

The Historical Society of St.Catharines

NEWSLETTER

December 2000

P.O. Box 23104, 124 Welland Ave., St. Catharines, ON, L2R 7P6

Web Site - <http://www.niagara.com/~dmdorey/hssc/hssc.html>

Our Mission and Goal is to increase the knowledge and appreciation of the history of St. Catharines and Vicinity. Our Society is affiliated with the Ontario Historical Society.

Our 2001 Program

Unless otherwise noted, the Society will meet on the 4th Thursday of the month in the Burgoyne Room of the St. Catharines Museum at the Lock 3 Complex, 1932 Welland Canals Parkway (formerly Government Rd.), St. Catharines. (*Program is subject to change*)

Thursday, January 25, 2001 - John Burtniak will be the guest speaker.

7:30 p.m. at the St. Catharines Museum. The topic will relate to Deltiology (postcards). John is the Society Vice-President and always presents a fascinating lecture.

Thursday, February 22 – We are pleased that Rochelle Bush and Harry & June Harper, all descendants of courageous freedom seekers, will be our guest speakers. Come hear about the Harriet Tubman Museum, the B.M.E. and Zion Churches and Rev. Anthony Burns. This special Black History Month presentation will start at 7:30 p.m. at the Museum.

Thursday, March 22 – Guest Speaker –T.B.A. - 7:30 p.m. at the Museum.

Thursday, April 26 - *Annual Meeting* and Guest Speaker –T.B.A.

Saturday, May 12 - 11:00 a.m. - 25th Annual Oille Fountain planting celebration.

Thursday, May 24 – Guest Speaker – T.B.A. – 7:30 p.m. at the Museum.

Saturday, June 16 - Our 6th Annual Historical Theme Bus Tour.

During June – Society members hand out History Awards at Local High Schools

Saturday, July 7 – Merritt's Birthday gathering at the monument. Walking Tour.

Thursday, September 27 – Guest Speaker. 7:30 p.m. at the Museum.

Thursday, October 25 – Guest Speaker – 7:30 p.m. at the Museum

Remembrance Day Service – Laying of Wreath at Cenotaph

Thursday, November 22 – 3rd Annual Member's Show & Tell- 7:30 p.m. at Museum.

The Board of Directors Extends a Warm & Cheerful Christmas Wish to All !

From the Society's Web Site Guest Book

Record 55 – name: Wendy Mellen - **From:** Penticton, BC - 2000-09-17

Looking for information on a relative, Mr Francis Mossey who lived in the St. Catharines area in or around the 1970s. He died in this area about 1980. He was Roman Catholic, was born around 1915, had a wife named Hilda, a daughter named Phyllis, and a son named Charles Veard. The family was originally from PEI. Anyone know of him? Anyone have a photograph?

Record 54 - name: Edith Bartley - **From:** Brooklyn, NY - 2000-09-05

Trying to find out more about the Oxborrow family which was in St. Catharines (or vicinity) by 1839 until at least 1856. Thomas Oxborrow and wife Sarah Freure (sp) had a dau. Eliza in 1839; he had a second wife by 1844: Jane ____; Thomas died in 1856 and is buried in Victoria Lawn Cemetery. The rest of the family (that I know of) moved to Oxford County, Ontario, and then to Iowa, except his widow Jane. Any information on Oxborrows or Freuer/Frewer etc in Canada gratefully received! Eliza was my husband's great grandmother.

Record 52- Name: Kevin Diehl - **From:** Kansas City, KS - 2000-08-08

Trying to find the parents or siblings of William ROE born May 19, 1843 in Port Dalhousie (now St. Catharines), Ontario. His obituary states that his parents were English and that he was a member of the Episcopal Church. The family bible has pictures that make reference to ANDERSON and SCOTT cousins. He immigrated to the US in 1864. He was married to Alice Elizabeth McBride on May 1, 1872 in Seneca, Pennsylvania. There they raised the following children: Minnie (Hoskins), Grace (Ridgway), Florence (Olson), Jennie (Wheeler), George, Agnes (Freeman), and Lawrence. William made his living in the oil business, as a tank builder, and as a farmer. He moved with his wife to Iola, Kansas to be closer to children about 1917. William died on October 21, 1923 and didn't bother telling anyone about his life. If anyone has any information, please contact us. My grandpa is a curious grandkid of William who would like to know if he has Canadian cousins.

