



The Historical Society of St. Catharines

P.O. Box 25017, 221 Glendale Avenue, Pen Centre, St. Catharines, Ontario L2T 4C4

Our mission and goal is to increase the knowledge and appreciation of the history of St. Catharines and area. The Society was founded in 1927. Our Society is affiliated with the Ontario Historical Society.

The Society gratefully acknowledges the support of the Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Culture.

Website: <http://stcatharineshistory.wordpress.com> Newsletter editor: John Brenton, hssc.newsletter@gmail.com

January 2019 Newsletter

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

This vintage Christmas Greeting dated December 21, 1913 is from the Special Collections of the St. Catharines Library online archive.

The view is St. Paul Street at Ontario, looking eastward from the intersection known as "Shipman's Gore" where a flower garden median separated traffic of the N.S. & T. streetcar tracks on the right from traffic on the left.

May all Good Luck be yours to-day, And Peace attend the New Year's way.

JANUARY 24 MEETING: SHOW AND TELL



At this popular annual event, the members of the Historical Society become the presenters. Over the years, we've enjoyed hearing about a wide variety of treasures including the old family bible, historic local photographs, post cards, books, sheet music, housewares and tools.

Check your attic for artifacts, rummage through the basement for relics and empty the closet for heirlooms to bring to the January meeting, then step forward to describe the item and share its history.

NOTICE OF PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE HSSC CONSTITUTION

The Constitution of the Historical Society of St. Catharines specifies that notice of a proposed amendment of the constitution shall be presented in writing to the secretary two months before the annual general meeting. This year, the annual general meeting will be held April 25, 2019 when the proposal will be presented for vote by registered members.

The issue is to increase the number of Board members who are able to call a special Board meeting.

The current wording of the constitution is...

6.1 Board meetings shall normally be held monthly except during the summer months. The president or any two officers may call extra meetings on a weeks notice.

This section currently excludes the ability of Board members other than the officers of the society to call an extra meeting. Section 5.0 of the Constitution defines the officers of the society, as follows:

5.0 - Officers

The officers of the Society shall be the president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary and past president.

The proposed new wording would be...

6.1 Board meetings shall normally be held monthly except during the summer months. The president or any two Board members may call extra meetings on a weeks notice.

The change allows all members of the Board to initiate an extra Board meeting.

NOVEMBER 22, 2018 MEETING

For the November meeting of 2018 the Historical Society of St. Catharines was pleased to present Bill Stevens who enlightened us with over "175 Interesting Things to See in St. Catharines." This was a fast-paced visual presentation of places of interest across Port Dalhousie and St. Catharines. The capacity crowd was enthusiastic! We will be including highlights from his presentation in HSSC Newsletters, starting this month.

Bill Stevens was born, raised and lives in Port Dalhousie and is a long time member of the Historical Society of St. Catharines having served 20 years as a director, executive, past president and program committee member.

175 INTERESTING THINGS TO SEE IN ST. CATHARINES

By Bill Stevens

1. First Welland Canal At Port Dalhousie

Port Dalhousie has three Lock Ones of the Welland Canal. While the locks of the second and third canals are still visible, lock one of the first canal is not visible today. The wooden lock in Lakeside Park was uncovered in 2008 but was then covered over once again with earth. The lock is located just south and east of the Dalhousie Avenue steps down into the park. The first canal piers stretch out into Lake Ontario from the north west corner of the park and the pier remains can be seen when the lake level is low and can also be seen on some aerial photos. An interpretive sign shown in the accompanying photo is located near the excavated lock. The canal route ran between the carousel and the Gary Road embankment, across the parking lot and becomes part of the second and third canal routes as it turns southward towards Martindale Pond. The accompanying photo shows the remains of the first canal which jut out from the wall of the second and third canal just north of the end of Lakeport Road.



The Harbour Lock of the First Welland Canal 1828-1847

The coming and going of schooners and steamboats, captains and crews of sailors, towboys and their teams of horses – all these were common scenes here at the site of the Harbour Lock, the First Welland Canal's northern terminus from 1828 to 1847. This timber lock and the harbour alongside it brought about the establishment of Port Dalhousie and were key to its early growth.

