



# 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.

Please visit our website: <http://stcatharineshistory.wordpress.com>

Newsletter contact: [hssc.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:hssc.newsletter@gmail.com)

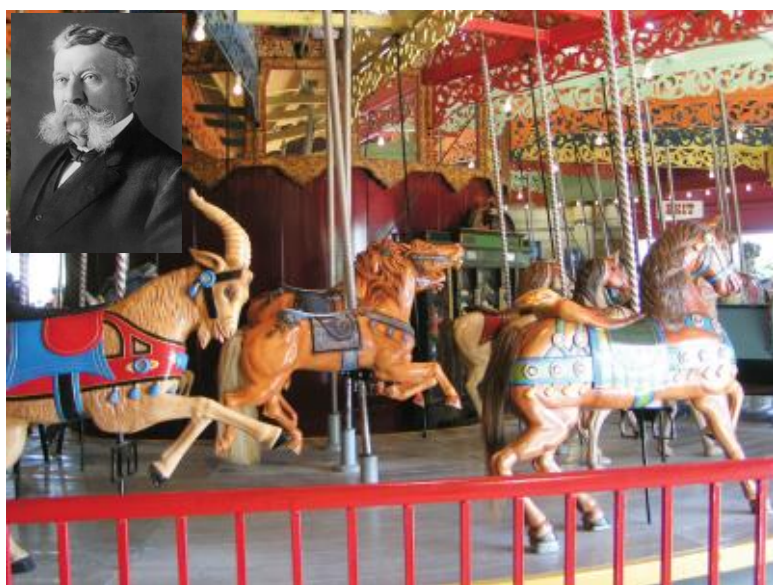
## July 2018 Newsletter

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### SUMMER IN THE CITY

...isn't complete until you ride the historic Lakeside Park carousel, still at the 1920's rate of a nickel a ride!



The Lakeside Carousel was built by Danish-born master-carver and renowned carousel builder Charles I.D. Loeff (inset left) between 1898 and 1905. In 1921 the carousel was relocated from “Scarboro Beach” amusement park across Lake Ontario to Lakeside Park in Port Dalhousie. In its heyday, over a quarter million people arrived every summer by steamship or the NS&T line to visit Lakeside Park with its beach, rides and attractions. The menagerie carousel features 68 animals arranged in 4 rows including hand carved wooden chariots, camels, goats, horses and the signature Loeff lions. The accompanying music is supplied by a large antique Frati band organ

playing paper music scrolls. In 1970 a fundraising initiative purchased the carousel and transferred ownership to the City of St. Catharines on condition that the ride would remain at 5 cents. Ongoing restoration work of the Lakeside Park carousel is coordinated by a group of dedicated volunteers. “The Friends of the Carousel” restored and continue to work year round to maintain this remarkable attraction in top working order.

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## LECTURE PROGRAM – SEPTEMBER 2018 to JUNE 2019

*Program Subject to Change*

The new Lecture Program for the upcoming season of the HSSC has just been announced! Join us at the **St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre** at 7:30pm on the 4<sup>th</sup> 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.

2018

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**SEPTEMBER 27 Whiskey King, by Canadian author Trevor Cole.** The remarkable true story of Canada's most infamous bootlegger Rocco Perri, who operated in the Niagara Peninsula, and the undercover Mountie on his trail: Other books by Trevor Cole: Norman Bray, in the Performance of His Life (2004), The Fearsome Particles (2006), Practical Jean (2010), Hope Makes Love (2015). Copies will be offered for sale.

**OCTOBER 25 Stories from the Front, by Museum staff and Museum volunteers.** The performance is an original dramatic production featuring local stories and music from the First World War. Included are the actual letters, diaries, and photographs of St. Catharines men and women. By giving voice to the letters, diaries and newspaper articles of St. Catharines residents, we honour both the men who fought overseas during the First World War and those they left behind at home.

**NOVEMBER 22 175 Interesting Things to see in St. Catharines, by Bill Stevens.** This is not a lecture but a 45 minute fast paced visual presentation. Items include plaques, monuments, cenotaphs, buildings and many miscellaneous items. Binders with a hard copy of each item will be available to view afterwards for those wishing more information. Bill Stevens, born, raised and resident of Port Dalhousie, long time member of the Historical Society of St. Catharines, has served 20 years as a director, executive, past president and program committee member.

