibilities of preserving their heritage.

In September, the O.H.S., with the assistance of the Ontario Heritage Foundation, held a very successful one day conference on the Ontario Heritage Act. The purpose of the conference was to bring together many of the local historical societies and Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committees (L.A.C.A.C.) to discuss some of the problems which these groups have run across working under the Act. The objective of the meeting was to determine common problem areas and then draw up a series of recommendations for presentation to the Minister of Culture

and Recreation. A report, edited by Gerald Killan, Chairman of the Local Societies Committee of the O.H.S. and chairman of the Conference, has been sent to all of the participants as well as all local societies which are members of the O.H.S.

A number of local societies are endeavouring to assist the dialogue in their own communities. THE ESSEX COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION scheduled a community forum for November 17th in order to give the general public an opportunity to hear the case for historical architectural conservation. This particular society is just one of many which are becoming involved in the fight and more power to them all.

#### Award Winners

A number of awards are available to both individuals and historical societies for outstanding efforts. I am happy to report that two of our affiliated societies have received recognition this year. THE BURLINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY was the winner of THE ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY AWARD OF MERIT this past year. The presentation was made during the Annual Meeting of the O.H.S. in June. Mrs. Vicki Gudgeon received the scroll on behalf of her society. THE NORTH YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY has been awarded an "Award of Merit" by the AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR STATE AND LOCAL HISTORY 'for enrichment of local history through innovative programmes in the Borough of North York and Gibson House Museum'. Congratulations to both of these hard working groups. THE PETERBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY has received a Certificate of Merit For Local History from the CANADIAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION for the historical atlas produced by that society.

#### GERRY KILLAN AWARDED SCHOLARSHIP

Gerry Killan has been awarded the ONTARIO HERITAGE FOUNDATION's first DAVID BOYLE SCHOLARSHIP FOR ARCHAEOLOGY. "We felt it altogether fitting and proper that our initial grant will enable Gerry Killan to research and produce the first definitive biography of the celebrated Canadian pioneer archaeologist whose name the scholarship perpetuates", said A.B.R. Lawrence, the Foundation's chairman, in making the announcement.

Since David Boyle was the first Secretary of the O.H.S. and was very active in the heritage movement at the turn of the century, this award has special significance for us in the Society. Gerry has asked that any members who have material which would be useful for his research, especially material on David Boyle, to contact him either at King's College, 266 Epworth Avenue, London, Ontario, or through the Society's office.



AURORA AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This very active society has recently announced their receipt of a charitable tax designation from Revenue Canada. Thus the society is now able to give tax receipts to donors which should make it more attractive for potential supporters of the society's work. Other societies should investigate this status for their own benefit.

THE BURLINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Regional government has made an impact on many aspects of our lives and this society has called attention to one particular problem, that of the disappearance of many traditional place names and the altering of others. The society has undertaken an extensive publicity programme in their community along with bringing the problem to the attention of other historical societies in the province. The depth of the society's concern was brought home to me when I had the pleasure of visiting and speaking to them some weeks ago. The changing face of our province should concern us all.

THE OAKVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The latest newsletter from this society proclaims that the society has been successful in its long efforts to have the Chisholm Estate preserved. The society was formed for this objective and at the last council meeting, the town approved the purchase of the estate. Our congratulations for a successful battle, well won! The society also reported that their oral history project was progressing and that they had had their most successful year yet in the museum. Not to rest on their laurels, the museum was undertaking an extensive Winter Workshop programme.

1978 ANNUAL MEETING

The 1978 O.H.S. Annual Meeting will be held at Huron College in London on June 16, 17 and 18. The University of Western Ontario, with which Huron College is affiliated, is celebrating its centenary this year and the O.H.S. is pleased to play a part in the festivities. Make your plans to attend the Annual Meeting right now! This year's Meeting will feature something old, something new, something borrowed, but nothing blue (in spirit, that is).

O.H.S. SEMINAR AND WORKSHOP PLANS

Between now and the Annual Meeting I hope to have the opportunity to meet a number of our members at the various Workshops and the Seminar which the Local Societies Committee of the O.H.S. are planning to hold.



On March 31, April 1st, the committee, in conjunction with the Toronto Area Archivists Group, is holding a seminar on the FUNDAMENTALS OF AN ARCHIVAL PROGRAMME. This seminar will be valuable for those local societies who are either planning to start a local archives, or have already started one as a project. It will be held at the McLaughlin Planetarium lecture room at the Royal Ontario Museum. Since this is a 1½ day seminar, make your plans to attend as soon as possible. The office will be sending out registration forms along with an itinerary in the near future.

One of the major problems facing every society is finances. Raising sufficient funds either for that special project or for the basic day to day operations of a society is one problem which will not just go away. However, there are many ways of raising money, you simply have to work at it with a little imagination and a lot of tenacity. But to help the local societies along the way, the Local Societies Committee has planned a series of Workshops on "Funding and Financing for the Local Society", to be held around the province. The Workshops will be held at the following locations:

- March 18 - Eva Brook Donly Museum,  
Norfolk County Historical Society, host,  
Simcoe, Ontario.
- April 15 - Ottawa, Ontario (more details later).
- April 29 - Midland, Ontario.  
Orillia Historical Society, host,
- May 6 - Napanee, Ontario.  
Lennox and Addington Historical Society, host.

Again, details will be sent out from the office in the near future.

#### INFORMATION NEEDED

One of our members, Bob Shipley, is hard at work on a book about Canadian war memorials. He has asked for our help in tracking down these memorials. If you have information about any war memorials in your area, including a description of the memorial or any other research material, you can get in touch with Bob at 1417 Baseline Road West, London, Ontario, N6K 2E9. He will be glad to hear from you.

In closing I and the members of the Executive would like to wish you all health and happiness in 1978.