



UPCOMING EVENTS

Peterborough Historical
Society

Monthly Meeting
To be temporarily
replaced by PHS Talks

Hutchison House
Closed to the public

NOTE: Due to COVID-19, the PHS monthly meetings and lectures this year are replaced by **PHS Talks**, a series of virtual presentations posted on the Hutchison House Museum YouTube page. Notices of the talks will be publicized in the usual manner and summaries of each talk will be included in a subsequent *Bulletin*. The aim is to post a talk on the third Tuesday of each of the months of **January, February, March and May**.

“The Many Working Lives of Robert Romaine”

Ken Brown

The May PHS Talks presentation will be by Ken Brown, a recognized specialist in Peterborough Business History and long-time member of the Society. Through his extensive research on local sources, including local newspapers and corporate records, Ken has published definitive studies of Peterborough canoe companies and also local potteries. Our May speaker brings his insightful knowledge of business leaders and practices to an examination of the successful career of Robert Romaine, truly a businessman of many parts. A successful manufacturer of bricks, editor and publisher of the *Peterborough Review*, inventor of innovative farm machinery and, most famously, printer of the Romaine Map of Peterborough – an essential archival source for anyone studying Peterborough’s history. Ken’s talk promises to be an informative and entertaining exploration of this important Peterborough figure.



To be posted on YouTube Channel, 18 May 2021

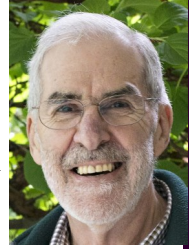
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQvUNc56VBwk9xVqN_Lqnvvg

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



At the end of my third and final year as President of the Peterborough Historical Society, this will be my last note in the *Bulletin* in this space. I look forward, however, to contributing in other ways, not only to this newsletter, but to other projects that the PHS undertakes to carry on the important conversation about our community's past and its relevance for the present.

For a year, the impact of COVID-19 has understandably overshadowed everything and likely will continue to do so for many more months. In the *Bulletin*, we have kept members informed of the challenges that COVID-19 has posed for the PHS and Hutchison House Museum. We have also expressed our gratitude and praise for the financial backstops that all levels of government provided to support the heritage sector by ensuring the continuation of operating grants, introducing wage subsidies and providing emergency assistance in face of lost revenues. These made possible our measures to adapt, especially to develop virtual and hybrid programming and events that maintain our service to the community. We have recognized tirelessly the essential support, financial and other, that members, donors and volunteers have provided throughout. And, in the crucial operation of Hutchison House Museum, we have recorded that none of this could have occurred without the outstanding and energetic work of Erin Panepinto and the band of committed volunteers.

We have also kept you informed in the *Bulletin* of the ongoing implementation of the Strategic Plan. The pandemic has slowed but not stopped the schedule of tasks. The new PHS/Hutchison House Museum website will launch this spring, the revision of other policies and practices are near completion and planning to expand our community engagement is under way.

As I step down from the position of President, I must thank all those who have supported me and worked so diligently to further our collective enterprise. My colleagues on the Board of Directors have been a pleasure to work with. Diane Ostrom, our Bookkeeper and Administrative Assistant, has kept us in order while navigating the twists and turns of the past year's disrupted routines. Our volunteers have continued to provide excellent PHS programs for the community. And again, I am profoundly grateful to Gale Fewings, Erin Panepinto and all the volunteers who produced, and continue to produce, the excellent programs of Hutchison House Museum.

Finally, I give a special thanks to Bob Taylor-Vaisey who will assume the presidency in the year ahead. As Vice-President on the Board of Directors, Bob has led key reviews and revisions of the PHS By-laws, policies and procedures that are an essential periodic undertaking of any organization. I am looking forward with enthusiasm to working with Bob and our newly-elected Board of Directors to preserve and promote the community's heritage.

Report on PHS AGM

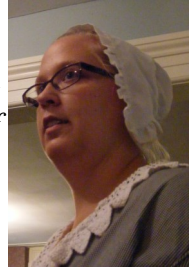
The PHS Annual General Meeting took place virtually by Zoom on 20 April. The members elected the following nominees for Director: Jodi Aoki; Linda Chandler; James Cullingham; Peter Eatson; Deborah Keay; Lou MacLellan; Michael Peterman; Dale Standen; Bob Taylor-Vaisey.

