

Gerry Boyce Continues to Publish!

Although author and historian Gerry Boyce died last October, his latest book has just been “published.” However, it is not available in a traditional printed version. With new technologies and people's changes in tastes and reading interests, it was decided to publish *Historic Hastings, Volume Two* as an on-line resource.

This book is a continuation of Gerry Boyce's popular county history, *Historic Hastings*, published in 1967, Centennial Year. Gerry finished the Volume Two version in 2016 and, because of failing health, turned the project over to Orland French to complete. Mr. French is an author and writer and long-time president and past-president of the Hastings County Historical Society. The work was extended to include events up to and including 2022. *Outlook* will feature some excerpts from the book from time to time.

The book has been posted on the web site of the Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County. For direct access, go to <https://discover.cabhc.ca/historic-hastings-volume-two> (click on the image to get to the PDF). Or go to the Archives web site <https://www.cabhc.ca/en/index.aspx>, click on Discover our Collections, then go to Newest Additions on the upper left and click on *Historic Hastings Volume Two*. Then click on the image to go to the PDF.

The project was completed with the assistance of Hastings County Council, the Community Archives and the Hastings County Historical Society.



The Batas and Batawa

by Orland French

Gerry Boyce's last book, Historic Hastings Vol. 2, is about to be posted on-line as an internet resource. Here's his story on the history of Thomas Bata and the creation of Batawa. Mr. Boyce died in October, 2022.

The community of Batawa has had a dramatic cultural and economic impact on the area. In anticipation of the Second World War, and fearing the ambitions of Adolph Hitler, Thomas J. Bata, a young man of 25 years, together with over 100 families from Czechoslovakia moved to Canada in 1939 and established the Bata Shoe Company in a town that would bear his family name. Originally, Batawa was very much a “company town” where employees and their families lived in the community's subsidized housing. Later, a section of the community was set aside so that families could build their own homes. Planners suggested that the town could grow to have a population of some 5,000. During the war, the Bata plant concentrated on the war effort and made high precision machine parts. More than a thousand workers, mostly women, produced naval gun mountings, gyroscopes for torpedoes and primers for anti-tank shells.

Follow the activities of the Hastings County Historical Society online



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After the war, Thomas Bata built the company into the world's largest manufacturer and marketer of footwear, selling over 300 million pairs of shoes each year and employing over 80,000 workers around the world. For some years, the Bata plant was the largest non-military employer in the county and it was reported, "a herd of cattle 50,000 strong is needed to satisfy the company's yearly buying of leather in Canada." By 1989, the Bata factory employed 1,500 in the shoe factory and 380 in the engineering division. Unfortunately, changing economic times and increased competition from abroad, particularly from China, led the company to close its Canadian shoe manufacturing plant in 2000. Now, the company continues to produce over one million pairs of shoes a day while employing 50,000 people around the world. Though Canada is no longer the corporate headquarters of the company, its Swiss headquarters oversees the operation of stores in 70 countries and manufacturing facilities in more than 20 countries. It continues to dominate the global shoe market.

In 1995, Thomas's wife Sonja's passion for shoes led her to found the Bata Shoe Museum in downtown Toronto. It was the first museum of its kind in the West. Batawa schoolchildren visit the museum annually to understand the product that their town was built upon and the artistry in its design. Sonja Bata continues to keep a beautiful Parkin-designed bungalow home atop one of Batawa's hills. It stands ready to greet her on her frequent visits to the area. Not far away stands the Batawa Ski Hill with its million-dollar chairlift and state-of-the-art snowmaking system, provided by Sonja to ensure that the ski operation remains sustainable. The ski hill was started by Bata volunteers and has operated as a community ski hill for over 50 years.