The Niagara Mailing List

This is an Internet site 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:

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.

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Heritage Show on CFBU - FM 103.7 - Brock U. Radio

Join host Tony Whelan each Sunday between 7:30 p.m. and 9 p.m. and listen to Niagara Heritage Hour. The show is 1 1/2 hours and features coming events, news & guests from the local heritage community. Be sure to listen in!

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Newsletter Notes

The Historical Society of St. Catharines 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 interest. 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 Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Culture & Recreation.

Next Issue March 2001

Society News In Brief

- **Membership** - We have reached a new level of membership ... the highest ever at 124!
- **Welcome to new members:** Neil Geffey, Kevin & Ruth Troughton, Pat Abrams, Florence Francey, Irene Steeves.
- **In Memoriam** - We are sad to announce the passing of long time member Judith Bagg and a Society past president, Robert Welch. Mr. Welch was President in 1960.
- **History Award** - The Society congratulates Dean RASO of Sir Winston Secondary School, the recipient of the Society's \$50 award, presented by Mr. Jim Purdie.
- **A Thank You** was received from R. Neville, history award recipient from West Park S.S.
- **Remembrance Day** – Society President Joyce DeForest placed a wreath at the cenotaph. This is the first time the Society has participated in this service.

Report on Past Society Programs

Thursday, September 28 - Speaker: Colin Duquemin - "A Lady Waiting"

"A young woman risks entering a man's world, and tweaks the nose of the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada" was the topic of a fascinating speech. Colin is currently writing a book concerning the Rebellion of 1837 and two men, Waite and Chandler, who were transported to Van Dieman's Land (Tasmania). We thank the Museum for providing access to their collections for our members to view prior to the meeting.

Thursday, October 26 - Speaker: John Roberts -"History of the Metis".

John Roberts, U.E., Ph.D., Executive Director of the Canadian Metis Council spoke of the Metis' place in history, with particular emphasis on the St. Catharines area. John also explained the term Metis and the current activities of the Council to promote their ancestry and history.

Items of Historical Interest

- **The Ontario Genealogical Society Niagara Peninsula Branch** – holds regular meetings with a speaker at 7:30 p.m. usually at the Thorold Public Library Chestnut Hall on the second Thursday of every month except July and August.
- **At The Museum - until** January 28, 2001 - Christmas Exhibit titled "Many Merry Christmases" – a travelling exhibit circulated by Parks Canada.
- **New Book** - "To the Glory of God and for the Salvation of All -- A history of the Parish and Church of St. Barnabas, St. Catharines, Ontario" written by William H. Steinman, 196 pages. Available from the Church Office on Queenston Street.
- **Lacrosse Hall of Fame** - two St. Catharines residents, who are members of the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame, recently passed away, a great sports reporter, Jack Gatecliff and Frank Madsen. On the brighter side, the Society congratulates St. Catharines resident Gary Moore on his recent induction into the Ontario Lacrosse Hall of Fame.
- **Port Dalhousie Inner Range Lighthouse** - restoration is progressing very well. Most of the exterior work is complete, and will be painted when the cedar shingles cure.

- *New book* - "Petrotyranny" has just been released, written by long time Society member John Bacher. We would also mention that John represented the NDP in the Federal Election in the St. Catharines Riding.
- *Land Registry Documents* – APOLROD is pleased to announce that land records for St. Catharines, Grantham Twp., Merritton, and Port Dalhousie are being housed at the St. Catharine Museum. The land records date from 1869 to 1955.

