



Huron County Historical Society

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Executive for 2019-2020

Vicky Culbert	President	226-421-2295	Ralph Laviolette	Secretary-treasurer
Rhea Hamilton-Seeger	Past- president	519-529-7238	Mac Campbell	Director
Elaine Snell	Membership	519-523-9531	Larry Mohring	Director
Graham Booth	Director		James White	Director
Mary Gregg	Director		Susan Gloucher	Director

Next Society Meeting

Our Calendar, COVID 19 Version

Reflections: The Life and Works
Of J.W. (Jack) McLaren

Both the Huron County Museum and the Huron County Historical Society are committed to following through with this exhibit.

Once our world gets back to 'normal' a new time will be chosen and the show will go on!!!!

When this happens, the committee will be in touch with donors and hopefully they will still be able to loan their artwork for this exciting show.

Thank you for your patience, your willingness to share, and most importantly your generosity of spirit.

Trek to Bruce Grey Bus Tour
Rescheduled for Oct. 3, 2020

If for any reason you are not able to participate please contact David and a refund cheque will be mailed to you. If this is the case, please provide your full mailing address.

David Armstrong 519-524-1156

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The Victorian Tea for May 23

sponsored by the the AMGH Foundation, Goderich that we told you about last newsletter has been totally cancelled. We hope it will be scheduled for next year. It promised to be a wonderful event that would appeal to so many.

History Tells Us... We Will Get Through This

There has been a lot written about the Spanish Influenza. Our own David Yates did an excellent column March 13 in the Goderich Signal. The value of banning public gatherings was not lost to the reader. Something we are all struggling with today.

Our organization continues to carefully monitor the news about physically distancing and to cautiously plan for the time when we are safe to mix and mingle.

We have rescheduled the **Trek to Bruce & Grey** to October. If you would like to see more of this fascinating area on your computer you can check out TVO's three episodes of the development of this area.

<https://www.tv.org/programs/the-bruce>

Our thoughts are also of our sister organization, Ancestors Ontario, Huron Branch (OGS), and their plans for their 40th Anniversary. Like so many others they too are waiting for the go ahead to firm up plans for their celebration. Stay posted.

So what do history buffs do while tucked safely away? They may pull out old family recipes to try again. There are always papers and photos to sort and of course plenty of time to read.

Graham Booth, Executive member of the HCHS, submitted a review of an adventuresome book about local bands by Garnett Picot. We include it here. Let us know of your favourite books.

Of Bands and Buddies:

The Adventures of our 1960s Rock 'n' Roll Bands

By Garnett Picot

Exploring the roots of rock 'n' roll can be a real nostalgic journey, a trip down memory lane especially for those who had recollections of actually growing up in those times. And for that generation that came of age in Huron County during the 1960s they may well cherish fond memories of its musical origins.

Now one can relive that era in Garnett Picot's new book, *Of Bands and Buddies: The Adventures of Our 1960s Rock 'n' Roll Bands*. As an original member of local rock 'n' roll bands in Huron County he takes the reader on a sentimental journey back to growing up with that musical legacy of the 1960s.

It is a remarkable recollection of how Huron County was home to many emerging rock 'n' bands in the 60s, names like the Invictas, the Concorde, the Mojoes and the Del-Reys. It also evokes a sense of the lifestyles and local cultural heritage of the Huron County towns and places of entertainment during the twilight years of the big band era and the dance hall pavilions that dotted the Lake Huron shoreline from Grand Bend to Sauble Beach.

Picot creates a cherished portrait of how some 15 or 16 of his local buddies, many still in their teen years, entering the 1960s and latching on to a growing rock 'n' roll movement that was sweeping the musical world. It is hard to imagine that it had only been three years earlier, in 1958, that Southwestern Ontario hosted one of the first rock 'n' roll concerts in Kitchener where rock icons including Chuck Berry and Jerry Lee Lewis enthralled the growing legions of teenage fans. Also, by 1958, two Ontario-born singer-songwriters, were emerging as roll n' roll stars with top - chart record hits – Jack Scott and Paul Anka.

These were home-spun groups made up of budding musicians, some with aspirations of making it big in the music world, others just having a good time over the summer as they plied local jobs, carried on their pursuits in education and started their career paths. Like many kids growing up in small towns, music was an outlet for their youthful energy and inspiration to test their musical talents.

The book provides a glimpse into playing on the road at gigs ranging from high school proms to big band pavilions to actual arenas and the labour of love of spending many hours jamming in their parent's homes and the antics of teenage exuberance including partying with their local buddies.

Starting out from a group called the Invictas, these bands grew and evolved in step with changes in 60s music into spin-off groups like the Concorde, Del-Reys and Mojoes. Along the way, their rise to fame as local musical bands allowed them to rub shoulders with major groups in the rock world, sometimes as opening bands for more established performers, such as Ronnie Hawkins and The Hawks, one of Canada's preeminent rock bands. The Hawks also had local roots, having just come together in 1961 while doing an extended musical gig in Grand Bend. The off-shoot musicians from this band would go on to become the iconic rock group, The Band, which included Stratford native, Levon Helm. They also got to know other emerging Canadian rock bands who would go on to stardom such David Clayton Thomas and the Shays (later Blood, Sweat and Tears), Crowbar and the jazz rock group Lighthouse.

The emergence of these groups mirrored the evolution of rock 'n' roll in the 60s. Early influences of rhythm and blues, Motown and the British Invasion shaped their sounds as bands, ultimately, seeing their demise as the heavy metal era in rock music began to capture more audience appeal in the late 60s.

As the book comes to a close, the author reminds the reader how good these times were to grow up in, of memories created would endure over the decades that followed. Many of these former band members have kept in touch over the years, periodically reuniting to do impromptu gigs and share stories of their love of music and how it continues to shape their lives to this day. The 175th anniversary of Goderich in 2002 was one such occasion whereby they gathered for a reunion concert.

The book really is a stitch in time, sure to enthrall all those who cherish the musical roots of rock 'n' roll in Huron County or who just want to reminisce about the lives of a youthful generation coming of age in the 1960s

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. Copies of recent past Historical Notes are available from Elaine Snell at 519-523-9531, or at the Museum (past copies \$8.00 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, 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 or call 519-440-6206.