



Outlook

Volume 26 Number 2

www.hastingshistory.ca

Issue 349 February 2021

Happy National Flag of Canada Day! February 15, Our Flag Marks 56 Years



It is without question today that Canadians of every age and in every region swell with pride when they see our bold red and white national flag proudly waving from buildings, leading parades and on the shoulder patches of our soldiers. Recognized worldwide as the glorious colours of Canada, with the sturdy maple leaf at the centre, the flag is an immediate identifier of The True North.

But it was not always held in such admiration. Indeed, its birth was a painful and divisive experience with strong emotions on both sides of the argument. Leading the battle—hardly a debate—were Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson, whose goal was to have a new, distinctive flag for Canada's 100th birthday in 1967, and former Prime Minister, John George Diefenbaker, who favoured retaining the Red Ensign with the prominent Union Jack in the upper left corner. Naysayers referred to it as Pearson's Pennant and claimed the prime minister was heading for polit-

ical suicide and was kindling racial conflict in the country. They argued the debate on a new flag would produce only bitterness and even hatred.

This was not the first effort in Ottawa to create a new flag. In 1925 and again in the 1940s, Prime Minister Mackenzie King introduced flag debates in parliament but faced such fierce political backlash, the efforts were abandoned. In these and other flag discussions a key question was which symbol best represented Canada. Many supported the beaver, an industrious animal with a long history in the development of Canada. Others were concerned at having a member of the rodent family representing their country. The maple leaf was suggested, but also had its detractors. However, in the two world wars the Canadian army cap featured the maple leaf, and bit by bit, the maple leaf came to be the favoured symbol of Canada. One more step, in 1921, King George V, on the recommendation of the Canadian government, declared red and white as the official colours of Canada.

In September 1964, Mr. Pearson referred the flag debate to an all-party committee of 15 members. The committee held 41 meetings and reviewed about 5,000 proposed designs before coming up with three finalists, each invoking the maple leaf in different formations. While Pearson favoured a design with three maple leaves, the final choice was for a single prominent maple leaf on a white background with borders of solid red. This design was proposed by George F.G. Stanley, Head of the Department of History at the Royal Military College in Kingston. Graphics designer Jacques St-Cyr added two small modifications, straightening the stem and reducing the leaf's points from 13 to 11 to arrive at the clean, crisp image that we have today.

The subsequent parliamentary debate lasted 33 days

Follow the activities of the Hastings County Historical Society online

 **Facebook:** @HastingsHistory  **Twitter:** @CountyHastings  **Instagram:** @HastingsHistory

Website: HastingsHistory.ca

with 252 speeches. The government was forced to invoke closure to end the debate and move to a vote. On December 15, 1964, by a vote of 163 to 78, the new flag was adopted. Queen Elizabeth proclaimed the new flag on January 28, 1965, and it was officially inaugurated on February 15, 1965.

Happy 56th Anniversary to our proud National Flag of Canada.

Source: *A Short History of Canada's Flag: How the Maple Leaf Trumped Beavers, Igloos and the Union Jack*, written by Bill Kennedy.



Membership Brings Benefits

As we begin a new year, we invite all of our former members and all of our new and long-term friends to consider a 2021 membership in the Historical Society. It comes with some real benefits. Membership shows your support for the work of the Historical Society as we create and carry out so many projects to develop and bring to you the great history of our region.

Also, members receive the 8-page *Outlook* newsletter nine times each year with amazing historical stories of our area, news of coming events and reports on activities.

While COVID-19 has forced us to suspend some activities, the Society remains very busy developing new programs that can be enjoyed without public assembly. One example is the recently launched "Memories Project," to gather your stories from years gone by. Also, the *Outlook* newsletter has not missed a beat during the pandemic; issues have been sent out on schedule.

The membership form can be downloaded from our website hastingshistory.ca.

Join the Historical Society family. We would love to have you with us!