Secure the Shadow ere the Substance Fade

A Short Sketch of G.F. Maitland, Photographer

In May 1865, George F. Maitland took over the photographic studio of James Inglis, who had been established upstairs in the Haynes Block (on the site of today's One St. Paul Street) for three years. Maitland was about thirty years old at the time and had worked for five years for R. Milne, photographer, of Hamilton, probably almost from the time of Maitland's emigration from Scotland in 1860. He brought to St. Catharines with him his wife, Mary Ann, four years younger than he, and their two children, Minnie and William. Within months of his arrival, *The Evening Journal*, a St. Catharines daily newspaper, was praising Maitland's work enthusiastically:

Decidedly the finest photographs we have ever seen in this locality are the Prize Photographs, on view at Mr. Maitland's photograph gallery. His pictures are elegantly got up, and for clearness and neatness of finish at once attract the eye. The figures in his portraits seem to stand out in bold relief from the background, resembling statuary more than pictures. Those who require a good picture would do well to give him a call. His charges are reasonable.

Soon, however, Maitland found his photographic rooms inadequate, and, on April 16, 1866, he closed the premises for renovations. Part of the plan was to remove the north wall in the upper flat and replace it with "a mammoth glass frame." In addition, he was to add another skylight to the one already in place in the roof. According to the *Journal*,

This will enable him to take a class of pictures never before attempted in St. Catharines, and in fact he will be enabled to get up life like pictures in every style and finish known to the art. We are glad to notice this evidence of improvement in the picture business, as it shows that Maitland, at least, is alive and kicking, and up to the progress of the times.

The progressive Maitland reopened his rooms on May 4, advertising the premises to be "enlarged and with improved Light."

Even with the additional light in the studio, Maitland was still hampered, as were all photographers of his era, by the long exposure times required for his primitive equipment. He operated only from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., the prime daylight hours, and suggested, "The best hours for photographing Children are from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m." Part of his enticement to draw subjects into his studio was the slogan "Secure the Shadow ere the Substance fade."

Within a few years, in the summer of 1869, Maitland offered something new to his customers: coloured photographs. For two weeks only, he hired an artist to enhance his prints with water colours. The *Journal* once again was effusive in its praise:

We were yesterday shown, at the studio of Mr. Maitland, Photographic Artist, some specimens of Colored Photographic Portraits, which for real artistic beauty and finish far surpass anything of the kind ever attempted in this town. Two of the specimens shown – leading merchants in town – were remarkably truthful as likeness, while the semi-transparency of the flesh tints and the beautiful blending and delicacy of the half-tints impart to the pictures a stereoscopic relief that at once charms the beholder.

Whether this two-week offer was repeated or extended is unknown, but about two years later, in March 1871, Maitland hired a full-time painter to work with him. This was J.T. See, of the Newman Street Academy, London, England. He coloured photographs with oil paints and retouched negatives. This time Maitland was offering coloured pictures in sizes from cabinet (about 5 x 7 inches) to life size.

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Maitland Story Continues....

One such photograph was of Theodore Pomeroy, of Massachusetts. Maitland shot the picture; then See painted it. They displayed the result in the St. Catharines post office. The *Journal* called See "a most promising and clever artist" and raved about the work of him and Maitland:

The picture is beyond doubt a noble work of art, and reflects a great credit upon the skill of the gentlemen named. Mr. Maitland has also at his studio an array of beautiful photographs, which for softness and delicacy of outline, admirable finish, and general excellence, are equal if not superior to anything in this line we have ever seen. Mr. Maitland has acquired an enviable reputation for the fidelity of his pictures, and it is certainly a "feather in his bonnet" to receive orders from so great a distance. It seems a happy combination of talent, when Mr. Maitland can make a good picture, and Mr. See transfer it in all its beauty on canvas.

Not content to rest with life-sized photographic portraits, Maitland went to the opposite extreme. In July 1872, he was offering cameo pictures, "the latest novelty of the photographic art." Probably See was tinting these, too.

Surprisingly, even though his business seems to have prospered, Maitland decided to leave St. Catharines after less than nine years. He sold out to See, who had become adept at photography and who hired H.C. Munro, of Cincinnati. Munro had been a student in an art school there and was prepared to do the retouching and painting for See, just as See had done for Maitland. On November 1, 1873, See took over the photographic rooms, and Maitland left town.

