

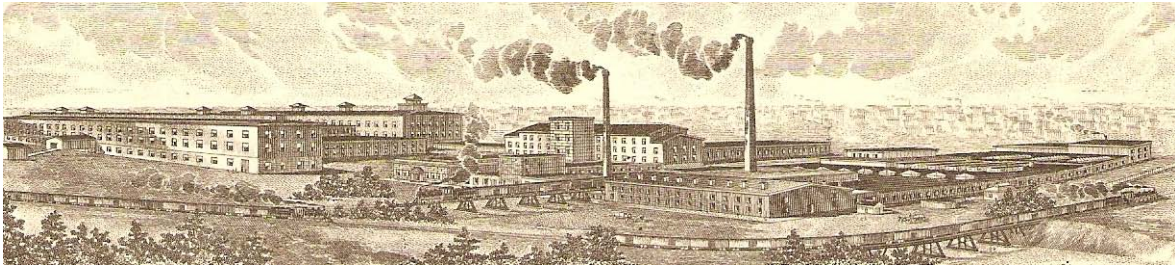


ESQUESING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 51, Georgetown, Ontario, Canada L7G 4T1
www.esquesinghistoricalsociety.ca

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BEARDMORE
BETTER LEATHERS SINCE 1844

In 1865, George Lissant Beardmore purchased the Acton tannery. Beardmore, born in 1818 at Islington, London, England, came to Canada at age 14 and had many adventures. In 1839 he returned home where he was joined by brother Joseph in a Canadian enterprise. They returned to Hamilton where they built a tannery. Joseph's health deteriorated, withdrawing from the business in 1844. He died in England in 1852.

George Beardmore braved the Canadian weather, health problems, shortage of capital and loneliness to build up a successful business. He married Elizabeth Dowker in 1848. Fire destroyed his stone tannery in 1850. He acquired a tannery at Grand River after this, while maintaining a leather goods store in Hamilton. Fire once again destroyed his tannery, so he moved to Guelph where John Harvey managed his third tannery. In 1854 he opened a Toronto leather goods store. The Guelph tannery served Beardmore until he closed it after buying the Acton premises.

The Acton tannery produced sole leather to supply the Hamilton and Toronto stores. About 1871, George Beardmore took his son, Walter (1849-1915) into business as a partner. Disaster once again struck in December 1872 when fire consumed the Acton tannery. Father and son raised capital to add to the \$17,000 insurance money to build a fine stone tannery at Acton.

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BEARDMORE & CO

TORONTO CANADA
TANNERS & EXPORTERS



OF

Hemlock and Oak Sole Leathers

Harness and Saddle Leathers

Case, Bag and Belt Leathers

Belting Butts and Lace Leathers

MANUFACTURERS OF

Half Soles and Top Lifts

Moulded Counters, Uppers, Leggings

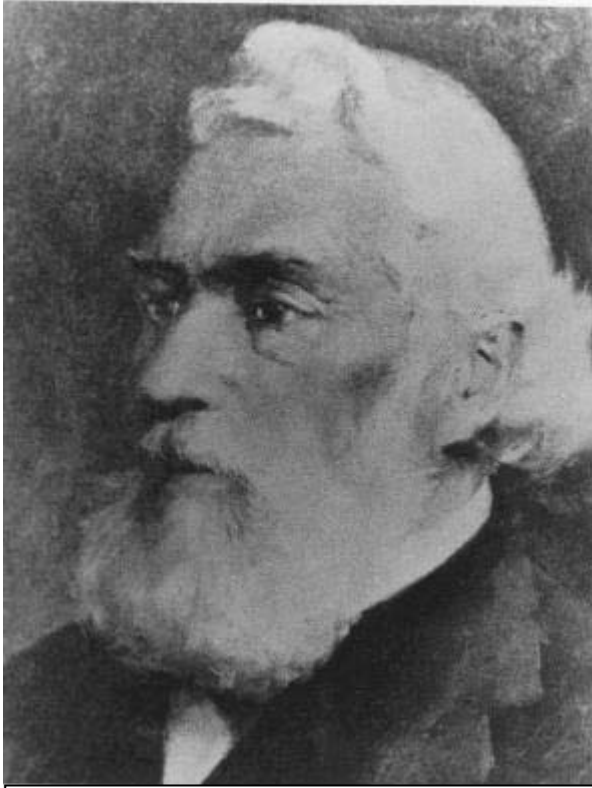
etc.

