



Huron County Historical Society

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www.HuronCountyHistoricalSociety.ca

Newsletter January 2023

Executive for 2022-2023

David Armstrong	President	519-440-6206	Mac Campbell	Director
Ralph Laviolette	Secretary-treasurer	519-440-6206	James White	Director
Elaine Snell	Membership	519-440-6206	Susan Glousher	Director
Mary Gregg	Director	519-524-9372	Larry Mohring	Director
Rhea Hamilton- Seeger	Director	519-612-1201	Liz Sangster	Director

January 18 at 7 p.m. 2023 - A Zoom Event

The R.C.A.F. Streamliners: Huron County's Best-Kept Musical Secret



Guest Speaker - Andy Sparling

In 1941, three horn-playing recruits from Clinton and Goderich at the R.C.A.F. Technical Training School in St. Thomas, Ontario began "jamming" in their spare time. In just three years, the trio grew into

a 15-piece swinging ensemble described by the legendary Glenn Miller as the "best big band in Europe – next to mine!"

Andy Sparling taught journalism at Loyalist College in Belleville for 24 years. Before that, he worked in radio and TV news in London, Ottawa, and Hamilton; along the way, he played trombone in swing bands to keep himself sane. He still plays in Canada's longest-operating big swing band (the Belleville-based Commodores Orchestra, which he led for ten years), and currently leads the Casa Royal Swing & Jazz Trio. Andy's dad Phil was one of the founding members of the R.C.A.F. Streamliners.

For getting the zoom link for January 18, 2023, 7 pm, all interested should email hchs1965@gmail.com to be notified of the login details.



From the Editor

Young Historians In The Making

In the last few years I have noted the passing of some of our strongest local historians. The latest one was June Robinson of St. Augustine. June was a busy woman and I am sure you know the old saying 'if you want something done ask a busy person'. June was active in her church, Women's Institute, 4-H, and her community around her as well as raising a family and involved with grand children. We first met over research for 'Reflections of West Wawanosh'. In 1989 there were eight ladies who formed the West Wawanosh Historians: June Robinson, Ethel McAllister, Eileen Hanna, Joan Armstrong, Leona Boyle, Marian Zinn, Lois Walden and Phyllis Morrison. Between them they worked tirelessly digging through documents, running the sideroads to drop off requests for family histories and then doing it all again to secure the info. Hours typing and typing it all over again with new information, it was before computers. They enlisted others to write and research too and we can't forget the proof readers! It was the first compilation of township history to include all the registry work, family histories as well as stories about organizations that make a community. It was published in 1996. All those wonderful ladies are gone now but what a legacy they left their community.

Today there are still a few communities in Huron that need the same deep dig into their history.

Today we are seeing our history told by a younger generation in their own words. Sinead Cox, Curator of Dialogue and Engagement at the Huron County Museum is behind the **Young Canuckstorians Film Project**. These short films explore Huron County history as told by kids for kids. A very unique project using the medium of today. Students from the Avon Maitland District School board SOAR Class and 1st Bayfield guides took the lead with research, scripts and recording in partnership with video producer Mickey Maple.

Mark **February 15** on your calendar for a presentation to the HC Historical Society.

New Podcasts from Ontario Historical Society

Did you know that we (the HCHS) have been members of the Ontario Historical Society since 1971! As they grow they get better at telling the history of Ontario in a variety of ways. During the holidays something quietly excellent began when the first two episodes of a brand new podcast dropped on Christmas Day and New Year's Eve. The Ontario Historical Society (OHS) announced the launch of its new podcast

series, *The Crown in Canada*, hosted by Nathan Tidridge and produced by Leaking Ambience Studios. The series examines issues surrounding the Crown's role in both Treaties and in our democratic institutions. The two-episode pilot was produced with assistance from the Government of Canada, Canadian Heritage Community Projects Program on behalf of the 2022 Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The OHS, founded in 1888, is a not-for-profit corporation and registered charity. The OHS is a non-government group bringing together people of all ages, all walks of life, and all cultural backgrounds interested in preserving and promoting some aspect of Ontario's history. The OHS has a long association with the vice-regal family in Ontario, being granted patronage since 1888 by all 29 Lieutenant Governors, and is the longest continuous recipient of patronage from the office of the Lieutenant Governor.

The first episode of *The Crown in Canada* was launched on December 25, 2022 following His Majesty King Charles III's inaugural Christmas message, and the second episode dropped a week later on New Year's Eve. These two pilot episodes, called "Rooted in Treaty", examine the Crown-Indigenous relationship that has existed across Turtle Island/North America, including what is now called Canada, for over 500 years. The podcast promises to take look at the role of the Crown in Canada in a thoughtful way, and examine what can be learned about this country—both its tensions and its promises.

The podcast can be found on the [OHS website](#), at the [Crown in Canada's home](#), or indeed [wherever good podcasts are distributed](#). Please feel free to share these links with family, friends, colleagues, and anyone interested in learning about this important story of Canadian history, and keep an eye out for more episodes of *The Crown in Canada's* first season coming in 2023. Rating and reviewing the show also helps enormously, and you can provide feedback and encouragement via the OHS at ohs@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca or at hello@crownincanadapodcast.ca.

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, 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

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.

Future of Historic Hensall Hall in Question

The COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing financial issues has forced the Hensall Heritage Hall Society to dissolve. Under a lease

agreement, the Society was responsible for all operating expenses for the facility. Between 2011 and 2017, the 'Friends' fundraised and restored the historic landmark.

Founded in the 1870s, the Village of Hensall existed for many years without a town hall, holding council meetings in various places throughout the village. In 1913, a Mr. McEwan left the property in his will, for the sole purpose of building a town hall.

One year later, Reeve George C. Petty, a nephew of the founding Petty brothers, had gathered the signatures of 84 ratepayers petitioning for a town hall, at a cost of \$5000.

Messrs. Welsh and Soldan were awarded the contract. A third local man, architect Mr. H. Reynolds, would design the hall following the classic Edwardian design of the day and measuring 40 feet wide by 70 feet long, with seating for up to 450 people. The exterior of the building would utilize Hensall's local craftsmen and natural bounty with bricks made from local clay at a nearby brickyard and laid in the Scotch Bond pattern, evidencing Scottish bricklayers.

Reynolds added touches of elegance to this Village meeting hall that exemplify the symmetrical design elements of the period.

The Society owed about \$38,500 before its dissolution. Bluewater Council is not optimistic about the hall's future and have directed staff to report on options for the Hall.

On an editorial note, when a community loses its heritage buildings, it loses valuable visual character. Let's hope this council sees the value of this structure and plans for its future.

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.

Need a simple elegant gift?

For a special gift or simply a thoughtful card to send consider using cards featuring some of the iconic artwork of Jack McLaren. Call executive member Mary Gregg 519-524-9372 or check out Fincher's, and The Book Peddler in Goderich.

