

OHS BULLETIN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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DECEMBER 2022

PERSISTENCE PAYS OFF FOR LES AMIS DUFF-BÂBY



Built in 1798, Duff Bâby House is located at 221 Mill Street in Windsor, Ontario.

Linda Chakmak, Secretary, Les Amis Duff-Bâby
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Is thirty years too long to wait for a dream to come true? For Les Amis Duff-Bâby, a small historical group in Windsor, Ontario, it seemed like the day would never come. The group (whose mission is to help protect, preserve and promote the historically significant Duff-Bâby Mansion) diligently worked away for decades before things finally fell into place.

A short review of the mansion's history explains the group's unwavering dedication. Built in 1798 as a mercantile establishment/home for Loyalist Scottish fur trader Alexander Duff, the house was purchased in 1807 by the Hon. James Bâby, a member of the Legislative Council and the only French-Canadian Catholic member of the Executive Council. During the War of 1812, the house served as headquarters for both British and American forces and hosted Shawnee Leader Tecumseh. It has stood sentinel to not only local history, but to Canada's growth and accomplishments as well.

In 1979, the property was purchased from Isobel Beasley by the Ontario Heritage Trust (OHT). Recognizing the importance of the house, a grassroots community group, Les Amis Duff-Bâby, was formed in 1990. It successfully pressured the OHT to restore the house to its original appearance rather than the proposed 1920s appearance. The Mansion underwent extensive restoration

'DUFF BÂBY HOUSE' CONTINUED ON PAGE 6...

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OHS HONOURS AND AWARDS WINNERS ANNOUNCED



The Friends of Mindemoya Old School (FOMOS) were selected as the winners of the 2021-22 OHS Heritage Conservation Award. Pictured above is the historic Mindemoya Consolidated School. When the building was threatened by demolition in 2020, a group of dedicated local volunteers came together and fought for the building's survival.

Eighteen months after incorporation through affiliation with the OHS, involving countless hours of relentless volunteer work, FOMOS signed a 21-year lease with the Municipality of Central Manitoulin on July 8, 2022. FOMOS President Jan McQuay remarked, "This iconic century building has such exciting potential. Having a lease is a major milestone in bringing the Old School back to life. Now the real work begins!"

For further information, visit mindemoyaoldschool.ca.

Daniel Dishaw, OHS Communications and Outreach Manager
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The 2021-22 OHS Award winners represent incredible achievements from across the province. Use the hyperlinks that follow to see the associated press release celebrating each one of our winners.

As always, the OHS is delighted to be recognizing a diverse range of communities and topics with its annual Award Program. To submit a nomination for the 2022-23 OHS Honours and Awards Program, visit ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/honours-awards/.

The winners for 2021-22 are as follows:

AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

President's Award: [Graeme Bachiu, Canfield Roots](#)

Cemetery Preservation Award: [Potter's Field Monument](#)

'AWARD WINNERS' CONTINUED ON PAGE 4...

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Kristin Ives, President
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Hello. Bonjour. Boozhoo.

I am honoured to have been elected as your new President. The Society has had a great influence on me as a volunteer, museum staff, and a community historian. The OHS has also shaped the way in which I view our remarkable province—through the individual stories shared that illustrate each community's unique culture and heritage, and through our collective experiences over time.

Thank you to everyone who attended the 134th Annual General Meeting on November 2. Although the virtual format, in many ways, does not compare to meeting in person, it does allow members of the Society from all around the province to join, and that is a great success! Particular thanks to Steve Paikin for his fascinating talk on John Turner. And congratulations to all the OHS Award winners! You can learn more about our winners on page 1.

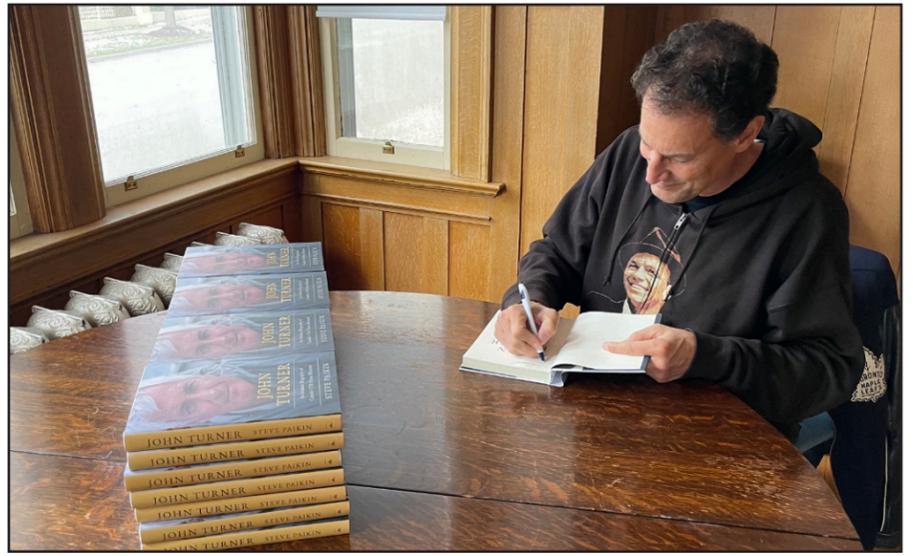
Personally, and on behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank and extend best wishes to former President, now Past President, Michel Beaulieu, and acknowledge his incredible leadership and significant contributions to the Society. It has also been a pleasure working with departing board member Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia), who has been a wonderful mentor to me on the OHS Board. I would also like to welcome our new board member Sarah Pirani (Toronto). Congratulations to Laura Suchan on becoming First Vice President, and to Chief Dave Mowat on taking over as Second Vice President.

Speaking of our membership and welcoming new faces, I'd like to personally welcome the Schumacher Historical Society (SHS) to the OHS. Our newest affiliate joins us from Northern Ontario, and incorporated through the OHS on November 4. SHS seeks to advance education by improving the public's understanding and awareness of the history of Schumacher and Tisdale Township through historical research and documentation and by involving Indigenous communities, local residents, and local businesses in preserving and promoting local heritage. Thank you to everyone involved with this organization for committing your valuable time and energy to preserving and promoting our collective history.

What an eventful first few weeks I have had as President. As you know, Bill 23 presents a significant challenge to our sector, with its potentially devastating impacts on both our heritage and our natural environment. A synopsis of the OHS's submission to the Standing Committee, with a link to the full document, is available on page 4 of this *Bulletin*. I have heard from many local history groups who also prepared submissions; thanks to each of you who has shared comments and concerns with your local and provincial elected representatives.

As a staff member of the Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA), I know first-hand the far-reaching impacts that this bill and other legislation are causing throughout the province. When I started with ERCA in 2000, staff were still feeling the impacts of the 1996-97 cuts; in some ways, many museums and heritage groups in Ontario have never recovered from those cuts.

