

The old hydraulic raceway built in 1824, which generated power in its tumultuous water, was the factor that brought factories and mills to St. Catharines in the early days, Francis Goldring told members of the Lincoln Historical Society last evening. Mr. Goldring illustrated his talk with early maps. Many other communities, started at the same time as Shipman's Corners, which became St. Catharines, did not continue to grow. The old raceway wended its way from Hayes Steel Mill to Hutchison's Mills, later the old Kinleith Paper Co. Many old lanes, Mr. Goldring said, led down from St. Paul St. to the mills along the raceway where horse-drawn wagons took their loads down, at William, James, Tannery Lane, Hill, Head and Race streets. Some of the factories were Riordon Paper Mills, Oille's mill, Garden City Paper, Grantham Flour Mills, Phelps' Mill and Packard, first to use the water from the raceway. Mr. Goldring also described types of water wheels used in the mills, turned by the strong raceway current. Norman Macdonald presided at the meeting. Another meeting will be held March 30 in connection with forming a Lincoln Historical Museum at the new Arts Centre in Rodman Hall. A delegation from the society will go to city council to urge the preservation of Lock three of the first Welland Canal. R.S.K. Welch, the society's president, is its representative to the Arts Council.”
(Originally Published in the June 2007 Newsletter)