



Outlook

Volume 19 Number 1

www.hastingshistory.ca

Issue 285 January 2014

Rescuing HMS *Speedy*

by Donna Fano



Speaker Ed Burtt stands beside the display of *Speedy*.

Photo - Donna Fano

Interest was high at the Quinte Living Centre on November 19 when HCHS members and guests attended Ed Burtt's presentation on his efforts to locate the wreck of HMS *Speedy*, which sank off Presqu'ile Point on October 8, 1804. Work has been underway for decades to recover the artifacts and remains of the ship from the bottom of Lake Ontario, off Brighton.

Ed Burtt, founder of Ocean Scan Systems, a high-tech underwater search company, has discovered dozens of wrecks in the Sophiasburgh Triangle west of Prince Edward County. This area of the lake was infamous for its apparent ability to swallow ships whole. After years of searching, Ed Burtt finally located *Speedy*; she had been dragged by wind and waves some considerable distance from the rocks where she foundered.

In October 1804, HMS *Speedy*, under the command of Captain Thomas Paxton, was en route from York to

Newcastle, a distance of 150 kilometres, when she ran into a sudden vicious storm. The captain had protested that *Speedy* was ill prepared for the trip as she was rotting and full of leaks. Nevertheless, he was under pressure to deliver important passengers for a trial scheduled to take place in Newcastle, site of a new district courthouse. The prisoner was Ogetonicut, a Native from the Rice Lake area, who was charged with the murder of a white trader.

When the schooner approached the entrance to Presqu'ile Bay, she encountered heavy northeast winds and snow squalls. The captain was forced to continue east in an attempt to turn *Speedy* and sail back into the bay where Newcastle stood. He thought he had steered clear of the submerged rocks known as the Devil's Horse Block, but didn't realize the compass readings were being thrown off by as much as 22 degrees, a phenomenon caused by the magnetic fields on the lake bottom. The impact gashed a large hole in *Speedy*'s hull, and the ship, crew and passengers disappeared forever into the black water. Over 20 passengers and crew perished: the shackled prisoner, the trial judge, Ontario's first solicitor general and other government officials, a police officer, witnesses and two children. Their bodies were never recovered.

While artifacts could not be touched or collected in accordance with international law, Ed was permitted to photograph them strewn on the bottom. Photos were taken of cannon balls, chains, anchors, acorn buttons, clay pipes, a pair of eyeglasses, coat of arms, coins, hinge for the hatch, and the bow of the ship, her beams and two broken masts spread over the site.

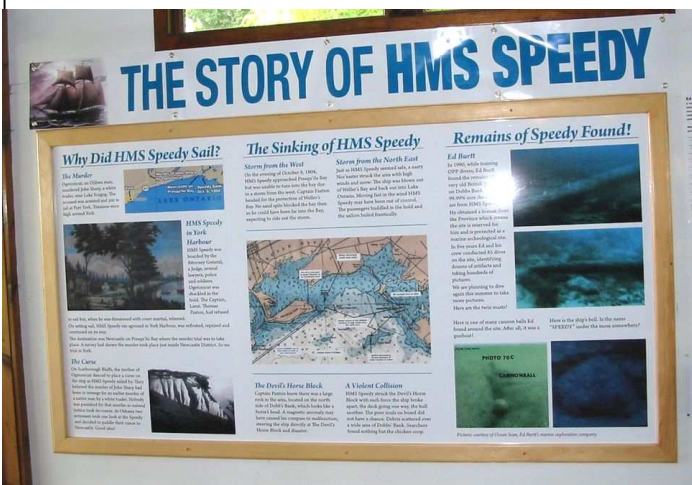


HMS *Speedy* Foundation sigma shown on Burtt's jacket

Even a pair of moccasins with a chain attached was observed. A large trough on the lake bottom caused by the dragging anchor was visible. While Ed is convinced the wreck is *Speedy*, he can't prove it until the muck is scraped off the ship's bell to reveal the ship's name. Further facts that indicated the identity of the ship were the presence of cannon

balls scattered about the lake bottom; *Speedy* was the only warship sunk in the area.

The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport regulations dictate that nothing can be recovered from the site until a government-funded public display venue is found. After eighteen years of waiting, in the summer of 2012, Burt was finally provided with a display space at the Lighthouse Interpretive Centre at Presqu'île Provincial Park for HMS *Speedy*. This attracted many visitors. His company made an attempt to dive down to *Speedy*'s site that summer to get new high-quality digital underwater photographs, but the summer's winds produced murky dark water conditions, preventing success for the expensive project. Once they obtain updated photos, an archaeologist will be called to the site to document the whole area, and then Burt and his crew can begin bringing the artifacts up for the display at the centre. Ed Burt has been invited by Parks Canada to set up artifacts and more display material next summer at the visitor centre, due to the high interest in *Speedy*'s story.



