



The Journal

Milton Historical Society 16 James Street, Milton, Ontario L9T 2P4 Telephone 905-875-4156
www.miltonhistoricalsociety.ca

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Spring Edition



Happy St. Patrick's Day !



Jan Mowbray swings a serious hammer at the recent OABA annual meeting.

We have a wonderful variety of speakers and topics set for our monthly meetings this year. I'm sure I speak for the entire board in saying that we hope to see you at one, or all, of them.

We will be celebrating our 35th anniversary and the Queen's Jubilee. We'll invite you to "Bring a friend" to a special meeting, and we'll touch on the War of 1812.

People refer to the rapidly changing nature of Milton but our core values are still there. Find out for yourself – *it is worth reaching into Milton's past*. To help you with any research you might like to do, we have some dedicated people within the Milton Historical Society who work diligently to maintain the archives. Our volunteers would be pleased to help you. Visit the Blacksmith shop on a Saturday morning, check out the displays, and the books for sale - books which are authored by local people about different aspects of our town and environs.

Let MHS be your starting place for exploring the people, places and events that shaped Milton's past. You will find everything you need at the Milton Historical Society, or visit our [website](#) anytime. The web-

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Message from the president

January saw the AGM and the election of some new board members, and re-election of others. It's a good board. In taking on the presidency, I've got some pretty big shoes to fill but Past President Marsha Waldie is still very much an integral part of the Milton Historical Society.

In February, we saw the installation of three new steps in the Milton Town Hall Walk of Fame: Hugh and Melba Beaty, Dr. Colin Cameron Lucas, and Dr. James Branston Willmott. While the later two were honoured posthumously, it was such a great pleasure to have Hugh Beaty present and to hear him speak.

It's now March and it seems we're *marching* through the calendar at a great pace.

site has a wealth of information just waiting for a click of your mouse.

In closing, if you haven't renewed your membership, please do so soon. Membership counts. Increasing our numbers gives us better access to funding which is tied to membership levels.

Jan Mowbray

Congratulations and best wishes to your 2012 Milton Historical Society executive

President – Jan Mowbray

Secretary – Walter Eadie

Treasurer – Diane Jarvis

House Plaquing, Research – Marsha Waldie

Special Events – Nancy Cuttle

Membership – Kay Bounsall, Susan Platt

Publications – Gloria Brown

Publicity – Pamela McLean

Heritage Milton Reps – Mirella Marshall and Mandy Sedgwick

MHS Journal – Bruce Carlin

Ontario Artist Blacksmiths meet at the Waldie Blacksmith shop

The Ontario Artists Blacksmith Association (OABA) held their annual meeting on February 11th and in spite of stormy weather in the area the event was well attended with over fifty blacksmiths and family members. Thanks to the volunteers from the MHS who cooked up batches of chilli to feed our visitors and arranged the set up of the meeting room as a makeshift dining hall. The OABA members learned blacksmith techniques and made plans for the new year and had a very productive meeting.

Milton's Walk of Fame recognizes three new members in 2012

Dr. James Branston Willmott (1837-1915)

Dr. James Branston Willmott served as the inaugural President of the Canadian Dental Association in 1903 and was a force in framing the act of 1868 that established the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of On-



Hugh Beaty receives his Walk of Fame Plaque from Mayor Gordon Krantz and MHS President Jan Mowbray

tario. Dr. Willmott served as a member of the Board of Directors and the Dean of the RCDS's School of Dentistry faculty, until his death in 1915.

Dr. Willmott taught dentistry to students the world over and practiced dentistry in Milton, while also serving as a member of Milton Council and a Justice of the Peace.

Mr. Hugh Beaty

Hugh M. Beaty sold his dairy herd and his farm machinery and relocated his family to Brazil from 1977 to 1979 to supervise the establishment of a dairy herd-based development project at the University of Mossoro, an agricultural school in Northeast Brazil. The Brazil project overseen by Hugh Beaty was the first and his management was critical to the successful establishment of the farm and since that time S.H.A.R.E. has implemented similar programs in Africa, Belize, El Salvador and other less developed countries. Mr. Beaty also served as executive director of "Send Help and Resources Everywhere" (S.H.A.R.E.) a Canadian based Agriculture Oriented relief organization from 1979 to 1991.

Dr. Colin Cameron Lucas (1903-1981)

Dr. Colin Lucas was made a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1959, the highest honour for a Canadian scientist as a result of the magnitude of critical research he undertook during his long career. Some of the research included the analysis of human hair, where he developed a methodology for determining its protein and amino acid structure. Dr. Lucas was a professor at the Banting and Best department of medical research at the University of Toronto. He was a mem-

ber of a number of scientific societies in Canada and, Great Britain and the United States and became a fellow of the Chemical Institute of Canada in 1947, also serving on the council of that organization.

2012 marks the thirty fifth anniversary of our society.

The Early Years of the Milton Historical Society – 1977-78

The files containing the first records of the founding and early years of the Historical society bring smiles to the reader as they are a medley of hand written and type written minutes as the computer had not made its appearance in general circulation. Executive meetings were frequently held at the offices of the Canadian Champion

The first executive of the Milton Historical Society in 1977 was comprised of;

- o Jim Dills – President
- o Leonard McNeil – Vice President
- o Lyn Gonneau – Vice President
- o Pamela McLean – Secretary
- o Rosann Felsbourg—Treasurer

The first guest speaker in September 15, 1977 was Dr. Anthony Adamson who spoke about the “Heritage Association”. General meetings were held at the library. Plans for guest speakers featured prominently in the minutes of the executive. The executive arranged to have a letter mailed to fifty service clubs to promote speakers to give presentations about the role of the Milton Historical Society.

In March of 1978 a workshop was held to consider interesting topics and lead volunteers. The suggestions included;

- Civic – Jim Dills, Dr Heaslop and Pam McLean
- Social – Mel Robinson
- Library – Don Hayward and Shelagh Conway and B.J. Stover
- Industries – Bill Cook, Alf Waldie and Lynn Gonneau
- Schools and Churches – Wilf Elsley and Jessie Hamilton

Environmental – Len McNeil and Bus Norrington

- o The society started to look into the feasibility of



Helen Comber receives lifetime achievement award from Mayor Krantz at recent council meeting.

repairing some of the cemetery stones at the Pioneer cemetery. The estimated cost was five hundred dollars, adult volunteers would do the work, town council was approached for legal aspects and families of those interred in the cemetery would be approached for support.

- o The society collected photos of past Milton Mayors to mount on a frame for display at Town Hall. In late 1978, town council sent a formal letter requesting our input on preserving the jail and courthouse. The minutes of Nov 23, 1978 show that the council was interested to know if the Milton Historical society was interested in buying the jail!

Some things that have changed

- o Membership fees in 1977 were three dollars for an individual, five dollars for a family and one dollar for a student. There was a lifetime membership fee of thirty five dollars. Coffee at the meetings was fifteen cents a cup.
 - o A publication entitled “Milton – Welcome to our Town” by Bill Cook was made available for sale at three dollars each. A walking tour was scheduled for the downtown area.
 - o Meetings were scheduled for the second Thursday of the month.
 - o Postage was twelve cents for newsletters in envelopes
- Treasurer’s report in February, 1978 was \$242.81 and membership was 58 members

Some things have stayed the same:

- o Monthly executive and general meetings
 - o Research and historical plaques for heritage homes
 - o A newsletter for the membership to keep them informed about the Society's activities.
 - o A job description was put together for the various chairmen of the society.
 - o The society then received donations of books, maps, photos and this continues to this day.
- Jim Dills attended a conference on "Preserving Main Streets" in September, 1978

Some things are a mix of old and new:

- o General meetings included speakers, show and tell, clean up week, cast off night and personal mementos
- o The first constitution of the society remained unchanged until it was amended in 2012
- o The September 1977 walking tour included Grace Anglican church, Sunoco garage, Bakery Square, Richardson's TV, Knox Church, St. Paul's, then Waldies for a possible tour of the blacksmith shop.

The stories below from the Canadian Champion highlight the establishment of a steering committee and the review of a draft constitution and nominating committee for the society.

March 24th 1977: (from Canadian Champion Mar. 30th, 1977)

Historical Society attracts over 60

"What promises to be the beginning of a historical society for the town of Milton got off to a good start Thursday night when over 60 people attended an exploratory meeting at Milton Central Library." "The meeting was arranged by Jim Dills, Len McNeil and Shelagh Conway."

