



# Outlook

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## The Sign of the Broad Arrow White Pines and Ship Masts

By Bill Kennedy



Lloyd Jones presenter for the *Masts of Hastings County* Photo - N. White

Back in the days of the great sailing ships, the white pine was the favoured tree for masts. It was among the tallest trees of the forest and had a suppleness that allowed it to better withstand forces such as gale force winds and naval battles that were more damaging to other species like

oak. The British generally got their masts from the Baltic region, but during the Napoleonic wars with its French blockades, this became increasingly difficult and emphasis shifted to North America.

Masts went from high above the main deck down through the gun decks to the ship's hull. Oak masts had a tendency to splinter when hit by enemy cannon balls (masts were targeted as they disabled the ship) and the splinters could cause mayhem among the gun crews by flying about like arrows. In fact, in colonial times the white pine was so important to the British navy that they instituted what was known as the Broad Arrow policy.

By way of example, a farmer might own fifty acres, but the white pines on his land that had been marked by British agents with the Broad Arrow symbol belonged to the crown and were not to be cut. This was, to say the least, a bone of contention

throughout colonial North America. Penalties for cutting down a marked tree could be severe, even to the farmer losing his farm.

It is estimated that at one point 700 ships a year were transporting masts from North America to England. Historical Society speaker Dr. Lloyd Jones explained that the size of a given navy mast was determined by the number of guns aboard the ship. Specifications required that a hundred-gun ship such as Horatio Nelson's HMS *Victory* have a mast with a base diameter of three feet, which meant a circumference of over nine feet. Also, for every inch of diameter, the mast needed three feet of height. A 120-foot-tall mast could weigh forty metric tonnes!

British ships were also manufactured in Kingston, Ontario. Shipwrights were brought over from England to build them, and they saw many uses including engagements on the Great Lakes two hundred years ago during the War of 1812–1815. It is from these great days of sail that numerous expressions still in use today originate. A person who is a “loose cannon” is unpredictable and dangerous as would be cannon that broke loose and rolled about the deck of a pitching ship. The crews manning the guns had their meals served not on glass plates (too easily broken) but on squares of boards, and thus do we have “three square meals a day.” Sailing ships are a maze of rigging and someone new to a job is “learning the ropes.”

Once in England, white pines not going into immediate use were preserved in pools of salt water and it is said that in these pools they could last as long as forty years. Under normal wear and tear the life expectancy of a mast aboard a ship was twelve years after which it was replaced. Nelson's fleet probably had difficulty enjoying this longevity. When the hero of Trafalgar was asked how close to the enemy he wanted to sail before firing, he replied, “as close as possible.”

## Letter Carriers Celebrate a Century of Service in Belleville

by Travis Shalla and Richard Hughes

One hundred years ago, on May 24, 1913, thirteen sturdy young men shouldered their heavy bags, filled with letters and parcels, and headed out of the main doors of the post office at Bridge and Pinnacle Streets. For the first time ever, the citizens of Belleville were to receive their mail delivered right to their doors.

For almost a century—the Belleville Post Office having been created in 1816—the fair burghers of Belleville had trekked downtown to pick up their mail at the great brass-grilled wickets of the post office. Mail not retrieved was listed in the newspaper under the heading of “mail waiting at the post office.”

In 1913, mail was arriving and departing Belleville on four eastbound and four westbound trains. It was speedily transferred to the post office and was sorted and delivered by the newly minted letter carriers twice daily to business customers and once a day to residential addresses. At that time, the City of Belleville extended from College Street in the north to the Bay of Quinte and from Sidney Street in the west to MacDonald Avenue in the east. Beyond those streets, there was rural delivery.

The Belleville Post Office has had at least four homes over the past 150 years or so. The 1874 Bird’s Eye View Map of Belleville shows the post office on the north side of Bridge Street (near current Dinkel’s Restaurant). In 1883, the grand old post office opened at the corner of Bridge and Pinnacle Streets, and it operated until 1960. Then the post office shifted to the federal building at 317 Pinnacle Street where it remained until 2002, when mail processing and delivery moved to the current Davy Road facility, and in 2007, the Belleville Post Office moved to 21D College Street West with additional post offices at Kelly’s pharmacy, Roluf’s downtown and two Shoppers Drug Mart locations.

The original 13 letter carriers have grown over the past century to 31 letter carriers and 9 rural routes today, delivering to 23,400 addresses 5 days a week. Moreover, the Belleville facility is more than a post office, actually an operations centre, processing mail 24 hours a day and 6 days a week for 52 communities, or 103,000 addresses, across the Quinte region. As well, it

processes all Armed Forces mail going overseas and to the North.