2019

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**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     Postcards from Port Dalhousie, by Roger Bradshaw and John Burtniak.**

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 Burtniak 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         Julian Street, by historian Nancy Cameron.** An illustrated talk about Julian Street by an author with connections to Ridley College.

**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.

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

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## **PRESERVATION OF YOUR HISTORICAL TREASURES**

### *June 2018 Meeting Summary*

The last meeting of the HSSC before the summer break featured an informative presentation by staff members of the St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre, Tanya Faulkner and Helen Booth.



Tanya Faulkner (Collections Technician – Artifact) described how techniques used by museum professionals to handle, to preserve and store museum artifacts can be applied to our personal collections of porcelain or ceramic, glassware, textiles, silver and paper. For example, the salts and oils of your bare hands can cause permanent damage to the surface of fine metal objects such as silver. It is recommended that you wear cotton gloves when handling these objects and use a charcoal infused 'Pacific silver cloth' for storage. Recommended packing and storage materials include bubble wrap and polyfoam sheets, acid-free tissue paper and envelopes, and polyethelene bags (not Ziploc sandwich bags!).

These materials are available through specialized archival suppliers, such as: Carr McLean, <https://www.carrmclean.ca>,

University Products, <https://www.universityproducts.com>, and GayLord Archival, <https://www.gaylord.com>.

Helen Booth (Collections Technician – Archival) described the resources available to the public through the Museum archive collection. If you are researching a local property, a business, or an individual, the Museum has a wealth of archival materials available including Land Titles Registry and annual City Directories that list the city addresses, the occupants and their occupations. You will need to call ahead to speak with Museum personnel who will assist you by making these materials available to you and guiding you through your research.





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## REIMAGINING

### *The Brown Homestead*

By Jennifer Humeniuk  
Director of Programming and Community Engagement  
John Brown Heritage Foundation

Built heritage is one of any society's greatest cultural assets. Comprising everything from grand parliamentary buildings, bridges, cathedrals and monuments, to whole neighborhoods, tiny log cabins or even a simple fence, these places tie us to our history and to one another. They are evidence of our cultural development that create a sense of place, of connectedness, and of identity.



John Brown Heritage Foundation (JBHF) is a registered Canadian charity created in 2015 to conserve and protect significant heritage buildings and sites, beginning with the John Brown House at 1317 Pelham Road. Since then, our mission has expanded beyond the physical conservation of the house and site in ways we could not have envisioned when we began. We were grateful to have the opportunity to share that mission, and the history of The

Brown Homestead with you at the Historical Society meeting in May. If you weren't able to join us, we hope this abbreviated version will whet your appetite for more and that you'll come see us soon!

John Brown was a Palatine German whose grandparents arrived in the new world in the early 1700's and settled in New York's Schoharie Valley. A private in Butler's Rangers, John moved his own young family to Niagara after the end of the American Revolutionary War in 1781. For his loyal service to the crown, he received a total of 800 acres in land grants in Louth, Thorold and Pelham Townships where the three meet near the Short Hills. John and his wife, Magdalena, had four daughters born in New York and five sons born in Upper Canada, which we like to say was a good example of efficient German engineering.

For most of the past century, the Niagara Region has been a place of wide-open spaces, but when John Brown left the more established Niagara (NotL), to settle in the untamed interior of the Niagara Peninsula, the area was primarily thick, old growth forests full of plentiful game and rivers swollen with fish, where bears ate crops and cougars killed livestock.

It is likely that the family lived in a log home on the site before building the stone house found there today. One of the requirements to have your land grant ratified was to build a permanent dwelling of certain dimensions and to inhabit it for a year. The one and a half story section at the rear of the stone house almost matches those dimensions and shows earlier building methods. It is believed to have been built first, and to have been completed a year before John's land grant was ratified in 1797.

The larger portion of the house (a magnificent 2-story, 5-bay Georgian which we affectionately refer to as "the addition") was likely built over the next two years and finished prior to John's death in 1804. These dates make it the oldest house in St. Catharines and one of the oldest in the Niagara Region.

This was the beginning of the Brown Homestead's long and rich history as a special part of the Niagara community. In its lifetime, the house has been used as a tavern, a working farmhouse and a personal residence, and it was only owned by four families prior to our Foundation's acquisition of the site in 2015. The limited ownership, along with the recognition of the house's historic value by the house's final private owner, Jon Jouppien, resulted in the interior retaining more of its original character than is often found in houses of that era. Our goal at JBHF is to celebrate that history, while ensuring a vibrant and dynamic future for the site within this community and in Canada, for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond.