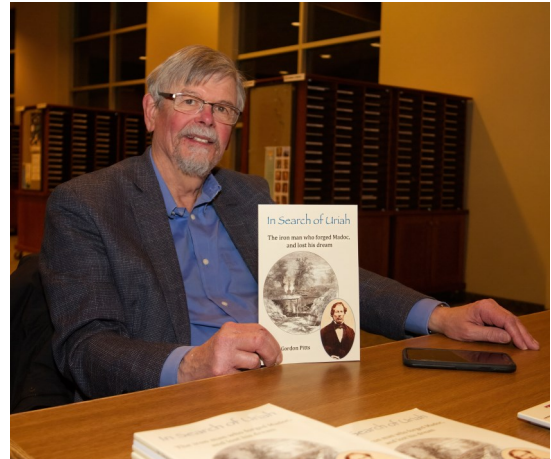
For those interested in the Bata Shoe Museum, go to <https://batashoemuseum.ca/>. The current exhibit is called "Obsessed: How Shoes Became Objects of Desire." The Shoe Museum is located at 327 Bloor Street West, Toronto.



Uriah's Dream in the Bush

by Orland French

Gordon Pitts likes to bring dead people to life. The longer they are dead, the more he loves rooting around in local records to put some flesh on the dry, dusty bones of the archives. And so it was that Uriah Seymour was resurrected, in a figurative fashion, before an assembly of the Hastings County Historical Society on March 21.



Speaker Gordon Pitts

Photo by Doug Knutson, Windswept Productions

What you know about Uriah Seymour is probably not much, but you may recognize the impressive multigabled stone house in Madoc, on your left as you enter town from the south. It is German-style, and was called Hawthorneden. Today it is 140 years old. It was built by his son Fred, a teacher who seemed to inherit some of Uriah's wealth. Or maybe he married into it. While Fred merely built a house, Uriah created Madoc. Or, in the author's term, "forged" Madoc.

You see, Uriah Seymour came to Madoc Township in the early 1800s to pursue a dream. He had heard of iron discoveries in the Madoc area and he wanted a part of the fortunes to be made. Or so he thought. And so, abandoning the iron works he had been developing in the United States, just south of Lake Ontario, he ventured into the wilderness north of Belleville in the 1830s. Ironworks of moderate means were already operating in the Madoc area. But Uriah

was to learn, as did many other would-be ironworkers, that mining in Madoc would be a tough go.

However, Uriah Seymour had more than iron mines on his mind. He dabbled in politics, in the manner of businessmen and entrepreneurs of the day. He was a councillor on the district council under Sheriff John Dunbar Moodie, but he didn't pursue politics any further. His iron-making complex was an unreliable enterprise, yet he continued to hang around Madoc.

"Something about the potential of this little community in the backwoods of Canada appealed to him, and he stayed," writes Pitts in his book, *In Search of Uriah*.

Maybe that "something" consisted of the extensive land holdings he owned in the village. A survey map in the book shows tidy rows of housing lots which Uriah, his brother Horace and later his son Fred, would sell to newcomers to the village of Madoc. Perhaps the fortune to be made in Madoc lay not in the ground, but right on top of it. "It is very likely that Uriah made more money from real estate than from his hit-and-miss iron business," writes Pitts.

At the end of his life in the 1860s, some people saw Uriah Seymour as a failure in business, but a founder of a community. Ironically, and we'll use that word wisely, Madoc is a Welsh name meaning benevolent, charitable or fortunate. It was none of that for Uriah Seymour.

In Search of Uriah, the Iron Man who Forged Madoc, and Lost his Dream, by Gordon Pitts. \$10.



The Annual General Meeting Held March 21

The President, Richard Hughes, presided over the 2023 Annual General Meeting of the Hastings County Historical Society at the

beginning of the March Public Presentation at Maranatha on March 21.

He noted that the COVID-19 pandemic had forced everyone to change their way of life for three years and this had an impact on the Historical Society, limiting its ability to bring public programs to our members and friends. However, the Society had resumed its activities in a big way in 2022, launching a series of very successful public programs.