On May 21 at the Society’s May Public Presentation, Mr. Travis Shalla, Letter Carrier Supervisor, delivered a fascinating account of the history of the postal service in Belleville, and on May 24, the current letter carriers and many retired carriers gathered to celebrate their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Special greetings and congratulations were brought by both the Historical Society and the Community Archives on this occasion.



The highlight of the week was the celebration at the Belleville Operations building on the actual 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary date of May 24, 2013, with the unveiling of the cancellation stamp, pictured left, that will be used in Belleville from that afternoon until the end of the year.



The image of the old post office used on the cancellation stamp is based on a silk screen print, pictured left, that is part of the Mika collection in the Com-



At the celebration Archivist Sharon White and Society President Richard Hughes received a special commemorative poster from Ms. Tracy Winstanley, Superintendent of the Belleville Operations Centre of Canada Post Corpora-



This article will appear in the September 2013 print edition

## Fifty Years of Walking Around Belleville

By Nick White & Anthea Weese

This year's Jane's Walks, in honour of Jane Jacobs, continue a tradition of walking tours of Belleville. It has been nearly fifty years since the *Intelligencer* announced on August 26th, 1963, that the Hastings County Historical Society would hold its first "experimental Walking Tour."

The event must have been successful as the Walking Tour of Lower Front Street held on September 1st was followed by six additional walks in October and November the same year.

The pictures below, believed to have been taken on November 10th, 1963, show that the weather wasn't as pleasant at that time of year as that experienced on the three Jane's Walks held on May 4th and 5th, 2013.

### Members Will Make Walking Tour of City

The Hastings County Historical Society is planning an experimental Walking Tour for Sunday afternoon.

Location of the walk will be the lower Front Street and Pinnacle Street area. This was one of the two earliest settled areas in Belleville, and the plan for the tour is to view and discuss many of the early buildings in that area.

According to tour supervisor Rodger Greig, several of the homes in the lower Front Street area show a distinct New England style and may date back to before 1820.



Sunday November 10th 1963



Photos and clipping from the HCHS scrapbook at the Community Archives

Saturday May 4th 2013



Trailed by around 150 explorers, Orland French led the **Meet Me at the Four Corners** walk — a celebration of downtown with a poke into history, an introduction to present downtown uses and culture, and an exploration of issues and possibilities for the future.



Orland fed the walkers on a diet of juicy historical tidbits along the downtown Front Street route, and was joined by downtowners such as restaurateur Paul Dinkel and Funk 'n' Gruven's Mike Malachowski who introduced the crowd to the charming courtyard alley behind their establishments.

Richard Courneyea discussed his family's decision to "put their money where their mouth is" and to make the move to living downtown, above his Richard Davis store.

Returning to the market, Don Wilson told how, with the participation of his grandchildren, seven generations of Wilsons have now been market merchants in downtown Belleville. That's a story in itself.



Photos Kim Stinson





**Saturday May 4th 2013**



The second walk, **Back Side for Your Backside**, was an accessible fitness trip following the Riverfront Trail along the Moira River.

Led by fitness expert Ashton Calnan, geologist Hannah Chittenden, and BDIA executive director Sarah Tummon, around 50 participants explored downtown's back side — the buildings on the west side of Front Street and the east side of Coleman Street.



Guest speakers included the Greenleys, erstwhile booksellers, and Shane Ross, owner of The Old Firehouse restaurant, who discussed the history of their buildings. Lots of stories, including how the former Eddie Thomas Cigar Store (now Earl & Angelo's) hosted a 30-year-long gambling game on the second floor. Police department insiders would tip off the



gaming room in advance of any police raids. Two house rules: answer phone calls immediately, and don't spit on the floor. As the leaders wrapped up the Walk, one participant declared it to be "fabulous, nobody wanted it to end." And another observed, "History and fitness, life doesn't get any better!"

*Photos Marianne Scott*



**Sunday May 5th 2013**



The third Jane's Walk, titled **Down by the Bay**, was held the next day.

Led by landscape architect Kevin Tribble, a designer of the city's widely used Bayshore Trail, and Doug Moses, previously the City's director of Parks and Recreation, the walk



started at the boat launch at the end of South George Street and proceeded eastward along the Bay to the CN memorial. Talks along the trail featured an eclectic mixture of topics: the geological history of the land, its evolving ecology since the settlement of Belleville and the challenges of building the trail

and the hopes for its future extension. After great views of the turtles sunbathing in the artificial ponds, the walk ended at the CN monument with stories from Belleville's days as a major railway centre.

