



# Newsletter - April 2024

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email: [hchs1965@gmail.com](mailto:hchs1965@gmail.com) [www.HuronCountyHistoricalSociety.ca](http://www.HuronCountyHistoricalSociety.ca)

*Zoom Talk*

April 17th 2024 at 7 p.m.

## The Salt Man

*A Tale of Adventure, discovery, love and courage*

Join us as we welcome author **Anne Kay** who will share details about the early days of the oil and salt industries, as she traces the life of her great-great-grandfather **Peter McEwan - The Salt Man**.

Her presentation will also include glimpses into Peter's personal life, little known facts and seldom seen photos.

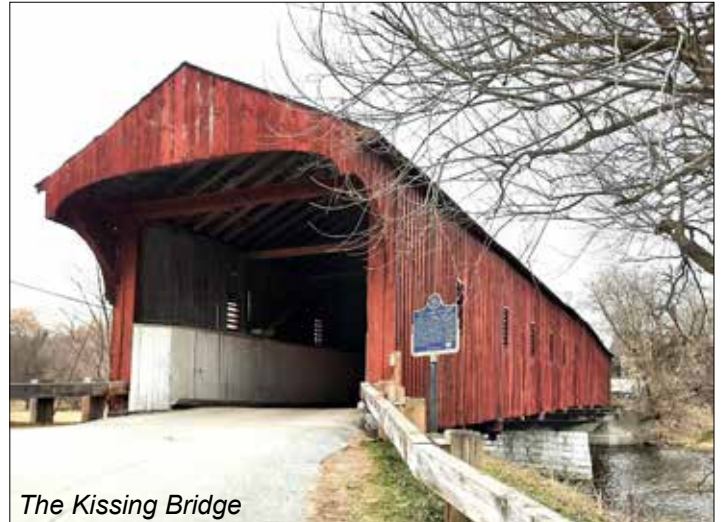
After a 40-year career writing health care articles Anne Kay perfectly chronicles the true story of the salt discovery in Huron County through her carefully researched work of historical fiction. Anne, with her family, takes every opportunity to visit her hometown of Goderich where the salt industry thrives to this day

Please email [HCHS1965@gmail.com](mailto:HCHS1965@gmail.com) by **April 14th** for the ZOOM link. **Everyone welcome**

## What Will Your Legacy Be?

What makes our communities unique and strong is the interesting features we choose to support and develop. It is what makes us unique and that attracts families and visitors alike.

Most, if not all, of the towns in Huron have been busy with infrastructure projects. We have seen Seaforth, Bayfield and Clinton torn up for new sewers and water lines and Goderich is facing a big job on the iconic Square starting this summer.



*The Kissing Bridge*

**May 11, 2024**

## We are going to Waterloo!

Your Society is planning another excursion this spring and you don't want to miss this one!

David and the rest of the executive have lined up an interesting day and encourage members to register early. Last year we had a waiting list! Open to members only and then to general public if there is room.

We are leaving from the Huron County Museum, Goderich, at 8 a.m. David Yates will be offering Huron County anecdotes while traveling. We will be visiting St. Jacobs as well as their Farmers' Market, and checking out the Mennonite story at the Interpretive Centre. Who can resist an apple fritter and coffee at the Market Square. It does include a guided walking tour of the Village of St. Jacobs and of course a visit to the Kissing Bridge. A full itinerary has been sent to members but please encourage others to join the Society so they too can take part in these interesting events. Please pre-register with David Armstrong at 519-524-1156 or email at [davidarmstrong@hurontel.on.ca](mailto:davidarmstrong@hurontel.on.ca)

*Deadline April 26, 2024*

Executive for 2023-2024

David Armstrong - President 519-524-1156

Ralph Laviolette - Secretary-treasurer 519-440-6206

Elaine Snell - Membership 519-523-9434

Directors

• Mary Gregg 519-524-9372

• Rhea Hamilton- Seeger 519-612-1201

• Mac Campbell

• James White

• Susan Gloucher

• Larry Mohring

But communities are more than the essential workings. They are the museums, the parks and trails; our wonderful waterways, and our beautiful, bountiful farmland that continues to feed and nurture us through our dedicated farmers.

Our taxes only go so far so community members and organizations take on fund raising or consider legacy funding to help maintain and improve the features of our communities that so many enjoy.

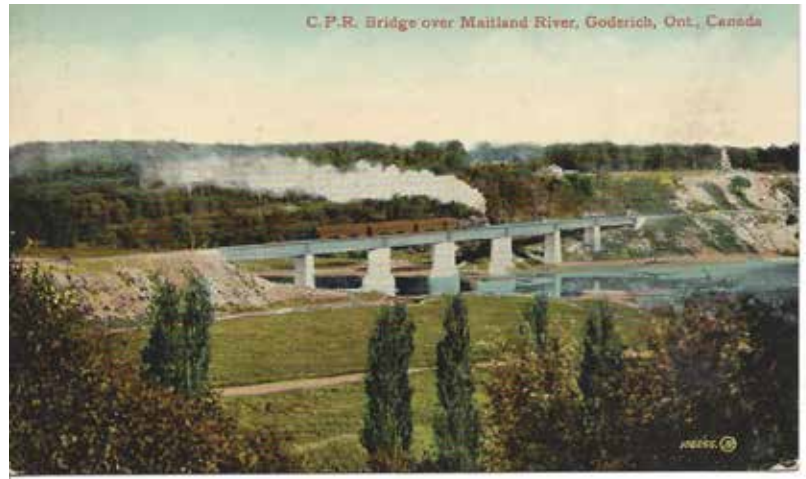
In March David Armstrong and Ralph Laviolette presented a plan to Huron County council on an expanded County archives to store and preserve the recorded history of Huron County. The HCHS is seeking permission to secure a business plan and be ready when funding becomes available. We have yet to hear back from them.

