

OHS BULLETIN

The
Ontario
Historical
Society

Local Societies Committee

Nov.-Dec. 1978

1466 BATHURST STREET, TORONTO, ONTARIO, M5R 3J3

Issue 21

President's Message

On September 4, 1978, the Ontario Historical Society celebrated its ninetieth birthday without fanfare, but with a spirit of change and a readiness to evolve and meet new challenges. And it is only appropriate that at ninety the Society should be looking into new ways in which it can serve the needs of our province in the fields of preservation, local history and increasing the public knowledge of our heritage. When Canon Henry Scadding, our first president, and the other members of the various local societies, met at Toronto in 1888 to set up the Society they were responding to a recognized need that has not diminished over the years.

Revamping our organization to suit the problems of the 1970s has been one of the main activities of the executive in recent years. Peg Angus amplified our long-standing commitment to preservation by setting up a separate committee in the late 1960s; she also established the local societies committee and reestablished this **Bulletin**. Keith Johnson took us back into the field of special publications beyond **Ontario History** and Ian Wilson began the restructuring of our operations to meet the new challenges. More recently, the Executive Committee has been kept busy responding to the problems posed by continuing inflation and now also retrenchment by the government.

Some of the most recent developments have been in the field of publications. As you will have noticed, we have now changed our printers for **Ontario History** and the new printer, Rod of Brebco Inc. of Meaford, has promised prompt delivery in future. Brebco are also taking care of our "Approaches to Ontario's Past" series, the second issue of which was mailed to you in early December. With it Gerry Killan passes the editorship to Elizabeth Arthur, who will be overseeing the next issue, which is expected in the spring. There has been some fear that our Research Series has been cancelled, but the real case is that it has only been suspended temporarily while the Executive Committee considers the problems posed by the inflation of printing costs, the best design for the cover, the proper format and in general the type of publications that will be of the most interest and value to our members. The **Bulletin** has also been redesigned, as you will have seen by the last issue, thanks to the initiative of our secretary, Ernie Buchner, with the result that it both has a more attractive appearance and -- believe it or not -- costs less!

We are also engaged in other activities. During the fall we have initiated a membership drive directed to public libraries. Ernie has sent them information on our activities and this has resulted in quite a few new memberships; if your local library does not belong, get after the librarian. **Ontario History** alone can save the busy librarian a vast amount of time by providing material for school projects. In September the executive approved a Membership Report, comments on which will be found below. And most important, we are very fortunate in obtaining the assistance

of a real specialist to take charge of our recruiting, Ashley Thomson of Sudbury, who will be arranging a continuing programme -- not simply a drive -- to bring in new members.

The Society has also taken action to help coordinate the efforts of the various heritage groups in the province in face of the increasing financial stringencies and the demands for amplified services. On November 4, Elizabeth Arthur, Ernie Buchner and the writer met with John McAvity of the **Ontario Museum Association**, Peter Ramsden of the **Ontario Archaeological Society** and Christine Arden and Lee Brebner of the **Toronto Area Archivists Group** (the archivists are in the process of forming a provincial association), to discuss mutual problems and plan future coordination. We agreed on the establishment of a Coordinating Committee for Heritage Groups and have made arrangements for regular future meetings.

The preservation field has also witnessed considerable activity. The resolution on the preservation of railway stations, which was discussed with such animation at the Annual Meeting in London, was passed on to the various railway companies. We have now heard from most of them outlining **their** problems and the whole question of what should be done is a difficult one. The individual case approach may be the best at first and we would appreciate it if you would let us know if there is an endangered railway station in your community of historical or architectural merit. Naturally, we will work in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture and Recreation and the Ontario Heritage Foundation in tackling each case.

In view of the many activities of the OHS and its member societies in the field of preservation, it came as rather a surprise to have Mr. Peter Stokes, Consulting Restoration Architect and President of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, attack the Niagara Historical Society and historical societies in general, for failing to take what he regards as adequate interest in preservation. His comments appeared in the journal of his society, **The Acorn**, and at the request of the Executive Committee, I have replied to the editor. A copy of my letter follows this Message. What this exchange points up is that we may hide our light under a bushel to too great an extent. Can you have your secretary write to me letting me know what your society has done in the field of preservation during the last few years: rescuing important buildings; holding conferences; writing for your society's journal or local newspapers; or any other activities. Ernie Buchner and I will then put together a report on our activities if enough information comes in. We will see if any other group can match the efforts of historical societies?

The Local Society Committee's Workshops have been going along well this fall under the experienced guidance of Gerry Killan and upcoming events are discussed by the secretary below. Two new approaches that have been

implemented are an entry into the field of technical training and the widening of our criteria for attendance to include individuals as well as society representatives. Keep your eyes open for future activities in your area; also mark the dates 15 to 17 June when our Annual Meeting will be held at Orillia.

Last year in London Bill Hitchins, Doug Leighton and the London and Middlesex Historical Society arranged a great meeting for us; this year Allan Ironside and the Orillia Historical Society are doing the same. The major theme of the papers will be Huronia and Simcoe County and the tours will take in the Lake Couchiching area, the Stephen Leacock House and finally, Ste Marie-among-the-Hurons at Midland. In response to the request of many of our members and the success of our meeting in Grey

From the Secretary's Desk:

No doubt you have noticed a marked change in the **Bulletin**. The new format and style are a result of many factors, not the least of which are the ever-increasing costs of printing and paper, and the vast increase in the amount of information which we want to bring to our readers. This new format allows us to use less paper (a savings), make the Bulletin easier to read (a bonus) and incorporate a number of new features such as the pictures, the feature articles or biographies and new regular columns on topics of particular interest (**Archives News, Oral/Aural History Notes, Notes from the Ministry of Culture and Recreation**). We hope you like the changes and invite your comments and suggestions. The Society would also like to hear any criticisms you have.

