



## UPCOMING EVENTS

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

**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**  
“Slave Narratives Tran-  
scribed by Susanna  
Moodie” Speakers **Michael  
Peterman and Molly Blyth**,  
“Peterborough Public Library,  
7:30 p.m.

**Heritage Luncheon**  
**April 4**  
12:00 and 1:30 p.m.  
Cost \$15.00  
Advance tickets  
required

**Mad Hatters Tea Party**  
**Sunday 22 April 1-4pm.**  
Tickets \$25 per person.  
Advance tickets  
required

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

## PETERBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY MONTHLY MEETINGS.

The monthly meetings and lectures are on the **third Tuesday of the month** and take place at **7:30 p.m., Peterborough Public Library**, Friends of the Li-  
brary Community Room, downstairs.

**“DOWNTOWN PETERBOROUGH IN THE 50’S AND 60’S:  
a Young Fellow’s Perspective”**  
**Tuesday 17 April, 2018, Peterborough Public Library, 7:30 p.m.**  
**All welcome.**

Whether written down or not, memory is fundamental to our understanding of histo-  
ry. Our April speaker is **Fred Gariepy**, a life-long resident of Peterborough who practices  
law in the Alfred W. Gariepy Murphy Law Office. After attending PCVS he graduated  
from Trent University with a major in History, and was called to the bar in 1974 after grad-  
uating from Osgood Hall Law School. He has an abiding interest in history, particularly  
local and military history.



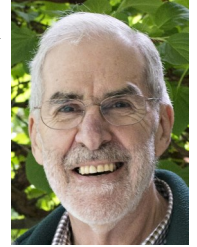
George Street 1954. PMA P-12-880-1

## May Speakers

**Tuesday, 15 May, “Slave Narratives Transcribed by Susanna Moodie.”** Speakers **Mol-  
ly Blyth** and **Michael Peterman**, editors of a forthcoming book, *Mary Prince and Ashton  
Warner: Two Slave Narratives Transcribed by Susanna Moodie*. The lecture will take place  
in the Community Room, Peterborough Public Library at 7:30 p.m.

## From the President ...

**Dale Standen**



As I begin a year as President of the Peterborough Historical Society, I must thank my predecessor, Don Willcock, for steering this venerable ship on a steady course over the past two years. Few have a broader familiarity with the extensive heritage networks in our community and I will be relying heavily upon his knowledge in the year ahead. Needless to say, I also will be relying upon the experience and assistance of the staff and volunteers of the Society and Hutchison House Museum, without whom the Society's numerous projects would not be possible.

The continuing Directors of the Society join me in welcoming five new volunteer Directors to the Board. This represents a significant renewal and promises an exciting addition of new perspectives, always a welcome and invigorating prospect for any organization. All heritage organizations face ongoing challenges in fulfilling their mandates to preserve, record and disseminate their communities' histories. I look forward to the task of maintaining the honorable and worthy work of those who have gone before.

The Peterborough Historical Society has a long pedigree to honour. Its first iteration, the Town and County of Peterborough Historical Society, first met in January 1897. From the outset its inspiration was two-fold: to preserve the memory and written record of the community's past, and to establish a museum (shortly to be named after Queen Victoria in that Jubilee year) to offer a material record for the public's edification. Like many early community museums, the collection was based upon donations heavily weighted toward indigenous artefacts, mineral specimens and stuffed animals. The Society also offered public lectures on various subjects. First located in space made available in Inverlea House by the Nicholls estate, it moved into the new Carnegie Library in 1912.

After much inactivity for half a century, and the dissipation of many artifacts under a policy of the Library Board, in 1950 a new head librarian, William Graff, brought direction and energy to the resurrection of the Historical Society and the museum collection. Reconstituted in 1953, the Society under the legendary leadership of Anne Heideman produced new exhibits, and within a few years a campaign to establish a new museum began. The celebration of the Canadian centenary was the catalyst for the Peterborough Centennial Museum and Archives to which the PHS transferred its collection. The PHS then turned its energy to restoring and transforming the stone house of Dr. John Hutchison, Peterborough's first resident doctor, into a living history museum. The Society also resumed scheduled public lectures, now monthly, and since 1980 has published an occasional paper annually.

