As part of a growing initiative at the OHS to become more active in the movement against climate change, OHS Project Manager and Librarian Sarah McCabe attended a webinar on December 8, 2021, hosted by the National Trust for Canada: “Gathering of the Heritage Sector: COP26 and Climate Heritage Action.” During the webinar, peer organizations in attendance were encouraged to join the Climate Heritage Network and begin working towards a greater integration of climate change action in their day-to-day operations. The OHS is very pleased to announce that in March 2022, the Society was accepted as a new member of Climate Heritage Network.

The Climate Heritage Network (CHN) is a global network whose members are committed to mobilizing arts, culture, and heritage to address climate change and support communities in achieving the ambitions of the Paris Agreement. CHN seeks to scale up culture-based climate action and to foreground the cultural dimensions of climate policy through coordination and cooperation among its members. CHN members work with all types of culture including arts and creative industries; museums and libraries; landscapes, heritage sites, and archaeology; and intangible heritage, traditional knowledge, and Indigenous ways of knowing.

Network members include: arts, culture, and heritage units of government at all levels; Indigenous Peoples’ governments, representative bodies, and organizations; site management agencies; NGOs and other organizations; universities and research organizations; design firms, artists, and other businesses.

As the OHS aims to have more of an impact on climate change and work toward the reduction of its own carbon footprint, the Society is exploring any and all opportunities to connect with like-minded organizations and movements. In that same vein, we have recently announced a paperless delivery option for this newsletter, the OHS Bulletin, which you can read more about in the adjacent article. Staff are committed to effecting change in any way possible, and we will continue to work toward this goal.

Daniel Dishaw, OHS Communications and Outreach Coordinator
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To borrow from a somewhat over-used phrase to describe Northern Ontario, our province is a “vast and magnificent land.” I was recently reminded of this as I made the familiar trek south from Thunder Bay to visit family and friends. As is always the case when I near Webbwood (the town, incidentally, that elected Canada’s first female mayor, Barbara Hanley in 1936), I get nostalgic.

For a number of years, and more times than I can remember, I would board the evening Greyhound Bus in Thunder Bay and make the long trip to Toronto to visit family and to work. The twenty-plus hours on a Greyhound Bus in the depths of winter was the only real option for me in the mid-1990s. Passenger train service ended in the mid-1980s and passenger ship service even farther back. Driving required a car, and air travel was not even a consideration due to the expense.

As arduous as these trips seemed at the time, they did expose me to many First Nations, cities, towns, and villages along highway 11/17. Each trip I found myself wondering about the people and history of these places as I passed through. In some respects, these trips spurred my interest in the history of Northern Ontario and, to the chagrin of many I know, have filled long summer evenings about why, for example, there is a 12-sided barn in Iron Bridge and why Port Coldwell is now abandoned (and often referred to as a “ghost town,” although I have yet to see one).

It is thanks to the dedication of many (mostly volunteers) that we can learn about the history and heritage of Ontario. I was reminded of this when the OHS Board of Directors met on February 10, 2022. Representing all corners of the province, I am continually struck by their knowledge, enthusiasm, and passion. As we discussed the many challenges facing the efforts to preserving, promoting, and protecting our shared history (aspects of which are covered elsewhere in this Bulletin), we were also updated on and shared information about our recent achievements and successes. One I’d like to share is how Ontario History journal has expanded exponentially its readership and reach.

As members will recall, in 2017 we signed an Agreement with Érudit, a Canadian non-profit publishing platform, to host the digital version of Ontario History (now starting with the 2005 Autumn issue). Since then, the journal has seen annual increases in revenue, subscribers, and article/book review downloads. In 2021, over 84,000 articles and book reviews were downloaded (an average of 232 a day), a 700% increase over 2018! At the same time, Ontario History is now being read in over 55 countries. As a result, more and more people in Ontario and around the world have access to and are discovering more about Ontario’s history. It is important to note that these downloads are not just coming from Ontario, but from all around the world. I am proud to say that our Society’s journal is a leading force in promoting our province’s history on a global scale.

