



# Outlook

Volume 6 Number 7

Issue number 179, October 2001

## 125th Anniversary of the Bay of Quinte Yacht Club, and the story of the *Atalanta*

by Elizabeth Mitchell

Susan Smith says she likes to get really involved in whatever she does. About twenty years ago, when the commodore of the Bay of Quinte Yacht Club (BQYC) decided it was time to clean up, and was about to throw out boxes and boxes of original documents, pictures from the 1800s, and other historical materials, Susan protested. With an interest in the history of the Bay of Quinte, she realized that there was valuable material in the files. So it was that she became the historian of the yacht club.

The Bay of Quinte Yacht Club is 125 years old, the inaugural meeting having been held September 13, 1876. Thomas Kelso was the first commodore. The yacht club was very small at first, and had no meeting facilities, so they met at the Dafoe House, on the site of the former Hotel Quinte. One of the most important members was Alexander Cuthbert, an entrepreneur who designed, built, and skippered 15 yachts, including two America's Cup entries. He was quite poor, but he could convince anyone to invest in his boats, which won him a lot of money, with which he paid off his debts, so that he could then go out and get backers to enable him to build more boats.

In its early years, the BQYC had only 11

boats. Unlike today, where boats are owned by individuals, back then, groups of men owned the boats. And it was only men who sailed at that time, not women. Although members included such prominent citizens as Sir Mackenzie Bowell and Henry Corby, sailing was not restricted to the very rich. In fact,

But back to Alexander Cuthbert. His first entry in the America's Cup race had been the *Countess of Dufferin* in 1876. Then in 1881, he challenged the New York yacht club again with the *Atalanta*. The boat was still unfinished when they started down to New York, building it as they went. Because of its con-



The Belleville waterfront from the north (probably the city hall tower) circa 1880. The island in the top right, now Victoria Park, was the site of saw mills for many years. Sawdust generated by the cutting of lumber was used to build the road which now connects the island to the shore.

the Wednesday afternoon downtown store closing, still within the memory of many of our Historical Society members, originated back then so that the store owners could go sailing.

Although boat racing continued, the club became dormant in the 1920s, and did not become active again until after World War II. At that time, they owned a very bedraggled building at the end of Victoria Park, which Senator Corby had built for the citizens of Belleville in the late 1920s. It was then being used as a swimming pool, but the pool was cracked, and water seeped in from the bay. The city could not afford to maintain it, so in 1951, the men of the yacht club got a lease from the city on the land at the end of Victoria Park. They tore down most of the building, filled in the swimming pool, and built a new building, largely without city help.

dition, it was nicknamed the "Great Canadian Mud Turtle." The US challenger was the *Mischief*, a well-maintained boat with a professional crew. Cuthbert had no money to buy top-quality sails, so the *Atalanta* had used sails. But they gave the US boat such a run for its money that the New York club changed the rules the following year, so that no freshwater boat could take part in the race. They were probably afraid that the next time, Cuthbert would beat them.

Although the *Atalanta* didn't win, Belleville became renowned in the world of yacht racing. The yacht club has made a proposal to the Ontario Heritage Foundation to put up a plaque in Victoria Park to commemorate, not just Cuthbert and the *Atalanta*, but the fact that this area has been so important in small craft building, producing boats that were

