



UPCOMING EVENTS

Peterborough Historical Society Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, 19 March
Ken Brown and Jon Oldham
"Historical Peterborough
Businesses Revealed
through Select Business
Letterheads."

PHS ANNUAL
GENERAL MEETING
Tuesday, 16 April
Princess Gardens
Professor Dimitry Anastakis
"The Impending Closure of
General Motors Oshawa in
Historical Perspective."

Hutchison House Events

Heritage Luncheons
first Wednesday of the month
February to June.
Advance tickets
\$15 per person
sitting times at 12:00 noon
& 1:30 p.m.

March Break Programming
12 March to 15 March
Contact Hutchison House for
details

PETERBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY MONTHLY MEETINGS.

The monthly meetings and lectures are on the **third Tuesday of the month: September, October, November, January, February, March and May** at 7:30 p.m., Lion's Community Centre, 347 Burnham Street.

**"Historical Peterborough Businesses Revealed
Through Select Letterheads"
Tuesday, 19 March 2019,
Lion's Community Centre, 347 Burnham Street,
7:30 p.m.**

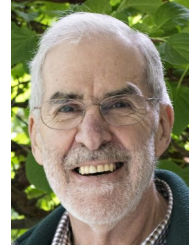
Before radio, television, and the internet, how did local businesses communicate with the public? Richly designed letterheads provided extensive information describing business operators, products, premises, and what could be bought in town. The Peterborough Museum and Archives houses thousands of historical invoices and letterheads going back more than 150 years. Who bought what from whom and for how much? What beer did Judge Weller drink when he should have been patronizing lifelong friend Henry Calcutt? Who did Charlotte Nicholls turn to when she needed new awnings? Peterborough archivist **Jon Oldham** and local historian **Ken Brown** will reveal secrets galore of long forgotten businesses.



Peterborough Canadian Irish Club annual St Patrick's ALL DAY celebration
Sat., 16 March, Douro Parish Hall
Breakfast, Children's activities, evening Entertainment, 9:00 am-10:00 pm
Advance tickets: Shelley Ryan 705-742-0987
All Day \$25, Breakfast \$12, Half Day \$15.

From the President ...

Dale Standen



Members, who on 9 February attended the conference “Back to the Future” celebrating 130 years of Public Health in the Kawarthas, were treated to a rich menu of public health landmarks and current challenges. Organized by a partnership of the PHS and Peterborough Public Health, the all-day conference was well-attended by 85 registrants and participants.

The diversity of subjects included in the program was striking, underscoring the extent to which public health impacts our lives, both personal and public. Peterborough’s effective Board of Health was established by a By-law on 18 February 1889 and exercised authority under provincial legislation. After 30 years, it had guided and overseen the foundation of modern systems of pure water supply, sewerage, milk and food inspection, vaccination and other measures to contain infectious diseases. Importantly, it helped to educate the public of the necessity of public health investments.

Speakers brought their experience and expertise to explore a wide array of public health issues, past, present and future. Edna Manitowabi, Odawa Elder, explained how Indigenous knowledge of medicinal plants for diabetes combines with a holistic approach to well-being of body and spirit. Dr. Garry Humphreys related the story of developing a polio vaccine, the crucial role of the Connaught Laboratories, and the remarkable success of Rotary International and other funding partners to bring polio to the brink of world-wide elimination.

The keynote speaker, Professor Kenton Kroger of York University, recounted the extraordinary early efforts of the first permanent provincial Board of Health after 1882 to gather data on disease from physicians across Ontario to determine, scientifically, environmental causes of disease and, by elaborate maps and reports, to disseminate this information and conclusions back to local physicians and Boards of Health.

Jamie Benidickson of the University of Ottawa, who has spoken before on sanitary measures in Edwardian Peterborough, demonstrated how multiple jurisdictions over the past century have obstructed the development of policy and its implementation to prevent pollution of the Great Lakes watershed. Kirsten Woodend, Dean of the Trent/Fleming School of Nursing, traced the development of public health nursing since the nineteenth century. Beryl Harris, longstanding President of the Selwyn Women’s Institute, in conversation with our Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Rosana Salvaterra, recalled the exceptional contributions of Women’s Institutes to public health measures, such as pasteurization of milk and well-babies clinics. And Dr. Peter Donnelly, President and CEO of Public Health Ontario, reflected upon a number of current and potential threats to public health that will present future challenges.