I was promoted to Curator of the John R. Park Homestead Conservation Area in 2014. It is an incredible, provincially designated site located on the shore of Lake Erie, in Harrow. The 19-acre site features the original 1842 Greek Revival home of John and Amelia Park and family, as well as ten period outbuildings where we interpret the human and natural history of the Essex Region. The site is bordered by Fox Creek, a Provincially Significant Wetland, to the north, and Lake Erie to the south. Like many of you, we work at and anxiously wait for operational grants; we also rely heavily on self-generated revenues and the generosity of our volunteers and donors. Adding new threats to the existing environment is scary for all of us. However, as students of history, we have the gift of perspective. This too shall pass. The pendulum will always swing back. In the meantime, we can only hope that



On Friday, November 18, Canadian journalist, author, documentary producer, and anchor Steve Paikin stopped by John McKenzie House to sign copies of his new book, [John Turner: An Intimate Biography of Canada's 17th Prime Minister](#). As the keynote presenter for the Society's 134th AGM, Steve Paikin emphasized the importance of studying Ontario's history and explored the contents of his book through an engaging and interactive discussion with the OHS membership.

Always a passionate lover of history, Steve Paikin offered the following note of recognition to the Society and its members: "I'm really glad the Ontario Historical Society is there to do this important work and keep the public's love of history—and keep champions of history—going, because we need it. We have too much of living in the moment and living of today, and not enough appreciation for what's come before us, so thank you for doing this good work."

Steve Paikin's talk is now available on the OHS YouTube channel: [2022 OHS Keynote: Steve Paikin – John Turner: An Intimate Biography of Canada's 17th Prime Minister](#).

damages are minimal, and that our individual and collective efforts continue to bring constructive change.

In addition to the external challenges we face, this is a time of significant internal change. The Board, staff, and members are preparing to say goodbye to the Society's long-time, incredible Executive Director, Rob Leverty, and for the transition into the leadership of a new Executive Director. Certainly, no one can replace Rob, but the Executive Hiring Committee is working to find someone as passionate, as professional, and as personable. There are not enough words to express Rob's contributions to the Society. The OHS has benefited greatly over the years from his creative problem solving, diligence in his work, dedication to the role, and his ability to effectively communicate the importance of Ontario's rich heritage and culture to every audience. Personally, and on behalf of the Board, I extend a heartfelt thanks to Rob for his service, and I wish him every happiness and success in his next chapter. We know this is not truly "goodbye", but rather, "until we meet again".

Before I conclude this report, I would like to announce to our membership that on August 29, 2022, an Order in Council (OIC) formalized the immediate transfer of responsibility for the *Ontario Heritage Act* from the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport to the Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism. On behalf of the OHS Board of Directors and staff, we welcome the Honourable Michael D. Ford, Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism.

I'm approaching this new role as President with the view that every challenge presented is an opportunity. I look forward to working with each of you as we navigate this next passage to advance the heritage and culture sector in our province and continue the good work of the Society.

Best regards,
-Kristin

Photo – Dave Bond, SSHS Photographer



On September 24, 2022, OHS ED Rob Leverty joined OHS Director Janie Cooper-Wilson to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the restoration of Bethel Union Pioneer Cemetery. The SilverShoe Historical Society (SSHS) began the restoration of this historic cemetery in 1997, and has hosted an annual Memorial Candlelight Service for the past 25 years. They were incorporated through affiliation with the OHS in 2007. OHS Director Janie Cooper-Wilson is also the Founder and Executive Director of the SSHS.

In celebrating their 25th Anniversary, the SSHS was pleased to present a special performance by Leslie McCurdy. McCurdy's one-woman play, *The Spirit of Harriet Tubman*, has been widely celebrated across the country. Several community organizations from all across the province were represented, with approximately 300 people in attendance.

From left to right: Gary Ethridge (SSHS Co-Founder & Financial Advisor), Janie Cooper-Wilson (SSHS Founder & Executive Director), Rob Leverty (OHS Executive Director), Sharon Dunn (SSHS President), Debbie Ebanks-Schlums (SSHS Secretary)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Rob Leverty, Executive Director
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My very first Executive Director's Report, in the [OHS Bulletin published in April 2008](#), was dedicated to Howard Sheffield, one of the Society's countless devoted members who fearlessly donate their skills and expertise to preserve and promote Ontario's history.

In this, my 58th and final report to you, I would once again like to dedicate this issue as a tribute to our membership by recounting the contributions of a long-time OHS member and ally, Nora Sawyer, former Chief of Alderville First Nation.

In 1989, the Government of Ontario proposed a revised *Cemeteries Act*. The OHS testified before the Legislative Committee Hearings at Queen's Park that this new legislation had no heritage component whatsoever and frankly, seemed to be written by *and for* the real estate industry.

All political parties at the hearings agreed that the concerns of the OHS were valid and should be addressed through further consultation with the Ministry of Government and Consumer Affairs.

In July 1990, Chief Nora Sawyer, OHS volunteer Marjorie Stuart, and I were invited to the Ministry's office (with only one day's notice) to review the regulations for the new cemetery legislation. We were ushered into a small room and told that we must present any comments on the new regulations by 4:00 p.m. that afternoon.

It was immediately apparent that this was not at all the consultation we had been promised. Disturbed by the situation and the way we were treated, Chief Sawyer said one way to register our disappointment was to go to the Minister's office and occupy it. Without a moment's hesitation, Marjorie and I joined Nora in her plan.

In those days, security was rather lax and soon all three of us were patiently sitting in the Minister's office. Chief Sawyer told one of the Minister's political staff that promises about consultation had been broken and we would not leave until we met with the Minister.

Soon after, another staff member arrived to tell us that unfortunately the Minister was not in the building and therefore unavailable to meet with us. That is when Chief Sawyer went to a nearby table, picked up the nearest telephone, and started making phone calls in front of all of us. The first call was to the Chiefs of Ontario and then another to the Union of Ontario Indians, requesting immediate reinforcements and outlining where people should come to join us.

Horrified, the Minister's staff left the room. After an anxious half hour, another, more senior, staff member appeared and offered that "If we agreed to leave the Minister's office, the Government of Ontario would not seek Royal Assent for the revised *Cemeteries Act* until after we were consulted in September."

We accepted this offer, agreeing to leave the Minister's office. Little did we know that a few weeks later, the Liberal Government would suddenly dissolve the Legislature and call a provincial election for September 6, 1990. In a shocking election result, the NDP won a majority of seats and formed its first government in Ontario.

