

The Historical Society of St. Catharines

NEWSLETTER

September 2001

P.O. Box 23104, 124 Welland Ave., St. Catharines, ON, L2R 7P6

Web Site - <http://www.niagara.com/~dmdorey/hssc/hssc.html>

Founded in 1927. Our Mission and Goal is to increase the knowledge and appreciation of the history of St. Catharines and Vicinity. Our Society is affiliated with the Ontario Historical Society.

Society Meetings and Program

Unless otherwise noted - the Society will meet on the 4th Thursday of the month - in the Burgoyne Room of the **St. Catharines Museum** - located at the Welland Canals Centre (at Lock 3), #1932 Welland Canals Parkway (formerly Government Road), St. Catharines, Ontario.
(Program is subject to change) (Refreshments are usually served after the program)

Our Fall Program

Thursday, September 27 - Speakers: Professors Robert Taylor and Roberta Styran -- Co-authors of a brand new book on the Welland Canals will present a lecture titled "Voices from the Ditch: People and Personalities on the Welland Canals". Their book is being published by The Champlain Society and printed by the University of Toronto Press.
The program begins at 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 25 - Speaker: Dr. John Jackson - author of several books and noted researcher of Niagara, will speak about "Landscape Differences as the Niagara River is Crossed - a Historical Geographical Appreciation". The program will be a unique opportunity to hear about John's insights and observations on the influence of the Niagara River on the Country and development of the both sides. John is intending to publish a new book utilizing this research.
The program begins at 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, November 22 - 3rd Annual Members' SHOW and TELL

Our Show and Tell nights have proved very popular and we hope that you will come and bring an item to share with us. This will be our last meeting before Christmas and we invite you to join in a little longer social following the program, which begins at 7:30 p.m.

Monday, January 21, 2002 - Special 75th Anniversary Dinner - -

featuring Past President **Norm Macdonald**, our celebrated architectural historian, as our keynote speaker. This event will be held at the Holiday Inn on Lake Street. Further Details will be published in the December Newsletter. But Make sure you mark your calendar and make plans to attend this very special occasion.... It won't happen again!

Thursday, January 24 – No meeting will be held in lieu of the Anniversary Dinner.

The Historical Society of St. Catharines - Board of Directors

President - John Burtniak – e-mail jburtnia@spartan.ac.BrockU.ca
Past President - Joyce DeForest – tel. 905-685-4728
Vice President - Bill Stevens – e-mail bibmstev@computan.on.ca - tel. 905-934-8966
Secretary–Brenda Zadoroznij – e-mail bzadoroz@becon.org tel. 905-935-3025
Treasurer - Del Hildebrand – e-mail dhildebr@Becon.org tel. 905-935-3025
Director-Membership - Barbara Zason - tel. 685-7401
Director - Paul Hutchinson – e-mail slabtown@niagara.com tel. 905-227-2699
Director - Dee Dickman - e-mail ddickman@spartan.ac.brocku.ca tel. 905-682-3094
Director - Steve Mouck e-mail mouck@vaxxine.com tel. 905-646-8916
Director - Joe Muskat - tel. 905-687-3359
Director - Dennis Gannon – e-mail dgannon@becon.org

2001 Secondary School History Award Recipients

Members of the Society handed out a \$50.00 award to a student of each public and separate secondary school in the City of St. Catharines that offers an OAC history course. The award is presented to the best student in an OAC history course for the 2000/01 school year as determined by the principal in conjunction with the history department of each school. We congratulate the following recipients and wish them well in their studies:

West Park - Sarah Vaughn - presented by Bill Stevens
Lakeport – Michael Sawyer - presented by Joe Muscat
Laura Secord – Mark Firman - presented by Brenda Zadoroznij
Saint Francis Xavier – Holly McPhee – presented by Joyce DeForest
Holy Cross – Mathew Vince - presented by John Bacher
St. Catharines Collegiate – Candice Kerling - presented by Joyce DeForest
Governor Simcoe - Melissa Dingwall - presented by John Burtniak
Dennis Morris – Jennifer Paul - presented by John Burtniak
Sir Winston Churchill - will be presented in October

Welcome to Our Newest Members

We welcome new members: Patricia Waters, Denis Cahill, Katie & Emma Dirks, Nancy Leger, Anne Marie Majtenyi and Mary Sullivan. Membership stands at 139.

Correction to June 2001 Newsletter

Please make a correction to the article on W. H. Merritt (page 10) in the fifth paragraph which reads "....,conceived the first suspension bridge to span the Niagara River (1849), and...." The date of the suspension bridge should be (1848). I thank Lou Cahill for pointing out this correction.

