

The Historical Society of St. Catharines NEWSLETTER

September 2003

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

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

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

Society Meetings and Program

Regular meetings, unless otherwise noted, are held on the 4th Thursday of each month between September and May in the Burgoyne Room of the St. Catharines Museum.

The museum is located at the Welland Canals Centre (at Lock 3),
1932 Welland Canals Parkway (formerly Government Road), St. Catharines, Ontario.
(Programs are subject to change) (Refreshments are usually served after the program)

Fall 2003

Thursday, September 25 - 7:30 p.m. – Society member Alex Ormston - The History of the Niagara District Bank: St. Catharines' own chartered bank!

Saturday and Sunday, October 18 and 19 - Doors Open Niagara.

Thursday, October 23 - 7:30 p.m. – Guest Speaker - Paul Lewis - History of Ridley College.

Tuesday, November 11 - Remembrance Day - the Society will participate in the laying of a wreath at the St. Catharines Cenotaph.

Thursday, November 27 - 7:30 p.m. - 5th Annual Member's Show and Tell and Christmas Social – please share with us (in 3 minutes) that wonderful heirloom, picture or historic item you have. This will be our last meeting before Christmas and we invite you to join in a little longer social following the program. P.S. feel free to bring along a favourite goodie to share!

Membership Renewal Time!

Winter 2004

Thursday, January 22 - 7:30 p.m. – Society member Alun Hughes - Daniel Hazen, Surveyor of Grantham Township.

Thursday, February 26 - 7:30 p.m. – Guest Speakers Corlene Taylor and Brenda Young - "Supporters of the Church at St Catharines": the earliest known document to say "St. Catharines."

Thursday, March 25 - 7:30 p.m. – Guest Speaker - Joseph O'Brien – The History of the 'Western Hill' area of St. Catharines.

Spring 2004

Thursday, April 22 - 7:30 p.m. - Annual Meeting and Election of Board of Directors and Speaker.

Thursday, May 27 – 7:30 p.m. – Regular Meeting and Guest Speaker.

At a Meeting of the Magistrates of the Niagara District, held at Mr. James Henry's House in Clinton, on the 5th day of September, 1814, in consequence of an Order from his Honor *Gordon Drummond*, President, administering the Government of the Province of *Upper Canada*, and Lieut. General Commanding his Majesty's Forces therein, to Regulate the Prices to be paid by the Commissariat for Supplies required for the use of the Troops, the following Prices were agreed upon as fair and equitable:—

FINE Flour per Barrel of 196 lbs. nett, delivered at Burlington, Fort George, &c.	14	Dollars.
Beef per 100 lbs. delivered at do. do. do.	10	
Pork per Barrel of 200 lbs. nett, packed and cured in the usual manner, Government finding half a Bushel of Salt for each Barrel delivered at Burlington, Fort George, &c.	30	Ditto
Hay taken away at the expence of Government, per Ton	15	Ditto
Oats delivered at Burlington, Fort George, &c. per Bushel,	1	Ditto
Rye Flour per Barrel, one Dollar less than Wheaten,		
Rye per Bushel delivered,	2	Ditto
Pease per ditto ditto	2	Ditto
Buck Wheat per Bushel delivered	1	Ditto
Indian Corn, per ditto. & ditto	1 hf.	Ditto
Potatoes per Bushel taken from the Farmers Houses,	1	Ditto

Signed

ROBERT KERR,
THOMAS DICKSON,
SAMUEL HATT,
RICHARD BEASLEY,
ABRAM NELLIS,
ROBERT NELLIS,

AMOS CHAPMAN,
THOMAS BUIER,
RICHARD HATT,
GEORGE ADAMS,
JAMES CROOKS.

As an inducement to the Farmers to volunteer further Supplies of Wheat and Flour to Government, the same Prices will be given for these articles during the whole of this month of September that have hitherto been given, say two and a half Dollars per Bushel for Wheat, and fourteen Dollars per Barrel for Flour delivered at the Mills—and for Cattle taken from the Farmers Houses by the Contractors, nine Dollars per hundred lbs. of Beef.