Bridging the Bay of Quinte Gap Part 1

By Richard Hughes

For many of us, drawn by the magnetic forces of the beaches and shops and beautiful rural countryside of Prince Edward County, our road trip begins with a quick shot over the Bay of Quinte via the Norris Whitney Bridge. But this brief passage over the rippling waters of the Bay was not always such a speedy and comfortable crossing.

In the early days, while individuals could row a boat or paddle a canoe across the half-mile of fairly calm water, population growth and the expansion of business, mainly the sale of County produce on the Belleville market, dictated the need for larger and regular means of transit. Not only pedestrians, but also those on horseback, horse-drawn wagons and buggies as well as the movement of cattle and other animals increasingly demanded a safe and regular means of crossing.

In the early years of the 1800s, Benjamin Gerow held a licence to ply his ferry between Ferry Point at Rossmore and Meyers Creek. A bit later Philip Zwick, a well-known local name today, obtained his licence to carry both passengers and goods, as did some others. Competition was fierce and the service, plagued with delays, was less than fully dependable. The motive power was often provided by horses on a treadmill.

In the 1830s, ferryman Alexander Petrie ran into trouble with the law when a circus operator reneged on a deal to carry his animals and performers across to Belleville. Petrie had waited three days for the circus to arrive and when it did, the agent booked another larger ferry to carry them across. A few days later Petrie met the circus agent in Belleville and at gun point, extracted the fee he felt due for the time he waited for the circus to arrive. The agent paid up. Petrie was arrested, charged with armed robbery and sentenced to death. When citizens intervened for him, he was pardoned (fortunately for him), and he continued in his ferry business, later becoming President of the Police Board, the equivalent of mayor.

The haphazard and competitive ferry service took on greater order in 1858 when the Town of Belleville obtained a licence and contracted out the service. After ten years, with traffic growing substantially, a steam ferry was brought into service. But even this

much faster crossing brought problems as the residents of the County felt the fees were excessive and favoured the Belleville side. In response, when Belleville's 25-year licence expired, the Township of Ameliasburgh applied successfully to the government to obtain the ferry licence, purchased a ferry and built a landing dock.

Between the irregular service, complaints over fees and interruptions due to collisions and bad weather,

patience with ferry service was running short. Compounding this, the problems of early winter and spring seasons when the ice was blocking the route but not safe for vehicular traffic, encouraged discussion of a permanent link—a bridge. But that is a story for another episode, next month.

Source: *Bridge on the Bay of Quinte* by Nick and Helma Mika, 1982



Historical Society Announces Great New Medicine for COVID-19 Lockdown



Replacing our monthly Public Presentations at Maranatha, which are suspended due to the COVID-19 lockdown, we are pleased to bring you a series of excellent local, historical documentary films on YouTube:

Ritchie's Folly – The Central Ontario Railway: The story of building the railway in the 1880s and one man's personal obsession with this project. A film by Sean Scally.

Moving Mountains – Blairton Iron: The story of the Marmorata Iron Works, the trains, the entrepreneurs and the hidden secrets of this project. A film by Sean Scally.

Herb Ditchburn – The Man Behind the Name: The story of master craftsman, Herb Ditchburn builder of the finest wooden boats in the world – a Muskoka legend. A film by Sean Scally.

Sons of the Waves – HMCS Trentonian: The story of a Royal Canadian Navy ship in the Second World War, its crew and the townspeople from its namesake – Trenton, Ontario – who supported the ship and its crew from afar. A film by Sean Scally.

Glanmore National Historic Site of Canada – A Victorian Treasure in Our Midst: A virtual tour video featuring highlights of the original 38-minute DVD, created to increase accessibility. A film produced by Gerry Fraiberg in 2012.

Here is the link to the Hastings County Historical Society YouTube channel:

<http://bit.ly/2MoVYDp>

Type this into the address bar of your web browser.



Announcing an Exciting New Program to Preserve Your Memories for Future Generations

The Hastings County Historical Society is announcing a new project for the preservation of local history in Hastings County. Beginning in 2021, the Society is seeking to capture stories and memories of its citizens. The way of life as it was once lived in the county (even the more recent events i.e., coping with the COVID-19 pandemic) can make for interesting and invaluable stories for future generations.