Even with all of the changes in our newsletter, there has still been time for a few other activities. The Local Societies Committee has embarked on a new round of workshops which are designed to help both the local heritage group and our individual member as well. A workshop on **Newsletters, Public Service Announcements, News Releases and Public Relations** has been presented in Nanawee, while a workshop on the **Basics of Researching Local History** was presented in London and Ottawa. Both topics will be presented again in the Spring with dates and locations coming soon.

There have been some changes in our training programme which all of our members should be aware of. In the past, the Society has limited attendance at the training sessions to two representatives from each of the local historical societies in the area. For the first time all of our membership is being invited to attend the session of their choice; there are no restrictions on attendance. Non-members of the Society are also eligible to attend by paying a \$10.00 registration fee (member's fee is \$5.00); however, the \$10.00 gives the person membership in the O.H.S. Thus the Local Societies Committee and their chairman, Gerry Killan are doing their part to recruit members for the Society while providing a useful programme to all of the membership, new and old alike.

A very enjoyable and informative weekend was spent in the Ottawa Valley at the Arnprior conference sponsored by the **Ontario Heritage Foundation** with the co-operation of the **Arnprior Historical Society**. Congratulations to both of these groups for putting together a programme which was informative and entertaining. From the number of people in attendance, the conference was an outstanding success and special credit goes to **Vrenia Ivonoffski** of the Ministry of Culture and Recreation and **Philip Powell**, President of the

County a few years ago, we are gathering at a modern motor hotel. Don't miss it!

Finally, I would like to say a word of thanks to a gentleman who rarely comes into the limelight, but works quietly on the toughest job in the Society, Jim Clemens, our treasurer. He is faced with the Herculean task of getting all our grant forms revised to fit the new guidelines. Without his expertise the entire Executive Committee would be unable to get together enough fingers and toes to get our budget totaled up.

And so, the best of the Season to you all, and prosperity and happiness in the New Year.

Fred H. Armstrong,
London,
President.

Arnprior Historical Society for all of their work in making the conference the occasion that it was. I was impressed by the number of people for whom the conference was a first exposure to the region's heritage and how much they were enjoying themselves. It shows that the interest is there; the secret is to tap it.

We are coming to a time when many historical societies will be reviewing their next year's budget. The expenses of operating a society plus the costs of projects seems to be constantly going up. We have heard for example, that there will be a massive increase (around 50%) in the cost of paper. And yet so many groups do not carry on a systematic review of their income from membership fees. Dues or fees are often the primary source of revenue and they should be dealt with accordingly. It is all too well to say that people will not pay any more, but is this really the case? Especially if they are getting more from their society than they are paying for? A word to the wise!

E. Buchner

TEXT OF A LETTER SENT TO THE ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVANCY OF ONTARIO

Editor-in-Chief
ACORN
86 Augusta Street
Port Hope, Ontario
L1A 1G9

Dear Sirs:

I am writing you at the request of the Executive Committee of the Ontario Historical Society to protest against the statements made by your president, Peter J. Stokes, Consulting Restoration Architect, regarding the role of historical societies in the preservation movement in this province. These appeared in **Acorn**, Vol. III, No. 2, p. 2, where, after attacking the "inaction", as he sees it, of the Niagara Historical Society, he goes on to assert that "historical societies generally are neither directly interested nor involved in historic building preservation, certainly beyond their own particular project as a rule." He next proceeds to list three historical houses being preserved by the Lennox & Addington Historical Society, the Peterborough Historical Society and the North Marysburgh Historical Society, but then states that "these are hardly exceptions to that rule."

We have here a totally unwarranted and in view of the record, totally unjustified attack on our provincial historical societies, which, I would argue, over a long period of years, have played as great, if not a greater role in the preservation of the architectural heritage of this province than has the Architectural Conservancy, with its admittedly great contributions. Now the Niagara Historical Society may not have taken what Mr. Stokes personally regards as an adequate stance in opposing what he regards as undesirable changes at Niagara-on-the-Lake, yet it certainly cannot be said to have taken no interest in preservation in this province. When, last year, the Ontario Historical Society held a fall conference at Toronto on the Ontario Heritage Act the Niagara Historical Society was one of the most active participants and their brief is printed in the readily available report: **The Ontario Heritage Act: Present Problems, Future Prospects**, which the Society published. The three societies that Mr. Stokes notes have certainly played an active role in preservation, however, he has somehow missed the many other parallel cases across the province. For instance, to cite just a few examples raised at our Executive Committee meeting, similar structures are being preserved by the Norfolk Historical Society at Simcoe, the Hastings County Historical Society at Belleville, and the Sault Ste. Marie Historical Society. Other societies, such as the North York Historical Society, the Essex County Historical Association, the Weston Historical Society, the Aurora & District Historical Society and the Peel County Historical Association are currently undertaking projects to effect preservation, or hold conferences to increase our knowledge of our architectural heritage, or to help found LACACS in our communities. The current list could easily expand into what could become an extended article.