Newsletter Notes

The Historical Society of St. Catharines Newsletter is published up to 4 times per year by the Society. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform the membership of issues pertaining to the Society and historical items of interests. Comments and queries should be directed to the Society postal address. Opinions and comments expressed in the newsletter are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Society.

Subscription is by paid membership only. This issue was produced by Bill Stevens.

The Society gratefully acknowledges the support of the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Culture & Recreation.

Next Issue December 2001

In Memoriam – Alan HOLDEN

We are saddened to announce the passing of long time member and past president Alan HOLDEN.

Alan Thomas Holden passed away on the 23rd of May, 2001 in his 81st year. Internment took place in Victoria Lawn Cemetery.

Al (on the left of Joyce) is pictured here at the April Society meeting with past president Joyce Deforest and friend Alex Ormston



The Society extends our sympathy to his family who remain and mourn his passing. Alan was Society President in the years 1981-1982 and 1989-1990.

Report on the May 24th Society Program

At the May 24th meeting, Paul Hutchinson presented a fascinating slide show of scenes of Merritton and explained the history of each picture. The large attendance of 67 included several first time attendees from the Merritton area. Paul preceded his pictures with a detailed explanation of the naming of Merritton and some history related to the naming of various areas, which are now part of the Merritton area of St. Catharines.

Congratulations to John Burtniak

At the May Annual Seminar of the Ontario Genealogical Society, John was presented with a Past President's Award. John (OGS#70810) was President of OGS from 1981-1983, having served on the Executive for four years prior to that time, and as Councillor for six years before that. Members of the Society would also like to extend to John our best wishes on his retirement from Brock University on October 1st. John has been at Brock since 1965 and retires from the position of Head, Special Collections and University Archives.

Memberships received now will be for the 2002 Calendar Year

Yearly Membership Dues: Individual - \$10.00 - - Family - \$15.00

Please make your cheque payable to: The Historical Society of St. Catharines

Please Remit to: The Historical Society of St. Catharines

P. O. Box 23104, 124 Welland Avenue

St. Catharines, Ontario, L2R 7P6

Lest We Forget!

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Remembrance Day! What can we give
To those who for us gave their all?
Who now among the poppies lie,
With skies above them for a pall.

What can we do? This one small thing
Will into world wide movement grow
If we can with our neighbour live
In peace. Then wars we'll never know.

What can we give, Oh, you who lie
So peaceful now in fields of flowers
Who fought that we might live in peace,
That health and safety might be ours.

by Elsie M. Stevens
08 June 1912 - 07 Aug. 1987

Live Younger Longer at Brock University

Continuing Education, Fall 2001 Course Listing
Register by : Phone 905-688-5550, Ext. 3444
Fax 905-688-2110

The Metamorphosis of Port Dalhousie: From Caterpillar to Butterfly?

From a farm drainage creek to a transportation corridor to a recreation facility, the outlet of the 12 Mile Creek into Lake Ontario has been a microcosm of the evolution of the Complex relationship between people and geography over 200 years. This six-hour course will provide an overview of economic and social forces that transformed prime agricultural lands into a principal cog in the Welland Canals System and, thence, into a tourism destination. The first session will focus on maps, plans, reports and photographs which illustrate the development of the Old Port Dalhousie Area, while the second session will consist of a guided walking tour of the harbour and heritage district, and visit inside the lighthouse. *Suggested reading for this course is "Footsteps in Time", by Frank Caplin. For further information, please call 905-688-5550, ext. 3444.

Patrick Little received his Honours BA from the University of Toronto, majoring in Canadian History. To this, he adds his experience and perspective as a lawyer, businessman and property owner who has been closely connected with the re- development of Old Port Dalhousie since 1976.

4:00-7:00pm - 2 Tuesdays - October 2, 9 - Fee: \$59

St. Catharines

St. Catharines famed for mineral waters
And for the beauty of her daughters,
For some do worship at the shrines
Of the fair St. Catharines.

Among its many great rewards
It gives you dry docks and ship yards,
To drive your mills great water power
It doth give you as a dower.

St. Catharines your greatness you inherit
From the genius of a Merritt,
You still would be a village dreary
But for this canal from lake Erie.

Since we above lines did compose,
Through new canal vast stream it flows,
The lock gates at the hill at Thorold
Can not be equalled in the world.