Now well into its second century, the PHS has an active role to maintain in the community. Peterborough has changed much in the last half century and I look forward to working with fellow Directors, staff and volunteers to maintain and strengthen the Society's role in making better known the richness of Peterborough's history, and the importance of history and heritage in the foundation of a healthy community.

## AGM Business Report

About forty members and guests attended the Annual General Meeting of the Society on 20 March. A special motion was passed to hold future AGMs in April in order to allow sufficient time for the review and preparation of the annual financial statements.

Members elected the following Directors to the PHS Board: Left to right: Paul Lumsden, Colleen Allen, Jodi Aoki, Wayne Godward, Linda Chandler, Don Willcock, Dale Standen  
Absent: Bill Corbett, Claude Dufresne, Dion Gemmiti, Bob Taylor-Vaisey





## The Historian as Detective: How Mackenzie King's Diary Survived

Professor Christopher Dummitt, historian in Trent University's School for the Study of Canada, led attendees of the PHS annual AGM dinner through the unravelling of the strange web of events that culminated in the decision to save Mackenzie King's diary from destruction.

King, Canada's longest-serving Prime Minister, left instructions to his literary executors that his diary was to be destroyed, "except for those portions that he indicated were to be preserved." But King died without so indicating. Therein lay the dilemma faced by his four executors. What, if anything, should, or could be preserved? The decision mattered for many reasons. King's official biographer reasonably would need access to at least parts of it. Some intimates and colleagues of King already knew parts of his private life, including his spiritualism with obsessive attempts to communicate with ghosts through mediums, a practice euphemistically referred to as "psychic research."

Within weeks of King's death, a publication in England quoted spiritualists with whom he had communed that King had sought policy guidance from ghosts. Within months the story was out in the mainstream press in Canada. If the diary were destroyed, would suspicions be worse than if the actual evidence were made available from the diaries themselves? The humming and hawing of the executors, who disagreed among themselves on what should be done, went on for more than two decades, during which period two of them died. Meanwhile the diaries were deposited in the Public Archives of Canada, and were being copied for safe-keeping.

While there, someone, an assumed employee, also made an illegal copy of a portion and tried to flog it on the black market. The RCMP were called in and the intrigue deepened. The final decision was to destroy a few notebooks of King's spiritualist notes, but to preserve the diaries. In 1976 the eminent military historian, C.P. Stacey, published a thin volume based on a selective reading of King's diaries, *A Very Double Life*, broadcasting the former Prime Minister's spiritualist pursuits as well as his youthful visits to prostitutes. Although King's diary entries about the latter were ambiguous, Stacey voiced no doubt about what they meant.

The story of the diaries' survival is less about King's private life than about the change of climate since the 1950s, and especially by the 1970s, of what the public and the press thought it legitimate to investigate about the private lives of public figures. Insights into this change in Canadian culture is a valuable contribution of Professor Dummitt's book, *Unbuttoned: A History of Mackenzie King's Secret Life*. It is a fascinating read.

**Dale Standen**



Christopher Dummitt



Colleen, Elaine, Kathleen, Ken, Jodi at the AGM

## Hutchison House Report

Gale Fewings



March Break at the museum was lots of fun for the children and adults alike. We had a good turnout for the programs and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves immensely. I've included some photos of the children and their creations in this issue of the Bulletin. We hope you enjoy seeing them.