Especially welcome were a dozen or so students from the School of Nursing and from the departments of biology, sociology and history of Trent University. A group of youth from Peer Leaders of Peterborough Public Health delivered a message distinguishing the unhealthy abuse of tobacco from its cultural and spiritual use in Indigenous ceremony.

The entire day was informative and stimulating, with time for questions, and for discussion during coffee

breaks and over a delicious and very healthy lunch. The event launched what will be a series of events by PPH throughout the year, to promote public health and celebrate 130 years of achievement. Stay tuned!



Beryl Harris (right) chats with Dr. Rosana Salvaterra about the contribution of Women’s Institutes to public health

February 2019 PHS Public Meeting

“Punching Above Our Weight: Contemporary Arts Practice in Peterborough.”

Su Ditta, Executive Director of Peterborough’s Electric City Culture Council, the municipal arts, culture and heritage council, gave an impressive and wide-ranging talk on the dynamic and flourishing arts community in the region at the February meeting of the Peterborough Historical Society. A graduate of Trent University, Ditta formerly served as Associate Curator: Media Arts at the National Gallery of Canada and as Director of the Media Arts section of the Canada Council. A passionate and effective champion of the arts here in Peterborough, she has worked on the boards of several arts organizations and was co-founder of Artsweek. Titled “Punching Above Our Weight: Contemporary Arts Practice in Peterborough,” her presentation focused on the many talented and successful cultural organizations, institutions and individuals in Peterborough and area which far exceed what is normally found in a community our size. Ditta remarked that in her travels across the country, she noticed that Peterborough is widely recognized for having a lively and diverse arts scene that is unusual for a community of some 80,000. She noted that there are over 120 arts organizations in Peterborough covering everything from the Performing Arts, Visual Arts and Media Arts, as well as a wide range of highly skilled artisans noted for weaving, pottery and woodworking. Her extensive, almost encyclopedic, knowledge of local artists and cultural organizations is a testament to her dedication and hard work on behalf of these talented individuals and groups. Using numerous examples from performances and exhibitions, Ditta noted that Peterborough actively supports the arts through grants and paid admissions. She concluded by observing some recent trends in the local scene – more diversity and a strong Indigenous presence. The significant financial contribution that the Arts make to our local economy is not generally recognized and Ditta argued that capital investment in appropriate facilities for the Arts would pay long-term dividends. President Dale Standen thanked the speaker and presented a token of appreciation on behalf of the Peterborough Historical Society.

Dennis Carter-Edwards



Su Ditta with the winners of a free pass that she provided for a performance by one of Peterborough's many arts groups

NOTICE: PHS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND DINNER

Tuesday, 16 April 2019

Princess Gardens, 100 Charlotte Street

6:00 PM - 6:30 PM (AGM)

6:30 PM - 7:00 PM (Cash Bar)

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM (Dinner & Guest Speaker)

\$45 Members \$50 Non-members

Tickets may be purchased and reserved by phone: 705-740-2600 or 705-743-9710

Or in person at Hutchison House, 270 Brock Street

Cash, cheque, Visa or Mastercard

Order/purchase tickets before 2 April 2019

Guest Speaker— Professor Dimitry Anastakis

“The Impending Closure of General Motors Oshawa in Historical Perspective.”

Dimitry Anastakis is Professor of History at Trent University and has published extensively on the automobile industry in Canada

Hutchison House Report

Gale Fewings



The following is an excerpt from *Our Forest Home: Being Extracts from the Correspondence of the Late Frances Stewart*, second edition, printed 1902:

*March 1826: "This time of year always brings to my mind my first visit to Edgeworthstown, a time never to be forgotten. Thank you dear H _____ for the primroses and violets, their sweet smell has gone, but I preserve them carefully as relics. * How very different everything looks here at this time of the year to what it does at home. The ground is still covered with snow and there is no appearance of buds swelling or dear little spring flowers, all are shut up and hidden."*

**These brittle, withered flowers still lie folded in the faded letter nearly a century old. _____ F.B., 1902"*

Year after year as February fades and March begins, the promise of springtime fills the air. Daylight lingers a little longer with each passing day, birds greet the dawn with song, the air smells just a bit sweeter, and as we sloop our way through slushy streets, we know that 'old man winter' will soon be on his way. Signs of spring are everywhere, and, like our forefathers, we look forward with anticipation to its coming.

