

NEWS and views

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Simcoe County Historical Association

Vol. 40, No. 4

ISSN 0700-4427

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Visit our Website

www.simcoecountyhistory.ca

SCHA

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

Two Talks in January

In Barrie, you can hear Willard Kinzie at the Barrie Historical Association meeting on Jan. 10; the details are provided on page 4. Mr. Kinzie is the first mayor of the City of Barrie (1957-1961). At 92 years young, he continues to work with the city through the Kempenfelt Kiwanis Club to establish an interpretive walk between the Southshore Centre and Minet's Point Road.

The idea for the trail has been in the works for over three years. It would be a tourism feature as well as a means of informing residents of Barrie about their own history. Topics such as the ice age, historical water levels, First Nations people and routes, the first settlement on the shores of Kempenfelt Bay and the railway could be featured. As well, early steam ships, the War of 1812, the history of Allandale, the development of the waterfront parks and trails may have their place on the walkway.

In Collingwood, historian, teacher and librarian Marie Cruickshank will present the story of Thomas Long. He and his fellow entrepreneurial brother, John, arrived in Collingwood in the 1850s. Their role in the development of Collingwood is especially noted for their donation of land for the library, a church and school. Join the Collingwood group on January 7; details are on page 4.

You can now celebrate Collingwood's heritage through the purchase of a handcrafted 8-piece miniatures set. It features the Terminals, Lighthouse, Town Hall, Station Museum, Tremont Hotel, St. Mary's Church, a Regency-styled home, and a model CSL-built lake freighter.

These unique pieces are produced by the woodworking shop of Community Living, Meaford. They can be purchased for \$25 at Clerkson's, 85 Hurontario St., or at regular meetings of the Collingwood and District Historical Society.

SCHA 2013 Schedule

March 14 – NOTE! Date and Location Change!

John Bacher, author of *Two Million Trees and Counting*, "From Desert to Forest: Edmund Zavitz, E.C. Drury and the Resurrection of Simcoe County" – for a joint meeting with Barrie Historical Association at **Barrie City Hall, Huronia Room, at 7:30 p.m.**

April 16 – TBA at the **Simcoe County Museum, Midhurst, at 7:30 p.m.**

May – Annual General Meeting - details in March issue of *News and Views*

President's Ponderings

by Helen Coutts

This is the quiet time in our Association, except for the Directors' meetings to plan the programs you enjoy in 2013. I'm happy to report that in 2012 our community fund supported the County Schools History competition, the restoration of the Gowan portrait and gave a donation to the Simcoe County Museum for allowing us to meet in their space. Come out to join the Barrie Historical for a joint meeting on Thursday, March 14 (NOTE DATE CHANGE) to hear John Bacher share "From Desert to Forest: Edmund Zavitz, E.C. Drury and the Resurrection of Simcoe County" as we celebrate a reforestation anniversary.

A new year is almost upon us. It is my hope that your Christmas and New Year

season gave joy as you saw relatives and ate too much as I did. Again the decorative lights were heartwarming, especially to those of us who find November-Early December gloomy. The couple of dustings of snow lightened things up but melted away and then redusted for Christmas but not enough to sled on the huge hill by our house. However, as I type, that Southern US storm is dumping enough snow to well cover us here east of Midhurst.

Farm wise the very dry summer was worrisome but the couple of rains we got here came at the right time to ensure a harvest of close to normal yield. Those rains were localized so many across Ontario were not as lucky. The drought took a toll in my garden with some long

time reliables suffering badly, including my raspberry canes. The flower heads I left in the flower beds for the birds are almost covered right now so who knows what spring will bring.

A unique visitor came to our yard on Christmas morning. The first family to arrive saw a great grey owl at the top of the bank huddled in the snow and just looking around while we watched and moved in enough to get a good picture before it flew across the road cut and swooped down to get breakfast from below the snow. We have had visits before but not for a lot of years. They venture south when food is scarce in their northern habitat.

Warden's Bonspiel

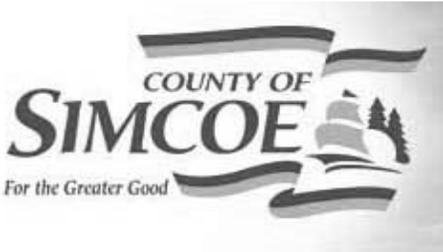
On Tuesday, February 12, Simcoe County Warden Cal Patterson will host a curling bonspiel in support of the fundraising campaign for Georgian Village in Penetanguishene. This new 'sixty-plus' adult lifestyle community is a unique opportunity that will enhance your health and vitality while providing a choice of housing and care options

The bonspiel will feature Simcoe County native and World Champion Curler, Glenn Howard.

