

St. Catharines Historical Society **NEWSLETTER**

May 1999

Newsletter for the members of the Historical Society of St. Catharines.
P.O. Box 23104, 124 Welland Avenue, St. Catharines, Ontario, L2R 7P6
Web Site - <http://www.niagara.com/~dmdorey/hssc/hssc.html>

Membership dues for the calendar year are individual \$10 or family \$15.00.
Please join or renew now for the 1999 membership year.

Our Mission and Goal is to increase the knowledge and appreciation of the history of the City of St. Catharines and Vicinity. The Society is a member of the Ontario Historical Society.

Historical Society Spring & Summer Events

***** SPRING IS IN THE AIR *****

23rd Annual Oille Fountain Geranium Planting

Saturday, May 8 - 11:00 a.m.

Corner of King and James Streets, St. Catharines

May 30 (Sunday) - Historical Walking Tour of Victoria Lawn Cemetery
Vice President John Burtiak will begin a guided tour at 2:00 p.m. *sharp* from the main gate.

June 19 (Saturday) - 4th Annual Heritage Bus Tour to Brantford and Area
The bus will leave Fairview Mall at 8:00 a.m. (from the parking area behind Food Basics). The guided tour heads through the countryside to Caledonia for a coffee break. Our first tour stop will be the National Historic site, Chiefswood, the home of Pauline Johnson. Next stop is the Mohawk Chapel (St. Paul's) before lunch at the Sherwood Restaurant, where we will enjoy a buffet lunch (included in price of tour). After lunch we visit the Woodland Cultural Center - Museum and Art Gallery (a native crafts and gift shop will surely satisfy the shoppers amongst us). The Art Gallery will be exhibiting "Native Art '99" during our visit. We will then take a short walking tour of a small area of Brantford to see some monuments (to Bell and Brant), interesting buildings (the courthouse and armory), and the cenotaph. We then head back to St. Catharines via the back highways through Binbrook etc. to catch a glimpse of Maggie's Homestead where the Mill still survives, plus much more in the way of historical commentary along the way. We return about 5:00 p.m.
Cost: Members \$30.00 - Non-members \$35.00. Reservations call Joyce at 685-4728.

July 3 (Saturday) - the Birthday of William Hamilton Merritt
The Society will join several other groups in a wreath laying ceremony at the Merritt Statue. The program will begin at 10:00 a.m.

September 2 (Thursday) - TAYLOR & BATE BREWERY
will host the Society meeting at their store on St. Paul Street. 7:30 p.m.

September 18 & 19 - 21st Annual Niagara Peninsula History Conference at Brock University, Theme: "Niagara Notables: Persons and Families Who Made Their Mark."

REPORT ON THE ANNUAL MEETING

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting - Thursday, April 1, 1999

The Meeting was held in the Mills Room of the St. Catharines Public Library, Church Street, St. Catharines.

Call to Order: President Dr. Wesley Turner called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. with a quorum present (25% required) of the paid up membership of 92.

President's Report: Wes welcomed and then thanked the members for their interest in the Society and in particular, the Board of Directors for their efforts on behalf of the Society throughout their last term. Wes highlighted some activities of the Society.

Minutes of the Previous Annual General Meeting: Secretary Bill Stevens advised that copies of the Minutes were available, that the minutes of the Annual Meeting held April 2, 1998 were published (in a slightly abbreviated format) in the February 1999 newsletter and previously reviewed by the Board of Directors. It was moved by Alex Ormston, 2nd Bill Stevens that the minutes of the Annual General meeting held April 2, 1998 be approved. Carried

Financial Report: Treasurer Tom Jenkyns presented the 1998 Financial Statement. Copies were distributed. An audited statement was not available for this meeting.

Summary Financial Statement for the Period of January 1, 1998 to December 31, 1998.

