

# OHS BULLETIN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

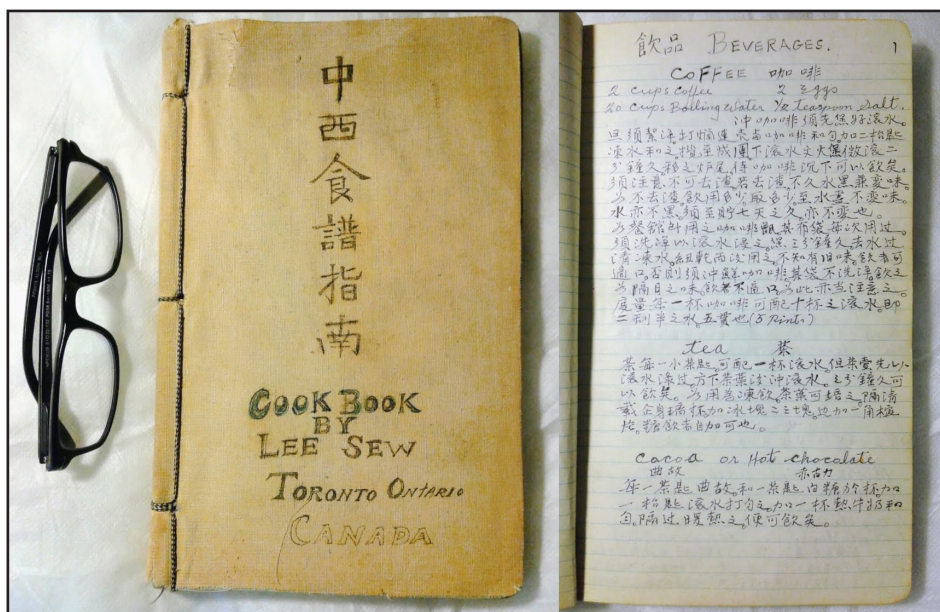
ISSUE 222

MAY 2023

## OHS DONATES HISTORIC COOKBOOK TO CHINESE CANADIAN ARCHIVE

## LAUNCHING THE *IN HINDSIGHT* PODCAST WITH DR. DONALD B. SMITH

Photo – Sarah McCabe



The cover of *Cook Book by Lee Sew, Toronto, Ontario, Canada* and a sample page showing the author's meticulous English and Chinese handwriting.

Sarah McCabe, Project Manager and Librarian  
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In January 2014, when I began cataloguing the OHS reference library's collection, then Executive Director Rob Leverty showed me a special object, a well-preserved old manuscript with *Cook Book by Lee Sew, Toronto, Ontario, Canada* written in ink on the cover. Inside were over 250 pages (plus an index) of recipes, meticulously hand-written in English and Chinese. What a treasure!

The cookbook came with a set of five intriguing *National Post* columns by journalist Joe Fiorito from 1999, with titles including "The \$50 Mystery of Lee Sew," "Search Gets Saucy in Hunt for Author," and "More Pieces Served in Lee Sew Puzzle: Chinese Immigrant's Book is a Slice of Toronto History." Fiorito had found the unusual book in an antiquarian bookstore in Toronto and chronicled his quest to learn more about what he describes as "an utterly charming compendium of recipes for the kind of sophisticated food which would have

'LEE SEW'S COOKBOOK' CONTINUED ON PAGE 6...

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Photo – Daniel Dishaw

Dr. Donald B. Smith with Sarah McCabe (OHS Project Manager and Librarian) at the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation Historical Gathering in Hagersville on February 21, 2023. Dr. Smith presented on *In Hindsight* and debuted Episode 5, which focuses on Peter Jones and Eliza Field, offering a portrait of the marriage of Mississauga Chief Kahkewaquonaby (Sacred Feathers) and his English bride.

Sarah McCabe, Project Manager and Librarian  
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The OHS is excited to announce the launch of our partnership with one of Canada's most renowned historians, Dr. Donald B. Smith, to bring you our first in-house-produced 20-episode weekly podcast series, *In Hindsight: Half a Century of Research Discoveries in Canadian History*.

A long-time OHS member, Dr. Smith is a Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Calgary and has focused his career on the history of Indigenous Canada, Quebec, Calgary, and Southern Alberta. Dr. Smith's first academic article, "Grey Owl," was published in the OHS's *Ontario History* journal in 1971.

In addition to the relaxed, anecdote-filled, old-fashioned radio-style talks (podcasts), substantial illustrated summary articles for each episode are provided exclusively on the OHS website, including a short bibliography or backstory showing how each "discovery" was made—a terrific resource for students and others interested in learning more.

The Introduction, which premiered in late January 2023, is presented by Chief Dave Mowat of Alderville First Nation, Second Vice President of the OHS. Episodes 1 and 2 review Dr. Smith's transformation from a student of international affairs into a historian of Canada with a particular interest in Indigenous Peoples.

'IN HINDSIGHT PODCAST' CONTINUED ON PAGE 8...

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# PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Kristin Ives, President  
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Hello. Bonjour. Boozhoo.

Spring has officially arrived here in the Essex Region, the southernmost corner of Ontario. We have pulled the taps from the John R. Park Homestead’s maple trees and packed away the maple-making program materials for another year. Now, the cold frame is set up in the heritage garden, and the rhubarb is popping up all along the garden fence.

Spring is always a time that lends itself to thoughts of growth, renewal, and change. For the Society, the past few months have been an era of significant change, but also of great opportunity. We find ourselves reflecting on and celebrating the incredible achievements and legacy that Rob Leverty has created over his many years at the OHS, while offering him the heartiest well wishes on his next adventure. This joy is tempered with our acute awareness that the current political and economic climates are challenging for the sector and for many of our member organizations. The Society is working to lead conversations around the importance of heritage preservation and promotion, while also actively listening to diverse community organizations from across the province regarding their challenges, concerns, and interests. We are actively working to continue the foundational work of the Society, while also exploring new avenues to reach new audiences and to engage new members. I look forward to seeing what lies ahead for the Society this year. There are many recent highlights worthy of celebration.

First and foremost, I was pleased to participate in the Society’s recent search for a new Executive Director. The process involved a great deal of time and coordination to ensure a fair, thorough, transparent, and very competitive process. Hearty congratulations to Daniel Dishaw, who started in his new role as Executive Director of the Society on February 1. Daniel will be familiar to many of our members and affiliates, as he has worked for the Society in the role of Communications & Outreach Manager since 2015. In that role, he worked closely with many of our member organizations, helping to support and promote their important work. Daniel has led several of our flagship programs over the years, including Honours and Awards, the *OHS Bulletin*, and Heritage Conservation.

