



Trafalgar Township Historical Society

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

Autumn 2015 Newsletter



Photo by Graham Paine, *Oakville Beaver*.

Suspected Arson Destroys Heritage Home

On September 27, 2015, the ["Oakhurst" Inglehart House at 1470 Bronte Road](#) was destroyed by fire. The vacant home was a listed property on the Town of Oakville's Heritage Register. As [reported by The Oakville Beaver](#), the fire was considered suspicious by police, and arson is suspected. Oakville Deputy Fire Chief Andy Glynn said the structure was too severely damaged to be saved, and heritage consultants will assess whether any of the structure can be salvaged.

Oakhurst was built in the late 1800s by William Cyrus Inglehart (1823-1917) and his second wife, Eleanor McLaren. From the TTHS' own [OurOntario record](#): "It is said that [Eleanor] designed "Oakhurst" and insisted on plenty of closets because she was tired of living in a log cabin with none."

TTHS Board of Directors

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Secretary: Michelle Knoll
Membership: Jane Watt
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Built Heritage Property Updates

❖ 3388 Burnhamthorpe Road West

In July, the TTHS learned from the Town of Oakville of a Notice for Intention to Demolish submitted for this small frame home, listed on the Heritage Register.

TTHS research showed that this property was transferred from the Crown to James McBride in 1808, and later divided amongst his children Archibald, Jane (McMichael), and Mary. James McBride is known to have fought in the War of 1812, became a justice of the peace, and served as an elder at the Palermo Episcopal Methodist Church (today Palermo United Church). Property assessment records mention a log cabin until 1827, when the home became a framed building; the current structure dates to the 1870s.

For detailed information about the property, take a look at [Heritage Oakville's August 12, 2015 report to the Town's Heritage Advisory Committee](#). Based on their recommendation, the property was removed from the Heritage Register by a motion at the September 8, 2015 Planning and Development Council meeting. As of publication, the house has not yet been demolished.



3388 Burnhamthorpe Road West, photo taken by Heritage Oakville



❖ 3269 Dundas Street West

In July, the TTHS was asked to review and comment on a Conservation Management Strategy developed for the property. The Society has worked to preserve the oldest house at this address, home to Lance Pocock, Farm Manager of Lazy Pat Farm. [The TTHS has posted several photographs of the gardens and signage at the property, along with information about the Barr and Piggott families.](#)



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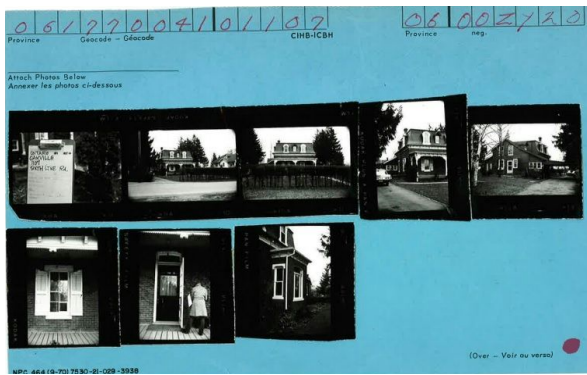
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TTHS Updates and Society News

- [Publisher Clive Law](#) recently contacted the TTTHS while researching Canadian military uniforms before 1914; through Clive we've learned that the uniform worn by Ernest Patterson (1874-1956) of Trafalgar [in this photo](#) may be that of the Lorne Scots' Peel, Dufferin and Halton Regiment, and likely the rank of Sergeant. [Visit Clive's online magazine, Military Artifact, for more.](#)

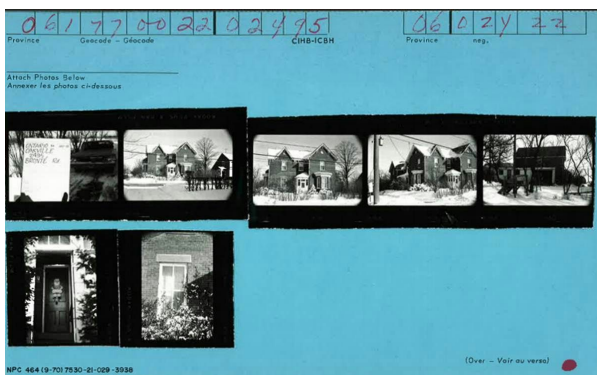
Parks Canada Takes Us Back to the 1970s!