*Photos Nick White*



# The Anomaly of Read

By C.W. Hunt

Communities in Canada are usually composed of many different ethnic groups, each worshipping at its own church: Presbyterian, United, Anglican, Roman Catholic and, increasingly, Muslim. But one community in Hastings County is composed entirely of one ethnic group—the Irish and one religion—Roman Catholic. Why is this, and how did it come about?

The answer lies in the causal conjunction of events in the British Isles, in Europe and in North America.

In Europe, the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 caused the discharge of millions of soldiers; with the war's end, they were no longer needed. At the same time, the war's end greatly reduced the demand for military supplies, a fact which contributed to a recession in Britain. This forced the British government to take action to avoid having starving soldiers cause food riots with a consequent breakdown in law and order. In an age before the welfare state, there was a very real danger of large-scale starvation.

The British solution was to foster immigration to their colonies in Australia, New Zealand, and British North America, then known as Upper and Lower Canada. Veterans were given free grants of land based on their rank: the higher the rank, the larger the grant. Many Irish chose to immigrate to Canada in large part because the passage was cheaper than to Australia, New Zealand, and even to the United States.

In Canada, the timber trade was flourishing. Thousands of logs were being hauled in sailing ships to British ports in order to sustain their fleet and also to provide lumber for the building industry. The ships' owners needed paying freight for the return trip to Canada, and consequently offered cheaper passage to Canada than was offered to any of the other colonies.

It is probable that most Irish Catholics, deeply resentful of the English and their church, would have preferred to immigrate to the United States, but it was more expensive. This resulted in the immigration of many Irish to Canada where they found work in the timber trade or in the building of canals. Once they had gained some capital, tens of thousands of Irish moved south into the United States. But many Irish did not leave Canada. There were two main reasons for this.

The British Government had decided that the best way to maintain the loyalty of Lower Canada's French Catholic citizens against the threat of annexation by the republic to the south was to grant les Canadiens the right to both their language and their religion. Moreover, the Governor General of Canada was frequently a Scot. The Scottish people were historically friendly to the French who had supported them in their struggle against annexation by the English. The Scots were also closely connected to their Irish cousins and were therefore more sympathetic to the Catholic religion than was the English Crown or the aristocracy.

Consequently, the colony of Canada was something of an anomaly. While its rulers were British, and the Church of England, the established church, other churches and religions were tolerated as was the French language.

At first, the majority of Irish immigrants settled in Montreal, which had both an English-speaking population and a well-established Roman Catholic Church. But many Irish gradually moved on to Upper Canada, primarily because of Lower Canada's seigneurial land system. In Upper Canada, land was held in freehold. In other words, the settler could own the land outright and not be subject to a French Canadian seigneur, another form of landlord.

In Britain, during the nineteenth century, only the aristocrats and the gentry owned large amounts of land, sufficient to provide for a large family in considerable comfort. But in Upper Canada, land was inexpensive and, for those who had served in the British Army, it was free.

For the modern Canadian living in a post-industrial society where agriculture employs no more than three percent of the work force, it is difficult, if not impossible, to fully grasp the importance of land to those early settlers. In England, the peasants worked the lord's land and in return, paid him a portion of their crop. The landlord provided protection to the peasant from marauders and granted the peasant the right to cultivate a portion of the lord's land. This medieval system of rights and obligations worked tolerably well for the peasant until the Industrial Revolution which began in the late eighteenth century with the invention of the steam engine.

By the early nineteenth century, the growing mechanization of the clothing industry made it more profitable



for the lord to move the peasants off the land and raise sheep. But in England, the peasantry had rights. Democracy, however, did not extend to the poorer classes; both the House of Commons and the House of Lords were controlled by the aristocrats, the landed gentry and the growing merchant and industrial class. It was in the interests of these groups to pass “clearance acts” through parliament. These acts enabled the landlords to dispossess their tenant farmers or peasants, and replace them with sheep.

The peasants were therefore forced to move to industrial centres where they worked six days a week, twelve to eighteen hours a day for subsistence wages. There were no unions, no minimum wage laws, no pay if injured, no workers’ compensation, no protection of any kind for the industrial worker. It is no surprise that so many were willing to sell whatever goods they had to pay for passage to the New World, even though that passage took an average of six weeks and was so horrific in terms of food and sanitation that thousands died en route or arrived in Canada on the verge of death. They were willing to endure this if it meant escape from an industrial hell and hope for a new world where there was both work and cheap land.