Interested citizens are asked to write stories of 250–400 words, but more or less is welcome. The stories may be typed or neatly handwritten and mailed or e-mailed to the Hastings County Historical Society beginning in January 2021.

Mail: Hastings County Historical Society E-mail: info@hastingshistory.ca
254 Pinnacle Street, 2nd Floor
Belleville, ON K8N 3B1

Ideally, we hope to obtain “two thousand and twenty-one stories.” A person may submit more than one story. Stories may be published in the *Outlook*, the Society’s newsletter appearing nine times a year. The submission should be accompanied by the author’s name, address, phone number and e-mail should permission for publishing be needed in the *Outlook* or in the future. All stories will be saved in the Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County.

Possible stories could include, but certainly are not limited to the following:

Laundry	The Telephone
Before Television	Saturday Night
Snowstorms	The Day I _____
The Home Front	School Days
The Games We Played	Christmas
On Our Street	When Times Were _____
I Remember	The Baseball Diamond

We are also asking you to co-operate, if you are able, by sharing information about this project with other residents (and former residents) of our county. We are looking for stories from all across Hastings County, but we wish your area to be well represented. With your help, we can create a wonderful bank of stories that reflect the experiences, wisdom and history of the people of our county.

Please join us in creating a treasured assortment of stories of life as it was lived in the county.



Samuel Thomas Greene and the Students at Deaf U

By Orland French

I was poking around Belleville Cemetery recently when I discovered that one of Belleville's prominent early citizens has two plaques to his name. I had found a pathway opening my eyes into lifestyles at modern deaf schools.



Portrait of Samuel Greene hangs at Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf

The memorials celebrated the life of Samuel Thomas Greene, the first Deaf teacher to teach deaf children in the Ontario school system. Right here in Belleville, at Sir James Whitney. He's still teaching, in a way. Follow me on this. If you're a deaf teenager, especially follow me. It'll pay off.

The first plaque is in the most obvious location, outside Sir James Whitney School at 350 Dundas Street West, the place of his employment from 1870 to 1890. That's when it was called the Ontario Institution for the Education and Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb. It was as cumbersome and as politically incorrect a name as ever could be concocted, although in those days "dumb" meant, correctly, being unable to speak.

This plaque, erected by the Ontario Heritage Foundation, tells you Greene graduated in 1870 and he came

directly to teach at the new provincial school for deaf children in Belleville.

It outlined his philosophy of teaching: "Believing that the education of deaf children should be based on solid language skills, Greene devised a progressive and highly successful method of teaching that used sign language and written English. Co-founder and first president of the Ontario Association of the Deaf, he was renowned for his eloquent public addresses and poetry recitations in sign language."

But this plaque doesn't relate some other salient details.

The second monument I found, on his grave under a fir tree in the Belleville Cemetery, tells you Greene was an American, a native of the state of Maine. He was a graduate of the National Deaf-Mute College (now Gallaudet University) in Washington, D.C. He was the co-founder and first president of the Ontario Association of the Deaf in 1886. He was noted not only for his excellent teaching skills but also for his talents in sign language, poetic signing, art, carpentry, athletics and leadership.

I don't know who funded this memorial, but it concludes with a jarring reference to Greene's tragic demise. He died at the age of 46 from injuries sustained in an iceboat accident on the Bay of Quinte in 1890. He was thrown from an iceboat, a very popular sporting activity at the time, and landed on his head on the ice. He died 14 days later. The Deaf and hard-of-hearing community acknowledges his contributions to deaf teaching in Belleville; there is a Greene Street off Ponton in the west end that commemorates his family. The city named it within the "Wallbridge Estates" because his wife, Caroline, was a Wallbridge descendent.

That was the end of Samuel Thomas Greene's teaching, except that his techniques and his philosophy no doubt live on. And so, 110 years later, after I visited his grave and read the headstone, I turned to the internet to track down Gallaudet University, his alma mater. How's it doing today?