Soon it will be time to get the gardens into shape after the long winter. We have lots to do this year as usual. It seems the gardens have grown over the years (in more ways than one) and the volunteers who help maintain them are becoming fewer in number. The Garden Committee is looking for more volunteers, so if anyone out there has a desire to get your hands dirty or 'green up' your thumb, we'd love to hear from you. In fact, we are looking for new volunteers for all of the committees. You can contact the office at 705-743-9710 or visit our website at [www.hutchisonhouse.ca](http://www.hutchisonhouse.ca) to learn more about becoming a Hutchison House Museum volunteer.

Go to your closet and dig out one of your favourite Easter bonnets or get inspired and use your creativity to construct some zany headwear. Volunteers Loretta Terry, Linda Chandler and Erin Murphy are hosting a special **"Mad Hatter's Tea Party" on Sunday 22 April 2-4pm** as a fundraiser for Hutchison House. Tickets are \$25 per person and must be purchased in advance. For anyone who has attended one of these events in the past you know you won't go away hungry or disappointed. Please phone our office to make your reservations. Seating is limited so book now!

Meanwhile, staff and volunteers are looking forward to sharing the history of the many volunteers who helped to bring Hutchison House Museum through to our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! We are inviting the community of Peterborough to our **Open House on Sunday May 27, 2018 from 1-3 pm**. The afternoon will include tours, hearth cooking, refreshments, photographs and exhibits honoring our volunteers, as well as a short program taking place at 2 pm. Please mark the date on your calendars and plan to come out to help us make this milestone a terrific and memorable success.



Shadow box projects March Break programs





Fairy and Woodland Elf Palaces



Tilani with silhouette popsicle art



Mobile made at March Break program



**PETERBOROUGH  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY**

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## From the Archives – Updates from the PMA

**Jon Oldham, Archivist**



The week of April 2 to 8, 2018 has been designated as *Archives Awareness Week* by the Archives Association of Ontario (who themselves are celebrating their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.) It is a time when archives across the province reach out to new audiences and celebrate what they do. And this is important because there seems to be much public confusion about what Archives do.

Much of the confusion, I think, stems from the fact that we use the term *Archives* to mean several related, but distinct, things. “*Archives*” simultaneously means “a collection of archival material,” “the facility in which these collections are housed,” and “the institution that governs the collection, the facility, or both.” In effect, an Archives manages an archives in an archives. No wonder there’s confusion!

To make matters worse, most people probably encounter the term most often with respect to their computers and email inboxes. Here, we *archive* files that are not immediately useful but that we don’t want to delete – a sort of deep storage. I think this is why many people think of our museum storage facility as an archives (it isn’t – it actually houses our *non-archival* material).

Ok, so it doesn’t simply mean a place to put old stuff that maybe isn’t needed today but that we don’t want to lose forever. But what is *archival* and what do *archives* do?

Think of “archival material” as the paper trail of a person’s, or organization’s life. It’s an accumulation of documents (including things like maps, photographs, and recordings) that pile up as a side effect of carrying on life or business. This paper trail is the hard evidence of history, which is why we keep it. It is diaries, letters, meeting minutes, business records, property documents, and similar things.

Archivists therefore collect this material, preferably as intact as it was accumulated, in order to preserve the evidence of lives (people or organizations). We organize these accumulations together in *fonds* (a grouping of material that grew organically and relates to a body – i.e. Grandma’s shoe box kept under her bed) or *collections* (a grouping of material that grew artificially by a body – i.e. a collection of post-cards). Sometimes the lines are blurred.

Once collected, we preserve these items to ensure they will be available for as long as possible, we familiarize ourselves with the material so that we can advise researchers make items available when requested, and we then provide access to it.

So, if you are interested in your community’s history or curious about your family roots, or ever just wondered why a street was given a certain name, visit your local archives to see archives in an archives. It’s as simple as that.

Remembering Marjorie “Meg” Durant. Members of the Historical Society will remember Meg Durant fondly for her longstanding contribution as a volunteer and donor, along with her late husband, William Durant. Meg passed away in February in her 98<sup>th</sup> year.