"During the meeting an 11-person steering committee was appointed to consider the objectives and the structure of the society. Those appointed include: Bill Cook, George Jackson, Elva Newton, Heidi Knowak, Rose Felsbourg, Len McNeil, Jim Dills, Lynn Gonneau, Pamela McLean, Ted Stover and Brad Clements."

"Milton Mayor Don Gordon was in attendance at the meeting. He offered the group any legislative assis-



Heritage Milton award winners Sedgwick –Marshall and Mattamy homes (l to r) Mandy Sedgwick, Clerk Troy McHarg, Mayor Gordon Krantz, Mike Dickie of Mattamy Homes and Mirella Marshall

tance or help in getting information concerning grants that might be needed."

"The steering committee will meet again in April to chart a proposed course for the society which will be presented to a May public meeting."

April 28th 1977 (from Canadian Champion Apr. 1977)

Plan founding meeting for historical society

"The 12 member Steering Committee reviewed a draft constitution setting out a proposed structure for the group, named a three member nominating committee and set the date for the general meeting." "The proposed constitution was prepared by Leonard McNeil for the steering committee's discussions." "Ted Stover, Mrs. E. Newton and George Jackson were named a nominating committee to present a possible slate of officers for the new society with provision for further nominations at the founding meeting."

HelenComber–Lifetime achievement

Congratulations to Helen Comber for receiving the Lifetime Achievement award from the Ontario Heritage Trust Foundation. Nominees are selected by the municipality for the contributions that they have made towards protecting local heritage. The Heritage Trust award includes both a framed certificate and a pin celebrating their volunteer work.

Helen has been a long time member of the Milton Historical Society having served on the executive of

the board for many years in a number of leadership positions including President, Secretary and Treasurer to name a few. Helen played a key role in the society as (treasurer) during the busy years restoring the Waldie Blacksmith shop in the early 2000's. Helen has a can do attitude that has helped the society achieve important milestones. Helen also has a flair for the dramatic which she demonstrates on heritage walks when she acts out the characters of some of Milton's early prominent female leaders.

Congratulations to Mattamy Corporation and Sedgwick Marshall Heritage homes receiving a 2012 heritage conservation award from Heritage Milton for saving, relocating and refurbishing the 1850 Richard Harrison Farmhouse. This Regency style, with excellent brickwork, was originally located on the east side of Tremaine and south of Derry and . The house is located at 502 Dymott Avenue.

BELIEVE - Saint Paul's building project underway!

As reported recently in the Canadian Champion, St. Paul's United church has begun their building restoration. This restoration will cost approximately 4 million dollars and is scheduled from March to November of 2012.

A capital campaign is running with a goal to raise 1.5 million dollars from supporters of St. Paul's. In total there are more than forty members of St. Paul's that are working on the building committee. A series of "Cottage meetings" have been scheduled to inform supporters about the building project.

The key restoration objectives for St. Paul's are to enhance and restore both the Worship and Christian education facilities. +VG Architects has been hired to plan the restoration work. Both the sanctuary and the education center will now be connected on the same level with the addition of a bright open Atrium. The roof work is expected to get underway very shortly. The organ has recently been removed for refurbishing.

Restoration of both buildings will be done simultaneously so the congregation will carry out their worship services offsite during the construction period. Members of St. Paul's are to be commended in BELIEVING in their future and we wish them success. The Milton Historical Society has advocated for the preservation of the sanctuary and it is very gratifying to see



Descendents of James Branton Willmott (l to r.)
Karen, Bob and Carol Willmott.

the church membership move forward. We hope that our society members will consider supporting this project in any way they can.

For information and regular updates on the progress of the St. Paul's restoration visit their website at <http://www.stpaulsmilton.org/section/view/?fnode=166>

Milton area veterans of the War of 1812

Research by members of the Milton Historical Society has led to finding three names of veterans from the war of 1812 who settled in the Milton area after the conflict. A short synopsis will be provided about the war veteran in memory of their sacrifices during the war. Our first veteran was Thomas Racey, who volunteered under General Beach, was a lieutenant, later a Captain. He was involved at the battles of Beaver Dam, Chippewa and Lundy's Lane. These battles occurred during the middle to later stages of the war.

Thomas Racey was baptized Jan 20, 1792 in Somerset, England. He married Dec 24, 1835 to Helen Priscilla Nelles of UEL background. Helen was born in 1803 in Grimsby, Ontario and died Feb 29th, 1888 in Milton. Thomas Racey died in March of 1881, aged 88 years. He lived with his family in Milton and was Land Register for Halton for forty three years and was active at Grace Anglican Church. He is buried at St. Stephen's cemetery in Hornby.

Garage Sale—April 14th

We are looking for donations of gently used items gladly accepted, no clothes please.

Queen's Diamond Jubilee

Celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee with flags and bunting from our Flag & Fan Sale May 5 & 12.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Earliest Milton Journals found !

Thanks to Walter Eadie for finding fifteen “missing” issues of the Milton Historical Society Journals. Walter came across the bulletins in January while cleaning up administrative files. The newly found Journals include the first type written Journal from 1977. The newfound Journals have been posted on the society’s website by Richard Laughton. Richard has scanned the fourteen issues and posted them on our website for all to see. If you come across any older versions of the MHS Journal you could win a CD or DVD of all Journals published over the thirty five years of our society’s existence. You can check our website www.miltonhistoricalsociety.ca for more information about the missing bulletins “contest”.

Milton WWII veterans audio records are now available at the touch of a button!

Over the years a number of our members including Ken Lamb, Lou Bradley and Kaye Bounsall have conducted tape recorded interview of Milton area veterans of their second World War experiences. The interviews were originally saved to cassette tapes. Richard Laughton has made digital copies of the taped interviews and they have been posted onto our website as well as the largest archive site in the world. This means that anyone in the world with an internet connection is now able to listen to these oral interviews. Thanks to Richard Laughton for making the digital copies of the audio records and posting them for the public. If you wish to hear some of the audio records, please go the following link; <http://www.miltonhistoricalsociety.ca/Research/Web%20Sites/Milton%20Soldiers/MHS%20Remembers%20Project/index.html>

Digital copies of MHS films are now available from our website. Not only has Richard Laughton made digital copies of the oral histories of the WWII veterans but he has also made and posted digital copies of three movies about Milton’s history previously prepared by MHS volunteers. The three films available through our website include “A different time – Milton’s Victoria Park” by Jim Dills and Sandy French, “Martin’s Mills” by Dr Leslie Meszaros and “The Restoration of the Waldie Blacksmith shop” which was a City TV Breakfast television interview about the official opening of the Waldie Blacksmith shop.

Please note that these are large files to download to your computer so you will need a bit of patience while you transfer the files but the wait is worth it! These films are accessible by going to the following address; <http://www.miltonhistoricalsociety.ca/Research/Archives/Videos/>

Memories of Milton Donations

The society has decided to donate copies of the publication “Memories of Milton” by Mel Robinson to local Doctors and Dentists offices as reading material in their waiting rooms. “Memories of Milton” is a collection of short stories on a wide range of local Milton news at the turn of the 20th century. A label is attached to each of the donated books to indicate that the Milton Historical Society is the donor and directs people to learn more about Milton’s history by visiting the society’s website. Thanks to Walter Eadie for coordinating this event. The donations have been well received by the local medical offices and we expect to distribute approximately 100 copies.

Welcome New Members

Ken Purvis, John W. Tickner, Karen Tomosky and Larry Chambers, Susan Snider, Jack Robertson
Memberships are \$20.00 single, \$35.00 double

Calendar of Events

March 15 – Karin Tomosky-Chambers will speak about the home of Halton’s first sheriff, Levi Willson

March 25— 2 PM Four Corners Public Library 65 Queen St. E, Brampton. O.G.S. Halton—Peel branch meeting—Rick Roberts—Introducing Family Tree Maker 2012

April 14th – Garage Sale for the MHS

April 19 – Ian Jones the Principal of Milton District High School will speak on the history of the MDHS

May 5 & 12 – Flag, Fan and Bunting Sale 9:30 till noon

May 17th – Jim Dills will speak about the beginnings of the Milton Historical Society

June 21st – Nathan Tidridge will speak about the Canadian Crown and Elizabeth II as Queen of Canada

YEAR: _____

**MILTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP FORM**
16 JAMES ST., MILTON, ONT. L9T 2P4
TELEPHONE: 905-875-4156
WEB SITE: www.miltonhistoricalsociety.ca

New:

Renewal:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone #: _____

E-Mail: _____

Membership Fees: Please mail or deliver your Membership Application to
____ Single \$20.00 Milton Historical Society at 16 James St., Milton, Ont.
____ Double \$35.00 L9T 2P4
____ Student Free Donations to the Waldie Blacksmith Shop Foundation assist
In maintaining & operating this interpretive centre in the
Heart of Milton. Donations of \$10.00 or more are income tax
Deductible and receipts are available.

