

**Next  
Meeting**

**Tuesday,  
March 21,  
1995**

*Auditorium of the  
Quinte Living Centre,  
370 Front Street,  
Belleville*

**7:30 Coffee  
8:00 Meeting**

## **Guest Speaker Steve Geneja**

**Author of**

*The Canadian  
Cruiser Uganda*

Steve joined the Canadian Navy in 1942 at the age of fifteen; he had tampered with his birth certificate. In 1942 he began service aboard the HMCS *Uganda* as an anti-aircraft gunner. In the fall of 1994 after years of research Steve completed and published his book about the *Uganda*. Steve will outline the history of Canada's largest fighting ship and recount some of his experiences aboard during World War II.

*The public and  
members are  
cordially invited*

**ISSUE 125**

**March 1995**

# **Outlook**

**The Hastings County Historical Society**

## **The "House Lady" speaks**

When Bill Hunt introduced Lois Foster as guest speaker on Heritage Day, February 20, 1995, he commented that she is sometimes known as "the house lady." It's a small wonder because Lois is noted for her knowledge of Belleville's buildings and houses. In 1976 she was one of the founding members of The Hastings County Historical Society's Building Research Committee.

Lois' presentation concerned Jonathan McCurdy, Belleville pioneer and Front Street merchant. In 1981 Lois began her research on the McCurdy house and in 1994 she was

asked to present the results of her research at a McCurdy family reunion. She began her talk by showing slides of Belleville history including early maps. The jog of Victoria Avenue at Pinnacle Street occurred when the road ran to the south to avoid a hotel. On the 1816 map Victoria Avenue was known as Hotel Street.

In 1826 Jonathan McCurdy purchased three lots just north of the present Taber-

nacle United Church on Church Street. Hattie Burrutt painted a picture which included the house; she painted it from the site of the present day convent. In 1831 McCurdy built a stone build-

living up to his contract, so McCurdy locked him out. Bull broke into the mill and McCurdy ordered him out, whacking him with his walking stick. Bull retaliated by hitting McCurdy on the head, fracturing his skull.

McCurdy died a few days later and Bull was charged with manslaughter.

In 1879 the McCurdy property on Church Street was surveyed and part of it sold for the construction of Tabernacle Church. The stone building on Front Street burned down in 1882. The north half was rebuilt the same year while the south half



Many people will remember the McCurdy house which used to sit on the brow of the Church Street hill just to the north of Tabernacle United Church. Built by Jonathan McCurdy after 1826, the house was inhabited by McCurdy descendants until 1969. The house was torn down several years later.

*This picture was taken from Belleville's Heritage, Volume II, published by The Hastings County Historical Society in 1983.*

ing on the west side of Front Street. This consisted of a hotel and living quarters. By 1837 he had a grocery store on Front Street.

The McCurdys moved to Belfountain, northwest of Toronto, where McCurdy ran a mill. However, by 1849 he was back in Belleville. In 1858 McCurdy went by train to Belfountain to visit his mill. George F. Bull, the man who was running the mill, was not

was rebuilt in 1886. These two buildings still stand just a bit south of the McNabb towers. The McCurdy descendants lived on the homestead until 1969 and the building was torn down some years later.

Following her presentation Lois presented a Good Citizenship Award to Don Kellaway. Hastings County Historical Society President Elizabeth Mitchell presented a similar award to Lois Foster.

## Canada Remembers

This year we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. Throughout the coming months *Outlook* will feature items of interest provided by Veterans Canada and its program Canada Remembers.

Canada Remembers is a program about pride, launched by the Government of Canada just over a year ago. Canada Remembers encourages Canadians everywhere to remember and take pride in the accomplishments of Canadian men, women, and children 50 years ago, during World War II. The war years of 1939 to 1945 transformed Canada as a country leaving a national, and international legacy that continues to affect the life of every Canadian today.

The objectives of Canada Remembers are to honour and com-

memorate the wartime service and sacrifices of Canadians overseas; to recognize and celebrate the wide range of contributions to the war effort made by Canadians at home; and to remind and inform ourselves today, how Canadians worked together to overcome the challenges of the war.

Canadians are remembering the war years in many different ways. Solemn ceremonies have been held in communities to mark the 50th anniversary of such major events as D-Day, and ceremonies will continue to commemorate anniversaries, such as the V-E or V-J Day.

Museums, archives, libraries and historical associations are turning their public programming to the theme of World War II.

## Growing Up In Wartime

Canada's children and teenagers played a vital role in Canada's war effort, filling in the gaps left by family

in the armed forces and providing valuable support to those overseas. Their selfless drive and enthusiasm earned the respect and appreciation of a nation.

### The "boys" in Uniform

Many Canadian soldiers were just teenagers themselves. Numerous nineteenth, eighteenth and even seventeenth birthdays were celebrated in uniform. Their willingness to fight and lay down their lives for freedom was an inspiration to all those who supported them at home.

- Approximately 700,000 Canadian soldiers who served in World War II were under the age of 21.

- Sometimes boys as young as 13 tried to enlist. Those who looked older were successful. Many of those who couldn't get into the military served in the Merchant Navy transporting troops and materials overseas.