As you will have read on page one, the Society recently announced that we will now be offering two delivery options for the OHS Bulletin: print and digital. With this issue of the Bulletin, all OHS members (with an email address on file) will have received an email containing a link to the digital version. While we still offer the print edition to any members that wish to continue receiving it, I am very pleased to know that we are doing our part to offer a more sustainable options. Moreover, I have to say that seeing the Bulletin in colour, and with embedded hyperlinks, is truly a major improvement in my eyes.

Finally, just as we are going to print, we learned that the Society has once again been approved by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) for Institutional Eligibility. This approval means that the Society is eligible to administer SSHRC grants and awards, such as the Aid to Scholarly Journals Grant that assists in funding Ontario History.

All my best,
-Michel
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Rob Leverty, Executive Director
rleverty@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca

2021 Financial Statements

I am pleased to report that the Society’s 2021 financial statements, independently audited by Akler Browning LLP, show a balance sheet that is sound and healthy with no outstanding debts or liabilities. Last year the OHS incurred a fiscal surplus and increased its total net assets.

Given that our annual provincial operating grant has been essentially frozen for the last 25 years and its current value has decreased in terms of real dollars by over 50% due to inflation, how has OHS accomplished such positive financial statements?

For 2021, it is mainly because of you. Thanks to all of you for renewing your membership, your subscription to Ontario History, your donated time and expertise in support of the Society’s activities, and your increased charitable financial donations last year. Total donations were up 30% including, for example, the OHS Cemetery Defence Fund, which went from $883 in 2020 to $5,988 last year.

The Society has also had to rely more and more every year on the investment income from our restricted Trust Funds established through our Planned Giving Program. We are deeply grateful for legacy bequests from the Estates of Jean Burnet, Helen Marie Smibert, Eber Pollard, Mary C.F. Campanella, Ruth E. Day, and Helen Marguerite Barons. In 2021, the OHS saw investment income of $45,748.72, which was critical in helping to fund the Society’s operating expenses, including maintenance of the historic John McKenzie House and property.

We salute the excellent work of the Vikrant Group at ScotiaMcLeod who have been the account managers for the OHS financial portfolio, which includes the Society’s Trust Funds and the Ontario History Endowment, since 2012.

I also want to acknowledge the outstanding work of our bookkeeper, Jean Labrecque, who has ensured throughout the pandemic that every single dollar of income and expense is properly accounted for.

The OHS remains committed to its policies of fiscal discipline, strict spending controls, no debts, and prudent financial management.

Again, we could not have done it without your support and generosity. It is deeply appreciated. Thank you so much!

Alison Prentice Award Trust Fund

In the OHS Bulletin last August, we announced the establishment of a new Alison Prentice Award Trust Fund. Every year, the OHS Alison Prentice Award recognizes the best book on Canadian women’s history published in the last three years. I am very pleased to report that last year, $17,675 was donated to this restricted Trust Fund. The annual income generated will be dedicated to a cash prize, given to the winner of the Alison Prentice Award. To grow this Trust Fund and increase its yearly income, your donations are being accepted. You may donate through our website, by mail, by phone, or by Interac e-Transfer to payment@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca.

Property Taxes On Natural and Built Heritage

On January 31, I gave my fourth detailed submission in the last two years to the Provincial Government on our request “That the Government of Ontario take province-wide action and amend the Assessment Act so that not-for-profit historical organizations incorporated through affiliation with The Ontario Historical Society under its Special Act, 1899, he exempt from property taxes, and that exemption remain active as long as those member organizations continue to be in Good Standing with The Ontario Historical Society.”

While property taxes might seem like more of a pre-pandemic issue, I argued that the pandemic has exacerbated the financial burden. Since March 2020, mostly rural and northern historical societies that own or lease heritage properties and must pay property taxes have been severely disadvantaged as they have been closed to the public and rely solely on volunteers and small community-based fundraising activities to pay for their ongoing maintenance expenses, insurance, and capital restoration costs.