In the early 1820s a group of Niagara-area businessmen promoted the idea of a canal to link Lake Ontario and Lake Erie. In 1824 the Welland Canal Company was incorporated to undertake the canal's construction. In 1825 plans for the canal route followed the natural channel of Twelve Mile Creek from St. Catharines to Lake Ontario, with a timber lock at the mouth of the creek to be the canal's northern entry, and the natural basin of the pond there the location for a harbour. The site chosen for the lock was a cut across the beach at the foot of the western headland.

The Harbour Lock was designed as a guard lock between the lake and harbour, 32' wide and 130' long, with a lift of 5'. Clearing and excavation began in early 1826. Over 25,000 feet of square timber and 1300 lbs. of iron were required for the lock's completion late that year. A feature of the lock was a swing bridge with a sweep of 32' that could be "drawn either way by one man with ease." Also completed in 1826 was the towpath, an earthen path raised through the creek to allow horses to tow vessels to the next lock.

Protective piers extending into the lake to form the lock entrance were completed in 1828; a lighthouse was constructed at the piers by 1835.

The harbour was also completed in 1828, with a depth of 12' and covering 300 acres; it was created by constructing an embankment across the beach between the two headlands, together with excavation and dredging, raising the water level in the basin sufficiently deep for lake vessels.

100 Labourers WANTED.

THREE Schooners wish to employ ONE HUNDRED good, healthy Labourers, to commence work on Monday next, at the Welland Canal Harbour, where from 50 cents wages will be given, and prompt payment made.

HOOVER & WARD.
St. Catharines, October 28, 1828

WELLAND CANAL.

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given, that the WELLAND CANAL is now open for the passage of Vessels, from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario.

By order of the Board of Directors,
JAMES BLACK, Sec'y.
Welland Canal Office,
St. Catharines, Nov. 30, 1829.

The Harbour Lock (and the two locks south of it) had larger dimensions than the other First Welland Canal locks, so that steamboats could travel inland from Lake Ontario to the village of St. Catharines. For the labourers who built the lock and harbour, the work was difficult and dangerous. Described as "a motley assemblage of good and bad from almost every part of the civilized world," they laboured with picks and shovels under brutal conditions in all kinds of weather. Accidents and illness were common, but wages were good because of a scarcity of labour: \$12 a month for common shoewheelers, and \$15-\$18 for teamsters. They were housed in shanties built on the bank above the beach.

The first vessel through the Harbour Lock was the schooner "Welland Canal," sailing from St. Catharines on May 10, 1828 with over 600 barrels of flour bound for Prescott for forwarding to Montreal. The schooner's passage through the lock was "greeted by a large concourse of spectators with long continued cheers..."

The first vessels to travel through the entire route of the Welland Canal began their passage at the Harbour Lock on November 27, 1829. Two schooners, the "Ann and Jane" of York, Upper Canada and the "E.H. Boughton" of Youngstown, New York, "decorated with flags and pendants" passed alongside the village "amid the spontaneous and hearty cheers" of onlookers.

Port Dalhousie grew and developed as the canal's northern terminus. An 1830 government report noted: "Already has the anticipated commerce of the canal begun to attract capital to Port Dalhousie. They are building houses and stores, and erecting granaries, and one merchant has established a wholesale store, with a heavy stock of British goods." By 1837 the village had a post office, sawmill, stores, taverns, and a shipyard.

In 1842 work began on a new canal of larger stone locks to replace the old timber locks, with Port Dalhousie remaining the canal's northern terminus. In 1848 a new and relocated Lock One and harbour were completed and brought into use. The old wooden lock that had been the making of Port Dalhousie was filled in and abandoned.

ABSTINENCE AND ACTIVE PLEASURE:

Some St. Catharines Societies from our Past
compiled by Elizabeth Finnie

Just outside the doors of Special Collections in the St. Catharines Public Library, there still exists an original, wooden card catalogue. In it are filed countless esoteric citations gleaned from old local newspapers by various librarians over the decades. Here is a random sampling of some St. Catharines societies back in the day. What a snapshot of the times!

