



Outlook

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President's Message

Do you recall the U.S. Army recruiting poster from the World War Two days showing Uncle Sam with very sharp facial features, pointing his finger and saying, "I want you!"? This was a very effective campaign. My mind turned to this poster as I have come to realize that the great success of the Historical Society has brought with it a greater need for occasional helpers.

Often interesting projects are proposed which would be valuable and interesting to undertake, but we are hesitant to move forward as they require a few extra helping hands to carry them out. At the same time, I am sure that many of our members and friends would be willing to help out with single tasks from time to time. An opportunity to take part in the work of the Society without taking on long term obligations.

How to match the tasks with the helpers? Would it be possible for our members and friends to let us know if they would be willing to pitch in occasionally? What do you think of this?

If you would be willing to consider pitching in with a specific task from time to time, would you let me know! Send me an email (rmhughes@cogeco.ca) or phone (613-961-7772) and we can have a chat.

Richard Hughes
President



Historical Society volunteers participating in the annual "Treasures from the Archives" presentation at the Society's April event. Front Row, L to R : Mary Jane Throop, Kieran Delaney, Adele Dibben, Jeanne Delaney, Lois Foster, Lorna Garbutt, Marney Black, and Elizabeth Mitchell. Back Row, L to R: Sharon White, Katharine Mills, Nick White, Bill Kennedy, Al Cleary, Lindi Pierce, Annis Ross, Gerry Boyce, Diane Sule and George Pearce.

Photo: Nick White

Treasures of the Archives A Visual Presentation

Society volunteers provided their audience at the HCHS April event with a kaleidoscope of visual presentations in old photographs and documents from the archives. Subjects covered included Harry the Fire Horse, aerial views of Belleville from 1919, the Forin family collection, Gwen Lazier's trip on horseback to Washington, James Collip, Billa Flint, the War of 1812, and the scanning and digitization of archival material. The presentation was an excellent reminder of the importance of preserving our past.

Orland French Lightly Roasted, Gently Toasted

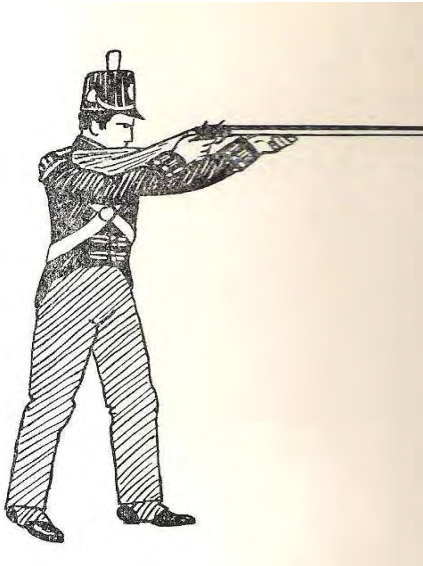


See page 3 for details about the event for Society Past President Orland French to be held at Dinkel's Restaurant in Belleville on Tuesday, June 19, 2012.

Captain Meyers and the War of 1812

The Home Front

By Doug Knutson



Just over a year ago, Nick White brought us a fascinating “Minus 100” featuring an *Intelligencer* article that looked back another 100 years to 1812, – essentially a “Minus 200”! The article described “The good old times in the hamlet of Meyers Creek” including the “parade state of Capt. Meyers Company at Kingston in the War of 1812.” This intrigued me: I had long heard that Captain John Walden Meyers had served as an officer in the Upper Canada Militia. This would make sense for a man with such an illustrious military career and a penchant for leadership. General E.A. Cruikshank, the source of much of the later work on Meyers, says:

“When the militia of the county was organized about 1798, he was, as a matter of course, appointed captain of the local company and seems to have held that command until the beginning of the war in 1812 as his name appears in an official list of officers and soldiers in service. He was then succeeded by his son, George Walden Meyers, who was promoted to be major . . .” However, I have never been able to

find any supporting evidence for this. With the help of several people, for example, Gerry Boyce, Maj. Rob Bradford, Peter Johnson and most notably, Randy Saylor, I delved into this question. (Okay, I asked the questions and Randy did the work.)