The Trustees of Hutchison House Trust Funds appointed are: Dennis Carter-Edwards; Peter Darling; Marilyn MacNaughton; Dale Standen.

The several reports received and approved by the members at the AGM are posted on the PHS website: <http://www.peterboroughhistoricalsociety.ca/events.php>. Following the AGM, the Honourable Jeff Leal addressed the members on the subject, "The State of Politics in Ontario and Canada." A summary of the talk is printed in this *Bulletin* and a recording of it will be posted shortly on the Hutchison House YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQvUNc56VBwk9xVqN_Lqnyg

Hutchison House Report

Erin Panepinto



“A very beautiful plant of the lily tribe abounds both in our woods and clearings; for want of a better name, I call it the Douro Lily, though it is widely spread over a great portion of the continent. The Americans term the white and red varieties of this species, the “white” and “red death.” The flower is either deep red, or of a dazzling white...”

(Catharine Parr Traill, *The Backwoods of Canada*)

Does anyone have a guess which abundant native spring plant Catharine names the ‘Douro Lily?’ It is the trillium! There are more than 39 varieties of trilliums in North America and another 11 across Asia. The most common to Ontario (and the ones that Catharine describes) are *Trillium erectum* (red, and known as the death flower) and *Trillium grandiflorum* (or the Great White Trillium). While trilliums are found in all ten provinces, they are most common in Quebec, Ontario and Nova Scotia. Trilliums are myrmecochorous, which mean that their seeds are dispersed by ants. The plants are very sensitive and easily damaged and, because of this, several of the subspecies are threatened or endangered. In Michigan, Minnesota and New York, it is illegal to pick them. Several species are protected in Ontario, as well, both because they are endangered, and also because one is the provincial emblem. The Great White Lily is found on the Ontario provincial flag as well as on government publications.

Some species of trillium were used traditionally as uterine stimulants which is where they got the nickname of “birthroot.” It was believed that an astringent tonic made from the root was useful in controlling bleeding. In later years, the white trillium would be included in Catharine Parr Traill’s *Canadian Wildflowers* and described thusly:

“In deep ravines, on rocky islets, the bright snow white blossoms of the Trilliums greet the eye and court the hand to pluck them. The old people in this part of the Province call them by the familiar name of Lily... In Nova Scotia they are called Moose-flowers, probably from being abundant in the haunts of Moose-deer. In some of the New England States the Trilliums, white and red, are known as the Death-flower, but of the origin of so ominous a name we have no record... The white fleshy tuberous root is much used by the American School of Medicine in various diseases, also by the Indian [First Nations] herb doctors.”

As April fades into May, while out on your drives and walks in the country, watch for the emblematic white flower; it is one of the early signs that summer is not far away.

Hutchison House Museum continues to be closed to the public in accordance with provincial lockdown restrictions. Please continue to consult our website or follow us on social media for the latest updates.

Painting by Agnes Fitzgibbon

Catharine Parr Traill, *Canadian Wildflowers*



Follow-up to a question posed in the April issue of the PHS *Bulletin*

Robert Ganton Clarke posed a question about a gas station in Peterborough in the 1950 era in his article, “The Great Corner Gas Controversy,” published in the *Bulletin* last month. Many thanks to Dr. Terry Hawkins and others who responded with information about the gas station. Dr. Hawkins wrote as follows:

“The gas station which you seek in your recent PHS article is Snowden’s White Rose. It was located on the southeast corner of Parkhill and George.”

PHS Announces Heritage Awards for 2019-2020

The Thomas H.B. and Christine Symons Heritage Award recognizes an outstanding one-time or ongoing contribution to local, regional, provincial, national or international heritage causes. This is the inaugural award of what will be a prestigious, annual recognition of exceptional contributions to heritage broadly conceived. Professor Thomas Symons, who died at the beginning of this year, was founding President of Trent University and Honorary President of the Peterborough Historical Society. Tom and Christine Symons shared a love for heritage and an understanding of its importance, which is exemplified by the stewardship of their home in Peterborough, Marchbanks, a designated heritage property.