Daniel has been instrumental in maintaining the historic John McKenzie House, working closely with the City of Toronto’s Capital Assets and Heritage Department and overseeing all other on-site conservation and restoration work, including project management, grant writing, and acting as the general contractor for the Society. Daniel has also helped to foster new relationships and partnerships for the Society, including the OHS Student Placement Program, wherein the Society works with university faculty members across the Greater Toronto Area to provide valuable culture and heritage sector experiential education opportunities to university students.

In addition to his outstanding professional credentials, Daniel was able to clearly illustrate a vision for the Society that will carry it forward—continuing to maintain the incredible foundation and core operations developed over the Society’s long history, but also incorporating new ideas and evolving the OHS to reach new audiences and ensure the historic organization is prepared for the future.

Further, I would like to extend my thanks to Michel Beaulieu, who led the Hiring Committee, and to the other members of the Committee for their dedication and



Photo – Courtesy of Essex Region Conservation Authority

Curator of the John R. Park Homestead, Kristin Ives, pours taffy on snow for an eager audience at the 2023 [Maple Festival](#) in March.

diligence in carrying out this important task for the Society. We look forward to seeing all that Daniel will accomplish in his new role.

There is some wonderful news to report from Collingwood, where one of our affiliate member organizations has succeeded in getting the Heritage Community Church at 310 Seventh Street designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. The OHS commends the Town of Collingwood for recognizing the importance that 310 Seventh Street plays in the Black Canadian history of Collingwood, of Simcoe County, and all of Ontario. The site, which has been a continuous place of worship for Black settlers since 1870, was a centre for shared culture, for the community, and for support when its congregation faced racism, discrimination, and alienation from their larger society.

The new year also brought an exciting new venture for the OHS—the launch of a partnership with renowned historian, Dr. Donald B. Smith, to produce a podcast series, *In Hindsight: Half a Century of Research Discoveries in Canadian History*. It is exciting and inspiring to see the Society continue to evolve and connect with members in new formats, and to engage new audiences in dynamic ways. Congratulations to the Society staff and partners for their incredible work on this engaging project.

As we head into the busy tourism season in Ontario over the next few weeks, many of our member organizations—museums, historical societies, archives, and others – will be opening their doors, preparing their sites and displays, hiring seasonal staff, submitting grant applications, relying on teams of volunteers to assist with events and activities, and more. These organizations are true cultural conduits, sharing Ontario’s heritage with local audiences and those from further afield. Through curating and communicating these rich stories, they create authentic experiences and foster connections for all audiences to Ontario’s diverse history. The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport reports that “Community museums contribute to collective awareness and pride of place and contribute to the economic well-being of Ontario communities, attracting more than three million visitors annually.” I want to wish a successful busy season to all our member organizations, and a happy spring to each of you.

All the best,  
Kristin Ives, President

## CONGRATULATIONS GRACE ANYU SUN AND NORTH YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Daniel Dishaw, Executive Director  
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On February 23, I was pleased to attend the presentation of the Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Awards (presented in partnership with the Ontario Heritage Trust), held in the Lieutenant Governor's Suite at Queen's Park.

I was thrilled to see someone from one of our member organizations honoured for their recent Youth Committee initiative. Grace Anyu Sun’s leadership of the Youth Committee of the North York Historical Society (NYHS) has influenced more young people to participate in the preservation and promotion of local history. Her talent inspires others and builds community capacity among youth in sharing and promoting heritage and interest in local history. She actively explores youth projects and promotes them to schools, encouraging students to start history clubs. She has designed a website as a communications platform for teens, and her emphasis on innovative methods and techniques has resonated with tens of thousands of local students. She has proposed and worked on a range of youth projects, including the creation of documentaries, podcasts and graphic novels for elementary students.



Photo – Rick Chard

Grace Anyu Sun (centre) of the North York Historical Society receives the Ontario Heritage Award for Youth Achievement, presented by the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell (right), and Chair of the Ontario Heritage Trust, John Ecker (left).

The Youth Committee she chairs has successfully adopted a feasible operation model, which can be replicated and used by other local historical societies.

‘CONGRATULATIONS GRACE ANYU SUN’ CONTINUED ON PAGE 8...



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Daniel Dishaw, Executive Director  
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I want to start by thanking our members, my colleagues, and the OHS Board of Directors for welcoming me into this role with so much good will and enthusiasm. All of the kind messages welcoming and congratulating me have been greatly appreciated. I'm honoured and excited to be taking on the role of Executive Director of the Ontario Historical Society. Having worked at the OHS for nearly eight years now, I have seen first-hand how important our work is to so many people across Ontario. It's a privilege to do this work—to come in every day and work on issues that really matter to people. Thank you.

I've always had a deep appreciation for history and historical places, but it wasn't until I worked at the OHS that I discovered how much public history and heritage preservation play a role in shaping communities and bringing people together. Healthy communities need accessible public space to gather, tell their stories, share their skills, and celebrate their history.

In a province where real estate is now so valuable, our historic natural landscapes and public spaces are more threatened than ever before. Historic sites such as train stations, church buildings, cemeteries, heritage homes, lighthouses, historic parks, museums, and schoolhouses often become important gathering spaces for the surrounding community. The protection and stewardship of heritage spaces by local volunteers has become one of the only ways that communities can maintain access to spaces for community events and programs.

The OHS is here to support those concerned citizens who want to save their history and empower their communities, and one of the ways we do that is through our Incorporation and Insurance Programs. Since 1899, we have incorporated not-for-profit organizations through affiliation with the Ontario Historical Society. In the last 20 years, we've been incorporating an unprecedented number of groups, each one stepping up to fill a community need, and all of that work is being done on the backs of local volunteers.

Since taking over in February, I'm pleased to announce that the Society has met with five different organizations that are preparing to incorporate through affiliation with the OHS. My colleague, Heather Anderson, who has supported the administrative side of our Incorporation Program for many years, has recently taken on a more active role in the incorporation process. Both Heather and I are looking forward to subsequent meetings with all of our prospective affiliates in the coming months.