For on its bosom there doth float
Full many a ship and steamboat,
Brings world's commerce to your doors
And many gifts on you it pours.

by James McIntyre
(1827-1906)
published 1889

25th Annual Oille Fountain Geranium Planting

Saturday, June 2 was a beautiful sunny day for our planting ceremony. A large number of Oille/Oill family and Society members were joined by Mayor Tim Rigby and Councilor Dawn Dodge for the 11 a.m. planting at the corner of King and James Streets, downtown. After the ceremony we all gathered across the street for a reception at the Honest Lawyer. Coffee and a special anniversary cake provided by Doris Pettifer were enjoyed.

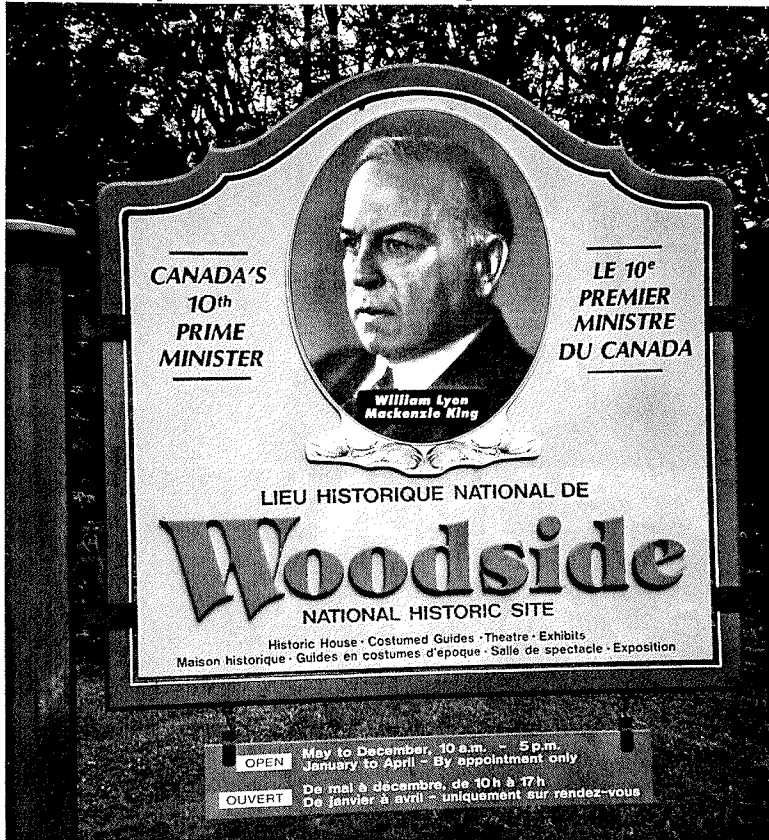


These pictures show
The family members /
Society members / and
Cutting of the
Anniversary cake.



Our 6th Annual Heritage Bus Tour (Saturday, June 16)

The modern Farr highway coach left Downtown at 8:30 a.m. and by 10:30 a.m. we were at Woodside Manor, the home of Canada's 10th Prime Minister. Then it was on to Joseph Schneider Haus, followed by lunch at the Kitchener Market. Our afternoon was spent at Doon Heritage Crossroads prior to our return at 5:30 p.m. The following are pictures and clippings of our tour.



The house after restoration

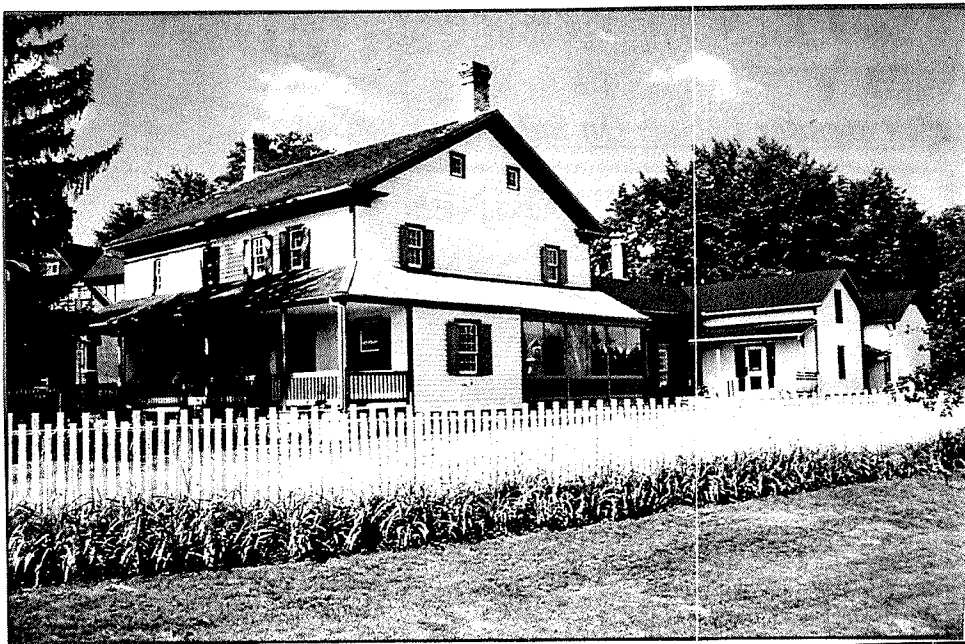
The boyhood home of William Lyon Mackenzie King, Canada's 10th prime minister.