In a major summertime program, the Society formed a partnership with the City of Quinte West and the Trent Port Historical Society, creating three historical memorial plaques which were unveiled at events with full public participation. These plaques, installed along public walkways by the river and bay, will inform the public for generations to come, of the pioneer days in Quinte West. The Society also worked with Albert College in developing a historical plaque to honour John Macoun, a former professor and Canada's foremost botanist. This plaque is being installed on a large boulder and placed in a garden setting. It was recalled that the Society had installed a total of 17 historical plaques across Hastings County over the past few years with total investment in our community of over \$40,000.

A very successful program in 2022 was the publishing of a booklet called *Stroll of Discovery Riverfront Trail* which encouraged people to get out and walk along the Moira river and learn about the many buildings, bridges and events on that route. This booklet, written by John Lowry and published by the Society, proved very popular, with the first 1000 copies being taken up in a few weeks and a further 1000 copies being printed. This booklet is available at the Community Archives and at the Public Presentations at Maranatha.

Also, in 2022 the Society re-launched the always popular Public Presentations at Maranatha, bringing interesting speakers to both inform and entertain the public during the long, cold winter.

These events are intended to be full evenings of entertainment, with other features like the Minus 100 stories which look back at life in Belleville 100 years ago that week. These will continue each month, except in June, July, August and December.

Very importantly, the Society continued to publish our monthly newsletter, the *Outlook*, never missing a month during COVID. We believe this is a very important newsletter as it not only presents the news and coming events, but three or four local, historical stories for your entertainment. This newsletter is provided to all members and is sent, free of charge, to all schools and retirement homes in Hastings County.

Another major project launched in 2022 was the creation of a new, modern Society website. This is a massive project that will require a few more months to get it all assembled. Our current website is many years old and was becoming out-of-date. The Directors of the Society are very excited about the new and fresh face of the

Society that this website will bring to the entire community.

The President closed his report saying that the Board of Directors always welcomed comments and suggestions on its work and activities. These can be addressed to:

president@hastingshistory.ca

The second portion of the Annual General Meeting was the election of the members of the Board of Directors for the coming year. This is traditionally carried out by the Past-president and, accordingly, Orland French announced that the following persons had been nominated: Dan Atkinson, Connie Carson, Richard Hughes, Michelle Hutchison, Stanley Jones, Jim Kennelly, Gary Nicoll, and Steve Young. These nominations were confirmed by a show of hands vote of the members present.





PUBLIC PRESENTATION

By researcher

STEVEN LINDSAY-MARACLE



**The History of the Mohawks of
the Bay of Quinte**

Steven Lindsay-Maracle has worked in the Research Department of the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte for three years. He is currently the President of the Deseronto and District Historical Society. In this presentation he will explore the fascinating history of the Kenhtè:ke Kanyen'kehá:ka - the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte.



**Tuesday,
April 18, 2023
7:30 p.m.**

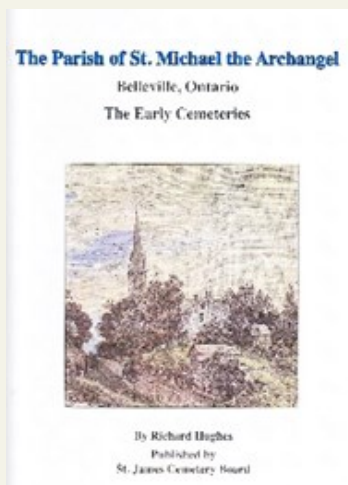
**Maranatha Church Auditorium
100 College Street West, Belleville
Enter by main front doors**

It's Reading Time Again

by Michelle Hutchison

Time has sprung ahead! In the lengthening evenings, we have time to read. May we suggest