Subsequently, the Office of the Premier, Bob Rae, negotiated with the OHS that before the *Cemeteries Act* was given Royal Assent, it would be amended to ensure the following: if the owner of a cemetery or burial ground wished to relocate it, then the OHS would have right of notification by registered mail, could prepare a submission on whether relocation would be in the public interest, and would be given the right of appeal to a Provincial Tribunal if the OHS disagreed with the decision of the Registrar, *Cemeteries Act*.

Because of the fearless leadership of Nora Sawyer that day in July 1990, the citizens of Ontario won important and historic concessions which have allowed OHS to defeat Provincial Orders to relocate sacred places for private real estate development and have definitely deterred other closure intentions.

So, this final report is in honour of our membership, located in communities across Ontario, because, over the last 34 years, I have seen countless OHS members like Nora Sawyer work relentlessly and courageously to preserve and promote our history.

It has been an immense privilege to work alongside such an incredible community of creative, intelligent, committed, diverse, and determined peoples. It is an experience that has taught me so much on so many levels. I have learned to listen and reflect... a lot. And everything I have learned from my time with OHS will fuel my future work, my life, and my relationships. What an unforgettable and precious gift you—the OHS membership—have given me.

Thanks again to each and every one of you for understanding that our history needs to be recognized as key to making Ontario a more decent and civilized province in which to live and work. Never underestimate the power of our grassroots network and its potential in continuing as a force to be reckoned

On the weekend of October 22, the historic John McKenzie House hosted the First Annual Fall Art Exhibition of the Jack Pine Gallery featuring numerous local, emerging artists. Of the many talented artists exhibiting, the youngest artist in the show, 14-year-old Nalin Kamat, won an award for his figurative artwork. Nalin, along with a few other artists in the show, is part of the Willowdale Group of Artists, a wonderful local art group based in North York. He is currently working on a series titled "Dispositions", using the human figure. You can see more of his artwork and future exhibitions at nalinkamat.com. Nalin is pictured here holding up his award with OHS Executive Director Rob Leverty at the opening gala on October 21. As the Society welcomes group rentals back to the historic John McKenzie House, we are pleased to see such enthusiastic engagement from the local community.



with, building civic space where historical activists will use their voices and join with others in doing this vital work. It can only get stronger and I know it will.

Moving forward, I can assure you that the OHS is in excellent hands with our new President Kristin Ives, the Society's Board of Directors, and my outstanding colleagues: Daniel, Heather, and Sarah.

One final footnote: when Nora, Marjorie and I were escorted from the Minister's office to the elevator, we assured the security officers that we were going to leave the Ministry. So when the elevator doors finally closed, it was just the three of us. I turned to Chief Sawyer, noting that I had full view under the table where she was making her phone calls, and said to her, "You must have a direct line to the Great Spirit because that phone wasn't even plugged in."

And as I close this report, I can't help but see Nora looking up with a conspiratorial smile as the elevator descended.

Thank you all again, and continued good luck in your important work on behalf of all the peoples of Ontario. Onwards!

Editor's note:

Born and raised on Alderville First Nation, Nora Sawyer is a mother of two and grandmother of four. She attended Cobourg District Collegiate before raising her children. She then returned to college in Peterborough to take small business management, and graduated from Trent University with a Bachelor of Arts in 1986.

Chief Sawyer worked at Sir Sandford Fleming College before taking the job of CEO with the Union of Ontario Indians in North Bay for two years. Nora then ran for Chief of Alderville First Nation and served as their first woman Chief from 1987 to 1993. She brought in many new initiatives to Alderville such as a new community centre and daycare, and new cultural practices. After her time as Chief, Nora worked for the Ogemawahj Tribal Council in Orillia as CEO for six years and then as the Director of Health and Social Services for the Chippewas of Rama for 13 years.

Nora served on the OHS Board of Directors (2019-21) and was Chair of the Society's Indigenous Affairs Committee. Elected in 2021 as a Councillor to the Alderville First Nation Council, Nora has been a true friend of the OHS for over three decades and she continues to generously share her wisdom with us.

SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE OHS

As 2022 comes to a close, we want to thank all our members and donors for their continued support of the Ontario Historical Society's important work. We rely on the generosity of our donors to continue preserving our diverse and authentic heritage. Thank you!

The Ontario Historical Society can issue charitable tax receipts for all donations larger than \$10 and dated in 2022. You can [submit a donation on the OHS website](#), or by contacting staff at 416-226-9011 or ohs@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca.

THANK YOU DONORS!

Michel Beaulieu

Audrey Fox

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Robert Halfyard

Ellen Blaubergs, in honour of Rob Leverty

Ronald Junkin

John Case

Stoneleigh Foundation

Richard Lucas

OHS SUBMISSION TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON BILL 23

The Ontario Historical Society recently made a submission to the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy in response to Bill 23, *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022*.

In that submission, the Society emphasized the economic and cultural importance of heritage designation as a tool for preserving local history, economic development, and tourism. Designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act* is an important economic tool for our not-for-profit membership, empowering them to raise the necessary capital funds to restore and maintain the heritage assets in their communities. Designation of these heritage assets also helps our volunteer-run organizations to obtain and maintain charitable tax status with Revenue Canada, which is critical for fundraising.

The OHS submission also encouraged the Standing Committee to recognize the value of cemeteries to the peoples of Ontario. These sacred places are crucially important elements of our collective heritage, a priceless historical record of the past, and witnesses to the continuity of life in Ontario. Many of Ontario's cemeteries contain significant ecological features that are invaluable to the natural heritage of Ontario. With a membership from all cultures and religions, the OHS believes it is in the *public interest* that all cemeteries be afforded the same legal status and be treated equally.

OHS research has shown that all peoples are represented in Ontario's unregistered cemeteries, including First Nations burials, Black cemeteries, and Jewish cemeteries. Unregistered cemeteries often represent those whose history has been neglected, ignored, forgotten, and not considered important. The OHS believes that the protection of Ontario's unregistered cemeteries is also critically important to our ecological and cultural heritage.

The OHS does not oppose the building of affordable homes for Ontarians. However, the OHS believes that **those homes should not be built on the graves of our ancestors.**

To protect all cemeteries and burial sites, the OHS asked the committee to vote, **recommending that the Government of Ontario register/license all unregistered cemeteries in the Province of Ontario.**

Additionally, the OHS asked the committee to vote, **recommending that the Government of Ontario designate all cemeteries in the Province of Ontario under the *Ontario Heritage Act* as properties of cultural heritage value in recognition of their sacred and historical significance to all the peoples of Ontario.**

The [full submission, including all relevant appendices](#), can be read on the OHS Advocacy page of our website.

