



UPCOMING EVENTS

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

**Tuesday, 20 February  
Heritage in the Age of  
Climate Change  
Speaker Erik Hanson**

**Tuesday, 20 March: AGM  
"The Prime Minister  
Unbuttoned: How we  
Discovered Mackenzie  
King's Secret Life"  
Speaker  
Christopher Dummitt  
Princess Gardens starting at  
5:30**

**Tuesday, 17 April  
"Downtown Peterbor-  
ough in the 1950s and  
1960s: A Young Fellow's  
Perspective." Speaker  
Fred Gariepy  
Peterborough Public Library,  
7:30 p.m.**

**Tuesday, 15 May  
Speaker  
Michael Peterman  
Peterborough Public Library,  
7:30 p.m.**

**Heritage Luncheon  
February 7, March 7  
12:00 and 1:30 p.m.  
Cost \$15.00  
Advance tickets  
required**

**Hutchison House 40th  
anniversary celebration  
Open House,  
Sunday May 27, 1-4 pm.**

**REVISED 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.** **Note that the February meeting will be in the Lion's Centre, 347 Burnham Street.** The March meeting will be the Annual General Meeting, time and location given in the notice below. **The April and May meetings will return to the newly-renovated Peterborough Public Library.** The location and time of each meeting will be confirmed in the prior *Bulletin* and on the website.

**Heritage in the Age of Climate Change**

Tuesday, 20 February, 2018, The Lion's Centre,  
347 Burnham Street,  
7:30 p.m. All Welcome

The movement to preserve our built heritage has changed dramatically over the last 50 years. Environmental issues have become a major consideration. "Cities, and the buildings which comprise them, account for more than 75% of the world's greenhouse gasses. That's the bad news. The good news is that building super-efficient new buildings doesn't help fix the problem, rehabilitating and repurposing old buildings does. As Carl Elephante, president of the American Institute of Architects says, 'the greenest building is one that's already built.'" **Erik Hanson**, Heritage Resources Coordinator for the City of Peterborough, will explain why heritage is the emerging champion in the race to zero net carbon and discuss what municipalities and the private sector can do to support the sustainable rehabilitation of existing buildings.



**Mark Your Calendar**

**PHS Annual General Meeting and Dinner  
Tuesday, March 20, 2018**

**Guest Speaker: Professor Christopher Dummitt**

**"The Prime Minister Unbuttoned: How We Discovered Mackenzie King's  
Secret Life"**

Princess Gardens

PHS Business Meeting 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Cash Bar: 5:30 p.m. Dinner 7:00 p.m.

PHS Heritage Awards will be presented after dinner

\$45.00 for Members \$50.00 for non-members

The dinner and speaker is open to the public

Tickets are available at PHS office

## From the President ...

Don Willcock



I enjoy movies. I enjoy history. Recently there has been a spate of history-based films, which means that these two pleasures have been addressed. Last summer I saw *Dunkirk*, and over the Christmas holiday I watched *All The Money In The World*. I am looking forward to viewing *Darkest Hour* (depicting Winston Churchill's early wartime prime ministership) and *The Post* (the story of the publication of the leaked "Pentagon Papers").

If done well, movies can be effective portrayers of historical topics. *Dunkirk*, while maintaining historical integrity, humanizes the evacuation of British and French troops from France in 1940 by emphasizing the individuals on the beach, in the rescue boats, and flying air cover. Their actions and emotions become the story, with the evacuation as a backdrop. Many of the actors are young – close to the ages of the actual Dunkirk participants. *All The Money In The World* depicts a smaller-scale, and more recent, event. While the 1973 abduction of 17-year-old J. Paul Getty III is the centerpiece of this movie, it is the Getty family's dynamics (or dysfunctions) that I found very interesting. I remember the event (at the time, I was only a few years younger than Paul), but there was not nearly the information available to the public then as there would be for such an event in today's world of the Internet, Facebook, Twitter, and blogs. I found it both informative and entertaining, although I am a bit disconcerted that occurrences during my lifetime are now being made into historical movies.