Basically, what I want to point out here is that the preservation of our heritage buildings, as well as of the other aspects of our heritage, has been one of the chief objects of our historical societies since well before some of our still active member groups came together to found the Ontario Historical Society in 1888. As early as 1879 the York Pioneer & Historical Society rescued the Scadding Cabin from destruction and transferred it to the grounds of the Canadian National Exhibition, where it can still be seen. (This is all aside from that society's work in setting up an historical grouping at Sharon, overlooked by Mr. Stokes, which forms one of the first preservation nuclei in the province). Within a decade of its founding the Ontario Historical Society was actively engaged in preservation activities, in cooperation with its member societies, and to give one outstanding example, in the early years of this century -- as again in the 1950s -- it played a key role in the preservation of Old Fort York at Toronto. The multitudinous past activities can be found in Gerald Killen's readily available history of the Society, **Preserving Ontario's Heritage** (Toronto: 1976). The efforts have continued and in recent years, broadened to encompass the formation of preservation committees, the holding of conferences, cooperation in the formation of LACACS, and engaging in a host of battles across the province.

Yet the sad part of Mr. Stokes' attack, and the unnecessary one, for as president of your society he should surely know what is going on, is that so much of this work has been done through cooperation between your local branches and our local historical societies. For instance, here in London the local branch of the Architectural Conservancy and the London & Middlesex Historical Society have worked together to help establish schedules of buildings to be preserved, have fought together for the preservation of our major historical buildings (admittedly

sometimes without much success), and have cooperated in the establishment of the municipal LACAC.

This is the kind of coordination that we need across the province if we are to get anywhere in the preservation movement. Yet, when the Ontario Historical Society recently acted to set up a coordination committee of the provincial heritage societies to discuss mutual problems, although our suggestion met with immediate response from the Ontario Archaeological Society, the Ontario Museum Association and the archivists of the province, who are presently forming an association, it was totally ignored by your association; no answers to our letter, no response to our telephone calls. We have now held a very successful preliminary meeting, and cooperation in this manner can do much to further the preservation cause and increase our mutual understanding of what other groups are doing. It is to be hoped that in the future we can extend the cooperation that has been so obvious on the local level to provincial questions and look to ways of coordinating our efforts, instead of making accusations of non-activity on the basis of insufficient research.

Yours sincerely,

Fred H. Armstrong
President

FHA:mpf

Highlights of the Membership Policy Committee Report

At their meeting of September 23, 1978, the Executive Council of The Ontario Historical Society adopted the report of the Membership Policy Committee. The Committee had been set up to examine all of the membership practices of the Society and to present a report which, if adopted, would formalize more aspects of the Society's membership practices.

- 1) The Society reaffirms its role to provide the best single focus for the work of local historical societies and historians within the province. The strength of the Society lies to a large extent on the interplay between those who are interested in history as an avocation and those who earn their living by the study of history; both groups accepting that they have much to learn from each other.
- 2) The Society recognizes that even though there are about 2100 members, representing a wide cross-section of the community, there has been a negligible increase in the total number of members in recent years. Thus the Society, with the adoption of this report, commits itself to reversing the pattern in the years ahead by expending greater efforts on membership recruiting.
- 3) The committee recommended the appointment of a Public Relations Officer (on a voluntary basis) to develop an effective publicity system for the Society which will attract members to the Society.
- 4) The membership committee will be responsible for all publicity efforts of the Society.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MEMBERSHIP POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

- 5) Membership will run for 12 months from the date of joining the Society and will include 4 issues of the journal, **Ontario History**. Memberships on a calendar year basis can still be accepted. All membership categories will remain as they are.
- 6) There will be a four month period of grace before members who have not paid their dues are struck off the membership rolls.

If you have any questions about the membership policies of the Society, kindly direct them to the Secretary for prompt attention.

E. Buchner

Personalities



Across Ontario there are many people who devote large amounts of time and expend great amounts of energy working on the heritage of their community. While these people are often known and appreciated for their contributions within their own community, the O.H.S. would like to extend the recognition of these people across the province by bringing them and their work to the attention of all of our members. Thus, from time to time, we will be presenting a brief feature on individuals whom the O.H.S. feels should be recognized.

It is appropriate that the first such feature should be of **Dalton Mercer** of the Richmond Hill Historical Society. Dalton has been a long time friend of the O.H.S. It is largely due to his efforts as Local Coordinator that the 1977 O.H.S. Annual Meeting at York University has been called "one of the best Annual Meetings ever presented". But, it is more for his work with local historical societies that Dalton is being featured in this issue of the Bulletin.

Following his retirement from the Metro Toronto Police Force in 1963, Dalton has time to devote to his long-time interest in the history of North York. His interest in the North York area stemmed partly from his many years

of service with the North York Police Force (prior to its absorption into the Metro Toronto Force) and partly from his family's long association with North York. His family had originally settled on a farm at York Mills in 1794 and the connection with the area has continued to the point where Dalton's daughter, Joan, is the sixth generation to be born in the same area.

Having originally joined the North York Historical Society in 1962, Dalton moved onto the executive of the society in 1965. In 1967, he took charge of the membership duties for the society, a post he held until 1972. Between these years the membership increased from 70 to approximately 200; a very healthy growth record. Part of the credit for this growth goes to the practices which Dalton contends are vital to successful membership growth; practices which are easily applicable to every historical society. One practice is the appointment of a "greeter", or perhaps, a couple of greeters to meet the people coming to the meeting. It is important that people arriving at the meeting be made to feel comfortable and welcome. This is true both for current members and vital for making guests and potential new members feel that they are not intruding, but are welcome and will meet with friendship.

Dalton served two terms as President of the North York Historical Society. During the first term, 1973, the society put on an Art Exhibition at Gibson House which was such a great success and contributed to the society winning the O.H.S. Award of Excellence that year as the most outstanding local historical society in the province. It was also during this first term that Dalton started working toward the formation of the North York Historical Board; a board which would act as the managers of historic properties in the municipality including those then under the management of the Toronto Historic Board. This effort culminated with the formation of the Board in 1977. In recognition of his efforts, Dalton was appointed to the first board for a two year term. In 1976, Dalton was once again President followed by yet another term as Past President. As noted earlier, it was in this latter capacity that he acted as Local Co-ordinator for the O.H.S. Annual Meeting in 1977.