... 'AWARD WINNERS' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Dorothy Duncan Public History Award: **Mississippi Valley Textile Museum, Millworkers' Staircase and Riverwalk**

Heritage Conservation Award: **Friends of Mindemoya Old School**

Indigenous History Award:

Dr. Helen Olsen Agger, *Dadibaajim: Returning Home Through Narrative*

Carnochan Lifetime Achievement Award: **Dr. John Sabeau**

AWARDS FOR AUTHORS

Fred Landon Award: **Dr. Jamie Benidickson**
Levelling the Lake: Transboundary Resource Management in the Lake of the Woods Watershed

Alison Prentice Award: **Dr. Ian Radforth**
Jeannie's Demise: Abortion on Trial in Victorian Toronto

Joseph Brant Award: **Dr. Jason Wilson**
King Alpha's Song in a Strange Land: The Roots and Routes of Canadian Reggae

J.J. Talman Award: **Dr. Dale Barbour**
Undressed Toronto: From the Swimming Hole to Sunnyside, How a City Learned to Love the Beach, 1850-1935

Huguenot Society of Canada Award: **Dr. Julie Macfarlane**
Going Public: A Survivor's Journey from Grief to Action

Donald Grant Creighton Award: **Dr. Suzanne Evans**
The Taste of Longing: Ethel Mulvany and Her Starving Prisoner of War Cookbook

Riddell Award: **Dr. Robert K. Barney and Riley Nowokowski**
"A Canadian Distinction of Note: London, Ontario's Labatt Memorial Park, Baseball History's Oldest, Continuously-Operating Baseball Precinct," *Ontario History*

OHS HONOURS AND AWARDS NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN

Help us recognize excellent work in the field of history. For more information or to submit a nomination, please visit: ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/honours-awards/.

Nomination submission deadline for 2022-23 OHS Awards: **February 24, 2023**

ONTARIO HISTORY

THE ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY



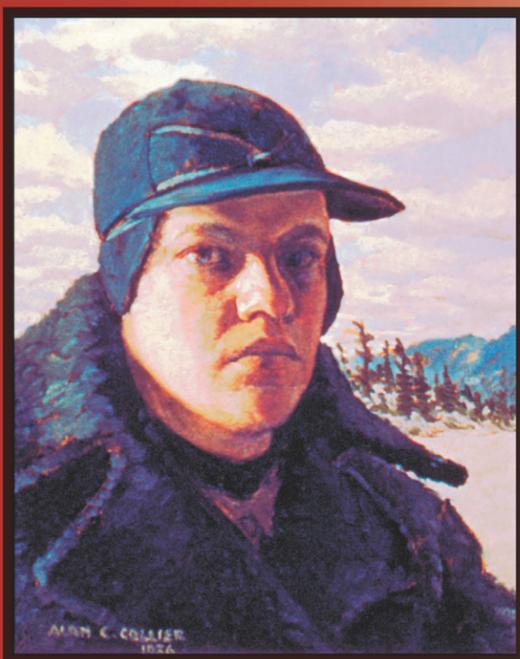
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"Terrific weight of rock above me": Alan Caswell Collier's Mining Art
Peter Neary

From Port Hope to Thunder Bay: Joseph Goodwin King, the Canadian Pacific Railway and Western Canada's first grain elevator on the Great Lakes 1883-1910
F. Brent Scollie

The 1826 Ancaster Tar and Feathers Outrage: Three Defendants' Perspectives
Ross Petty

"[T]inged with gloom and grandeur": Romanticism, Conservatism & Upper Canadian Political Culture
Denis McKim



Alan Caswell Collier (1911-1990), Self-Portrait, Kirkland Lake, 1936. *Queen's University Archives, 5142.6-192*

ONTARIO HISTORY AUTUMN 2022

The 2022 Autumn issue features four new peer-reviewed articles and six book reviews:

"'Terrific weight of rock above me': Alan Caswell Collier's Mining Art"

by Peter Neary

"From Port Hope to Thunder Bay: Joseph Goodwin King, the Canadian Pacific Railway and Western Canada's first grain elevator on the Great Lakes 1883-1910"

by F. Brent Scollie

"'The 1826 Ancaster Tar and Feathers Outrage: Three Defendants' Perspectives'"

by Ross D. Petty

"'Tinged with gloom and grandeur': Romanticism, Conservatism & Upper Canadian Political Culture"

by Denis McKim

Single copies are available for \$25 plus shipping. Please visit our website for subscriptions to the journal: ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/ontario-history-journal/.

MUSEUM MILESTONES

Dr. John Carter
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In geographical terms, Ontario is gigantic. It measures more than one million square kilometres. It is estimated that throughout the province, there are 670 museums. During my time as a Museum Advisor for the Ministry of Culture, I had the opportunity to visit many of these sites. In that role, I provided advisory services and support, and had the privilege to meet with and befriend staff members across the province. I certainly miss being able to do that now, and it is one of the reasons that I began to write Museum Milestones. This column enables readers to take arm chair tours of museums/historic sites across Ontario, and to choose which of the many options they would like to visit. In the last column, one of the most southerly museums in the province, Leamington's Essex-Kent Mennonite Historical Association Museum, was profiled. In this issue, we travel to Northwestern Ontario to visit one of Ontario's most northerly museums, the Red Lake Regional Heritage Centre. Enjoy the trip and the feature article below by Director Trevor Osmond.

The Ontario museum community seems to have turned the corner on COVID-19. Many sites are again open, and providing educational programs and other services to their communities. One interesting story comes from the Paddy Walker House, the oldest remaining building in Kincardine and the oldest standing wooden hotel in Bruce and Grey counties. While it was closed due to COVID-19 restrictions, its caretakers took advantage of the pause to conduct an ambitious capital campaign to finance the building's exterior refurbishment. Successful fundraising and strong community support enabled them to complete a beautiful restoration of the exterior, completed in 2022. Go for a visit next summer to see the remarkable transformation.

RED LAKE REGIONAL HERITAGE CENTRE

Trevor Osmond, Director, Red Lake Regional Heritage Centre
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The [Red Lake Regional Heritage Centre](#) (RLRHC) is located on Highway 105, two hours north of the Trans-Canada Highway. It includes a mix of modern architecture and a natural rock exterior. The building includes a large glass-windowed entrance that is reminiscent of the War Museum in Ottawa and the Natural Heritage Campus of the Canadian Museum of Nature in Gatineau, Quebec. Built in 2004 and opened in 2005, the RLRHC is Ontario's most northern museum that is accessible all year by road. While the building is a grand piece of architecture, the RLRHC's roots are much smaller.



“On The Move” was an exhibit at Red Lake Regional Heritage Centre that showcased how transportation shaped the history of the region.

The original building was a two-story cabin (built by Gustav Einar Erickson in 1929 at Sam's Portage). The log cabin was transported to the town of Red Lake in the late 1970s and was selected as the site for the museum by Council. Over the years, the museum outgrew the log cabin and was moved to a fire rescue station in 1995. Despite this move, it became clear that in order to be a real tourist attraction, it needed yet a new site. In 1999, Council made the big decision to create the RLRHC, which has since served as a museum, meeting place, cultural centre, and archives.