The event will take place at the Penetanguishene Curling Club at 8 Owen Street. The day begins with continental breakfast and registration at 8 a.m., followed by lots of curling, 50/50 draws, silent auctions, and

complimentary lunch. An awards ceremony will complete the day at 5 p.m.

The cost is \$100 per participant, and you can register as an individual or a team. Contact Cheryl Maurice at 705-726-9300, ext. 1425 or cheryl.maurice@simcoe.ca.



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	rohenco@sympatico.ca
Mark Fisher, First Vice President	728-3825	mwfisher2@hotmail.com
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Amber Bagg, Corresponding Secretary	252-7094	amberbagg@hotmail.ca

Please submit photos and articles about your historical happenings in Simcoe County. Photos will be returned.

Email mark.jill@sympatico.ca or mail to SCHA, Box 144, Barrie, ON L4M 4S9.

For Membership Information, contact

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

Deadline for the next issue is February 28, 2013

The War of 1812: reminiscences and recollections

by Jill Hynes

The following notes were compiled by the author for a presentation to the SCHA in October, 2011. They will be published in full in the upcoming issues of this newsletter.

An interesting quote from Egerton Ryerson's book *The Loyalists of America and Their Times* states the following: "The circumstances under which the Loyalists were banished from the States and deprived of their property will largely account for the alienation of feeling which long existed between the Americans and Canadians, which gave intensity to the war of 1812-15."

Great change took place in Lower and Upper Canada between the end of the American Revolution and the beginning of the war of 1812, not just in population, but in the perspective of the residents.

A very long record exists, written by a cousin of Egerton Ryerson named Amelia Ryerse Harris. With her cousin's encouragement, she wrote an account of the lives of her parents and herself in Canada.

Her father, Samuel Ryerse fought for the Loyalists in the American War of Independence. Both he and his brother Joseph fought with the New Jersey Volunteers. During the war he became acquainted with Colonel John Simcoe, the British commander of the Queens Rangers, also a Loyalist unit.

After the acknowledgment of American Independence by England, the British troops were about to be disbanded, so the British Government offered them a free transport to New Brunswick, and a grant of land. When there, little choice was left to those who had sacrificed all for connection with the mother country. Amelia

writes that on her father's arrival in New Brunswick he obtained a lot of land in or near Fredericton, the present seat of government; and there he met her mother, who was a refugee also, and they were married.

Amelia states, after remaining there several years, his friends entreated him to return to New York, holding out great inducements if he would consent to do so. He accepted the offer of his friends and returned, but he soon discovered that the rancorous, bitter feelings which had arisen during the war were not extinct, and that it was too soon for a British subject to seek a home in the United States. My mother loved her native city, and might not have been induced again to leave it had it not been for domestic affliction. She brought from the healthy climate of New Brunswick four fine children, all of whom she buried in New York in eight weeks. She gave birth to four more; three of those had died also, and she felt sure if she stayed there she would lose the only remaining one. Therefore she readily consented to my father's proposal to come to Canada, where his old friend, General Simcoe, was at that time governor. In the summer of 1794 my father and a friend started for Canada. The journey was then a most formidable one, and before commencing it wills were made and farewells given, as if a return was more than doubtful.

On his arrival at Niagara he was warmly greeted by his old friend, General Simcoe, who advised him by all means to settle in Canada, holding out many inducements for him to do so. He promised my father a grant of 3,000 acres of land as a captain in the army, 1,200 as a settler, and that my

mother and each of her sons should have a grant of 1,200, and each of her daughters a grant of 600 acres.

On my father's arrival in the country he had been sworn in a justice of the peace for the London and Western districts, a very extensive jurisdiction over wild lands with few inhabitants; for those districts embraced all the lands between Lake Erie and Lake Huron, the Grand River, and Rivers Detroit and St. Clair. Courts were held at Sandwich, a distance of nearly two hundred miles, without roads, so that magistrates had to settle all disputes as they best could, perform all marriages, bury the dead, and prescribe for the sick.

About this time, 1799, a great number of old soldiers, who had served under and with my father, found their way to the Long Point Settlement. One of these soldiers had been taken prisoner with my father at Charleston, and when they were plundered of everything he managed to conceal a doubloon in his hair. With this he supplied my father's wants, who was wounded and suffering. My father now exchanged with him one of his choice lots, that he might be in the settlement and near a mill, and took his location, which was far back in the woods.

My uncle [Joseph Ryerson], and several other half-pay officers, came from New Brunswick to visit my father. The pleasure of seeing those loved and familiar faces, and again meeting those who had fought the same battles, shared the same dangers, and endured the same hardships, fatigues, and privations for seven long years, and had the same hopes and fears, and the bitter mortification of losing their cause,

War of 1812 continued

was indeed great. How many slumbering feelings such a reunion awakened! how many long tales of the past they used to tell, of both love and war! Those officers that came from New Brunswick to visit the country all returned, after a few years, as settlers.