Everything's up to date at Gallaudet, thank you very much. On its website, Gallaudet (Gal-luh-det) says it is the only university where students live and learn in American Sign Language (ASL) and English. And they use all the words of modern teenagers. All of them. There's a trailer starring seven Gallaudet students, titled *Deaf U*, which is available on Net-

flix. Naturally, I looked it up on Netflix and I was immediately drawn in to a Deaf student lifestyle a long way from anything envisioned by Greene. I don't know if Greene had a sign for the f-word. (I don't mean to be cute or impolite, but this is what I found. It seems to be an effort by Gallaudet to show that Deaf students are like any others.)

So, if you're a Deaf student and you want to know how your colleagues are living at Deaf U, take a look. You don't need the sound, so you can turn it off in case there are any language-sensitive people (i.e., parents) around. But your friends are going to love it.

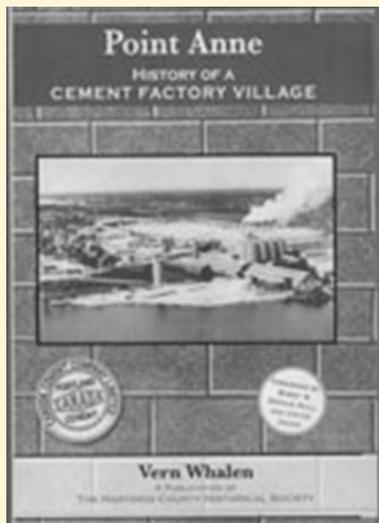
SPOILER ALERT. Contemporary mores. Very modern lifestyles.

Orland French is HCHS past-president who has developed the Society's website on historical plaques. He says you never know where a stuffy old plaque is going to lead you! Graze around our website: hastingshistoricalplaques.ca

The Belleville Public Library has a book entitled *Samuel Thomas Greene: A Legacy in the Nineteenth Century Deaf Community* by Clifton F. Carbin and published by Epic Press in Belleville.

It's Reading Time Again

By Michelle Hutchison



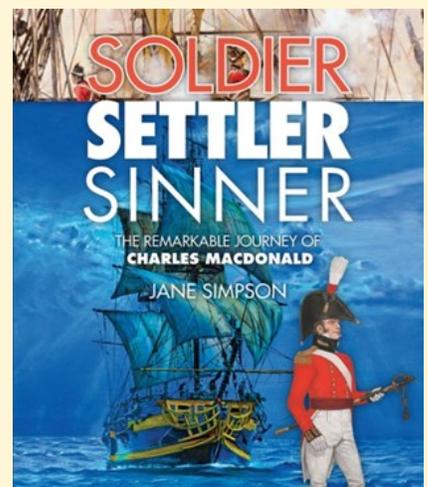
The winter months are coming to an end, but the pesky cold and snow persist. With COVID-19 restrictions keeping us in our homes, your search for excitement may begin here!

First known as Ox Point, with its rich cache of limestone, in the early 1900s, Point Anne was home to the second largest cement plant in Canada. Author Vern Whalen grew up in this “village built on rock.” *Point Anne: History of a Cement Factory Village* traces the story of a company town that, in its heyday, had some 600 residents. Share in the tales of its heroes and its legends. Learn about its triumphs and its tragedies. Find out why, for folks who spent time there, Point Anne will forever hold a place in their hearts.

106 pages, \$20

Captain Charles MacDonald was somewhat of a rogue. His many escapades, beginning with the Royal Marines during the Napoleonic Wars, led him from Northumberland County in England to the Caribbean and finally, to Point Anne on the shores of the Bay of Quinte. Through all of his exploits, Charles always managed to land on his feet. Jane Simpson, author of *Soldier Settler Sinner* takes us on a captivating journey, often tinged with a hint of scandal, as she recounts the saga of her ancestor, his legendary travels and his many adventures. Along the way, readers are treated to a glimpse of life—its customs and its culture—as would have been experienced by Captain MacDonald. Come along; join in for a unique excursion into history.