The RLRHC is a regional museum that collects artifacts related to the Red Lake region's history. Since Red Lake has so many ties with mining, fishing,

The Friends of the South Grey Museum in Flesherton presented the premiere production of *No Bed of Roses*, an original documentary dealing with Agnes Macphail's life in politics through narration, readings, and creative production techniques. This program pays homage to a great Canadian, and was held at the Annesley United Church in Markdale as a fundraiser for the museum.

The Canadian Transportation Museum & Historical Village on the Arner Townline in Essex, is working with a grant from Digital Museums Canada on a project called “Lured to the Lines.” Museum staff are looking for stories from people who came to Essex County to work at the automotive production plants in Windsor. Information will be recorded and short video interview clips will be made to archive this interesting component of local history. Also in the great southwest, congratulations are extended to the Harrow Early Immigrant Research Society (HEIRS) on the celebration of its 50th anniversary. I also want to extend my personal congratulations to Kris Ives, Curator of the John R. Park Homestead, on being elected the new President of the Ontario Historical Society in November.

The Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre in Southampton recently launched its digital newspaper website. A wonderful, free research tool for all to use when looking for online historical newspapers from Bruce County. Plaudits to archivist Deb Sturdevant and everyone else responsible for bringing this initiative to fruition.

At the Fashion History Museum in Cambridge, an outreach program called “Dressing Up,” is being offered for people with dementia. Staff from the museum model turn-of-the-century costumes in front of a live audience, offer a commentary on what they are wearing, and then encourage the audience to ask questions. This new educational initiative is already receiving positive feedback.

Finally, if you or somebody you know are intending to complete an MA or PhD in Museology at the University of Leicester, you may be interested in this: I've just completed arrangements to start the Dr. John C. Carter Award in Museum Studies. An annual scholarship will be given to a successful applicant, with a preference for a Canadian student who is enrolled. For further details, please contact Ben Reed, Operations Manager, School of Museum Studies at the University of Leicester. He can be reached at ben.reed@le.ac.uk.

boating, aviation, and the people of Northwestern Ontario, most of our artifacts represent aspects of this local history. In recent years, the RLRHC has taken on larger exhibits, providing professional content that has left audiences extremely satisfied. The RLRHC also increased our programming offerings, made our archives more accessible to the public, and continued to be a positive influence on tourism in the region.

Like the rest of the world, the RLRHC has been through a great deal of hardship and uncertainty over the past couple of years. In addition to the global pandemic, we had to contend with a forest fire evacuation (very nearly two), a building disaster, the relocation of artifacts and assets, flooding, destroyed exhibits, and several more minor issues. Now, nearly two-and-a-half years later, we are finally on the brink of being fully open to the public. Recent hardships, however, have taken their toll on staff and on the RLRHC's success as a tourist location, an educational environment, and a gathering place.

Through these hardships, our staff have found a way to persevere and make the most of the situation. COVID-19 restrictions gave staff time to work on collections, research, and policy projects that would have otherwise been difficult to accomplish. In addition, the RLRHC moved a lot of content onto our web page. During the pandemic, we released [Heritage Online](#), a resource for crafts, activities, educational programs, wild crafting, puzzles, and our podcast. We also featured an online West Red Lake Art Show exhibit, which showcased artists from across Northwestern Ontario.

The RLRHC also took the time to seek funding through a variety of grants, some of which were available only because both the provincial and federal governments were trying to ease the blow of the pandemic on museums and other cultural organizations. Through the help of Evolution Mining (a mining company with an active gold mine in Red Lake), several community donations, and the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund, the RLRHC transformed our temporary gallery by installing a “Hang It Up” art display system. We also made a major investment in our basement. The project transformed the main basement into a storage area complete with insulated walls, museum-grade shelving, and enough room to store the collection according to conservation standards. The project had been moving through the planning stages for three years, waiting for the right funding opportunities.

The Government of Canada's Digital Access to Heritage Grant helped the RLRHC acquire a new camera, a laptop, and photography equipment. This was a major step forward as the RLRHC's equipment was all at least ten years old.

As part of the disaster relief efforts, artifacts were relocated to a nearby warehouse in Balmertown. The relocation of artifacts into storage gave staff time to evaluate the needs of the collection. As a result, significant effort was made to ensure proper storage of the artifacts by rehousing them. It also allowed staff to correct errors or omissions in the database, updating collections policies, digitizing objects, creating permanent storage boxes, and ensuring that donation records were complete.

‘RED LAKE HERITAGE’ CONTINUED ON PAGE 8...

BARRY PENHALE'S ONTARIO

UP, UP IN THE AIR: A BRIEF LOOK AT ONTARIO'S AVIATION HISTORY

Barry Penhale

barry@naturalheritagebooks.com

Among my many historical interests, the realm of flight in Canada and aviation "firsts" have long fascinated me. Whenever possible, I have collected rare photos and newspaper or magazine articles concerning aircrafts and pilots. It has also been a great privilege to have frequently been a passenger onboard small aircraft piloted by some truly exceptional bush pilots. It was back in the 1960s when I first became acquainted with those truly intrepid individuals who made up the unique corps of Ontario's bush pilots. I am flooded with cherished memories of my time in their company, and the float plane sites and northern communities they knew so well: Ramsay Lake in Sudbury, Biscotasing, Nikina, Kasabonika, Cochrane, Geraldton, Moose Factory, Winisk, and Landsdown House, to name but a few. Because of my time in the company of that exceptional band of men, I came to appreciate an old saying still used today whenever veteran pilots gather together: "There are old pilots and there are bold pilots, but there are no old, bold pilots!" Fortunately, the pilots of my acquaintance,



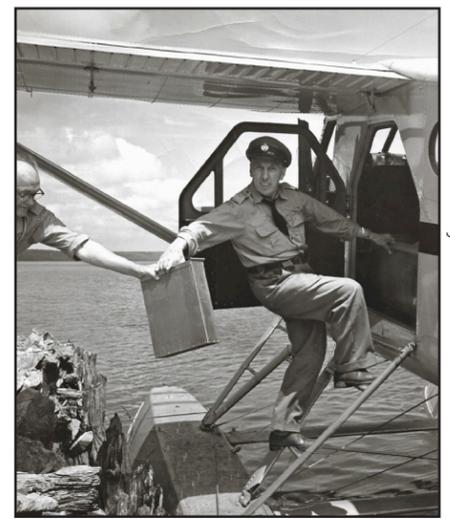
March 15, 1965: The Honourable Kelso Roberts, Q.C., then Minister of Lands and Forests (right); and Assistant Deputy Minister, G.H. Bayly (left), stand on either side of Charles LeFeuvre. On this occasion, LeFeuvre was being recognized for his many hours as senior pilot with the department. The photo was taken in the Ontario Legislature by Ontario Government photographer, W. Masters.

though possessing nerves of steel, knew just how far to push themselves and their aircraft. Consummate professionals in their field, it was a combination of skill and an ingrained sense of responsibility that kept them and their passengers out of the newspaper accidents column.