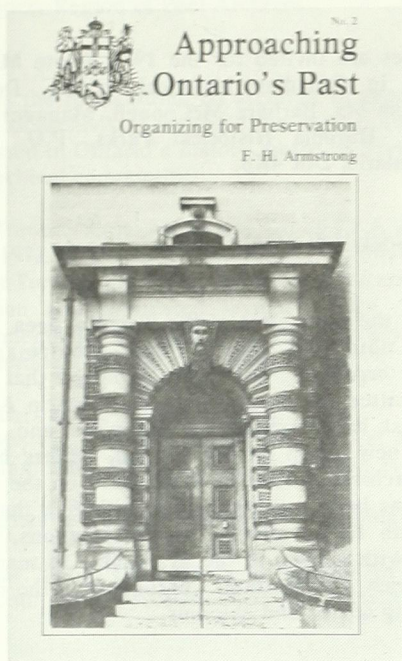
By 1978, Dalton moved off the executive of the North York Historical Society, but his work in local heritage was not ended. In 1963, Dalton and his charming wife, Ruth, had moved to Richmond Hill, north of Toronto. No doubt recognizing that they had something of an expert in their midst, the Richmond Hill Historical Society voted Dalton onto their executive as 2nd Vice President in May, 1978. Always active, Dalton is to be found greeting visitors to the meetings of the Richmond Hill society with a friendly handshake and a warm smile. And, in addition, he works diligently on a wide range of projects for the society, such as the museum and the new crafts centre which the society is setting up next door to the museum. Incidentally Dalton and Ruth somehow find the time to visit their many friends around the province on their frequent trips here and there.

In summary, Dalton Mercer has shown many of the qualities which mark people working in the heritage field in Ontario, a keen interest in the history of their community, a willingness to work at their interest and the capacity to give leadership to make their community a better place in which to live. Thank you for all of your work, Dalton. Most of all, thank you for that warm handshake and that friendly smile.

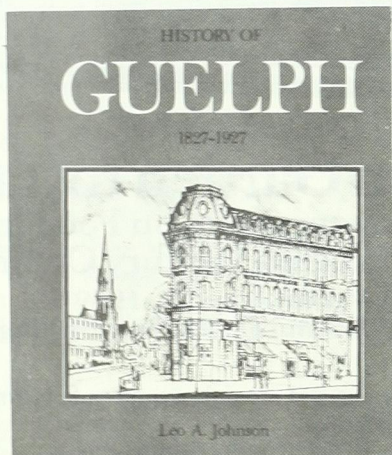
E. Buchner

New Publications

A number of publications from historical societies and others have come to our attention.



The latest issue in the O.H.S.'s **Approaching Ontario's Past** series has been released. Written by F.H. Armstrong, President of the O.H.S. and entitled "Organizing for Preservation", the booklet deals with the steps for preserving the architectural heritage of a community through the channeling of vague emotions into constructive action.



The Guelph Historical Society reports that sales of the **History of Guelph** are progressing well. Copies can be ordered from the society Box 833, Guelph, Ontario.

There are two new books on Peel County. Lee Brebner, Region of Peel Archivist has edited a book entitled **The Peel County Seat Debate, 1856 to 1867**. The book uses Peel Council Minutes, bylaws and newspaper articles to outline how Brampton came to be chosen the county seat in 1867. Cost of the book is \$2.25. The second book is by Pauline Roulston and is entitled **Place Names of Peel, Past and Present**. This book sells at \$6.95. Both are available at the gift shop of the Region of Peel Museum, 7 Wellington Street East, Brampton.

The 1829 Census for the Town of Cornwall, the Township of Cornwall and the Township of Roxborough is now available in mimeographed form. It has been indexed for easier use. The price is \$2.50 and can be ordered from the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Historical Society, Box 773, Cornwall, Ontario, K6H 5T5.

The Royal Ontario Museum has published a new cookbook called **A Cook's Tour of the ROM**. It is a collection of 130 recipes bound together in the new volume. The book is a project of the Members' Committee of the Royal Ontario Museum. It is available at the ROM Book and Gift Shop. The price is \$5.95 and proceeds go to the ROM Renovation and Expansion Fund.

The Huron County Historical Society has sent along word that **Huron Historical Notes**, Volume XIV has been completed. Details can be obtained by writing Mrs. M. Batkin, 75 Princess Street East, Clinton, Ontario, NOM 1L0.



Upcoming Events, Workshops, Seminars and Conferences

Western Canadian Studies Conferences

The Eleventh Annual Western Canadian Studies Conference will be held at the University of Calgary on February 23rd and 24th, 1979. The Conference will be interdisciplinary in nature, and will include papers dealing with the response of various political, economic, social and cultural groups of the Great Depression. Registration, including meals and hospitality arrangements will be \$35.00 per person. Further information about speakers, accommodation and sessions may be obtained from Douglas Francis or Herman Ganzevoort, Department of History, University of Calgary, Calgary, T2N 1N4.

Canada's Material History: A Forum

The National Museum of Man is sponsoring a forum on Canada's material history in Ottawa on 1 - 3 March, 1979 which will interest historians, museum curators, historic sites researchers, historical archaeologists and others working in this field. The conference will be held at the Victoria Memorial Museum Building in Ottawa and will include an opening reception and a banquet. Further details are available from the National Museum of Man, Ottawa.