This area's first militia was created by Lord Dorchester in 1787 when we were still part of Quebec. The Upper Canada Militia was created in 1793, and the Hastings Militia Company was formed in 1798. All of the Meyers sons - George, Leonard and Jacob - appear in a 1799 list of officers, but not their father, John. By 1800 Jacob Walden Meyers had become a captain in the Hastings Company. As his father had the same initials as he had, it seems that John Walden Meyers was mistaken as the “Captain J. W. Meyers” in the *Intelligencer* article. But why was Captain John W. Meyers, the Hans Waltimeyer so feared by the American Rebels in the Revolution, not involved in the defence of his new home?

All males from sixteen to fifty (later to sixty) were enrolled in the Upper Canada Militia. Former soldiers like Captain Meyers would be obvious choices as militia officers and many of Meyers' veteran contemporaries did in fact become militia officers. So why not Meyers? William Gray in “Soldiers of the King” cites several reasons for exemption from militia service. These all apply to John W. Meyers case:

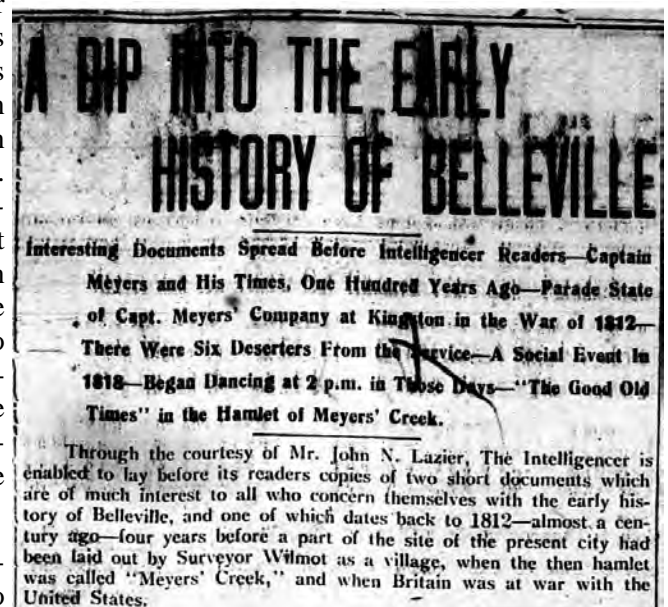
“magistrates . . . half pay officers . . . employed seafaring men . . . one miller per grist mill. . .”

Furthermore, Meyers was fifty-three years old when the Hastings Militia was formed. He was getting close to the exemption age. By 1812, he was sixty-seven. Perhaps he felt he had done his time and that he had sacrificed enough. Yet Gray continues:

“Though these men were exempt many did in fact hold commissions in the militia.”

Somehow a “get-out-of-jail free card” doesn't seem to fit John Meyers. He was an energetic leader in so many other areas of community life right up to his death that it seems unlikely he would try to find a loop-hole to avoid militia service.

Some other experienced and distin-



guished Loyalist officers, for example, Justus Sherwood and Edward Jessup, were passed over as officers by Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe for the Upper Canada Militia. I wonder if Meyers could have been in the same boat. Perhaps the British were looking for fresh blood. Or were there other, more sinister motives involved? There were plenty of rivalries and jealousies among these


early leaders. Meyers certainly had his share of enemies and rivals! More on that next time. But for whatever reasons, I think it's pretty safe to say that Captain John Walden Meyers was not directly involved with the local militia as it faced the outbreak of war 200 years ago.



Doug Knutson is a documentary filmmaker. He is producing a biography on Captain Meyers called "Damned Rascal". His website is:

www.windsweptproductions.ca.

For more information you can read Randy Saylor's page on the about the Militia Acts of 1787 and 1793 in Quebec and Upper Canada : <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~saylormowbray/militarymilitiaacts.html>



Hastings County Historical Society Presentation

ORLAND FRENCH APPRECIATION NIGHT

Lightly Roasted and Gently Toasted

To Express Appreciation for 10 Years of Creative and
Progressive Promotion of Local History and Heritage

Location: Dinkel's Restaurant,
44 Bridge Street East, Belleville

Date: Tuesday, June 19, 2012

Time: Drinks and Chat 6 to 7 pm

Special Guest Speakers & Social Evening 7 to 9 pm

Hors D'Oeuvres
Cash Bar

Tickets \$20

Tickets available from Greenley's Book Store or from
Richard Hughes 613-961-7772 and Anne Rector 613-966-7288

From the Minutes of the City of Belleville, March 22, 1948:

Council made payment of \$12.75 to **W.C. Mikel**, K.C., in full payment for injuries suffered when he fell into an excavation at the corner of Church and Bridge Street East.