I want to HELP Milton Historical Society by volunteering: I've indicated my
interest-

____ Blacksmith Shop Interpreter, Assisting : ____ in the archives ____ with exhibits ____ with
social times ____ phone committee ____ walking tours ____ school tours ____ researching local
history ____ staffing during open hours VOLUNTEERS are a vital component to our
Societies Success



The Journal

Milton Historical Society 16 James Street, Milton, Ontario L9T 2P4 Telephone 905-875-4156
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June, 2012, Vol.27 Issue 2

Summer Edition



Milton Historical Society 35th Anniversary celebrations L to r. Jim Dills, Jessie Hamilton,, Mayor Gordon Krantz, Pam McLean, Jan Mowbray,, Annie Drew, Don Hayward, Marsha Waldie and Brad Clements

tab: \$500 per annum. And two month's notice.

Though the preceding is a very simplistic statement, the point is, expenses are increasing, often unpredictably as in the case above, creating challenges to the MHS budget. We must find new ways to increase our income and, at the same time, increase our membership.

With regard to our membership, we must ensure the programs we deliver are relevant. If you have any suggestions you'd like to see implemented at any of our monthly meetings - a specific walk, a particular speaker, a new topic? Let me or any other MHS board member know.

We are currently engaged in discussions around a partnership with the Milton Public Library. If this works out, it will allow MHS access to a wider cross-section of Milton. It would also provide an opportunity to expand our programs. We will keep you posted. Have a great summer.

Jan Mowbray
President, MHS

The Early Years of the Milton Historical Society 1979 *(In recognition of the society's 35th anniversary we look back at early issues of the MHS*

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Presidents Message

The Milton Historical Society has just celebrated a great milestone: 35 years of bringing Milton's history to life. In those 35 years, MHS volunteers have a lot to be proud of in their work to preserve Milton's History. We are all very grateful to this hard-working core group of people. As we begin our next 35 years, we must re-think the future in order to deal successfully with our past. Our survival depends on it.

Let me give you an example. Recently MHS was hit with expenses related to internet storage of historical photos and other material, which allowed people from all over the world to access MHS data. The government cut support to that agency leaving MHS and other historical societies scrambling for alternatives, of which there is very little real choice. The

executive)

At the January executive meeting the President's report about the Court House indicated that the Region is to consider retention with possibility of fixing up and tenanting but that it would require approval of Milton Council and possibly designation. There was also discussion about the potential use of the Registry building. The bank balance as of November 23, 1978 was \$271.36. Payment of \$9.40 was due to the Champion for the coming events ad. President Jim Dills advised the executive that the Gallery of Mayors pictures have arrived. A film about the "Upper Canada Village" was proposed for an upcoming meeting and Don Hayward was to meet with the Library to learn the operation of the film projector.

In February correspondence included a letter from the Town of Milton to request the society's help with the naming of roads in town. LACAC had sufficient representation to meet with Town Council regarding restoration of the Court house. The executive discussed the idea of meeting with other historical society executive to share ideas and cooperate. Lynn Gonneau went into the survey records at the court house and found some of the wills of people who had been buried at the old cemetery with the last burial of 1883. A survey team of Winters and Aubrey did a survey in November of 1860 of the cemetery plot. The minutes show that the executive was looking for a place to hang their hat and call their own. Ideas that were discussed included purchase of the Richmond School and opening it for public viewing to make money for the society and another idea was to modify the Kernahan property along the lines of the Black creek Pioneer village.

The March general meeting included a film about "Upper Canada Village" as well as guest speakers Bessie Smith and George Jackson who spoke about growing up in Milton. The Region was still studying the cost of restoring the Court house. A brainstorming session for the court house included using it as a theatre for a new drama group or as an Art gallery. It was proposed to build a cairn for the Pioneer cemetery and John Simpson was to be asked to discuss plans. There would also be a request for financial assistance from the then mayor Dan Gordon. Membership early in the year was eight families and four singles. Stamps for mailing were 17 cents. The MHS agreed to participate in the Festival of Countries that Fall



MHS 35th Anniversary Plaque award. (From left to right) President Jan Mowbray, Mayor Gordon Krantz, First Society President Jim Dills and Nancy Cuttle, special events co-ordinator.

At the April meeting a motion was passed by the executive to develop a proposal to give to Council that the historical society would take over the Court house and work with other organizations. There were many ideas discussed for the old court house including participating with the new theatre group to make the court house a viable theatre. An architect was a guest at one meeting and put up some plans for the court house restoration. An open house was held at the old Court house in June and attendance was reported as "a good turnout".

At about the same time Jim Dills was working on writing a heritage policy for the town. In late summer the society participated in the Festival of Countries and had exhibits along the themes of "Forgotten Treasures", "General Store", "Country legends" and "Memory Lane museum".

Guest speakers that Fall included those with expertise in obtaining grants for restoration of historic buildings as well as those who had restored buildings (Dundurn castle as an example). Towards the end of the year the minutes reflected that the Town council sent a letter regarding their interest in the court house.

Ed Goodall remembrances

We were saddened to hear the news of Ed Goodall's passing recently. Ed will be missed by members of the Milton Historical Society and by other organizations of which he was a member, including the Royal Canadian Legion and the Milton Senior Activity Center. Ed was a member of the Historical Society for over thirty years. Ed was a past president and held a num-

ber of executive positions over the years. Ed regularly attended our general meetings and also enjoyed volunteering at the Waldie Blacksmith shop where he welcomed visitors from near and far on Saturday mornings. Ed assisted with research on the Milton Remembers World War I book where he helped find photographs of local soldiers from their families.

Ed was one of the Legion members who gave valuable advice and strong research help for the publication entitled “Milton Remembers World War II. The local Royal Canadian Legion, Pte. Joe Waters branch helped to finance the WWII publication thanks in part to the efforts of Ed. Ed also liked to write and submitted a number of articles about local history that were included in the Milton Historical Society’s Journal over the years. Ed and his wife Carolyn also helped proof read other publications including “Memories of Milton” by Mel Robinson. In a number of historic walks and special occasions Ed would dress up and impersonate some past historical figures of Milton and he seemed to really enjoy this. We will miss Ed’s cheery nature and support of our society.

The Beginning—War of 1812

Submitted by Ed Goodall

As we celebrate the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812 it is well to remember when and how it began. For Thomas and Mary Clark of Queenston, Ontario, the war started in the early hours of Thursday June 25th 1812 — ushered in by a heavy pounding on the door of their house in Upper Canada. Thomas, a merchant and a Militia officer lit a candle and went to he door to find one of his employees with an urgent message. The note, brought across the border, informed him that a week previously in Washington, the United States had declared war on Great Britain. Thomas Clark immediately dispatched a courier to the local military commander, Major General Isaac Brock at the nearby Fort George on the Niagara River.

The coming of war was not entirely unexpected as relations between the two English speaking nations had been tense for a number of years, tension caused by the greater war being waged in Europe. The war of 1812 revolved on American grievances with Britain over maritime issues. By the time the war started, Britain had been at war for almost 20 years with Napoleon’s Revolutionary French army. To Britain, nothing else mattered besides winning the war and if they trampled on the feelings of some neutral nations



to *Ed Goodall as mayor at Milton’s 150th anniversary Mayor’s Levee in 2007*

achieve that aim, it meant little to them. As the chief neutral nation trading with the French it was inevitable the United States would find itself running up against the might of the British Sea power. In 1807, Britain passed an Order in Council establishing a blockade of Napoleon’s Europe and forbidding any nation to trade with the enemy, a regulation that greatly affected American shipping. The Royal Navy would frequently resort to forcibly impressing seamen, including citizens of other nations, especially Americans, not only on the high seas but also in territorial waters, much to the outrage of the U.S. This instrumental cause for war was centered on Britain’s continuing support of the native people in America, who’s lands were needed for a westward expansion, and the non-settlement by the U.S. of Loyalist claims from the Revolutionary War.