Attention: Wedgewood Enthusiasts

The 24th Wedgewood Seminar will be meeting in Toronto, April 25th to 28th, 1979. The seminar will be hosted by the Royal Ontario Museum and participants are scheduled to visit historical sites and potteries in the Toronto-Hamilton area. The theme of the seminar is "Wedgewood in Canada" and the speakers are all Canadian. It is believed that this is probably the first all-Canadian seminar presented to an international audience.

Niagara Peninsula History Conference

The First Annual Niagara Peninsula History Conference is being planned for Brock University, St. Catharines in April 1979. The theme for the conference is

Upcoming Events, Workshops, Seminars and Conferences

Niagara Peninsula History Conference

aspects of the history of the Welland Canal since the Canal will be celebrating its 150th Anniversary next year. Four speakers will be invited to present papers on relevant topics and the day will include lunch and dinner plus a celebrated after dinner speaker. The organizers are inviting papers for the conference and ask that anyone interested in being a speaker contact them at Brock University (684-7201). The organizers are **John Burtniak** (Ext. 293), **Wesley Turner** (Ext. 402) and **John N. Jackson** (Ext. 313).

From Garden to Table

The **Ontario Museums Association** is presenting a week-long conference in February 4 - 8th called "From Garden to Table". The conference will deal with all aspects of food preparation in a 19th century kitchen. The site for the conference is the Royal Botanical Gardens, Hamilton. Details can be obtained from the Association, 38 Charles Street East, Toronto.

Forest History Society

The sum of \$10,000 has been awarded to the **Forest History Society** by the Upper Great Lakes Regional Commission. Purpose of the grant, announced by **Harold T. Pinkett**, President of the **Forest History Society**, is to enable the society to include a "Delphi Panel" in its forthcoming symposium on "Environmental Change in the Great Lakes Forest".

Scheduled for June 7 - 9 in Madison, Wisconsin, the symposium will draw together historians, ecologists, geographers, industrialists and others in a consideration of the past and present ecological system of the area. The causes, nature and impact of changes prior to, during and since the logging era will be examined. Further details from the Forest History Society, 109 Coral Street, Santa Cruz, California 95060.



Ideas

Many societies use their newsletter to give short informative pieces on some aspect of their community's history, be it a building, an event or a personage. They also draw the membership's attention to heritage programmes in other nearby communities - a very helpful and worthwhile service.

A novel, and yet probably very useful idea has been inaugurated by the **Glenarry Historical Society**. The November 10th meeting was advertised as a "Beef" night and offered a chance for the membership to air their views on the current activities of the society. The idea sprang from those occasions when the executive was asked "Why don't You" or "Why do you" and on the tenth the membership could put their complaints or opinions on a slip of paper for discussion. It sounds like a worthwhile exercise for any group from time to time.

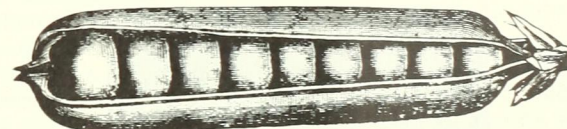
Provincial News

Ministry of Culture and Recreation - Huronia Historical Parks

Entries are invited for the 1979 **Sainte Marie Prize** competition in Canadian historical writing. Details are available from Ms. Barbara McConnell, Manager of Public Information, Huronia Historical Parks, P.O. Box 160, Midland, Ontario, L4R 4K8.

Ontario Association of Archivists

From the newsletter of the **Toronto Area Archivists Group** we note that **Henri Pilon**, Chairman of the independent organizing committee reported that meetings of the committee (for establishing the Ontario Association of Archivists) have focused on the ways and means of getting the new group off the ground. Letters have been sent to all archivists to solicit their views on the issue. No consensus has been reached as yet, although the proposal has met with favour. There are reservations, however, particularly with respect to the availability of manpower to operate the new organization. Consequently, the committee is still seeking advice and opinions.



SPECIAL SYMPOSIUM
From Garden to Table
A Symposium on Food in
Nineteenth Century Ontario
February 4-8, 1979
Royal Botanical Gardens, Burlington

The garden was not only a source of enjoyment and appreciation, but also an essential part of life in nineteenth century Ontario.

Using the theme *From Garden to Table*, the programme will provide an insight into the cultivation and preparation of vegetables, herbs, and fruits of the period.

Lectures and workshops will be presented by eminent scholars and curators.

For full symposium details and registration information, please contact:

Ontario Museum Association

38 Charles Street East
Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1T1
Telephone (416) 923-3868

Archives News

By Lee Brebner, Region of Peel Archives

This is the first column on archives to appear in the Bulletin. As an archivist, I welcome the opportunity to keep those interested in Ontario's history aware of developments within the archival community.

The Toronto Area Archivists Group (T.A.A.G.) was founded in 1972 to act as a catalyst for archivists within Metropolitan Toronto. Its membership included members of the profession and interested laymen. Since 1972, the number of members has increased dramatically and the group has members throughout the province.

Members of the current executive are:

Chairman: Mr. Lee Brebner, The Region of Peel Archives
Vice Chairman: Mr. William Ormsby, Public Archives of Ontario
Secretary: Miss Christine Mosser, Metropolitan Toronto Library
Treasurer: Mr. James Fraser, City of Toronto Archives
Past Chairman: Miss Christine Ardern, Toronto Harbour Commission

T.A.A.G. holds monthly meetings at various repositories throughout the city. Topics covered at the meetings include a wide range of subjects of interest to both the professional and the layman.

In addition to the monthly meetings, T.A.A.G. has initiated a publications program and an education program. In September, the first volume of **Ontario's Heritage: A Guide to Archival Resources** was published. Dealing with the Peterborough Region (Haliburton, Peterborough and Victoria Counties), the volume enumerates government records, educational records and records from the private sector. Volume two will cover the Region of Peel, and is scheduled to be published in the summer of 1979. Over the next few years, it is anticipated that fifteen volumes will be produced, providing a complete inventory of archival resources throughout the province.