In Ireland the situation was even worse. The peasants or tenant farmers had no rights and could simply be dispossessed of the land they worked at the pleasure of the landlord. But Canada provided the opportunity for work on its canals and in its timber trade. This enabled a thrifty, hard-working commoner to become his own lord, to be the master of his own property. It was a powerful lure—an intoxicant. Hence, despite the strength of the Catholic Church in Lower Canada, many Irish Catholics moved on to Upper Canada.

But why did so many Irish Catholics settle in the north-eastern section of Tyendinaga Township with its centre in Read, and why were there no Protestants among those settlers? We will answer that in the next issue of *Outlook*.



**Read Church - St. Charles Borromeo**  
Photo - Donna Fano

## Stories from the Archives

(continued from last month)

By Sharon White

In the May issue of *Outlook*, I summarized some of the stories from the Archives that were presented at the Historical Society’s meeting on April 16. In this issue, I’ll write about the remaining stories—with thanks to all of the presenters for providing their notes.

### Photographs of Construction

Presenter - Adele Dibben

In light of much recent talk of “lost buildings” in our area—such as Belleville’s Hotel Quinte and the Wharf Street Debating Club building—Adele Dibben decided to show us pictures of different structures under construction.

Adele started with an interesting image that captured the old Belleville High School beside the new, partially built Belleville Collegiate Institute, taken about 1927–1928. This was followed by a sequence of photos showing the early stages of the present-day Court House construction in the winter of 1959 and various stages of erecting the Norris Whitney Bridge over the Bay of Quinte, 1982. She also included a photograph of a hotel “going up” rather than “coming down” (The Best Western, in 1987).



**BCI under construction (at the right) Note the old Belleville high school at the left before it was torn down.** Photo from Mika Collection 1927-1928

Adele has been working with the Historical Society’s photograph collection, and she often researches inquiries from people looking for specific images. Her last two pictures took us back to an earlier era when construction was a community affair involving men, women, children and horses or other working animals—and minimal or no safety equipment.

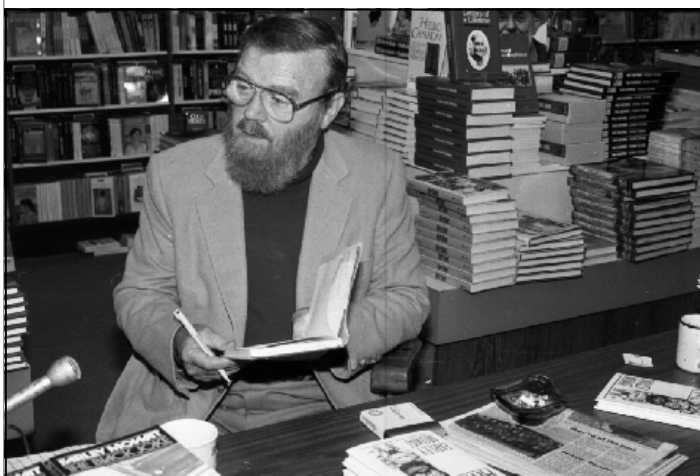
## Farley Mowat

*Presenter - Donna Fano*

Donna Fano's presentation was about the influential Canadian author Farley Mowat and his connections to our area. Farley was born May 12, 1921, at the Belleville General Hospital. His father, Angus Mowat, was the Librarian in Trenton, where the family lived until Angus accepted the position of Chief Librarian in Belleville when Farley was seven. The Mowats lived in the apartment on the third floor of the Corby Library building from 1928 to 1930.

Donna showed some photographs of the young Farley Mowat from his autobiographical book, *Born Naked*. She has donated a copy of this book to the Community Archives, as well as a few letters and photographs she received from Farley and his wife, Claire. (Thank you, Donna!)

Donna's presentation included photographs from the Archives' *Intelligencer* fonds of Farley promoting a book at Greenley's bookstore in 1985, and presiding over the opening of a major art show in Belleville in 1993. She also mentioned Farley's service with the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment during the Second World War, his connection to the Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf, and some of the many honours and awards he has won.