The following article shows the need for repairs to the inspiring Menesetung Bridge. The Menesetung Bridge Association has also made presentations to Huron County council as well as to Town of Goderich. Still waiting to hear back. Please take a moment to read about their proposal below.

Putting your community first for a few moments only takes a phone call or an email. All representatives have emails on their municipal site. Please feel free to contact your municipal representatives and let them know how you feel about the importance of a vibrant museum and archives facility and/or a iconic historical rail bridge that is enjoyed every day by residents and visitors alike.

### *Menesetung Bridge - a County Treasure*

If you like to take scenic walks, chances are you have walked across the Menesetung Bridge at Goderich. It was 34 years ago that a committed group rescued the CPR bridge from demolition and created a charitable corporation, the Menesetung Bridge Association. It was an enormous task but with determination and a lot of community support from across the county and beyond, the bridge opened as a unique trail in 1992. The Bridge Association works closely with the Maitland Trail Association and the G2G Rail Trail contributing to the extensive network of trails through Huron County and beyond. Part of the mandate of the Bridge Association is to



*Postcard view of the CPR Bridge over the Maitland, courtesy of Larry Mohring*

maintain the bridge and to that end there is an engineering inspection done every five years. It came to light that the tops of the four piers in the water are deteriorating where the trusses rest and if left unaddressed could lead to the closure of the bridge. Keep in mind the bridge was constructed in 1907 and 1908 and the concrete has lasted 115 years. It should come as no surprise that some heavy maintenance work is needed.

Funding is going to take some creative thinking and a lot of community support. The Bridge Association met with Town of Goderich administration and the County of Huron Economic Development and tourism Departments three years ago to start working on a plan. It would involve a series of grant applications to many areas of different levels of government. Not an easy task but it was undertaken. But success was not to be had as the group had to show they had the support of local government to guarantee that sufficient funds have been committed to complete the project. The Bridge Association is not without some means and has paid for the initial engineering work. It is also willing to spearhead the community part of the project. So far the county of Huron as declined to be part of the project and the town of Goderich is still undecided. Deadline for the Bridge Association grant application was Feb. 28.

# The Streamliners, The Play

The RCAF Streamliners Dance Band 1941 -1946  
*Written by Andy Sparling*

Andy Sparling presented the story of the Streamliners, a little known Second World War dance band that became one of the greatest big swing bands ever produced in Canada. Its three founding members were from Goderich and Clinton. He presented to our membership last year. How time flies!

Andy teamed up with our own James White and they wrote a play about the The Streamliners. Under the direction of Duncan McGregor the play has grown

*The Streamliners in action  
Photo from A. Sparling Collection*

## Membership renewal....

If you received this newsletter by mail, the date shown above your name on the address label is the year to which your membership is paid up, according to our records. Call Elaine Snell if you are not sure or need clarification. If you are in arrears, consider this a reminder that the membership fees are \$20. To reserve your member's hard copy of Historical Notes, keep your dues up to date.

Email us about using e-transfer. Copies of recent past Historical Notes are available please call 519-440-6206 (past copies are \$8 to \$10 per copy).

**To access the members-only section** for the Historical Notes or to do a search for names or places in the Historical Notes, go to [www.HuronCountyHistoricalSociety.ca](http://www.HuronCountyHistoricalSociety.ca), open the dropdown menu for Publications, click HCHS Members Login. If you cannot get access using the password, then check if your web browser is up to date.

If the password is lost or not available readily, contact [hchs1965@gmail.com](mailto:hchs1965@gmail.com) or call 519-440-6206

Just an added note. The login password has been the same for a number of years and our web master suggested it was time for a change. So if you have not renewed and are having problems accessing the archives, please contact Elaine about renewing.

and will take flight at the Livery Theatre in Goderich. There will be awesome music, and dancing!

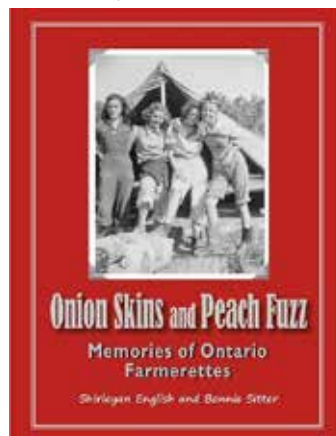
**The show dates are October 16 through to 27, 2024.**

You can also support this local production of a local historically significant story by sponsoring a part of the play. Contact Duncan McGregor, [mcmgregor@ezlink.ca](mailto:mcmgregor@ezlink.ca) or call him at 519-523-9396 for more information.



## Local Author's Book Becomes Film And A Play!

Congratulations to author Bonnie Sitter and Coln Field, Documentary Film Producer, who secured a \$5,000 grant from



Lambton Creative County Program to produce a documentary film about Farmerettes, who volunteered through the Ontario Farm Service Force (1941-1952). The book is by Bonnie Sitter and Shirleyn English.

You can see a play version of the story on the Blyth Festival stage this summer. It runs from August 14 to September 7.

### Where to get your local History Books And back copies of *The Historical Notes*

Fincher's and The Book Peddler both of Goderich, North Huron Citizen in Blyth, The Book Barn off Hwy 86 between Wingham and Whitechurch, The Village Bookshop, Bayfield and Bayfield Archives.