Abstinence Society

(St. Catharines Journal January 4, 1849)

Meeting at the Methodist chapel to reorganize the Total Abstinence Society. (The old society was considered dead though some disagreed.) Postcard image of St. Paul Street Methodist Church, 366 St. Paul Street, St. Catharines, Ont. c1907, from the St. Catharines Public Library Archives.

Active Pleasure Club

(St. Catharines Evening Star, December 15, 1893, page 1)

The Active Pleasure Club held their first dance in Fitzgerald's Hall last night.

Agricultural Society (there were many)

(Niagara Gleaner, June 26, 1830)

Notice of formation of the Niagara District Agricultural Society. First meeting held at Walter Dittrick's Hotel in St. Catharines.

Anti - Cigarette League

(St. Catharines Evening Star, April 2, 1870, page 4)

Last meeting of the Anti-Cigarette League held in YMCA.



Automobile Club

(St. Catharines Evening Journal, February 9, 1915)

Meeting February 11, 1915 to discuss the interchange of licenses with New York State.

Boy Scouts

(Women's Patriotic Journal, November 14, 1914, page 3)

A patriotic concert was given by Boy Scouts in the Opera House.

Image of 1st Presbyterian Boy Scout Troop and others. c.1914 courtesy of St. Catharines Library.

(Ladies) Benevolent Society

(St. Catharines Journal, November 24, 1853)

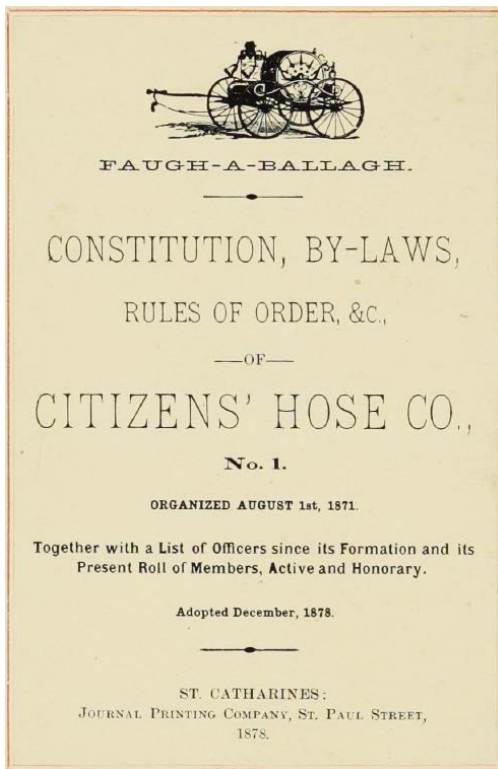
Town council voted £25 to the Ladies Benevolent Society in aid of the poor of the town. "Our own

poor so as not to...encourage influx of idlers and paupers. This is very important...£25 is a small sum but it is all that is asked for."

Canadian Order of Foresters

(*St. Catharines Standard*, May 15, 1896, page 3)

Including the Beaverdams Quartette: Miss Donaldson, Miss Fisher, Miss Coady, Mrs. James Hilton, organist.



Citizens Hose Company

(*St. Catharines Evening Star*, January 16, 1902, page 1)

Last night the Citizens' Hose Company decided to resign as a body of volunteer firemen. Resignation to take effect July 1, 1902. Image of Constitution and By-Laws of the Citizens' Hose Co., from Brock University Archives & Special Collections.

Debating Society

(*St. Catharines Journal*, November 3, 1836)

Debating Society formed by young men of St. Catharines October 29, 1836.