*Continued on page 2.*

### Next Meeting

Tuesday, September 18,  
2001

#### Guest Speaker

Sue Smith

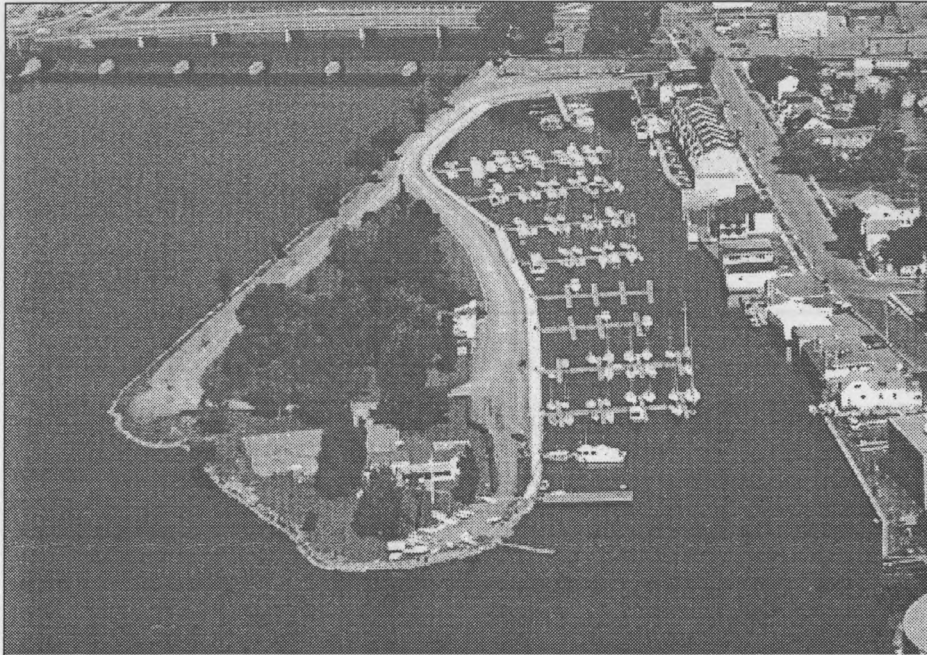
Topic

125th Anniversary of the  
Bay of Quinte Yacht Club

Refreshments at 7:30 p.m.

Meeting begins at 8 p.m.

The Hastings County Historical Society, General Delivery, Cannifton, Ontario K0K 1K0



Victoria Park and the harbour in the 1980s viewed from the south. The Bay of Quinte Yacht Club is at the tip of the park at the bottom of the photo.

## Where is the Atalanta now?

*Continued from page 1.*  
known around the world.

And what happened to the *Atalanta*? She went on to win many freshwater races. There are conflicting stories about where she ended up. One says that the *Atalanta* was sold to a group in New Orleans. The other says that she was sunk deliberately in the harbour in Detroit, Michigan.

As a postscript to the story of the *Atalanta*, Hazel and Michael Shaw have just returned from England where they took part in the America's Cup Jubilee. The Bay of Quinte Yacht Club was invited to participate because of Cuthbert's entry in the 1881 America's Cup race. Although they were racing against bigger and better boats, some with professional crews, they did well, with an overall standing of 21st out of 42. (Cuthbert didn't have a fully trained crew either.) And in the spirit of Alexander Cuthbert, they raised all the money themselves. More than once while they were in England, they raised a mug for Captain Cuthbert.

**DON'T  
FORGET**

**It's almost that time again.  
Time to renew!**



Please complete this form, or a photocopy of the form if you wish to save the newsletter, and bring it with your payment to the Society's next general meeting (third Tuesday of each month except June, July, August and December), or send it by mail to the Hastings County Historical Society, 154 Cannifton Road North, General Delivery, Cannifton, Ontario K0K 1K0

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

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### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES:

Individual	\$20.00 _____	Life Member	\$150.00 _____
Family	\$25.00 _____	Corporate Sponsor	\$ 50.00 _____
Senior/Student	\$15.00 _____	Women's Institute/ Organization	\$ 20.00 _____
Senior Family	\$20.00 _____		

I also enclose a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ toward the work of the Society.

*The Hastings County Historical Society is a Registered Charity. Official receipts for Income Tax purposes will be forwarded to you with your membership card.*

# The Hastings Heritage Centre is open for business!



The actual historic moment of the Hastings Heritage Centre's opening on Monday, September 10, 2001, was captured by The Community Press photographer LeeAnne Vance. Tipping the toll gate beam is Hastings County Historical Society President Hazel Lloyst Shaw. Looking on are Susanna Moodie (aka Eleanor Jourard) and George Benjamin (aka Lee Jourard).

Photo and story courtesy *The Community Press*

by LeeAnne Vance

**Belleville** - Susanna Moodie and George Benjamin were spotted in Cannifton Monday without the services of a medium. That the 19th century Bellevillians—Benjamin was publisher of *The Intelligencer* and Moodie a noted author—were in each other's company was the second miracle of the day as the two were said to be on less than friendly terms when alive.

Lee and Eleanor Jourard donned period costume to stand in for Moodie and Benjamin for the opening of the Hastings Heritage Centre in the former Thurlow Township municipal offices at 154 Cannifton Road North. The centre, that will be open to the public, houses much of the Hastings County Historical Society's archives and will serve as the organization's head office.

President of the Hastings County Historical Society (HCHS) Hazel Lloyst Shaw told the 40 or so gathered in front of the brick building for the official opening, "Within these walls you will find much of the history of Hastings County."