**Above photo: Farley at Greenley's bookstore for the signing of his book in 1985.**  
*Intelligencer Fonds*



**Left photo: Photo, given by Farley and Claire in March 2013, is now owned by the Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County**

## Warships in the Bay of Quinte

*Presenter - Al Cleary*

Al Cleary's story derived from two small, dark photographs that he came across when researching in the Schuster Coal Company fonds for pictures on a different subject. The photos appeared to show five warships tied to the Belleville government dock. Al has an interest in boats, and he wanted to find out what type of ships these were and why they were in the Bay of Quinte.

Al told us about his search for answers—in his own books, at our Archives, at the library in Kingston, and through consulting Roger Litwiller, who referred the questions to retired Commander Fraser McKee, respected author of several books about Canadian naval ships. Mr. McKee identified these ships as five of the eighty Fairmile motor launches that were built in Canada for coastal anti-submarine patrol during the Second World War, and he provided some information about their histories, adding that these were “interesting and rare photos.”



*Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County (Schuster Coal Company Fonds 664-02-30)*

Al was not able to find out why these ships were docked in Belleville, but he hopes to learn this one day. He did discover another local connection of the Fairmiles, in that their doorknobs and locksets were supplied by the Belleville Sargent Lock Company.

## May and June 1990 in Pictures

*Presenter - Elizabeth Mitchell*

Elizabeth Mitchell is one of about six people who have been cataloguing the large collection of *Intelligencer* negatives at the Archives. She chose to talk about some of the pictures that interested her in the group she was working with recently, taken by the *Intelligencer's* staff reporters in May and June of 1990.



Elizabeth showed some “lost” historic landmarks from this period, such as the Trenton bridge under demolition and the Cablevue building being torn down across from Belleville’s City Hall, leaving only the façade still there today. Some of the interesting people and events covered by the *Intell* included Anne Murray, who gave a concert at the Quinte Sports Centre; Dr. Paul Foster, who retired from his veterinary practice; and car racing at Spenard and Empringham racing school.

Newspaper photographers often shoot a whole sequence of pictures, although only one or two might be printed in the paper. Elizabeth illustrated this point with a long series of shots of a tent caterpillar, and another series of a house being moved with assistants running alongside to remove road signs where necessary and generally keep an eye on things. When shown sequentially, the still photos appeared almost like a movie.



*Intelligencer Fonds*

## Ontario Volunteer Service Awards

May 1, 2013 Belleville Banquet Centre

Six HCHS people were nominated for volunteer awards this year by the Society. The awards, made by MPPs Todd Smith and Rob Milligan on behalf of the Provincial government, recognise each five years of continuous volunteer work performed by a person for the nominating organisation.



In this picture from left to right, Gerry Boyce (56 years), Orland French (10 years), Mike Shaw (10 years), Elizabeth Mitchell (10 years), Dick Hughes (back) (5 years) and Nick White (5 years) in foreground *Photo - Sharon White*

## Annual Banquet and Celebration of Local History

**Guest Speaker:** The Hon. Sheila M. Copps, PC, OC

**Topic:** We are Nobody’s Babies

**Date:** Saturday October 26, 2013 **Location:** Travelodge Hotel Ballroom

**Social Hour 6 pm - Dinner 7 pm**

The Progress of Women in Canadian Politics. Six women have risen to Premier positions in Canadian politics. The Hon. Sheila M. Copps helped pave the way. A combative and controversial advocate for women in Parliament and politics, she was the first woman appointed Deputy Prime Minister of Canada. As Heritage minister, she was always a strong advocate of Canadian nationalism and defender of our history. The title of her topic is taken from her book, *Nobody's Baby*.

**Tickets \$65.**

**Tickets available at Quinte Arts Council, 36 Bridge St E. Belleville, and from Richard Hughes 613-961-7772**



# Minus 100 Presentation

covering May 21, 1913

by Gerry Boyce, May 21, 2013

Nationally, not unlike current political controversies in the nation's capital, the Canadian Senate seemed to be involved in controversy.