Highlights

- House restored to its 1890s appearance
- Costumed interpreters, school programmes, and special events
- Exhibits and audio-visual presentations
- 4.65 hectares of gardens, lawn and woodland for picnicking and strolling

Woodside National Historic Site
528 Wellington St. N.
Kitchener, Ontario N2H 5L5
Phone / TTY : (519) 571-5684
FAX : (519) 571-5686
E-mail : ont_woodside@pch.gc.ca
Internet : ParksCanada.pch.gc.ca
/parks/Ontario/Woodside



Joseph Schneider, his wife Barbara and their four children arrived in what is now Waterloo Region in 1807. They were among a small group of rugged pioneers who trekked to the new frontier from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania in search of arable farmland. They found what they sought but they also found an intimidating landscape of uncleared bush, swampland and sandhills.

Bolstered by their Mennonite religion and assisted by their closely-knit brotherhood, these hardy settlers adapted quickly to their new life. By 1816 Joseph Schneider had erected a sawmill and substantial Georgian-style wood-frame home for his family. He had cleared a road, Schneider's Road, that linked his farm to the Great Road through the German Company Tract and had completed his family with three more children. One of these, a twin, Joseph Eby Schneider, eventually took over the operation of the farm and mill and by the mid 1850's had a thriving enterprise and growing family. It is the life of this second Schneider family that plays itself out in the restored historic house today.

Much has changed since the 1850's. Schneider's original 448 acre farm has shrunk to less than an acre, Victoria Park occupies the land where the sawmill once stood and Schneider's Road is now Queen Street. Even the town of Berlin has been renamed Kitchener. But the house that Joseph built still stands beside the creek (now underground) and the farm kitchen still hums with activity throughout the changing seasons.



Joseph Schneider Haus

MUSEUM & GALLERY

466 Queen Street South,
Kitchener, N2G 1W7
Phone: (519) 742-7752
Fax: (519) 742-0089
www.region.waterloo.on.ca/jsh

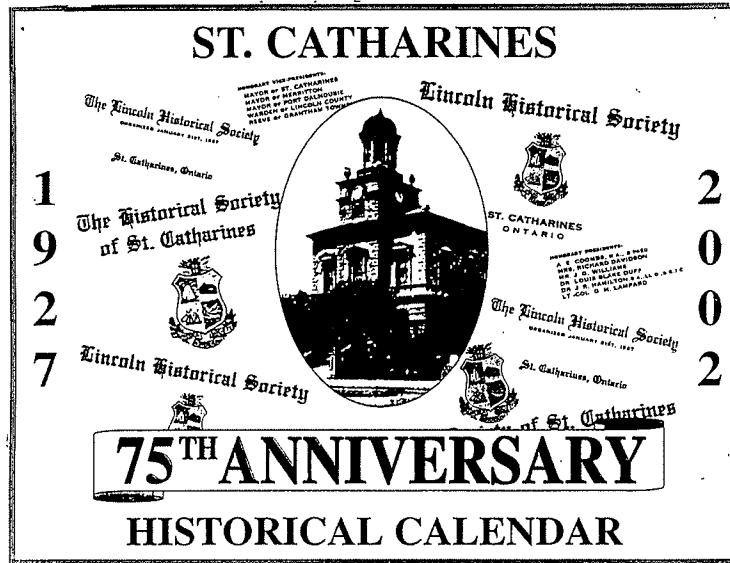
THE FOUR SQUARE GARDEN



The 2002 Calendar Is Now On Sale!

The 2002 issue of the Historical Calendar is our 75th Anniversary Edition and is now available.

The Board thanks all who had expressed an interest in buying one and we hope you will continue to support this project. Price is \$8.00 and, if purchased through the mail \$10.00 to include envelope and postage.