PETER TURQUAND,
Deputy Commissary General.

Society Makes Major Donation to St. Catharines Public Library

We are pleased to announce that the Society has purchased microfilm of the St. Catharines, Grantham Township, Merriton and Port Dalhousie **Municipal Council Minutes** and donated them to the St. Catharines Public Library. The microfilms will be available to the public in the Special Collections Department of the library. The following information pertains to this collection:

St. Catharines Minutes: microfilm reels BEK 331 to 335 for the years 1845-1899.

Grantham Twp. Minutes: microfilm reels BEK 329 and 330 for the years 1850-1900.

Merriton Minutes: microfilm reels BEK 317 and 318 for the years 1874-1899.

Port Dalhousie Minutes: microfilm reels BEK 308 and 309 for the years 1863-1884.

The original records are held at the Ontario Archives in Toronto and were filmed by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS).

The Society has also purchased and donated the remaining seven microfilm reels, C-4543 to C-4549, of the **Upper Canada Sundries** (Record Group 5 A1) for the years January 1813 to June 1817. This will fill in a gap and complete the collection of this series of microfilms held in Special Collections of the Central Library. An example of the items to be found in the Upper Canada Sundries is shown on page 2 (found on reel #C-4544).

In addition, the Society has donated sufficient monies to have three old and worn St. Catharines **City Directories** reproduced, in order to preserve the originals and continue to make the information available.

The addition to and preservation of these materials in the Public Library's Special Collections was made possible through donations made to The Historical Society of St. Catharines over the past several years which have accumulated to \$1000.00 and are now being used to acquire and preserve materials that will be of great benefit to local researchers. The Society has requested the Library to place suitable donor recognition plates on the microfilm in memory of Al Holden and Samuel Heaman.

Board of Directors of The Historical Society of St. Catharines

Elected April 24, 2003 for Two Year Term

Past President - John Burtiak - tel. 905-227-5120

President - Bill Stevens - e-mail bibmstev@computan.on.ca - tel. 905-934-8966

Vice President (interim) - Joyce DeForest - e-mail vdefores@mergetel.com - tel. 905-685-4728

Secretary - Brenda Zadoroznij - e-mail bzadoroz@Becon.org - tel. 905-935-3025

Treasurer - Del Hildebrand - e-mail dhildebr@Becon.org - tel. 905-935-3025

Elected April 24, 2003 for One Year Term

Director - Dee Dickman - e-mail ddickman@spartan.ac.brocku.ca - tel. 905-682-3094

Director- Membership - Bill Harder - e-mail whharder@warplink.com - tel. 905-684-2528

Director - Paul Hutchinson - e-mail slabtown@niagara.com - tel. 905-227-2699

Director - Maurice Gomme - e-mail magomme@Becon.org - tel. 905-682-2329

Director - Joe Muskat - tel. 905-687-3359

Director - Dennis Gannon - e-mail gannon.dennis@dol.gov

Newsletter Notes

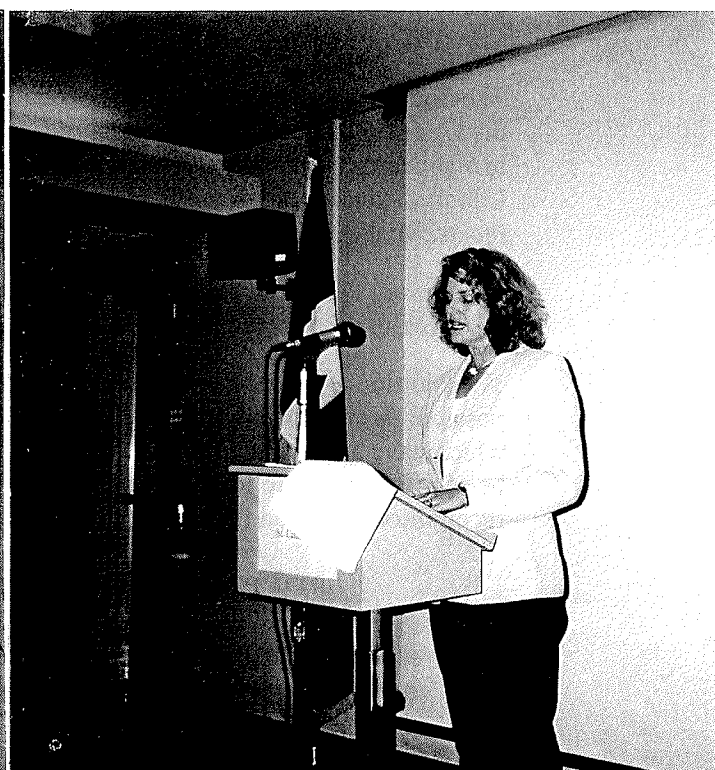
The Historical Society of St. Catharines Newsletter is published up to 4 times per year by the Society. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform the membership of issues pertaining to the Society and items of historical interest. Comments and queries should be directed to the Society postal address.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