Heather has also worked closely with our affiliated member organizations as they move toward compliance with the new corporate changes to the *Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act 2010 (ONCA)*, which came into effect between October 19, 2021 and October 19, 2022. In order to support our groups and their unique legal corporate structures, the OHS is working on developing a legal study to determine how organizations incorporated under *An Act to incorporate the Ontario Historical Society, 1899* can be in complete compliance with the new *ONCA* regulations. We will keep our membership up-to-date as we move forward with this initiative. The compliance deadline does not come up until October 18, 2024.

In recent weeks, I've been going out to meet as many of our members, volunteers, donors, and stakeholders as I can. I want to learn more about your organizations, your needs, and your expectations. In addition to all of those productive meetings, I've had the pleasure of participating in so many great site visits, events, and programs since February 1.

It was my pleasure to participate in the Canadian Historical Association's (CHA) Roundtable event, "Historical Societies and the Study of the Past." It was refreshing to join so many of our peer organizations to explore the challenges and opportunities currently facing our sector. I'd like to thank CHA President Steven High and CHA Executive Director Michel Duquet for facilitating and chairing the discussion.

I was also honoured to be invited to the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation's Historical Gathering in Hagersville on February 21. Dr. Donald B. Smith unveiled his new OHS podcast series, *In Hindsight: Half a Century of Research Discoveries in Canadian History*. Congratulations to Don and to my colleague Sarah McCabe, who has done an incredible job of producing and promoting this new podcast series. You can read more about this story in Sarah's article on page 1.

For the past few years, the OHS has been pleased to participate in the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario's NextGen Job Shadow Program. In March, OHS staff were delighted to meet with Kaliyah Macaraig, a 4th year Art History student at the University of Toronto. Kaliyah is particularly interested in the role of art and architecture in supporting the social wellbeing of communities within Canadian urban spaces, so we had fascinating conversations. The OHS wishes Kaliyah all the best in her bright future in arts, culture, and heritage.

On April 6, I was pleased to meet with Toronto City Councilor for Ward 18 (Willowdale), Lily Cheng. Members of the Parkview Neighbourhood Garden, the Willowdale Central Ratepayers Association, the Ontario Historical Society, and Councilor Cheng's team met at the John McKenzie House to discuss the



Photo – Sarah McCabe

OHS Executive Director Daniel Dishaw (right) and Project Manager & Librarian Sarah McCabe (not shown) joined former OHS Director Carolyn King (left) at the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation's Historical Gathering in Hagersville.

importance of the historic site to Willowdale residents. The OHS and its local partner organizations emphasized our support for the community's use of the space. A publically engaged historic building is a well-protected one! We are all looking forward to continuing a strong and productive relationship with Councillor Cheng and her staff.

## In Appreciation

I want to close my first report for the *Bulletin* with a note of appreciation for my colleagues, both current and past.

My colleague Heather Anderson has been with the OHS since 2011 and understands the needs of our membership so well. Supporting our members in so many different ways, she also keeps much of the Society's internal operations running. Heather manages our membership services, helps newly affiliated societies draft their constitutions and bylaws, works with our members to file their corporate returns, and supports our members with HODG applications and charitable tax status applications. She also manages community events at the John McKenzie House, sits on the BAO's Cemetery, Crematorium & Municipal Advisory Committee as the consumer representative, represents the OHS at various conferences, and takes the lead on many of our grant applications. It's a pleasure working with Heather and we're very lucky to have her here at the OHS.

My colleague Sarah McCabe has been a powerful force at the OHS since joining the Society in 2014. As a volunteer, Sarah developed and catalogued the OHS library, which now has more than 5,000 unique titles. Since joining the OHS staff in 2015 as Project Manager and Librarian, she has managed the implementation of our new website, the *Ontario History Journal Digital Archive*, the Society's new Membership Management system, our digital invoice repository, the OHS Ebook Store, and the OHS Publications Elibrary. Sarah supports our tech infrastructure and security, our membership management processes, our collections management, accounts payable, and so much more. Sarah is an incredible person to work with and we're so lucky to have her.

Finally, I would like to thank our former Executive Director, Rob Levery, who was a driving force at the OHS for more than 34 years, serving as ED for 14 of those years. Rob's accomplishments and contributions are too many to list here, but I know I speak for my colleagues and the OHS membership when I say that Rob has been an incredible mentor and supporter for us all. He incorporated 122 groups as ED, so many of you will know firsthand how much time, energy, and personality he invested in the work of others. I was so pleased that staff and OHS Directors (past and present) were able to gather at the John McKenzie House on February 10 to thank Rob for his years of service and wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

Thank you all once again for your support. We could not do what we do without our members, subscribers, donors, and volunteers. All my best for a warm and productive spring!



Photo – Alison Norman

On Friday February 10, 2023, current and former OHS staff and Directors travelled to John McKenzie House to celebrate and thank Rob Levery ahead of the February OHS Board meeting. From left to right are the 2022 OHS staff: Rob Levery, Heather Anderson, Sarah McCabe, and Daniel Dishaw.



# SHIP'S COMPANY OF PENETANGUISHENE KEEPING HISTORY AFLOAT

Mark Simpson, Director, The Ship's Company of Penetanguishene  
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The Ship's Company of Penetanguishene is made up of volunteer marine heritage enthusiasts dedicated to preserving traditional seamanship skills and a knowledge of our maritime heritage. This is done through the building and sailing of historic small boats, training workshops, woodworking, ropework, and sailing theory. We are based out of Penetanguishene, Ontario, on southern Georgian Bay, and are associated with the Penetanguishene Centennial Museum. The Ship's Company of Penetanguishene is a not-for-profit organization incorporated through affiliation with the Ontario Historical Society in 2001.

The Ship's Company has built and currently sails four historic replica vessels. Known as "Penetanguishene's Small Tall Ship", our flagship, the HMS Badger, is a 36' replica of an 1812 British gunboat, representative of similar vessels that were used on the Great Lakes and Georgian Bay during the early 19th century when Britain used the Royal Navy as a defense force in Upper Canada. The story of how the H.M.S. Badger went from retired lifeboat to our group's flagship vessel begins more than twenty years ago.

After constructing our first small vessel, the HMS Revenge, the crew was looking to take on a new project, something even grander. To get started, our group needed to find a hull. When we first came across the abandoned lifeboat, it took a lot of vision to see our goal in it: a historical vessel restored for the enjoyment of the community.

She began her life serving aboard the freighter Fort Chambly and during her service had travelled the distance of two globe circumnavigations. After serving her time, she was unceremoniously retired. When we found the abandoned lifeboat, her new resting place was much less glamorous than her beginnings. With the old orange paint peeling off to expose her bare hull, she was now serving as a makeshift garden planter. There had even been talk of cutting up the old hull for scrap—in fact, she had the beginnings of a cut on her bow, but the owner didn't have the heart to scrap her.