Display of HMS *Speedy* Marine Heritage Foundation in the Lighthouse Interpretive Centre this past summer
Photo by Ed Burt

The sinking of *Speedy* altered area history. Newcastle was to be the capital of the district, but after the tragedy, the town was deemed unsuitable. Perhaps concerns about the suitability of the harbour were to blame, or was it the story of the curse? Ogetonicut's grieving mother was said to have performed a "witch dance" on the Scarborough Bluffs as the ship carrying her son passed by on the way to the trial. Many believed this to be the cause of the sinking. Whatever the reason, plans for the Newcastle site were abandoned, and Cobourg became district capital.



St. Agnes Manor

(No. 2 in an occasional series about Belleville's lost heritage buildings)

By Lindi Pierce



Family of Billa Flint in the St. Agnes Manor garden
HC04968

Adaptive reuse is a new approach to preserving important heritage buildings in an economically viable way. But how new is it? Architectural sleuthing done by local building researchers has discovered buildings burned and rebuilt on the original foundations, façades and cladding changed, storeys and wings added—the kind of adaptations that make tracing the evolution of a building not for the faint of heart. The story of one very fine address in Belleville's Old East Hill reminds us that our built heritage has always evolved. St. Agnes Manor, which once stood proudly at the corner of Ann and Bridge Streets, was lost forever in 1973.

In 1861, prominent businessman and industrialist, politician and soon-to-be Canadian Senator Billa Flint left his 1835 brick home at 180 Coleman Street (which still stands), and moved into a large new home befitting his wealth and status in Belleville's most prestigious neighbourhood. Architect John Forin likely used pattern-book plans to create the picturesque building in the Italian Villa style popular in the late 1800s. Italianate details included deep bracketed eaves, paired and triple round-headed windows, and the three-storey Tuscan tower crowned with a lantern. An awning roof with stylized pennant-shaped trim (a medieval touch) adorned a balconette on the tower's front face.

Upright Billa Flint elected to retain the more "chaste" conservative symmetrical façade of the earlier Classical

revival style. The front doorway was staunchly centred, graced by a portico with classically inspired pediment. Flint also chose brick over the white stucco of the style, inadvertently avoiding too close a resemblance to picturesque Bellevue, a well-known Tuscan Villa in Kingston, home of his political adversary John A. Macdonald.



Group of students including Beatrice Lillie - top row, far right corner
HC04915

St. Agnes Manor was constructed in local red brick, with quoins of marble quarried near Bridgewater/Actinolite, a village whose marble church and school were both endowed by Billa Flint. In picturesque fashion, a delicately proportioned verandah encircled the house almost completely. The five acres of grounds were treed, and a round pond was created from a local water source, judging by the cedar tree nearby. An Archives photo of the Billa Flint family shows the sloping and treed lawn, vines climbing the verandah, and a glimpse of the genteel but formal life beside the pool at St. Agnes Manor.

The May 1860 issue of the *Hastings Chronicle* reports on the new building, with its gaslight, hot water heating, “every convenience such as bathrooms, closets” and the wide mahogany staircase rising from the spacious vestibule. The home boasted a library and a greenhouse, and was built at a cost of \$8000.

In 1878, the home passed to industrialist brothers Alec and Colonel James Brown, whose iron foundry was doubtless the source of the ornate cast-iron fence which encircled the property, renamed Elmpool, in their day. Miraculously, this elegant fence escaped the scrap drives of both World Wars, and can still be identified in modern photos.

In 1903, local force-for-good Mrs. F.R. Lingham purchased St. Agnes Manor/Elmpool, and set about creat-

ing a prestigious school where “girls could be prepared for the duties and responsibilities of life by careful training along lines of broad intellectual culture (*The City of the Bay, Belleville and her Industries. Daily Intelligencer, 1909*). The “founder and directress” had a three-storey addition built on the building’s south side adding a “chapel, art-room, dining room, room for domestic science, infirmary and sleeping apartments.” Contemporary photographs show a rather Spartan reception room and a basement dining room with silver, flowers and white table linen. Appropriate to the rural nature of Bridge Street in the era, the school grounds contained “a fine orchard, a vegetable garden, and a poultry yard.”

