



UPCOMING EVENTS

**PHS Monthly Lecture
at 7:30 pm**

**Tuesday, 16 January:
Panel Discussion, "Book
Selling and Book Reading:
More or Less?"**

**Hutchison House
Hogmanay celebration on
January 1, 2018
1:00pm to 4:00pm, at
Hutchison House**

**Tuesday, 9 January 2018,
Snofest event
Fireside Tea & Dessert
1 pm. and 2 pm
Tickets \$5.00**

From The President

Don Willcock



In 1837, 180 years ago, how did the Hutchison family celebrate their first Christmas in their new Peterborough home? We can speculate that it was a low-key, family day, similar to the day that Sanford Fleming describes in his diary for 25 December 1845: "Christmas. Out sleighing. Good dinner at the Drs [Dr Hutchinson's]." Or perhaps it was not as quiet as that.

The months of November and December 1837 had been tumultuous ones, with rebellions in both Upper Canada and Lower Canada. Both Louis-Joseph Papineau's November uprising in Lower Canada and William Lyon Mackenzie's in Upper Canada had been crushed by Government troops and militias. Life in Upper Canada seemed to have returned to normal for Christmas.

An excerpt of a 23 December 1837 letter from Thomas Langton to his son William, however, notes that things were not quite normal: "Our invitations had gone forth to twelve gentlemen to dine with us on Christmas Day, when on the 19th a message was received from the Government [...] recommending the whole force of the townships of Fenelon and Verulam being called out to beset two roads into the Lower province [...] by which it was thought Mackenzie might endeavour to escape. [...] This put an end to our party, as we expected; but this morning intelligence was received that Mackenzie had succeeded in escaping into the States, so that there was an end to our soldiering for the present, and our party again revived with but short time for preparation."

Since Dr Hutchison was the surgeon for Peterborough's militia unit, he and his unit may have been called out to round up rebels much like the Fenelon and Verulam militias. Christmas the first year in his new house may not have been as peaceful as Fleming portrays it in 1845.

Whether you are planning a busy or quiet holiday, the PHS wishes you and your families all the best for the season and the coming year.

Correction:

I must apologize for an error in my report, last month, on the PHS bus trip to Belleville: Glanmore House is actually owned by the City of Belleville, with the Ministry of Heritage providing some maintenance support as a designated National Historic Site.



**Join us for Scottish
Hogmanay 2017
on January 1
1:00pm to 4:00pm,
at Hutchison House**

WINTER SPEAKER SCHEDULE 2018

NOTICE OF DAY AND LOCATION OF MEETINGS: The day of the PHS monthly meeting is **the third Tuesday of the month**, and the time is **7:30 p.m.** The January meeting will be in the Lion's Centre, 347 Burnham Street. From February on, meetings are expected to be held in the newly renovated Peterborough Library. The location of each meeting will be confirmed in the prior *Bulletin*.

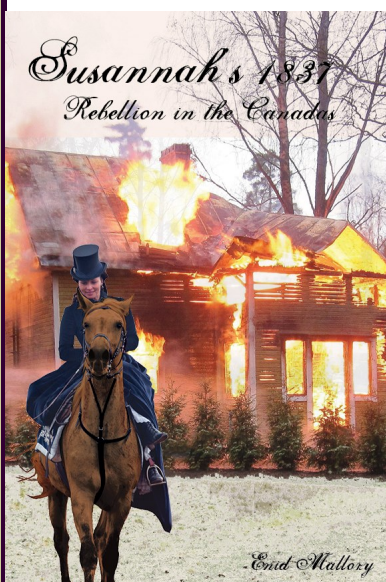
Tuesday, 16 January: Panel Discussion, "Book Selling and Book Reading: More or Less?" Participants: Mark Jokinen (Jokinen Books); Michelle Berry (Hunter Street Books); Jennifer Jones (CEO, Peterborough Public Library); Marisa Scigliano (Trent University Librarian, Client Support and Technical Services). Moderator: John Wadland, Professor Emeritus of Canadian Studies, Trent University. **Lion's Centre, 347 Burnham Street, 7:30 p.m.**

Tuesday, 20 February: Erik Hanson, "Heritage in the Age of Climate Change" Erik Hanson is Heritage Resources Coordinator for the City of Peterborough.