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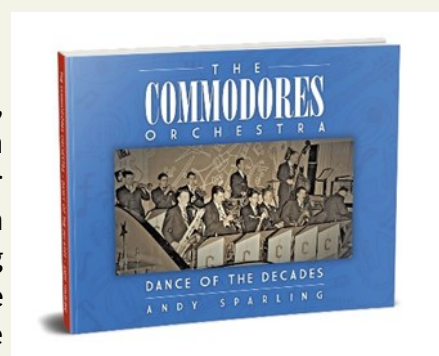
The bell tower of The Church of Saint Michael the Archangel stands high atop the hill as a beacon for all to see. Since 1822, this church community has had three cemeteries that interred their dead. Two are long closed, each having accepted at least one thousand burials. The current Saint James Cemetery was dedicated in the early twentieth century. Through his research, author Richard Hughes has been able to offer a snapshot of the times. Burial rituals have changed, from the practice of “waking” the deceased in the home to the advent of funeral homes. Handwritten church records reflect changes in demographics over time. Shifts in where people lived, their living conditions and changes in life expectancy are made evident. *The Parish of St. Michael the Archangel: The Early Cemeteries* includes a listing of some 3000 names of individuals buried in these

historic cemeteries as an aid to anyone wishing to conduct genealogical research. In its brief 44 pages, this is a book packed with history.

44 pages

\$7

They played the biggest hits of the era: Swing, Serious Jazz, Dance ... Call it what you will, The Commodores Orchestra has been delighting listeners for over nine decades. In their heyday, they were considered the best Big Band between Toronto and Montreal. People dressed in their finest clothing to go out and dance to the music. These were not full-time musicians, plying their trade by playing the circuit. These were men with “real” jobs and families, who played for the love of the music. Author and bandleader, Andy Sparling spent two decades collecting stories. He guides the reader through the decades, drawing a portrait of talented musicians so skillfully that it feels as though one can almost imagine knowing them personally. Big Band jazz continues to enthrall audiences. *The Commodores Orchestra: Dance of the Decades* has the “wow factor.”



138 pages

\$25

Grave Robbers in Our Midst

by Joseph Palmer

In the 1800s, medical research was often made possible through the workings of grave robbers,

also known as body snatchers or resurrection men. In this area, they found a market at universities, particularly Queens in Kingston.

The first recorded case was in 1822 in Kingston when a man fell off a boat and was drowned. He

was buried on a farm, but a few days later, his exhumed body was found covered by tree boughs in an apparent attempt to hide it. He was reburied and seems to have remained there. From that time on, however, occurrences started to increase rapidly, and for a time, Kingston was considered to be the body-snatching capital of North America.

Once these resurrection men had procured a body, they still had to transport it, and this was usually by means of a barrow or placed in a tea chest. Once they met with a prospective buyer, he would inspect the corpse, making sure it was fresh, and then a deal would be made. The resurrection men could make up to \$30 which, in current terms, would be about \$675. Quite a substantial pay for a day's work!

Why would a person participate in such a ghastly activity? In fact, the majority of grave robbers, at least in the Kingston area, were medical students themselves. They had a direct incentive to supply bodies to their professors. At that time, to study human anatomy, students had to dissect corpses to gain first-hand knowledge of how the body works. In the nineteenth century, families were not keen on donating bodies for research, so creative students went out to find them.

Closer to home, on November 17, 1889, Stephen Conger Johnston of the Tweed area passed away, and he was buried at Bethel Cemetery in Hungerford Township the following day. A few days later, a member of the family went to pay his respects and discovered that Mr. Johnston's body had been removed. The family was, quite naturally, horrified and placed an ad in the *Tweed News* offering a reward for information leading to the location of his body. A lawyer from Belleville contacted the family and struck a deal. If they would specify the amount of the reward, he would inform them where they would find their father's body, in perfect condition. Once terms were met, the lawyer informed them that the body was at the Kingston Medical College, and they would have to hurry as students were planning to dissect the body.

Accompanied by a Kingston police officer, Mr. Johnston's son, Thomas, went to the college and found his father lying on a dissection table. They had arrived just in time. As Thomas retrieved the corpse, one of the students said, "Be sure you have the right one." One mystery was where the body had been kept in the month since his death, but accounts indicated that it had been frozen.