Thirty-five to forty boarders and a similar number of day students were instructed by nine live-in teachers and a number of visiting specialists. Prim uniforms, carefully chaperoned outings, ample physical culture, and recreation in the treed private grounds were on offer.

As befitting a city long known for prestigious educational institutions (first School for the Deaf was established in 1870, Albert College received its charter in 1866). St. Agnes Manor’s pedigree and associates were top-drawer. The patron of the school was the Lord Bishop of Ontario. The Advisory Board was composed of two MPs, an MD and a Reverend. Staff selection was critical to building prestige for the school. “Lady Principal Miss F.E. Carroll” had served at Bishop Strachan School, and qualifications of instructors were touted: Toronto Conservatory of Music; Royal College of Music, London; School of Art and Design, Toronto; Art Students’ League, New York.



View from Bridge Street

HC05020

The school’s prospectus (an undated copy resides in our Archives collection, another at Queen’s Archives can be viewed online) yields insights into the attitudes and aspirations of society. “This School was founded that there might be a place, easily accessible to the people of

Eastern Ontario, where girls could have a thorough education and a happy home life surrounded by refining influences, and where they could be trained morally, physically and intellectually.”

The prospectus emphasized musical education: Conservatory Examinations for the year numbered 23 piano, 4 violin and 13 theory exams. Special courses (extra-curriculars?) were Singing (\$12 per term), Organ, Piano or Viola (\$12). Domestic Science and Needlework with Matron (\$4) and Drawing and Painting provided additional refinement.

The course calendar contains a fascinating look at education for girls and women. In addition to the three R's, first formers absorbed Church Catechism, Nature-Studies and Object-lessons. In Form II, Drawing and Needlework were added, and by Forms V and VI, Latin, Grammar & Rhetoric, Roman History and Euclid paved the way for possible Matriculation with Honours.

Details were business-like. Term fees were from \$5 to \$12 “strictly in advance,” Board and Laundry, \$45. The school offered a 20 percent discount for daughters of clergymen. The school year was divided into four terms: Michaelmas, Christmas, Lent and Trinity. A set reception day and visiting day were scheduled. Necessaries for resident students: “an umbrella, rubbers, waterproof, wrapper, bed-room slippers, two bath towels, two laundry bags, toilet soap, napkin-ring, and teaspoon (for use in room)” were to be “plainly marked.”

No doubt many Belleville and Hastings County families can remember stories of aunts and grandmothers who attended St. Agnes Manor. One not-so-favourable recollection came from a student who attended around 1914. Beatrice Lillie, who became an internationally loved stage and screen personality, reportedly found St. Agnes a bit stuffy and rule-bound. She recounts some escapades of the romantic kind in her autobiography *Every Other Inch a Lady*. A well-known photo of the school reveals a uniform-clad figure standing on the balconette of the tower—could that have been our prankish entertainer?

The school closed in 1920. Inevitably, as condo conversions and retirement villas were not yet reuse options, St. Agnes Manor was carved into 21 apartments. The building's last years are less well documented, but inevitably, rising costs for maintenance of the architectural features of an aging building led to the familiar downward spiral from neglect to demolition.

In 1971, a fire in one of the apartments might have led to concern about its safety because by 1972, the structure yielded to the 1960s and 1970s imperative for modernization and was demolished to create space for a highrise apartment building. A parking lot replaced the

former gracious gardens, and St. Agnes Manor, its heritage significance unimpeachable because of its association with Billa Flint, Beatrice Lillie, Belleville's educational history, and the lives of so many of its girls and women, was no more.

*As always, I am indebted to Lois Foster for the use of her research files.

* All quotations from *St. Agnes' School – Elmpool, Belleville*

When Furs Tamed the Canadian Winter

Part 1: Woodley Furriers, the Early Years

By Richard Hughes

It was mid-October 1904, and the afternoon train from Montreal, belching black smoke and hissing white clouds of steam, had just glided into the Belleville Grand Trunk station. Among the passengers to step down that day was 32-year-old George T. Woodley, along with his wife, Ada, and their five young children.



Mr. George Woodley
Submitted by Doug Woodley

They were returning from Montreal where George Woodley had lived for the past decade; had married his Belleville-born sweetheart, Ada Mary Inman, in 1896; and had welcomed their first five children. Although George had been raised in a family of bricklayers and stone masons—his father and grandfather, both James, had followed this trade—during his years in Montreal, he had studied the craft of furrier. George Woodley immediately launched himself into the business in Belleville, first operating from Charlotte Street but soon opening a store at 273 Front Street.