One of my favourite history-based films is *The Longest Day*, based on Cornelius Ryan's well-researched book of the same name, depicting the Allied landings in Normandy on D-Day 1944. It is a good history movie, in my opinion, because it tells the story from many different perspectives: commanders and other ranks on both the Allied and German sides; French partisans; and civilians. Another aspect that adds to my appreciation of this film is that the German and French roles are portrayed by German and French actors using their own languages (with subtitles).

But movies run the risk of stirring up disdain if done poorly or without being factual. An example of the latter is *U-571*, which raised the ire of British Second World War naval veterans because it portrayed Americans taking an Enigma code machine from a German submarine when it was a Royal Navy destroyer, HMS BULLDOG, that actually accomplished the feat – before the U.S.A. had entered the war.

For me, history-based films are mainly entertainment. Often, however, they are my starting point for further research and learning about their subjects and time periods. Sometimes this leads to satisfaction with the accuracy of the screenwriters, and sometimes I am disappointed by a lack of historical correctness. Either way, I gain from having seen a film.

See you at the movies!

## Hutchison House Report

Gale Fewings



Our recent New Year's celebration was smaller than in previous years, no doubt because of the 'polar vortex' that affected everyone over the holidays. Even our piper, Colin Campbell, donned tartan pants instead of his kilt at Hogmanay!

Although there were sub-zero temperatures on January 1<sup>st</sup> we still welcomed a good 90 visitors along with another 42 volunteers from the community. The keeping room was very pleasant throughout the afternoon with a little elbow room for guests to mingle and chat. The ten students from the Ard Mohr School of Highland Dance, led by instructor Lynn Mooney, had enough floor space to perform freely and they did a wonderful job.

In addition to the community volunteers I would also like to thank our first footer Barry Landry, Doug Kean for his "Address to a Haggis", fiddler Justine Landry, the Hastings & Prince Edward Pipe and Drum Band and our own Hutchison House Volunteers who step up to the plate each and every time to make our events a success.

The year 2018 marks a particularly important milestone for the museum. Hutchison House first opened its doors on May 24, 1978. During our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary year we hope to host numerous events to celebrate. Some events are still in the planning stage but you must mark Sunday May 27 on your calendar for a celebratory Open House from 1-4 pm. This will be a perfect opportunity for the community to come out to the Museum and I can pretty much guarantee the afternoon will not be affected by a 'polar vortex'!

We'll keep members of the Peterborough Historical Society updated on our events planning in future issues of the Bulletin.

## Annual Heritage Awards

Each year the Peterborough Historical Society recognizes the contributions and efforts made by community members in exploring, celebrating and preserving the rich cultural and architectural history of the Peterborough area. Recipients must be residents of the City of Peterborough or Peterborough County. Nominations will be considered for accomplishments or projects completed in the past three years.

There are six award categories:

**The Samuel Armour Award** recognizes the development and/or delivery of programs, activities or curriculum based local history material that engages students in exploring the diverse history of the region.

**The J. Hampden Burnham Award** recognizes the completion and presentation of a major project in any media such as a painting, video, web design, newspaper articles, etc that promotes awareness of the history of the region.

**The George Cox Award** recognizes the sympathetic redesign or sensitive new construction that respects the existing character of significant cultural resources, such as buildings, cultural landscapes, period gardens or the preservation of manuscripts, photographic collections, etc.

**The F.H. Dobbin Award** recognizes the publication of a major work, either fiction or non-fiction that focuses on Peterborough's past.

**The Martha Kidd Award** honours the memory of Martha Kidd, historian of architecture and of Peterborough's built heritage, and recognizes outstanding work in the preservation of our region's built heritage.

**The Charlotte Nicholls Award** recognizes a substantial donation either financial or in kind services towards the commemoration of a historic structure, artifact, cultural landscape, etc.