East End Pleasure Club

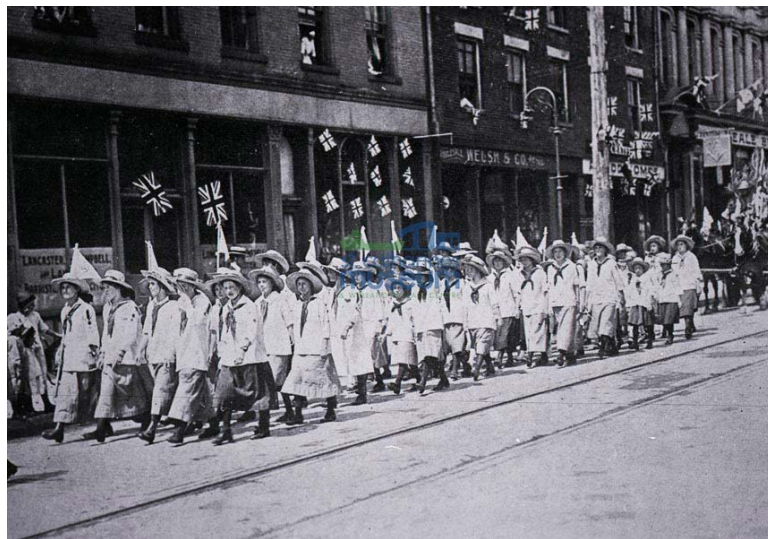
(*St. Catharines Evening Star*, January 2, 1902)

The East End Pleasure Club will hold a hop in Collier's Hall Friday night.

Epworth League of the Methodist Church

(*St. Catharines Evening Star*, August 20, 1902)

Trolley Day party – 25 members of the Epworth League of Welland Avenue Methodist Church celebrated at Victoria Park.



Girl Guides

(*Women's Patriotic Journal*, November 14, 1914, page 1)

Girl Guides of St. Catharines, first to be registered as a company of Girl Guides in England and to receive a certificate from Agnes Baden-Powell. Image of Girl Guides marching along St. Paul Street in the 1915 Dominion Day Parade, courtesy of St. Catharines Library.

Horticultural Society

(*St. Catharines Journal*, June 30, 1859)

List of prizes including J. Wilson, gardener for T.R. Merritt. John Holder. J. Tackle, gardener for J.P. Merritt. George Deans, gardener for Wm. McGivern. James Taylor, Wm. Brownlee, Wm. Eccles.

Humane Society

(*St. Catharines Standard*, September 19, 1927, page 1)

\$1,326.27 raised on September 17, 1927 as a result of tag day in aid of local Humane Society.

Leper Mission

(*St. Catharines Evening Star*, June 7, 1902, page 1)

Special meeting of the Leper Mission to be held at the home of Mrs. J. Mills June 9, 1902 to arrange for a convention to be held June 20, 1902.

Literary Society

(*St. Catharines Constitutional*, November 15, 1860, page 3)

A number of gentlemen interested in forming a Literary Society met together in the Town Hall.



Masonic Lodge (many listings)

(*St. Catharines Journal* September 10, 1857)

Masonic festival and ball given by the coloured masons of the town. Addresses by Rev. Messrs Countee and Harper. Splendid supper by Wm. Brown. Music by Whittens Band. Many present from Hamilton, Niagara Falls, Buffalo, Rochester.... "We believe this is the first affair of this kind the coloured masons have got up."

(*St. Catharines Constitutional*, August 31, 1859, page 3)

A moonlight excursion on Lake Ontario is offered on the steamer *Peerless* on the Centennial

anniversary of the taking of Quebec, September 13, 1859.

Image of members of a Masonic Lodge, possible Port Dalhousie, date unknown, courtesy of St. Catharines Library.

Medical Society

(*Toronto Star*, July 27, 1844)

St. Catharines meeting. Dr. Beadle, Dr. Mack (Secretary), Dr. Lowe, Dr. J.H. Blackwell (President), Dr. Moore, Dr. Ferris.

Needlework Guild

(*St. Catharines Women's Standard*, May 23, 1895, page 5)

Mrs. Clive is forming a Needle Work guild for the hospital.

Patriotic Fund

(*St. Catharines Journal*, April 19, 1855)

Concert in aid of the Patriotic Fund Wednesday 11th April in Town Hall conducted by Mr. Valentine. Mr. Crozier of Hamilton was leader. Violin solo by Herr Graybiel who played "The Last Rose of Summer" and "Auld Robin Grey". Proceeds some \$170.