148 pages, \$30



Pick up your copy of these two fine books at the Community Archives in the Library/Archives building, 2nd floor.

Showcased in the October edition of *Outlook, Belleville in the First World War*, published by the Hastings County Historical Society, is also available at the Community Archives. You will also find it at Chapters at the Quinte Mall, Belleville and at Books and Company in Picton.

Belleville's Early History in 60 Seconds

By Richard Hughes

The Quinte district is so very rich in history: tales of the colourful people, the amazing events and the stories of building the cities, towns and villages of our area. But, in the electronic age of this 21st century, it might be more appealing to some to reduce key aspects of our history to the short "bites" so popular today. Also, with the basic facts from this short story, you can impress your friends with your amazing knowledge of Belleville's history. Let's recall the first roughly 140 years of history in 60 seconds.

In the 1780s the earliest settlers arrived at the mouth of the Moira, and from 1785 to 1790 called their home Singleton's Creek after Captain George Singleton, one of the first Loyalists to arrive. From 1793 the settlement was referred to as Meyers Creek, in honour of Captain John W. Meyers who had built a lumber and grist mill on the Moira. In 1816, the settlement of 150 people changed its name to Belleville, likely after Lady Bella Gore, wife of the Lieutenant-Governor of the province.

By the 1830s, it was a flourishing community of about 2000 people, but still had no sidewalks, ditches or drains and no sanitation—a muddy, stinky mess. In 1836, to bring some order to the community, it was incorporated as a Police Village, with Billa Flint as President of the Board of Police (mayor). Two years earlier, the *Intelligencer* had been established.

The 1840s were boom years in the lumber town with plank roads to Cannifton and Trenton and a ferry to Ameliasburgh. In 1850, Belleville was incorporated as a town with Benjamin Davy as its first mayor. Six years later the Grand Trunk Railway arrived in Belleville, ushering in a further period of rapid growth.

On January 1, 1878, with a population of 11,000, Belleville was incorporated as a city with Alexander Robertson taking up the mayor's chair in the stately city hall which had been constructed just five years earlier.

With the arrival of the 20th century, Belleville's gas street lights were replaced by electricity, and the first automobiles arrived to the horror of the horse population. Belleville's population, which had decreased in the late 1800s, again reached 10,000 and by 1913, postal delivery service had begun. Belleville entered the new century with a solid foundation built on the first 140 years of settlement.



Corbin Lock Company

By Richard Herrington

Believe me, I've got a lock on this story!

I spent most of my working career at the Corbin Lock Company in Belleville, but in reality, I caught only the tail end of the Age of Locking in Belleville.

Charles Springer started the trend in 1910. Familiar with the hardware industry, he founded the Springer Lock Company at 180 Coleman Street in Belleville in 1910. From 1910 to 1917, he was the managing director, while Mackenzie Bowell (*Intelligencer* publisher and, much earlier, prime minister of Canada) was president. When Bowell died in 1917, Springer took over the business.

Springer sold the business to the American Hardware Company and began to make locks under the division name Corbin Lock Company of Canada.

Meanwhile, the Belleville Lock Company (formerly the Belleville Hardware Company) had been formed at 270 Pinnacle Street. In 1931, it was purchased by Sargent and Co., becoming Belleville-Sargent until 1947. It enlarged to produce marine hardware and was purchased by the American Hardware Company in 1947. In 1956, the American Hardware Company was renamed the International Hardware Company. It produced locks under the name of IHC of Canada.

I started at Corbin Lock right out of high school in 1964. I was friends with Brian Burley whose father was purchasing manager at International Hardware. He hired me to work in the inventory control department.

There were three divisions of the company: Corbin Lock, Russwin Lock and Kwikset Division. Kwikset was located in Anaheim, California, and we ordered fully assembled locks from them.