Tuesday, 20 March: AGM Special Guest Speaker, "The Prime Minister Unbuttoned: How we Discovered Mackenzie King's Secret Life"). Professor Christopher Dummitt, School for the Study of Canada, Trent University. Professor Dummitt is author of several books and articles on 20th century Canadian history, most recently the acclaimed *Unbuttoned: A History of Mackenzie King's Secret Life* (2017).

Tuesday, 17 April: Fred Gariepy, "Downtown Peterborough in the 1950s and 1960s: A Young Fellow's Perspective." Fred Gariepy is a life-long resident and practices law in Peterborough in the Alfred W. Gariepy Murphy Law Office.

Tuesday, 15 May: Michael Peterman, "Title TBA." Michael Peterman is Emeritus Professor of English Literature, Trent University, and has authored numerous books and articles on Susanna Moodie, Catharine Parr Traill and other Peterborough writers.



New book by local author Enid Mallory: a historical novel, set in Toronto during the William Lyon Mackenzie uprising. The year 1837 is one of profound change in the history of Canada. Canada's coming-of-age story is told through the eyes of a young Susannah, born into Toronto's privileged Family Compact but having to deal with dramatic change in her family and her heart as she learns about death and loyalty and love. Available in the Hutchison House book shop, and on Amazon in paperback and ebook.

Hutchison House Report

Gale Fewings



Catharine Parr Traill provides one of the earliest, rare accounts of Christmas decorating customs in the early nineteenth century. In *The Canadian Settler's Guide* (1855) she tells of going out to collect red-berried wintergreen to hang over the mantelpiece and picture frames in her host's home in 1832. She also mentions collecting evergreens to decorate her own home in 1838,

adding high bush cranberries and her daughter's coral beads for colour.

Here at Hutchison House we follow the same custom of decorating with fresh greenery and splashes of red. Edith Butler and Lois Scott spent a morning in late November setting up the evergreens throughout the house and the effect is both simple and appealing. Having the museum decorated as it would have been so many years ago really helps to set the mood for an old fashioned Christmas.

As I write this report we are still days away from our annual Christmas Market sale. It is shaping up to be a great success. Special thanks to everyone who helped this year.

We are all looking forward to sharing our holiday traditions with the school children whose classes are booked to visit the museum in the coming weeks. The children never fail to be surprised that Christmas 'in the olden days' was so much different from their own experience. Plans and preparations are also underway for our **Hogmanay celebration on January 1, 2018**. Next year will be extra special as we mark the 40th Anniversary of Hutchison House Museum. Our first-footer will be "piped in" at precisely 1 p.m. January 1st, with a rousing rendition of 'Burns' Address to a Haggis' to follow shortly thereafter. Visitors will enjoy tours of the museum as well as samples of the taste of Scotland throughout the afternoon. Highland dancing, and the skirl of



the bagpipe and drum will round out the day. Plan to drop in to wish new friends and old neighbours the best for the coming year. Admission prices: adults \$7.00; children \$4.00; family rate \$18.00 (2adults/2+ children). The event runs from 1 to 4 pm.

On Tuesday, 9 January 2018, we will host a Snofest event. Visitors will enjoy a scrumptious treat at our Fireside Tea & Dessert served by the crackling fire of the keeping room (1840s kitchen). Tickets for the event are \$5 per person and must be booked in advance. Participants may choose from two sitting times. Dessert will be served at 1 pm. and 2 pm. To place a reservation, or to obtain more information, please call the Hutchison House office at 743-9710.

Over the holiday season Hutchison House will be closed from December 22nd until December 29th. Best wishes for a safe & happy Holiday! We'll see you at Hogmanay, if not before.