At JBHF's founding in 2015, the dramatic economic decline in the Historic House Museum industry made it evident that there was a need for change. The discussions that followed led to three fundamental questions:

1. What is called for to create a meaningful, sustainable and community-based existence for The Brown Homestead?
2. What changes need to be made in the current status quo to support not only this project, but others like it?
3. How much funding will be required and where will it come from?

To answer these and other questions necessary to inform a reliable growth plan, JBHF embarked on an intensive two-year strategic planning project. Our newly expanded mission, vision and values are some of the fruits of our labours.

JBHF is dedicated to *reimagining historic sites as dynamic engines of progress and development*. We consider ourselves stewards of the past, working to promote a brighter future through creative education, nurturing human relationships and inspiring a growing passion for learning. The Brown Homestead, which JBHF owns and manages, is providing a model of how historic sites can become creative educational leaders and community catalysts. Our vision? Compassionate and joyful communities of life-long learners using innovative thinking and an understanding of their place in history's continuum to build a harmonious and sustainable future.

Much of what JBHF has become over the past two years has been the result of extensive community outreach and research. At the same time, much of it is based on nine core values which are an integral part of our strategy for success. They are the foundation of all we do and of where we are headed.

**Life-Long Learning:** JBHF is committed to making heritage education currently relevant, engaging and fun for both children and adults. We pursue the development and sharing of immersive and experiential learning opportunities which nurture human relationships and foster both the cognitive and creative sides of the human psyche. We find educational opportunities in everything we do and each aspect of our work.

For example, we use the ongoing site and restoration work to offer educational opportunities to students of Willowbank Restoration Arts and Brock University. We also include an educational

component in each contract with the tradesmen that the Foundation employs to work with the public, students or volunteers. Similarly, we create learning and professional development opportunities for interns and staff, including in-house training, webinars and conferences, satellite learning projects and supporting continuing education efforts either fiscally or with paid time.

**Innovative Thinking:** JBHF seeks fresh perspectives that shape progressive ideas and technologies. By balancing these with knowledge of, and appreciation for, traditional methods and ideologies, we allow diversity of thought and action to build a path from the past into the future. At Doors Open St. Catharines (2017) for example, we had a Master Heritage carpenter working beside a carpenter who uses applications from the automotive and aerospace industries. In addition, Digital Humanities Professor John Bonnett from Brock University demonstrated and discussed the use of new technologies like 3D modeling and Augmented Reality for conservationists.

**Community Connection:** Its simplest meaning is that we appreciate the needs and values of one other and our guests. We practice and advocate personal integrity and mutual respect, valuing other perspectives. Our programming and organizational culture encourages collaboration, inclusion,



conflict resolution, listening, leadership and mentoring. Most significantly though, *Community Connection* means that we are relevant to, and making a positive impact in our community. We believe heritage sites only reach their full potential when they are active, thriving community spaces. This means consistently reaching out to our neighbors, inviting them into a dialogue, and

including them in our plans.

**History as a Continuum:** We view history as a continuum of which our present era is only a part. We believe that the study of history is not merely to learn what happened, but to help us determine what should happen next. This pushes us to create a venue and programming which speak to the future of Niagara, as well as to its past. One of our first steps in conserving The Brown Homestead was to allow the house's history and its place in its current community to speak to us about its future. A blog on our website, *Conserving the Brown Homestead: First Steps*, details this process, which we believe could be used by anyone wishing to conserve a historic home. We hope to inspire others to follow suit.

**Embrace Uncertainty:** We explore tangible truths where facts are incomplete, and we are transparent about what we know and what we interpret. By accepting and acknowledging the fragmentary and elusive nature of history, rather than rigidly adhering to a single perspective, interpretation or era, we invite open discussion and diverse opinions, turning limitations into opportunities.



**Everyman's History:** We look beyond the traditional historic lens that focuses on the perspective of prominent figures, and attempt to understand how the ordinary person experiences and impacts history. One of our planned programs, the Niagara Culinary Heritage Initiative is a good example. This program will celebrate and explore Canada's cultural heritage through its food, offering chef-led heritage cooking classes, recipe exchanges, dinners and demonstrations focused on the culinary traditions of Niagara's diverse residents. It will include cooking traditions from our Loyalist roots, but also those of First Nations peoples, new immigrants to Canada, and the region's migrant workers.