International Hardware was a multimanufacturing facility, along with sales, engineering, inventory control, typing order department and purchasing. It had a lock assembly department for the different product lines, a foundry, machine shop, press room and a plating department as well as packing and shipping.

The second floor of the manufacturing part of the plant was dedicated to making and assembling safety deposit locks, and was extremely busy.

My duties when I started included determining from the sales of different product lines, what parts were required to make those products, posting the results to card records, then determining from previous ex-

perience how many to keep on hand. If necessary, I would then place orders for the parts either from our own manufacturing departments or from our parent company Emhart Corporation located in Berlin, Connecticut, USA.

Our department consisted of a purchasing manager, assistant purchasing manager, four inventory control clerks and a typist.

In 1981, I became assistant purchasing manager and then purchasing manager in 1985.

Travelling with the company came with the new job. Driving to Berlin, Connecticut, was sometimes necessary to pick up parts required in a hurry. It was about an eight-hour drive each way. We also travelled to different manufacturers to see if we could have parts made cheaper. One time we flew to Wallaceburg, Ontario, in a rented four-seater plane. It was quite an experience flying over Toronto in that small plane.

Salesmen were frequent callers, especially salesmen for the transportation business as we shipped all over Canada. Other suppliers also called on us. I especially remember when I first started as a manager, some of the suppliers suggested we should not change as you can imagine some incentives were in place.

Safety standards were not great. By today's standards, we would have had to shut down the plant, as chemicals in the plating department were spilling onto the floors. Water was continually running to wash these chemicals down the drain into our sewer system. There were no masks or other safety clothing worn. These situations were also prevalent in the press room, foundry and machine shop.

And, of course, the flushed-out chemicals went straight into the Moira River.

With the competition from overseas and the new materials and methods being developed to make door hardware cheaper and faster, changes were coming.

We were bought out by Black and Decker and moved to Trenton in 1989, discontinuing the manufacturing side of the lock business. Eventually we closed our doors in 1991. By 1990 most of the buildings on Coleman Street had been demolished, with the exception of the office, the Billa Flint building, which still remains.

Richard Herrington is a resident of Belleville.



Note to Authors—By submitting material to be printed in the *Outlook*, the author confirms that he/she holds both legal and moral rights to the material, and grants permission to the Hastings County Historical Society to use this material in print and/or electronically. The opinions expressed in articles submitted to the *Outlook* are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Hastings County Historical Society, its Board or its members.



HASTINGS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY DIRECTORS & OFFICERS

Officers

President	Richard Hughes
Vice-President	Stanley Jones
Treasurer	Dan Atkinson
Secretary	Trevor Parsons

Directors

Jim Kennelly	Jonathan Chircop
Gary Foster	Gerry Fraiberg
Diane Godbout	Gary Nicoll
Steve Young	

Ex-officio:

Gerry Boyce (Historical Advisor)	Orland French (Past-President)
Amanda Hill (Archivist)	

Sub-committees

Banquet	Richard Hughes
Book Sales at Public Presentations	John Lowry
Buildings Advisor	Lois Foster
Bus Tours	
Education	Trevor Parsons
Exhibits/Events	Stanley Jones & Jonathan Chircop
Historic Plaque Website	Orland French
Membership	Elizabeth Mitchell
Outlook Production	Donna Fano (Layout)
	Laurel Bishop (Editor)
Outlook Distribution	Elizabeth Mitchell
Plaque Projects	Orland French assisted by Gary Foster
Publications for Sale	Michelle Hutchison
Publicity (Print Media)	Diane Godbout
Social Media	Jonathan Chircop
Website	Heidi Rooke
Website address:	www.hastingshistory.ca
Community Archives	613-967-3304
Hastings County Historical Society	613-962-1110

Hastings County Historical Society has its offices in the Library/Archives building at 254 Pinnacle Street, Second Floor, Postal Code K8N 3B1. *Outlook* is published nine months of the year for members and friends of the Society. Submissions can be sent to:

outlook.hastingshistory@gmail.com