BOOT & SHOE MAKING.

DANIEL DEWEY informs his friends and the public in general, that he has REMOVED his SHOE STORE from Mr. Griffing's Hat Manufactory to the easterly room in Mr. William Chisholm's store, directly opposite the "Village Hotel," where he will continue the above business, as usual, on as reasonable terms as at any other shop in the place. A good assortment of LEATHER constantly on hand and for sale, *cheap*, for cash or HIDES.

St. Catharines, June 6, 1827. 72

As well as social notices and announcements the newspaper has always been a reliable way for a merchant to advertise goods and services.

Reading this advertisement from 1828, imagine the time when one could purchase locally made goods in the downtown village of St. Catharines.

At that time, the first Welland Canal was approaching completion and had expanded the commercial viability for a number of related industries and trades along its route, from hotels to manufacturing.

Excerpt of the *Farmers Journal, Welland Canal Intelligencer*, December 10, 1828 from the Brock Archives and Special Collections

ST. CATHARINES NEWSPAPERS

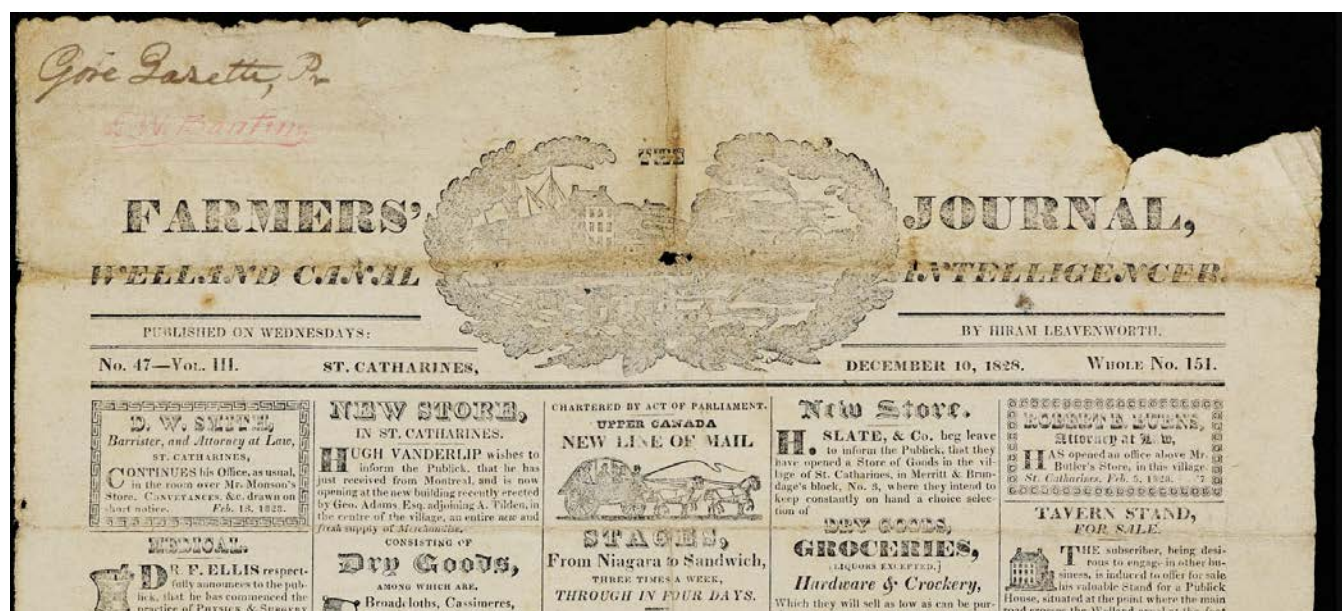


Image of Farmers' Journal, Welland Canal Intelligence, St. Catharines, December 10, 1828 from Brock University Archive and Special Collections

The social snippets documented in the article “Abstinence and Active Pleasure” were drawn from a number of local newspapers published up to 180 years ago. Several local newspapers have served our community over the years. Most papers existed for a short period of time, while only one has survived to remain a daily ‘Standard’ to this day. Each of these newspapers on its own has a colourful background that would make a fascinating subject for further research.