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

Next Issue December 2003

“Bound For The Promised Land: Harriet Tubman’s Struggle For Freedom”

On Thursday, May 22 a capacity crowd of 112 people came to hear Kate Larson speak about her research on Harriet Tubman, and they were not disappointed. The University of New Hampshire recently granted Kate her doctorate after defending her dissertation on the life and achievements of Harriet Tubman. Kate came all the way from New Hampshire for this special presentation. Her research will culminate in the publishing of a book this December by Ballantine Books. The book will be titled *Bound For The Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, Portrait Of An American Heroine*. ISBN: 0345456270 - hardcover



Welcome to Our Newest Members

Henry Radecki, Donald Baker, Sheila Jones, Margaret Springer, Brian and Lorraine Leydon, Ivy Stevens, Moira Hayes

Membership is for the Calendar Year. Dues are Individual - \$10.00 and Family - \$15.00. Cheques should be made payable to: The Historical Society of St. Catharines and mailed to the Society address. Please encourage your friends and acquaintances to join!

“Taking the Waters: a History of the Spas of St. Catharines”

Members may purchase a copy from the Society for \$10.00 plus \$2.00 postage and handling.

September is Grape and Wine Festival Month

.... so, when I found the following excerpt on the *Early Canadiana Online* web site <http://www.canadiana.org> I thought it might be of interest. The site contains digitized books and they are fully searchable. I entered the search words ‘Port Dalhousie’ and the book titled “*The Canadian Settler’s Guide*” (by Catherine Parr Traill, 1802-1899. 241 pages. London: E. Stanford, 1860) came up showing an entry on page 212. It reads as follows: “Mr. Reid, of Port Dalhousie, showed some results of experiments he has been making in improving the vine, and introducing new varieties suitable for Canada. By raising plants from the seed, instead of from shoots, he has obtained a number of new open-air varieties. Specimens of the fruit of these, very large, were exhibited. Mr. Reid also had on exhibition two bottles of wine, made from grapes of a native stock, brought into the garden out of the woods.”

Library to Hold Workshop on Discovering Your Roots

Staff will conduct guided tours of the Special Collections Department of the Centennial Library to provide you with a basic overview of the many genealogical resources available. You can register for one of two sessions by calling 905-688-6103, ext. 220. The first session will be offered on Thursday, September 25 from 7:00-8:30 p.m. and the second on Thursday, October 30 between 2:00-3:30 p.m. The sessions are free and limited to 10 people per session.

Thorold and Beaverdams Historical Society

Presents the following program:

September 29 - Doug Todd, "Digging into Niagara's Aboriginal Past - Thorold's Huson Site Uncovered"

October 27: Roberta Styran, "Fender-benders to Floods and Fatalities on the Welland Canals"

November 24: Annual Show and Tell, followed by Christmas Social

Meetings take place on Monday nights in Chestnut Hall alongside Thorold Library on Ormond Street, and commence at 7:30 p.m. Admission is free and a warm welcome is extended to all. Phone 905-227-1632 or 905-227-0206 for further details.