When President James Madison initially declared war, the Americans believed Canada would be an easy target. It’s garrisons stripped to fight Napoleon in Europe and defending a border 3,000 kilometers long with only 5,200 British regulars, supported by 14,000 Canadian Militiamen and 10,000 natives. The seven and a half million Americans expected the conquest of half a million Canadians to be, in former President Thomas Jefferson’s words “a mere matter of marching” The Americans were in for a big surprise.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

by Brenda Whitlock

The MHS archives recently received a donation of two oil paintings of Thomas Bowes and Dorothy Willmott Bowes which will be displayed in the showcase of the Milton Town Hall next to the Mayor's office. Here is the story of how these paintings made their way to Milton. Many thanks to Brenda and Ed Whitlock and Walter Eadie for facilitating the transaction and to the donor William Willmott.

SERENDIPITY by Brenda Whitlock

“The facility of making fortunate and unexpected discoveries by accident.” “A happy accident”, “A pleasant surprise” “Discovering things you were not looking for”

About two years ago, Elizabeth Willmott, wife of Kenneth Willmott, living in Owen Sound, wrote to the Milton Historical Society saying that she and her husband owned the original Bowes grandfather clock which had been brought from Ireland by the original Bowes settlers in Canada. The Willmotts were related to the Bowes through the marriage of Thomas Bowes and Dorothy Willmott Bowes. Mrs. Willmott wanted to know if the Milton Historical Society were interested in having the clock – she also sent with the e-mail scans of the clock which I eventually put on Milton Images.

Unfortunately fate intervened and the grandfather clock ended up with another member of the Willmott family. Elizabeth Willmott contacted me and advised that her brother-in-law, William Willmott, living in New Zealand, had pictures of Thomas Bowes and Dorothy Willmott Bowes and was also interested in letting us have those. I corresponded with Bill Willmott once or twice but then the e-mails stopped. That appeared to be the end of that story.

At the beginning of March of this year, 2012, I received an e-mail from a lady who seemed to be the organizer of a Bowes genealogical web page. She wanted to know the story behind the Bowes grandfather clock because she would like to contact the person who owned it because she had many people enquiring about that branch of the family. However, I wasn't sure how to get in touch with Liz Willmott in



Dorothy Willmott Bowes—(The original painting donated to the society is on display at the Milton Town Hall).

Owen Sound but I found that on the cataloguing page for the Bowes clock I had typed in not only the name of the donor but also their address and telephone number. This information is not available to the public – only to people who catalogue or work with the web page i.e. Walter Eadie, Judy Houston and myself. I would also point out that I have **NEVER BEFORE** put the entire address and telephone number of a donor!

This was indeed SERENDIPITY. I telephoned Liz and we had a long chat and she let me know that her brother-in-law Bill Willmott in New Zealand still wanted us to have the pictures but had lost the contacts for the Milton Historical Society because his house was badly damaged in the Christchurch earthquake. She said Bill was also coming to Canada in about five days to attend a conference. Were we still interested in the pictures? Yes, yes, yes. She immediately e-mailed Bill who immediately e-mailed me. I told him that we were most definitely interested. So he packed up the pictures, got on the plane with them a few days later, stopped for a couple of days rest in Hawaii and they arrived on the Wednesday evening at the Sheraton on Queen Street, Toronto and Ed and I drove in on Thursday morning to collect the pictures..

That basically is the story of how we came to have the pictures. Things just seemed to come together in a most serendipitous way – it is quite obvious that fate has decreed that Thomas and Dorothy wanted to come home to Milton and they did!

Recent Donations

Thanks to the Mr. John Tickner family for donating a dozen photographs of the family during the period from the early to the mid—1900's .

Thanks to Lynne McMurray for a donation of numerous company journals from Procor. Procor was part of the Trans-union fastener group and included the PL Robertson company of Milton as well as Whitehouse Fastenings of Montreal. The booklets cover the period from 1969 to the early 1980's and include information about staff, new products and general business of the company.

Correction - The photograph of the Willmott family members in the March Journal incorrectly identified them as descendents of James Branstons Willmott. It is believed that they are descendents from his brother.

At Knox Presbyterian Church The excitement is building!

Submitted by: Marsha Waldie UE

What a tremendous journey and blessing for the members of Knox as they near the completion of their historic building restoration project and one of Milton's heritage gems.

The skill saws, hammers and scaffolding will shortly be but a distant memory.

Knox has made great progress since closing the doors to their sanctuary in June 2010 and the restoration work starting in Sept. 2011.

Their Pastor, Howard Sullivan has indicated that the "project continues to astound him every time he learns more details about the 122 yr. old building. We thank all those who have joined us in this journey and shared in the inspiring results, thank you so much. Truly, we are amazed ourselves by the joy we have in working together as our mission statement inspires: Unified by Christ's Love, we share Him with the World." The project slogan says it all – For Christ and Community!



Front Row (l. to r.) John William Tickner, Elizabeth Alice (Taylor) Tickner, Alice Christina Tickner Front—Leslie Alexander Tickner circa 1926 Main Street House, Milton

The architect and the restoration construction crew are to be commended. Knox is now in the critical stages of coordinating the interior finishes.

The painting is now completed, rolls of carpet are now on site, a few woodworking items are being completed by various skilled members and some final upgrades to the sound system is in progress.

Oh, yes and the historic 1905 Karn Pipe Organ has returned from it's holiday in the country, waiting patiently to be put back together and the pew's will also soon be back home as well.

Knox members expect to be back into their sanctuary sometime in July and to those who have observed from the sidelines, you are invited to come and see, 'the miracle on Main' Incredible isn't it!

Knox is planning a **Grand Opening Celebration** to welcome the Community to embrace the restored sanctuary and share the joy with them on Sunday Sept. 23rdwatch for details.

Saint Paul's United Restoration Update

By Jim Dills

The fund-raising efforts of St. Paul's United church restoration committee has resulted in pledges and donations of 1 million dollars which is two thirds of the way towards the final goal of 1.5 million.

Restoration and renovation work continues over the summer. In the meantime St. Paul's congregation worships at Milton Town Hall in the Milton Room and the church administration has been relocated to the small house on the lot at 101 Main St. All contact numbers remain unchanged.

Contributions to the St. Paul's Capital Campaign are always welcome as the congregation works to preserve it's historic presence in the downtown area, something many in the heritage community were strongly supportive of insuring.

Editor's Note: All donations big or small will help return the sanctuary to use. When the sanctuary reopens, the corner of Main and James will be re-energized with church services and the beauty of the building for all to admire. If you are able to make a contribution, please consider doing so. All donations to the church will qualify for a charitable donation receipt to go against your income taxes.

35th Anniversary Dinner of the MHS

The Milton Historical Society celebrated the 35th year of it's founding with a celebration dinner in place of

our May general meeting. The event was held in the Milton room at Milton's Town Hall. The location for the dinner was significant in that one of the main reasons for the creation of the society in 1977 was concern about the future of the Court House which had been vacated by Halton Region in favour of a larger and more modern courtroom on Steeles avenue.

A buffet style hot dinner was served to the roughly fifty celebrants along with wine. The dining tables were decorated with glass vases and fresh flower arrangements thanks to Mirella and Mandy. Before the dinner there was a slide show which included pictures of society people and activities over the years.

There were also speeches by our president Jan Mowbray, Jim Dills and Bruce Carlin about the importance of preserving our local heritage. Mayor Krantz presented the society a 35th anniversary plaque. Dinner was followed by cutting of an anniversary cake. Present to celebrate this important anniversary were members of the early years of the society including Jim Dills, Don Hayward, Jessie Hamilton, Pam McLean, Annie Drew and Brad Clements.

Thanks very much to Nancy Cuttle and Kay Bounsall for all of the preparations that went into making this evening a wonderful event and to everyone who came out to support this important anniversary. (Note that some of the glass vases went missing after the dinner, if you have one of them, please return to Mirella Marshall)

Milton Historical Society

MONTHLY PROGRAMS

Museums of Mississauga: June 19 to Aug. 24, Rebellion of 1837 Art contest with the Artists Looking for Empty Walls. This show will run at the Grange featuring Mackenzie's historic route of travel. (www.lafew.com/contests)

- Trafalgar Township Historical Society: June 26, 7 pm at the Palermo School House on Dundas Hwy east of # 25. Mathew Wilkinson from Heritage Mississauga will speak on the War of 1812.