In August, the TTTHS requested a search of the photographs contained in the Parks Canada Canadian Inventory of Heritage Buildings, for any photos from Trafalgar Township which we could then request at high resolution. **Parks Canada's response was staggering: TTTHS received a file containing multiple photographs from over 100 properties!**

Unprecedented in the world, in 1970 Parks Canada initiated a nationwide survey of buildings constructed before 1914. To lead the new Canadian Inventory of Historic Buildings (CIHB), Parks Canada hired architect Barbara Humphreys to manage the program.

In 1970, the survey program was launched at the national level. Employing students in the summer months to spread out across the country, photographs were taken and detailed description sheets were filled out to document selected towns and cities. By the mid-1970s, the CIHB inventory included 169,000 documented buildings across the country.



Included in the Inventory are homes on the following streets: Bronte Rd., Burloak Dr., Burnhamthorpe Rd. W., Cornwall Rd., Dundas St. W., Eighth Line, Fourth Line, Lakeshore Rd. E., Lower Baseline Rd., Maple Grove Dr., Morrison Rd., Ninth Line, North Service Rd., Royal Windsor Dr., Sheridan Garden Dr., Sixth Line, South Service Rd., Speers Rd., Third Line, Trafalgar Rd., Upper Middle Rd., and Winston Churchill Blvd.

If you're interested in seeing the images of Trafalgar homes in the Canada Inventory of Heritage Buildings, please contact TTTHS Secretary [Michelle Knoll](#).



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TTHS Reports: We've Been Busy!

Open Archives Day

From Ross Wark: "On **Friday June 19**, Jane Watt, Anne Choate Little and I worked the TTHS Open Archives Day. We welcomed **Ann and Doug McDougall** from Hamilton - We knew that they were coming. Ann is a member of the Fox and Smith families from Palermo. Gave us many images for our archives that Anne will catalogue. The McDougalls will photograph and scan other items for us - they will keep the originals."

Chris Raible @ TTTHS Saturday July 8, 2015

From Jane Watt: "We had 52 people attend the meeting - Chris was a great speaker. I tried to ask the folks who I didn't recognize where they heard about the meeting, the answers were as follows: 3 from Oakville Historical Society, 3 were friends of a TTTHS member, 3 from the Oakville Beaver, and 4 were from Halton Peel Branch of the OGS. We took in \$57.10 in donations and \$120.00 in memberships."

Donation to TTTHS Sept.-Aug. 2015

From Ross Wark and Anne Choate Little: "We were pleased to receive a print copy of the "memories" of **Mr. John Thorpe**, who came to Trafalgar Township in 1924 as a "home boy" from England. John was sent to the farm of William W. Featherstone on Fifth Line at Hornby but, in part because of illness, moved about a year later to a dairy farm on the Sydenham Road above Dundas owned by the Dyment family. The stories John has written in his "Memories" give us a glimpse into life on area farms, the loneliness and hard work of immigrants, their successes, and we thank donor Margaret Abrahams, John's great-niece, for sharing this with us."

Heritage Day Fall Fair

From Ross Wark: Our Doors Open event held at the school house on **Saturday, September 26th**, attracted seventy six people - most were first time visitors. Adults tried to identify vintage artifacts while children had fun sitting in early school desks and playing with antique games and toys; five large display panels highlighting the War of 1812 attracted attention. History books and rural photography images were for sale, and all enjoyed free indoor refreshments and barbecue. The following board members and volunteers welcomed visitors and fielded questions throughout the day: Syzan Talo, Michelle Knoll, Margaret Wark, Jessee Abrahams, Victoria Talo, Michael Reid, Jeff Knoll, Mario Testa, and Ross Wark. The TTTHS is indebted to Mr. David Helsel, of Cleveland Ohio, for providing us with a typed copy of a diary entitled 'Adventures of the American Four Among the Pine Stumps of Canada.'"