Total Balance of funds on hand as of December 31, 1997 = \$7533.66

Term Deposits on hand as of January 1, 1998 = \$4500.00

Bank Balance as of January 1, 1998 (consisting of an actual bank balance of \$3077.98 less outstanding cheques of \$44.32) = \$ 3033.66

Total Balance of funds on hand as of January 1, 1998 = \$7533.66

Term Deposits on hand as of December 31, 1998 = \$5013.28

Bank Balance as of December 31, 1998 (no outstanding cheques) = \$3192.23.

Total Balance of funds on hand as of December 31, 1998 = \$8205.51

Net Increase of revenue over expenditures for 1998 = \$671.85

It was moved by John Hersonek, 2nd Tom Jenkyns that the Annual Financial Statement dated December 31, 1998 be approved. Carried.

Membership Report: Membership co-ordinator Avril Brass reported that current membership was 95 as of the renewals received this evening.

Nominations and Elections: The meeting was turned over to Norm MacDonald who acted in place of the Nominating Chair Dennis Gannon who was unable to attend the meeting.

Norm advised that the executive positions were two-year terms and that all positions, except for past president, were open for nominations and election to them. Norm then read the slate of candidates from the nominating committee:

Past President - Wes Turner, President - Joyce DeForest, Vice President - John Burtniak,
Treasurer - Tom Jenkyns, Secretary - Bill Stevens.

Norm called for further nominations from the floor. No further nominations were put forward. Moved By Rob Taylor, 2nd Sheila Wilson: that the nominations be closed and that those candidates nominated be declared elected. Carried

Norm then advised that up to 6 persons could be elected to the Board of Directors for a one-year term of office. The nominating committee nominated the following slate:

Paul Hutchinson, Brenda Zadoroznij, Avril Brass, Dennis Gannon, Jim Purdie.

.....Annual meeting minutes continue.....

Norm then called for further nominations from the floor. No further nominations were put forward. Moved by Sheila Wilson, 2nd Rob Taylor: that the nominations be closed and that those candidates nominated be declared elected. Carried

Norm then turned the meeting back over to Wes Turner who introduced the new president. Joyce Deforest. Joyce thanked the membership for their support in the past and pledged to undertake the duties of the presidency to the best of her abilities.

Joyce then announced details of the up coming June 19 bus tour.

Joyce then asked Wes to continue to chair the meeting.

Further Business: Wes Turner opened the floor to the membership. Alex Ormston raised the issue of the Society having a telephone number that could be published and also brought to the memberships attention that January 1, 2000 will be the 200th anniversary of the creation of the District of Niagara and that the Society should plan something to celebrate this.

The formal meeting portion was closed at 7:20 p.m. and a 10-minute break was taken.

Guest Speaker: At 7:30 p.m. approximately 51 were in attendance when Wes introduced the guest speaker Cheryl MacDonald. Cheryl presented "Port Dover, a Place in the Sun" and answered many questions afterwards. Janice McNabb thanked the speaker. Wes announced details of the May meeting.

Spas Book: John Burtniak then stepped forward and introduced the Society's new book: "Taking The Waters: a history of the spas of St. Catharines" ISBN 0-9685082-0-0. A copy was presented to Sheila Wilson and then to Norm MacDonald. Sheila kindly signed copies for people who purchased the book.

The evening closed with a refreshments and social until 9:00 p.m.

A Report on some Past Society Events.....

February 4 (Thursday). - A capacity crowd of 108 people were on hand to hear Society Past-President Dennis Gannon present a paper on "The Underground Railroad in St. Catharines". Particular emphasis was placed on the Rev. Hiram Wilson who spent 15 years in St. Catharines helping those who had escaped slavery in the United States.

March 4 (Thursday) - Robert and Kate Emerson and their two lovely children, presented a most fascinating evening titled "An Armoire Adventure: 18th Century Fashion Unlocked". Undressing and dressing in period clothing all the while explaining the materials used in their creation, purpose of each item, the person's status, etc. for each piece and outfit.