Established 1844

The Largest Tanners in the British Empire

Warehouses:
TORONTO
MONTREAL
QUEBEC
ACTON

Tanneries
ACTON
BRACEBRIDGE



George Lissant Beardmore EHS00611

This confidence in Acton expressed by the sturdy new tannery, was short-lived due to supply problems. Leather tanning at this time relied on hemlock bark. The bark contains 8 to 10 % tannin and when made into a solution, known as the liquor, it produces a firm solid piece of leather with a reddish colour. When Beardmore opened in Acton, local farmers would bring wagon loads of hemlock bark to the tannery to make between \$3 and \$4 per cord. By the time the Acton tannery was back under production, bark had to be brought in from Erin and Eramosa was costing \$8 a cord! It was decided to move to where the supply was “endless”.

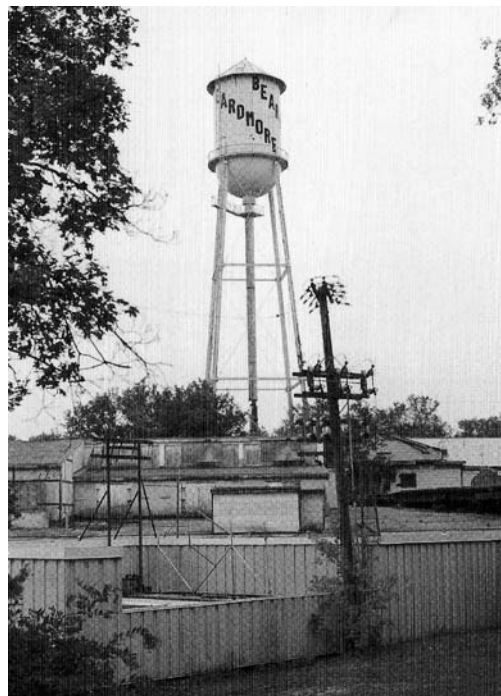
A large tannery was built at Bracebridge and by June 1877, Beardmore was looking for a tenant for the Acton buildings.

About 1882, Beardmore returned to Acton to produce cordovan leather. This is a soft fine grained leather, which could be used to make gloves. They took over the Storey Tannery until about 1887 when Beardmore regained the use of their original premises. The Storey tannery was abandoned and sat empty for many years, until it was razed and the materials used to build a garage.

Beardmore returned to Acton for a number of reasons. Firstly, the “endless supply” of hemlock in Muskoka began to decline. Communications between Toronto and Muskoka was very difficult and finally a substitute was found for hemlock bark. Quebracho extract and chestnut extract became available and also speeded up the tanning process. Hemlock supply was no longer an issue, so Beardmore decided to concentrate their efforts in Acton, eventually tearing down the Bracebridge plant in 1922-23.

-excerpt from *Acton: The History of Leathertown*

EHS 11695



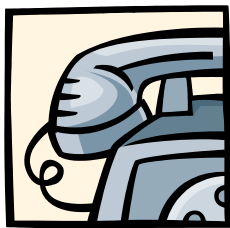


ESQUESING HISTORICAL SOCIETY SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2009

- Wed. 9 Sept. 2009 **Beardmore Tannery** - Well known local historian and author J. Mark Rowe will illustrate Acton's leathertown history and explore the company that generated its leather producing reputation.
KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Knox & Main St., Acton, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed. 14 Oct. 2009 **The Beauty of Dry Stone** – Matthew Ring is a Dry Stone Craftsman living and working in Fergus and surrounding areas. He will focus on the origins of the craft, why it is applicable today and the Canadian historical aspects. Few people understand the uniqueness of this craft and the purpose of his presentation is to enlighten and inform.
KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Main & Church St., Georgetown, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed. 11 Nov. 2009 **"A Brief History of the Great Lakes ... with some sightings of the River Palace"** – Long-time supporter of the EHS and local resident, Walter Lewis takes us on a dash through the history of the Great Lakes, which includes glimpses of the ships that carried settlers to the area and their grain to market. He explores this topic at this meeting jointly sponsored by the Halton Hills Public Libraries.
THE GALLERY, HALTON HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE, 9 Church St., Georgetown, 7:30 p.m.
- Dec. 2009 There will be no public meeting in December

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT NO CHARGE!