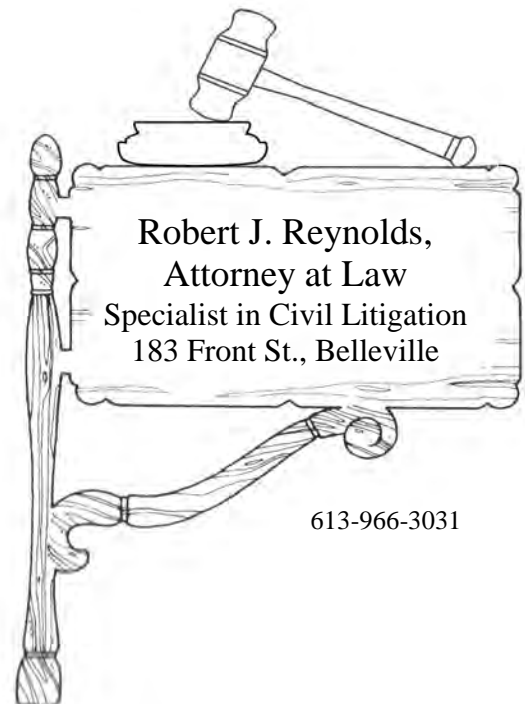
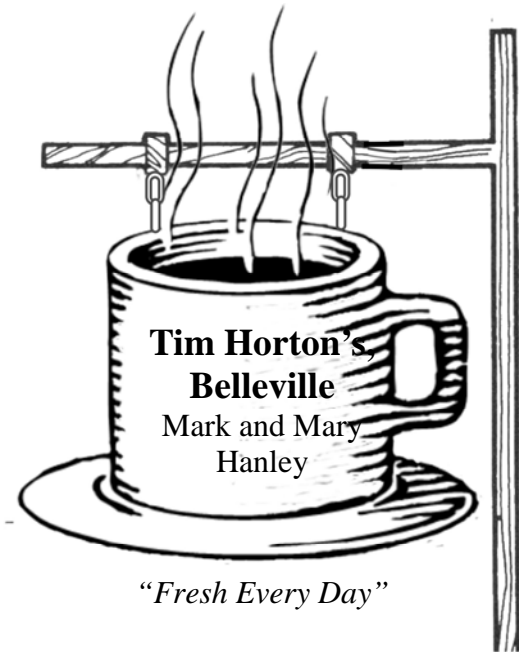
On May 20, 1913, this quotation from a speech by the Right Honourable Mr. Robert Borden (Conservative Prime Minister) was prominently displayed in *The Inteligencer*:

“For the present, however, I deprecate the assertion made in many Liberal quarters that the majority of the Canadian Senate is merely an echo of a discredited minority in the House of Commons, and that whenever Sir Wilfrid Laurier pulls the strings the Liberal Senators will dance as he desires.”

“There are many men of high character and intelligence among the Liberal Senators and I entirely decline to believe that their actions would be thus unworthily controlled.

“Otherwise I would be prepared to declare that the Canadian Senate as at presently constituted had thoroughly outlived its usefulness and that an immediate remedy must be sought and found.

“The Senate is an important part of our constitutional machinery and is entitled to every respect, but it is not, never was, and never will be, above the will of the Canadian people.”



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## Coming Events July to December

Keep these events in mind

**July 1 (Monday)** - Canada Day Celebrations at Zwick's Park

**September 17 (Tuesday)** - Heather Hawthorne speaking on The Fascinating Heritage and History of the Deloro Mine Site

**October 15 - (Tuesday)** Hastings County and the Great War, 1914-1918 by Bill Kennedy

**October 26 - (Saturday)** Annual Banquet and Celebration of History with Hon. Sheila Copps as speaker

**November 19 - (Tuesday)** Ed Burt of Ocean Scan will speak on Efforts to Recover the Remains of HMS *Speedy* which Sunk in 1804 off Presqu'île Point.

## Deadlines for Submissions to the September *Outlook* Newsletter

Aug. 28 - Final submissions of articles and photos for the September newsletter are due. **Please send any submissions before this date if possible.**

Sept. 3 - Sept. *Outlook* newsletter goes to the printer  
Sept. 9 - Newsletters are picked up and preparation of newsletters are done by Archive Angels for mailing.

A copy of the newsletter will be sent to the contributors of stories to the *Outlook* for final proofreading prior to the print date.



Donna Fano - *Outlook* Editor

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## Hastings County Historical Society Presentation

### Special Guest Speaker:

**Topic:** Heather Hawthorne of the Ontario Ministry of the Environment will be speaking on **The Fascinating Heritage and History of the Deloro Mine Site.** There will be a documentary video on the history of gold mining and arsenic production at Deloro and the major project to clean up this site.

**Date:** Tuesday, September 17, 2013

**Time:** 7:30 p m

**Location:** Quinte Living Centre Auditorium  
(North Corner Door)  
370 Front Street, Belleville

**Bring a friend!**

**Website:** [www.hastingshistory.ca](http://www.hastingshistory.ca)

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