



# Huron County Historical Society

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[www.HuronCountyHistoricalSociety.ca](http://www.HuronCountyHistoricalSociety.ca)

## Newsletter October 2021

### Executive for 2020-2021

Vacant	President	519-440-6206	Ralph Laviolette	Secretary-treasurer
Vicky Culbert	Past- president		Mac Campbell	Director
Elaine Snell	Membership	519-523-9531	James White	Director
Mary Gregg	Director		Susan Glousher	Director
Rhea Hamilton- Seeger	Director	519-612-1201	Larry Mohring	Director
			Liz Sangster	Director

### October Speaker

## The Canada Company and the Huron Tract – Personalities, Profits and Politics

Presented by Robert (Bob) C. Lee

October 20, 2021 at 7 p.m.

The opening and setting of over 2 million acres of land in Upper Canada was no small feat. Bob will talk about the underlying forces, which lead to the formation of the Canada Company and about the intriguing mix of people charged with the responsibilities for the company and their overall impact leading to the present-day legacy.

The politics of the day, coupled with diverse and colourful personalities such as John Galt, Tiger Dunlop, Thomas Mercer Jones, Sir Peregrine Maitland, Roman Catholic Bishop Macdonnell and Anglican Bishop Strachan introduce an interesting blend of vision, intrigue, mischief and day-to-day survival strategies. When the shareholders' perspective of the Company versus the settler's perspective is added onto a fascinating glimpse of pioneer conditions, the stage is set for an interesting talk!

**For getting the zoom link for October 20 , 7 pm, all interested should email [hchs1965@gmail.com](mailto:hchs1965@gmail.com) to be notified of the login details.**



### A Rejuvenated Face In The Urban Landscape

Pause if you will and reflect on a trip you have made to any town or city and remember what buildings drew your eye? Made you feel good? Possibly make you want to know more about the community.

Our streetscapes and our country side are made up of architecture of older periods and say what you will when renovated, or thoughtfully repurposed, those same buildings continue to reflect a certain strength, a richness of history. There is a transformation of a large mainstay on the main street taking place in Brucefield.

What was once a hotel, later a bank, is now becoming a toy emporium. Isaac Fisher, local young man, making a name for himself in a number of media related ways has purchased the old brick building on the east side of the street in Brucefield. The building was originally the James Dixon Hotel, which burned in 1896, and William Dixon rebuilt the large brick one in 1897. His son-in-law Thomas Snell operated it with rooms renting for \$1 per day. A large hall above the hotels' barn was rented for dances and other meetings.

The Molson's Bank opening in this building in 1917 and became part of Bank of Montreal in 1925. The office was refurbished in 1958.

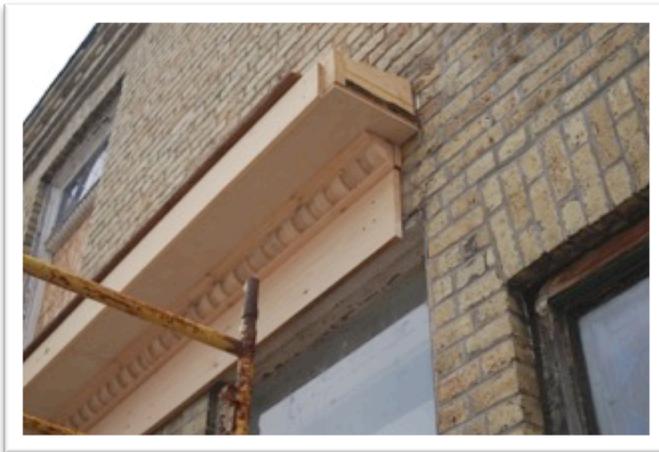
Isaac and his project were featured on **Stayish** (facebook local news station) July 31 where Isaac talked about his idea of a combination toy museum and toy store with hands on activities included in part of the draw for the young at heart and the simply young.

Renovations involved are extensive and include even basic repair of brickwork. When I took the following photos last week I was impressed with the attention to detail. In one photo of the original stained glass transom there is a particular beaded wood trim. That same trim has been recreated in the bulkhead above the doors along the front.

We wish Isaac well and are eagerly awaiting the opening of his enterprise.

One final note, the Huron County Historical Society has its own **Facebook** page, which your directors have been uploading interesting tidbits of history to. Do take a look and let us know if there is anything you would like to see included.

*Brick building in Brucefield, left, being restored/renovated for Village Toy Castle.*



Top photo of banner on the east side of the building in Brucefield.

Middle photo shows the detail around the stained glass transom and the bottom photo shows the recreation of that detail in the new work above the front doors and windows

## Answers To September Cemetery Quiz

*Liz and Pam Sangster's engaging talk last month on local cemeteries included a quiz on famous people buried in Huron cemeteries. Here are the answers to that quiz*

**Colonel Anthony Van Egmond** (1779-1838) was a veteran of the Napoleonic Wars (in Holland). He was imprisoned and died in prison for taking part in the 1837 Upper Canada rebellion so arguably had a part in Canada becoming a sovereign nation.

**William Nichol Cresswell** (1818-1888) emigrated to Canada in 1848 settling in Tuckersmith Township. He was co-founder of the Royal Canadian Academy of Art and travelled/painted extensively throughout Canada and the United States from his home in Seaforth.

**Hannah Isabel Graham** (1869-1941) was a well-known poet with several published collections and many works published in international magazines and periodicals.

**Dr. Jennie Smillie Robertson** (1878-1981) was one of the first women to perform surgery in Canada. She was a social reformer, co-founder of Women's College Hospital in Toronto and the Federation of Medical Women of Canada.

The artist was the talented **J.W.(Jack) McLaren** (1896 -1988) recently featured at the Huron County Museum. As a very young man during WWI, he was part of a Canadian comedy ensemble entertaining the troops.

**General Andres Puentes Vargas** (1910-1983) and his wife are buried at Bairds Cemetery.

The author and artist was Huron County's own **Paul Carroll** who died in 2017 and is missed by many.

## 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 (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](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

## 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.

## Never too early to think of simple elegant Christmas gifts

For a special gift or simply a thoughtful card to send consider using cards featuring some of the iconic artwork of Jack McLaren. They are available for sale at Fincher's, and The Book Peddler in Goderich.