If you are interested in nominating someone for an award, you can download and fill out an awards nomination form on the PHS website [<http://www.peterboroughhistoricalsociety.ca/awards.php>] or pick up a printed form at the PHS office at 270 Brock Street.

## Book Selling and Book Reading in the Digital Age

The large audience that attended the January Peterborough Historical Society panel discussion on 16 January were treated to a stimulating exchange of information and perspectives on the state of book reading and book selling in the age of e-books and the internet, here in Peterborough. Professor John Wadland, moderator, introduced the panelists, noting their apt qualifications for addressing the subject.

Panelist Marisa Scigliano, (Trent University Librarian, Client Support and Technical Services) gave a cogent assessment of book publishing world-wide (China far outstrips the United States), and suggested three categories of reading: for information, for pleasure, and for a deep understanding. She documented the striking transition at Trent University to e-journals, particularly in the sciences. Even though the transition to e-books has been slower, partly because of the economics and risks to publishers, the move to e-books is still unmistakable. The circulation of Library hard copies is down 80% in a decade and the increase in internet circulation has increased many times as much. It is evident that, for their purposes, students find the convenience of access to internet sources decisive.

Jennifer Jones, CEO of the Peterborough Public Library, noted that the digital revolution has also affected PPL users, though in different ways. The large proportion of seniors in Peterborough's population supports continued demand for hard copies but the Library also has been increasing its purchase of e-books to satisfy this demand. One challenge is the higher cost of e-books for libraries, due to publishers seeking to offset falling revenues from lower sales of hard copies. Electronic sources allow the Library to provide publications in foreign languages much more readily than before. Fiction, biography and erotica are increasing in popularity. In children's e-book use, which is increasing, Peterborough ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in Ontario.

Mark Jokinen, owner of Mark Jokinen Books, a long-established used book store, recounted how a Trent University student called his bookstore "quaint." Mark does not sell books online, does not use a cell phone, and removed his computer from the shop because he felt it was rude to be using it while customers may need assistance. He has noticed fewer purchases by undergraduate university students, though graduate students still come in. The key to a successful used book trade is acquiring good books to sell, and he finds that he now has less to spend on buying books. The turnover time to sell a book is increasing somewhat, though the business still supports him. The closing of four used book stores in Peterborough in the past year does not depict a disaster, since some reflected normal business retirements. But there is definitely pressure on the business, and there is a question whether the used book business will be viable thirty years from now.

Michelle Berry, author of several books of short stories and novels, opened the Hunter Street Bookstore in 2016 because she missed a downtown bookstore when Titles closed. For a year, people visiting her store called her crazy, but they nevertheless bought books! She had thought that a local bookstore could be a sort of community gathering centre but soon learned that it was really a retail business with all the demands that entails. She has found that best-sellers don't do well in her store, but specialty books do and customers are willing to wait weeks for special orders. Michelle champions choice and accepts that customers read both books and e-books. A major problem posed by Amazon and Chapters is that they hoard publishers' supplies, distorting sales numbers and complicating access for others. She is not sure that independent bookstores are disappearing because of e-books.

After a lively question and answer period, Professor Wadland thanked the panelists with hearty applause from the audience.

**Dale Standen**

PHS panel on books and reading.

Left to right: John Wadland (moderator), Marisa Scigliano, Mark Jokinen, Jennifer Jones, Michelle Berry





## Hogmanay January 1 2018



Bob and Kathy



Dale and Don



Norman and Marilyn



First Footer  
Barry Landry



Stephanie and Betty



Doug Kean gives  
address to the haggis



Fiddler Justine Landry



Ard Mohr School of High-  
land Dancers



Hastings and Prince Edward  
Pipe and Drum Band



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HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY**

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Museum**

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Peterborough Ontario  
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info@hutchisonhouse.ca

