

Next Meeting

**Tuesday,
October 17, 1995**

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

7:30 Coffee

8:00 Meeting

Guest Speaker Fred Deacon

For 30 years Fred was the president of Deacon Shirt Company, later known as Deacon Brothers Limited. He twice served as chairman of the Board of Education in Hastings County, is the chairman of the Bridge Street United Church Building Fund, and has been an active member of numerous fraternal and community organizations. Since the closing of the family business in 1990, Fred has been Human Resources Manager for the Peterborough County Board of Education. He and his wife remain residents of Belleville.

Topic:

The Deacon Shirt Company Through Three Generations"

Fred will speak on the evolving business of clothing manufacture since his grandfather founded Deacon Brothers several decades ago. Deacon Brothers was a fixture of Belleville's industrial scene for many years. Its popular shirts and sporting clothes carried the name of our city to many distant places.

The public and members are cordially invited to attend.

ISSUE 129

October 1995

Outlook

The Hastings County Historical Society

From sheep to shawl

Handwoven hierlooms on display

by Jean Williams

When members of the Hastings County Historical Society arrived at the September 19 meeting they were greeted by a colourful array of woven rugs, blankets and coverlets. Marion Casson and Mary Haggerty had come to tell the group about spinning and weaving in Upper Canada from the 19th century to the present.

Bill Hunt introduced the guest speakers; both are from Prince Edward County where Marion is curator of the Ameliasburgh Museum and Mary runs The Weaver House.

Marion Casson discussed spinning and weaving in this area from the 1800s to the present. Much of the information came from books written by Dorothy Burnham of the Royal Ontario Museum.

At one time the Quinte area was a hotbed of weaving. Until the Loyalists arrived following the American Revolution, woven goods were imported from England, but by 1840 there is mention of weaving in Picton. Very few examples of handwoven clothing survive as the material was recycled into rugs. In the beginning weaving was very plain but later patterned coverlets evolved.

Mary Haggerty demon-

strated the tools involved in turning wool from the sheep into a handwoven object. She explained that the sheep were shorn, then the wool was washed and carded to get the fibres in a straight line. At this point Mary moved to a spinning wheel and the audience watched in fascination as the fluffy piece of wool evolved into yarn ready to be used for crocheting, knitting or weaving. Many saw for the first time a "swift" and a "niddy nody," both used to wind the wool.

Many pioneer homes had looms. Peddlers supplied flax until flocks of sheep were established. Carpets

were woven with a natural background and dye was purchased from peddlers to add colour. In an example of pioneer work we saw a blanket made and signed by Nancy M. Hubbs and numbered as part of her trousseau. Blankets were woven in two pieces as no loom was wide enough for a blanket. Now there are 100-inch looms which must be operated by two people. It is estimated it would take a year to spin enough wool for a blanket.

Marion and Mary concluded by showing examples of overshot coverlets, both old and modern (woven by Mary) and linens. They were thanked by Barbara Coulman.





**CASH
PRIZE**



**Fame
&
Fortune**

No Kidding!!

If you or someone you know has creative ability
WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

*The Hastings County Historical Society needs a new logo,
something dynamic, something interesting ... so ... we're having
a logo contest for a new logo*

*The winner will receive a cash prize of \$100 plus lots of
publicity*

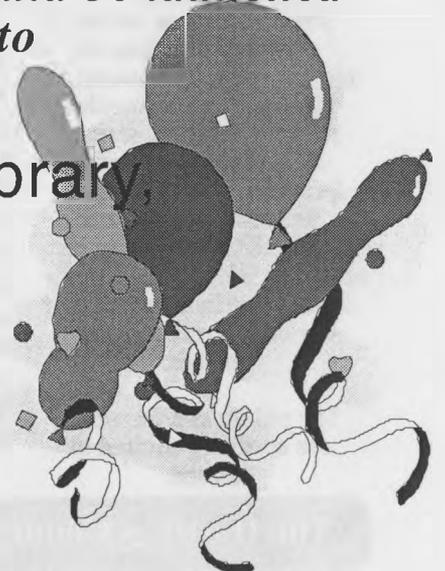
*A career as a designer or commercial artist could be launched
All entries should be submitted to*

Logo Contest,
c/o The Belleville Public Library,
223 Pinnacle Street,
Belleville, Ontario



**ENTER
NOW!**

NO LATER THAN NOVEMBER 1, 1995



County News

by Gerry Boyce

Local history makes news - One of the aims of this column is to keep readers informed on local historical matters that attract attention outside the immediate area. This month we'll feature two such topics: fishing on the Bay of Quinte and a disturbance at RCAF Station Trenton.

Fishing on the Bay of Quinte is an important tourist activity in 1995 - both summer and winter. In fact, Belleville asserts that it is the "Sports Fishing Capital of Ontario." Recreational fishing was also important a century ago, but commercial fishing was more important.

This is apparent from a 20-page article in the March 1995 issue of *Ontario History*, the quarterly journal of the Ontario Historical Society. The article is "Maintaining a Great Lakes Fishery: The State, Science, and the Case of Ontario's Bay of Quinte, 1870 - 1920" by Neil S. Forkey. A graduate in Canadian history from the University of Maine, Forkey is completing his doctorate on the environmental history of the Trent River Valley in the nineteenth century, at Queen's University.

Forkey begins by describing an event in "the central Ontario city of Belleville" on October 9, 1893: the opening of the Dominion Fishery Commission's inquiry into the condition of Ontario's fisheries. Chaired by Samuel Wilmot and Edward Harris, the federal commission was particularly interested in appraising the government's pisciculture (fish breeding) program, then about 25 years old. Wilmot had helped to establish the system, as an answer to the depletion of the Canadian Great Lakes fish population;

That October day the commission heard the view of ten Quinte area fishers, one of whom was William Black. An experienced bay may, who had

fished the bay for whitefish and herring for 25 years, Black was the Belleville agent for the Buffalo Fish Company. He purchased and shipped food-fish via rail to that New York city. Black and the other witnesses (including Daniel Belnap of Rossmore) testified that the bay remained a reliable source for whitefish and other species, despite generations of exploitation. They supported the fish-breeding program, although they were upset by government restraints on their trade, such as closed seasons and means of capture restrictions.

Subsequent to the hearing, the government maintained and then dramatically increased its fish breeding program. Whitefish fry plantings at Belleville increased, peaking at 59,000,000 in 1914.

Forkey uses the Bay of Quinte "as a laboratory in which to examine the application of Canadian fishery conservation over a fifty-year period." He describes the fishing methods and the evolution from shipping cured fish to transporting fresh fish. The advent of refrigeration meant whitefish catches were packed on ice in refrigerated cars and sent by the Grand Trunk to Toronto, and then to Buffalo.

Forkey's style is clear and readable. The accompanying photos, statistical tables and outline map of Prince Edward County are helpful. In summary, this is a valuable article for anyone interested in fishing, environmental studies, and the relationships between different economic activities a century ago.

Unrest at RCAF station Trenton is one incident described in an article in the June 1995 issue of *Canadian Historical Review*, the quarterly review published by the University of Toronto Press on behalf of the Canadian Historical Association. The author is Laurel

Sefton MacDowell of the University of Toronto's Department of History. Her article "Relief Camp Workers in Ontario during the Great Depression of the 1930s" records harsh conditions confronting Canadian workers "who faced wage cuts, layoffs and unemployment." One government response was to provide work camps for young unemployed men "to provide food, clothing, a bed, and medical treatment to 'build up morale through work.'" Military projects included aerodromes, landing fields, barracks (one at RMC) and three RCAF air stations (one at Trenton).

MacDowell describes the difficulties faced by workers in these camps, especially in northern Ontario. The men were housed in barracks on the work sites and conditions varied from camp to camp. A visitor to Project 28 (Trenton) re-

ported that the quality of the food was good, but that "the cooking is so *poor* that much of the food is left untasted on the men's plates." The chief cook in kitchen #1 was an ex-railroad foreman, which would seem to explain much of the trouble."

Labour unrest took place in several camps. MacDowell writes: "In November 1935 a disturbance at Trenton air station occurred when 'agitators' led 300 men to demand their October allowances (as yet unpaid) so they would have cash to spend over the weekend. The officer in charge spoke to the men about the policy concerning the payment of allowances (20 cents per day for tobacco and personal needs), apparently the crowd dispersed, and several leaders were discharged."