In November, the second edition of **The Guide To Repositories In The Toronto Area** was published. The guide lists archival repositories, personnel and collections. The cost is \$4.50 and it may be obtained through T.A.A.G.'s secretary.

In an effort to assist historical societies and other interested parties, T.A.A.G. has offered a week long program - "Introducing Archives". T.A.A.G. hopes to hold this program again in March, 1979. Members of T.A.A.G. are willing to provide advice and assistance to any groups or individuals.

Any questions regarding T.A.A.G. should be addressed to the secretary, Miss Christine Mosser,
c/o Canadian History Department,
Metropolitan Library,
789 Yonge St.,
Toronto, Ontario
M4W 2G8

Report on the Canadian Oral History Association Conference

TORONTO,
OCTOBER 13, 14

Oral History is becoming more and more popular as a tool for retaining individual recollections and impressions of the past. Taped interviews with older members of companies and communities are being used for many different reasons including radio, television and publishing projects.

The Canadian Oral History Association considered some of the ways in which oral history can be used in the field of education at its recent meeting in Toronto. The two-day annual conference, held at the Skyline Hotel, was attended by approximately 50 people involved in various areas of oral history from across the country.

Papers for the Friday morning sessions, dealing with different aspects of education and oral history were given by well-known educators from York University, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and the Scarborough Board of Education.

In most disciplines the question of ethics is one which remains unanswered. This particular problem was addressed during the first afternoon session - Reactions to and the Ethics of Interviewing. During the second session - Involvement in Oral History - members of the panel outlined the various ways in which oral history plays a part in their programmes.

The day's activities ended with a reception and banquet at which delegates had an opportunity to meet with the executive and speakers.

Saturday's sessions dealt with the technical aspects of oral history, including transcription and editing, the interview process and storage and use of tapes. Discussion periods after the sessions gave delegates an opportunity to find some solutions to the problems which were being encountered in the various areas of interest.

The business meeting included a recap of the conference activities and reports from the members of the executive. The presentation of a number of resolutions and election of the new officers concluded the business session.

The membership voted to approach the Learned Societies regarding the next meeting which should be held in conjunction with the Learned Societies 1980 meeting in Montreal.



Ontario Ministry of Culture and Recreation Notes

On the weekend of October 21-22, 1978, in Arnprior, Ontario, the Heritage Conservation Division of the Ministry, in association with one of its agencies, the Ontario Heritage Foundation, the Arnprior and District Historical Society, the North Lanark Historical Society, and a large number of other local heritage organizations put on a heritage conference entitled "Exploring our Heritage:

**ONTARIO MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND RECREATION
NOTES**

The Ottawa Valley Experience". It is the first in what the Ministry hopes will be a series of regional heritage conferences to be held in various parts of the province over the next few years.

The goals of the conference were to highlight aspects of the local history of the region and to suggest ways of placing it in a wider historical context, to focus attention of the residents of the region on their heritage and some of the tangible remains related to it, to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas between the professional and the amateur, and to serve as a meeting place where people associated with heritage groups throughout the region could meet with one another and discuss common interests and problems and also have an opportunity to discuss various issues with provincial government officials.

Although it is difficult to measure the success of a conference with such disparate goals, the response to this one exceeded even our most optimistic expectations. Some six hundred people registered and several hundred others attended on a more casual basis. Most of the papers were enthusiastically received and much interesting and potentially valuable historical material was unearthed. Papers, illustrated talks and audio-visual presentations dealt with various aspects of the region's heritage: local historians gave thumb-nail sketches of their communities, frequently illustrated with material only available locally; there were several presentations on the contributions of various ethnic groups to the cultural mix of the region; papers were presented on the social structure of a township, building materials and techniques, transportation modes and routes, and industries of the region.

Some seventy displays and demonstrations were available for viewing. They included numerous interesting and invaluable photographs and collections of artifacts ranging from prehistoric whale bones discovered in the area to early twentieth century tools. There were demonstrations of spinning and weaving, quilt-making, pottery, and so forth. These displays and demonstrations appear to have aided significantly in attracting large numbers of people to the conference and lent a festive atmosphere to the conference.

The conference demonstrated one important fact that all of us who are involved with volunteer heritage groups know so well: it is crucial to have the full support and co-operation of active and energetic local volunteers. Very early in the conference planning process Ministry staff felt that a key to the event's success would be local participation in the development of the programme. Following a meeting in April, 1978, with representatives from heritage groups throughout the Ottawa Valley region, several individuals volunteered to assist with the planning and organization of the conference by ensuring that heritage groups, schools, businesses, municipal officials, and local media were kept informed of the conference and by urging these groups to become involved through the contribution of displays and other material publicizing aspects of the region's local heritage. The outstanding efforts of these individuals deserve special mention, for the conference's success was largely due to their hard work and dedication:

Mr. Philip Powell, President, Arnprior Historical Society
Mrs. Marjorie Lindsay, Chairman, Renfrew LACAC;
member, Heritage Renfrew

Mrs. Joan Rivington, Chairman, Almonte and Area
Continuing Learning Committee
Mrs. Gertrude Dickie, Carleton Place LACAC
Mr. Bill Dobson, President, Smiths Falls Historical Society
Mr. Daniel Proulx, Co-ordinator, Le Chenail, Hawkesbury
Mr. Stuart Morrison, Arnprior Historical Society

We look forward to working on other heritage conservation endeavours with all of the people who attended the conference.