This amount to be charged to the Bell Telephone Company.

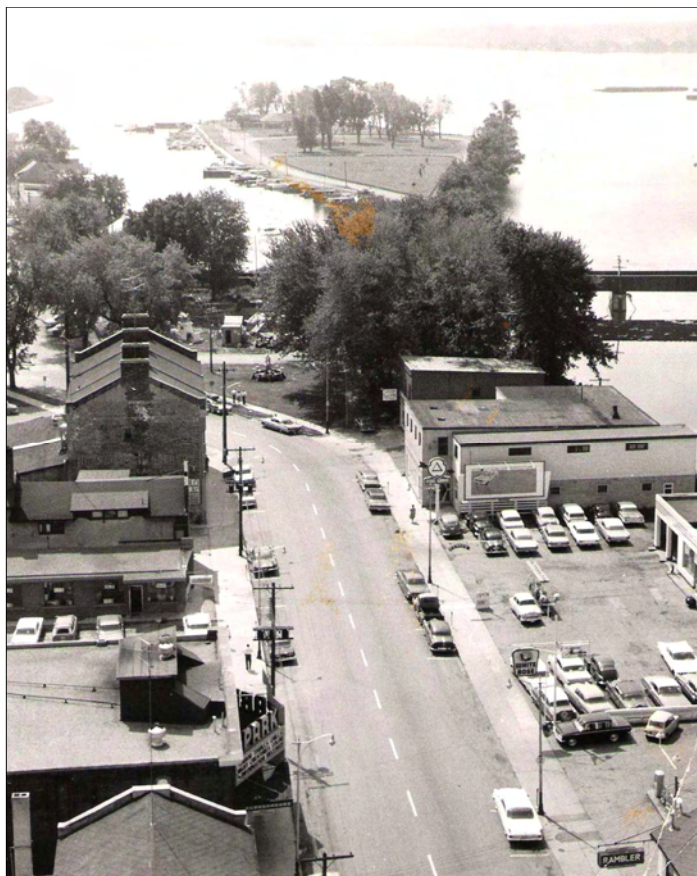
Lieutenant General A. Chester Hull

Former Hastings County Historical Society Treasurer A. Chester Hull died on April 9, 2012 at the age of ninety-two. During WWII he served as a bomber pilot, was awarded the DFC, and at age twenty-five became Senior Operations Controller of 6 Group (RCAF) RAF Bomber Command. Chester, who continued to serve with the Air Force after the war, went from supervising a billion dollar Air Force budget to supervising one of a thousand dollars for the Society. Meetings of the Society's Board of Directors, of which Chester was a member from 1985 to 1987, were sometimes held at his house on Rednersville Road in Prince Edward County. Chester also served as National Commissioner of the Boy Scouts and was president of the Quinte Arts Council. His

Frank LaMorre King of Quinte's Bootleggers

By C.W. Hunt

In June of 1927, Prohibition came to an end in Ontario. The Ontario Temperance Act had been passed during the First World War, and continued in force for a period of ten years. While the Act had led to a



This undated photograph shows Front Street looking south where it curves towards Dundas Street and before the construction of the vehicle bridge across the Moira River. The LaMorre operation was located just north of Clapp's Garage where the "Dunlop" sign hangs over the sidewalk at the very bottom right corner. *Photo: William Taylor Hunt*

significant decrease in alcohol consumption and much less public drunkenness, it did lead to widespread bootlegging and facilitated the rise of organized crime.

But the province did not return to the easy liquor access and wide-open bars of the pre-Prohibition period. The old-style bars were not allowed to return.

If people in a community wanted licensed drinking, a plebiscite had to be held; to win, the wets needed a majority of 60 percent. Then, and only then, would licensed hotels be allowed to serve beer - no wine or hard liquor was served. There was a room for men and one for ladies and escorts. You had to be twenty-one years of age and not on a prohibited list to obtain entry. Hours of operation were strictly regulated.

Each year an Ontario resident wishing to purchase wines or hard liquor had to purchase a liquor booklet in which all purchases were recorded by a clerk in the LCBO store. After the customer had filled out a request on a form provided, a clerk went into the back of the store to get the requested product which he then placed in a brown paper bag. The customer was obligated to take the purchase directly home, and only then to sample its contents. The whole procedure carried a stigma, as if one were carrying out some barely legal but quite immoral act. During the Second World War, the amount of alcohol one could purchase was strictly limited. Moreover, even after the war, people working long hours often found it inconvenient, if not impossible, to get to the LCBO store during its regular hours. The stores closed at 6:00 p.m. during the week and were not open Sundays or after 1:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

Not surprisingly, this system led to a great deal of bootlegging. In one of his poems, Al Purdy wrote about Belleville's taxi drivers and how they could get a thirsty man a mickey on a Saturday night. There were bootleggers in every part of town but the majority could be found in Foster Ward and in Hillcrest, also known as "Stoney Lonesome."

