

# NEWS and views

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Simcoe County Historical Association

Vol. 39, No. 2

ISSN 0700-4427

## In this issue...

Our Fall Schedule .....	1
SCHA 2011 Meetings .....	1
President's Ponderings .....	2
Wasaga Under Siege .....	2-3
SCHA Executive .....	2
Huronian Historical Parks .....	4
Simcoe County Museum .....	4
SUMAC .....	5
Coming Events .....	6

Visit our Website

[www.simcoecountyhistory.ca](http://www.simcoecountyhistory.ca)



Preserving the Past,  
in the Present,  
for the Future.

## Our Fall Schedule

For those of you who were unable to attend our wonderful Annual General Meeting, you missed a great meal, an intriguing speaker, and the opportunity to meet our 2011 Andrew Hunter Prize winner, Alyssa Cyr. We are going to give you another chance to meet Alyssa. For our first meeting of the fall, Alyssa will present her paper, written for her course work at Laurentian at Georgian, Barrie campus. Her research of primary source newspapers brings a refreshing look at World War II from the perspective of the residents in Midland.

In October, you'll hear from me, your editor, as I'm joined by my daughter. We are researching some notable moments of the War of 1812 as well as some of the music of the time period. A little live harp music, a few recorded songs and some video clips you may not have seen, with some wartime storytelling will make up our evening.

In November, our first vice president, Mark Fisher, will bring a report on his research and publication regarding the Gowan papers. This long-term project will be described in full in the September issue of *News and Views*.

As the SCHA executive look to 2012, we are aware of a number of remarkable events taking place around the province, across the border, and closer to home in our own county. Starting with the wonderful Wasaga Under Siege weekend in July, plans over the next three years will have us all looking back to the years of 1812-14 and the impact those events had in our county.

Join us as we seek to partner with our member societies to bring a greater understanding of history during these bicentennial years. Lots of ideas are percolating around our board table. If you have some of your own, let us know!

### SCHA 2011 Schedule – Simcoe County Museum

**September 20** – Alyssa Cyr will present her Andrew Hunter Prize winning paper, *Midland Corvette Construction: More than Shipbuilding* – at the **Simcoe County Museum, Midhurst, at 7:30 p.m.**

**October 18** – Jill and Amy Hynes – The War of 1812: Historical Tidbits and Tunes – at the **Simcoe County Museum, Midhurst, at 7:30 p.m.**

**November 15** – Mark Fisher, SCHA First Vice President, on The Gowan Papers, published this fall – at the **Simcoe County Museum, Midhurst, at 7:30 p.m.**

## President's Ponderings

by Helen Coutts

As we all enjoy summer, when it doesn't rain, it's time to mark your fall calendars for our meeting plans for you. Check the front page and invite friends and neighbours to accompany you.

First we had a long enough dry spell that I couldn't dig out the weeds in the clay part of my garden, but then nature didn't get the rain turned to off for our church's garden tour on the weekend! It did cooperate the weekend before when my husband entertained 30+ women to an event in our backyard. (That explains the frantic weed removal). One of the evening's events was identifying various early implements and tools as teams. An out of County friend tells me she attended

a wonderful historical evening with a fashion show, artefacts and displays in South Simcoe, perhaps TecWeGwill Hall. Well Done!

My kitchen looks out to a field of wheat which is all in head and thriving, telling me it won't be long until harvest season is here. Strawberry time is here now with the other fruits never far behind.

An event the weekend of July 22, 23 & 24 titled "Wasaga Under Siege" could be a good introduction to the Celebrations of the War of 1812-14. A Mackinaw boat is to arrive at Nancy Island @ 1 p.m. on that Saturday. The next act for me will be our October meeting with the Hynes.

Again this summer we'll attend plays in various locations across the province and see some country as we go, planning a pilgrimage to New York City and Bermuda in early September.