From St. Catharines, the Maitland family went first, briefly, to Buffalo, New York, and then to Stratford, Ontario, where Maitland continued as a photographer for thirty-four years before selling out and retiring. (Mrs. Maitland, as she had done in the Niagara area, continued to publish poetry under the name M.A. Maitland during the years in Stratford. From the 1860s on, she published many poems in newspapers and magazines and also produced a book of poetry, *Autumn Leaves*. Posthumously, another volume was published, *God Speed the True*.) The Maitlands eventually ended up in St. Mary's, Ontario, where Mrs. Maitland died on February 24, 1919, her husband surviving her.

Sources: *The Evening Journal* of 17 May 1865 (p. 3), 8 Nov 1865 (3), 9 Apr 1866 (2, 3), 2 May 1866 (2), 25 May 1866 (2), 19 Jul 1869 (3), 20 Jul 1869 (3), 22 Mar 1871 (2), 18 May 1871 (3), 18 Jul 1872 (3); *Weekly News* of 18 Sep 1873 (3), 9 Oct 1873 (3); *The St. Mary's Journal* of 6 Mar 1919 (1, 4); *The Stratford Daily Herald* of 25 Feb 1919 (1); 1871 census of St. Catharines (Div. 3, p. 96); 1881 census of Stratford (Div. 2, p. 53)

Article By: Paul Hutchinson

Society Planning to Celebrate 75th Anniversary in 2002

There were various historical groups in St. Catharines as early as 1863 and perhaps even before this, however in 1927 the Lincoln Historical Society was formed. The Executive in 1927 consisted of: President - F.R. Parnall; Vice Pres.- C.A. Hesson; Secretary – J. Colin Blain; Treasurer – Mrs.J.A. Abbs (resigned) / Gertrude Ball; Curator – C.A. Case; other board members were: Mrs.L. May and W.C. Muir. The Lincoln Historical Society met regularly until 1938 and then lapsed. In 1950 a group of 13 gathered

and reorganized and the Lincoln Historical Society began meeting regularly again. In 1961 the name changed to the St. Catharines and Lincoln Historical Society. In 1970 the group Incorporated as The Historical Society of St.Catharines and has carried on as such to date. This year would be the 50th Anniversary of the re-organization, however after consideration of the various dates it was decided that we should celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the 1927 formation in 2002.

The Old Courthouse

The building at the corner of King and James Streets is most often referred to as the Old Court House. The original portion facing King Street was designed by architect Kivas Tulley and was completed in 1850 and the portion facing James Street was added in 1865. City Council met in the new building as early as January 29,1850. In 1862 it became the County Building when the seat was moved from Niagara-on-the-Lake to St. Catharines. The building eventually became the Court House and was used until 1981. The City is currently undertaking a significant renovation project to repair the roof and cupola. The existing stone balustrade leading to the main entrance is carved to slope with the rise of the steps and believed to be the only one like this in Canada. The Courthouse Building has always been a central focus in the downtown. The Society was most pleased to be the recipient of an electronic image of an old stereoscopic picture of the Court House taken by George Maitland in the early 1870's. The picture below was found in a collection of Maitland pictures by Julian Baker of Hailsham, England, who contacted the Society via our web page. We thank Julian for the five scanned images of various City scenes.

Editorial (Or My Rant!)

Our Society is relatively small in number, and from this small number we are usually able to get about 10 people to serve on the executive and board. These people volunteer and spend their valuable time in producing programs, a calendar, presenting the history awards, recording minutes, looking after the monies, etc. There are times when one questions why they would want to do this. However, the desire to promote history and see the group survive eventually outweighs the thought of not participating. To those who volunteer to run the Society, I congratulate you.

I would encourage members to continue their support of history in St. Catharines. Perhaps you have writing ability? If so why not research a person, item, story and write it up for the newsletter (it would make my job a lot easier). Why not find a topic and write a speech? Why not jot down a topic or speaker that you feel would be of interest to the members and send it to us. When was the last time you recruited a new member? We need members to present the history award at 9 high schools. We could use another active director or even a recording secretary. Come out to the meetings, listen to the speakers, share in the socials, participate in the events, offer suggestions, enjoy the newsletter or simply continue your membership.

Your membership is a show of support for the efforts of the Society. Your level of involvement is up to you, but I certainly hope that there is enough offered that you do value your membership.