A brief look at flight, with particular emphasis on Ontario, is the subject of this latest contribution to the *OHS Bulletin*. Not a thorough history by any means, due partly to space limitations, and frankly I confess to being neither a pilot nor an acknowledged aviation historian. That domain belongs to others such as my Toronto friend, Larry Milberry, who is a triple threat in the aviation world: a pilot, historian, and publisher par excellence of Canadian aviation history books. Despite Larry's impeccable credentials, I feel comfortable sharing what I have learned as a chronicler of the past whose activities now span countless decades. Mine will be a more casual account of our aviation history, culled from personal research and oral history interviews with noted veteran pilots. I remain hopeful that readers of this column will continue to discover little-known chapters in Ontario's history. There is always so much more about Ontario to discover.

My main focus here is to delve into the history of our very own but surprisingly largely unknown Provincial Air Service. At the close of 1923, the government of Ontario made the rather momentous decision to establish and operate its own air service. By the spring of 1924, the first plane was launched from Ramsay Lake in Sudbury. That electric word "Contact" quickly fanned out across the province, delivered with Scottish, Irish, English, and French accents. All twenty aircraft, which were purchased or in the process of being acquired, proudly bore their wing and hull registration, and each plane was named after a bird. Examples include CF-AON, which was dubbed "Nightingale," and CF-AOK, which carried the name "Kestrel." These purposely chosen names assisted with ready identification during message transmission.

Shortly after inception, the Provincial Air Service introduced revolutionary approaches to fire-fighting, aerial photography, and rescue work. In 1924, an Ontario pilot named Rusty Baker spotted a serious out-of-control fire and transmitted accounts of the blaze over a continuous wave key (used for sending morse code) strapped to his leg. This, it is believed, was the first-time air-to-ground radio was used successfully to report on a fire. On June 26, 1946, the service introduced the use of helicopters in forest fire suppression. This marked the first time anywhere in the world that a helicopter was used for this purpose. In 1948, the Provincial Air Service purchased its very first DH Beaver, a remarkably versatile bush plane that very quickly earned the affectionate moniker "Workhorse of the North."



Charles LeFeuvre preparing to take flight.

It needs to be noted that a legendary outdoorsman and an accomplished pilot, F.A. "Frank" MacDougall, had a large hand in design suggestions. The much-admired MacDougall was a very effective deputy minister of the Department of Lands and Forests, and is also remembered as one of three flying superintendents of Algonquin Park, the others being "Yorki" Fisker and George Phillips. It was my pleasure to know all three. But for this writer, it is MacDougall who remains a giant of his time. Truly an unsung hero, this dedicated individual's own story begs to be recorded, but that is for another time.

Even the briefest account of the history of the Provincial Air Service would be sadly incomplete without introducing its senior executive pilot, Charles LeFeuvre. I had the pleasure of recording an interview with him for a CBC Radio broadcast, and discovered that his stories of his years as a pilot to be absolutely riveting. Before joining the Ontario Department of Lands & Forests, he had already amassed impressive credentials as chief flying instructor at the Toronto Flying Club. He also served as the chief instructor for the Norwegian Air Force during the Second World War. The camp fondly dubbed as "Little Norway" was located at the foot of Bathurst Street, and those even close to my age will recall the former Maple Leaf Baseball stadium to the north. In 1976, Prince Harald of Norway unveiled a commemorative monument that can be viewed at the site. Little Norway is an important, yet largely unknown part of Toronto's history and will be the subject of a future contribution to the *OHS Bulletin*.

But back to Charles LeFeuvre who, as reported in the *Kingston Whig-Standard* on May 20, 1966, had already flown a million miles. A significant portion of that flying took place over the Northern Ontario bushland, with LeFeuvre at the controls of a Beaver plane, operating on pontoons during the summer and piloting planes equipped with wheels and with skis in the winter. In an interview with reporter Brian Small, Charles recalled flying in all kinds of weather, especially those times when he would be isolated for several days at a time, due to extreme winter weather conditions. Nevertheless, he confessed to loving the life of a pilot and predicted that he would continue to fly for pleasure once retired.

In closing this brief reminder of our priceless aviation history, I acknowledge the enormous contributions to our province made by those forward-thinking founders of the Provincial Air Service and the early pilots whose service did much to bring honours and widespread respect to Ontario we would not otherwise have known. The foundation they provided has led to today's to a modern fleet of fixed-wing and rotary aircraft, which are maintained in hangars across the province. Ontario's aviation services are currently managed by the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry.

... 'DUFF BÂBY HOUSE' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

work in 1995-96 and since that time has since served as office space for various provincial ministries. Public access in the form of tours was limited to four to six times per year.

In an effort to enhance the group's legitimacy and enjoy the added benefits of affiliation, Les Amis became incorporated in 2013 under the Ontario Historical Society, whose support and guidance has been extremely valuable. Then, in 2019, a unique opportunity presented itself. The first floor of the mansion became vacant, as ministry offices were either moving out or moving elsewhere within the building. At that same time, a new municipal council was elected. The councillor for the mansion's ward showed great interest in its history and saw the potential for tourism, revitalization, and spin-off benefits for local businesses. A petition was presented to Council: the proposal for access passed a sub-committee's scrutiny and, in January of 2020, the City of Windsor agreed to pursue a lease with the OHT. In addition, the City committed funds for staffing and interpretation under the auspices of Museum Windsor. Les Amis Duff-Bâby supports Museum Windsor to enhance and highlight this historic gem. After a pandemic-related delay, a Grand Opening Celebration was held in May, complete with Duff and Bâby descendants. The mansion is open a half-day per month and attendance has been very gratifying. In June, we welcomed 50 people, in July it was 200, and 115 in August. Plans for the immediate future include a book launch (3rd edition of *A Mansion on the Detroit Frontier*) and a co-operative venture to clear an overgrown woodlot on the site. The future is looking bright!

For more information, [follow us on Facebook](#) (Les Amis Duff-Baby), [keep up with us on Twitter](#) (@lesamisdb), or contact us by email at lesamisduffbaby@yahoo.ca.