A visit to Woodley Furriers in the early years of the 1900s would soon reveal the many facets of the business and the amazing range of products available to the buyer. Entering the store, customers were bathed in the soft yellow light of the large gas chandelier above the main showroom area. Guarding the outer walls was a series of wax mannequins draped handsomely in full-length muskrat, Persian lamb, electric seal and Hudson seal coats. Tables were stacked with fur collars, cuffs,

muffs and hats. Towards the back of the store were great piles of dried and stretched skins awaiting shipment to the fur manufacturers in Toronto for tanning. Leaning against the back walls were newly arrived pelts, fully extended on great oval wooden stretchers.



Interior of Woodley's store Submitted by Doug Woodley

George Woodley's store was also a manufactory, custom-making coats and other fur items as well as providing a repair service. At that time, fur coats and hats were equally attractive to men and women; of particular interest to the men were the large warm muskrat coats. The muskrat pelts were bought directly from local trappers, farmers and Native people at a time when the Bay of Quinte area teemed with these water-loving rodents. They were then stretched and dried before being shipped to Toronto for tanning. Woodley's regularly sent shipments of 200 to 300 pelts at a time.

A picture of the range of furs carried by this store was given in a report by Chief Constable Alex Kidd when the store was robbed on January 17, 1924. Chief Kidd circulated the list of stolen goods which included 22 coats of Hudson seal, Persian lamb, electric seal, muskrat and coon, along with 42 Persian lamb skins, 76 skunk skins, 18 raccoon skins, 38

 A vintage advertisement for "WOODLEYS FURRIERS" featuring "NORTHERN MUSKRAT COATS" for \$175. The ad includes a detailed description of the coats' quality and availability. At the bottom, it lists the address "273 FRONT STREET".

WOODLEYS
FURRIERS

NORTHERN
**MUSKRAT
COATS**

\$175

.. There is a great demand for Muskrat Coats this year, particularly the Northern rat. This Coat gives excellent service, is very warm and very beautiful. Our assortment is very large comprising models for the school girl to the matron. The skins are worked in plain and all the fancy designs and linings are of brocade. These Coats are regular \$225 values. Select yours now and get the advantage of a warm coat for these cold days.

WOODLEYS
273 FRONT STREET

Daily Intelligencer ad November 12, 1926 for ladies' Muskrat coats suitable "for the school girl to the matron"

mink skins, 35 squirrel skins among others. Note the predominance of fur skins which pointed to the tradition of custom tailoring the coats for the individual customers. The thief was caught in Montreal and the furs ultimately returned.

Furriers were also creative marketers, and assigned attractive names to some common sources of furs. For instance, Hudson seal coats were made from sheared and dyed muskrat pelts. Surprisingly, Canadian sable and Alaska sable were actually made from skunk pelts. While the label was required to show the true source, classy names raised the social appeal of the product to a whole new level.

George T. Woodley operated his highly successful and growing business during the dynamic early decades of the twentieth century while raising a family of nine children. When he retired, the business passed to three of his sons: Harold, Arthur and Russell Woodley. We will pick up the rest of the story in Part 2 next month.



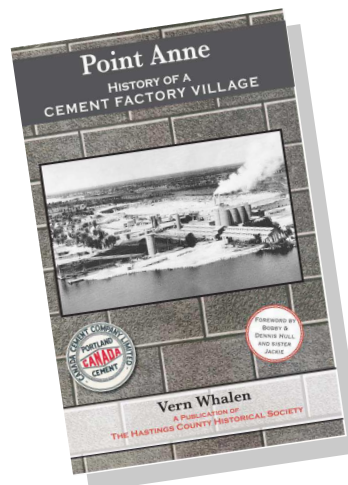
Point Anne Book

A Few Noteworthy Appreciations

By Vern Whalen

The recent spectacular success of the book *Point Anne: History of a Cement Factory Village* would not have been possible without the support of three retail sales outlets. Solely as a community gesture to help the Hastings County Historical Society, they offered to sell our book. I might add that they also did this enthusiastically without seeking anything in return. They are as follows:

- ⇒ Manager Karen Baptiste and crew at **Bayview Variety (Free Flow)** on old Hwy 2 East near Shannonville
- ⇒ Owner and Publisher Mrs. Jean Morrison and Mary Newton at **The Napanee Beaver** in Napanee
- ⇒ Owner Anil (Andy) Vadhera at **Rolufs Travel & Camera** on Front Street in downtown Belleville



Along with the appreciation of the Hastings County Historical Society, I wish to add my own very personal thank you to all three. Their gesture of kindness and cooperation has not gone unnoticed. We ask all members of the Society to patronize these special businesses.