Here are just a few of many locally-based newspapers of that early era:

- ❖ One of the very earliest papers in the area, **The Spectator** (1816), was first published in the village of St. Davids, then renamed the **Niagara Spectator** (1817-1820) and published in Niagara. The founding editor was Mr. Richard Cockrell who had served in the War of 1812 as an army surveyor.
- ❖ William Lyon MacKenzie first published **The Colonial Advocate and Journal of Agriculture, Manufactures, and Commerce** in 1824 at Queenston, on a press that he had purchased from Mr. Hiram Leavenworth. MacKenzie soon shortened the name to **The Colonial Advocate** and moved the operation to York. This was the publication that MacKenzie used as a platform for his reform ideas, critical of the ‘Family Compact’ aristocracy of Upper Canada. It was a political journal that would be a key voice of the constitutional reform movement leading to the Upper Canada Rebellion in 1837.
- ❖ The aforementioned Hiram Leavenworth published **The Farmers’ Journal and Welland Canal Intelligence** (1826-1834). Through a number of mergers it would become **The St. Catharines Journal** (1835). The **St. Catharines Journal** would merge with another local paper, the **Evening Star** to become the **Star-Journal** (1908-1920) and the **St. Catharines Evening Journal** (1859-1919).
- ❖ The growing population of the newly formed City of St. Catharines was an opportunity for expanding circulation and attracted competition. One competitor, **The St. Catharines Standard**, (1891-present), a daily paper published by William Burgoyne, survived and became the market leader for many years.

Local newspapers have played an important role in publishing current events. They’ve always been a forum for editorial comment and have traditionally contributed to strong political and social influence. This was significant in a time when the printed newspaper would have been the only media – those simpler times before mass communication by radio, television and Internet could deliver the message to a broader audience.

In today's fast pace, the Internet can deliver your message instantly through social media (Facebook and Twitter), online news sources and email. One has immediate access to infinitely more information. This immediacy and the variety of news sources has led to the demise of many printed newspapers. You no longer need a printing press and a newspaper delivery route to have an audience for your message.

The newspapers that are preserved in archives are a valuable trove of information about the era. They document social and economic conditions and include the visual graphics style and unique wording of the day. We now must rely on the digital age of media to preserve the story of our time for future historians.

Will it hold up as well as the printed newspaper did? What will the Historical Society of St. Catharines report 150 years from now, say, in the year 2170?

UPCOMING EVENTS

Event information and links to external websites are provided as a courtesy for members of the Historical Society of St. Catharines (HSSC). The HSSC is not responsible for the delivery of content from third parties. Event details and future schedules may be subject to change.

Wednesday Jan 16, 2019 7:30pm	Grimsby Town Hall Frank Lloyd Wright is acknowledged as one of the greatest American architects of all time. Join Ken and Linda Bauman who revisit some of Wright's iconic buildings and show how many of his creative ideas are reflected in the interior design of our homes and in the architecture of new development in Grimsby. All are welcome.
Month of February 2019	Black History Month at BME Church. The Salem Chapel of the British Methodist Episcopal Church, 92 Geneva St., St. Catharines, was designated as the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Historical Site by the Government of Canada in 2000. The Salem Chapel continues today as a religious institution and serves as an international Sacred Destination tourist attraction. Call 905-682-0993 to arrange your group tour.
Thursday Feb 7, 2019 2:00pm – 4:00pm	FamilySearch.org piece together your ancestor's history by learning how to search Historical records, Genealogies, Memories and Family Tree in FamilySearch.Org the world's largest FREE genealogy website. Pre-registration is required. Contact the St. Catharines Central Library. The St. Catharines Public Library provides access to genealogical records from all over the world, that you can access for free, from the Library.
Feb 25, 2019 7:30pm	Thorold & Beaverdams Historical Society presents Melanie Battell on "A Cold Saturday Afternoon in Welland – the accident at the Main Street Bridge, 1928"
Feb 26, 2019 2pm	Looking Back St. Catharines: The Underground Railroad. Sarah Nixon of the St. Catharines Museum shares a Black History Month presentation that explores the rich history of the black community in St. Catharines, including Underground Railroad music and escaped slaves' stories. Location is the St Catharines Library – Mills Room. Adults \$2. Please register in advance. 905-468-2841
Until March 20, 2019	People and Places exhibit in the Burgoyne Room and History Hall highlights the landmarks and stories behind some of the City's buildings that have disappeared from our City's landscape. Items in the exhibit include window pediments from the Russell House Hotel, the May-Clark-Seiler house doorway, the Henry Furs sign from King Street, the YMCA sign from its former location on Queen Street, plus other photographs and objects from the Museum's collection.