*****Presentations by other Heritage Organizations*****

May 11 (Thursday) - Regular meeting and speaker of the Ontario Genealogical Society Niagara Peninsula Branch - 7:30 p.m. at the Thorold Public Library Chestnut Hall. St. Catharines Historical Society Secretary and long time Genealogist Bill Stevens will speak on "Finding Death Information" The O.G.S. branch meets on the second Thursday of every month (except July & August).

May 20 -7:30 p.m. - History of the Niagara Parks Commission - George Bailey speaks to the Niagara Historical Society at the Museum in Niagara on-the-Lake.

Every Sunday - HERITAGE HOUR - on CFBU - FM 103.7 - Brock U. Radio - between 8 p.m. & 9 p.m. Host Tony Whelan presents items of historical interest.

THE ST. CATHARINES MUSEUM - at the Welland Canals Center - Open seven days a week 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. May 18 is International Museums' Day. Summer Exhibits will feature Rowing!

A MESSAGE FROM THE PAST PRESIDENT - WES TURNER

Dear fellow members,

When I was elected president of the Historical Society in 1996 I wrote a letter of greeting. Now, that I have completed three years in that position, I am happy to retire to the post of past-president. You have a new president and I am confident that under Joyce's leadership the Society will continue to flourish.

Before I go on to talk about our Society's activities, I must thank the members of the Executive (now called the Board of Directors) who have worked so hard and enthusiastically over the past three years. The speakers and programs that you have enjoyed are the product of their imagination and organizing abilities. The Society is sound financially and, therefore, able to undertake new initiatives such as the awards for top OAC students and the proposed historical journal. While we do receive a small government grant-which is much appreciated-our chief source of income is membership dues and these must continue in order to keep the Society financially solid.

It exists for the sake of its members and that is why I repeatedly urge you to renew your own memberships and to encourage other people to join. The Board really does welcome suggestions about programs and activities as well as comments about what we are doing.

We have been a busy Board. The Web page is attracting increasing interest both locally and from far away. We have had successful bus tours to Hamilton, Toronto and Haldimand-Norfolk and will explore a different area this year. The book on the Spas of St. Catharines has at last been published. The newsletter has continued to appear because of Bill Steven's dedication to the Society. Under Dennis Gannon's direction, and occasionally, John Burtniak's, we have had many successful walking tours in St. Catharines. The Society will proceed with the Victoria Lawn Cemetery tour and will try to offer other walking tours. The Oille Fountain Potting Ceremony, nominations for the Niagara Enterprise Hall of Fame, celebration of William Hamilton Merritt's birthday, and the historical calendar will all continue. Of course, the Society's Board will work hard to bring you varied and interesting programs with plenty of notice so that you can plan well in advance to attend the meetings. Do tell others about our activities and bring friends to the meetings. Delicious refreshments will continue to be served after the main event and there is always lots of interesting conversation with other members.

Well, I had better end this letter before it becomes an article or even a book. Thank you for your support of the Society during my presidency. Watch for the notices of upcoming events because the Board does not go to sleep during the summer. Our series of fall meetings begin on 2 September at Taylor and Bate Brewery on St. Paul Street. I hope to see you there and at the following meetings.

Best wishes for an enjoyable and healthy summer!
Wesley B. Turner, Past-President

BRITISH GENERALS IN THE WAR OF 1812 - High Command in the Canadas

McGill-Queen's University Press has just published an exciting new book by Society Past President Wesley B. Turner. An examination of the thoughts and actions of five British generals in Lower and Upper Canada - Sir George Prevost, Isaac Brock, Roger Sheaffe, Baron Francis de Rottenburg, and Gordon Drummond - who held the highest civil and military command in the Canadas. ISBN 0-7735-1832-0. March 1999, 260pp. Priced at \$39.95. This book will be available for purchase at Brock University Book Store. Hopefully all of Niagara's libraries will obtain copies.