Canadian Nurses in the First World War

Members and guests of the Peterborough Historical Society were greeted by a nurse in blue costume when they arrived at the Lion's Club for the monthly lecture. It wasn't a reminder to get a flu shot, but rather a presentation by historian and animator Heather Caldwell in period costume on the story of the "Bluebirds: Canada's Nursing Sisters in World War One."

Canadian nurses played an important role in the Great War, treating the battle wounded and sick at casualty clearance centres near the Front as well as in General Hospitals in France and England. From a small contingent of 5 permanent nurses who accompanied the Canadian Expeditionary Force in the fall of 1914 to more than 2,000 nurses by the end of the war, the "Bluebirds," so called because of their blue uniforms, endured the hardships and risks from disease, bombing, gas attacks and the physical and mental strain that were part of the military struggle to defeat Germany and her allies.

Nurses, who were required to be at least 21 years old with three years of training, were given the rank of lieutenant upon joining and earned the equivalent pay. During the war, 49 nurses paid the ultimate sacrifice while countless others suffered from what today is known as post traumatic stress disorder. Nurses provided front line care as soldiers were brought in from the battlefield with horrific wounds as well as tending patients in the general hospitals and assisting doctors performing operations. Many of the general hospitals were sponsored by hospitals in Canada where the nurses had been training. The war resulted in advances in medical practice, such as improvements in blood transfusions and development of portable x-ray machines.

There is a local connection to the "Bluebirds." Helen (nee Fowlds) Marryat from Hastings served in France, Greece and England. She was awarded the Royal Red Cross medal by George V for her service. Her personal diary from the war years is now at Trent University Archives and represents a moving account of the toll the war took on these young women, many from privileged backgrounds, who endured the horrors of the Great War.

The talk prompted many questions from the audience. President Don Willcock thanked the speaker for an informative presentation.

Dennis Carter-Edwards



Heather Caldwell with her display of "Bluebird" artifacts.

Christmas Market—November 25, 2017





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Voices from Peterborough's Past



Crescent Street shoreline cribbing in the age of Otonabee River log drives. Peterborough Museum and Archives PG 6D-40 (James McGrath fonds) crop. The photo is also found in the Pammett Collection. Howard Pammett dated this photo to 1913

Crescent Street Shoreline Cribbing

Originally, Crescent Street was the sole route south out of downtown Peterborough. The spring floods and battering from intermittent log drives passing through caused parts of Crescent Street to collapse into Little Lake. Dealing with erosion and flood control, along with maintaining a steamboat path through the log booms, were priority issues for the lake.

The photo above dates from the latter days of log drives down the Otonabee River through the lake. Behind the boom and steam launch tied to shore is the wooden cribbing that was the first remedy to support the Crescent Street shoreline. It could not, and did not last.

In the fall of 1936, the federal Department of Public Works funded an unemployment relief project to extend support for the street further into Little Lake. In 1937, 22,000 yards of stone were hauled from the city's new gravel pit off the Lakefield road to create a stone facing 20 feet wide and about a half mile long on Crescent Street's shoreline. It has lasted 80 years.

Today's planners find Crescent Street's stone shoreline environmentally insensitive. But in those Depression years, the "green" solution was unimagined. In fact, the rock facing was perhaps the least of the indignities the community inflicted upon Little Lake. Peterborough's river, lake, and "the creek" had, from the beginning, served as public sewers. In the 1930s the city still dumped garbage directly into the river at the foot of Simcoe Street. Until the early 1950s, Ashburnham sewage liquids flowed directly out of the Maria Street sewage tank into the lake. And for a while afterwards countless other pipes from residences and industries continued to discharge dubious contributions into the downtown waterway.

Today's vision for the waterfront reluctantly accepts hard surfaces to address erosion and flood control where necessary, such as at the city marina and the Holiday Inn. However, this vision deems solid shorelines to be unfriendly to the life of the lake and desires rehabilitation of them with vegetation. Current city studies for this area call for new walking paths with "naturalization" of the water's edge. One hopes they are mindful of the earlier priority of keeping Crescent Street from slipping into the lake.,

Ken Brown