“Exemption from future property taxes by the Government of Ontario will be a crucial pandemic recovery initiative for remote and northern historical organizations incorporated by the OHS.”

I also noted that “the 2018 Ontario Fall Economic Statement announced that the Province would create a province-wide property tax exemption for properties occupied by Ontario branches of the Royal Canadian Legion, to take effect in 2019. The Assessment Act was amended in December 2018 through Bill 57, the Restoring Trust, Transparency and Accountability Act, 2018. This amendment added section 15.1 to the Assessment Act to create this new property tax exemption for Legion properties in Ontario. It took effect as of January 1, 2019.”

As the Mayor of Latchford, George Lefebvre, states in support of the OHS property tax exemption request: “During 2019, the Province of Ontario exempted all Royal Canadian Legion Branches from municipal taxation which included Sgt. Aubrey Coens V.C. Br 629 here in Latchford. Despite our limited assessment base, the loss of this taxation had absolutely no impact on all other taxpayers here.”

Therefore, I submitted that “enacting our focused request for property tax exemption would not set a major precedent or have any distinguishable financial impact.”

If this heritage issue is not resolved before the upcoming June 2nd provincial election, I urge you to ask all the party candidates in your constituency that if they are elected, will they support our request in the next Legislative Assembly of Ontario?

Thank you and enjoy the spring!
In 2015, historian Vivian Hylands and I started envisioning plaques in the downtown area to highlight Cobalt’s art history. Vivian’s sudden passing in 2017 was a heartbreaking loss; her vision for the project had been a critical driving force.

After Vivian’s passing, I continued lobbying for support of the project. It was at this time that Ann-Marie Loranger, Economic Development Coordinator for the City of Temiskaming Shores, expressed an interest in getting involved. Ann-Marie spearheaded the installation of four plaques in the Town of Cobalt and Coleman Township. These four plaques recognized Cobalt’s storied art history.

I then began fundraising in the summer of 2021 to support the installation of more plaques. The response was incredible! Individuals, businesses, art and culture groups, and foundations from the community all stepped up to support the project. Among them were the Temiskaming Foundation, Cobalt Legacy Fund, Silver Lodge Fund, and five municipalities.

Six plaques were installed in Cobalt in 2021. The first plaque honours the Cobalt Artist Colony, which began in 1958 and is one of the oldest in Canada. The other plaques recognize the artistic contributions made by Laura Landers, Sir Frederick Grant Banting, George Cassidy, Yvonne McKague Housser, and Marianne Vander Dussen.

Last year, the McMichael Canadian Art collection had two exhibitions on Cobalt art. The first, "Uninvited: Canadian Women Artists in the Modern Moment," showed six of Yvonne McKague Housser’s works and one of Bess Housser’s. The other, "A Like Vision: The Group of Seven at 100," had A.Y. Jackson’s Cobalt paintings as well as Franklin Carmichael’s famous painting, A Northern Silver Mine, 1930. That exhibition also featured a whole wall of streetscape sketches.

Catharine Mastin, Ph.D., is preparing an exhibition at McMichael on the modern artists who painted Cobalt’s silver mining camp. Her work will add further revision to the story of how Group of Seven artists Franklin Carmichael, A.Y. Jackson, Sir Frederick Grant Banting, and their female contemporaries Yvonne McKague Housser, Isabel Mclaughlin, Rody Kenny Courtice, and Bess Housser artistically responded to Cobalt. The Cobalt story is a timeless testament to how history enjoined to art enriches us today.
THE TORONTO RAILWAY MUSEUM IN ROUNDHOUSE PARK

Brendan Read, Toronto Railway Historical Association Volunteer
Contact Manager & Curator Kelly Burwash for further information: kburwash@trha.ca

The Toronto Railway Museum (TRM) tells the story of Toronto’s railways, but the museum has its own story to tell.

