



UPCOMING EVENTS

Peterborough Historical Society

Monthly Meeting

Sylvia Sutherland
"Reflections on a
Career in Journalism
and Municipal Politics"
Tuesday, 17 March
7:30 p.m.

Lion's Community Centre

PHS ANNUAL GENERAL

MEETING & DINNER

Tuesday, 21 April 2020

Princess Gardens,

100 Charlotte Street

6:00 PM

\$45 Members

\$50 Non-members

Dr. Rosana Salvaterra
"Cheaper by the Dozen:

Revisiting the 12 Greatest
Accomplishments of Public
Health"

Hutchison House Events

Heritage Luncheons
first Wednesday of the month
March to June
Advance tickets
sitting times at 12:00 noon
& 1:30 p.m.

March Break Programs

Flower Pots 17 March
Bird Houses 18 March
Weather 19 March
Puppets 20 March

Call Hutchison House
for details

Issue 465

March 2020

PETERBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY MONTHLY MEETINGS.

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

Reflections on a Career in Journalism and Municipal Politics

Sylvia Sutherland
Tuesday, 17 March 2020
7:30 p.m.

Journalists are the first historians. They describe events as they happen and shape the first narrative. **Sylvia Sutherland** was not only a journalist who recorded events, she entered the political arena to help shape them. Although she ran unsuccessfully as a Liberal candidate in Peterborough both federally and provincially, she was elected the first female Mayor of Peterborough in 1986 and held office on two separate stretches for a total of 13 years. She served a five-year term on the Ontario Municipal Board. Sylvia will reflect on her varied career in journalism and municipal public service.

Sylvia Sutherland

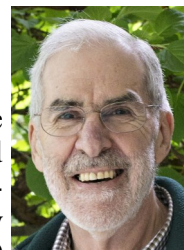


The Peterborough Historical Society acknowledges with thanks the support of the City of Peterborough, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport of Ontario, and the Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough.



From the President ...

Dale Standen



Quarantine, much in the news with the outbreak of COVID-19, has a long history. Before microbial and viral causes of disease were known, people shunned and often forcefully isolated those with deadly infections. It was universal practice to prevent disembarkation from ships arriving in port until they had been inspected for evidence of disease. So alien is this practice today that the quarantine of a large cruise ship in Japan because of the current alarm over COVID-19 has occasioned sensationalist press coverage.

The reason we have enjoyed global travel for decades with nary a thought of quarantine is because, thanks to vaccination, antibiotics and widespread public health measures, the threat of almost all the age-old killer diseases has been nearly eliminated. The recent appearance of novel viruses such as SARS and COVID-19 is raising questions about our complacency. And the application of selective quarantine measures in face of COVID-19 has stimulated debate over quarantine's effectiveness.

Public health experts are the ones to address this question. Whether effective or not, people historically resorted to quarantine as the major first response to epidemics. In face of cholera in the nineteenth century, colonial governments established quarantine stations at Grosse Ile below Quebec City, at Lawlor Island off Halifax, and on Partridge Island off Saint John. In Peterborough, immigrants were isolated and inspected at Hospital Point (Del Crary Park) before being allowed to continue their journey. In Victoria later in the century, lepers from Asia were similarly isolated. The Public Health Act of 1884 in Ontario mandated municipalities to create isolation hospitals for reportable epidemic diseases such as diphtheria, smallpox, typhoid fever, scarlet fever, measles and tuberculosis. Peterborough established an isolation hospital in 1911. Those who stayed at home when diagnosed with disease were quarantined there, with a placard placed on the door.

For us, these are alien experiences. The application of quarantine in face of COVID-19 generally has been much more targeted and selective, with the exception of Chinese authorities' unprecedented attempt to quarantine an entire city and province. Improvements in diagnostic methods, scientific knowledge and the means of tracking travellers may be game changers that will allow selective quarantine to work. The most critical element in successful containment is still likely to be what historically allowed spectacular advances in our public health: a well-educated and responsive population.

NOTICE PHS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & DINNER

Tuesday, 21 April 2020
Princess Gardens, 100 Charlotte Street
6:00 PM - 6:30 PM (AGM)
6:30 PM - 7:00 PM Cash Bar & 50/50 draw
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 7 April 2020

**Guest Speaker
Dr. Rosana Salvaterra**

**"Cheaper by the Dozen:
Revisiting the 12 Greatest Accomplishments of Public Health"**

Dr. Salvaterra is Medical Officer of Health, Peterborough Public Health, and holds an academic appointment in the Department of Family Medicine at Queen's University.

Hutchison House Report

Gale Fewings



Since the beginning of time, people have turned to plants for help in healing. Herbalists maintain that common ailments can be treated at home with a range of simple herbal remedies. They say you can stay healthy by including herbs in your daily diet. In times past, it was the tradition to take herbal tonics in the spring to restore the body's vitality after a winter diet lacking in fresh green vegetables.