When I was researching my book *Booze, Boats, & Billions*, I heard many stories about bootlegging. Most bootleggers were small operators, often bootlegging as a convenience for the customers of their regular legal businesses such as a taxi company or a convenience store. The markup charged was usually small; it was not highly profitable.

But there were exceptions. The largest operator was Frank LaMorre. He and his two brothers operated a taxi business, a car sales and repair business, plus a confectionery store at 43 Dundas Street East in Trenton. Alex LaMorre owned the confectionery business, brother Bill operated the car business, while

Frank ran the taxi business. All three enterprises were operating prior to the Second World War. In the early years of the war, Frank and Bill expanded into Belleville, opening a garage and taxi business at 140 Front Street just north of the Cities Service station and Ralph Clapp's garage. Flying Officer and Spitfire pilot Jack Hart told me that Frank was the only brother involved with bootlegging and that his taxi drivers were kept busy driving all over the county supplying a wide variety of customers. Some of the orders were for quite expensive liquors, including champagne.

Jack Hart did his training in Trenton and learned about the bootlegging part of the operation while there. It was Jack who told me about the wide-scale

operation of Frank's bootlegging business; a lot of young airmen got their supply through LaMorre's taxis. As LaMorre's had a fleet of taxis, the drivers handled a large volume of alcohol. How they obtained so much distilled liquor is unclear, but it is almost certain that Frank dealt with someone at Corby's distillery. In an upcoming issue of *Outlook*, I will examine the role of distillers and breweries in the bootlegging business.

Could these young men in the photograph on the right be some of LaMorre's patrons caught in a raid by the Belleville constabulary? Were they found without their liquor booklets? Are they bootleggers themselves? Or just friends getting together for a good time? To get the bigger picture turn the page.

HC09648



Bus Tour, June 6, 2012



Hastings County Historical Society Presentation

Bus Tour To Historical Highlights of Cobourg Area

**Guided with Commentary by
Local Historian Peter Brotherhood**

See where Susanna Moodie arrived and stayed also Charles Dickens & the Prince of Wales; visit the 1911 train station; see where Sir Stanford Fleming designed Canada's first postage stamp; tour the fabulous Victoria Hall and see the replica of London's Old Bailey courthouse; tour actress Marie Dressler's home and the newly renovated Cobourg Museum.

Bountiful lunch and Rest Stops included.

Departure Quinte Mall (North Parking Lot)
Wednesday, June 6, 2012 at 8:30 am
Returning about 5:15 pm

Tickets \$60.00 available from
Greenley's Book Store, 258 Front St, Belleville
and from Bill Hunt 613-962-4611.

This Issue of *Outlook* The 50th for Editor



Historical Society volunteer Mary Jane Throop presents a cake to Bill Kennedy at the Society's April meeting. This May edition marks the 50th *Outlook* to be produced during Bill's tenure as the newsletter's editor. The first *Outlook* was issued in February 1981 and the speaker on that occasion was Bayside Secondary School Vice-Principal, John Melady. His talk was on the British Chemical plant explosion in Trenton in 1918. *Outlook* has been going strong ever since. Back issues can be seen online on the Society website.

Major John Norton, the Cherokee Scot Taught Native Children in Quinte Area

By John Lowry



Major John Norton (above) was a Mohawk chieftain of mixed Cherokee and Scottish parentage who was an important military leader and crucial contributor to several of the British victories in the War of 1812.

John Norton was born near Dumfermline, Scotland in the late 1760s. His father was a Cherokee who had been abducted by English troops while they were burning his village during the British campaign against the Cherokee nation in the Anglo-Cherokee War of 1758-1761. His father later served with the British army and ended up in Scotland. Norton's mother was an Anderson; apparently her father was a farmer in the area of Dumfermline.

In 1784 Norton left home and travelled to Ireland where he enlisted in the British army the following year. His military service took him to Quebec, and then to Fort Niagara. Sometime in 1787 he deserted near the end of his enlistment and ended up at the Mohawk settlement on the Bay of Quinte where he was a teacher of native children until 1791.