Let’s go back 36 years, to 1986. The array of rail yards belonging to the CPR and its archival Canadian National Railways (CN) that once served businesses with freight trains and supported intercity passenger trains was disappearing as subsidized road and airline competition changed the transportation industry.

In the place of rail facilities, new development began to spread across the downtown core, filling the vacant spaces. The resulting congestion—a result of the city’s growth and redevelopment—led to the 1967 launch and expansion of the GO Transit regional rail system, which necessitated the construction of small, dedicated yards near Union Station.

As railways began to disappear, the importance of telling this history grew. The Toronto & York Division of the Canadian Railroad Historical Association (CRIHA) opened a small museum of historic locomotives and railcars on the city’s waterfront in 1975. Unfortunately, limited resources forced it to close just six years later in 1981.

In 1986, the CPR traded the John Street Roundhouse (which would become a railway museum) to the City of Toronto in exchange for regulatory concessions on its other properties. With the facility in public ownership, proposals for a railway museum soon emerged. The most elaborate of these visions proposed building a dome over the entire roundhouse for a comprehensive transportation museum. With an estimated cost of $50 million (in today’s dollars), the project fell apart, as advocating organizations failed to secure adequate funding.

In the meantime, the tracks that linked the John Street Roundhouse with the rail network were removed, and all but the roundhouse, the coaling tower, and the water tower were demolished. The coaling tower was later moved from its original site at the east end of the property to its current location in order to accommodate expansion at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre.

In 1990, the roundhouse was declared a National Historic Site, citing it as “an architecturally and historically important surviving reminder of steam technology and the role of rail transportation in the City of Toronto.” With this in mind, the City of Toronto gradually refined its museum plans. The City decided that the site and facility would be self-sustaining by leasing most of the roundhouse stalls to generate income to support the museum.

The Toronto Railway Historical Association (TRHA) was formed in 1981 and incorporated in 2005. It was established to advocate on behalf of a railway museum in Toronto. The TRHA began by developing a very productive working relationship with the City. Work began on the building restoration and site construction in 2007. The opening of the new museum took place in 2011.

With the building restoration complete, stalls 1 to 11 were rented to the Steam Whistle Brewery, while Leon’s Furniture, later the Ree Room, occupied stalls 18 to 32. It soon became apparent that the TRM could only occupy three of the stalls. The City had planned to add the roundhouse’s machine shop to the museum but later turned it over to Toronto Hydro for an electrical substation.

Faced with limited room, the TRM expanded outward, creating a historic railway village at the east end of the site. Most notably, the village includes the former CPR Don Station, built in 1896. When Don Station saw a decline in ridership in the late 1960s, it was moved to Todmorden Mills Heritage Museum. At the Toronto Railway Museum, the Don Station houses the museum’s gift shop, which also serves as a station for a miniature railway.

Central to the TRM are its 16 locomotive and rolling stock exhibits. They occupy many of the tracks on site, including those surrounding the 120-foot turntable. The museum’s signature exhibit is No. 6213, a CN 4-8-4 steam locomotive. The collection also includes Cape Race, a 1929 CPR solarium car.

CN 4803, one of the locomotives on display at the museum.
Though diminutive in stature, Wilma Morrison (1929–2020) was unquestionably a giant in the ways that really matter. One can easily picture Wilma in an earlier era as a fearless suffragette or as one of Harriet Tubman’s courageous co-workers, guiding freedom seekers in search of “Caanan’s Land.” As it happens, Wilma worked miracles in her own time and, whatever the challenges, the now greatly missed trailblazer always put actions ahead of words, and with remarkable results. Speaking as a friend of Wilma’s, I feel it necessary at once to put the spotlight on friendship, which I personally see as an important part of the legacy she left behind. She made friends easily and it didn’t matter if you were white or black, young or old, all were equally cherished. Since her passing, I have spoken with many others who also mourn the immense loss of a treasured friend, and I have read testimonials cherished. Since her passing, I have spoken with many others who also

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reinforcing just how much she meant to countless individuals across both Canada and the US.