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TTHS Stories: The 1887 Diary of George Dennis

By Anne Choate Little

The April 2015 TTTHS Archives Open afternoon saw Donna Rae bring a very special collection to the TTTHS. While browsing in an antique store near Port Rowan, Ontario, a small red notebook caught her eye. "Canadian Diary 1887" in gold leaf on the cover, turned out to have daily diary notes, financial accounts and notable memoranda written by 39 year-old farmer, George Dennis of Palermo, Ontario.

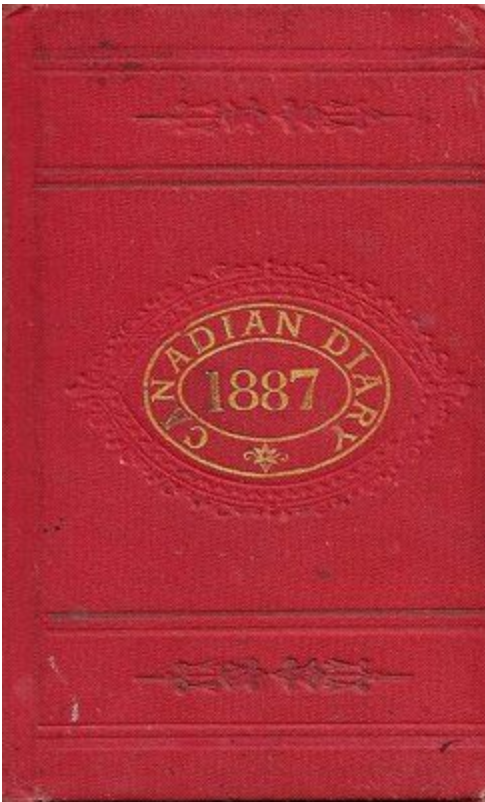
For \$4, Donna took on the project of learning about George Dennis. The result is a collection of genealogical records researched by Jane Watt, the diary itself, a photocopy of the diary to assist with reading it and notes by Donna. The information collected by Donna tells a story with happiness and tragedy for this family who left no direct descendents.

In 1887, George and his wife, Amelia (Patterson), were farming just northwest of the centre of Palermo on Con. 2 Lot 32 NDS, fronting on Lower Base Line. Their families had been in Halton County for almost 100 years; Amelia's parents were in Nelson Township at the time of their marriage in 1874, George's ancestors always near Palermo.

The daily diary entries by George state the facts of his work: the farm chores, taking care of the children (Walter and Olive) looking after the crops, being involved in meetings to build a church in Zimmerman, and much more. On February 23rd, a note is made about the federal election. In March, the family moves "down" to the "stone house". Amelia is not well and Dr. Buck visits frequently. George writes of neighbours, family and friends visiting, and frequent outings with people.

Donna was struck by the contrast in these entries with those on the last page in which George writes, "it has been a year of discouragement to me" and, his note in the "Memoranda" section on the next page, "Nov. 11th, Four men hanged in Chicago today."

Donna learned that George and Amelia had 3 children. But the oldest boy, George, age 11 in 1887, is not mentioned in the diary. When George takes the children to school, he names only





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TTHS Stories: The 1887 Diary of George Dennis, cont'd:

his 8 year-old son, Walter, and 7 year old daughter. Walter is the son who assists George with farm chores. Jane's research shows that Amelia and son George both die on January 23, 1888. When we learn this, George's note of December 31, 1887, "it has been a year of discouragement to me" is most poignant.

Jane's research also turned up George's death certificate which noted the cause of death as being kicked by a horse. George had handled and worked with horses all his life. He was 48 years old. Son Walter was listed as living on the same farm still in 1925. Daughter Edna Olive (called Olive) graduated as a nurse and died in Whitby, Ontario in 1925. All are buried in Palermo Cemetery.