The climate of Canada was much preferable, and as an agricultural country was very superior. The population was now becoming so great that the Government thought it necessary to have all the male population, between the ages of sixteen and sixty, enrolled in the Militia. My father was requested to organize a regiment, and to recommend those whom he thought, from their intelligence, good conduct, and former service, most entitled to commissions. He was appointed Lieutenant-Colonel of Militia and Lieutenant of the County, a situation that was afterwards done away with. This duty of selecting officers gave rise to the first ill-natured feelings that had been exhibited towards him in the settlement. Every man thought he ought to be a captain at the least, and was indignant that my father did not appreciate his merits. Some threatened to stone him, others, to shoot him. The more moderate declared they would not come to his mill, although there was no other within seventy miles.

They used to meet one day in the year for company exercise, and there was a general muster on the 4th of June, the King's birthday, for a general training. These early trainings presented a strange mixture. There were a few old officers, with their fine military bearing, with their guns and remains of old uniforms; and the old soldier, from his upright walk and

the way he handled his gun, could easily be distinguished, though clothed in home-spun and buckskin, with the coarse straw hat. The early settlers all had guns of some description, except the very juvenile members, who used to carry canes to represent guns. Those trainings used to be looked forward to with intense interest by all the boys of the neighbourhood, and afforded subjects of conversation for the ensuing year. It was no easy thing in that day to find a level piece of ground that was tolerably clear from stumps sufficiently large to serve for their general trainings.

However effective or ineffective, there was a minimal state of readiness among the residents of this British colony. According to Ryerson, though so few in number and modest in pretensions to their multitudinous and boasting invaders, they had the hearts of freemen and patriots, and trusted to the Divine blessing in the justness of their cause.

Twelve thousand pounds were granted by the Legislature, one moiety thereof for drilling and training the local militia, the other moiety for other purposes of the Militia Act. Twenty thousand pounds were granted to be employed for such services as the safety of the province and the exigency of the times might require. And a further sum of thirty thousand pounds currency, to be at the Governor's disposal in case of war between Great Britain and America.

These liberal supplies enabled the Government to meet the approaching crisis with confidence in the patriotism and support of the Provincial Legislature, and the whole mass of the Canadian population. In closing the session, the Governor

thanked the House for the labour they had bestowed upon the improvement of the militia system, and for the increased means thereby afforded him for the defence of the province. He also expressed his best thanks for the proofs he had received of their confidence in his administration, by the liberal provision they had made for the exigencies of the public service.

While the Americans were busily preparing for the campaign, we were not idle in Canada. On the 27th of July, 1812, General Brock proceeded to York and called a meeting of the Legislature, to which he delivered an animated and spirited address, concluding with the following remarkable words:

We are engaged in an awful and eventful contest. By unanimity and dispatch in our councils, and by vigour in our operations, we may teach the enemy this lesson, that a country defended by FREE MEN, enthusiastically devoted to the cause of their King and Constitution, cannot be conquered.

Allan MacLean, Speaker of the House of Commons said, *Remember, when you go forth to the combat, that you fight not for yourselves alone, but for the whole world. You are defeating the most formidable conspiracy against the civilization of man that was ever contrived; a conspiracy threatening greater barbarism and misery than followed the downfall of the Roman Empire—that now you have an opportunity of proving your attachment to the parent state, which contends for the relief of oppressed nations—the last pillar of true liberty, and the last refuge of oppressed humanity.*

to be continued...

Sir John A. Events

If you are unable to attend the annual Sir John A. birthday dinner, hosted by the Orillia Historical group on Sat January 11th with Richard Gwyn as guest speaker, don't worry. There are a few other ways to celebrate our illustrious first Prime Minister.

Everyone is invited to Sir John A. Macdonald's 198th birthday party! The festivities begin on January 11 at noon at his statute in City Park, Kingston, Ontario.

If indoor entertainments are more your style, you can attend the main stage production of SALON Theatre Company's classic hit musical comedy about a band of young musicians who encounter the ghosts of Sir John A. Macdonald and his first wife, Isabella, on a summer night in Cataragui Cemetery. A ghost story, a love story, a rollicking comedy, a tale of scandal and great achievement--not without tears. The story of Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada's founding prime minister, warts and all. This will take place January 9-12 at the Grand Theatre, Kingston.

You can find other plans for the future at www.SirJohnA2015.ca, a website dedicated to all things Sir John A. as we prepare for his 200th birthday celebration in two years' time. Who knows what the great member societies of Simcoe County will plan!

**Happy New Year
from the
SCHA!**

**Please use the enclosed
form to renew your
membership for 2013.**

The Andrew Hunter Award 2013

The Andrew Hunter Award is offered annually for historical research on Simcoe County, Ontario, written by an undergraduate student for a course in any university or college. In this eighth year of competition, we look forward to receiving many worthy entries for each of the two awards being offered.