My paternal family reunion, being held for the 75<sup>th</sup> time, is celebrating by meeting in Innisfil at the farm of the Kell's from about 1911 and before that belonging to my Grandma's family. Meanwhile my maternal family celebrate their 60<sup>th</sup> annual reunion, and the Coutts' will gather again at Springwater Park.

Congratulations again to our Andrew Hunter Award winner, Alyssa. It will be fun to hear her present in September at our open meeting. Enjoy your summer!

## Wasaga Under Siege - A War of 1812 Experience

Wasaga under Siege "A War of 1812 Experience" hosted by Nancy Island Historic Site and the Town of Wasaga Beach will feature authentic War of 1812 tactics, historical battles, marine assault landings, artillery, and much more. A professional public address announcer will narrate each battle event as a series of fictional and historical battle scenarios will be presented to the public over a three day period.



The Grand Encampment at Nancy Island Historic Site will feature over 400 re-enactors opening their living history

encampments to the public along with 19<sup>th</sup> century merchants, artisans, period cooking, musket and cannon demonstrations and period entertainment featuring Hardtack & Harmony, Freshwater Trade, Caber Toss, Washboard Hank, The Zoom Daddys, Dr. Quimby's Medicine Show, Laura Secord, Shaymus the Storyteller and Backroads. ...continued on page 3



*The SCHA acknowledges the financial support of the County of Simcoe and of the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Culture.*



## Simcoe County Historical Association Executive

Helen Coutts, President	721-0587 roheco@sympatico.ca
Mark Fisher, First Vice President	728-3825 mwfisher2@hotmail.com
Gord Harris, Treasurer	739-7649 gordon.harris@xplornet.com
Jill Hynes, Corresponding Secretary	739-6220 mark.jill@sympatico.ca
Ellen Millar, Recording Secretary	726-9300 ext. 1287 ellen.millar@simcoe.ca

For Membership Information, contact

Earl Elliott, Membership Chair 734-9808 earl.elliott@rogers.com

You are invited to submit photos and articles regarding your historical happenings in Simcoe County. Photos will be returned.

Mail to SCHA, Box 144, Barrie, ON L4M 4S9.

Deadline for the next issue is August 30, 2011

## Wasaga Under Siege - continued

According to Bonnie Smith of the Town of Wasaga Beach, "The sandy beach and the modern attractions that surround it have overshadowed Wasaga Beaches rich history for such a long time, that only a small percentage of visitors and residents actually know that a War of 1812 battle was fought here. Wasaga under Siege "A War of 1812 Experience" is an annual large scale re-enactment that will help bring to live this important historical event in Wasaga Beaches' history.

Bonnie also emphasized that "Battles and activities will no longer be restricted to the Historic Site of Nancy Island as all battle events will take place off the island in various beach park locations throughout Wasaga Beach. The battles taking place off Nancy Island will bring more awareness of our rich history to our visitors and residents as well as bringing more exposure and visitation to Nancy Island Historic Site itself."

As well, this year, a re-enactment of the Relief of Fort Mackinac in 1814 will take place on the Nottawasaga River from Edenvale, ON (Glengarry Landing) to the mouth of the Nottawasaga River (Nancy Island Historic Site). This 25-30 km River Run will begin on Friday, July 22 starting at 9:00am to 1:00pm from Edenvale to Jacks Lake then conclude on Saturday, July 23 starting at 9:00am to 1:00pm from Jacks Lake to Nancy Island.

The re-enactment of a portion of the Relief of Fort Mackinac, which took place from February to April 1814 is a wonderful addition to the list of activities taking place in 2011.

The Upper Nottawasaga River is basically the same way it looked like in 1814 and is a great opportunity for those hearty re-enactors to experience the environment and hardships soldiers and sailors experienced firsthand on this historical journey. This river excursion will not be a leisurely float down the

river as all participants will be expected to pull their weight on an oar, potentially cut paths through fallen trees and log jams and getting your feet wet as low fast running water may dictate guiding the boat by hand and feet.