FROM THE BOOKSHELF

Dr. Cynthia Comacchio
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My favourite month is coming to a close as I prepare this column. October's customary glories have been enhanced by unseasonably warm temperatures, though with at least weekly reminders of what lies ahead in the form of early morning frost. It is, in fact, Halloween as I write. And in its pagan form, this was the feast of Samhain, or "summer's end." As a feast of transition, it was thought to be a portal, a moment in which passage between our world and the world "beyond" was briefly permitted. Not at all surprisingly, the Druid harvest festival became All Hallows' Eve, followed up by the eminently Christian All Saints' Day and then, on the second day of November, the fusion of pagan and Christian traditions to remember the departed, All Souls' Day.

I love these stories that intermingle pagan and Christian rituals, earth-bound and other-worldly ideas. And although Halloween as we know it, with the ever-more elaborate store-bought costumes reflecting current popular culture heroes and trends, is a post Second World War creation, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that, as a community-based, local celebration, it was very popular in agrarian times, and not only among children. Personal diaries and journals testify to what seems to have been a popular trick among older boys and adolescents: tipping outhouses. In one spectacular version I came across, purportedly by an eye witness, recorded that an outhouse was not merely tipped but moved to a barn roof. According to American etymologist Barry Popik, the term "trick or treating" is much newer than the ancient practice of door-to-door begging and trick performance: he dates its first public mention in North America to a 1917 article in the *Sault Ste. Marie Daily Star*. This does not mean that the term wasn't used before, or in places other than the Sault, but it seems to have been popularized only after the Great War. So the ancient Druidic feast has certain Ontario historical implications!

Our books at summer's end offer solid treats, no tricks involved, and with the bonus of no sugar, fat, or calories. What we get in the two books explored below are heartwarming stories about that not-so-past rural past in which outhouses abounded and feasts such as Halloween meant communal celebration (Mindemoya, in this case), and an important biographical sketch of a vital but scarcely known contributor to provincial conservation methods and programs.

All best wishes as we ease from a lovely fall into whatever winter may bring. And may your outhouses stand ever upright!

TALES FROM THE MINDEMOYA OLD SCHOOL



JOANNE SMITH, ED.

Espanola: Friends of the Mindemoya Old School, 2022

Paperback; 107 pp.

\$25.00, plus \$5 shipping; josmith53@live.com

The fate, or perhaps the destiny, of the Mindemoya School in Manitoulin offers an excellent example of how a committed local group can rally to save a cherished historic building otherwise condemned to demolition. One of the earliest Consolidated Schools in Ontario, it was built in 1922, during the flurry of postwar school expansion. At a time when the term "efficiency" was the driving force behind all things in government, industry, and even daily life, consolidated schools were intended to gather within their modern classrooms the scattered population of children in small and isolated communities, thereby ensuring uniformity and consistency in curriculum delivery, teaching standards, citizenship training, and even hygiene.

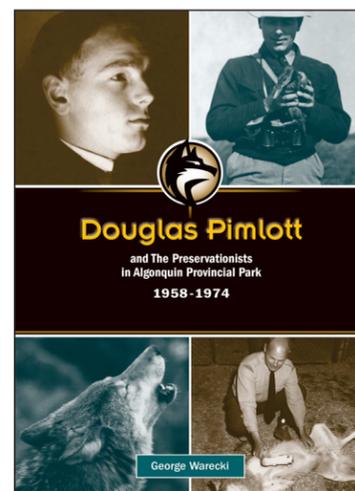
In the century since, most of these consciously modern schools have been replaced by contemporary structures in keeping with advances in construction and technology, curricular developments, changing pedagogies, and student needs. Thanks to the group of volunteers who call themselves Friends of the Mindemoya Old School (FOMOS), an architecturally appealing and structurally sound building was not relinquished to the wrecking ball, but lovingly and efficiently repurposed for a variety of community uses. The OHS has played an important support role: in January 2021, Executive Director Rob Leverty saw FOMOS through the incorporation process. In July 2022, by which time the group had attracted a membership of over 300, they were able to sign a 21-year lease with the Municipality of Central Manitoulin.

Much of what FOMOS members must do, like those of other historical societies and associated groups, is about raising essential funds. It is unrelenting and challenging work that rivals the actual construction and renovation in terms of time and energy. The group will use the proceeds from sales of this book to continue their restoration project. This collection of "tales," including both personal memories and excerpts from published and unpublished archival material, was uncovered and collated by the very capable member/editor Joanne Smith, who acknowledges in particular the support and assistance of the Central Manitoulin Historical Society. The result is a charming montage of the "every day" and the official, the personal, and the public. As the editor herself notes in her dedication, "These memories and dreams have created a place much more than bricks and stones." Since most Canadians have spent the better part of their growing up years within school walls, it is fair to say that schools are special repositories of such memories and dreams during the most formative period of our lives.

The memories here depict what life was like in the little town as much as the school, in so many ways confirming the ways in which community, church, and home reinforced, and were reinforced by, what children were taught—not just through delivery of the Ontario standard curriculum, but also in formal and informal interactions during school hours and outside of them. In the opening reflection, Joanne Hodgson Smith describes the various ways in which Mindemoya "had pretty much [anything] any of us ever needed." So it would seem to a child for whom the local was pretty much the world. But more to the point, as she thoughtfully concludes, "The town not only had all the amenities but it had people who worked hard and were fiercely proud of this little place. They played, loved, laughed together, and somehow knew they were creating a magical place for families to grow" (2-3). Not all memories, of course, are so rosy. Allan Tustian recalls having received the strap plenty of times; though he believes this was due to the fact that he had "a tendency to be lazy" and enjoyed roughhousing with other boys, who invariably also got the strap (4). The truth is that corporal punishment by means of strapping was a regular disciplinary method in most Ontario schools until late in the 20th century. It was deployed mostly against boys, so poor Allan was likely not a schoolroom outlaw. In fact, as Alma Smeltzer Tustian remembers, "the Class of '44 was full of people who loved to play tricks on anybody who was around," including herself and her girlfriends (5). Even in 1946, Tom Robinson was transported to the school with other children from neighbouring towns in a covered horse-drawn sleigh that featured a wood stove in winter, and then a truck with uncomfortable wooden seats in better weather. Not surprisingly, "It seemed to be a very long drive to get to school" (6). No doubt his feelings were shared by Wilda Taylor Campbell, who, because her family was the last to board, "often cried with the heat" because she had to sit near that stove (8). Janice McQuay recalls that the Grades 3-4 songbook, at a time when singing was a dedicated subject, contained little that was "Canadian," though she had the lyrics and music so drilled into her that to this day she can sing the mostly British and American patriotic ditties that were in them (59). This, too, was commonplace for Ontario textbooks at the time. And Joanne Smith believes that "The Trillium police haunted my dreams for a long time" after she presented her teacher with a picked bouquet of Ontario's official flower and was quietly advised never to pick them again... (58) I remember those dire warnings from my 1960s elementary school days!