Conditions: The entry shall be an essay between 3,000 and 5,000 words in length or a fourth year undergraduate thesis paper (no length restriction) on



Andrew Hunter 1863 - 1940

some aspect of the history of Simcoe County, Ontario, written in English or in French. The author must have been a part-time or full-time undergraduate student in a degree program at an accredited university or college at the time of writing. The essay must have been written to meet the requirement of an undergraduate credit course during the 2012-2013 academic year. The thesis paper must have been submitted for grading in the 2011-2012 academic year. Entries become the property of the Simcoe County Historical Association and may be published as part of an essay collection.

Submissions: Essay entries shall be postmarked by April 22, 2013 and undergraduate theses shall be postmarked by June 30, 2013. Submissions will not be returned to the contestants. Papers must be typed in Times New Roman 12 point font, double spaced, and should not bear the instructor's comments or grade. Three copies must be provided. A cover sheet must list the author's name, address, phone number, year of study, school affiliation and department, and the name of the instructor for whom the paper was written.

Entries should be sent to:

The Corresponding Secretary
Simcoe County Historical Association
P.O. Box 144
Barrie, ON L4M 4S9

Adjudication: Entries will be judged by a distinguished panel appointed by the Simcoe County Historical Association. The winners will be announced in early May 2013 with the presentation of the awards to take place at the Annual General Meeting of the Association.

Award: There will be two awards offered in Canadian funds, one for \$500 for the best undergraduate essay and one for \$500 for the best undergraduate thesis. The Simcoe County Historical Association may edit the winning entries for the purpose of publication.

The Simcoe County Historical Association is under no obligation to grant the awards. For more information, see www.simcoecountyhistory.ca

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 and October - November

Barrie Historical Association – contact Doug Hamilton

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

Jan. 10 – Willard Kinzie – Discover Barrie: New Interpretive Walkway

Mar. 14 – Joint Meeting with SCHA – see pg 1

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

Jan. 7 – Marie Cruickshank – Thomas Long: Collingwood's Forgotten Man

Feb. 4 – Jane Cooper Wilson – The History of Collingwood's Black Community

Mar. 4 – AGM – Beverly Westcott – David Williams: A Man for His Time

Essa Historical Society – contact Olive Lee

705-458-9971

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

fortwillow.com

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

Jan. 5 – Annual Show and Share

Feb. 2 – 30th Anniversary Celebration

Huron Museum Huron Ouendat Village – contact Jamie Hunter

549 Little Lake Park Road, Midland – 705-526-2844
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

Jan. 19 – Brian Baker – Photo Collection Highlights

Feb. 16 – Kathryn Schutsen from Innisfil Library – Our Stories

Feb. 18 – Family Day featuring Games of Yesteryear

Mar. 16 – Student presentation – Emily Carr

Museum on the Boyne – contact Katie Huddleston-Naieb

250 Fletcher Crescent in Riverdale Park, Alliston – 705-435-0167

Orillia History Speaker Series – contact Daniel Byers

Meet at St. Paul's United Church, Peter St. and Coldwater Rd., Orillia – 7:00 p.m.

Jan. 16 – Andy Monk – Bob Bartlet, Arctic Explorer of Renown

Feb. 20 – Bob Bowles – Pioneer Buildings (barns and homes)

Mar. 20 – Mark Fletcher, David Jefferies, and Jane Sorenson – OMAH Reborn: The Newly Renovated Sir Sam Steele Building, Past, Present, and Future

Orillia Museum of Art and History – contact Lynda Whiston

30 Peter Street South, Orillia – 705-326-2159

www.orilliamuseum.org

Closed until Spring for Renovations!

Penetanguishene Centennial Museum and Archives – contact Nicole Jackson

13 Burke St. at Beck Blvd.

Call 705-549-2150

www.pencenmuseum.com

Ramara Historical Society – contact Cathy Westcott

westcott.cathy963@gmail.com

Meet at Udney Community Centre, 2347 Concession Road 10 (east of Orillia)

7:00 p.m. Third Thursday of the month (except July and August)

Simcoe County Museum – contact Kelley Swift-Jones

1151 Highway 26, Midhurst – 705-728-3721 museum.simcoe.ca

Feb. 18 – Family Day and Heritage Day with special family activities indoors and out!

Mar. 9-17 – March Break Public Activities

Stayner Heritage Society – contact Dorothy Millsap

www.staynerheritagesociety.com
705-428-2540

Tecumseth & West Gwillimbury Historical Society – contact June Chambers

Meet at Tec We Gwill Hall, Newton Robinson, 7:30 p.m.

Third Monday of the month January-May and September-November Call 905-775-7144 or 905-936-4086

Jan. 21 – TBA