- Nasagieweya Historical Society: July 10th, 8:30 pm Charlene Tuersley is leading an overview of early transportation by train through the Nassagawaya Township. contact the society for location

- Mississauga South Historical Society: July 17, 7:30 pm at the Lorne Park Library, 1474 Truscott Dr. Speaker Zig Misiak "Six Nations During the War of 1812"

- Trafalgar Township Historical Society: July 20, 1:30-3:30 pm Open House at the Palermo School House located on the Dundas Hwy just east of Hwy 25.

- Esqueping Historical Society: Sept. 12, 7:30 pm at the Knox Presbyterian Church Georgetown, Main St. "The Barber Dynamo-A Perspective. Local author, Reinhard Filter will examine the development of hydroelectric power and how the Historic Barber Paper Mill harnessed that power, setting a North American first.

Burlington Historical Society: Sept. 10th, 7pm Guest Speaker Webb Turner, "Life and Legacy of Isaac Brock"

Sept 20th 8:00 PM Milton Historical Society
History of the Milton District High School by Ian Jones

-October 18th 8 PM Milton Historical Society
War of 1812 The Ancaster Assizes, speaker James Elliott



The Journal

Milton Historical Society 16 James Street, Milton, Ontario L9T 2P4 Telephone 905-875-4156
www.miltonhistoricalsociety.ca

Sept. 2012, Vol. 27 Issue 3

Fall Edition



Some of the War of 1812 pictures and other historic items on display at the MHS carriage room

President's Report

History is a kind of introduction to more interesting people than we can possibly meet in our restricted lives; let us not neglect the opportunity. ~Dexter Perkins (1889–1984) one of the most prominent authorities on U.S. history.

The monthly general meetings of the Milton Historical Society provide the introductions to a great many interesting persons. On that note, I once again have the pleasure of greeting you as president of the Milton Historical Society, and to bring greetings on behalf of the entire Board: Marsha Waldie, Bruce Carlin, Gloria Brown, Kay Bounsall, Susan Platt, Pam McLean, Mirella Marshall, Mandy Sedgewick, Walter Eadie, Diane Jarvis, and Nancy Cuttle. Though not on the board, Brenda Whitlock is an integral part of the behind-the-scenes action in the MHS archives: researching, cataloguing, filing, etc. We are grateful to her for her work, and for the able assistance of Asiya.

The summer of 2012 is fast fading into the past. It went by so fast, I didn't accomplish as much as I thought I would but isn't that usually the case?

As a board, we took July and August off from meetings but work was ongoing – such as plans for the fall meeting schedule. I would like to welcome Jennifer Smith to the board as Program Convener. Jennifer will arrange the general meeting programs, provide the topic, appoint speakers, etc. If you have a suggestion for a topic or activity, we are more than happy to listen. Our goal is to make all meetings as interesting as possible.

The hallmark of an organization is built around its membership. And, speaking of membership, if you haven't already renewed your membership in the Milton Historical Society, please do so as soon as possible. Funding to the Historical Society is based on membership numbers. The higher our numbers, the stronger our chances for any available funding. Kay Bounsall and Susan Platt are the membership chairs and would be more than happy to sign you up.

In closing, we always need volunteers and though we have a great team, **there is no "I" in Team but there is a "u" in volunteer!** Please

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volunteer - there are many ways to help and even a little of your time can be invaluable to the whole team. Come, be part of the team!

War of 1812 Display

I hope that you have had a chance to view the War of 1812 display at the Waldie blacksmith shop this summer. The attractive display was organized by Gloria Brown and includes brochures, newspaper articles and illustrated descriptions of some of the key battles of the war. There are also framed pictures hanging along the walls with a variety of photos and maps. Visitors to the shop have had the opportunity to view the blacksmiths ply their trade and also learn about the War of 1812.

War of 1812 – Local Soldiers – George Miller

George Miller U.E.L. was in the Royal Navy on the Great Lakes of Canada and was appointed as a pilot, volunteer services in the war and he was a sailor under Captain Dobbs aboard the brig named the HMS Star. The HMS Star was a 262 ton ship with a crew of 110. The brig was a ship that had two square masted sails and was fast sailing and used for training and as a courier. HMS Star boasted a total of fourteen guns of varying calibers including 2 long 12 pounder and 14 of the 32 pounder carronade. In the Fall of 1814 George Miller was aboard the HMS Star.

The Star and two other British ships were blockaded in the Niagara river under Commander Alexander T. Dobbs. A party of 70 British carried a gig and six bateaux overland from Frenchmen's creek to Lake Erie. With the portage of the boats complete on August 12, 1814 the British seaman and marines made their way towards the U.S ships disguised as supply boats. Between 11 and 12 PM the boats were discovered a short distance ahead of the U.S. schooner "Somers" and hailed. They answered "provision boats" which deceived the officer on deck. Before he discovered his mistake the boats drifted across his hawse, cut his cables and ran him aboard with a volley of musketry, which wounded two men.

Before the others could get on deck the schooner was captured. In another moment the British were along



Example of a circa 1812 brig

side the "Ohio" and there was a short brief struggle in which the British lost their second in command Lieutenant Copleson Radcliffe R.N. and one seaman was also killed and six seamen and marines wounded. This was one of the last naval engagements of the war. The British subsequently took part in a storming attempt during the Siege of Fort Erie, which failed with heavy casualties.

Prior to his navy days, George Miller was a militia officer ensign in a battalion company doing duty at Kingston under Colonel the Honourable Richard Cartwright between June 26 and December 24, 1812. George Miller was an original land owner in the southwest portion of Esquesing township and his property was at Concession 5, Lot 1 East half and the date of patent was September 2, 1826. In the publication, Halton's Scotch Block it is written that George Miller built a dam and sawmill on the Sixteen mile creek above the Baseline where settlers were able to get lumber cut for building.

George Miller was interred at the Boston church cemetery and his tombstone reads that he was a native of Kippen, Perthshire, Scotland. He died on June 10, 1848 at the age of 58 years. He had a wife and four children. The George Miller farm is now owned by James Robertson.

Looking Back:

Submitted by Marsha Waldie

Milton Old Boys' and Girls' Reunion was held June 27 to July 1, 1929. According to the official program every evening there was a show and dancing till midnight. Dancing - Admission was 25 cents and 15 cents.

Thursday things got underway at 7:30 PM with a parade and the arrival of the King of the Carnival". There was an address of welcome by Mayor Syer, community singing followed by a band concert at 8:30 pm. At 9:00 PM a play with local talent under Mr. A. E. Millson took place.

Friday a reception and registration of members was held in the morning at the Town Hall (Located on Main street). The afternoon held various activities for old and young. The evening began at 7:00 with a band parade followed by a softball game. Milton vs Kilbride. At 8:00 PM the band held a concert with the evening play, "The Path across the Hill".

Saturday morning at 10 they held a Rose show followed by an inspection of the town. It appears that autos were supplied by the town to drive individuals around sightseeing. At 1:30 PM the old boys and girls from Toronto accompanied by the Toronto band arrived at the C.P.R. station and proceeded to Martin's Lake (mill pond). This was followed by an exhibition of swimming with a few star attractions – George Young and Ernest Vierkotter, ex mayor McColl and Dr. R.K. Anderson MP welcomed all. This was followed by baseball, Milton vs Oakville. The afternoon also held sports, foot races, jumping, etc for the children. At 4:30 PM everyone enjoyed horse races. Again the evening finished with a band parade, theatre performance by a group from Toronto and dancing.

Sunday all attended a special church service held in all the churches in the morning and again at 7 PM. The afternoon started at 3:00 with a parade led by Orangeville citizens band to Evergreen cemetery to decorate the graves with a short address by Chairman Judge Elliot. A sacred concert was held in Victoria Park with a silver collection.

Dominion Day, July 1st saw the arrival of the Galt Kilbie band and old boys from Detroit, London, Hamilton



In Town for a Circus

Milton Old Boys and Girls Reunion—1929.

and other points. They paraded from the station to the Town Hall later they paraded from Bruce St. Public school grounds – decorated autos, floats, calthumpians, children, etc, old boys and old girls in costume on the Agricultural Park (fairgrounds), crowning of Queen of the Carnival followed by a Grand Minstrel show with 40 high class performers. The closing dance was in full swing, closing with a grand display of fireworks and a huge bonfire.

The MHS – Highlights of the 1980's

In 1982 the society produced four picture frames of Milton's Mayors that spanned the time from 1857 to the 125th anniversary of Milton's incorporation. There was a walking tour of Milton's main street led by Jim Dills. The MHS hosted the Canadian Pavilion at the Festival of Countries.