Among the herbs used as tonics were yarrow, dandelion, sage, peppermint and rose hips, which helped to cleanse the system, and other herbs which were thought to strengthen the whole body, toning and invigorating its systems. Mint, for example, was taken for the digestive tract, and hawthorn berries were taken to improve the circulation system.

According to *"The Complete Book of Herbs: A Practical Guide to Growing & Using Herbs"* by Lesley Bremness, "one of the most versatile herbs" is calendula; calendula (or marigold) "is popular as a cheerful cottage garden flower; for its use in cosmetic and culinary recipes; as a dye plant and for its many healing properties."

On February 12, 2020, members of the Peterborough Community Medicine Garden offered a free workshop at Hutchison House and participants learned of the healing properties of calendula through a hands-on program creating calendula salve.

The Peterborough Community Medicine Garden, located behind the Mount Community Centre (near the bee hives), is a citizen-based initiative envisioned to be a resource where community members can learn about the practical uses and healing properties of plants, and how to identify, propagate, tend, harvest and process herbal medicines. The project aspires to bring this knowledge back to our community and enable us, by working together, to become reacquainted with these herbal healers and to restore our capacity to sustainably use them and care for each other.

We at Hutchison House are very interested in working with this dynamic group. In exchange for providing space for 'free' workshops the gardeners have offered to assist with the maintenance and planning of the museum's herb garden. This promises to be a wonderful and exciting community partnership!

Thinking about gardens on this dreary winter day brings a smile to my face even with the 2.5 feet of snow covering the ground just beyond the office window.

Currently, Erin and I are planning for the upcoming March Break programs among other things. The Heritage Luncheons continue on the first Wednesday of the month throughout March, April, May and June. As time flies, it won't be long before the Scottish Teas are back for another season, but first, let's get winter over with!



Herbal Workshop



PA Day Fairy Workshop
Zander, Aryaleigh, Alex, Caleb



Annual Family Day Keeping
Room floor washing by the
Baker Clan
Joe, Cory, Keith, Ann

S.S. Keewatin Marine Museum

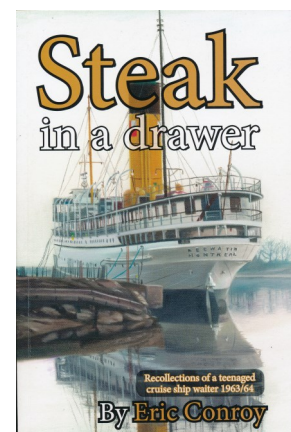
“Prettiest girl I’d ever seen, The Mighty Ship Keewatin.” These lines are from a song in one of several videos that Eric Conroy screened when telling the story of his venture to rescue the *S.S. Keewatin* from the scrap heap in Michigan and to restore her as a museum in Port McNicoll. Those who braved nasty weather to attend the February PHS meeting enjoyed a fascinating and engagingly told tale of unlikely heritage preservation.

The *Keewatin* is the only surviving Great Lakes passenger steamship of several built for the CPR in the great Edwardian era of steamships. Except for her size and survival, she has much in common with the *Titanic* that was built at the same time, sporting much of the same equipment and fittings. That includes her engine, much coveted by the Smithsonian! Before the First World War, the *Keewatin* transported thousands of immigrants to Port Arthur on their way to populate the Canadian west. In 1920, she was refitted as a luxury cruise ship. When decommissioned in 1967, she was saved from the scrap heap by an American businessman who moved her to his marina on the Kalamazoo River as a museum. For complicated reasons, forty-five years later she again faced being scrapped, and that’s when Eric Conroy and others bought her and returned her to her old home port of Port McNicoll. That escapade could not have succeeded without Conroy’s perseverance and influential personal connections made during an entrepreneurial career in business and consulting. Getting *Keewatin* back to Canada required dredging a lengthy stretch at the mouth of the Kalamazoo River, gaining cooperation of the U.S. Coast Guard, and winning acceptance of the local Michigan population who had fallen in love with the ship. How Conroy accomplished this astonishing feat is the stuff to make an award-winning movie. Back home and spruced up as a marine museum, *Keewatin* is a priceless artifact of Canadian history, offering tours daily from May to October. One of the most popular episodes of CBC’s “Murdoch Mysteries” was filmed on board *Keewatin*. The floating museum is a main contributor to Port McNicoll’s community revitalization.

After a period of questions and answers, Dale Standen thanked Eric Conroy for his fascinating story and his role in preserving an important piece of Canadian heritage. Attendees enjoyed viewing a beautiful scale model of *Keewatin* that Eric had commissioned and brought with him, and an opportunity to purchase a coffee-table history of the ship. Also available is Eric’s own book, *Steak in a drawer*, recollecting his experience as a teenage waiter on board the *Keewatin* in 1963-64. Here is the source of Eric’s life-long devotion to the *Keewatin*, an experience which he explained transformed his life.