Our group harboured some pretty ambitious plans for transforming this old lifeboat into a replica 1812 gunboat. Most of the material and all of the time and expertise were donated by dedicated volunteers who wanted to see a small tall ship sailing around Penetanguishene Bay. The floorboards and much of the internal supports were salvaged from donated oak skids. The spars were made from trees felled in members' yards.

The newly christened H.M.S. Badger was launched in spring 2001, thus embarking on her new mission to teach local history and keep traditional sailing skills alive. Since then, she has become a frequent sight on Penetanguishene Bay, sailing twice a week when she is not attending an event elsewhere. It's been 22 years since that launch and our new old boat is becoming an old boat again, but we do our best with the support of the OHS to keep her in great shape. The Ship's Company of Penetanguishene has been an OHS member since we first began construction on the H.M.S. Badger and we couldn't have done it without their support.



The H.M.S. Badger was originally a retired lifeboat, but seemed destined to live out her days as a makeshift garden planter.


As well as general maintenance, Badger has received several improvements over the years, the most recent being the addition of a bow gun to complement her side swivel guns. We even have new plans to convert the two-stroke outboard to a new electric motor, which will be quieter, greener and visually more historically accurate. Through all her years, Badger has served all her crews well and continues to be a good old boat. For more information, check out our website at [shipscompany.ca](http://shipscompany.ca) or visit our Facebook page: [@shipscompany](https://www.facebook.com/shipscompany).



Work on the [H.M.S. Badger](http://shipscompany.ca) started in 2000. She was launched on July 1, 2001. Now known as Penetanguishene's "Small Tall Ship", she's a familiar site on Penetanguishene Bay, and regularly participates in special events, re-enactments, and community activities.

# ONTARIO HISTORY

THE ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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SPRING 2023**

*"The Legend of Captain Michael Grass": The Logic of Elimination and Loyalist Myth-making in Upper Canada, 1783-84*  
Avery Esford

*Food, Drink, and the British Army in Early Nineteenth Century Upper Canada*  
Jake Breadman

*Upper Canada's Union Debates (1822-23, 1839-40): Facing the 'French Fact'*  
Peter A. Russell

*The Life of Guelph's Samuel Venerable*  
Elysia DeLaurentis

*Historical Accounts and Archaeological Evidence Concerning an Early-Seventeenth Century Partnership*  
William Fox

*Camp 100 and Neys Provincial Park*  
Michael O'Hagan



Detail of "Chipaway" by Edward Walsh. Civilians fish on the creek while a British soldier can be seen standing guard in the distance. (William L. Clemens Library, University of Michigan.)

## ONTARIO HISTORY SPRING 2023

The 2023 Spring issue features six new peer-reviewed articles and seven book reviews

**"The Legend of Captain Michael Grass": The Logic of Elimination and Loyalist Myth-making in Upper Canada, 1783-84"**

*by Avery Esford*

**"Calories and Culture: Food, Drink, and the British Army in Early Nineteenth Century Upper Canada"**

*by Jake Breadman*

**"Upper Canada's Union Debates (1822-23, 1839-40): Facing the 'French Fact'"**

*by Peter A. Russell*

**"From Violence to Veneration: The Life of Guelph's Samuel Venerable"**

*by Elysia DeLaurentis*

**"It's not personal, it's strictly business': Historical Accounts and Archaeological Evidence Concerning an Early-Seventeenth Century Partnership"**

*by William Fox*

**"Waiting out the War on the Shore of Lake Superior: Camp 100 and Neys Provincial Park"**

*by Michael O'Hagan*

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# MUSEUM MILESTONES

Dr. John Carter  
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We return to Southern Ontario for this issue of Museum Milestones. In the lead article below, Judy MacKinnon provides us with an entertaining piece about the Treasure Chest Museum in Paisley. This site is truly a community museum, and Judy, a long-time volunteer there, explains its background and ongoing operation. Do stop by the Treasure Chest Museum (which it really is) for a tour this summer, and then take some time to discover and enjoy the wonderful and historic town of Paisley.

Moving farther to the southwest, some shocking news has recently come from Belle Vue National Historic Site in Amherstburg. This important historic building was constructed between 1816 and 1819 for Robert Reynolds. Built in the Palladian style, it is a reminder and example of the rebound in the Western District of Upper Canada after the War of 1812. Sitting close to the river bank overlooking the Detroit River, it was designated as a National Historic Site in 1959. Through the dedication and efforts of the Belle Vue Conservancy, fundraising, restoration, and preservation of this architectural marvel are still ongoing. In 2016, the Town of Amherstburg purchased the property from a numbered company. A new roof, windows, gutters, and foundation work have been carried out to stabilize the building, after years of severe neglect. These were the first steps in the long process of restoration and eventual opening to the public.

On a recent inspection of the site, it was found that unknown individuals had broken into the building, vandalized parts of the historic interior, left garbage throughout the house, and stolen some of the furnishings intended to be used for period interpretation. Local police were called in to investigate,

and the municipal council has since voted to expend money to purchase a working alarm system. This unfortunate incident astounds me, but I trust that this unnecessary setback will not hinder the Belle Vue Conservancy and the Town of Amherstburg in their continued efforts to restore this magnificent treasure to its former glory.

At Museum Windsor's Chimczuk site, a new display on the history of cycling in Windsor will be exhibited. It depicts bicycle manufacturing, community racing, recreation, and tourism, all of which predate the appearance and production of automobiles in Windsor. In addition, this exhibit will explain how bicycles are still an important and sustainable part of the city's transportation mix. Ride your bike over and have a look!

At the Museum of Dufferin (MOD), a call is now open for entries from painters, sculptors, and photographers for "Unity and Diversity." This multicultural art show is being offered by the museum in partnership with the Dufferin County Multicultural Foundation.

The Thunder Bay Historical Museum held the first showing of digital stories from Places and Faces: Getting Older Adult's Stories of Connection, Belonging, and Placemaking in Thunder Bay. This production was created by the museum with input from and in collaboration with Age BIG.

In staffing news, there have been several changes. Jasmine Proteau has recently been hired as Museum Services Manager at the Museum of Dufferin. She previously worked at several museums in England and Ontario, and was most recently the curator of the Town of Lincoln Museum, in the Niagara Region.