*Ghost Towns & Pioneer Villages
in Our Backyard - Part II*
**Hastings County Historical
Society ANNUAL BUS TOUR**

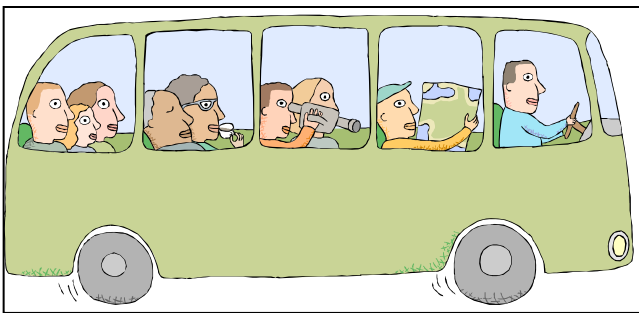
Saturday, May 24, 2014
(NOT the long weekend)

Come away for another day in a luxury Franklin touring coach, and be transported back in time as you explore more about the mysterious disappearance or decline of many of the thriving villages of nineteenth and early twentieth century Hastings County. This tour is the second in a series of three focusing on *Ghost Towns & Pioneer Villages in Our Backyard*. (Last year's demand for tickets was so brisk that two busloads were sold out by mid-February.)

Resident historical sleuth Bill Hunt and other colourful commentators will give you the scoop on what rural Hastings County used to be like. Take a closer look at places you have passed by without realizing what they used to be! Check out places you never thought of visiting!

Our ticket includes a delicious lunch, two pit stops and lots of fun as you explore the secrets of life in Halloway Heights, Wellman's Corners, Harold, Bonarlaw, Springbrook. Learn what drove men to sink their lives and what wealth they had into backwoods places like Cordova Mines and Marmora. Why was a stone church in the woods left to go to ruin? What happened to the thriving communities of Chatterton and Tucker's Corners?

The cost for this day-long excursion is just \$65, which includes lunch. Limited seating. (These trips usually fill up quickly, so don't delay!)



**Bill Kennedy Gives
Presentation in Deseronto**

On November 12, 2013, the Historical Society was invited to the Tyendinaga Home Support Community Wellbeing Centre of Deseronto to present *Men and Women of Hastings County Who Served in the Great War 1914-1918*. The presentation was in commemoration of this year's World War I Centennial and the people from Hastings County who served on the Western Front in France and Belgium. More than thirteen million soldiers from both sides were killed, wounded or missing. In the Battle of the Somme alone, which lasted from July to mid-November in 1916, Allied casualties were 620,000, while Germany's were 450,000.

Two men from Tyendinaga Township were highlighted: Private David Green and Lance Corporal John Kennedy. Green, born in 1892, stood five foot eight inches tall and weighed one hundred and sixty-five pounds when he enlisted with the 157th Battalion in February 1916. By the end of that year, he was in France. He was wounded on April 10, 1917, the second day of the Battle for Vimy Ridge, and succumbed to his wounds on May 1. His family initially had been advised that he had been killed on April 10, and the army had stopped his pay on April 25. The family later received a letter from the Canadian government correcting the error.

Kennedy was a Belleville policeman and later an employee of the Grand Trunk Railway before he enlisted with the 59th Battalion in July 1915. He survived numerous battles including Vimy Ridge. He wrote home to his wife: "The air is so full of shot and shell that I don't think a fly could come across without getting hit . . . If I lived forever I could not forget what I have seen in France." Kennedy was wounded in the Vimy Ridge sector in January 1917, but within a month was back in the line. He survived the war but would never make it home. Two weeks before his departure date for Canada, he contracted bronchial pneumonia and died.

Green and Kennedy are but two of a number of men and women the presentation highlights. This presentation will continue to be available throughout 2014 to any organization or group who are interested in hearing it. Further information can be obtained from the Historical Society at 613-962-1110. A longer write-up of the presentation can be found in the November issue of *Outlook*.