LECTURE PROGRAM – JANUARY 2019 to JUNE 2019

Program Subject to Change

Join us at the **St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre** at 7:30pm on the 4th Thursday of the month from September to November and January to June. Learn more about local history through our excellent lecture program featuring a wide variety of expert speakers. Museum staff often present a historical artifact from the museum collection related to the lecture topic at each meeting.

2019

JANUARY 24 Show and Tell. The Historical Society presents its annual evening of Show and Tell, where Society members and friends are invited to bring a local historical artifact, step forward and explain the history and meaning.

FEBRUARY 28 The City of St. Catharines Civic Art Collection, by Rebecca Cann. St. Catharines has monuments, public art and memorials dating back to 1886. This talk will explore the outdoor installations and share interesting facts about the collection's history, maintenance and role in community life. Rebecca Cann is the former Cultural Services Supervisor for the City of St. Catharines, managing the development of an inventory, catalogue and maintenance program for the Civic Art Collection, among other responsibilities. She is currently an arts consultant and instructor at the Centre for Arts & Cultural Studies, Brock University.

MARCH 28 Update on the ongoing 2-Year Study of the St. Catharine's Shickluna Shipyards, by Dr. Kimberly E. Monk.

APRIL 25 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Postcards from Port Dalhousie, by Roger Bradshaw and John Burtiniak.

The presentation represents a collaboration to produce a book on 'Postcards from Port Dalhousie'. Utilizing John's extensive collection, they have selected numerous vintage Port Dalhousie postcards to display and describe in book form. For selected postcards they have photographed the current scene to achieve a past and present view. Roger Bradshaw is the author of the self-published books 'Historic Welland Canals' and 'Niagara's War of 1812' and the tour photographer on Canadian Battlefield Tours in Europe. John Burtiniak is a historian, author, researcher, editor, collector and retired Librarian/Archivist at Brock University. He is active on various provincial and local historical associations.

MAY 23 St. Paul Street Stories, by historian Nancy Cameron. Stories of the Garden City's most historic street. Tales of scoundrels and scandals, calamities and curiosities, murder and mystery, bootleggers, buried treasure, shipwrecks, spies, fugitives, fraudsters, and much more...."

JUNE 27 Preservation of your Historical Treasures, by St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre Staff. They will describe how to handle and store your valued historical objects.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FOR SEPTEMBER 2018 through AUGUST 2019

The New Year has begun. If your HSSC membership has lapsed and you would like to renew it – now is the time! The Historical Society puts your membership dollars to work in our monthly lecture series and research and support for projects that align with our mission of increasing knowledge and appreciation of St. Catharines and local area history. HSSC members will receive the newsletter 4 times a year.

Thank you for being a member and supporting the Historical Society of St. Catharines!

Membership dues can be paid at any HSSC Meeting or mail a cheque to:

The Historical Society of St. Catharines
P.O. Box 25017, 221 Glendale Avenue, Pen Centre
St. Catharines, Ontario, L2T 4C4

Make cheques payable to: The Historical Society of St. Catharines

- **Individual Membership: \$10**
- **Family Membership \$15**

Your membership information will not be shared with any other group or business. To receive your newsletter by email we ask that you provide your e-mail address on the membership form.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

- ☐ I would like to receive the Society Newsletter, meeting reminders and notices by e-mail
- ☐ I would like to receive the Society Newsletter by print