NIAGARA COLLEGE - NIAGARA RIVER CRUISE THROUGH HISTORY - June 5

Society Past President Wes Turner provides the historic commentary on a daylong (board at 10:30am- embark at 11:00am and return at 5:00pm) tall ship cruise along the western shore of Lake Ontario and the lower Niagara River. Fee \$79.00 includes meals, cruise and taxes. Call Niagara College at (905)735-2211, 641-2252, 563-3254 or 374-7454ext.7510 for details.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT - JOYCE DEFOREST

It is an awesome task you have set before me - that of carrying on the excellent work of my predecessors in the St. Catharines Historical Society. To follow in the footsteps of historians like Dennis Gannon and Wesley Turner is a sobering thought indeed.

I bring no historical training to this task, simply a love of history and a fierce pride in my hometown of St. Catharines. Perhaps that will be enough as I call upon the support of the excellent executive you voted into office this term.

I count on the help of all members of the Society, and of the extended community, to bring interesting guest speakers to our meetings and thus to open new areas of interest to us all. We have some intriguing programs planned for the coming few months - including a few innovations to our standard fare. I'm sure you will enjoy them.

Suggestions, information and requests will be carefully considered and every effort will be made to bring them to fruition. A suggestion by a past president Alex Ormston at our annual meeting has exciting prospects and we are checking into the possibility of centering a meeting on this special anniversary for our area.

I thank you for the confidence you placed in me and in our executive for this term. We will do our best to make the first Thursday evening of the month one that you will not want to miss. Yours in the promotion of the history of St. Catharines,
Joyce DeForest, President

1999 CALENDAR is still on sale - for only \$5.00 -

The Historical Society Calendar is still available. It contains 13 unique scenes from St. Catharines of yesterday. On sale at all meetings and events of the Society or can be ordered from any Board member. A great buy - a great gift item - there are now less than 60 available. The theme of this year's calendar is rowing, in recognition of the up coming world rowing championships.

>>>>NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL HISTORY AWARDS<<<<

Members of the Society will be handing out an historical calendar and a \$50.00 award to a student of each public and separate secondary school in the City of St. Catharines. The award is to the best student in O.A.C. History subject for the 1998-99 school year as determined by the principal in consultation with the history department of the school. The award will be presented at graduation ceremonies and winners will be invited to attend a Society meeting for presentation of a certificate.

WE WELCOME THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS

Barbara J. Davis, Joan Blackie, Errol Lowhar, Don McLeod, Elizabeth Goodwin

HISTORICAL JOURNAL - ARTICLES WANTED

The Society invites the submission of material related to St. Catharines for possible publication in its journal, St. Catharines History. This can include research articles, memoirs, oral history, diary excerpts, or transcriptions from original documents. Contact Paul Hutchinson through the Society address or e-mail: paul.hutchinson1@sympatico.ca

HISTORY OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY - PAST PRESIDENTS

We are attempting to assemble a list of Past Presidents of the Society. Some of our past presidents were: Wes Turner (1996-99), Dennis Gannon, John Burtniak, Al Holden (1988), John Calvert (1986-87), Greg Miller (1984-85), Norm MacDonald, Sheila Wilson, Alex Ormston, and Collin Penkith, If you know of any others, please let the editor know so that we can complete our past presidents list.

EDWIN POOLE -

was a noted photographer who conducted a successful business in St. Catharines until his retirement in 1921. His work won several awards at photographic competitions around the world. In an advertisement c1878 he was closing his shop to attend the Paris picture exposition. For many years he was the superintendent of the Sunday school at the Lyman St. Baptist Church before becoming a faithful member of the Queen St. Baptist Church. For 44 years (1885-1929) he was secretary of the Upper Canada Bible Society. He was a prominent worker for the establishment of the YMCA here. He was one of the oldest members of Union Lodge I.O.O.F. Edwin's wife predeceased him by seven years and two children died young. He loved the children and he always carried peppermints in his pocket for those who sought him out.

'Tis not every day you get a photograph of yourself. Therefore, when you do, see that you get a good one. There is much indifferent photography throughout the world, not worth having, therefore not worth paying for. Many persons have sought unwisely to get increasingly lower prices, always on the look out for cheaper work. That is a great mistake; it leads to the use of low grades of materials, the employment of unskilled labor and "slighted work," and often to "cut-throat" prices. The photographers of St. Catharines are on good terms with one another and will not resort to such things. They know that each one has his patrons and is likely to have. They, however, desire that the number of those who patronize them shall increase.