Written by Bill Kennedy

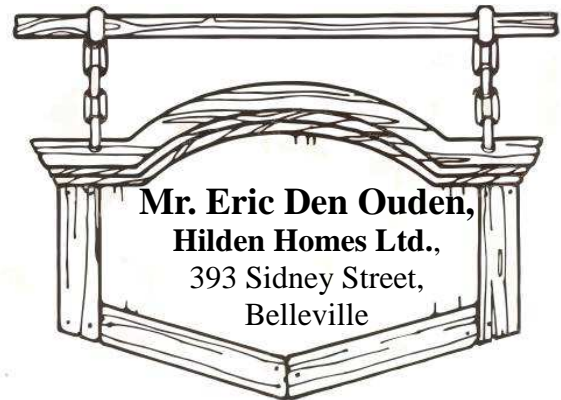


Many Thanks Go to Our Sponsors!

The Hastings County Historical Society's Annual Banquet and Celebration of Local History on October 26 was an immense success and we are deeply grateful to the generous community-minded sponsors:

Allan's Auto Repair, 112 Station Street
Bel-Con Design Builders Ltd., 10 Dundas St. West
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Mr. John Stockton, CIBC Wood Gundy,
 199 Front Street

Patronize Our Sponsors



Holiday Cheer *By Sharon White, Photos by Nick White*

The Archives Volunteers celebrated their accomplishments in 2013 at a year-end get-together that provided a welcome opportunity for socializing, nibbling on holiday treats, and general merrymaking. Most of the volunteers from the Archives and the Historical Society Board of Directors attended, with a few other honoured guests and partners.

Many thanks to all who contributed their time and talents to the work of the Archives in 2013: Laurel Bishop, Marney Black, Gerry Boyce, Breanna Brethour, Ann Butryn, Al Cleary, Jeanne Delaney, Kieran Delaney, Adele Dibben, Donna Fano, Lois Foster, Lorna Garbutt, Sarah Herren, Richard Hughes, Janet Johnston, Matthew Lutz, Renée McWilliam, Katharine Mills, Elizabeth Mitchell, Bobby-Jo Morris, Annis Ross, Erin Ryan, Diane Sule, Mary Jane Throop, and Nick White. Special thanks to Lois Foster for hosting our year-end celebrations, to the Historical Society Board of Directors (always supportive and helpful), and to the many others who have assisted with special projects, including Rick Garbutt, George Pearce, Lindi Pierce, Peter Ross, and Barb Throop. It is a pleasure to work with you all!



Some of the many celebrants at the holiday get-together in December 2013 to honour the Archives Volunteers

The Mystery of the Royal Oaks

The Historical Society is putting together the amazing story of the Royal Oaks and we need the help of our members and friends to gather local information. The story of the Royal Oaks goes back to 1937 and the coronation of King George VI at which time acorns were gathered from the trees at Windsor Castle and shipped to the Commonwealth countries to commemorate that great event. Horticultural societies across Canada propagated the acorns and grew the seedlings which were then given to schools for planting with much ceremony. The same process occurred upon the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953.

Some of these Royal Oaks were planted in Belleville and Hastings County, and the one that we are most familiar with is located on the grounds of the former Cannifton-Corbyville Public School. The Historical Society would like to assemble information on the local Royal Oaks in order to preserve this piece of history when our schools were linked to the Coronations of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth II.

Do you recall the Royal Oaks? Can you remember when and where they were planted? Are there any photographs or newspaper clippings of the events? We would very much appreciate any input you might be able to offer. You can email president@hastingshistory.ca, or phone Richard Hughes at 613-961-7772.



Hastings County Historical Society Presentation

**Special Guest Speaker:
Paul Kirby**

Topic: Author Paul Kirby presents the amazing life and times of Billa Flint, Magistrate, Member of the Legislative Assembly of Canada (pre-Confederation), Belleville Mayor and Senator after 1867. He was renowned as a builder of Hastings County and Belleville.

Date: Tuesday, January 21, 2014
Time: 7:30 p.m.

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

Bring a friend!

Website: www.hastingshistory.ca
Email: president@hastingshistory.ca

Deadlines for Submission to the February *Outlook* Newsletter

Jan. 29 - Final submissions of articles and photos for the February *Outlook* newsletter are due. Early submissions are most welcome.

Feb. 5 to 7 - *Outlook* newsletter goes to the printer.

Feb. 10 - Newsletters are picked up and the preparations for mailing are done by Archive Volunteers on the same day.



Submissions can be made online to
outlook.hastingshistory@gmail.com

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Hastings County Historical Society is based at the old township office in Cannifton. Please address mail to 154 Cannifton Rd. North, General Delivery, Cannifton, ON, K0K 2K0. *Outlook* is published eight months of the year for members and friends of the Society. The editor, Donna Fano, can be reached at the email address below, <outlook.hastingshistory@gmail.com>