Mayor George Zegouras called the opening of the centre, "Another step forward to preserving the history of the Quinte area."

Volunteers put in countless hours in the preservation and cataloguing of local records

and were thanked for their efforts. Folks like Gerry Boyce, an integral part of the HCHS since it was formed in 1957, were publicly acknowledged for their efforts in preserving area history for future generations.

MPP Ernie Parsons offered a "thank you to the volunteers who keep history alive and relevant."

And Shaw offered an invitation to all to use the services of this valuable resource. "I encourage everyone to come out and learn about the history of Hastings County," she said.

Notable collections housed at the centre include the Mika Collection—pictures, clippings and manuscripts relating to Hastings County, Canadian railroads, and United Empire Loyalists from Belleville publishers Nick and Helma Mika. There's a local newspaper collection including some 19th century papers not available elsewhere, City of Belleville minute books (1836-1860, 1896-1959), bylaws (1850-1931) and assessment rolls (many from 1864-1980). The centre also houses the Boyce Collection, source materials for Gerry Boyce's publications like *Historic Hastings* and *Sidney Township 1790-1990*, and hardware catalogues for the Corbin, Springer and Sargent Lock Companies. There are also oral history tapes from interviews with older residents conducted in 1975.

The heritage centre will be open for researchers Mondays. The hours for the remainder of the year are October 15, 29, November 12 and 26 from 1 - 4:30 p.m.

MPs Lyle Vanclief and Larry McCormick, MPP Ernie Parsons, Quinte West Councillor Ron Hamilton and Thurlow Ward Councillor George Beer were also on hand for the opening along with a number of past presidents of the HCHS.

## Looking ahead

Tuesday,

November 20, 2001

### Guest Speaker

**Paul Adamthwaite**

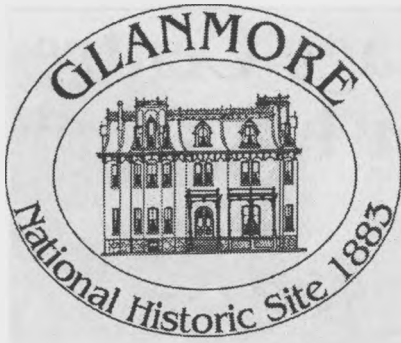
Topic

Shipping In Prince Edward  
County

Refreshments at 7:30 p.m.

Meeting begins at 8 p.m.





# G LANMORE

National Historic Site

257 Bridge Street East,  
Belleville, Ontario K8N 1P4  
(613) 962-2329

## Historic Halloween Celebration

Sunday October 28th, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Bats in the rafters, cats on the prowl,  
Ghosts in the parlour, oh how they howl;  
Is Glanmore haunted? You must decide.

Put on your costume and seek where they hide.

Spirits and goblins are out in full force at Glanmore's 2nd annual family Halloween party! Come in costume and discover how Halloween was celebrated 100 years ago. Fortune tellers, games, crafts and more will delight the entire family.

Admission: \$3.00 per person.

## Christmas is Coming...

Pre-registration is now open for popular Christmas programs held at

Glanmore National Historic Site:

Adult Craft Workshop, Sunday December 2nd, 2001 - 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Create a beautiful Victorian-style kissing ball to hang for Christmas. All materials, including greenery ribbons provided. Pre-registration required. Cost: \$25.00

Children's Christmas Celebration, Sunday December 9th, 2001 1 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Ages 5 to 10

All sorts of Victorian fun will be had at Glanmore's Children's Christmas Celebration.

Children will enjoy stories, visit with Father Christmas, play Victorian parlour games and make a simple gift for a very special someone. Pre-registration required. Cost: \$3.00 per child.



## Yuletide Candlelight Tours

Friday, December 14, and  
Tuesday, December 18, 2001  
6:30 p.m.

Enjoy a tour of Glanmore by candlelight, as the historic house is beautifully decorated for the holidays. Traditional Christmas refreshments will be served. A special appearance by Father Christmas himself will make the evening complete for both the young and the young at heart. Pre-registration required. Cost: adult/\$5.00, children/\$2.50.

Outlook is published for the friends and members of the Hastings County Historical Society.

It is edited and produced by Lewis Zandbergen.

Anyone wishing to submit articles or information may contact the editor at 613-395-3022, or E-mail lewzan@reach.net

Thank you to *The Community Press* for its assistance.

PLEASE NOTE!

The Deadline for the November issue is October 20, 2001

mailing label