Go ahead now! and get yours taken, and be particular what quality you get. You know where to go. If not, ask for Poole's Photo Rooms.

Thirteen years in St. Catharines and he still maintains his reputation for Quality.

Reverse side of business card (Reduced)



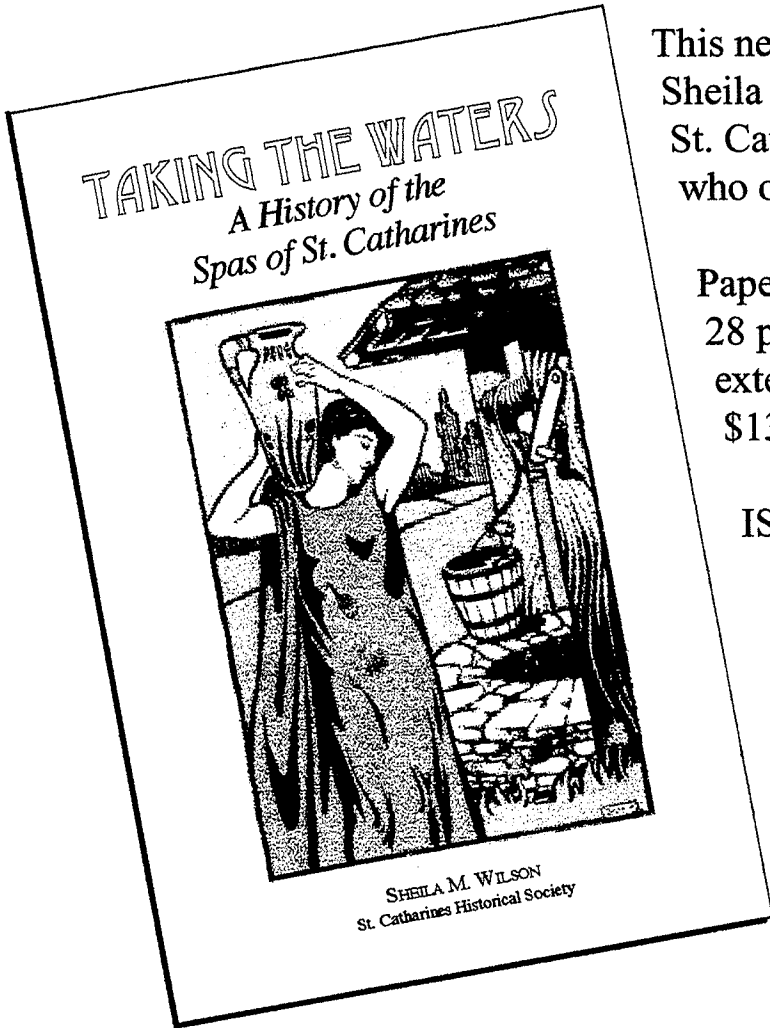
COMPLIMENTS + +
* + OF

E. Poole

Edwin died on January 27, 1931 at his home at 11 Race Street, St. Catharines. He is buried in the Farrington Cemetery in Brantford, Ontario where other members of his family are buried. At his death, he had two sisters, Mrs. Staniland of Brantford & Miss. A. POOLE of St. Catharines. He also had two brothers, William POOLE of England & L.J. POOLE of Detroit. This copy of POOLE'S business card with his picture was donated to the St. Catharines Public Library. There are pictures of POOLE as an elderly gentleman, but this is the only known picture prior to retiring and while in business.

TAKING THE WATERS

A History of the Spas of St. Catharines by Sheila M. Wilson



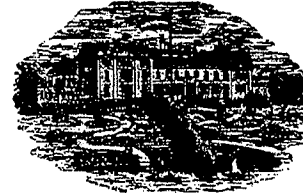
This new publication by Society member Sheila M. Wilson chronicles the history of St. Catharines' spas — and the colourful people who owned and managed them.