Many local citizens make a tradition of attending our annual special events such as Hogmanay or Peach Tea, and many others plan on visiting the museum to spend a relaxing afternoon on the terrace enjoying scones and jam during the summer or the monthly luncheons at this time of the year. But, there aren't very many people out there who would look forward to spending Family Day on their hands and knees scrubbing the keeping room floor! The Baker Clan from Cavan, however, are the one big exception and cleaning the floor has become a tradition for this gang. Thank you so much to Ann (the ringleader) and family. Wow, this year marks the tenth year in a row!

By now, school children must be eagerly awaiting their upcoming March Break. During the week, we

have an excellent lineup of activities for children ages 6-12, including the following: Tuesday March 12 Wet Felting; Wednesday March 13 Hand Puppets; Thursday March 14 Make your own Journal; Friday March 15 Pioneer Days.

The March Break workshops all take place from 9:30 am-12:00 noon or 1:00-3:00 pm at a cost of \$20 per child per workshop. Parents/grandparents are asked to send indoor shoes and peanut-free snacks with the children. Pre-registration is required. For more information or to register please call the museum office at 705-743-9710.

Fundraising for all not-for-profit organizations is always one of the biggest challenges and one that never ends. Here at Hutchison House Museum, in addition to the daily teas in summer, luncheons, special events, school programs and workshops, as well as volunteer-run events, the need for more in the way of funding is ongoing. To this end, we have applied to become members of the Kawartha Bingo Sponsors Association and for the next fiscal year, April 2019 to March 2020, Hutchison House staff and volunteers will work a minimum of two bingo sessions per month at the Delta Bingo and Gaming Centre on Clonsilla Avenue. Please come out and support the museum. All you have to do is play BINGO!

The Baker Clan





Hutchison House
PA Day February 1, 2019





**PETERBOROUGH
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

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Voices from Peterborough's Past All in an Evening's Entertainment at the Empire Theatre

What a program – two big silent five-reelers (about 150 minutes in all), plus a ten-minute scenic short! All for less than twenty cents (\$2.33 in today's currency).

The Empire Theatre on Charlotte Street would also have presented a scattering of live background music, perhaps even “the Empire Orchestra,” under the direction of Miss Muriel Porter, the wife of the owner. Muriel was also the theatre's treasurer and would soon take over as proprietor.

It was the opening year of the “Roaring Twenties,” “the Jazz Age.” The phrase “New Era” was on everyone's lips through the decade.

The Empire's March 1920 program reflects this time. Women were gaining ground in efforts to assert their rights, and the questions the ad asked were controversial: “*Ladies*: How much freedom should a woman be permitted after marriage? *Gentlemen*: Would you marry a woman if you could live with her but three days a week?”

The screening of the comedy *Experimental Marriage* (released March 1919) is significant. According to writer Kay Sloan, the movie marked the end of a long “film debate over suffragism.”

In the movie, a young feminist wants both to marry a dashing young lawyer and to continue her work in the suffrage movement. The couple agrees to wed – but also to live together only from Saturday until Monday. That will leave each free to live as they please the rest of the week. Complications and comedy ensue, but in the end conventional marriage, not surprisingly, wins out. “Overt power” for women, Sloan concludes, “would remain unacceptable for women in the decades to come.”

The Darkest Hour (1919), a more typical melodrama, also revolved around marriage. It raised the question: “Can a Woman Make a Man Propose to Her Without His Having Any Knowledge of It?”

The *Canadian Government Scenic* was probably issued by the Exhibits and Publicity Bureau of the federal Department of Trade and Commerce. Established in 1918 and rebranded in 1923 as the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau, it produced such titles as *The Most Picturesque Spot in North America, Lake Louise*; *Wooden Shipbuilding in Canada*; *Building Airplanes in Canada*; and *Harvest of the Sugar Maple Tree*. The local audience probably appreciated seeing a depiction of their own country, a rarity both then and now.

About a year later, on Thursday, 28 April 1921, the Empire Theatre screened its last program, including *The Tiger's Coat* (1920), which featured amongst its cast yet another notable woman of the time, Tina Modotti. The very next day, the movie house closed down forever, after less than seven years in action.

Robert Clarke

<https://www.peterboroughmoviehistory.com/>

Empire Theatre ad, *Peterborough Examiner*, 19 March 1920, p.9.