That same year the MHS was incorporated with the Ontario Heritage board and the Ontario Historical Society. This was also the first year of the MHS assisting the Mayor and Councillors in their first attempt at convening a New Year's Day Levee. There were fifteen homes plaqued and five more in research.

There was discussion about having the Roxy theatre designated as a historical site. There were also efforts to try and have the Registry building turned into an archives or a cultural center from the Region of Halton. The MHS had also offered an amount of \$2,500 towards the restoration of the Pioneer cemetery by the Town of Milton.

Panton Home Restoration

One of the first buildings in the village of Kilbride was the Panton homestead on Lot 19 of the village plan. The house appears on the Kilbride map of 1853. Although Kilbride is not part of the municipality of Milton, there are some historic connections with Milton.

William Panton Sr. (1808-1865) immigrated to Canada from Ireland and settled in Nelson township. In the 1837 rebellion he fought on the side of the government forces. In 1847 he moved to Cumminsville and was in the mercantile business. (milling and lumbering). He helped lay out the village of Kilbride. He moved to Milton in 1857 and served as Clerk of the County of Halton until his death in 1865.

William Panton Jr. a son of William Sr. and was born in Kilbride in 1847. William was appointed County of Halton clerk after the death of his father and served 66 years. William Jr. was also a part or whole owner of the Canadian Champion beginning in 1882 and continuing on until 1927.

J. J. Panton was a son of William Panton Jr and was local editor of The Champion in 1882. J.J. Panton left Milton in 1883 and worked in the newspaper business as telegraph editor of the Butte, Montana Daily Miner.

The home was purchased in 1950 by George Prudham PC, Minister of Mines in the St. Laurent cabinet 1949-1957. George Prudham was an uncle to Ruth Taylor of our society. The house was purchased for his then recently widowed mother, Anna Catherine Pickett Prudham. She lived there until her death in 1957. The property was sold to the Zwicker family in 1957 or 1958 and they in turn sold the property to John Dixon in 2012.

The house was the scene of many happy family gatherings during the 1950's. Many lively discussions took place centred around government issues of the day. Mrs. Prudham's cousin, Keither Pickett Henry, was married to George S. Henry, Premier of Ontario in the late 1930's and he too could lead a lively discussion when they visited with family in the old house. Mrs. Prudham entertained often during the summer months when guests were able to sit under the wonderful old black maple trees that still grace the



1952 photo of Ruth and Robert Dixon with their grandmother at the Panton home at 2080 Kilbride street.

lawns today.

The new owner of the home is John Dixon, nephew of Ruth (Dixon) and Don Taylor of our society. Renovation work will take some time as the house was allowed to fall in disrepair over the last dozen years.

We wish John all the best with his renovation project. Ruth writes that walking through the old house now brings back wonderful memories of years gone by and she looks forward to more family memories in the restored home

St. Paul's Church Update

By Jim Dills

Dramatic aspects of the St. Paul's restoration and renovation program have been really visible as workmen continue the work on the sanctuary roof. The slate is being removed as this is written and a protective layer is being positioned over the roof boards that have not seen the light of day for more than a century.

The new material to be applied will be dramatically lighter than the previous slate of the original roof. Inside the "attic" additional work to strengthen the roof structure is to take place but it will not be as visible as the exterior roof.

Plans for the work in the Christian Education Centre have been filed with the Town and approval was expected as this was written. This is extensive as it deals with the changes in the stairwell pattern to make the central atrium level with the sanctuary, allow for the elevator installation and provide the gathering area

(somewhat like the former Graham Hall) on the common level. The space in the former Graham Hall will have a reduced ceiling height as a result. The space on the top level will not be dramatically changed and uses will be allocated at a later time.

Work on the brick and mortar restoration continues.

Unseen and largely unknown the designated committees continue with countless meetings and decision-making as the project proceeds. Meetings with our insurer, with our financial groups, with the architects, with our project managers, with the contractors involved, with the town and others continue as minute details in each area are dealt with.

The Knox Presbyterian church reconstruction was completed this summer and the church reopened their doors. Congratulations to all who helped in the renovation. Job well done.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

by Walter Eadie

Our most recent Archives volunteer, 'Asiya Malik, has completed an alphabetical listing of all former MHS members by name with , as best as could be determined, their initial and final years of MHS membership. Asiya has also created a log book where the archives volunteers are recording all visits and inquiries to the Archives – Name, date, purpose of visit, etc.

Tom Holden, a former lawyer in town, sent a package of documents related to the former law practice of Kenneth Dick. The items have been catalogued and filed and a thank you letter sent.

Lou and John Bradley donated some items including a very good condition 1935 telephone book.

Walter Eadie has participated in a Facebook group called "I Remember Milton". There are several descendants and relatives of former Milton business owners who are participating along with our own Walter Eadie and this has allowed Walter to augment his records on Main street businesses.

The family of Gordon Hume has donated two boxes of historical books from the Milton, Burlington and Hamilton areas as well as Steam Era posters, collector books and Steam related magazines. There are also a



Mike Currie dressed as a British Indian agent during a War of 1812 re-enactment this summer.

number of photos of family and two large photos, one showing the clearing of land and the other a photo 1957 Milton centennial of dignitaries at the Milton fairgrounds.

The archives have also dealt with a number of requests for information on family histories usually one or two families a week.

Mike Currie—A Man of Many Hats

Mike Currie is one of our resident volunteer blacksmiths but he also participates in military re-enactments and we thank him for the attached write up and photograph.

These pictures were taken at Ft. George in Niagara-on-the-lake. It was a re-enactment of the first invasion by the Americans on the fort in 1813. My uniform is that of an agent of the British Indian Department. The agents job was to recruit the local natives to fight for the King of England. Most agents were born in North America, had taken native wives and lived with the natives as trappers and traders. This was important because the natives needed to trust the agents who could speak their language.

During the battle the agents would have been with the natives and not in the British line. The agents took their orders from a British officer and passed those orders on to the natives. Sometimes they did as they were asked, but most times not.

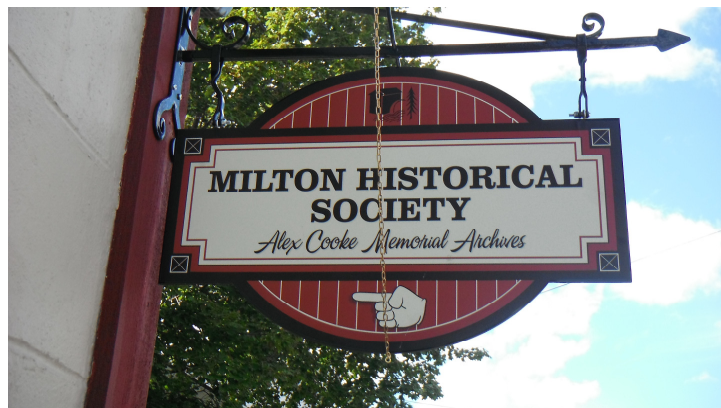
The BID were at all the major battles of the War of 1812. After the war some agents continued to work for the crown. The BID later became part of the Canadian government and what is now the Native Affairs Department.

Summer Volunteers Thank You!

Thanks to the members who have helped greet Saturday morning volunteers to the Waldie Blacksmith shop. Thanks to May Johnson, Fran Gravel, Judy Houston, Kaye Hogg, May Bell, John McDonald, Jennifer Smith. Our visitors were made welcome and entertained by the displays, museum articles and the friendliness of our volunteers.

Blacksmith Shop News

Thanks to all the blacksmith volunteers who have helped with demonstrations over the summer. Thanks to Darwyne Hourie, Larry Maughan, Fred Johnson, Mike Currie and one of our new volunteers David Brandow.



The MHS Alex Cooke Memorial Archives sign has been installed. Thanks to blacksmith Darwyne Hourie for building the steel frame that attaches the sign to the building. It looks great.

Welcome New Members

Ann Kornuta
Tanya Vakil-Fernandes
Faisal Lodhi

Single Memberships are \$20.00
Double Memberships are \$35.00

The MHS Journal is published quarterly for our membership. If you have any comments or suggestions, please send them to Bruce Carlin at bdcarlin@gmail.com

Milton Historical Society

MONTHLY PROGRAMS— All meetings are held at the Waldie Blacksmith shop unless stated otherwise.

Thur. Sept. 20th, 2012 Doors Open 7:30 pm and Meeting Starts 8 pm

Local Milton artist Ann Kornuta presents "Past Tense", a collection of paintings reflecting on the past images of Milton. This collected work has been put together in an electronic book (or 'eBook') along with photos, video, and information culled from the collection of the Milton Historical Society. The paintings all reflect a different time within a place of Milton spanning over 150 years.