Alessia Ferris is now the new curator at the Craigleith Heritage Depot, taking over from Andrea Wilson who has retired.

In the northwest, Danielle Marshall is the new curator at the Fort Frances Museum, and Jesse Richard has been hired as archivist at Kay-ah-Ch-Wah-Nung (Manitou Mounds). Congratulations to all, and welcome.

# TREASURE CHEST MUSEUM

Judy MacKinnon, Volunteer, Friends of the Treasure Chest Museum

The Treasure Chest Museum is located in the heart of Paisley, Ontario, Bruce County. Norman Hagedorn began collecting artifacts of the 1800 and 1900's. When he retired in the 1970s, it became a serious hobby, with most of the 2,000 artifacts housed in his home. In 1968, he lost part of the collection in a fire, but that didn't deter him. He just started collecting again.

In 1982, Norman and his wife Ina wanted to donate the collection to the Village of Paisley. While they waited for the Council to decide what to do, Norman built a two-storey, cement-block building next to his home and called it the Treasure Chest Museum. With the help of his son Bob, they arranged to display more than 3,200 items that he had collected, and opened it to the public himself until the Village Council agreed to accept his offer in 1988. This wonderful museum now belongs to the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie. Volunteers and summer students look after the collection.



The Treasure Chest Museum is located at 407 Queen St S in Paisely.

The Treasure Chest Museum's collection includes small agriculture equipment like hand corn planters, a turnip planter and pulper, a corn sheller, a seed cleaner, a fanning mill, and an apple peeler that could do 60 apples in a minute. The apple peeler is of great interest to children with its many moving gears.

Along with the agriculture equipment, there's a variety of small woodworking tools like jack planes, moulding planes, and saws for various jobs, household crocks of every shape and size, as well as a cutter decorated

with serpent heads that belonged to Simon Orchard and Samuel T. Rowe, Paisley's first settlers from 1851. The museum also has bear skin coats that helped keep settlers warm in our Bruce County winters, and a military exhibit with items worn by Paisley and Area soldiers from the First and Second World Wars.

One of the museum's most popular attractions is the blacksmith shop. Norman Hagedorn started his working life out on a farm where he ran a seed-cleaning business for neighbours. Eventually, the business grew and he and Ina moved to town. He erected a building for seed cleaning and manufacturing snow blowers, cattle shutes, wagons, and truck boxes. For this job, he made his own blacksmith tools. When he built the Treasure Chest Museum, he naturally installed a blacksmith shop, complete with his tools, an anvil, and huge bellows to show visitors how a blacksmith shop worked.

The museum's second floor houses an impressive array of glassware, cast iron utensils for cooking, copper kettles, butter churns, prints, and fancy butter and cheese dishes. There is also laundry equipment of various kinds, including an all-wooden washing machine. Imagine washing your clothes like that! There is a children's section with clothing, toys, cradles, and games, and many other items that pertain to household use.

Norman had a passion for collecting bath sets and coal oil lamps. Visitors to the museum will find 130 bath sets of many different shapes and colours. As museum volunteers, we love asking visiting children what they think the chamber pots were used for and seeing the looks on their faces when we tell them. And when we say it was the children's job to empty them—their reactions are priceless!

The highlight upstairs is the coal oil lamp collection: over 300 lamps, including cranberry hanging lamps, a green bull's eye, and a Washington drape.

Lastly, our little museum contains an archive of *The Paisley Advocate* from 1865 to the present, used by people researching Paisley, Tara, Chesley, Arran, or Elderslie Townships, which now make up the five wards of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie. One can find photos, scrapbooks, history books, births, deaths, and marriages within the archive, as well as collections related to famous past residents, like the artist David Milne, and the poets Isabella Valancy Crawford and Thomas O'Hagan.

The Treasure Chest Museum is a hands-on museum, as Norman Hagedorn wanted children to touch, feel, and see how the artifacts he collected were used.

Norman and Ina Hagedorn served the Community of Paisley for many years. Their legacy is a true asset to the Village and to the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie as a whole.

Come and visit us at the Treasure Chest Museum. We are open July to August, seven days a week from 11 am to 4 pm, and September to June, by appointment. We do welcome yours—to book, please call 519-353-7176 and leave a message.



## BARRY PENHALE'S ONTARIO

### DANIEL & DONNA HILL: A REMARKABLE LEGACY OF HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISM

Barry Penhale

[barry@naturalheritagebooks.com](mailto:barry@naturalheritagebooks.com)

During the early part of June 1953, a head-over-heels-in-love couple, both Americans, found themselves headed for the Canadian border en route to historic Quebec City. Their mode of travel on a brief honeymoon was a second-hand 1946 Plymouth sedan, purchased for \$350. Following their marriage on June 8th in a small chapel at Howard University with the groom's father officiating, the newlyweds had eagerly embarked on an exciting new life together. By choice their life was not to be spent in the racially divisive country of their birth but to the north in Canada.

Their great affection for each other would undeniably have been most apparent. But even more obvious would have been their differing complexions. The new husband was a Black man—a former G.I. who had served until the end of the Second World War in the segregated US army. His travelling companion and bride was a young, liberal-minded white woman, Donna Mae Bender, who, even before they met, wanted to change the world. As a part-time



'Daniel G. Hill and Donna Hill at home with family.

volunteer with the Congress on Racial Equality, she was already organizing civil rights "sit-ins" at segregated pharmacies. Intellectually, and in numerous other ways, they were equals, which was proven time and time again in an interracial marriage spanning 50 years. From that loving, respectful union came a huge body of work that led to improved human rights conditions predominately in Ontario, but their efforts also increased awareness nationally of Canadian Black history and its importance.

On the family front, the couple brought three highly creative children into the world, two boys and a girl. But perhaps we are getting somewhat ahead of ourselves. Before chronicling some of this amazing duo's many impressive achievements, it would seem fitting to minimally acquaint ourselves with selected portions of their individual family backgrounds. Donna Mae nee Bender was born in Watertown, South Dakota, in 1928. She lived briefly in Minneapolis prior to her parents' move to Oak Park, Illinois, where she attended high school. Her father was a working journalist with years of service in the pharmaceutical field, eventually settling in Chicago and assuming a staff position with a trade publication known as *The American Druggist*. Following the end of the Second World War, Donna attended Oberlin College, the first US college to accept both Black and female students. Upon graduating in 1950, she began working with a Cleveland, Ohio, Civil Rights Coalition before moving to Washington, D.C. There, she joined the group known as Americans for Democratic Action, while volunteering part time with the Congress for Racial Equality. But big and unexpected changes lay ahead. Donna met a force to be reckoned with in Daniel Grafton Hill III, who was teaching at Morgan College, while at the same time heavily into partying. After just over a year of dating, the support they had counted on from certain family members, colleagues, and friends simply wasn't there, but in some unexpected quarters they found themselves pleasantly surprised to be on the receiving end of well-wishes that they had not anticipated. The two were firmly convinced that, first and foremost, their love was all that really counted. From the outset they were totally convinced that they were up to dealing with whatever lay ahead on their journey together. And what an amazing journey it proved to be!