Refreshments served from 7:00 p.m.



Stephen Blake	905 877-8251	President
Karen Hunter	905 838-2109	Treasurer
Dawn Livingstone	905 877-6506	Secretary
Sherry Westfahl	905 873-7145	Past - President
J. Mark Rowe	905 877-9510	Archivist
Jan Raymond	905 877-9172	Publications
Marj Allan	905 877-9985	Membership
Cathy Hunt		Social

Bruce Historical Society will have their October luncheon meeting on 31 October, 2009 at Paisley Arena. The Guest speaker will be J. M. Rowe of the EHS on the topic of John Stewart, Esquesing rebel.

Society Notes

INTERNET CONNECTIONS

The Esquesing Historical Society has an official web site on the World Wide Web. <www.esquesinghistoricalsociety.ca>

Send your e-mail to mrowe6@sympatico.ca or dawn.livingstone@sympatico.ca

EHS NEWSLETTER

John Mark Rowe prepared this newsletter with assistance from Karen Hunter and Dawn Livingstone. Submissions welcome.

You may opt to receive your newsletter sent electronically to an e-mail address you provide.

MEMBERSHIP

Our 2009 memberships stand at 91. The individual membership rate is \$10. The family or institution rate is \$12. Cheques payable to the Society can be mailed to our post box. Membership runs until February. Marj Allen, membership secretary, will accept your 2009 fee at the meetings.

ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO

www.archives.gov.on.ca

The new facility is now open at York University. The address is:

The Archives of Ontario
134 Ian Macdonald Boulevard
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M7A 2C5

Telephone: 416-327-1600

ARCHIVES

The Limehouse Women's Institute Tweedsmuir histories were scanned this summer by our student Tracy Richardson. She also scanned the newsletters of the EHS. Both of these projects will be searchable and available on-line in the future.

The Georgetown Leader, a newspaper from the 1960s has been microfilmed and will be available at the Georgetown Library. Steve Blake coordinated the project.

We have had donations by Bob Hill, Neil Robinson and Lois Knight.

LOCAL HISTORIAN MARY MAXWELL

Peacefully, with her family at her side, on Friday August 14th, 2009 at Brampton Civic Hospital. Mary (nee Coupland), in her 95th year, loved wife of the late Canon James Maxwell. Loving mother of Laurie and Mary Jean and her husband George Adams. Proud grandmother of Kyle, Krystal and Joshua Brooks, Melissa Baldwin, Shane and Shawn Adams and great grandmother of Desiree and Paige Adams. Predeceased by her brothers Robert of Nova Scotia, Warwick of Norval and Roy of Hornby.

HALTON-PEEL OGS

Four Corners Branch Library, 65 Queen St., Brampton @ 2p.m.

Call Ann Logan at 905-845-7755

Sept 27 – **Ruth Burkholder**, professional genealogist and author - *Research in Colonial America* at **Oakville Public Library**

Oct 25 - **David Beasley**, author, *From Bloody Beginnings: Richard Beasley's Upper Canada*. Richard Beasley was the first Assembly representative for Halton and did much good work in the Assembly at **Oakville Public Library**

LIMEHOUSE KILN SOCIETY

Restoration Update - Vaulted brick fire boxes have been discovered during the course of the current restoration. They appear intact through to the chimney. The good news is that the kiln isn't rotten through but has this existing brick internal structure intact. Apparently, there was a solid veneer built in front of these openings, likely as part of an earlier decommissioning. Remnants of the iron frames for the doors were found as well.

See the photos at

www.limehousekilns.ca/events.htm

STREETSVILLE HIST. SOCIETY

PO box 598, Streetsville, ON L5M 2C1
Our General meetings are held, opposite the Leslie Log House, at the Specialty Care,

4350 Mississauga Rd. S. on the 2nd Thurs. of the month (Feb, Apr, Oct, Dec,) at 7:30
Contact: Ann Holmes Ph: (905) 826-3183
or e-mail abholmes@sympatico.ca

The Streetsville Historical Society, with sadness, informs of the passing of our President of twelve years, Mr. Norman Potts. Malcolm Byard has agreed to move up to the position of President.

Ann Holmes has accepted the position of 1st Vice Pres. & will continue as Secretary.

BRAMPTON HIST. SOCIETY

The Society meets at Heart Lake Presbyterian Church, 25 Ruth Ave. at 7:15

September 17 Jack Drew History of St Paul's Anglican Church, Brampton

October 20 Dave Harmsworth History of Harmsworth Paints

MILTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society meets at the Waldie Blacksmith Shop at 16 James Street at 8p.m. on the third Thursday of each month.

September 17th: "*The Halton Connection to the Nobel Prize for Mathematics*", with Frances Hoffman.

October 15th: "*Holland During World War Two*", with Bill Tielemans

NASAGIWEYA HIST. SOCIETY

The Nasagiweya Historical Society meets the second Tuesday of each month at Nassagaweya Presbyterian Church in Haltonville at 7 p.m. President Audrey Allison 905-854-2378

September 8: NHS BBQ, 6pm, home of Eli Daigle. Rain date Sept 9 (rain date to be called by 12noon). Call for directions and up-to-date info.

OAKVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

For an impressive list of walking tours and ghost tours of Oakville visit

www.oakvillehistory.org and click on EVENTS or phone 905-844-2695.

Oct 21 – "**The War of 1812**" with Lieutenant Colonel Robert & Mrs. Nichol Robert (in costume). @7:30 at Knox Presbyterian Church, 89 Dunn Street

TRAFALGAR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

September 26 - Family Heritage Day - Doors Open at Palermo Schoolhouse
<http://www.trafalgartownshiphistory.ca>

JOHN & GISELA SOMMER'S ART

Peel Art Gallery mounted a display of some of the donated works of EHS members John and Gisela Sommer during the summer:

John Sommer: A Lasting Gift

July 22 – Aug. 30

Sommer has long been an important force in the visual arts in Halton Region, Peel's nearest neighbour, and over the years has given the Art Gallery of Peel over 200 examples of contemporary printmaking, painting, sculpture and photography, many of which will be featured in this exhibition.

GEORGETOWN CITIZEN'S BAND 1931

The Walter Diggins in this photo would have been my father's father. He sired three children, William, Walter (my father) and Sue in London, England before leaving his wife and relocating in Canada, where he sired several more children, three of them undoubtedly being Omar, Waldo and Hugo,



whose names also feature here. My father migrated to Sydney, Australia as a young man and had three children, Digby(me), Diana and Tony. I would like to make contact with descendents of my grandfather in Canada or the US. William Walter Digby Diggins, (digbyruthd@optusnet.com.au)

HHH HONOURS NORMANDY

The unique architecture known as Victory Housing was commemorated on a weather-

proof storyboard unveiled by Heritage Halton Hills on 6th June 2009. Robert Stewart and his committee had the morning dedication begin with a Legion Colour Party that marched from the head of Normandy Blvd. in Georgetown to the cul-de-sac where the new retaining wall separates the street from Maple Avenue. The storyboard was unveiled by MP Mike Chong, Mayor Rick Bonnette and HHH Chairman Mark Rowe.



Heritage Halton Hills plans future commemoration for other Victory housing surveys in Acton and Georgetown.

ST. JOHN'S CELEBRATES 175 YEARS

On Sunday 7 June, the community of St. John's Anglican Church at Stewarttown held an open house to celebrate their 175 years of service to their community. They date their foundation from an existing record which credited the people of Esquesing Village (Stewarttown) with collecting £80 towards the building of a church.

The Canon Terry Deforest led an Evensong service to conclude the celebrations. Local Esquesing clergy participated in the service. The congregation included MP Mike Chong.

GLEN HOSTS DICKENS FESTIVAL

Come to the Glen for a murder mystery on Friday 24 September and a whole day of Victorian activities on Saturday 25th. A historical walking tour is planned for 10 am.

JAZZ AT THE MUSEUM

Enjoy a Sunday jazz afternoon at Halton Museum at 1:30 for \$20. Performances on Sept. 13, Oct. 11 and November 8th.



St. John's Anglican Church on Trafalgar Rd.

NEW LIFE FOR AMOURIES!

When the Colonel John R. Barber Armouries was opened in 1997, the Town of Halton Hills bought the former Armouries in Fair Grounds Park, Georgetown. They hoped to find a tenant for the building, but had no luck. In a last ditch effort a final appeal was made and Globe Theatre Productions stepped forward. They addressed Council in August and provided a viable business plan. Council deeded the building to the group. The land has always belonged to the municipality. The group hopes it will qualify for significant funding to make the 1866 building functional.

LIMEHOUSE GATHERING

The Limehouse Historical Reflections open house will be held on October 3rd from 1 to 4pm at Limehouse Memorial Hall. The historical era of focus this year will be the 1930s to the present. Everyone is welcome!

SCOTCH BLOCK BOOK LAUNCH

Milton Historical Society are pleased to announce the launch of their latest book - *Halton's Scotch Block The People and their stories* by Gloria Brown and Jim Dills. The book signing and launch take place at Boston Presbyterian Church on October 3rd from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Boston Church is on the Third Line, north of 5 Sideroad. The Scotch Block was the area settled by Scots immigrants. The area is now partially in the Town of Milton.

ACTON FREE PRESS

21 Sept 1899

LOOKS MUCH LIKE WAR - The "Powerful" and "Terrible" warships ordered to Africa with many men - Boers Preparing to Advance

CHURCHILL: Very successful services held. The preacher was Rev. A. F. Pollack of Speedside.

CREWSON'S CORNERS: Many went to Harvest Home at Churchill

BALLINAFAD: Civic holiday Tuesday - poor weather - sports in the afternoon - concert in the evening. The hall was crowded. Teacher Graham presided with dignity - the talent came from a distance, Acton SS Band and local talent in Miss Thompson, Miss Brown and Mr. Harry Shortill.

GEORGETOWN: Mr. Edward Hagyard, tenant of Carter farm up on York Road, was sued last week by an implement dealer...case dismissed with costs. Norval Methodists will have a Harvest Home on Monday 25th. Hop picking is over for the season. The band keeps up the weekly open air concerts and the citizens appreciate them. The Misses Godfrey are leaving town to take charge of a fancy goods and millinery business in Palmerston. The west abutment of the GTR stone bridge will be entirely renewed.

ACTON: Additional street lamps- lines to extended to cover outside of Corporation. Annual western excursions on GTR set for Sept 28-30th. Return before 16 October for \$3.20 to Port Huron and Detroit; \$7.30 to Grand Rapids; \$9.20 to Chicago.

Coffee Social given by Ladies Aid last Thursday

28 Sept 1899

GEORGETOWN: Concert will be given evening of Fair Day, Oct 4th at Town Hall under auspices of Dramatic Club. Mr. JohnL. Deluce has leased Mr. Fred W. Barber's factory and contemplates putting in machinery for the manufacture of veneer...

LIMEHOUSE: Last Sunday was children's Day at the Presbyterian Church. A meeting to improve the cemetery was called for Tuesday. A serious runaway occurred on the 7th line late Saturday night. Both occupants were thrown out and seriously cut about the face. Some of our village men hearing of it went to the rescue.

ACTON: **Acton Crescents win the championship again!** Defeated Galt to win Royal District .

Esquesing Fair at Georgetown next Thursday.

Halton Historical Society - local committee formed- Asa Hall, John Warren, James Matthews, D. Henderson, MP, Joshua Norrish, H.P. Moore, and A.T. Brown. Chapters formed in Milton, Oakville and Burlington.

3 October 1899

Halton County Show at Milton - excellent show, large attendance.

GEORGETOWN: Water in the reservoir has run down pretty low this last week. A citizen writes to the Herald that merchants are operating on Sunday in contravention of Lords Day Act. Big crowd yesterday at the Fair.

Craftsmen Wanted!

Do you know of any dry
stone craftsmen from
Esquesing? We're interested
in the living and the
deceased, so share their
names and achievements at
our meeting or by e-mailing
the EHS

The Beauty of Dry Stone

Introduction

Building with stone is not only beautiful, but also durable. Unlike railroad ties or wooden fences, which may rot and must be replaced every 10-15 years, stone does not deteriorate. Stone walls also offer a charm that no other material can equal, and are especially beautiful as part of flowerbeds and perennial gardens.

A "dry" stonewall means one without mortar holding the stones together. Because the individual stones are able to shift slightly in response to frost heave, there's no need to have a foundation below the frost line. Even so, building with stone requires a substantial commitment of time and effort. Yet the results are so satisfying it's easy for the project to become a minor "obsession." The following website will help you create a freestanding wall or a retaining wall that will beautify your property for as long as you own it.

www.easy2diy.com



10th Line, Esquesing – A dry stone wall backed up by a split rail fence. 2009 photo by J. M. Rowe

October Meeting

You may get the impression that beautiful dry stone walls can become a passion. The Esquesing Historical Society is pleased to welcome Matthew Ring of Fergus to our October meeting. His presentation is focused on the origins of the craft, why it is applicable today and the Canadian historical

aspects. Few people understand the uniqueness of this craft and the purpose of his presentation is to enlighten and inform. The EHS also hopes you will enlighten and inform with pictures and tales of dry stone craftsmen past and present from Esquesing. We will have a table for guests to display anything they wish to share. We hope to create a substantial file on the topic for our Archives.

Bringing a touch of the old world to the modern with Dry Stone walls and features.

The 2009 Canadian Dry Stone Wall Festival is on Friday, October 9, 2009 - Monday, October 12, 2009 at Grand Valley Ontario.

Neighbourhood Watch!

Please bring photographs of dry stone walls in your neighbourhood to the meeting. An accompanying history would be invaluable!



Ballinafad Dry Stone Walls

These dry stone walls are tagged on the website of the Dry Stone Wall Association of Canada (www.dswa.ca) as “wonderful old walls near Ballinafad, Ontario.” The Association would like to know about these walls – who built them and when. Can you find out for our October meeting?

The Beauty of Dry Stone Scotland

The Beauty of Dry Stone Scotland is now available for purchase; 25 dollars(+tax) and 5 dollars shipping and handling within North America. Please call for shipping outside of NA or for larger orders.

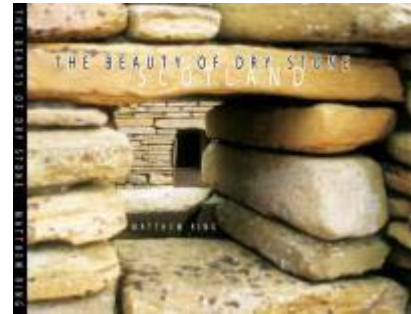
Dry Stone Wallers will find it of particular interest since it is a visual journey of where the craft we practice originated.

For those non-wallers, you will simply enjoy the wonderful imagery and history of the craft found within the 100 pages; most of which are full colour photographs.

Order directly through Matthew Ring at

Matthew Ring

Matthew Ring is a dry stone craftsman living and working in Fergus and surrounding areas. He also inspects new and older walls, recently the George Park Mill in Hilton Falls.



matthew.ring@gmail.com or call 416 835 2900. Pick-up is available within the Fergus/ Elora/ Kitchener/ Waterloo/ Guelph area which saves you the shipping!

<http://www.matthewring.ca/>



Mississauga Road, Caledon – 2009 photo by Steve Blake