### Living with War

Canadian children worked on the home front and helped the war effort in many ways.

- With most able-bodied men overseas there weren't enough farm workers to harvest the crops. Countless young people worked long hours on farms to ensure a steady food supply for Canadians and the Allies.

- To encourage students to help with the harvest, many schools didn't count a tendency to

introduce new material in classes until after the crops were in.

- The government lowered the minimum age for obtaining a driver's licence to 14 years so children could legally drive farm trucks and other vehicles.

- Many children thought of themselves as junior soldiers. They prepared for war by memorizing airplane silhouettes and building ship models.

High school students joined cadet corps and learned how to march, perform arms drills and fire weapons.

- Teachers had children write letters to Canadians overseas,

telling them about what was happening back home.

- Canadian children were joined by hundreds of British refugee children who were sent to Canada by their parents to ensure their safety. These children lived with them and went to their schools.

### Scrimping, Saving and Scavenging

Children learned to scrimp and save to raise money for the war effort. They learned to recycle and collect materials, such as metal, rubber, fat and grease that were in short supply. Encouraged by

tives such as free passes to movies, Canada's young people became

own toys for metal salvage drives.

- Children used their hard-earned money, bringing their nickels and dimes to school to buy War Savings Stamps which they stuck into special booklets for postwar redemption.

- Boy Scouts and Girl Guides conducted many fund-raising activities. As an example, the 10th Toronto Scout Troop collected 510,000 pounds of salvage and used the money they received to buy a truck, an ambulance for the Royal Canadian Air Force and Victory Bonds.

- Of the \$5.5-billion raised in Victory Loan appeals, millions were contributed by children.

### "Canadian Whites"

To save scarce U.S. dollars, the government barred all nonessential American products from coming into Canada.

This embargo included children's much-beloved comic books. Canadian publishers stepped into the breach. They couldn't afford colour printing so they published "Canadian whites."

- Canadian comic book heroes included Johnny Canuck, Freelance Dixon of the Mounties and Nelvana of the Northern Lights.

- In the summer of 1941, the first Canadian comic book, "Wow No. 1" hit the stands, and all 52,000 copies were sold.



# County News

by Gerry Boyce

WOW! It was great to see the exciting ways in which Heritage Day (February 20) and Heritage Week were celebrated.

(1) The Heritage Showcase at Belleville's Bay View Mall featured displays by several groups including our society, the Hastings County Museum, Heritage Belleville, the Tweed and Area Historical Society, the Quinte Region Branch of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (ACO), the Quinte Flywheels Antique Vintage Gas Engine Association, the Belleville District Council Boy Scout Museum and the Brian Williamson Military Collection. It was a fine opportunity to see what these groups are doing and to renew friendships. Thanks to the Bay View Mall and co-ordinator Dianna Oliver for sponsorship. Let's try to involve more groups next year.

(2) Belleville City Council's meeting on Heritage Day was the occasion for Heritage Belleville to present certificates of commendation for contributions to built heritage to several property owners, the Quinte Region Branch of the ACO (for its book of walking tours), and retiring members of Heritage Belleville (Ruth Greenley and Cecilia Daley). Heritage Belleville presented Belleville City Council with a picture of Sir Mackenzie Bowell, taken in February 1875 when he was North Hastings MP. The picture will hang in the Sir Mackenzie Bowell Room as a reminder that he was prime minister of Canada 100 years ago.

(3) Heritage Belleville's Research Team (Elizabeth Saunders, Carol Wolfgarth and Helen Woods) put on a well-attended Brown Bag Lunch at the Corby Library to explain their building research proce-

dures. The team also sponsored an open house at City Hall to discuss its research into 90 buildings west of the Moira River. Many families attended. The youngsters enjoyed pictures and refreshments while the parents learned about their homes.

(4) The Quinte Construction Association held an open house to highlight its restoration work on the "Old Stone Building" on Station Street (sometimes known as Meyers' Mill). It's encouraging to see the improvement to this land-



Graham Reed, President of the Madoc Historical Foundation, presented this year's Heritage Award to Hilda Cathcart and Roy Moorcroft who accepted the plaques on behalf of the recipient, Minnie Moorcroft. Roy is Minnie's brother and Hilda, her niece. Minnie was given the award for her work in researching and producing a book on the history of the Moorcroft family and Hilda worked closely with her in preparation of its publication. The award is given annually to individuals who have helped preserve the history of the Madoc community and Roy received the award several years ago. Foundation representatives plan to take the award to Minnie, a resident of a retirement home in Marmora, later this month.

Photo courtesy of Penny Harrop and *The Community Press*.

mark industrial building. Congratulations.

(5) *The Marmora Herald* celebrated Heritage Week with a fun quiz compiled by local historian/author/lawyer/politician André Philpot. It was a tough quiz and two correct answers out of ten was considered a passing grade. Try these samples: (A) "In the 1920s how was "Wrigley's Juicy Fruit advertised as a health food?" (B)

"Name a prime minister and provincial premier who have spoken at the Marmora Town Hall." (Answers below)

(6) The Madoc Historical Foundation honoured Minnie Moorcroft with its annual Heritage Award for her book, *The Moorcroft Family*. Hilda Cathcart, Minnie's niece who was instrumental in getting the book published, spoke to the foundation's Heritage Week meeting.

