



**Huron County Historical Society**  
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Executive for 2009-10

David Armstrong	president	519-524-1156	Ted Turner	archivist
Ralph Laviolette	secretary	519-565-2454	Isobel Bissonnette	archivist
Mac Campbell	treasurer	519-524-7935	Rhea Hamilton-Seeger	councilor
Ralph Laviolette	newsletter, Notes	519-565-2454	Brock Vodden	councilor
Elaine Snell	membership	519-523-9531		

**Next Society Meetings.....**

**April, 2011**

Watch for the next newsletter in early April for the next General Meeting location and speaker.

**President's message.....**

Greetings once again, members, friends and supporters of the Huron County Historical Society! Our spring schedule of activities will start in April and your council is meeting in late February to plan that event and others to follow through 2011. Our Annual General Meeting will be in May. If you or anyone you know is interested in serving on council, please let me know. There is lots to do and share. We would welcome any member to join us in an introductory way to learn the ropes before taking on any task.

.....David Armstrong

**Huron Historical Notes.....**

Work on the 2011 Notes edition featuring a history of the north-east corner of Huron County will be ready for distribution early summer. Work on the 2012 and 2013 Notes are also in preparation.

**Membership renewal....**

The date shown above your name on the address label is the year to which your membership is paid up, according to our records. If you are in arrears, consider this a reminder that the membership fees are \$20. To reserve your member's copy of the 2011 Historical Notes, keep your dues up to date. Past copies of the Notes are available at the Museum, \$8.00 per copy. And, if you are in arrears, mail-in your membership today. Note our current address for mail and memberships: **HCHS Memberships, Box 3, Goderich ON, N7A 3Y5.**

**Here is a Tidbit of Historical Trivia to ward away the winter blues....**

The following is an excerpt from the 2008 edition of Historical Notes which was titled Early Industry in Huron County – Part I. It describes the Van Egmond Woollen Mills near Seaforth, which were prominently featured in the Belden Atlas of 1879.

August G. Van Egmond, the youngest son of Anthony Van Egmond, started a woollen and carding mill in 1854. It was in a small building located in Egmondville, at the southern limit of the town of Seaforth. His sons, Leopold G. and William, were brought into the business and a larger three-storey brick building was built in 1866. Later, as business increased, a large frame addition for storage was built adjoining the mill.

In 1881 the Van Egmond Woollen Mills won three medals for their goods at the Industrial Exhibition in Toronto. During six days of work in May of 1882 the mill produced 2,575 yards of checked flannel on nine looms.



Shown at the right of this receipt dated August 29<sup>th</sup>, 1889 are Leopold G. and William D. Van Egmond. The mill building, built in 1884, had 27 lightning rods. The mill's whistle when blown made three different sounds at the same time.

The mill building burnt in December 1883 and a new white brick building was erected in 1884. A frame warehouse was built across the road a few years later. August retired from the business in 1886 and his sons continued in business until 1900.

Van Egmond Woollen Mills exhibited 60 tweed patterns at the Seaforth fair in 1890. The complete process of cloth production, from raw wool to finished cloth, was done at the mill. In 1893 electricity, generated at the Seaforth electrical plant, was introduced into the Van Egmond mill.

Henry Jackson bought the woolen mills, warehouse and residence in 1900. Tow businesses made clothing here for a time until in 1917, the firm moved its business to Seaforth, at the site where the Bethel Church, former Canadian Tire, is now.

In about 1918, J J Merner from Zurich bought the former Van Egmond Woollen Mill and converted it to a flax mill.



Van Egmond Woollen Mills built in 1866 and August G. Van Egmond's home at right.

### **The Archival Records project.....**

Our next newsletter will feature a report of the progress of the archival material survey and questionnaire to residents that sought advice about the papers and artifacts in homes and businesses in the County that should be preserved and how best to preserve them.