The following is a schedule of the variety of battles will be waged:

### ***Skirmish in the Woods!***

Friday, July 22, 7:00pm – Fictional Battle

American scouting and foraging parties have been sent ashore for firewood and reconnaissance in search of any signs of British forces and the Schooner Nancy hidden up the Nottawasaga River. British pickets have already alerted Lt. Worsley of the American presence and re-enforcements have been sent out to stop the American advance and hopefully discovering the Nancy.

### ***The Americans have Landed!***

Saturday, July 23, 2:00pm – Fictional Battle

The Americans, unprepared for the previous evening battle, have re-grouped and landed with force as they come closer and closer to detecting H.M.S. Nancy. Once again Lt. Worsley and his small force will try and hold off the Americans and avoid detection. Will they succeed?

### ***Defending H.M.S. Nancy!***

Saturday, July 23, 7:00pm – Historical Battle

Having successfully staled the American advance hours earlier and believing that the Nancy's hiding place is still safe, Lt. Worsley was unaware that the tall masts of his ship had been spotted by American troops during the day battle and a full scale American assault was being planned to capture his ship. Lt. Worsley did all he could to defend her from the American onslaught. Badly outnumbered the Nancy was destroyed in battle, though its defenders escaped upstream to fight another day.

### ***Avenging the Nancy!***

Sunday, July 24, 2:00pm – Fictional Battle

The Americans, having obtained their objective in destroying the Nancy, have left behind two small ships and crew to guard the mouth of the Nottawasaga River. Lt. Worsley having re-supplied rowboats with goods and ammunition from an upstream depot must first clear the way for his rowboats to safely pass and re-supply besieged Fort Michilimackinac. Forcing the Americans to once again land and fight, Lt. Worsley will have the final taste of victory as British cold steel and Native support save the day!

If all this Siege activity makes you thirsty, the ladies and gentlemen of the Nancy Island Historic Site Grand Encampment are invited to take tea on Saturday, July 23 at 3:15 p.m. in the hospitality tent hosted by the ladies of the Incorporated Militia of Upper Canada. Please bring your own tea cup, plate, spoon and chair.

To satisfy the appetites of our guests, we shall be serving treats from the Georgian Period, baked by the finest camp followers of the Incorporated Militia of Upper Canada. The afternoon will also include a formal presentation on a selected topic.

If you would be attending, please send your compliments to Darlene Kingstone at [ilikebatman@gmail.com](mailto:ilikebatman@gmail.com) at your convenience. Children accompanied by an adult are also welcome to attend as well.

"There are few hours in life more agreeable than the hour dedicated to the ceremony known as afternoon tea." (Henry James)

Lastly, if the river and battle re-enactments are not entertainment enough, you can view the Redcoat Iron Man and Iron Woman contests on Sunday morning where you will see some unique talents, costumes and accomplishments!

Compiled using files from David Brunelle and [www.wasagaundersiege1812.com](http://www.wasagaundersiege1812.com)

## Huronian Historical Parks

by Bill Brodeur

Sainte-Marie among the Hurons and Discovery Harbour anticipate a strong Tourism season this year, and welcome visitors from Ontario, the rest of Canada, and around the world to the Southern Georgian Bay area. “Our historical attractions welcomed visitors from over 70 countries last year, and along with the diversity of our primary market, the Greater Toronto area, we’ve enhanced a number of visitor services”, said General Manager Jan Gray. “One example is the Audio Wand Tours, available in 12 languages that also improve accessibility for visitors with visual disabilities”, she noted.

New bilingual websites have been launched for both historic sites featuring easy navigation and many special features. Users will find informative and interactive sections including Plan Your Visit, Special Events, School Visits, and Group Visits. The websites also include fun children’s games, a Media Corner for journalists complete with Resource Kit, and a Flickr photo gallery with high quality images. Welcome messages in 12 languages will also stimulate visits to the attractions.