October 18th 8 PM Milton Historical Society general meeting—James Elliott - Ancaster Historical Society will speak about the Ancaster Assizes which resulted in hangings of a number of people during the War of 1812.

November 15th 8 PM Milton Historical Society general meeting—Andrew McCausland will speak about the History of the Toronto based McCausland stained glass company and the work they have done in Milton area churches

December 20th—6 PM Potluck Dinner for the Milton Historical Society members

Dec 31st New Year's Eve bell ringing at Victoria Park
January 1st, 2013—New Year's Day—Milton Town Hall



The Journal

Milton Historical Society 16 James Street, Milton, Ontario L9T 2P4 Telephone 905-875-4156
www.miltonhistoricalsociety.ca

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Winter Edition



Launch of the MHS 35TH Anniversary recipe book. From L to R. Pam McLean, Gloria Brown, Judy Houston, Stuart Hill and President Jan Mowbray. See p. 5 for story. Photo Jim Dills

Without all the work, the time, the dedication and commitment to preserving Milton's past, our history would be merely a series of dates and lists of events.

Thank you to everyone for their contribution in helping to bring Milton's history to life.

In closing, on behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and all the very best for a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Jan Mowbray,
President, MHS

Curling

According to the history by Donald Kennedy curling in the 1800's as described in the Canadian Champion talks about occasions when men's curling took place on the mill pond. Out of town teams competed with Milton rinks as Don says on a, "challenge basis.

He describes ladies, in their long coats, high-buttoned boots and muffs to keep their hands warm would line the sides of the ice and politely applaud. Players owned their rocks, which they carried around in a wooden, shipping box."

A copy of the book, "Curling in Ontario 1864-1946" by John A. Steven-

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Message from the president...
As we approach the end of 2012, we can reflect upon a very active year and those who make it happen:

The 35th anniversary celebration of the Milton Historical Society; The Queen's Jubilee Tea; The launch of the Milton Historical Society Cookbook (December 15th); The various speakers and topics at the monthly meetings; The many volunteers who help out in various ways throughout the year; And, in particular, the ongoing, never-ending, invaluable archival work under the leadership of Brenda Whitlock; The Blacksmiths who come in all year long to demonstrate blacksmithing; Richard Laughton and his work on the Society's website, The Board of Directors of the Milton Historical Society.

son talks about the birth of Curling in Canada and on page 22-27 tells about the first curling games. Fergus in Wellington County was the first in club in Ontario – 1834. Flamborough followed in 1835, Toronto and Milton in 1936. Thus, we can claim to be one of the pioneer curling clubs of Ontario.

In the Nov. 18th, 1864 *Champion* the Milton Club met to discuss and consider uniting with the skaters in developing a combined rink for both winter activities. Of course the skaters also were using the mill pond for their skating pleasure.

According to another article on Curling in the *Champion* dated April 24, 1991, and indicates that a club was built just north of the Main Street bridge at the junction of the two streams and mentions that in March 1900 the roof of the curling club collapsed. The article also indicated that this building was built on a lot which Joseph Martin supplied in 1880.

Mel Robinson's articles in the *Champion*, "Milton Then and Now", on Jan. 11, 1978 talks about the curling rink which was located, "north of Mill Street where Garden Lane leads to Rotary Park, the northeast corner was once occupied by the old curling rink." Mel recalls standing in this building in the 1920's with his feet freezing cold to watch hockey. "The ice surface was very wide with squared wooden timbers set in from each side and planks were set between these columns to board in the centre area for hockey games. On each side there was enough ice for one curling rink and spectators had to stand on the ice of the curling rink. The rink was open for skating many evenings and Saturday afternoons."

After the Mill Street rink was demolished Milton curlers had to go to neighbouring clubs to play. According to Don Kennedy's research, "Eventually Milton curlers discussed the possibility of building their own rink. The inaugural meeting was held at the Town Hall on September 22, 1964. It was pointed out that attempts to establish a curling rink were made in 1958.

The Executive finally proceeded with plans for locating a site, eventually selecting one on Millside Dr., over one at the Fair Grounds and a few others. The lot was purchased from Dr. Carl Martin and construction began in 1964, with the official opening scheduled for December 30th, 1964. This had to be cancelled as the



building was not ready. On March 24, 1965 the building was officially taken over and the opening was re-scheduled for October 15, 1965."

Today the Milton Curling Club is a very active group, with a good size membership. The club has a number of in house curling leagues, both Ladies and Mens as well as having various members who curl at different levels within the province.

By Marsha Waldie UE

Excerpts from Christmas in the British Army during the War of 1812 by Robert Henderson

Christmas during the time of the War of 1812 had little resemblance to today's holiday celebrations. Indeed Christmas day was recognized as an important religious event and was marked by the English and Germans with a special church service, a fine dinner and simple decorations but absent were large celebrations that one would expect.

For French Canadians and Scots, New Years Day was the focal point of their seasonal festivities. In contrast to this, the protestant Upper Canadians and newly-arrived American settlers, looked scornfully upon Christmas celebrations, particularly its decorations, as a "rag of Romanism". An English immigrant coming to Canada noted in the 1820s: "I was much surprised at the cold indifference which most people showed in their observance of Christmas day -with the exception

of the then few residing English families, the church was scantily attended."

In 1800 one of the first orders concerning Christmas in North America offers some insight into the experience of the common soldier:

"Tomorrow being Christmas Day it will be observed by the Troops in Garrison as a Sunday in every respect, and the civil artificers and Labourers in the Royal Engineers Department will be allowed a holiday from two in the afternoon on condition of their taking no time for dinner."

If not with their messes officers were often invited to the homes of local citizens. This was the case for Lieutenant John LeCouteur of the 104th while stationed in Kingston, Upper Canada. That day, for amusement LeCouteur had fun with an old Christmas custom of the "First Footing", which determined the fortunes of the family in the coming year by the first visitor on Christmas day. A good year was expected if a handsome man visited bearing coal or salt; whilst a poor old woman arriving at your door was considered a bad omen. After arriving at the Christmas party the young LeCouteur set his plan into motion:

After tea well over and arrangements were making for forfeits or some amusement to be fixed upon, I slipped out with Miss Phoebe, an ally who lent me one of Her Mother's dresses. In a short time I was fully equipped, slipped out of the back door, knocked at the front door, and requested to speak to the kind Old lady as a decayed Gentlewoman requiring aid. Miss Phoebe was of course sent out to hear my story and thought it would be better the poor Lady should tell her own story to the whole party who might become interested in her welfare. This was reported and the decayed Lady told her piteous tale, loss of Husband, children, fortune. The old Lady herself was completely won and a large sum was preparing for her relief but a certain occasional twinkling in the unfortunate Lady's eye led one or two of the fair sparklers [to] suspect the truth - a whisper went about and screams of laughter following, the poor Lady had to cut and run.

Looking for Ghostly tales !

Milton Historical Society member and volunteer blacksmith Fred Johnson is looking for your ghost



stories, hauntings or just creepy stories of Milton

Fred is looking to do a haunted walk in the downtown area. Stories of particular interest are those that can be walked to from the blacksmith shop:

- 1) The Waldie blacksmith shop itself
- 2) The hotel by the new post office, that burned down on Halloween in the 1970's
- 3) The old town jail where hangings took place
- 4) the fair grounds
- 5) old post office with the town clock
- 6) old mill site
- 7) mill pond
- 8) cemetery beside PL Robertson's

Does anyone know about an Indian grave site dug up in the town of Milton? Can you direct me to any artefacts or news paper clippings?

Any assistance would be great. This type of history is very popular today and I would like to help keep it alive I'd like an opportunity meet with some people to learn about these stories and have lots of time between Christmas and Feb 7th. Please contact me and we will see that can be arranged thanks to all fred Johnson. Fred can be reached at mrgiant@hotmail.com or by phone at 289-878-2562.

Turn the Clock Back:

Submitted by: Marsha Waldie UE

In 1967 as a Canadian Centennial project the Town Council improved the pond on Martin Street. They landscaped the south and east approaches to the pond and installed coloured lights in the trees along the south bank and set up a stone memorial, an inscription which read “1867-1967 – This Milton Centennial Pond was developed by Jasper Martin in 1820-1822. Labourers dug it deep enough to float barges and the earth was then drawn on the barges by oxen from the north side to the south bank. This Pond, which is on the 16 Mile Creek, supplied water power continuously for operating the grist mill from 1822 to 1960, under the ownership of the Martin family.”