Daniel did not follow other menfolk in his family into the ministry. Far from it. Once out on his own, Dan's church attendance was almost nil, and he was to say on more than one occasion and right up to the end at age 79, that he was a confirmed atheist. But many of the same issues that concerned a long line

of prominent Hill family preachers also confronted Dan in his chosen role as a human rights activist. He addressed those issues continuously during a lifetime of seemingly never-ending battles. This work was his ministry. Those like myself who knew and admired the man vividly recall his fearlessness as he fought on behalf of others whose lives had known some of the worst periods of the ever-present racism problem in Canada. The Dan Hill that I and others knew was no pushover. Known as a scrapper, he experienced a good number of hard-fought victories in his challenging field of work. Should that description appear to best suit the world of pugilists, remember that in Hill's era, many of us could be found among the throngs of early TV viewers glued to flickering black-and-white television sets, watching the best pound-for-pound boxers of the time. And now for a confession: after becoming acquainted with Dan, I could easily picture him within a boxing ring and more than holding his own.

Yet in spite of the swagger and a physical appearance that seemed to cry out "don't mess with me," Dan was a dignified individual and one who proved to be ever so tactful when dealing with difficult individuals. He was, in fact, a master at diffusing dangerous situations. This expertise served him well in 1971 when he was appointed chairman of the Ontario Human Rights Commission. The important work he did as chairman added greatly to his growing reputation within the field of social justice. Recognized as the principal founder of the Ontario Black History Society in 1978, he then served as president until 1983. Among his many achievements, he authored the highly acclaimed and groundbreaking book *The Freedom Seekers: Blacks in Early Canada*, published in 1981. His numerous honours include being an Officer of the Order of Canada. Following a lengthy period of declining health, Daniel Grafton Hill III, the great-grandson of American enslaved peoples, died in Toronto in his chosen country on June 26, 2013. He left behind the love of his life, his wife Donna, to whom he had been married just over 50 years, and their children, Dan, Lawrence, and Karen.

In preparing this article, I re-read Lawrence Hill's award-winning book *Black Berry Sweet Juice: On Being Black and White in Canada*. Larry is one of Canada's finest writers and I value our friendship highly. I also read once again Dan Hill Jr's book, *I Am My Father's Son*. This very personal book by the internationally known songwriter comes highly recommended. Both Larry and Dan are furthering their unique family legacy as they follow in the footsteps of their extraordinary parents.

#### ... 'LEE SEW'S COOKBOOK' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

been in fashion in the grand hotels of the Twenties" (*National Post*, May 21, 1999, p. A16).

In discussions with community members and experts, Fiorito was advised that Lee Sew most likely came to Canada before 1911, learned to cook in a big hotel in Vancouver, and came east to work for a wealthy family in a private home. "Somewhere along the line," he writes, "Lee Sew learned classical techniques for the richly sauced continental cuisine of the Twenties. This little book must have been his professional vade mecum" (*National Post*, May 27, 1999, p. B2).

Poignantly, Fiorito traces the most probable Lee Sew on record to his 1967 burial at age 81 in a communal grave in Toronto's Mount Pleasant Cemetery. The chef most likely died without a family, as they would have kept and handed down his book.

Fiorito concludes, "As for your legacy, it will be delivered into the hands of the Ontario Historical Society" (*National Post*, May 28, 1999, p. A17). Sure enough, Joe Fiorito delivered the manuscript into the hands of then OHS Director of Programming and Preservation Rob Leverty in 1999. Recognizing its importance, the OHS had it professionally digitized in 2015 as part of the Ontario Trillium Foundation grant-funded OHS Reach project.

Nine years after first handling the beautiful century-old document, I'm thrilled to report that in January 2023, the OHS donated *Cook Book by Lee Sew, Toronto, Ontario, Canada* to the Chinese Canadian Archive, a community-built archive launched in 2016 and maintained by Toronto Public Library (TPL).

The Chinese Canadian Archive collects items in English and Chinese that reflect the Chinese Canadian community in the Greater Toronto Area. Items record the activities and community involvement of individuals and families and include photos, drawings and paintings, books, letters, diaries, calligraphy, identifications, and more. A rotating display of archive materials can be seen in the Marilyn & Charles Baillie Special Collections Centre on the 5th floor of the Toronto Reference Library (789 Yonge Street). For more information, please contact [trlspec@tpl.ca](mailto:trlspec@tpl.ca) or visit <https://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/chinese-canadian-archive/>.

Lee's Sew's cookbook will be right at home, carefully preserved and accessible to those who wish to study and make use of this unique and historic document. Our warm thanks go to TPL special collections archivist Ruby Yuen for arranging the donation. For more on Lee Sew's story, please see Joe Fiorito's *Union Station: Love, Madness, Sex and Survival on the Streets of the New Toronto* (2007, Toronto: Penguin Random House Canada), where it makes up Chapter 13.



Sarah McCabe and Ruby Yuen (Chinese Canadian Archive special collections archivist) at the Toronto Reference Library with *Cook Book by Lee Sew, Toronto, Ontario, Canada*



# FROM THE BOOKSHELF

**Dr. Cynthia Comacchio**  
[ccomac5702@rogers.com](mailto:ccomac5702@rogers.com)

It hardly seems possible that it is officially spring. Despite Wiarton Willie’s hopeful prediction, we did not have an early spring (like we ever do).

Talking about the weather is something all Canadians seem to have in common. It serves as the basis of conversations with friends and strangers alike—our version of “How are you?” is more like “How about this weather?”—and many readers will note that it is my starter of choice for this seasonal newsletter too. But I’m not just Canadian, I’m also a historian, so I feel compelled to comment on how we have just come through some historic times, weather-wise. It’s not often I have the opportunity to combine those in one sentence, much less a couple of paragraphs.