Career Opportunities

CURATOR INVERARDEN

Regency Cottage--1816
CORNWALL--ONTARIO
Restored by Parks Canada 1978
Operated by Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Historical
Society for the City of Cornwall

A challenging opportunity for a person
with initiative and enthusiasm

DUTIES - To work with administrative committee in setting up this historic house and museum; development programs; acquisition of furnishings and artifacts; care of building and grounds; supervision of staff and volunteers; arrangement of displays and special events.

QUALIFICATIONS: Graduate degree in museology with minimum of **three** years experience in a museum; OR **five** years of practical experience in a museum; ability to direct staff and volunteers; ability to maintain good public relations.

Competition ends January 31, 1979.

Apply in writing, with references, to
The Secretary
Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Historical Society
Box 773
Cornwall, Ontario, K6H 5T5

Local Historical Societies and Heritage Group News

Albion/Bolton Historical Society

An interesting variety of monthly meeting programmes have been put together by this society. **Dr. Marti Latta**, Professor of Anthropology, University of Toronto

Albion/Bolton Historical Society

spoke to the October meeting on "Very Early Indian Sites" in the Beeton, Bolton and Mississauga while the November meeting scheduled **Mrs. Ann Silk** of Black Creek Pioneer Village, Toronto to speak on Corn Dolls and Corn Dollies. Did you know there was a difference or what exactly the difference is?

Aurora and District Historical Society

A study has shown that the cost of converting Aurora's Church Street School to a combined museum, senior citizen's and recreational centre would be \$700,000. The feasibility report by A.J. Diamond and Associates, an architectural firm in Toronto, is currently under study by Aurora Town Council and has the endorsement of the historical society. A cataloguing project, under the guidance of Jean Van Nostrand was carried out at the museum during the summer. The typing of catalogue cards has continued this fall.

Canadian Friends Historical Association

The 6th Annual Meeting was scheduled for Saturday, November 25th, 1978 at Friends House, 60 Lowther Avenue, Toronto. **Barbara L. Curtis**, Quaker Bibliographer, The Haverford Collection, Haverford College was scheduled to speak on "Quaker Archives - Their Collection, Care and Use".

The meeting notice also carried the sad news of the recent death of the Association's Chairman, Dr. Walter Balderston of London, Ontario.

Century Village, Lang

Mrs. Marion MacKelvie, curator, sent along word that the Village celebrated a Thanksgiving Festival on October 8th. Threshing of oats by steam power, fresh apple cider making, butter churning and straw hat making were just some of the activities.

The Village has an attractive new brochure containing a short description of each of the Village's structures and its position in the village.

Collingwood and District Historical Society

The Collingwood society is helping to sponsor **Heritage Simcoe** at Georgian College, Barrie. The society also had a booth at the Canada Day Festival in the local arena. Their display included a large cake decorated in the form of the Canadian flag. The note did not mention what became of the cake.

Essex County Historical Association

A recent newsletter notes that "the future of the former Essex County Court House is brightening. The stone "palazzo" in Sandwich, built by Alexander MacKenzie in 1855, has captured the imagination of the new Arts Council for Windsor and Region. The fine old building might well become a cultural centre, thereby gaining a new lease on life. All of this is very tentative...but hopeful."

Saturday, November 18th was the day for "Essex

Essex County Historical Association

County Roots" a meeting of the County's heritage groups sponsored by the E.C.H.A. Discussions and displays were part of the programme. The event was scheduled for the Essex County Civic and Education Centre in Essex, Ontario.

Etobicoke Historical Society

Montgomery's Inn is offering a number of Canadiana Courses this fall - quilting for beginners; learning to spin; local history lectures; and a Grade V programme. Contact the Inn at 236-1046 during business hours for further details.

As part of the Experience '78 Summer Work Programme, student **Mark Fesyk** did research for the Etobicoke Historical Board's L.A.C.A. and Nancy Fitzgerald set up Board of Education archives under the direction of the librarian at the Education Centre.

Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society

The **Pierce-Arrow Collection** display at the Historical Society building continues and is well worth a visit.

Cavalier de La Salle and the **Griffon** were highlighted in October's Collection Corner. A model and etching of the Griffon were on display along with photographs and an etching of La Salle. Featured in the exhibit was Relation of the **Discoveries and Voyages of Cavalier de La Salle from 1679-1681**, a book from the Society's Frank L. Severance Collection.

Glengarry Historical Society

The October 5th meeting featured **Mr. Max Singleton** speaking on Glengarry Architecture. The same newsletter said that the society's Antique Show and Sale had been very successful but the work load was hard on the personnel involved.

George A. Neville, a member of the Glengarry Historical Society and President of the Ottawa Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society has started his own publishing firm - "Canadian Heritage Publications". The first book is a reprint of the 1823 volume **Narrative to a Voyage to Quebec and Journey from Thence to Lanark**.

The G.H.S. is planning a Genealogical - Historical Seminar for the summer of 1979. Late July looks like the time for the two day Seminar.

Guelph Historical Society

The unveiling of a plaque to honour Joseph Connolly, architect of the Church of Our Lady in Guelph was one of the major interests for the society this fall.

On December 7th, the society will be holding their annual Christmas Party and "Show and Tell Night". Two prizes are awarded for the most interesting and/or unusual antique item and the most interesting and/or unusual Guelph item.

Guelph Historical Society

The society has remitted \$41,000 in cash register receipt tapes from Zehr's markets (a local supermarket) and received a cheque for \$136.00. The funds from the tapes have been used in the purchase of a filing cabinet for the society and now they are actively working on the purchase of a second cabinet.

Heritage Richmond Hill

Building moving would seem to be the avocation of the Richmond Hill Historical Society, at least, for this fall.