Be it in Georgia, Kingston, Collingwood, St. Catharines, or Niagara Falls (both sides), accolades were quick to arrive when word spread that the Niagara Region’s undisputed authority on African Canadian history had left us on April 23, 2020, a Covid-19 casualty. Somehow, in spite of the Niagara Region’s previously neglected Black heritage. A 2019 documentary film locally produced by Ayo Adewumi and simply entitled Wilma captures one of her greatest achievements, leading the charge to save the British Methodist Episcopal Church (circa 1836) — a unique historic landmark where escaped slaves from the US once congregated. Wilma’s mother. Like a torrent cascading over the falls of the much-publicized Honeymoon Capital, it was only a matter of time before Wilma hit her stride and the full force of decades of accomplishments left us with an unrivalled record of the Niagara Region’s most prominent and influential citizens, including elected officials. Undoubtedly, it was Holland’s example as a courageous and caring father figure that encouraged Wilma to embark on what was to become her own exceptional life of community service.

Married in 1955 to George Morrison of Collingwood, she and her husband left Hamilton to settle in Niagara Falls, Ontario, following the passing of Wilma’s mother. Like a torrent cascading over the falls of the much-publicized Honeymoon Capital, it was only a matter of time before Wilma hit her stride and the full force of decades of accomplishments left us with an unrivalled record of the Niagara Region’s previously neglected Black heritage. A 2019 documentary film locally produced by Ayo Adewumi and simply entitled Wilma captures one of her greatest achievements, leading the charge to save the British Methodist Episcopal Church (circa 1836) — a unique historic landmark where escaped slaves from the US once congregated. Wilma grew up at the time when many local places of employment refused to hire African Canadians. Not only steel factories but hotels, restaurants, and churches were closed to them. In Shadd’s book we encounter a mentor and hero of Wilma’s, the Reverend John C. Holland, a truly remarkable man who

worked as a railway porter for over 30 years while at the same time serving as the beloved pastor of the non-denominational Stewart Memorial Church. Wilma found comfort and strength in Reverend Holland’s church and was active throughout the 1940s in the Stewart Memorial youth movement and church choir. Like all other members of Holland’s church and indeed the entire expanding Black population in Hamilton at the time, Wilma heard countless stories concerning her pastor’s endless fight against racism, which included accompanying job seekers to Stelco and other factories, where racist hiring practices were solidly in place. The Reverend Holland by now was a well-known Hamiltonian, and it was in the respect of many of the city’s most prominent and influential citizens, including elected officials. Undoubtedly, it was Holland’s example as a courageous and caring father figure that encouraged Wilma to embark on what was to become her own exceptional life of community service.

In her book, The Journey from Tollgate to Parkway (Natural Heritage Books, 2010), author Adrienne Shadd thoroughly chronicles the rich Black heritage of Hamilton and environs. It is here where we encounter a young Wilma Miller who, in the care of her mother and grandmother, is now a resident of the “Steel City.” Wilma grew up at the time when many local places of employment refused to hire African Canadians. Not only steel factories but hotels, restaurants, and churches were closed to them. In Shadd’s book we encounter a mentor and hero of Wilma’s, the Reverend John C. Holland, a truly remarkable man who

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Finally, it can be confirmed that the Black History permanent exhibit at the Niagara Falls History Museum has been dedicated to Wilma Morrison. Our compliments to the many dedicated individuals within Niagara Falls whose efforts through these and other initiatives will further honour Wilma Morrison and her legacy.