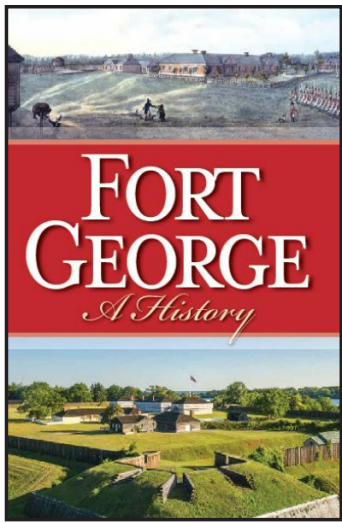
No doubt many share my view that the winter of 2022-23 (always late to end in Ontario) felt longer than most. Who cares that it was the same length, officially, as every winter ever. What matters is how it felt. Paradoxically, it was the warmest winter in more than a century, possibly ever. We also had record low snowfalls, though, again, it didn’t feel that way to me or most others obliged to wield a snow shovel for the few but hefty blizzards we did have. What we lacked in snow, we made up for in drizzle, rain, freezing rain, sleet, and fog. Ontario might as well have been coastal. Except the coasts had record snowfall. A climatic mix-up, perhaps? Even the calendar seemed confused; April showers characterized March.

No doubt, also, many Ontarians would prefer warmer than seasonal temperatures and rain over the usual snow. Except that it didn’t really work out that way either. Again, this might be due to winter-brain numbness, but it seemed to have rained steadily night and day for longer than usual. One weekend, as if the weather-maker got bored or suddenly remembered it’s supposed to be winter, we were visited with a horrendous blast of a rare weather event. Meteorologists, perhaps bored at having to report the same weather patterns all the time, came up with a newfangled name for the phenomenon, also a historic first. We now have “thundersnow”. One word, I think. Could a plague of locusts be far behind? And this unusual weather always seemed to hit around one in the morning, inspiring much dog howling and barking and running around the house, just in case you thought you could sleep until the locusts arrived at dawn, landing ever so lightly on four feet of white stuff glazed over with impenetrable ice.

You know you’re getting old when you start using words like “newfangled.”

So, my weather rant now behind me, the books I’m looking at are new, of course, but hardly newfangled, in the sense that they are all based on the standard requirements of historical research. Each is steeped in archival research and features a fine narrative to pull together the findings—and to make for good reading. Happy spring, OHS people, stay warm and dry. And never mind robins, watch for locusts.

## FORT GEORGE: A HISTORY



**TONY CHISHOLM, RONALD J. DALE, AMANDA M. GAMBLE, DAN B. LAROCHE, JOSEPH H. LAST, RICHARD D. MERRITT, WESLEY B. TURNER**

Niagara-on-the-Lake: Friends of Fort George/Parks Canada, 2022.  
Paperback; 134 pp.

<https://friendsoffortgeorge.square.site/>

Both Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort George hold fond memories for many Ontarians as the site of family trips in childhood, and adulthood too, for that matter. They are certainly prizes among the province’s cherished tourist spaces. This comprehensive little book detailing the Fort’s history packs a lot of information into a little over 100 pages. That it was written by a seven-member

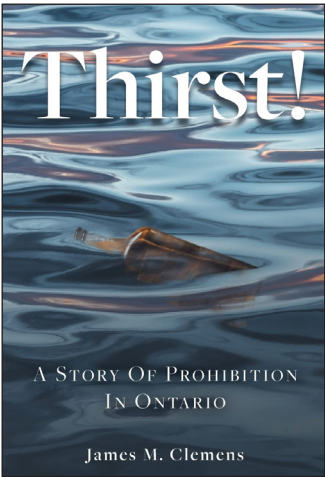
team of dedicated local historians in consultation the Friends of Fort George, as well as Parks Canada, is especially impressive. The committee clearly worked together well to compile the Fort’s story as it has evolved in the more than two and a half centuries since it was erected by the British in the early nineteenth century. The book reads seamlessly, as though written by a single author.

The Fort immediately impresses the visitor with its sheer size. It was effectively a functional small town, containing not only the expected barracks but also blockhouses, kitchens, and a fully operating hospital. Surrounded by a ditch to repel invaders, Fort George served as British military headquarters until midway through the War of 1812. It was largely destroyed in an American ambush in 1813. It then served the American forces as an effective base for their taking of Niagara, and other attacks in Upper Canada. As we know, however, the story did not end well for the American occupation of the colony. The British reoccupied Fort George and attempted to rebuild it, but finally abandoned it when the war ended. It was not fully restored to its original design until the 1930s, more than a century later. It is now, rightly, a National Historic Site.

Any visit to this wonderful old fort provides a sensory mix of smells, sounds, and images, which, although twenty-first century, evoke what it used to be. This book attempts to capture the “real-time” experience in a plentiful array of well-chosen images and maps, as well as previously unpublished photographs.

*Fort George: A History* will go far to dispel any notion that old military complexes were just that: straightforward utilitarian structures that housed soldiers for the purposes of defence and attack. Like most historic forts in Canada, they did more than protect British and French imperial interests. Through their essential interactions with the landscape and the local residents, they had a considerable shaping influence on the politics, society, and economy of the colonies. They were, overall, important components of their cultural development. For all military buffs, local history enthusiasts, and those who want to know the interests supporting our National Historic Sites, this is an excellent place to start. In addition, all proceeds from the book’s sales will support the Friends of Fort George’s important initiative funding youth employment opportunities at Fort George and Brock’s Monument.

## THIRST: A STORY OF PROHIBITION IN ONTARIO



**JAMES M. CLEMENS**

Altona, MB: Friesen Press, 2022  
Paperback; 94 pp.  
[www.friesenpress.com](http://www.friesenpress.com)

Prohibition is one of those perpetually fascinating historical topics, though, in fact, much of what we think we know about its causes and effects comes from the American side of the story. It was legally proclaimed by a number of Canadian provinces (but not all) and was, more or less, upheld in Ontario and the United States during the interwar years.