Brock University Course – Research the History of Your House

Melanie Battell will conduct a five-part session starting Tuesday, September 30 from 7-9pm and continuing for 3 more Tuesdays and conclude with a field trip Saturday, October 25 from 8am-12:00pm. Cost \$149/\$139(senior). For more details and registration information tel. 905-688-5550, ext.4775; e-mail conted@brocku.ca or visit the web site at <http://www.brocku.ca/conted> Other courses offered include: Keep Your Own History: Go Journaling; Travelling Niagara’s Underground Railroad: Niagara Falls and Fort Erie.

St. Catharines Museum

Open Monday to Friday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The Museum Library/Archives is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m.

The Museum Gift Shop, “Merritt’s Mercantile,” carries many items and books of historical interest.

For additional information on upcoming events visit the Museum web site www.stcatharineslock3museum.ca.

To contact the Museum by post: St. Catharines Museum, P.O. Box 3012, St. Catharines, ON L2S 3R6;

by telephone: 905 984-8880, ext. 231; by Fax: 905 984-6910; by e-mail: stcmchin@niagara.com

The Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame and Museum is located inside of the St. Catharines Museum.



27th Annual Oille Fountain Geranium Planting

Saturday, May 31st was a beautiful rainy day downtown, when several members of the Oille family joined with Society members and Mayor Timothy Rigby to place the customary geranium in the urn on top of the fountain.



The fountain is 125 years old this year and it was most appropriate for the Citizen's Mayor to do the honours of planting the geranium. Mayor Rigby placed the geranium into the urn liner, and ascended the ladder to place the geranium at the top of the fountain.

Shown in the accompanying photo are several members of the Oille family who joined Mayor Rigby for a photo. On his left in the picture, was 17-year-old Lauren Lockey from Montreal, who is the granddaughter of Linda Lockey (to Lauren's left) and great-granddaughter of Doris Pettifer (on the right of Mayor Rigby).

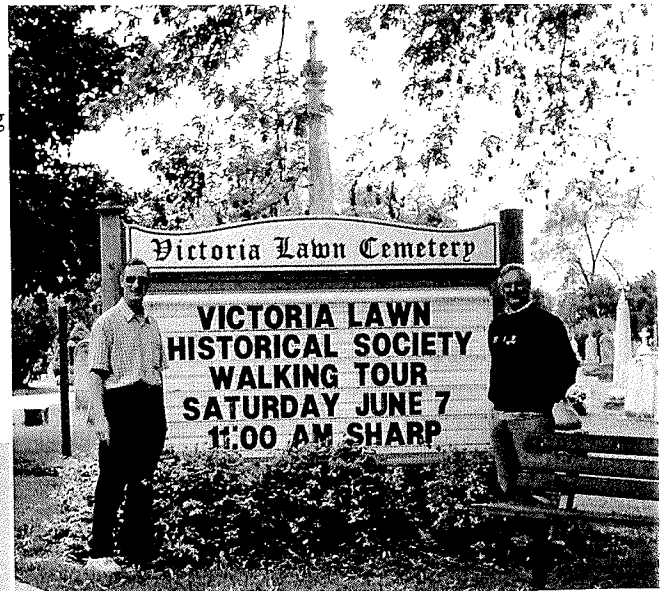


Following the planting, almost everyone headed over to Memorial Park (St. Paul St. at Yates St.) and joined with The Colonel John Butler (Niagara) Branch of The United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada for the Flag Pole Dedication Ceremony.

(photos by Joyce and Maurice)

Victoria Lawn Cemetery Tour

On Saturday, June 7th, Society president Bill Stevens led a group of 41 people on a 90 minute long walking tour themed "Canals and Ships". The tour featured 35 stops and a self-guided tour booklet was available to provide extra information. The booklet has been made available in the cemetery office if you wish to purchase a copy and undertake a self-guided tour. We thank Peter Coholon, superintendent of Victoria Lawn Cemetery for his assistance and also for his participation in telling us about the cemetery's rich history.



Merritt Day Celebration

On Saturday, July 5, Society past-president John Burtiak recalled the creation, site selection and dedication of the Merritt monument and why William H. Merritt deserved this recognition. Wreaths were then placed in his honour by: Bill Stevens, president of The Historical Society of St. Catharines, Bill Strachan for the St. Catharines Historical Museum Board and by Dee Dickman for the Canadian Canals Society.