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FROM THE BOOKSHELF

Dr. Cynthia Comacchio
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It’s hard to believe that, when I last set out to write this column, we were approaching the winter solstice. And here we are just having passed the vernal equinox. The former brought the promise of the light returning, a promise fulfilled with the arrival of spring, helped along some by the ritual clock-changing. Spring in Ontario is certainly special: it is now the third week of March and we have enjoyed days of 20-degree weather with clear skies and sunlight, days of minus 10 with winds of the kind that blow over spindly naked trees, a blizzard, a few near-blizzards, many showers that could have waited until April, and plenty of those “wait an hour and let’s see what the weather does” days where freezing rain, regular rain, and snow alternate in one 24-hour cycle. That said, even the grey, the cold, and the “mixed precipitation” can’t hold back the new life already unfurling in and on the earth.

The books I’m reviewing here are perfect reading for this time of year. One takes us outdoors into the natural environment, anticipating the arrival of those longed for days when we can enjoy being outside without the layers of down-filled attire and footware that we can’t do without for what seems like half the year. The other tells the story of a different sort of place that beckons as the days warm unfurling in and on the earth.

Let there be sunshine, health, and the camaraderie and getting together so needed respite for community members, whether individuals, families, or unprecedented activity on the trailway, as local trails have provided much-needed respite for community members, whether individuals, families, or friends, and frequently their dogs. Archival images and maps, along with the details of the work involved to build the trail from its old foundations, both in planning and actual construction, make for an exciting behind-the-scenes look at just what was required. It was a project that drew on multiple levels of participation: from the various governments—municipal, provincial, and federal—to the contractors, the builders, and the amazing team of daunted volunteers, all of whom strove to put it together successfully and sustainably. The trailway’s links to other local trails, and its connection to the national trail network known as the Great Trail, are also discussed for the benefit of serious hikers. And a lovely trail diary by environmental activist Nicola Ross is an added treat. This book is a perfect gift for nature lovers, trail lovers, hikers of all kinds, those who enjoy nature photography, historians of the environment, and, for that matter, all and any who are concerned about the environment and how to give something back to preserve it.

ELYSIA DE LAURENTIS

Fergus: printFactor Media, 2022
drewhouse.com

A Grand and Storied Home: The Drew House of Elora, Ontario

The story of a house like this one is fascinating in itself, especially for those interested in Victorian architecture, its Ontario adaptations, and our built heritage in general. But, as author Elysia DeLaurentis makes clear, the story is compelling for more than the house’s structural details. It is also meaningful for what it reveals about what is hardest to find out: the stories of the people who inhabited it, beginning with the illustrious Drew family. Doubtless a frequent visitor to his grandparents’ estate was the namesake grandson of the original owner, the lawyer, Great War hero, one-time Guelph mayor, and Progressive Conservative Premier of Ontario (1943–48). The initials GD, still discernible, were scratched on the windowpane by the lively young Drew, as DeLaurentis notes. Although it did not remain in the Drew family, the house has not changed possession often in the nearly 200 years of its history. Excluding the present owners, Roger Dufau and Kathleen Stanley, and the original Drews, the house was occupied by only four different families, each of which made it their own while retaining the characteristics that signify a heritage home. This is where the Drew House story becomes about much more than the house. DeLaurentis, a local historian and professional researcher/writer, capably and effectively searched out the personal stories of those who once inhabited it. By means of indefatigable sifting through local and provincial archives and historic publications, by talking to former residents and their descendants, by examining stores of family photographs and documents, she has deftly woven all the bits and pieces into a narrative that shines much light on domestic arrangements and family relations, on class and gender, on social aspirations and conventions. There is even a bittersweet coming-of-age tale by John Denholm, whose family lived there in the 1950s, in which he recalls what it meant to be a teenage boy in small-town Ontario in those years. Beautifully written and illustrated with many never-before-seen photographs from private collections, this book will convince any who still need convincing that an Elora excursion should be at the top of every what-to-do-post-Covid travel list.
Winter weather forced the City of Guelph to put archaeological investigations at the Baker District redevelopment site on hold until April. The current location of the Baker Street municipal parking lot was at one time a cemetery, in use from 1837 until 1853 when a Guelph by-law prohibited burials within town limits. In 1879, Guelph purchased the cemetery property for use as a public park. By then, many of the burials had been moved to Woodlawn Memorial Park. Unfortunately, many unmarked burials remained. According to information on Guelph’s website, the former parking lot property is part of the Baker Street redevelopment project, which will transform the downtown space into a civic hub featuring a new library, outdoor urban spaces, and residential and commercial spaces. The archaeological investigation of the property is required by the Province of Ontario to document and remove any human remains and artifacts before construction can begin. To date, 65% of the site has been excavated, unearthing 83 grave shafts, as well as 37 discoveries of human remains. It is expected that archaeological work will resume some time in April and be completed by June. All human remains will be reinterred at Woodlawn Memorial Park.

