



UPCOMING EVENTS

**Peterborough Historical
Society
Monthly Meeting**

Lion's Community Centre
7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, 15 October
Bob Taylor-Vaisey and
Kathryn Matheson
"Tom Symons"

Tuesday, 19 November
Ted Morin
"Staff Sergeant Eddie Morin"

Hutchison House Events

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

Haunted Halloween
event for children
Saturday, 26 October
1:00-3:00 p.m.

Hutchison House
Christmas Market
Saturday, 23 November
9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Call Hutchison House
for details

Issue 460

October 2019

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.**

"TOM SYMONS: A CANADIAN LIFE AS TOLD BY HIS FILES"

Bob Taylor-Vaisey and Kathryn Matheson

**Tuesday, 15 October 2019,
Lion's Community Centre,
347 Burnham Street,
7:30 p.m.**

A remarkable Canadian and resident of Peterborough, Tom Symons, founding President of Trent University and author of *To Know Ourselves: The Report of the Commission on Canadian Studies*, was in the forefront of multiple critical issues, including Indigenous rights, human rights, language rights and heritage preservation. Bob Taylor-Vaisey is a retired corporate archivist and senior document management consultant for Imperial Oil Limited who has been organizing T.H.B. Symons' files for transfer to Trent University Archives. Kathryn Matheson is a graduate of the Frost Centre for Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies at Trent University and currently serves as Researcher and Administrative Coordinator for Professor Symons.

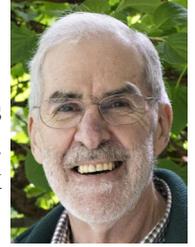


THB Symons
(Photographer unknown. Courtesy
of Trent University Library and
Archives)

The Peterborough Historical Society acknowledges with thanks the support of the City of Peterborough and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport of Ontario.

From the President ...

Dale Standen



It is October again, the month when we ask members to renew their PHS memberships for the coming year. Attached to this issue of the *Bulletin* is a reminder letter and renewal form. The Society depends heavily upon memberships and donations to support its work, and we ask you please to continue your support for what we hope you find a worthy enterprise.

As I renew my membership, I think about the valuable contributions that historical societies make to their communities. They tell the stories of people in our past, how they lived, what mattered to them, where they came from, and how collectively they navigated the currents and weather of history en route to our present location on the voyage. The stories of the past are fascinating, instructive and inspirational. They connect us to a wider world and encourage reflection on approaches to current dilemmas, both personal and communal. Our predecessors in Peterborough have left us a rich heritage worthy of preservation and celebration.

The Peterborough Historical Society strives to make our community's history accessible for everyone. Hutchison House Museum, which the Society owns and operates, conducts exceptional children's educational programs linked to school curriculum, and numerous other public programs throughout the year for adults and children, all focused on historical themes, and all reported monthly in the PHS *Bulletin* by our Curator, Gale Fewings. Additionally, the Society engages the public in a series of seven lectures on subjects linked to local history and of wider community interest, and undertakes other outreach activities of local heritage.

Our community is always changing, and as it does the PHS must address new themes and subjects. When Bernice and I arrived nearly 50 years ago, Peterborough was a significant manufacturing centre with major employers like Canadian General Electric, Outboard Marine Corporation, DeLaval and Quaker Oats. Now OMC and DeLaval have gone, and CGE just ended its manufacturing in Peterborough. Major employers are now service industries: Trent University, Fleming College, Peterborough Regional Health Centre, expanding retirement facilities and a plethora of diverse smaller businesses. The last 50 years have brought greater diversity to Peterborough's population and a long-overdue recognition of the significance of the region's Indigenous communities. These are exciting developments of far-reaching importance. They are history in the making.

The PHS Board is currently framing a strategic plan for the next 5 years. Whatever direction it plots, your Society will be seeking ways to include the diverse stories of our community, past and evolving. In doing so, we are eager to hear from you, the members.

One reality is that the Society's work is dependent upon a vibrant membership and donations. We are grateful to the City of Peterborough for a generous annual service grant to help maintain Hutchison House Museum. The Society's work in preserving, promoting and advocating on behalf of Peterborough's heritage also incurs costs, and members provide the principal sustenance to meet these.

For those who have already renewed their memberships or made donations, I thank you warmly. For others, thank you for your past support, and please join me now to renew.



Hutchison House, home of the Peterborough Historical Society

Reliving Perth's Old Red House

The audience at September's PHS meeting learned how many stories a historic house can tell. Jim Forrester, an information professional with diverse expertise in history, film studies, digital humanities, and extensive experience with his wife, Stephanie, in renovating old timber houses, traced the history of the Old Red House in Perth, which has been in the Forrester family for 96 years.

For background, Jim began with a film clip from "The Story of Perth." Concerned about ongoing American ambitions to annex British

North America following the War of 1812, the British government established several military settlements in Upper Canada, populated by discharged or semi-retired soldiers and officers. Perth was the first of these. Surveyed on a military rectangular grid, the Royal Engineers left their imprint on the solid construction of the early buildings, including the Old Red House. Its rectangular structure is of one-foot square, precisely-hewn ash timbers with flawless dovetailed corners, protected by clapboard sheathing. On a tour of the Canadas, the Governor General, the 4th Duke of Richmond, visited Perth and was honoured with a banquet in the Old House in August 1819, then an inn owned by Sergeant Adamson. On the Duke's suggestion, the house was painted red. As he continued his tour, the Duke died a few days later on the Richmond Road from rabies contracted earlier in his journey. The Duke was buried in Holy Trinity Cathedral in Quebec City.

