



Outlook

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Your New Community Archives - A Great Idea!

The Archives Relocation Committee (ARC) was formed in 2007 and in the very capable hands of Sharon White has been making progress in determining the requirements essential for the relocation of the Hastings County archives currently held in the Heritage Centre on Cannifton Road.

The new building would need to be between five to seven thousand square feet with a minimum floor load capacity of 250 lbs/sq. ft. It would need low light levels, a fire detection and suppression system *cont'd. on page 2*



Society Vice-President Dick Hughes and Executive Member Sharon White display a sample of the Archives Relocation Plan prepared and presented by Sharon to the Society at its November meeting. Photo, Doug Knutson

What Are We Doing At The HCHS?

by Orland French, President

One of the responsibilities of any organization is that it should periodically review its purpose. This is no less true for an historical society. Once in a while we should ask ourselves, "What are we trying to accomplish?" When the Hastings County Historical Society was incorporated in 1970, its role was defined as multi-purpose:

- To promote, encourage and enter into research into the history of Hastings County;
- To provide information and education services on the history of Hastings County and its citizens, and particularly to its students;
- To maintain archives for the deposit of historically significant documents.

There were other roles listed, but these three were pertinent to the evolution of our search for a home for the archives. For more than half a century the historical society has maintained what stands as the only community archives in Belleville. From its humble beginnings in an oft-mentioned linen closet to the extensive collection now housed in the Heritage Centre in Cannifton, the archives has continued to expand and enlarge as the paper record of the Hastings County and Belleville community. The size of the collection is outgrowing our capacity to deal with it, and so the time has come for another step in the evolution of building a new archives.

In our quest for a new location, we have proposed that collectively the City of Belleville, the County of Hastings and the HCHS jointly establish a new community archives. No longer *cont'd on page 2*

Sponsors & Prize Donors for Society's Annual 2008 Banquet

The Hastings County Historical Society thanks sponsors and donors to its recent and very successful fund raising banquet at the Ramada Inn last November 1. With their help the Society raised more than \$5,000 to meet its operating expenses and build its archives relocation fund.

The sponsors were:

- Allan's Auto Repair
- Bel-Con Engineering Ltd.
- CIBC Wood Gundy
- David Denison Coldwell Banker Ekort Realty
- Gerry and Bev Boyce
- Industrial Alliance Insurance &

ARC *cont'd. from page 1*

and have a high level of security. There would need to be space not only for storing records but also for staff, researchers and displays. Funds currently available for the new location amount to approximately \$40,000 plus grant money that is available for this kind of endeavour.

The archives operation would be a partnership consisting of Hastings County, the City of Belleville and the Historical Society. It would be governed by a Board of Directors. The concept for construction, to which the City and the County have agreed, is that the city would provide the land, the Society would raise the money for the building and then the city would take ownership and run it. Estimated cost is one million dollars. As for staffing a professional archivist would be hired part-time with the intent that the position would eventually become full-time.

Under the direction of President Orland French one of the Society's fund raising program initiatives is Project *cont'd. on page 4*

What Are We Doing?

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would the community record of Belleville and Hastings be solely owned and held by a private society. The councils of Belleville and Hastings County have endorsed that proposal.

Part of the objective is that a community archives, operated by a municipality, would employ a part-time or full-time professional archivist. This is the norm in many other municipalities. The Archive Angels, bless them all, would continue to support the archives in a voluntary capacity.

Within a short time, we expect to announce significant progress in the next step of developing a new archives. At that time we will be launching a major fund-raising drive (right in the middle of a recession). For some time, we will have no doubt what we



Tail Gunner L.E. Bedell Shot Down At War's End

At the November Remembrance Service Society member Bruce Bedell was photographed beside the Belleville Cenotaph that bears the name of his brother, Flight Sergeant Lyle E. Bedell (4th name down).

Lyle was with RAF 101 Squadron when his Lancaster bomber was shot down over Germany in March 1945, two months before the end of the war in Europe. Bomber tail gunners fulfilled one of WWII's most dangerous jobs. Their life expectancy was short. Lyle was 20 years old when he died on his fifteenth sortie.

are trying to accomplish as a historical society. The archives will become our major focus. This is



A new archives? That's a great idea!

appropriate, because the presence of a proper and effective community archives serves the teaching and learning roles of our historical society.

Sponsors & Donors

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- Jones Deslauriers Insurance
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Donors of items for door prizes included:

- Belleville Theatre Guild
- Quinte Arts Council
- Quinte Alternative Films
- Later Life Learning
- Gerry Boyce
- Greenleys Books
- Wallbridge House Publishing

Again, our thanks to all of them! Their participation is greatly appreciated.