**Craftsmanship:** We take pride in our work and seek new ways to hone our skills and talents. We challenge ourselves and others to do better, and admit our mistakes and learn from them. We share knowledge and help one another grow. This is true of our trades work and teaching, but it is also true of our approach to the organization as a whole. Our strategic planning and our systems-based approach to the business is part of that craftsmanship, as is regularly quantifying our efforts in order to improve our programming and events.

**Vibrant Organizational Culture:** We believe that an organization's success is best served when the staff and volunteers are provided opportunities for growth and encouraged to make meaningful intellectual contributions and investment. JBHF provides a dynamic learning environment for employees and volunteers as well as for those we serve. We work collaboratively across departments and teams, encouraging each other to speak up and help everyone to have a voice.



Our Weekly Team Meeting is a great example. JBHF holds a Team Meeting with all permanent employees and interns every Monday morning. This meeting fosters good communication between departments and keeps staff apprised of the current work and strategic goals of the organization.

Additionally, it allows staff to contribute to, and better understand, projects or work in which

they are not directly involved, encouraging them to ask questions and participate in the decision-making process. In essence, we believe in the “campfire rule,” and hope to ensure that anyone who works for or with John Brown Heritage Foundation leaves us better off than they were when they found us.

**Economic Sustainability:** The economic realities of sustaining historic sites are often neglected and sometimes ignored. After all, how can one put a price on the priceless? At JBHF, however, we believe economic sustainability is essential to ensuring the successful, continued conservation of our built heritage. For this reason, we are working to build an organization with sufficient stability to withstand adversity over time. Our endowment fund, which has begun to thrive, is a good example,

and one we would recommend to others who wish to conserve a historic site. Connecting to our community and creating a diverse and growth oriented business plan is also part of that stability. It is not simply about money! In a very real sense, earned income for a historic site is a direct indicator of community involvement and of relevance.

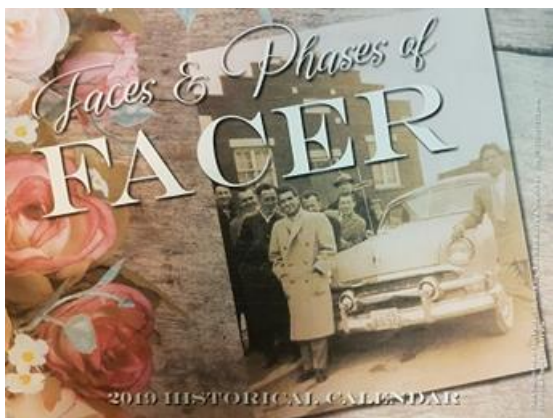


All these ideas, and the nine core values they represent, are what we believe will help the Brown Homestead make a significant and lasting cultural contribution to the Niagara Region. A great deal of specific work lies ahead as we begin to realize this vision. There are plans for the grounds and the site, including a heritage garden and architectural salvage sculpture park, a new building to house, conserve and celebrate the Norton Cabin, and plans to roll out further

programming as our growth and the work on site allows.

We invite each of you to reach out, or better yet, come join us! We are always looking for volunteers and donations to support our efforts. We also welcome all thoughts, whether critical or complimentary. It is the involvement and excitement of our community that will make these visions for The Brown Homestead reality.

Our website is [jbhf.ca](http://jbhf.ca), where you can sign up for our newsletter and blog, or you may wish to email Andrew and Jennifer at [admin@jbhf.ca](mailto:admin@jbhf.ca). Lastly, we can be reached Monday – Friday from 8am – 4pm at our office phone: (905)328-1646. We can't wait to hear from you!



## **FACES AND PHASES OF FACER**

*Facer Street's 2019 Historical Calendar*

A limited first edition 2019 calendar will be available in time for the Facer Street Festival, for a donation of \$12. All proceeds from the calendar go to support the "Beautify the Facer District Project". A must for anyone with Facer roots, an interest in St. Catharines and Niagara history, and who supports the Facer Street Festival! Don't delay, reserve your copy by sending an email to: [director@facerdistrict.com](mailto:director@facerdistrict.com) or to [info@facereuropeanfestival.com](mailto:info@facereuropeanfestival.com), or call Tom at (905) 348-0462.