Walking Tour of Downtown

Twenty-three of the twenty-seven citizens to attend the Merritt ceremony then set off on a hot, but leisurely walking tour of both Queen and James streets between St. Paul and King streets.

We thank John Burtiak for this very interesting tour.



Annual Historical Society Bus Tour Saturday, June 14

The bus departed at 8:00 a.m. sharp on a beautiful day. From the Q.E.W. we drove along Old Highway 2 through Burlington and Oakville. The views from the bus were wonderful and John Burtiniak provided some interesting commentary.

After a coffee break, we arrived at the Oakville Museum. The Erchless Estate is a four-acre estate home and gardens on the shore of Lake Ontario. Oakville's founding family, the Chisholms, built the home. The museum also contained the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame and Museum. After lunch at Oakville Place, we headed for Brampton. The downtown was the scene of Brampton's sesqui-centennial events and many of us went over and looked at the displays, including antique fire trucks and a replica of the Red Barons bi-plane, complete with bullet holes. The Peel Regional Heritage Complex is located in the former Peel County Jail. The museum had a special Avro Arrow exhibit. The complex also houses the art gallery and archives. Some of us took time to do a bit of genealogical research.

We thank our Farr bus driver Sam, for getting us back to St. Catharines safely at 5:00 p.m. and John Burtiniak for arranging yet another fabulous tour!



Bits and Pieces of Historical Interest!

***John Burtniak Donates Art to Niagara Falls Art Gallery** - John has been actively involved in the Niagara Falls Art Gallery for many years and has now left his mark on this gallery with this absolutely wonderful donation of over 300 pieces of art relating to Niagara Falls.

***Congratulations to Tony Whelan** - Tony received an Ontario Heritage Award for his many years as radio show host and producer of the Heritage Niagara radio show on Brock Radio CFBU 103.7 FM. For many years, Tony organized the Heritage Day at the Fonthill Library, among many other activities.

***Congratulations to Ken Croft** - life long St. Catharines resident, who will be inducted into the Canadian Lacrosse Hall of Fame in New Westminster, B.C. on Saturday, November 8.

***Congratulations to Robert Malcolmson** - local author, on the publication of his latest book *A Very Brilliant Affair: The Battle of Queenston Heights, 1812*. The book is available at several local stores.

***Victoria Lawn Cemetery** has a web site at victorialawn@city.stcatharines.on.ca where you can now access information and send e-mails to staff members.

***Ontario Historical Society** - web site - www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca

***World Canals Conference** - "Channels For Prosperity" will be held June 2-4, 2004 at Brock University. More information can be obtained by e-mail: tourism@city.stcatharines.on.ca and information about the host organization, the Canadian Canal Society from their web site <http://people.becon.org/~ccs/>.

***Friends of the Loyalist Collection at Brock University** - was founded in 2001 as a non-profit charitable organization with the purpose to establish and maintain a collection of source material, mainly on microfilm, dealing with the United Empire Loyalists, with a view to facilitate and encourage academic research and study. The collection will be housed in the James A. Gibson Library. Donations can be sent to Beverly Craig UE, 2540 Centre St., RR#1, Ridgeville, ON L0S 1M0. Make cheques payable to Friends of the Loyalist Collection at Brock University.

***The Colonel John Butler (Niagara) Branch of The United Empire Loyalist' Association of Canada** - will meet October 4th at Betty's Restaurant in Chippawa for lunch at 11:45 a.m. and then John and Kay Chesser will present a lecture titled "In Consequence of Loyalty."

***Children's Discovery Centre** - web site discoverycentre@becon.org.

***The Friends of the Carousel** - web site www.friendsofthecarousel.org.

***Merritton Matters** - web site for the Merritton Community Group - www.merrittonmatters.ca.

***Short Hills Provincial Park** - a new history of this magnificent park, has been published by The Friends of Short Hills Park. Written by Andrea Klose, the history includes chapters on early settlement, commerce, conflict, religion, transportation and utilities, historical features, the boy scout camp, park formation and future recommendations. Copies can be obtained by contacting David Hunt, Director, Friends of Short Hills Park at 905-892-4773 or by e-mail jordave@mergetel.com. Cost (at time of newsletter preparation) is \$10.00 plus postage charges.