The diary and collection are in the TTHS archives for your further information. Please also see [our digital record about the diary](#); this article on "[The Haymarket Square Incident \(May 4, 1886\)](#)" explains the note of four men being hanged in Chicago on November 11th, 1887.

Donna, Jane - your work with this diary has honoured George Dennis and his family. On behalf of the TTHS, thank you for bringing it to us.

Newly Added

to OurOntario by TTHS

The photograph at left shows the congregation of Palermo Methodist Church, circa 1890. View the full record [here](#).

This congregation was founded as a Methodist Church in 1812; the building was erected in 1867. The church celebrated its anniversary every October and it may be that this photograph was taken at the 1912, or 100th, anniversary. In 1925, this church became a part of the United Church of Canada.





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Queries

- ❖ Wanted: **Exact location on Kerr Street** of a Vanguard Standard Saloon car

- David Wood, from the [British Saloon Car Club of Canada](#), is interested in figuring out exactly where on Kerr Street the Vanguard Standard Saloon car in [this TTTHS digital record](#), was parked in the 1950s; he thinks the building in the background may be the one at Kerr and Washington Ave. David can be reached via email at bsccocwebguy@hotmail.com.



- ❖ Wanted: Information about "**Adams' Forest**"

- The TTTHS received an inquiry through the Town of Oakville from Betty Strong of the Bronte Historical Society, asking for information about a park in Oakville known as "Adams' Forest." A 2001 article by the Oakville Arts Council mentions there being land in Bronte, near Sovereign House, named after Sam Adams. Adams was a free Black who settled in Bronte in the 1850s, a blacksmith and inventor with a forge was on Belyea St. He later became a prominent landlord in Bronte with the profits from his blacksmith shop, and owned a farm north of the present-day Bronte Athletic Field. Any information on "Adams' Forest" should be sent to the [Bronte Historical Society](#).



- ❖ Wanted: Information the current owner of [Harvey Morris Switzer House](#)

- Wilfrid Morrison recently contact the TTTHS for information about the current ownership of the home at 2507 Dundas St. W., built by his great-grandfather Harvey Morris Switzer. Morrison provided the TTTHS with a copy of Switzer's obituary, but the Society is seeking further information about Switzer's business operation in Palermo. Any information can be sent to TTTHS Secretary [Michelle Knoll](#).



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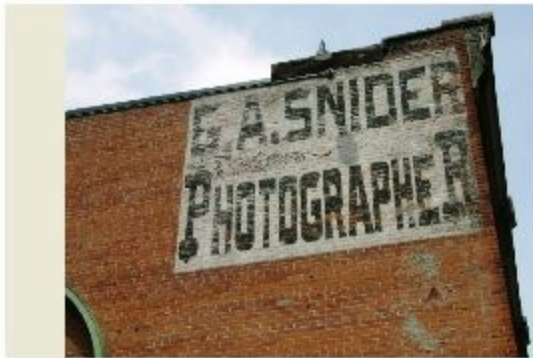
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TTHS Stories: Who Was George Albert Snider?

By Howard Simkover

Many readers will recognize the name "Snider," since this family's roots in Trafalgar Township go back over 200 years. The Sniders are connected through marriage to many other families in the region, e.g. Marlatt, McDuffe, Kenney, Biggar, Shain, Munn, Forster, Conover (to name just a few).



G.A. Snider Sign, Ottawa

But this particular story begins in downtown Ottawa, where in 2010 two small buildings were demolished on Bank St. Their removal revealed a 120 year old sign on the side of a neighbouring building: "G.A. Snider, Photographer." The sign had been hidden and protected from the elements for many decades.

The reappearance of the sign caused Howard Simkover of Ottawa to wonder about this long ago photographer...

George Albert Snider was born in the Township in July 1856. His paternal ancestors were United Empire Loyalists who came to Canada from the US around 1802. His paternal grandfather was David Snider, who was married to Eliza Marlatt. David's farm was on Lot No. 6, 2nd concession north of Dundas Street (old survey). George's father, Samuel Snider (married to Huldah Kenney), became a grain merchant who later worked as an Assessor for the City of Brantford. George had four siblings - two sisters and two brothers. His wife was Agnes Hunter Burnet, born in Montreal, but whose parents came from Scotland.