The Belleville Reminiscences of E.S. Vandewater ~ Part 2



The "Bay City" street car on Front Street, Belleville, circa 1880. Edgar Smith Vandewater was eleven years old in 1887 and in his reminiscences writes about celebrating Queen Victoria's 50th year of reign at Queen Victoria School on Church Street. They marched from there, he writes, to Sam Ratallack's sports field where they sang patriotic songs.

In the spring of 2008 the Historical Society received a letter from Richard J. Moran of Redford, Missouri. Attached to his letter were reminiscences of life in the Belleville area written by his great uncle Edgar Smith Vandewater. Here is Part 2 of Vandewater's story.

Belleville had no cement roadways or sidewalks and very few, if any, streets had water mains or sewer connections, no electric lights, the streets being lit by gas and in many cases, coal oil lamps on lamp posts.

From the stone house we moved to Coleman Street and later to the east side of Albert Street, about half way between Bridge and Dundas (a cousin has been living there lately).

I will now take a trip north on the west side of Albert Street, beginning at Dundas Street, where there was a Large stone vinegar works. Next to

this lived John Pepper, the builder. Later the Foleys. Two children, Tom and Nellie. Next north was the Burtons, then the Corbetts with four or five daughters. I remember Maggie, Minnie, Lizzie and Belle. Next was Police Sergeant McCroddam; three children, Maggie, John and Harry,

Paving Woes!

The Daily Intelligencer, September 18, 1901: The residents of Victoria Avenue are thinking of getting up some sort of demonstration to celebrate the end of the paving operations on that street. They have certainly had a strenuous summer of it.

From the looks of Front Street in the above photo of the horse drawn Bay City street car it could use some asphalt, too. Imagine crossing it after a heavy rain!

then several vacant lots when we come to the Jamiesons; two sons, Mac and Jim. Next was the Websters, Custom Officer; two daughters, Grace and Margaret.

Now turn west on Bridge Street toward Front Street; the first brick building was John Lewis' stable, then his home; he had one daughter, Ella. Between Charles Street to Ann Street was Major Caswell; had two daughters. Also F.E. O'Flynn, son Eddie and daughter Susie, and on the corner of William Street was the Clark family (I think). From Ann Street to William Street was Colonel William Brown's beautiful residence, owner of the Foundry at the corner of Pinnacle and Station Street; across William Street was MacKenzie Bowell, later Sir MacKenzie Bowell, Premier of Canada. Next was Dr. J.J. Farley, our family physician. Across George Street was Thomas Rirchie's home, Front Street's largest Dry Goods merchant, occupying the entire block to John Street.

To be continued

Who Is This Man?



"He is one of the finest specimens of manhood in all Canada, and it is doubtful if a more striking soldier lives. He is seven feet one and a half inches tall."

Want to know more about him? Don't miss the upcoming issues of *Outlook*.

Family Members Help Gerry Boyce Celebrate December Launch of his New Book *Belleville: A Popular History*



Shown from left to right are Gerry's sons Thomas, Duncan and Egerton, daughter Susie, wife Bev and Gerry with a copy of his new book.

Belleville Mayor Neil Ellis, former CBC television broadcaster and author Roy Bonisteel and Michael Peterman, author of *Sisters In Two Worlds*, were among the over one hundred guests who attended the launch. Gerry's 300 page book is a goldmine of local history, old maps and documents and photographs of intriguing characters, places and events. A great read!

Hilma Moir

The Society's sympathy is extended to the family of the late Hilma Moir of Belleville who died in November. A long-time member and supporter of the Society, Hilma remembered our group right up to the time of her passing. A few days before her death she contacted Gerry Boyce by phone and arranged for a family member to deliver two attractive 1963 paintings of Hastings County scenes with the wish that they be used to help raise funds for the Society's archives program. Hilma will be missed. Other Society members who died in 2008 were Kenneth Douglas, Mary Power, Marion Cornwall and Frances Moir.

ARC *cont'd. from page 2*

100 which means simply obtaining \$100 donations from 100 people. The names of the "100" would be memorialized on an archives' plaque. This would show serious interest on the part of the public in having a proper home for their archives. Other fund raising options are under review.

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, January 20, 2009

Speaker

Tom Ryddle

Topic

United Empire Loyalists

Monthly meetings start at 7:30 and are held in the Auditorium of the Quinte Living Centre, 370 Front Street, Belleville

Spring Bus Tour

Bill Hunt is planning another one of his always excellent and sold-out bus tours for this May. The subject will be local geology. More information will follow closer to the date. Also, watch for Bill's upcoming book scheduled to be out in March. It's called *Dancing In The Skies*, about WWI pilots who trained at the air base in Deseronto.

Hastings County Historical Society Directors

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HCHS Website www.hastingshistory.ca

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HCHS MEMBER ADDRESS