***Mayholme Designation** - through the passing, on June 9, 2003, of By-Law 2003-160, the City of St. Catharines designated the property at 525 Ontario Street under the Ontario Heritage Act. "Mayholme" was built in 1857-58 by George May, son of United Empire Loyalist and Butler's Ranger William May.

***The Last Word** Over the past few months, several items have appeared in our local newspaper, *The Standard*, that has given me cause to rejoice! Some of these items were the restoration of the old ruins on Glendale Avenue into the popular "Keg" restaurant; the designation of Mayholme and the creation within it of a research center; the recent and shall I say wonderful, restoration of the old court house; the preservation of the bandshell in Montebello Park, which itself has been maintained in such a beautiful fashion by City staff and the on-going carousel restoration. To all those who see the real value in preserving our built heritage, I applaud you. The Heritage Committee of St. Catharines is also to be congratulated. Let us hope that these examples will encourage others to continue this trend. Ed.

Lest We Forget The Story of Richard Braithwaite Spaven

The fourth name down on the right side of the Merritton Cenotaph reads "Richard Spavin"(sic). Who was Richard Spaven? In March of 2001 I received an e-mail from Mrs. Kate Stirk <kate-stirk@barclays.net>, who lives at 28, Dringthorpe Road, Dringhouses, York, North Yorkshire, England, YO24 1LG and after a few exchanges of e-mails Kate sent me a parcel containing discs with about 60 photographs. One of those photos was of Richard Spaven, her husband's great uncle. Richard had taken many photos as a young man living in Merritton and sent them home to show his family where he lived and what he did for a living here. Richard was born in Thornton le Clay, a small village 5 miles east of York, North Yorkshire, England. His parents were Richard and Margaret (Braithwaite) Spaven, and they had 8 children. The family business appears to have been building, carpentry and bricklaying. There are other Spavens in the village also in this line of business, possibly uncles and cousins. His father and grandfather were builders and joiners and Richard became a bricklayer. Richard and his brother Robert both came to Merritton. While it is uncertain when Richard came here, Robert arrived sometime prior to October 1912. Robert lived here several years before going to Australia. Richard was here only for a short time before he enlisted on February 7, 1916 at age 24 and 7 months in the Canadian Field Artillery. He states that he was in the Territorial Army for 3 years (in Yorkshire). His records show him as 5 feet 8 inches tall, fair complexion, brown eyes and light brown hair. He trained at Camp Petawawa, was sent overseas and arrived in England on August 22, 1916 on board the *S.S. Cameronia*. One month later he caught diptheria and spent 77 days in isolation in the hospital in Aldershot. While on leave he returned home to see his parents (picture below with his mother) and then, not long after, he was sent into battle, only to die on the battlefield on November 4, 1917 (possibly Vimy Ridge or Passchendaele in Belgium). The following is inscribed on his parent's monument in the churchyard at Sand Hutton, a village on the outskirts of York: "Richard Spaven, Gnr C.F.A., son of the above Killed in Action in the Great War. Nov 4th 1917 and buried in Brandhoek No.3 Military Cemetery, Belgium, Age 25". He is also named on the war memorial of this village. (Brandhoek is near Ieper (Ypres) and a picture of his monument there is shown below). A short occasional article headed "Additional Casualties Among Local Soldiers" appeared in the *The St. Catharines Standard*, November 21, 1917, p. 1 reads as follows: "GUNNER RICHARD SPAVEN – The official casualty list contains the name of Gunner R. Spaven of this city, as having been killed in action. No official word has been received by local friends. Before enlisting he was employed at the Independent Rubber Works. His parents reside at Tulford, Kent (*this is incorrect location*), England. He enlisted with the 49th Battery and was a bricklayer by trade."