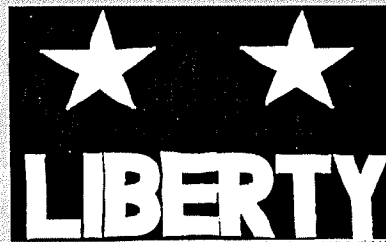
NIAGARA INVADED!

REBELLION!

The state of Canada — disaffection — American/Canadian occupation of Navy Island 1837 — cutting out the *Caroline* — destruction at the Falls — the American/Canadian invasion of June 1838 — “The Battle of the Short Hills” — State trials at Niagara — execution — a wife and a daughter tweak the nose of the Lieutenant-Governor — transportation to “the convict’s hell” — prison hulks and Bay ships — suffering — Van Diemen’s Land — Masonic brethren intervene — Responsible Government — The State of Canada. ISBN 0-9698994-4-0

COMING SOON

NIAGARA REBELS



The Niagara Frontier in the Upper Canadian Rebellion, 1837-1838

Colin K. Duquemin

COLIN K. DUQUEMIN,
56 Highland Avenue, St Catharines, Ontario, L2R 4J1
Tel: 905-685-8887

At The St. Catharines Museum

Exhibit continues to October 8 –“ROWING: The Tradition Continues” – an exhibition of St. Catharines rowing tradition and our world class status in the rowing community. Also on exhibit is the Vintage Niagara display, which tells the story of the Grape and Wine industry. From October 13 to January 20 – “My Name Is Nanuq – The Diary of a Polar Bear” – by reading the touching diary of Nanuq, visitors will follow a fascinating year in the life of a mother polar bear and her two cubs. Mounted specimens of a mother bear and her two cubs, hands-on artifacts of polar bear fur, teeth, claws and a skull accompany the exhibit. A maze and video will help visitors familiarize themselves with these majestic animals. The Museum also has a Gift Shop “Merritt’s Mercantile” which now carries a line of food products made from local tender fruit.

Saturday, Sept. 15 – 24th Annual Niagara Peninsula History Conference

held at Brock University. This year’s theme: “A Glance Back At Niagara’s History”. Society members John Burtiak, John N. Jackson, Wesley B. Turner, Sheila M. Wilson and Alun Hughes are among the 7 speakers presenting papers. A bus tour takes place Sept. 16.

Saturday, November 10 – Wes Turner to Speak

The Colonel John Butler (Niagara) Branch of The United Empire Loyalists’ Association of Canada will meet at 11:45 a.m. for Lunch at Betty’s Restaurant, Chippawa. Guest Speaker: Wes Turner - “Keeping the American’s Out: Niagara’s Forts.

Heritage Niagara Radio Show

On CFBU - FM 103.7 - Brock U. Radio each Sunday between 7:30 p.m. and 9 p.m. Host Tony Whelan presents coming events, news and guests from the local heritage community.

The Niagara Mailing List

An Internet site devoted to genealogy and history in Niagara. You can post short messages, place or answer a query or read about some current news. To subscribe, simply e-mail the list at <NIAGARA-ONT-L-request@rootsweb.com> and in the body of your message, simply write "subscribe". You will then be notified of your membership

Port Weller Public School Reunion

The 50th Anniversary Celebration will be held on October 19, 2002 – which gives the Committee lots of time to seek out former students, teachers, staff and memorabilia. If you know of anyone who had a connection to Port Weller Public School or has anything that can be displayed, pass the word and/or call Principal Jacob Warkentin at the school at 934-3322.

Congratulations to Lacrosse Hall of Fame Inductees

St. Catharines' resident Jim McMahon has been named to the Players Division of the Canadian Lacrosse Hall of Fame. Jimmy (Peewee) Bradshaw, a former St. Catharines resident was also named to the Players Division and the late Frank (Geezil) Madsen of St. Catharines was named to the Veteran Players Division.

Kudos to the Lighthouse Restoration Group

The Port Dalhousie Inner Range Lighthouse has been painted and finished. It looks great! The Official Opening and Rededication will be held on Saturday, October 6, 2001.

Photos from the Merritt Birthday Celebration held on July 7st

The Society recognizes and celebrates William Hamilton Merritt's birthday (which is actually July 3rd) of by laying a wreath at the Merritt Statue. President John Burtiak conducted the program.



John Burtiak Conducts Our July 7st Walking Tour Of Yates Street

A Few
Words
From
John
Before
We
Start