Dale Standen

Dale Standen thanks Eric Conroy



**Peterborough Historical Society
Annual Heritage Awards
Call for Nominations
Deadline 9 April 2020**

As a means of encouraging programs and activities that commemorate our rich history and acknowledging achievements in the fields of cultural, social and architectural history, the PHS presents the Annual Heritage Awards for citizens of Peterborough City and County. The awards recognize outstanding accomplishments in heritage preservation and promotion and are named in honour of Peterborough citizens who have made significant contributions to the broader heritage community. There are seven separate awards.

The Peterborough Historical Society welcomes nominations for its annual Heritage Awards until Thursday, 9 April. Nominees must reside within the boundaries of Peterborough County. They may be individuals, businesses, institutions, organizations, groups or members of the media. Nominations will be considered for projects completed in the previous year and will be evaluated by an independent Awards Committee. If you are aware of a deserving project or person, submit an application. Individuals may also nominate themselves or their own project. A nomination form may be picked up at the PHS office at 270 Brock Street or downloaded from the PHS website: <http://www.peterboroughhistoricalsociety.ca/awards.php>.

The Heritage Awards will be presented at a ceremony to be scheduled in the spring of 2020.

NEW AWARD: The Thomas H.B. and Christine Symons Heritage Award for an outstanding one-time or ongoing contribution to local, regional, provincial, national or international heritage causes made by residents, former residents, groups, businesses or organizations from or to the Peterborough region.

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 honors 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 or services, towards the commemoration of a historic structure, artifact, cultural landscape, etc.

Submit by 4:00 p.m. 9 April 2020 or postmarked no later than 9 April 2020 to:
The Awards Committee, Annual Heritage Awards, Peterborough Historical Society,
270 Brock St., Peterborough, Ontario K9H 2P9

Nomination forms may also be downloaded from the Awards page of the Peterborough Historical Society website at www.peterboroughhistoricalsociety.ca and emailed to the Society's email address: info@peterboroughhistoricalsociety.ca.



**PETERBOROUGH
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

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Voices from Peterborough's Past Sevengala, the "Master of Telepathy," at the Grand Opera House

As shown in the postcard below, on the southwest corner of Peterborough's Hunter and Water Streets, tucked into the "Braund Building" with people milling about its door, is the Canadian Bank of Commerce. Nowadays, it is an equally popular spot, home to the St. Veronus Café and Tap Room.

The poster on the corner announces the engagement of "The Original Sevengala" and "Le Transmission by Telepathy" at the Grand Opera House – which helps to provide a date to this great photograph.

"The eminent hypnotist Sevengala" – his real name was Walter C. Mack – was in town for the whole week of October 8, 1906, which means that this photo was probably taken a little before or maybe even during that time.

Making sure not to be confused with the well-known Svengali (a fictional character of the time), Sevengala's business card maintained, "There is BUT ONE Sevengala." All the others were "imposters."

The *Examiner* advised its readers not to be "left behind" in their beliefs: come out and see – at the "low prices" of 10, 20, or 30 cents – this "king of fun makers" and his "able exposition of telepathy." While the question of hypnotism might be "much discussed" and mystifying, it was nevertheless "an established fact, acknowledged by every scientist of the day." It just might seem impossible until you witness it for yourself.

Walter C. Mack toured as Sevengala on the vaudeville circuits from around 1904 to 1913, when he died, at about age forty-seven, in New York City.

Robert Ganton Clarke

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

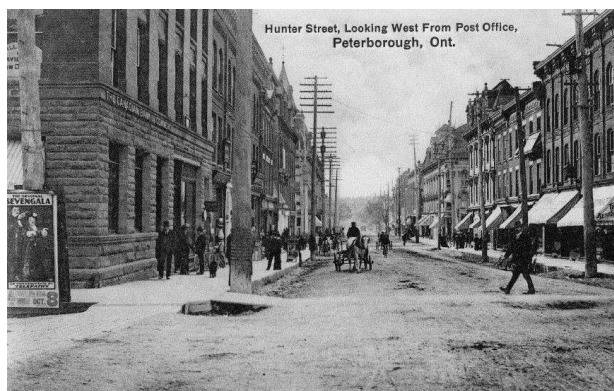


Photo Credits:
Hunter and Water
Streets, 1906, postcard,
Trent Valley Archives,
F400.

NOTICE OF BY-LAW AMENDMENTS

The Board of Directors of the Historical Society has been reviewing the Society's procedural bylaw and will be approving some proposed revisions for ratification at the Annual General Meeting in April. After the March 10 Board meeting, we will post the revisions on our website as well as distribute them to our email distribution list. We have approximately 50 members for whom we do not have an email contact. If you are not on our current email list and would like to save the Society considerable expense by receiving the revision document by email, please send your email address to bob.taylorvaisey@gmail.com. Otherwise, we will be sending hardcopy versions of this document through Canada Post.