The inaugural award is presented to **Jean Murray Cole**. Few individuals in any community contribute consistently over more than half a century as Jean Murray Cole has contributed to history and heritage in Peterborough City, County and beyond. From her arrival in Peterborough in 1966, Jean has been a leader in the Peterborough Historical Society on the Board of Directors, as President and as frontline volunteer. She was a core agent in the restoration of Hutchison House and its establishment as a museum and served on the Boards of other area museums: Christ Church Community Museum (Lakefield), Lang Pioneer Village and Canadian Canoe Museum. She has won numerous municipal and provincial awards for her volunteer service, mostly in the heritage field. Jean has without doubt been a driving force, and frequently the principal one, behind several notable heritage projects in the area. The *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Peterborough County 1825-1875*, which Jean and her husband and General Editor, Alf, published, is a landmark contribution to the recorded history of Peterborough. It won three prestigious national and provincial awards. Jean has published more than a dozen works on local and related history. For this remarkable lifetime contribution to Peterborough’s heritage, Jean Murray Cole is a worthy candidate for the first Thomas H.B. and Christine Symons Heritage Award.



Christine Symons with the Thomas H.B. and Christine Symons Heritage Plaque



Jean Murray Cole

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 award is presented to **Matthew Seaby** in recognition of his development and coordination of an exhibit celebrating the rich history of the Head of the Trent rowing regatta, celebrating the regatta's 50th anniversary, to be mounted annually during future Head of the Trent celebrations.

The F.H. Dobbin Award recognizes the publication of a major work, either fiction or non-fiction, that focuses on Peterborough's past. This year the award is presented to two nominees:



Robert Ganton Clarke in recognition of his published article in *Ontario History*, "In Search of George Scott: Jack of All Trades, Motion Picture Pioneer, World Explorer," an original and valuable contribution to the history of the early development of the motion picture business in Peterborough and beyond.



Peter McConkey in recognition of his extensive collection of writings and collaborative works over six decades on the history of the Peterborough area, based on solid genealogical research and illuminating an array of migrants to Peterborough of different origins.



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PHS AGM: Summary of Keynote Speaker Presentation “The State of Politics in Ontario and Canada”

The Honourable Jeff Leal was the keynote speaker at the recent PHS Annual General Meeting. With more than thirty years of public service as an elected official, first as a City Councillor (1985-2003) and then as a MPP (2003-2018), he offered reflections on his lengthy career and the state of politics today. Jeff attributed his interest in politics to a meeting as a young cub scout in 1968 with the former Prime Minister, Lester Pearson, who was touring Peterborough where his father was a church minister. He researched Pearson's accomplishments and was struck by the progressive policies of the Liberal Government, such as Medicare, the Canada Pension Plan and co-operative internationalism. As a result, he became a lifelong Liberal.



Jeff cited key life experiences that shaped his approach to politics, including his reading difficulties as a young boy; these difficulties instilled in him an empathy for persons facing challenges and an understanding of the importance of government providing the necessary support to help individuals achieve their full potential. He mentioned the sound advice he received from fellow councillors Jack Doris and Glenn Pagett – to listen, to ask questions and to find out how things work before acting – as a key to his political success.

Jeff highlighted four major achievements in his career that contributed to Peterborough's progress: a new regional hospital, ongoing support for Trent University, the new Tech Centre at Fleming College and improvements to the Peterborough Airport. In his role as Ontario's Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, he worked on behalf of a key economic sector that employs some 800,000 people and contributes \$38.5 billion to the GDP. In this role, he was also involved in the U.S., Mexico and Canada trade negotiations and he described how the Trump administration's drive for trade concessions on agricultural products was driven by political considerations.

A trip to Sicily with son Braden on the 75th anniversary tour of World War II sites and to visit Commonwealth gravesites left a lasting impression; Jeff wishes that all students could have the opportunity to visit the gravesites of our veterans. As for reflections on politics today, Jeff expressed concern that social media platforms undermine the willingness to listen and strive for compromise and instead demonize opponents. President Dale Standen thanked the speaker for his years of public service and for being our keynote speaker.

Dennis Carter-Edwards

Congratulations to Jodi Aoki!

Trent University has awarded Jodi Aoki an Eminent Service Award for her outstanding work over 32 years in Trent University Archives! In addition to being a PHS Director and editor of the *Bulletin*, Jodi has contributed to preserving the history of the community and province by serving on the Archives Advisory Committee of the City of Peterborough and on the board of directors of the Archives Association of Ontario. The PHS is fortunate to have Jodi on our team. Thank you and congratulations Jodi!