There are many such anecdotes and excerpts that recount tales both unique and similar. There are many photos as well, personal and official, in black and white and well as colour. As well as adding these recollections to what we know of the history of childhood, of rural towns, and rural schools in Ontario, as mentioned, this book is an important part of the fundraising campaign for this vital project. Further information about its progress as well as donation information can be found at mindemoyaoldschool.ca or by contacting mindemoyaoldschool@gmail.com.

DOUGLAS PIMLOTT AND THE PRESERVATIONISTS IN ALGONQUIN PARK, 1958-1974



GEORGE WARECKI

Whitney: Friends of Algonquin Provincial Park, 2021

Paperback; 75 pp.

store.algonquinpark.on.ca

'FROM THE BOOKSHELF' CONTINUED ON PAGE 8...

A faculty member at Brescia University College, affiliated with Western University, George Warecki is an established scholar in the environmental history of the province, and, in fact, one of the “pioneers” of this now flourishing field. This thorough biographical sketch of Douglas Pimlott, who helped to establish ecologically informed preservation methods in Ontario, belongs to his proposed series of succinct biographies about key (if mostly unknown) figures in our environmental history. This is the second of them. The first, *J.R. Dymond: Scientific Research, Nature Reserves, and the Interpretive Program in Algonquin Provincial Park, 1931–1954*, also published by the Friends of Algonquin Park. The allotted column inches do not permit a full review of the 2019 Dymond biography, and while the two books effectively stand alone, they are obviously thematically and geographically connected. Dymond, a zoology professor at the University of Toronto, arrived at the park in the 1930s, at a time when scientists were becoming increasingly concerned about industrial and commercial exploitation of wildlands. In 1931, he led the group that founded the Federation of Ontario Naturalists. These were the beginnings of a tough battle to get the government, focused as most governments are (to this day) on “development” and profit despite the environmental costs, to listen to the experts in order to minimize the damages wrought by human intervention in wild spaces. The book outlines the first step toward effective modern park and wildlife management: state intervention for protection and conservation in the face of mindless human colonization. The problem bedevils us still, nearly a century later.

The second prong of this approach requires the mobilization of public opinion and, consequently, public input in the formation of state policy. This is what the author’s consideration of Douglas Pimlott picks up. Most studies of his remarkable and all too short career (he died in 1978 at the age of 58), few as they are, call him “the founder of modern environmentalism.” In this accessible but scholarly study, as in the Dymond biography, the author introduces readers to a person who should be well known and respected for his unstinting and often frustrating efforts to protect the jewel of Ontario parks by means of an informed, progressive, and viable model for ecological conservation and activism. What distinguished Pimlott, alongside and in addition to his scientific findings and theories, was his enthusiastic “front line” participation in the interests of actually putting into effect the best scientific methods in this campaign to save the earth from ourselves.

Born in 1920 in the tiny, predominantly anglophone, rural village of Quyon, Quebec, along the Ottawa River near Hull, Pimlott stood out from an early age due to his academic ability and especially his aptitude for biology. His father was a CPR employee and Great War veteran who married Pimlott’s mother while on leave in Sussex in 1917. Because Pimlott Sr. could work only intermittently due to his war wounds, and the family could barely get by on the typical veteran’s pension, the young Pimlott quickly became accustomed—as did many working-class children of the time—to supplementing his family’s scant livelihood. Before he was ten, he had taught himself to trap and hunt, his field expertise later allowing him to work as a guide, while also observing and studying in the enormous “classroom” of the bush. His strong work ethic, his determination to learn, his Christian Science faith, and his passion for the study of wildlife and its conservation allowed him to push through class barriers to eventually pursue graduate studies. These were not easily nor readily attained. He initially did clerical work for the federal agriculture department and the department of mines and resources. Enlisting in the Royal Canadian Navy in 1940, he quickly advanced to the rank of Lieutenant, and was about to be deployed in the Pacific when the war ended. Along with about 15,000 other veterans, Pimlott enthusiastically took advantage of the education provisions in the federal government’s Veterans Charter to fund the education he so desired. He enrolled in the school of forestry at the University of New Brunswick to earn his undergraduate degree, his first step towards a doctorate, followed by an impressive career in scholarship, with many respected and award-winning publications, and then in the planning and administration of wildlife and park preservation. After a fellowship in the University of Wisconsin’s new Department of Wildlife Management, he completed his PhD dissertation on moose ecology while working for the new province of Newfoundland as its wildlife manager. While at Wisconsin, he was greatly influenced by theories of biological diversity that emphasized the importance of encouraging that diversity by giving over much designated parkland to “primitive” allotments for wildlife alone.

By the time Pimlott’s family, now including three young children, left Newfoundland for Ontario, the provincial government was attempting to “manage” the mixed-use territory of Algonquin Park, where rapidly growing tourism was visibly interfering with the wildlife habitat. For twenty-first century people who take media dominance for granted, often allowing ourselves to be persuaded without questioning, Pimlott was remarkably prescient in nurturing support for

ecological conservation by using the media to tap into the “public voice” in the early 1960s. The moment, characterized by rising protest and a young, often campus-based, leftist push for “participatory democracy,” was conducive to exactly that. As environmentalism became an increasingly popular protest cause internationally, Pimlott and fellow ecologists helped to channel that energy into an organized “grassroots” movement. He was among the founders of the Algonquin Wildlands League (AWL), formed in 1968. In 1974, not long before his untimely death, his efforts helped to achieve a landmark: the provincial government institutionalized public input by establishing the Provincial Parks Advisory Council, comprised of interested citizens, who would monitor and advise on the implementation of the Algonquin Park Master Plan, which he had personally worked hard to conceive and promote. Like his fellow environmentalists, he was tremendously disappointed when the government designated only nine percent of the parkland to be primitive despite their hope for a full 50 percent.

These are the bare bones, of course, of a study that is at once easily read and carefully referenced. Warecki has drawn Pimlott’s life out of his own larger historical research, permitting an introduction to a fight that is far from won as we deal with environmental crises. His footnotes outline a number of important sources, archival and secondary, for those who want to delve further into the many themes and issues presented here. It must be noted, as well, that the author has generously donated his research and all proceeds from the sales of the books in his Algonquin Biographies series to the Friends of Algonquin Park, contributing both scholarship and activism to the cause of ecological preservation.

... 'RED LAKE HERITAGE' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Most RLRHC exhibits are now a decade old and, except for the recent mining exhibit, they are all in need of a redesign or retirement. The RLRHC has begun raising funds to change the gallery space into a more modern, story-driven gallery space. The new Main Gallery design includes some returning favourites, but will also include an aviation exhibit and a local Indigenous historical/cultural exhibit.

While the RLRHC has certainly had its fair share of difficulties over the past two and a half years, we have persevered and are nearly ready to reopen with renewed offerings. We hope you will explore what we have to offer in the coming months!

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