Ed. (Bill Stevens)

The Historical Society of St. Catharines - Board of Directors

President - Joyce DeForest – tel. 685-4728

Vice President - John Burtniak – e-mail jburtnia@spartan.ac.BrockU.ca

Treasurer - Del Hildebrand – e-mail dhildebr@Becon.org tel. 935-3025

Secretary - Bill Stevens – e-mail bibmstev@computan.on.ca - tel. 934-8966

Past President - Wes Turner – e-mail wturner@spartan.ac.BrockU.ca

Director-Membership -Brenda Zadoroznij – e-mail bzadoroz@becon.org tel. 935-3025

Director - Paul Hutchinson – e-mail slabtown@niagara.com tel. 227-2699

Director - Jim Purdie – tel 937-3158

Director - Dennis Gannon – e-mail dgannon@doleta.gov

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The Welland Canals Foundation

The Welland Canals Foundation Inc. is a volunteer organization which strives to promote the importance of the present and past Welland Canals, and to preserve their history and heritage. The Foundation began in 1980 and carries on events like William Hamilton Merritt Day, which will be held this year on **Tuesday, November 28 at Lock 3**. The group has strongly supported the Welland Canals Parkway initiative and numerous other activities. Current President is Ed O'Connor; the Secretary-Treasurer is Lou Cahill (a long standing member of the Historical Society of St. Catharines); the Past President is Harley Smith. In addition there are several directors. The group's mailing address is The Welland Canals Foundation Inc. c/o OEB International, 63 Church Street, St. Catharines, Ontario, L2R 3C4.

The group is currently making plans to celebrate the passage through the canal during the maiden voyage of the new FedNav vessel 'Federal Welland', the first ship to possess this name in honour of the Welland Canal, she was christened in Oshima, Japan on September 14, 2000. They are also currently planning for the 175th Anniversary of the First Welland Canal in 2004, and hope that a major documentary film can be produced as part of this celebration. I thank Lou Cahill for this information. *The editor*

2001 Calendar Now on Sale

ONLY \$6.00

Containing 13 unique historical pictures of St. Catharines

Only 300 are printed and are usually sold out !!!

The proceeds are directed to the Annual History Awards - so the cause is good!

A great Gift for the teacher, friend, or paper carrier - Or even to yourself !!!!

So don't delay - mail or call today - Call 934-8966 and place your order !!

By post – Send \$7.00 (the extra dollar covers postage) to the Society Mail Address

Better yet – save postage - send along your membership renewal at the same time !!

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A Few 1999 Calendars are Still Available

The annual calendar project began with the 1994 calendar and it has been a success each year by selling out... except for the year 1999, when a larger print run was made. Over time, we have had requests for calendars from past years and have not been able to provide them. We do however have 14 - 1999 calendars still available and will mail them out for \$4.00.

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It Is Time To Renew Your Membership

2001 Membership Dues Are Now Being Taken!

As a member:

- You are supporting the mission and goals of the Society to increase the knowledge and appreciation of the history of St. Catharines and Vicinity.
- You are supporting a program of speakers on historical topics and the research that goes into the preparation of the speech.
- You will receive a membership card to show you are in good standing
- You are eligible to become a member of the Board of Directors and hold an executive position in the Society
- You are encouraged to assist in programs and activities of the Society
- You will receive the Society newsletter which is distributed usually on a quarterly basis
- You are entitled to vote at the Annual Meeting and at any General Meeting
- You may receive a discount on items sold by the Society
- You will receive first opportunity to participate in Society activities
- You may receive a discount on Society Activities when offered

Membership is for the Calendar Year

Yearly Membership Dues: Individual - \$10.00 - - Family - \$15.00

Please make your cheque payable to: The Historical Society of St. Catharines

Please Remit to: The St. Catharines Historical Society
P. O. Box 23104, 124 Welland Avenue
St. Catharines, Ontario, L2R 7P6

Remove and return with your cheque ... thank you for your renewal!

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Membership Renewal - Individual Family _____

Names(s) - _____

Address: - _____

Telephone # _____ - e-mail address: _____

Comments, Speaker or Activity Suggestions: _____