This is certainly an interesting (and largely unknown) chapter in the early history of CFB Trenton.

IN BRIEF

- The RCAF Memorial Museum is acquiring and reassembling a complete Halifax bomber found 750 feet deep in an ice-cold Norwegian lake.
- The bulletin board at Marmora's Memorial Park has been revamped to contain a village guide and history; the sign proudly identifies Marmora as "Upper Canada's Pioneer Irontown."
- Rob Walker's "Museum Corner" in the *Bancroft Times* (August 29) highlighted the history of the community's fire department.
- Did you know Bancroft has a change of status? The village is now a town and will celebrate the new status.
- A plaque at the Tweed Playhouse now tells the history of the building
- Madoc Historical Foundation continues to run fascinating "Historical Notes" in the local press.
- A new history of Thurlow Township is proposed by Christopher Barron, grandson of the late Mary Plumptre, who wrote *The Rambling River* in 1967.
- The September 1995 issue of *Searchlight*, the excellent quarterly of the Quinte Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society, has exciting information on the roots of the legendary Captain John W. Meyers of Loyalist/Quinte fame. Mildred E. Sissell of Jackson, Michigan, has determined that Meyers' father, George Waldenmaier, was born in the town of Neckarwiehingen, Wurtemberg, Germany.

The Society's sympathy is extended to the family of the late Cecil Becker, who died September 17; Cec was our devoted, hardworking treasurer for many years.



Your County Museum



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

Sherlock Holmes and Long John Silver at Glanmore Toby Jugs



On display in the Breakfast Room is an enchanting collection of Toby and character jugs. Dating from the mid-18th century, these jugs are whimsical recreations of famous figures. Highlighted in this display are literary characters including, Friar Tuck, Long John Silver, Sherlock Holmes and several Dickens characters.

Barnardo Reunion

The Hastings County Museum's 15th annual reunion of homechildren was held on Sunday, September 17. This year's guest speaker was Mrs. Collette Bradford head of Barnardo After Care in England. Many thanks to all our volunteers for their preparation and hard work.

Education and the common curriculum workshop

In association with the Ontario Historical Society's Museums Committee, the Hastings County Museum is offering the workshop "Education and the Common Curriculum" on Wednesday, November 1, 1995, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. A fee of \$10 for institutional members and \$20 for non-members will be charged. Please contact the Hastings County Museum at 962-2329 for further information.

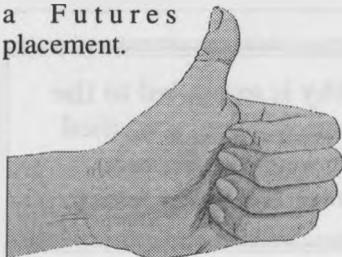
They're a great bunch

Thumbs up for our Volunteers

The staff of the Hastings County Museum is gearing up for another busy fall and winter season! We welcome back many returning volunteers as well as several new volunteers. Joining us this fall are, Marlene Pollock, Monique King, Barbara Weiderick, Trevor Peck, Sylvia French, Edward Tomsett, Amy Hutchinson, Elaine West and Herb Copper. We appreciate all the time effort our volunteers dedicate to the museum.

Welcome to our student placement

The staff of the museum is fortunate to have three students placed with use this fall, Crystal Roach and Robert Sims are both co-op students from Quinte Secondary School and Sean Archer is with us on a Futures placement.



From washboards to washing machines

Come and join us for an intriguing look at the many inventions and creations associated with laundry. Decide for yourself if laundry has really changed all that much? Opening at the end of September "From Washboards to Washing Machines" chronicles the history of laundry from early pioneer methods to the forerunners of modern washing methods.

Vigil Lamp Returns

In July Mr. John Patterson kindly donated the vigil lamp which hung at the base of Glanmore's grand staircase in 1883. Donated in memory of his father, Mr. Walter Hugh Patterson, the lamp is an ornate brass and cranberry glass float lamp which was intended to burn slowly and continually, hence the name vigil lamp.

New museum advisor

The Hastings County Museum has a new Museum Advisor at the Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation. Ms. Claudine Bazin recently visited Glanmore and following an extensive site tour, was very impressed with our adherence to museum standards particularly our artifact storage and on-going site restoration.

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

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