Many Special Events and Highlights are planned for both sites throughout

2011. A new feature exhibit is entitled “The Jesuits in North America: Celebrating 400 Years”.

The exhibit chronicles the Jesuits’ presence in North America including their arrival at Port Royal in Acadia 1611, the founding of Sainte-Marie among the Hurons in 1639, and the Jesuits’ continuing work as teachers and missionaries throughout the world.

Sainte-Marie celebrated National Aboriginal Day on June 21 featuring special free-flow programming for both school groups and the public, and the dynamic Aboriginal Festival Weekend ran June 25-26 showcasing First Nations drumming, singing, and dancing.

Franco-Ontarian Day on September 25 celebrates the Francophone community in Ontario, and the popular Thanksgiving Harvest Festival and Arts and Crafts Show and Sale returns to Sainte-Marie October 8-9. A “Top 100” event in Ontario for three years running, the spectacular “First Light” Christmas event at Sainte-Marie will be presented during the evenings of November 24-25-26.

Discovery Harbour will host a Citizenship Ceremony on July 12 and admission will be FREE that day! A special musical highlight called

“Ditties and Shanties” is planned for July 23 featuring presentations of historically themed music throughout the historic site. Métis Day Bo’jou Neejee returns August 6. Haunted Harbour, a fun and spooky outing for the entire family, expands to three evenings October 26-27-28 due to popular demand.

Both sites will offer enhanced family programming throughout the summer season. At Sainte-Marie, a fun new Scavenger Hunt activity will be introduced throughout the historic site. An expanded on-site music program is also planned, plus special French cooking and French Fairy Tales themed weekends on selected dates. Discovery Harbour will have a daily croquet activity, on-deck activities aboard the impressive historic replica ships H.M.S. Tecumseth and Bee, dockyard demonstrations including an all-new sawpit, sailor’s ropework, and 19<sup>th</sup> century cooking. New special displays focusing on historic gardens will be in the site’s North Visitor Centre.

Sainte-Marie among the Hurons and Discovery Harbour are open seven days per week to September 4. For information call (705) 526-7838 or visit their websites at [www.hhp.on.ca](http://www.hhp.on.ca)

## Simcoe County Museum Events

Threadworks, a special project of Ontario Network of Needleworkers, is mounted every three years and circulates to museums and galleries throughout Ontario. It showcases exceptional and creative needlework by artists from across Canada.

The theme is “Trees” and offers interpretive works of the highest technical and artistic quality. The exhibition runs until August 6 at the museum.

On August 28, the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Savour Simcoe Celebrating our Heritage, Agriculture and Regional Cuisine event will once again be celebrated on the beautiful outdoor grounds of the Simcoe County Museum.

Tickets are \$55 and include all food and beverage tastings and admission to Simcoe County Museum.

Be sure to visit [www.simcoecountyfarmfresh.ca/savoursimcoe](http://www.simcoecountyfarmfresh.ca/savoursimcoe) for information about this year’s presenters.

Mark September 1<sup>st</sup> on your calendar and enjoy a memorable day of golf on a fabulous local golf course. This event is in support of the Simcoe County Museum and Long Term Care Facilities. The tournament will run from 11:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. Call 705-728-3721 ext. 1301 for more details and ticket prices.



## Sum of Arts and Culture

What is Sumac?

Sumac is a formal network of 15 museums, art galleries, archives, and historic sites in Simcoe County. While the group has worked together on an informal basis since 1996, the establishment of Sumac now unites the group formally in a spirit of future cooperation as it works to promote the cultural institutions of Simcoe County.

Who makes up the current Sumac membership?

The Sumac network includes the Simcoe County Museum, Huronia Museum, Penetanguishene Centennial Museum & Archives, Base Borden Museum, Collingwood Museum, Leacock Museum National Historic Site, Orillia Museum of Art and History, Ontario Provincial Police Museum, Coldwater Canadiana Museum, Museum on the Boyne, Simcoe County Archives, MacLaren Art Centre, Nancy Island Historic Site, Sainte-Marie among the Hurons, and Discovery Harbour.

Why a new name?