Paperback 5.5 x 8.5 inches, 96 pages with 28 photographs and illustrations. Includes extensive footnotes, bibliography and index.
 \$13.00 Members \$15.00 Non-members

ISBN 0-9685082-0-0



SPRINGBANK HOTEL



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	QUANTITY	PRICE	TOTAL
SOCIETY MEMBERS		\$13.00	
NON-MEMBERS		\$15.00	
Shipping (\$2 Canada, \$3 U.S. per order)			
TOTAL			

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ORDER!

MERRITT PAPERS now have CHECKLIST... thank you Alex Ormston!

Titled "CHECKLIST OF LETTERS - Appearing, Quoted, or Mentioned - in the MERRITT BIOGRAPHY" December, 1998. It is available at the St. Catharines Historical Museum.

"Everything you always wanted to know about the Merritt Papers" is how Alex explained it to me. In reality, it is an extensive checklist of the 343 letters, correspondence and subjects mentioned in the Merritt Biography, the book first published by his son J.P. Merritt in St. Catharines in 1875.

Alex spent hours pouring over the book to extract all mentions of the letters, correspondence and subjects all of which are available in the type script copy available in the museum library/archives. Alex is a past president of the Society and former curator of the St. Catharines Historical Museum,

FROM THE SOCIETY WEB SITE and MAIL BAG

The Society often receives e-mails and mail requesting assistance in various researches. This newsletter section will highlight some of these requests - perhaps you can answer them:

From the Society Web Site Guest Book (where you can respond to the query):

Guest #17 - Robert K. Bessey, U.E. from Guelph - searching the Loyalist BESSEY family.

Guest #18 - Sandra Belanger-Dennis from Hamilton - searching STEVENSON/WALTERS/TROUP/CULP/SMITH lines from St. Catharines / Beamsville areas.

Guest #19/20 - Christine from St. Catharines - writing a children's novel about Laura SECORD and her famous walk, set in the period 1795-1815- seeking information on this time period, especially old maps or pictures from the Niagara on-the-Lake and St. Catharines area.

Guest #21 - Alan Moote from Oceanside, CA. - seeking MOOTE family in Niagara area.

Guest #22 - Donna Jacobus from Temecula, CA. - "My great-grandparents Philip Ariel WILLS and Edith BURTCH were from St. Catharines. My Grandparents John and Lillian WILLS are buried there also". Looking for information on these people.

Guest #23 - Cathi Darby Stephens from California - searching my DARBY and BOWMAN families in the St. Catharines area from 1785 onwards.

Guest #24 - Iva Cone from Tulsa, OK. - searching Isaac PICKARD married Jane Anna HAINES and lived in St. Catharines area until c1868.

THE ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Ontario Historical Society is located at 34 Parkview Avenue, Willowdale, Ontario, M2N 3Y2. Members receive the OHS Bulletin four times per year. It covers Ontario Historical events, news, book reviews, and all sorts of interesting news pertaining to historical items of interest. The St. Catharines Historical Society maintains membership in the OHS. Membership for Individuals/Institution/Organization is \$20.00 per year.

If you have a computer.... Why not join the Niagara Mailing List

This site is devoted to genealogy and history in Niagara. You can post short e-mail messages, place a query, answer a query from someone else, read about some current news, etc. To subscribe you simply e-mail the list at: NIAGARA-ONT-L-request@rootsweb.com

And in the body of your message, simply write ... subscribe. You will be notified that you have joined and provided with instructions on posting and to unsubscribe.

Newsletter Note ... Next Issue May 1999

The St. Catharines Historical Society Newsletter is published up to 4 times per year by the Society. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform the membership of issues pertaining to the Society and historical items of interests. Comments and queries should be directed to the Society postal address. Opinions and comments expressed in the newsletter are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Society. Subscription is by paid membership only.

This issue was produced by Bill Stevens.

The Society gratefully acknowledges the support of the Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation