



Trafalgar Township Historical Society

"Documenting, celebrating and preserving the agricultural heritage of North Oakville"

Fall 2018 Newsletter



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Society News & Updates

November Guest Speaker

We are grateful to Jay Young for coming out to share an Archives of Ontario presentation called “Dear Sadie, Loves, Lives & Remembrances from WW1”. Jay’s stories included a love tale told through corresponding love letters of two young Canadians sent back and forth between the war front in France and the homefront in Toronto. This timely presentation came mere days before the centennial anniversary of the armistice and acted not only as a story of local history, but as a reminder that those who fought in the world wars each had families and loved ones who cared deeply for them, and each made individual sacrifices for our country’s freedom. You can see the whole story here: <http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/en/explore/online/ww1/when-harry-met-sadie.aspx>

Repairing the Fourteen Mile Creek Spillway Foundation, Dundas St., October 2018



Although the base of the Creek spillway was rebuilt only two years ago when the entire street was revamped, the intense, short downpours recently experienced required repairs and changes to be made to handle the water flowing out of the dam pond under Dundas Street. At our last "Archives Open" of 2018, we saw Gazzola Paving, Cambridge Concrete Pumping and the street Landscaper onsite. The Landscaper has also just redone the landscaping which divides the left turning lane of Dundas Street from eastbound traffic closer to Bronte Road. Unfortunately, I do not remember the name of the Landscaping company which is based in Hamilton and for which the person in the yellow vest works. Note by A. Choate Little.

1910 Report of the Palermo Sidewalk Commissioners

TTHS member Fred Vansickle brought us a 4 page "Special Report of Palermo Sidewalk Commissioners for 1910". To give an idea of the importance of sidewalk and road care before people and cars required better solutions, Albert (called Ab) Hughes recalled in an interview (a separate internet record in the TTHS collection) that most

village streets in the late 1800's were dusty, rutted and often muddy. Sidewalks, for example, in the Village of Oakville were plank. A water cart may have been paid to sprinkle the dirt roads when the dust was particularly bad. A major road may have had gravel laid. The work was paid for by area residents and done by area residents.

One of the earliest recorded sidewalk commissioner reports was reported in the Spring 2012 TTTHS newsletter. In 1852 the Trafalgar Township Council decided that "under By-Law 48 Palermo to commute half of their statute labour and apply amount for construction of sidewalks. Residents petitioned May 1852 and an extra levy was charged. Commissioners: H.M. Switzer, Joseph Simons, John Soules."

For 1883-1884, the Palermo Sidewalk Commission Report was given to Trafalgar Township by Commissioners M. McCrimmon and W.H. Hager.

The 4 page 1910 report shown in our new internet record is in 2 images (pages 1 and 4 shown in the main page image, pages 2 and 3 can be seen in the 2nd image.) It shows the names and amounts subscribed by local Palermo residents for "Teaming and Labor". The amount of "Cash Subscribed" is individually listed for each donor. Page 4 shows the financial record of "Cash Receipts" and "Expenditures".

The Palermo Sidewalk Commissioners in 1910 were W.A. Dearing, Jno. Carkriff, Henry Heeks was Secretary. Special Commissioners were Dr. Mowbray and Jno Marshall.

The subscribers show the community families at the time. The following local people were able to provide practical materials and skills: John Carkriff, William Pell and W.A. Dearing brought their teams and worked. Mr. Morden supplied 21 loads of sand. Mr. Paul Campbell supplied 55 loads of gravel.

The thrifty Committee were able to sell the old planks.

This Report was Miss Book's copy. She had given a cash donation for the 1910 work. In the 1901 Canada Census, she is listed as "Ettie Book", age 52, single, head of Household, born in Ontario, Methodist. She died in 1925. Her brother, Dr. James Burgess Book also donated under the pseudonym "A Friend". He died in 1916. Ettie is buried with many of the Book family in the Palermo Cemetery as they were active members of the Palermo Methodist Church community. Here is the link to this internet record: [Special Report of Palermo Sidewalk Commissioners for 1910](#). Note by A. Choate Little.

Autumn in Lion's Valley Park, October 10, 2018



Once the thriving community of Proudfoot's Hollow was located here. The building of the Great Western Railway, and the growing village of Oakville spelled doom for this pioneer settlement. Photo and article by Ross Wark.

Merton Pioneer Cemetery, October 20, 2018



Located on the North Service Road east of Bronte Road, Merton cemetery and the former Mount Pleasant Methodist Church were set out in 1880. The church closed in 1918 and was demolished in 1927. Today, the cemetery is maintained by the Town of Oakville. Some settlers in this village were Sheridans, Riggs, Speers, Breckons, Atkins and Joyces. Photo and article by Ross Wark.

Trafalgar Park Community Centre, September 22, 2018

This centre was officially opened on September 22, with hundreds of people in attendance throughout the day. Many amenities, including a seniors centre, an arena, a walking track Pine Rooms, and fitness centre add to the vitality of the Rebecca Street site. Photo and article by Ross Wark.



Doors Open Heritage Day, September 29, 2018

At this Saturday event, we attracted 64 people to our school house site located on Dundas Street in Palermo. Among our visitors were former pupils of S.S.#2 who attended in the early-mid 1950s.



From left to right: Dorothy (Tovell) Kingston, Paul Kingston, Murray Bullock, Jack Van Kestoren, Wayne Shillum, and Ken Fox. Photo and article by Ross Wark.

Oakville Family History Fair

Trafalgar Township Historical Society was well represented at this October 27th event. Anne Choate Little, Jane Watt, Margaret Wark, Ross Wark, and Wayne Shillum met many visitors throughout the day. We all connected with members of other history friendly groups represented at the Fair. Elise Cole is to be thanked for organizing this annual gather. Article by Ross Wark.

Recent Donations & Contributions

1854 Probate of Will of James Hopper

Fred Vansickle brought in the Probate of the Last Will and Testament of one of the early Dundas Road settlers in Trafalgar Township, James Hopper. James didn't marry and at the age of 81, died leaving his effects to his very good friend Jonathan Book who was also executor of his estate. The document has been kept in good condition by the Book and Vansickle families all these years.

James was born in England and came to the area of Palermo just as it was opened for settlement in 1806. Private James Hopper served with other Halton County men in the 2nd Regiment of York Militia. In 1813, he was working on Dundas Street. As per the work of Fred Blair and the historical information on The Lorne Scots Regiment, we know that he fought at St. Davids and Burlington Heights in 1814.

James was also one of the local Trafalgar Township men who responded to the 1817 Gourlay report, "Statistical Account of Upper Canada".

We also know that in 1818 he was one of a trio of men who purchased land for the Palermo cemetery.

In the 1825 Trafalgar Township Assessment, he is shown as having one person in his family (himself) and having 40 acres of Lot 32 Concession 1 North under cultivation. The other 60 acres of his lot was not cultivated.

Here is the link to our record of his will and information on James as well as his good friend, Jonathan Book: [Probate of Last Will and Testament of James Hopper, Trafalgar, 1854](#). Note by A. Choate Little.

Palermo Memories of Wayne Shillum

Our TTHS internet collection now has some of the photographs and memories from Wayne Shillum whose parents brought their family of three boys to the Back Concession near Palermo in 1950. They bought the 100 acre dairy farm from Fred Edwards, (now 3133 Burnhamthorpe Rd. West), and named their property Rosemar Farms.

Our Summer 2018 Newsletter first introduced the book Wayne wrote of life on the farm, in and around Palermo in the 1950's. It is: *The Farmboy in 1950's Palermo Ontario* by Wayne E. Shillum. Publisher: WES Marketing, January 2018. ISBN 1987978064, 9781987978063 (Available from Amazon.ca).

Wayne's book is full of family, farm, school stories, and the adventures of young lads. Here is a link to one of our records about digging a new well which will give you an idea of Wayne's book. He writes as if talking with



friends. Use this link to "search" for the other Shillum records in our collection: [Well Digging, Shillum Farm, 1953](#). To the left is a great photo of Wayne in his cowboy costume with his older brother, Bob. Note by A. Choate Little.

1895 Palermo Cheese and Butter Factory By-Laws, Rules and Regulations

Fred Vansickle has donated one of the copies made of the original charter for the By-Laws, Rules and Regulations of the Palermo Cheese and Butter Factory, started by Henry Heeks in 1895. Henry Heeks had emigrated to the Palermo area from England in 1883. As per the closest Census in 1891, he

was working as a farm labourer in the household of John and Jane Hope. The 1901 Census lists him as a butter maker in the employ and household of Laurence and Mary Hager. Transcribers of the handwriting in the different Census certainly make a hash of his name so searching is easiest if you simply search for "Henry" in Trafalgar Township - although even with that you might miss the 1921 listing which requires you to search for "Herny Hocks"!

Thanks to this charter as well as the "1900 Notice to the Patrons of the Palermo Creamery by Henry Heeks" also donated by Mr. Vansickle, the plaque honouring Henry for his tireless efforts to build the Palermo community hall, his involvement with many local theatre plays, his work on putting sidewalks into the village, and much more, we are slowly building a picture of the life of this energetic man.

Here is our internet record of the Cheese and Butter Factory charter:
[Palermo Cheese and Butter Factory By-Laws, Rules and Regulations, 1895](#)

As per the book, "The Garden of Canada ; Burlington, Oakville and District", c1902, compiled by Martha Craig and published by William Briggs, Toronto, Henry was a graduate of the Guelph Dairy school. He remodelled the Cheese and Butter Factory building in 1900 to be a creamery. In 1901, he sold the creamery to the City Dairy Company of Toronto, staying on as manager. He took prizes for his products at the Toronto Industrial Exhibition.

Fred, thank you very much for all the information you share with us. Note by A. Choate Little.

Newspaper Page of the Closing of S.S. #15, Merton

Ross Wark has donated a large newspaper page with photographs, "Merton School To Fall Victim of Progress". S.S. #15 closed on June 27, 1958. Not all the page has been reproduced in our internet record, but the record does include a photograph of teacher Miss A. T. Yorston, of the 1958 award winning choir and a photo of the school. The original paper page resides in the print archives of the Trafalgar Township Historical Society.

The school was first built in 1905. In 1937, the brick building was built on the north-east corner of the Middle Road and Highway 25 (now the Queen Elizabeth Way and Bronte Road). A highway from Toronto through Hamilton was started along the Lakeshore in 1914 but construction lagged because of the Great War. Traffic only increased and in 1931, construction on what was then known as the Queen Street Extension west of Toronto (along the Middle Road) began as a Depression-era relief project. The story of the Queen Elizabeth Way is very interesting so I will refer you to Wikipedia for the details: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen_Elizabeth_Way

In the 1950's, the Ontario Department of Highways started work to modernize the highway for its increased traffic. Highway 25 (now Bronte Road) was slated to have a new interchange. This is one of the primary reasons for closing and demolishing S.S. #15, Merton's Little Red School House.

In our internet record, I have combined the newspaper information with the memories given to the TTHS by Marilyn (Heslop) Chinnery to allow us a glimpse of the place of the school in the Merton community for so many years. Her memory of Miss Yorston is heartwarming.

Here is the link to our new record for your information: [Merton School To Fall Victim of "Progress", Closed June 1958](#). Note by A. Choate Little.

Locomotive Photography of Dick George

The Beatty Memorial Lecture Series of McGill University website now includes a photograph from our internet collection. Sir Edward Beatty was a McGill Chancellor, also president of the CPR during the 1920s and 1930s.

A few years ago, we had a visit from Margaret George, Stanley O'Connor and his niece, Laraine Smith, who brought us photographs of CPR locomotives taken by Dick George and Al Paterson. Margaret George, Dick's widow, grew up in Oakville. Dick George lived in Oakville and sometimes rode his bicycle to Hornby to take photos of the trains and engines. Laraine and Stanley are descended from Hugh O'Connor who had been stationmaster at Hornby. Dick George gave this particular photograph to Stanley O'Connor who has just died.

We still have some of the engine photograph books of the "CPR Hudsons" for sale. The black and white photos are of excellent quality and the information provided for each is of definite interest to any Canadian Pacific Railway locomotive fan.

Here is the photograph and the [link to the record in our TTHS internet collection](#).

Here is the link to McGill's Beatty Memorial Lecture Series website. Our photograph is at the 32 second mark in the 3 minute video in the centre of the main page,



[64 Years, 88 Speakers: History of the Beatty Memorial Lecture Series](#). There is a TTHS credit at the end of the video although I had requested that Mr. George receive the credit. Note by A. Choate Little.

TTHS Queries

Glenorchy Bridge(s) Question: Did the second Glenorchy bridge built in the 1980's use the original abutments, or was it built further down the slope?

Recently, someone has commented on our internet record, saying it was not built using the original abutments: [Potato Truck Accident at the Glenorchy Bridge, 1964](#).

Relying on information from local people, I wrote in the record: "The bridge at Glenorchy crossed an arm of the Sixteen Mile Creek at Fourth Line just below the Lower Baseline Rd., Halton County. This bridge had been built in about 1898 and stood until this accident. A second bridge was built on the same abutments in the mid 1980's (search our collection for other photographs of the Glenorchy bridges and school) but in 2001, as per the linked newspaper story, the crossing became a bicycle/pedestrian crossing only as the area is prone to flooding and the north bank road up to Lower Base Line is so very steep."

This is the differing opinion from a recent viewer of the record: "I don't think another bridge was built on these abutments in the 1980s. A friend and I used to drive across Sixteen Mile Creek there in the 90s and the crossing at that time was considerably further down the slope and essentially crossed at the creek level, over a cheaply-made bridge that was closed every winter and then finally for good around the time of the article you mention. I took a number of photos of that bridge it was in rough shape and it was replaced earlier this decade by a dedicated pedestrian bridge at the same spot. The abutments themselves were never anything but a suggestive mystery to me in all the years we went there, until finding these photos in more recent years."

Please add your answer to the Comments in the record, or contact a TTHS member, so we can "set the record straight". Thank you. Note by A. Choate Little.

Middle Road Bridge at Kerr Street

A mystery photograph in our internet collection has been identified as the bridge over the Sixteen Mile Creek at Kerr Street as it was before 1939. This was a bridge on the "Middle Road". Between 1931 and 1939, a depression relief project saw the old country lane widened to four lanes. Of course, now it is the Queen Elizabeth Way. A former Merton resident brought the mystery photograph to the TTHS. I posted the photo in our internet collection with a question asking about it, and recently Darryl Litchfield provided the answer. Here is a mini-photo of the bridge and link to our internet record: [King George Arch Bridge Over the Sixteen Mile Creek, Looking West to Kerr St., Oakville, Demolished 1930's](#).

We have a number of photographs in our internet collection that are connected with the "before" and "after" of the Queen Elizabeth Way, to which I've added links to some of the histories on the internet that describe the years of change. Wikipedia on the Middle Road, on the building of the Queen Elizabeth Way, and the website for "The King's Highway" are good sources of information.

This particular record has links to two postcards in Jane Watt's collection (which were posted by the Oakville Public Library). One is an excellent view of the bridge, a hand coloured photo, showing cattle grazing on the flats below. The other says "View From the Red Cross Tea Rooms" - and if you know anything about the Red Cross Tea Rooms, please tell us about them. Note by A. Choate Little.

Upcoming TTHS Events

Guest Speakers & Meetings

Location: Old Palermo Schoolhouse, 2431 Dundas Street West

All are welcome to attend our guest speaker evenings to learn more about Trafalgar through informative and interactive discussions. Light snacks and refreshments are provided. If you know anyone who might be interested in being a guest speaker in the future, please contact Michelle at michelle@tths.ca!

Date & Time	Activity
Wednesday, February 6, 2019 at 7:00pm	Guest Speaker Evening: David Hobden: Early Settlement of Halton County & Annual General Meeting
Wednesday, April 3, 2019 at 7:00pm	Guest Speaker Evening: TBD
Wednesday, June 5, 2019 at 7:00pm	Guest Speaker Evening: TBD
Saturday, Sept. 28, 2019 from 10:00am-4:00pm	Family Heritage Fair, Desk & Book Sale Heritage displays, activities and BBQ

Open Houses - Archives Research

Location: Old Palermo Schoolhouse, 2431 Dundas Street West from 1:30pm to 3:30pm

All are welcome in joining us in researching family and community histories. Do you have something to donate or contribute? Bring your precious documents and artifacts to one of our open houses and we would be happy to learn about your story! We can scan your documents and add them to our archives so that others can enjoy and engage in research. Join us from **1:30pm to 3:30pm:**

Friday, January 18, 2019

Friday, February 15, 2019

Friday, April 19, 2019

Friday, May 17, 2019

Friday, June 21, 2019

Friday, July 19, 2019

Friday, Aug. 16, 2019

Friday, Sept. 20, 2019

Friday, Oct. 18, 2019