One would expect that Thomas would return home with his father to rebury him, but that was not to be. The students protested, claiming the body was not Mr. Johnston, but another person. The battle between the Johnston family and the Medical College began. The fight quickly grew more and more hostile between the two sides, culminating with two demonstrators of anatomy at Royal College, Kingston publishing an article in the *Kingston Whig* that stated that the body removed from the college was not that of Stephen Johnston and that in due time legal proceedings would be taken. In turn, Johnston's friends got together at his home and looked more closely at the body. Some agreed it looked strikingly similar to Mr. Johnston, while others were not so sure. Finally, the decision came down to Dr. Tuttle who was the doctor who had examined Mr. Johnston before he died.

Although this body bore a striking resemblance to Mr. Johnston, the final view was that it could not have been him as the corpse had a large abscess or fever sore on one leg near the ankle, but Mr. Johnston did not. The family was heartbroken but had to come to terms with the fact that this man was not who they hoped it would be. In fact, Mr. Johnston's body was never found.

Stephen Conger Johnston's grave can still be found at Bethel Cemetery, but to this day, it still remains empty—a reminder of this brutal and disturbing trade that took place in this area over 100 years ago.

Source: The Tweed News June 12, 1968 reprinted from November 28, 1889



So, You Want to Be a Nurse!

by Richard Hughes

During the past three years of worldwide sickness and death caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the critical importance of nurses has been highlighted. Portrayed as heroes on the front line, this is barely sufficient to describe the devotion to duty shown by nursing staffs at hospitals and long-term care homes. We are fortunate in Quinte to have a top-notch school of nursing at Loyalist College offering a four-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree.

Belleville General Hospital was created through the relentless work of the Women's Christian Association, and it opened in 1886. Soon afterwards, Miss Gordon was named Superintendent, and she organized the first training school for nurses. The process for application to this school, open only to women, required a written request or personal meeting with the Lady Superintendent of Nursing. The applicant should be between 25 and 35 years of age and provide a letter from a clergyman testifying to her good moral character and one from a physician stating that she is in good health. If the candidate could obtain the approval of the

Superintendent, she was received into the school for a one-month period of probation during which time she would be tested for reading, penmanship, simple arithmetic and English dictation.

If the candidate could pass successfully through the probation period, she became a pupil nurse for a two-year period. She was required to reside in the hospital and serve in the wards, receiving \$7 per month for Year 1 and \$8 per month in Year 2. The school prescribed the dress, but the pupil had to provide two such dresses each year along with caps and aprons. Among the stringent conditions, the pupil nurse performed any duty assigned, including being sent to private cases among the rich or poor anywhere in the province. She did, however, receive two weeks vacation annually and must "attend their own places of worship every Sabbath."

Now, what instructions do the pupil nurses receive? These are set out in eight points:

- The dressing of blisters, burns, sores and wounds; the preparation and application of fomentations, poultices and dressings,
- The application of leeches and subsequent treatment,



A graduating class in nursing from the Belleville General Hospital

CABHC 2017-37 (1)

-Administration of enemata and use of female catheter,

-Management of helpless patients: moving, changing, giving baths in bed, preventing bed sores and managing position,

-Bandaging, making bandages and rollers and lining splints,

-Making beds and changing sheet while patient is in bed,

-The preparing, cooking and serving of delicacies for the sick,

-To understand the art of ventilation without chilling the patient, both in private houses and hospital wards and the management of convalescents.

-Several other tasks are listed including the preparation of reports on secretions, expectoration, intelligence (as to delirium and stupor), eruptions, formation of matter, etc.

When the full term of two years is complete, and after passing final examinations, the nurses received their certificates which testified to their knowledge, ability and good character.

In 1895, the first graduating class of five nurses received their certificates at a grand celebration event at City Hall, with a long list of dignitaries in attendance, numerous speeches and music supplied by the Belleville Orchestra. The room was draped with colourful bunting and adorned with brilliant flowers. The Lady Superintendent, Miss Gordon, was dressed in a beautiful gown of black velvet. Thus began the long and illustrious tradition of nursing in Belleville.

Source: The Daily Intelligencer, March 1, 1895, from the Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County local newspaper collection online.



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