Many readers of this column will recall that in March 2021, the OHS Board of Directors opposed the closure of the Johnson Cemetery in Petteferry, Ontario. At that time, the OHS submitted a letter to Dr. Crystal Forrest, (Acting) Registrar, Bereavement Authority of Ontario, OHSA President Michel Beaulieu stressed the ongoing commitment of the OHS to provide additional information in order to positively identify the locations of all unregistered cemeteries in the province. It is important that these cemeteries are identified and registered to ensure they receive the same level of legal protection given to registered cemeteries. Since the beginning of the Unregistered Cemeteries Project, a joint committee of the OHS and the Ontario Genealogical Society has submitted information concerning hundreds of unregistered cemeteries in Ontario. With this latest submission, the committee has made every effort to provide the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services with as much information as possible for identifying unregistered cemeteries in these particular counties. It has now been ten years since the first list of unregistered cemeteries was submitted to the Province and the OHS has requested that an update of any actions that have taken place or are otherwise planned with regards to unregistered cemeteries be provided.

Over the past year, I have continued to stay current of any developments in the Johnson Cemetery issue. Last year, Georgina Town Council directed staff and its solicitor to proceed with discussions regarding the donation of the cemetery and the remnant land between the cemetery and fire hall lot line. Any further discussions were held in closed sessions. On December 8, 2021, Council was given a verbal update by its solicitor in a closed session on the Johnson Cemetery. I sought more information from Mayor Margaret Quirk, who put me in touch with Shawn Nastke, Director, Strategic Initiatives, for the Town of Georgina. Shawn told me in an email that the Johnson Cemetery remains a priority with the Town, however, there was no publicly available information at this time. He promised to follow up in a month’s time with a status update. I will be sure to update OHS members of any further developments.

In early March 2022, the OHS submitted the next installment of documentation to the Province of Ontario regarding unregistered cemeteries. This latest submission documents unregistered cemeteries in the counties of Simcoe, Stormont, Sudbury, Timiskaming, Waterloo, and Wellington. In the Society’s letter to Dr. Crystal Forrest and Carey Smith, Registrar, Bereavement Authority of Ontario, OHSA President Michel Beaulieu stressed the ongoing commitment of the OHS to provide additional information in order to positively identify the locations of all unregistered cemeteries in the province. It is important that these cemeteries are identified and registered to ensure they receive the same level of legal protection given to registered cemeteries. Since the beginning of the Unregistered Cemeteries Project, a joint committee of the OHS and the Ontario Genealogical Society has submitted information concerning hundreds of unregistered cemeteries in Ontario. With this latest submission, the committee has made every effort to provide the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services with as much information as possible for identifying unregistered cemeteries in these particular counties. It has now been ten years since the first list of unregistered cemeteries was submitted to the Province and the OHS has requested that an update of any actions that have taken place or are otherwise planned with regards to unregistered cemeteries be provided.

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Inquiries about submissions and advertising: Daniel Dushaw, Editor, OHS Bulletin, 34 Parkview Avenue, Willowdale, ON M2N 3Y2 416-226-9011 cdushaw@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca

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