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## 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.*

Discover a wide variety of activities and exhibits that celebrate local history. Visit a museum or a library. Here are some suggested activities that you can enjoy in St. Catharines and the Niagara area this summer:

**Niagara Historical Society & Museum.** In addition to permanent exhibitions on the history of Niagara-on-the-Lake the museum has “pop-up” exhibits around the community celebrating unique villages: at the Shaw Festival Theatre is a display on Niagara Camp, the WW1 training grounds in NOTL, the Chamber of Commerce has a small display of artefacts from the Old Town, Ravine Winery has a display relating to the history of St. Davids, the Laura Secord Homestead features a display of Queenston history and the Meridian Credit Union display includes the history of Virgil. For more information visit their website:

<http://www.niagarahistorical.museum/exhibitions/index.html>

**Niagara Falls Museums.** There are 4 museums to choose from: Niagara Falls History Museum, Battle Ground Hotel Museum, Willoughby Historical Museum and Lundy’s Land Battlefield. Learn more by visiting the museum theatre and exhibition galleries or the self-guided walking tour. Visit their website to learn more:

<https://niagarafallsmuseums.ca/visit>

**Morningstar Mill.** Morningstar Mill is one of the few mills in Ontario that houses all its original equipment, and operates its millstones using the original water source. The mill provides a rare glimpse back in time to when moving water was still used to mechanically grind grain into flour. <http://morningstarmill.ca/>

**Welland Museum.** A number of exhibits focus on the Niagara area (including the Welland Canal).

<http://www.wellandmuseum.ca/>

**St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre.** From the site of our HSSC monthly meetings, enjoy a grand view of the ships passing through Lock 3 of the Welland Canal. Don’t miss the new exhibit “People and Places” discovering people and places that have disappeared from our City’s landscape and “Doing our Bit: World War One from St. Catharines to the Western Front” commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the first World War, with the wartime experiences of St. Catharines residents at home and at the front.

<https://www.stcatharines.ca/en/St-Catharines-Museum.asp>

**July 27, 2018  
9:00pm – 10:00pm**

**Full Moon Ghost Walk.** The St. Catharines Downtown Association presents the Downtown St. Catharines Full Moon Ghost Walks. Every month from spring through fall, under the glow of the full moon, groups of brave souls listen to spine tingling tales and fascinating local history of Downtown St. Catharines, delivered by intrepid guides. Tickets are \$10 each and must be purchased in advance, either online (see below) or in person at the St. Catharines Downtown Association office, 80 King Street, main floor, St. Catharines, during office hours Monday to Friday. For more information, phone (905) 685-8424, email [scda@mydowntown.ca](mailto:scda@mydowntown.ca), or online: <http://mydowntown.ca/calendar/events/view/full-moon-ghost-walk-july-27>

**August 3-6**

**40<sup>th</sup> Annual Canal Days Marine Heritage Festival, Port Colborne.** Tall Ships gather in Port Colborne each Civic holiday weekend, for a four-day celebration of history and heritage along the canal. Don’t miss the Port Colborne Historical and Marine Museum for the exhibits and Niagara Antique Power Association’s live demonstrations. [http://portcolborne.ca/page/canal\\_days](http://portcolborne.ca/page/canal_days)

**August 6, 2018  
Noon to 9:00pm**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Facer European Festival.** Presented by the Facer District Merchants this Civic Holiday Monday on Facer Street (between Currie Street and Cosby Avenue) from Noon to 9:00 PM, in the historic Facer District of the City of St. Catharines, Ontario. A family friendly event with admission completely free of charge! Food vendors, live polka and multicultural entertainment and a historical walking tour. [www.facereuropeanfestival.com](http://www.facereuropeanfestival.com)

**September 1-3**

**30<sup>th</sup> Annual Marshville Heritage Festival.** Enjoy the old-time family-friendly atmosphere of farm demonstrations, refurbished heritage buildings, tours and live entertainment for all ages. <http://www.marshvilleheritagefestival.ca/>

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## **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FOR SEPTEMBER 2018 through AUGUST 2019**

Your Society membership renews annually in September for the upcoming season. Annual Membership Dues are only \$10.00 for an individual or \$15.00 for a family. The Historical Society puts your membership dollars to work in our monthly lecture series and as 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!**

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

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

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

Your membership information will not be shared with any other group or business. If you wish to receive a membership card, notify John Calvert at: [jcalvert57@hotmail.com](mailto:jcalvert57@hotmail.com). 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: \_\_\_\_\_

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