The society sponsored the moving of a Pastor's House to Black Creek Pioneer Village to serve as the manse for the church in the village. And, not content with that, the society also moved an Evangelical Meeting House alongside the society's "Burr House". Once it is mounted on a foundation, the building will become the society's "Guild Hall". Service clubs in the community are being contacted for support in the society's financial needs and official receipts are being issued.

Once again, fall craft classes are being offered at the Burr House.

Huron County Historical Society

The response to the essay contest sponsored by the society was reported as being very good. The contest was open to elementary and secondary students at the fall fairs throughout the county.

Huron Historical Notes Volume XIV will be ready soon.

Innisfil Historical and Archaeological Society

The photograph collection continues to grow with now more than 2700 photos in the collection and over 1000 printed. The society has hired a typist under OCAP to help with the indexing of the photos.

Kingston Historical Society

The society hosted the Annual Meeting of the **John Graves Simcoe Memorial Foundation** during the summer and two members of the Kingston Historical Society, **A. Douglas Stewart** and **J. Harold Ritchie**, gave speeches at the Meeting. **Senator Eugene Forsey** was the key-note speaker.

Two other members, **Margaret Angus** and **Lily Inglis** worked on the recent **Conserving Ontario's Main Streets** Conference at Peterborough.

A recent newsletter noted that a grant from the Department of Health and Welfare's New Horizons Programme will allow **Evelyn Johnson**, **Arthur Bell** and **A.C.E. Ritter** to work on a **Frontenac County Schools Museum**. The grant will allow the acquisition and development of an initial collection of 40 microfilm rolls of school records and registers, 280 slides of schools and school sites, 200 old school books. The Frontenac County Board of Education has also committed \$1,000. for the microfilming. Oral history will be another programme in the plans. The proposed Museum will encompass 17 townships and the islands.

Lennox and Addington Historical Society

The society's Historical Maps for towns project employed three students over the summer and the prototype of the map is now ready.

Rain did not dampen the spirits of the members of the Society who took part in the Festival of the Pioneers parade on August 19th. The festivities included square dancing in the County Museum.

Discussions are continuing between the society and the County over the future of **MacPherson House** and its ownership. The County is trying to return ownership of the House to the Society. The future of MacPherson House will, hopefully, be announced soon.

Ottawa Valley Historical Society

Good news was received when the Ministry of Culture and Recreation confirmed a Wintario grant allowing the society to proceed with a new Museum building and work is moving along. The building fund received a major boost when the Kiwanis Club presented the society with a cheque for \$10,000 towards the Museum Building fund.

Peel County Historical Society

The Bygone Brampton Symposium, on October 14th, drew close to 75 people. Although the numbers were not as great as the organizers had hoped, the symposium was well-received. Plans are now underway to hold a "Bygone Caledon" symposium in the Fall of 1979.

The Region of Peel Museum will be featuring "Christmas in the French Tradition" from November 6 to January 10. The show is an outgrowth of an idea established in 1976 whereby the museum and art gallery undertook to present Christmas in a different tradition each year. The displays consist of several mannequins representing the Shepherd's Feast at Lex Baux, in Provence; the family by the Yule log; various gift bearers, such as Saint Nicholas, Pere Fouctard, Hans Trapp, and Christkind, all of whom perform the same function as Santa Claus in North America, and St. Florentine, who brought the Christmas Tree to France. Also featured is the traditional French Christmas meal which was eaten in New France in the seventeenth century.

Peterborough Historical Society

The latest newsletter brings word that **Mrs. Martha Kidd** has been honoured for her work in the field of preservation and conservation with a Community Service Award from Heritage Canada. It was scheduled to be presented by the Governor-General at Heritage Canada's Annual Meeting on September 30. Mrs. Kidd has been active in this field for many years, both in Peterborough and elsewhere. She served as the first Chairman of the Preservation Committee of the **Ontario Historical Society** and has worked in a larger field for Heritage Canada, and most recently has chaired the committee which has just completed the architectural survey of Peterborough's core area this summer.

St. Catharines Historical Museum

The Museum has announced that its new **Index of**

St. Catharines Historical Museum

Artisans and Industrialists is now available for research use in the museum's library. The Index lists craftsmen, artists and industrialists of every description in the latter half of the nineteenth century in the St. Catharines area. It was compiled by Maria Featherston as part of the museum's Experience '78 programme this past summer.

Streetsville Historical Society

Brigadier J.A. McGinnis, chairman of the Toronto Historical Board was the guest speaker at the society's Birthday Meeting on October 5th. His talk was entitled "Who Really Won the Battle of Queenston Heights?"

Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Historical Society

The year 1984 is a special one for Cornwall, as it is the Bicentennial of the founding of the city. A special committee to make advance preparations for this event was appointed by the City Council early last spring and has held several meetings. Among the committee members are Mr. Robert Pearson and Mill L. Jean Cameron of the **Stormont,**

Dundas and Glengarry Historical Society

The Society has applied to have a historic plaque erected on the site of the old windmill fort. The application was made to the Heritage Administration Branch of the Ministry of Culture and Recreation.

Wellington County Museum

The 1978 Fall Programme of the **Wellington County Museum** included workshops on a varied list of topics, such as Plain and Fancy Christmas Bread; Small Gifts for Giving; Decorate Your Table and Yourself; Tree, Mantle and Wall Decorations; and Cake Decorating and Christmas Goodies. There ought to be some good eats and fancy houses in the Wellington County area come Christmas.

York Pioneer and Historical Society

The society is clearing the inventory of past issues of **York Pioneer**. Details, including the issues still available and prices can be obtained by writing to the society at Box 481, Station "K", Toronto, M4P 2G9.



Season's greetings and best wishes for a happy and prosperous 1979!