In 1865, the roof of the house was destroyed by a fire that had spread from a neighboring building. The rest of the house was saved by the local fire brigade. After its repair, the house was painted white, which it has been ever since, though retains the name Old Red House.

Over its 200-year life, the house has been owned by four families: Adamson, Fraser, McDowell and Forrester, the first three families being related. Jim led the audience through various modifications to the house,



notably the cutting of a second door on the front of the house to accommodate the making of an apartment. As part of his research on the building, Jim stripped the apartment's interior, in what he refers to as "interior archaeology," to examine materials and construction techniques. The 3D modelling program at the University of Guelph has produced a digital model of the Old Red House, some examples of which were shown.

Jim is working with Algonquin College in Perth, whose Heritage Institute is interested in exploring ways to employ the house in its instruction. This spring, students dismantled the timber drive shed beside the house, to be reassembled on the College property and likely used as a blacksmith shop for instruction. And most recently last month, Stephanie Ford Forrester curated a display at the Perth Museum to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the banquet held in the Old Red House for the Duke of Richmond.

Jim accompanied his talk with a richly-illustrated slide show that documented several of the Old Red House's stories. Following numerous questions and discussion, Dale Standen thanked Jim for his engaging presentation, followed by warm applause.

Dale Standen

Jim Forrester, Dale Standen



Hutchison House Report

Gale Fewings



The House has been rather quiet since the children went back to school. Erin and I have busied ourselves preparing for a number of events scheduled for the fall. The museum will host three Heritage Luncheons between now and December. If anyone is interested in buying tickets we are taking reservations. Luncheons will be served on Wednesday, October 2; Wednesday, November 6; and Wednesday, December 4. Each luncheon will consist of two sittings with the first sitting at 12:00 noon and the second beginning at 1:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15 each and must be purchased in advance. For more details please call the museum office.

Our Haunted Halloween event for children will take place on Saturday, October 26 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Admission is \$5 per person and the event always promises to be a little bit scary, but not too frightening.

The annual Hutchison House Christmas Market is also fast approaching. The sale will take place on Saturday, November 23, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. This important fundraiser for the museum will likely feature baked goods, jams and jellies, pies, and attic treasures. The volunteers and staff will be getting together in the coming weeks to finalize plans for the event. Award-winning Empire Cheese can be ordered ahead of time by filling out an order form and mailing it to the museum. On offer is a variety of delicious specialty cheeses and gift baskets. The deadline for cheese orders is November 15 and orders will be available for pick up at the sale. Look for more details in the next Bulletin due out early November. Of course, it goes without saying that donations to the sale are greatly appreciated.

Throughout the month of October, we also have a smattering of programs and group bookings scratched on the calendar, as well as the ongoing responsibility of caring for the building and collection, taking care of daily business, committee meetings, grant applications to contend with, etc. etc. If you, or someone you know, may be interested in volunteering at Hutchison House, we would be most happy to hear from you. There is never a shortage of meaningful ways to get involved. Our volunteers are the strength of the museum. They are our most valuable asset, but they could use some help. Please consider how you can assist us in meeting our goal of keeping this very important, historically relevant house a going concern. For more information about becoming a volunteer, please contact myself or Erin and we'll be happy to open the door to your future through our past.



Downtown Abbey Servants' Luncheon
l-r: Loretta Terry, Linda Chandler, Juli Hiller

Voices from Peterborough's Past

What a Blast! 1,100 Kiddies and Hundreds Turned Away

In the difficult years of the Great Depression, everyone occasionally needed a treat – including the youth of the city.

Often, the city's two movie theatres – the Capitol and the Regent – gave out special prizes to “kids” attending the matinee shows – which cost only a dime for admission. On one occasion, the Regent offered kids at Saturday morning shows a free button for Rin-Tin-Tin's Lone Defender Club. One Christmas, the Capitol offered “A Xmas Gift for Every Child.” For a special Wednesday children's matinee in 1934, the Regent gave out baseballs and bats to “lucky” boys – the lucky girls got skipping ropes. Long-time Peterborough businessman Marlow Banks recalled receiving a toy revolver and holster on one particularly lucrative occasion.

The children responded. On Good Friday morning in April 1934, long before the Capitol Theatre's show was scheduled to start at ten o'clock, George Street was witness to a tidy but noisy line of youthful theatergoers, with their dimes in hand, anxious to get in.

According to the *Examiner's* report that same day, the “monster queue of children extended for a considerable distance down George Street.” The theatre had room only for 1,100, and, regrettably, hundreds of children had to be turned away.

The Capitol's Jack Stewart – described as a “genial manager” – quickly announced that he would present the same program over again on Saturday morning – “in order to save the children who were unable to gain admittance . . . the disappointment of being unable to see the special presentation of Mickey Mouse and other comedies.”

Robert Ganton Clarke, <https://www.peterboroughmoviehistory.com/>



Examiner, ad, 4 April 1934, p.13.



Examiner, 6 April 1934, p.5

Fall at Hutchison House



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SOCIETY**

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