In December of 2009, a Strategic Marketing Plan was completed for the group. As the group moves forward, this marketing plan will be implemented over the next five years. It is also anticipated that the network will function as an advocate in representing its membership of 15 cultural institutions in Simcoe County. While an older moniker served the group in its early years, it was felt that a new brand and title would be beneficial for both the implementation of the Marketing Plan and the group's advocacy efforts.

What does Sumac mean?

The title Sumac is not an acronym, but was chosen for the following reasons:

- \* Sumac can be interpreted as the "Sum of Arts and Culture" in Simcoe County

- \* Red sumac is a heritage plant found throughout Simcoe County and nicely reflects the common cooperation across the network's members. The red plant species also works effectively as a supportive graphic to this title.

- \* The descriptive text "Simcoe County's Cultural Network" will also be used in association with the new title Sumac

How is Sumac funded?

The Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Ontario Ministry of Culture has provided initial seed money to complete the 5 Year Strategic Marketing Plan. Further funding for implementation of the Plan is supported by the Ontario Trillium Foundation on the condition that Sumac members also contribute financially to the project each year for the five year period. Members' contributions are based on a sliding scale depending on the size and marketing budget of the individual museum, art gallery, archives, or historic site.

How is Sumac governed?

Currently Sumac is managed by an internal Management Committee and has hired a part-time Project Manager to implement the Five Year Strategic Marketing Plan. Regular all-member meetings are also held on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

Sumac is currently applying for not-for-profit status in association with the Ontario Historical Society (OHS). When this is



Costumed staff from some of the represented sites added lots of colour to the recent launched of Sumac at the MacLaren Art Centre in Barrie event.

Pictured left to right: Bill Brodeur, Coordinator of Marketing and Media Relations for Sainte-Marie among the Hurons, Diana Coulson, Historical Interpreter from the Simcoe County Museum, and Garreth Hussey, Historical Interpreter from Nancy Island Historic Site.

granted, Sumac will move to a Board governance model and appoint a Board of Directors to manage the affairs of the organization, in compliance with all requirements relative to this model and those required by the OHS. It is anticipated this step will be completed by June 2011.

What is the status of Marketing Plan implementation?

Currently Sumac is working through the first key steps in the "Year 1" module of the marketing plan. These have included the development of the new name Sumac, its associated brand and graphic treatment, the community Media launch on May 3 at the MacLaren Art Centre in Barrie, and the launch of a website flashpage with links to membership web sites. Future tasks for 2011 will be the development of a full featured Sumac website that provides increased profile for each member plus additional special features, a new "Summer Fun" marketing initiative with the Simcoe County Board of Education, and selected advertising in key venues to draw attention to the Sumac network and its membership.

What other activities is Sumac currently involved in?

As Sumac formalizes it is anticipated that the group will be an effective voice and link for its membership relative to key tourism and cultural initiatives. Currently Sumac has had representation at the Provincial RTO7 input meetings for regional tourism marketing, has attended a War of 1812 Anniversary committee meeting for general information sharing, and monitors additional linkage and stakeholder opportunities.

Who is the primary contact person for Sumac?

Sumac currently maintains a part-time Project Manager to coordinate the implementation of its Five Year Marketing Plan, and to function as a communications liaison for the group and its internal Management committee. General inquiries can be directed to:

Donna Goodwin  
Project Manager, Sumac  
Email: donnagoodwin5@gmail.com

# COMING EVENTS

## *of our Member Societies*

---

### **Alliston Historical Society – contact Jackie Baillie**

705-435-5626 or  
cknowles@rogers.com

Meet at Museum on the Boyne,  
Fletcher Cres., Alliston 2:00 p.m.  
Second Wednesday of the month  
February - June & October -  
November.