From there he travelled west to become a fur trader and travelled extensively throughout the Ohio region making numerous contacts with the First Nations communities there. On his return to Upper Canada around 1795 he became an interpreter for the Indian Department at Fort Niagara and worked with Joseph Brant, leader of the Grand River Mohawks. He learned the Mohawk language and became a strong advocate for the Six Nations and their land claim negotiations with the British government.

In 1804 he sailed back to Britain where he made friends in the abolitionist movement and helped the British and Foreign Bible Society translate the Gospel of John into Mohawk. On his return to North America two years later he made a 2,000 mile journey to the southern United States to trace his Cherokee roots and met his father's sister and other relatives. When the War of 1812-1814 broke out he joined Major General Sir Isaac Brock at Detroit, took command of native fighters from the Six Nations, and went on to play a crucial role in the Battle of Queenston Heights where Brock was killed.

In 1816 Norton returned to Upper Canada where he received a commission as a brevet major in the British army and retired to a large farm near Grand River. In 1823 he came to believe his wife guilty of sexual misconduct and ordered a young Indian named Big Arrow off his farm. In the ensuing argument a duel was fought, Big Arrow was wounded and died a week later. Norton was convicted of manslaughter and fined twenty-five pounds. He left his wife and travelled south to the territory of Arkansas. Despite some correspondence home, he never returned to Grand River.

Norton spoke several native languages, translated Sir Walter Scott's *Lady of the Lake* and several books of the Bible into Mohawk, wrote a history of the Mohawks, completed a journal of his travels and served variously as a military commander, schoolmaster, Indian Department interpreter and Mohawk chieftain. He is believed to have died somewhere in the southern United States.

Reclaiming Our Story

The Madoc Meteorite By Sara Hailstone

What connects the town of Madoc in Hastings County to Paris, Philadelphia, and Rome?



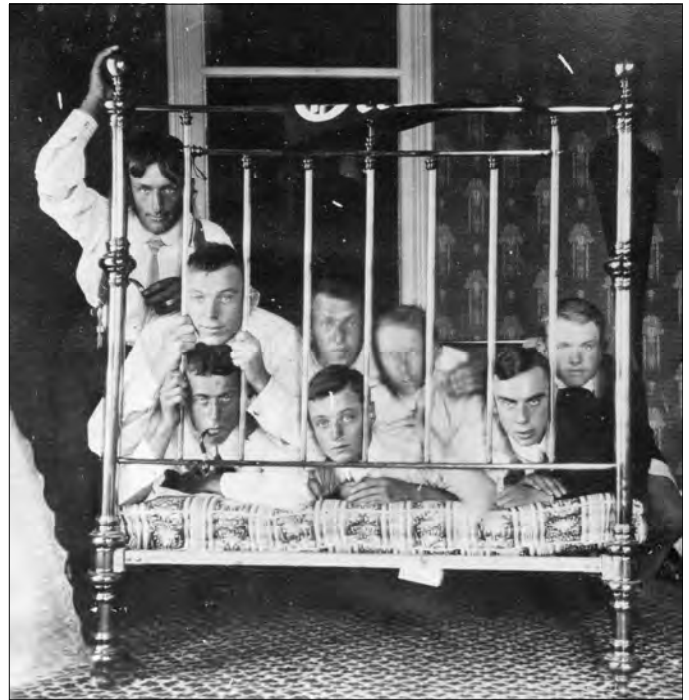
The Madoc Meteorite

A rock, or more precisely, a 167.8 kilogram meteorite that was unearthed by a Madoc farmer in 1854. The discovery quickly aroused the interest of the Geological Survey of Canada and the following year the celestial treasure was spirited out of town by two of that organization's representatives, Sir William Logan and Thomas Sterry Hunt, and then shipped across the Atlantic to the Paris Universal Exposition where it was viewed by over five million people. Two decades later it was at the World's Fair in Philadelphia and somewhere along the way a slice of it ended up at the Vatican in Rome. In 1995 it was front and centre at the Planétarium de Montréal and a few years later on exhibit at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. In the summer of 2004 it reportedly made its way back to Madoc for a short visit. It is the second largest meteorite to be found in Canada.

The meteorite is composed mostly of plessite, an alloy, and 7.5 percent nickel. Scientists first believed it to be an example of its own classification, which they identified as "madocite." Later the analyses showed that the presence of plessite did not justify creating a new class of meteorite.