James Clemens focuses on the “less” in Prohibition’s “more or less” implementation. He also gives readers a decidedly Ontario perspective on what was very much a cross-border, or perhaps transnational, situation. While Prohibition is the core of the story, the real “star” is the City of Dresden, a ship that has never before featured in traditional histories of the period. The author carefully uncovers the details of the Dresden’s operations and its demise, as it capsized on a sandbar off Lake Erie’s north shore (near Port Rowan) in the final days of November 1922. The effect of his research is to shake up another of our lingering and mostly untrue historical beliefs. Because Prohibition in Ontario was the long-running project of moralistic matrons, such as those of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, who persuaded the provincial government to stop what they perceived as the moral degeneration of “Canadian” (British) society at the hands of debauched and mainly “foreign” imbibers, it is usually assumed that, except for the minority drinkers, all Ontarians must have been puritanical and strictly law-abiding. It was the war, however, in calling for both more production and public sacrifice, far more than public disdain for “the demon rum,” that allowed the Ontario Temperance Act to pass unanimously, if not enthusiastically, in 1916. The federal government enacted national prohibition as a war measure in 1918, superseding all provincial measures in place. But after its repeal with the war’s end, provinces either did not re-impose the measures or revised earlier legislation. In Ontario, postwar revisions kept the sale of alcohol illegal, but, remarkably, permitted its production and export.

**‘FROM THE BOOKSHELF’ CONTINUED ON PAGE 8...**



As Clemens points out, this egregious loophole allowed all manner of entrepreneurial activity in “bootlegging” and “rum-running,” the making and smuggling of alcohol across the border to quench the thirst of Americans who faced much stiffer regulation—and therefore many more challenges to get around it—due to their authoritarian and “no holes” 18th Amendment.

The story of the City of Dresden, which he describes as being in “deplorable” condition, is a fascinating one and well worth reading as a shipwreck tale. Clemens relies on close readings of contemporary reports to tell it, including newspaper accounts, oral histories and court records. What is most interesting is that he uses the Dresden incident to enter into a sociocultural history of how laws enacted to regulate morality by “prohibition” of the things that are regarded as its root causes are rarely sustainable. Prohibition was very unpopular by the time the Dresden went down. The war had ended four years earlier, and Canadians were tired of the anxieties, the restrictions, and the deprivations. The “Roaring Twenties” signified a new beginning for a newly modern nation, and urban, industrial, populous Ontario signified modernity. The “thirst” that is Clemens’ title captures more than simply the desire to drink; it captures the greed that led some to become increasingly enmeshed in questionable practices for their own profit.

A former high school history teacher with a master’s in history from Carleton University, James Clemens has produced a book that fills in some of the livelier and “close to home” aspects of a story we all assume we know, but, as is so often the case, we really don’t.

## TORONTO RAILWAY MUSEUM KEEPS ROUNDHOUSE TURNABLE SPINNING

**Daniel Dishaw**, Executive Director  
[ddishaw@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca](mailto:ddishaw@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca)

The Toronto Railway Museum (TRM) is located in Roundhouse Park, in the heart of downtown. Operated by OHS institutional member, the Toronto Railway Historical Association, the museum seeks to connect the story of Toronto’s unparalleled growth to its railway past, present, and future, while providing a fun, memorable, and equitable experience for every guest.

On March 8, I toured the museum and spoke with staff and board Directors about the museum’s important mandate and direction. There is so much to do at the museum, including guided tours, train simulators, lectures, exhibits, and special events. I strongly encourage you to pay them a visit this spring/summer season! For more information about their upcoming programs



TRM Communications & Development Lead, Brooklyn Zalik (pictured above, right), gave a fantastic tour of the museum and the various exhibits.

and events, or to get involved with the museum, visit their website at [torontorailwaymuseum.com/](http://torontorailwaymuseum.com/).

In each of the eighteen episodes from across Canada, Dr. Smith presents a selection of his personal research discoveries through reading, interviews, and visits to the localities under review, both before and after his arrival in Alberta from Ontario in 1974.

Throughout, Dr. Smith’s theme is that Canadians of the past were prisoners of their cultural values just as their latter-day judges are of today’s beliefs. In each episode, he tries to understand, and to help the listener understand, the individual in the context of their own times.

Available now are Dr. Smith’s talks on Grey Owl (Episode 3), Chief Buffalo Child Long Lance (4), Peter Jones & Eliza Field (5), the Mississauga and David Ramsay (6), Sir Augustus d’Este & Egerton Ryerson (7), Nahnebawequay (8), Lord Bury (9), and John A. Macdonald (10).

Upcoming episodes through the end of June 2023 will include four Alberta stories (Elizabeth Barrett & Shahwahnegezhik/Henry Bird Steinhauer, Fred & Evelyn Albright, Annie Glen Broder, and Hugh Dempsey), four 20th century Canadian political stories (Onondyoh/Fred Loft, Duncan Campbell Scott, Lester Pearson, and Chief Gary Potts & the Temagami Land Claim), concluding with Olive Dickason & the Writing of Indigenous History in Canada, which introduces how historical writing has been altered in the digital age (Episode 20).

Please visit the OHS website for *In Hindsight* recordings and episode summaries at <https://ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/podcasts/in-hindsight/>. *In Hindsight* may be found wherever you get your podcasts. Closed captioned videos of each episode are also available on YouTube ([www.youtube.com/@OntarioHistory/videos](http://www.youtube.com/@OntarioHistory/videos)).

The OHS is honoured to share Dr. Smith’s lifetime of personal research discoveries!

Members of the Youth Committee have come from more than a dozen schools in North York, and their work resonates with local students because of how effectively they have spread their message through new community programs. They have set up clubs in schools, promoted the history of the community, and collected history-related works in schools to facilitate communications and build interest among young people to share and protect heritage through the NYHS Youth Committee website. Grace also commits much of her time to public, historical preservation projects to build connections with the broader sector – such as developing a historical plaque, assigning a ceremonial street name, and submitting a design for a history-themed postage stamp.



Photo – Rick Chard

Daniel and Grace chat about the award-winning project during the reception at the Lieutenant Governor’s Suite. For more information or to see the full list of 2022 Ontario Heritage Award recipients, visit [heritagetrust.on.ca/pages/programs/recognition-programs/2022-recipients](http://heritagetrust.on.ca/pages/programs/recognition-programs/2022-recipients).

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Types of membership in the Society are: Individual \$50, Institution/Organization \$55, Life \$500.

Membership is open to all individuals and societies interested in the history of Ontario. The *OHS Bulletin* is sent free of charge to all members of the OHS. The OHS’s biannual scholarly journal, *Ontario History*, is available to members for an additional \$36.75

per year; member organizations, institutions and non-member individuals for \$47.25; and to non-member organizations and institutions for \$57.75. Membership inquiries should be directed to Heather Anderson at [handerson@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca](mailto:handerson@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca).

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