From “Milton in the Past”, a series of articles written by Russell M. Clements for the Canadian Champion, 1967, it is noted that the Town Council in 1886 agreed to pay Thomas Turner 4c per lamp per night for lighting the street lamps in Milton, supplying oil, wicks and chimneys. The first electric lights were provided by the Ball Electric Light Co. which was located at Elizabeth and Victoria Streets in 1891. In 1895 the company sold out to the Milton Light and Power Co., the principal stock holders of the latter firm being John Stewart, Robert Stewart, John Hunter, Sidney Young and Duncan Dewar.

Milton, the County Town of Halton was not incorporated until 1857. Some facts about the County in 1856 are interesting: Population about 20,000; Warden – Robert Miller, Registrar – Thomas Racey, Sheriff – Levi Wilson, Judge of the County Court – Joseph Davis.

Winter Sledding in Milton in the Early Days From Memories of Milton by Mel Robinson

When a good snowfall is received in Milton nowadays, many children and their parents can be seen sledding on the banks of the Sixteen mile creek. One of the popular places is on the Eastern side of Commercial street, just North of Laurier avenue. In earlier times, there were some other popular sliding sites in town. Below is a summary of Mel Robinson’s sliding adventures about one hundred years ago.

Mel Robinson was born in 1909 in Hamilton and at



the age of two his family moved to Milton where his father took a job as a foreman at the P.L. Robertson company. Mel was a writer and a teacher and later in life he wrote a weekly article for the Canadian Champion entitled “Milton, Then and Now”

Mel’s family lived on Victoria street and there was a great snow sledding hill at the east end of Victoria where it turned to join James street. Today there is a set of concrete stairs that lead from the street level down to the ball diamonds and the swimming pool at Rotary Park. Mel recalls that this sledding hill was one of the best and most popular in town.

Occasionally, Mel would walk with a friend out Main street to the mountain for a really long run. It was a walk of a few miles to the top of the hill and a long, steep walk after each ride down. Sleigh rides down the escarpment allowed Mel and his friend to go very fast and travel quite a distance but this trip was not without its hazards as Mel recalls that during one sleigh ride down the hill they encountered a team of horses struggling up the hill pulling a heavily loaded sleigh. The boys had to take quick action to slow down and go off the side of the road to avoid a collision.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

by Brenda Whitlock

Congratulations to Jim Dills for his recent award of the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee medal. Jim was recognized for his contributions to the community of Milton. Jim continues to contribute to an appreciation of our local history through his writings (Time Capsules in the Canadian Champion, his work on the restoration of the St. Paul’s Church, and other activities. Jim

has authored or coordinated the publication of many books on Milton's local history. This is a well deserved honour. The presentation of the medals was made by Halton MPP Ted Chudleigh.

Publications: Milton Recipe Book Launch

Congratulations to the team that produced and launched the Milton Historical Society's most recent publication "Collection of Favourite Recipes - Past and Present". There are more than one hundred recipes ranging from main dishes such as "Hockey Night Meat Balls" to a variety of baked desserts and pies. The spiral bound recipe book has dozens of local historic photographs and it is priced at a great value of \$15 for non members and \$12 for MHS members. This is a limited production book and initial sales have been brisk so get yours now and avoid disappointment. It makes a great Christmas present. Thanks to the advertisers for their financial assistance through advertisements.

Levi Willson Open House

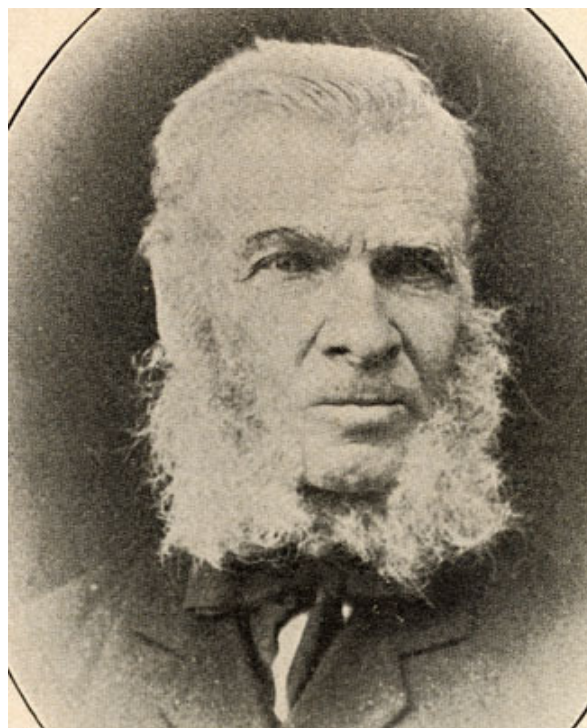
Thanks to Karin Tomosky and Larry Chambers for hosting a Holiday Season Open House recently at the original Levi Willson home. There was a good size crowd of well wishers to view this historic home, the original part that dates from 1827. The home is very impressive with high ceilings, large windows to let in lots of light and the interior decorations have been kept true to the original period look. Guests were taken on guided tours of the home to learn about the history of the home. There were drinks and refreshments served and it was an enjoyable afternoon for all.

Welcome New Members

Anita Naeem, Sue Paul, Carol Burne, John Tovey, Marion Marshall

Elections: MHS Board, Annual Meeting

Please join us at the annual meeting of the Milton Historical society on Thursday, January 17th. Our elec-



Levi Willson, Halton's first sherriff, picture circa 1870 from Milton Images website.

tions for the executive members will be held. All positions will be open except for that of President. The Treasurer and Sectary positions are for a two year term. All other Positions as follow will be for a one year term: Special Events, Journal, Building Plaquing, Public Relations, Building Maintenance, Membership, Publications, and Monthly Programs. If you are willing to help out please speak to our Past President, Marsha and she will explain the various Board Positions. After the annual meeting there will be a Show and Tell and all members are invited to bring a historical article that has a funny or interesting story.

Also, memberships for 2013 will be sold at the annual meeting. Support your society. Our membership numbers help us financially as they are a significant amount of money for the society and the membership numbers have a bearing on the annual operating grant we receive from the province. Renew today!

Single Memberships are \$20.00
Double Memberships are \$35.00

Simply fill in the membership form on page 6 and return with your money.

Milton Historical Society

MONTHLY PROGRAMS

December 31st—Ring in the New Year at Victoria Park. Arrive at 11:45 PM. The MHS is not co-hosting the celebrations this year but this is still a fun way to welcome in the New Year

January 1st, 2013—Mayor's Levee at Town Hall from 1 to 3 PM. Town Hall tours and refreshments

Jan 17, 2013—8 PM Milton Historical Society Annual General meeting including elections for the 2013 executive. This will be followed by a Show and Tell.

Feb 9, 2013—10 AM Ontario Artists Blacksmith Association annual meeting at the Waldie Blacksmith shop

Feb. 18th, 2013—The Blacksmith shop will be open and children's programs will be held. There is also an unveiling planned for the recent acquired Bowes and Willmott paintings

Feb, 21st—8 PM Monthly meeting, the topic is undecided at this moment (either Black History or the McCausland stained glass business)

March 21st—8 PM MHS General Meeting
Ross Johnson will speak about his uncle Ross Alexander's service in World War I, including his letters home

April 18th - 8 PM MHS General meeting
Ken Weber will speak about the Wives of the Prime Ministers.

MILTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP FORM

16 JAMES ST., MILTON, ONT. L9T 2P4
TELEPHONE: 905-875-4156
WEB SITE: www.miltonhistoricalsociety.ca

New:

Renewal:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone #: _____

E-Mail: _____

Membership Fees:

___ Single \$20.00

___ Double \$35.00

___ Student Free

Please mail or deliver your Membership Application to
Milton Historical Society at 16 James St., Milton, Ont.

L9T 2P4

Donations to the Waldie Blacksmith Shop Foundation assist
In maintaining & operating this interpretive centre in the
Heart of Milton. Donations of \$10.00 or more are income tax
Deductible and receipts are available.

I want to HELP Milton Historical Society by volunteering: I've indicated my interest-

___ Blacksmith Shop Interpreter, Assisting : ___ in the archives ___ with exhibits ___ with
social times ___ phone committee ___ walking tours ___ school tours ___ researching local
history ___ staffing during open hours VOLUNTEERS are a vital component to our
Societies Success