---

### **Barrie Historical Association – contact Doug Hamilton**

Meet at Barrie City Hall – 7:30 p.m.  
www.barriehistorical.com

---

### **Collingwood District Historical Society – contact Joan Miller**

705-445-1119  
Meet at Leisure Time Club, 100  
Minnesota Street, Collingwood –  
7:00 p.m.  
www.historicallyspeakingcdhs.ca

---

### **Essa Historical Society – contact Olive Lee**

Meet at Thornton Library fourth  
Saturday of the month except July,  
Aug. & Dec. – 1:30 p.m.

---

### **Friends of Historic Fort Willow – contact Gord Hanson**

http://fortwillow.com

**Sept. 17** – Nine Mile Portage  
Heritage Festival

---

### **Genealogical Society – contact Linda Mitchell**

Meet at Church of Jesus Christ of  
Latter-Day Saints  
79 Ferris Lane, Barrie – 2:00 p.m.  
www.simcoebogs.com

**Sept. 10** – Melissa Ellis – Five  
Websites that will Jumpstart your  
Family History Research

**Oct. 15** – TBA

**Nov. 5** – Marian Press – Newspapers  
Online for Genealogists

---

### **Huron Museum Huron Ouendat Village – contact Jamie Hunter**

549 Little Lake Park Road, Midland  
– Call 526-2844  
www.huroniamuseum.com

---

### **Innisfil Historical Society – contact Donna Wice**

Meet at Knock Community Centre,  
10th SR at 9th Line, Innisfil – 2:00 p.m.  
www.innisfilhistorical.ca

---

### **Museum on the Boyne – contact Katie Huddleston-Naieb**

250 Fletcher Crescent in Riverdale  
Park, Alliston – Call 435-0167

---

### **Orillia Museum of Art and History – contact Linda Whiston**

30 Peter Street South, Orillia – Call  
326-2159 www.orilliamuseum.org

**to Aug. 6** – A Legacy Of Many  
Dimensions: Dr. James Angus, An  
Exhibition for an Educator, Historian,  
Rotarian, Arctic Collector

**Aug. 9-Oct. 29** – The Hidden Shilling:  
Arthur Shilling From Private Collections  
Opening Reception: Friday, August 12

**Aug. 20** – 7:00-11:00 p.m. – Starry Night  
Gallery & Studio Tour: A Magical  
Evening of Art

### **History Speaker Series – contact Dan Byers**

Meet at St. Paul's United Church, Peter  
St. and Coldwater Rd., Orillia – 7:30  
p.m.

---

### **Penetanguishene Centennial Museum and Archives – contact Nicole Jackson**

13 Burke St. at Beck Blvd.  
Call 549-2150  
www.pencenmuseum.com

**Sept. 24** – Settlers' Day honouring  
the St. Amant family

---

### **Simcoe County Museum – contact Kelley Swift-Jones**

1151 Highway 26, Midhurst –  
Call 728-3721

### **See page 4**

---

### **Stayner Heritage Society – contact Dorothy Millsap**

www.staynerheritagesociety.com  
705-428-2540

**July 9** – 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Heritage Day –  
12 noon-4 p.m. including the First  
Annual Heritage Car Show

---

### **Tecumseth & West Gwillimbury Historical Society – contact June Chambers**

Meet at Tec We Gwill Hall,  
Newton Robinson, 7:30 p.m. Call  
905-775-7144

---

### **Allandale Railway Historical Society - contact Mitchell Wilson**

One of the newest Historical Societies  
in Simcoe County is the Allandale  
Railway Historical Society.

This not-for-profit group formed in  
January of 2011 to encourage the  
preservation of the Barrie area's railway  
history and to promote appreciation for,  
and an understanding of, its contribution  
to the economic development of the  
City. The society is interested in playing  
a leadership role in assisting in the  
establishment of a railway museum to  
be located in old rail lands area, ideally  
in the restored Allandale Station.

Their president, Mitchell Wilson, states  
that the group is still setting up  
infrastructure. In June, the group hosted  
a tent at Celebrate Barrie, offering  
guided tours through out the day,  
information on the ongoing restoration  
of the train station, rail artifacts, photo  
boards, and a slide show.

For more information, visit  
www.allandalerailway.com