(7) The Trent Port Historical Society is having considerable success raising funds for work on the old town hall/market building. At the society's request, Trenton City Council is changing the designation of the building from "architectural-historical" to "historical." This

tor to the Tweed and Area Historical Society's display was Bill Hunt, program chair for our society. Bill promised Evan access to pictures of the Aselstine Belleville-Tweed bus.

(9) Just Lucky ... When Grace Porrit (the Tweed society's senior member) drew the winning ticket for the beautifully crafted afghan donated by Lucy Robinson as a fund raiser for the Tweed Heritage Centre, she drew her own ticket. The draw raised \$500 for the building fund.

(10) Barney Moorhouse's "Times Traveller" column in *The Bancroft Times* recorded news from the paper of 1903. The Canadian Minister of Justice was proposing to penalize the selling of cigarettes to minors. From the hamlet of Purdy came news that William Lavoy's family had the mumps, a picnic at Combermere featured "an old women's race," and William Vanallen had bought a new bicycle.

(11) Heritage Week reminds us to celebrate anniversaries that record accomplishments. This year, for example, St. Paul's Anglican Church at Roslin celebrates its 150th anniversary and St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church at Belleville marks the centennial of the reconstruction and enlargement of the building after a major fire. Church buildings are important heritage structures and prominent features of the skyline. Yet times change. Many rural churches have been closed over the years and one wonders what the future holds for Belleville, following the disclosure of plans to unite the Tabernacle and Holloway Street United Church congregations into a single congregation, under a new name.

Marmora Quiz Answers:  
(A) It was advertised as a "help to digestion and a cleanser for the mouth and teeth" which should be used "after every meal."  
(B) Arthur Meighen in 1924 and Bob Rae in 1994.



# Your County Museum



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

## New Co-Op Students at the Museum

The staff of the Hastings County Museum welcomes two new co-op students, Wendy Roy and Mike Tracy. Wendy is a Grade 11 student from Moira Secondary School and will be assisting in the education department. Mike is a Grade 11 student from Quinte Secondary School and will be working in maintenance. We look forward to having them with us!

## Looking for something to do during March break?

The Hastings County Museum is offering a new March Break program. This program allows children of all ages to visit the museum to create Ukrainian Easter eggs.

Sessions will be held Mondays,

Wednesdays and Fridays at 9:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. from March 6 to March 19. Refreshments will be served.

Cost is \$5.00 (GST included) per participant. Please call to pre-register 962-2329

## Percy Portraits on display

The staff of the Hastings County Museum is happy to announce that two portraits of Percy Phillips, the son of the original owners of Glanmore, are now on display in the main hall of the house. The paintings were donated in 1994 by Mr. R. Norris and have been conserved by Ms. Amanda Gray. Special thanks go to the Hastings County Museum Auxiliary for providing financial support and Mrs. Winsome Lewis for providing technical assistance.

## ACO visits Napanee

The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (ACO), Quinte Region Branch will conduct a tour of the Napanee Court House and the MacPherson House on Sunday, March 19, 1995.

The highlight of the visit to Napanee will be the viewing of the recently restored Court House and will feature a slide show outlining the stages of the restoration project.

The tour will then move to the MacPherson House which was built in 1826. The public had its first chance to tour the restored home in Centennial Year, 1967. Built by the "Laird of Napanee," the house is notable because of its woodwork and matching front and rear entrances.

Refreshments will be served and everyone is welcome. For more details please call 968-7576.

## Come and see the decoys!

A new exhibit, "Historic decoys of the Quinte area," has just opened at the Hastings County Museum. This display highlights the intriguing history of decoys, how they were used and the folk art that has developed around them. The exhibit is on display in the breakfast room until September. Special thanks to Steve Lloyd, George and Lee MacDonald, Royce Duxtater and Mr. and Mrs Harry Ellis of Corbyville Collectibles for their assistance.

Look for "Northern Owls" and "Wonders of Waterfowl" two travelling exhibits from the Royal Ontario Museum, on display at the Hastings County Museum from April 12 to May 30. To compliment these exhibits, the Trent Port Historical Society will display some of their specimens of stuffed birds in the studio.

## Welcome to new volunteers

The staff of the Hastings County Museum welcomes two new volunteers, Shirley Biggs and Bobbi Geneja.

## Thank you!

Deborah McFarland, education co-ordinator, would like to thank all those volunteers who participated in the museum's recent paper quilling education program.

A special thanks to Debbie Crouse for sharing her expertise.

The program was a great success thanks to all our volunteers' efforts.

## Create a beautiful Victorian craft

April 2, 1 to 4 p.m.

At this adult fund-raising workshop, participants will learn to make a variety of intriguing things using the old technique of paper quilling. Instructor Debbie Crouse will teach the group methods of rolling paper to make intricate and amazing creations! Cost is \$20.00 (GST included) per participant. Please call to pre-register 962-2329

Outlook is published monthly for the Friends and Members of the Hastings County Historical Society

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