Ultimately, the story of the "Madoc Meteorite" is one of ownership, and the absence of this story in a proclaimed local identity. Perhaps only few had the chance to view this incredible piece of Canadian geological history in the very space it was discovered. The historical record vibrates with political power. A small rural village did not have the capabilities to exhibit and allow access to the study of this meteorite. Instead, it was purchased from a farmer who is only remembered now as 'unknown.' The crux of this power dynamic is that the Madoc Meteorite is remembered, but the inhabitants of the very town of its discovery were not given the opportunity to remember anything of it really. For additional information go to <sara-hailstone.suite101.com>.

Boarding House Blues?



It's highly unlikely there is any connection between this merry band of bedfellows and Frank LaMorre (see pages 4 and 5), but perhaps an overcrowded University of Toronto fraternity house? Regrettably, this archive photo comes down to us with no attached history so we don't know the motivation for the gathering. The chap on the left at the bottom of the pileup is apparently comfortable enough to smoke his pipe.

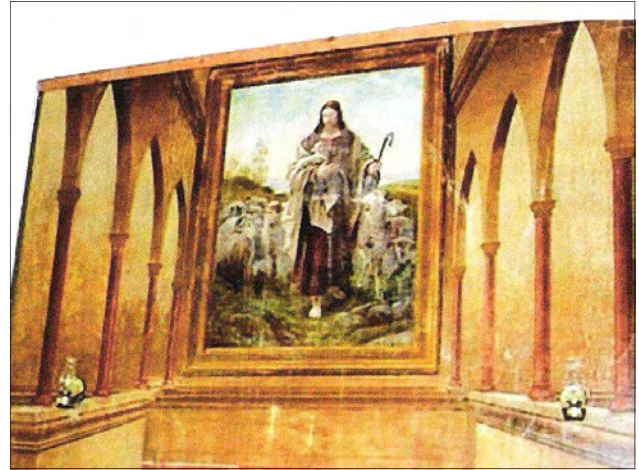
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Moira Community Centre Mural Restoration Project

The wall mural, "The Saviour with a Lamb," was painted directly on the wall in the original Moira United Church, in 1915 by Wilhelm Fritzen, a German refugee. The rare and unique art treasure, one of a small number of iconographic pieces left in rural Ontario and part of Ontario's cultural history, is in urgent need of structural repair if it is to be preserved. About 1952, several Moira residents witnessed Manley MacDonald, a leading Canadian artist, surface cleaning and touching up the painting.

In 2010, the restoration of the building, which is now owned by the Municipality of Centre Hastings, was completed. The building now serves as an active community centre. The group, "Centre Hastings People Helping People," are caretakers of the building; renting the facility for weddings, meetings, and private functions on behalf of the municipality.

On April 11, 2012, an appeal was made by Linda



Farrell, a member of the Moira Hall Restoration Committee, to Centre Hastings Reeve Owen Ketcheson and council members to consider finances to support the stabilization and restoration of this piece of art. Two fine art conservators and an art student from Queens University have provided a detailed "Examination Report, Treatment Proposal and Cost Estimate." The request is currently under consideration by the Centre Hastings Council.



Hastings County Historical Society Presentation

Topic: The War of 1812:
Events Near Quinte and Actions Along Lake Ontario

Guest Speaker: Major John Grodzinski, CD, PhD
Assistant Professor, Royal Military College, Kingston

Special Feature: Five Historical Re-enactors
in Full 1812 Uniforms will Participate

Hear the stories of the engagements and activities of the War of 1812 in this area and on Lake Ontario as the Newly Independent United States Faced Off with the British Army and the local Militias.

Date: Tuesday, May 15, 2012
Time: 7:30 p m
Location: Quinte Living Centre Auditorium
(North Corner Door)
370 Front Street, Belleville

Everyone Welcome, Bring a Friend
Visit Our Website: www.hastingshistory.ca

HASTINGS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY DIRECTORS

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HCHS Website	www.hastingshistory.ca
Heritage Centre Phone No.	613-962-1110

Hastings County Historical Society is based at the old township office in Cannifton. Please address mail to General Delivery, Cannifton, ON, K0K 2K0. *Outlook* is published eight months of the year for members and friends of the Society. The editor, Bill Kennedy, can be reached at email <kennedycounty@gmail.com>

MEMBER ADDRESS