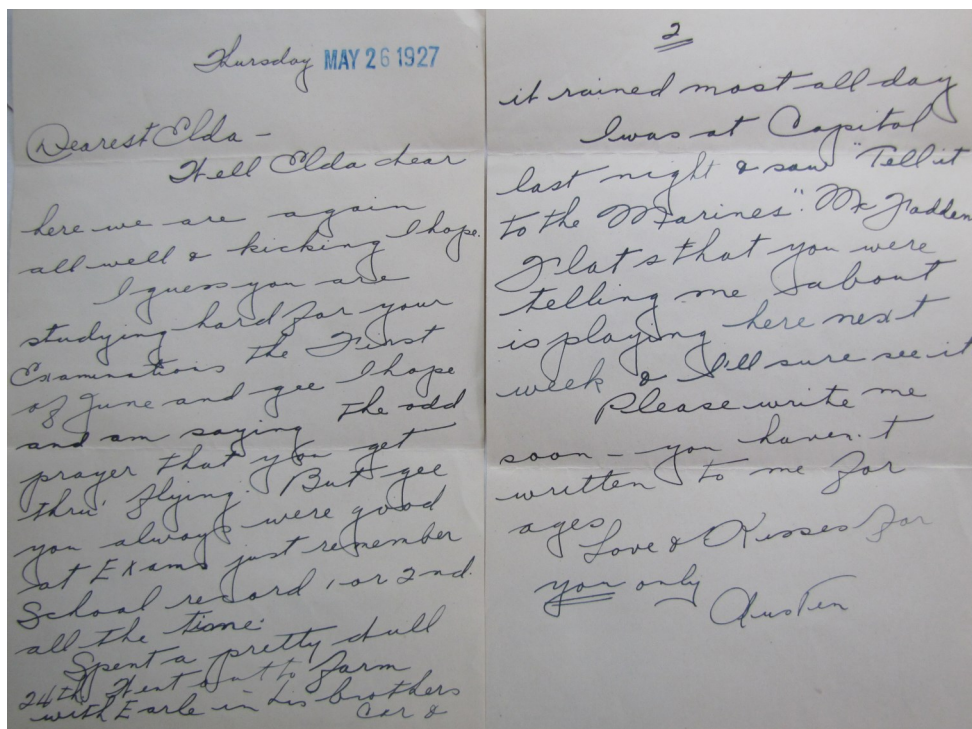
Websites:  
[hutchisonhouse.ca](http://hutchisonhouse.ca)

[peterboroughhistoricalsociety.ca](http://peterboroughhistoricalsociety.ca)

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## Voices from Peterborough's Past



Austen Nixon Collection, Peterborough Historical Society

### The Historical Value of Letters

About 5 years ago, a box of love letters, photos, and post-cards was discovered behind a radiator at a house on Park St that was being renovated. The box was brought in to the Peterborough Historical Society archives and I had the honour of reading the letters.

They were written by a young man, Austen Nixon, "Aus," to Elda Webber. Aus lived on Reid Street with his parents and worked at DeLaval Company. Elda lived on Park Street and worked for Metro Life Insurance but decided she wanted to be a nurse and went for training at Toronto Hospital for Sick Children. The letters are more than love letters that discuss how the two are going to meet again. They also describe life in the "Electric City" from about 1922 to the early 1930s. They discuss movies (which Aus loved), plays, fashion and economic conditions, and they employ a colloquial vocabulary characteristic of the inter-war years. Aus also played the saxophone in downtown clubs and on a steamer on Stony Lake. One of his most charming letters is written on a sheet of music. When Aus lost his job at DeLaval in 1926 he moved to Walkerville where he was told he would get a job in the Detroit auto industry. This never happened. He ran out of money and returned to Peterborough where he found work at Canadian General Electric.

Aus and Elda never married. Elda never returned to Peterborough. She married a businessman and moved to New York City. In his last letter, Aus wrote, "I hope you are not saving these boring letters, I am keeping yours close to my chest."

With the advent of electronic communication the art of letter writing is in decline. The push of the "delete" key can easily destroy what is written. Thankfully, Elda saved her letters behind the radiator.

Susan Jewell