George lived and worked as a photographer in Brantford, Ottawa and Montreal. While in Ottawa from 1890-1901, George worked initially as a professional photographer, and then later for the life insurance industry. He put up that sign on the Bank St. building in 1892, where he had both his studio and his residence. George and his family moved to Montreal in 1902, where he worked for insurance companies for many more years, and died in 1940.

Click to view TTHS [photographs of the old Snider's School](#), information about the history of the land, family and settlement, and links to further information including the Simkover document.

You can also read/download Howard Simkover's document on the Snider family by simply clicking on these links in Google Drive: [GA Snider Document – Part 1](#), [GA Snider Document – Part 2](#). Questions or comments on the document will be welcomed by Howard, who can be reached at simkover@rogers.com.



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Upcoming Events

Wednesday Nov. 11, 2015

TTHS Meeting with speaker San

Location: Old Palermo Schoolhouse, 2431 Dundas Street West

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Note: The TTHS will now hold its regular meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of every other month!

Special Guest Speaker Shannon Kyle at our next meeting- see article below for more information!

Wednesday No. 18, 2015

Oakville Historical Society presents "**Museum under the Waves: The Hamilton & Scourge National Historic Site of Canada,**" featuring speaker Mike McAllister

Location: St. John's United Church, 262 Randall St., Oakville

Time: 7:30p p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Note: admission to this event is free, refreshments will be served.

Professor Shannon Kyles to Speak at Upcoming TTHS Meeting



Shannon Kyles has been teaching architecture for 35 years. Her entry into the field was through the then-new technology of Computer Aided Design (CAD). By 1999, Kyles started her first website - Ontarioarchitecture.com has now been in operation for 17 years. Her other web projects include lookuparchitecture.com, and a [specialty site on Regency-style cottage architecture](#) (2014). Kyles is also a regular guest on CBC's Fresh Air with Mary Ito.

Kyles will speak at the upcoming TTHS Meeting on "Restoration and Preservation" - this talk will focus on "the current state of restoration around the province. With historical societies, the ACO, CAHP, and various museums, where should we be going? Are there enough museums? What else can we do? This presentation is aimed at looking forward to where restoration should be in 20 years time, assuming that both the population of Ontario and the political climate will be greatly changed by then."

Kyles will present at the upcoming meeting of the TTHS on Wednesday November 11, from 7-9pm at the Old Palermo Schoolhouse (details above).



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TTHS at Work: John and George Weykamp

By Anne Choate Little

In a 2011 TTTHS newsletter, we asked if anyone had information on area artist John Weykamp (1894-1979). We are pleased to have added information about the creative, artistic Weykamp family to our archives after talking to Linda Weykamp and Mary (Weykamp) Leyen.

In 1950 or 1951, George Weykamp and his brother, Aloysius (Jack) came from Holland to Canada, buying a farm at 5th Line and Hwy 25, Milton. The young men worked hard to set up the farm for the arrival of their parents, John and Elizabeth (1902-77), with their sister, Mary (b. 1931), in 1953. Their Canadian future had promise but it was hard to leave Holland, their extended family, a beautiful house with big garden, orchards, bees, and Mary's good job.

John had always drawn, painted landscapes and still life, carved in wood (e.g. wooden chests), sculpted in clay. He and his sons were self-taught, outstanding artistic (and musical) talents. John was about 58 years old when he emigrated to join two of his seven sons, and he brought his artistic work. That first fall, he exhibited and won first prizes at the Milton Fall Fair. In Canada, he only ever exhibited at the Fair. People here heard of his work by word of mouth and they would stop in at the farm to view and buy.



The TTTHS can show you two paintings by J. Weykamp: "[Pulling Stone for Trafalgar Road](#)" (at left) courtesy of Mike and Lesley Stott, and another of an older woman with open books and needlework, set aside in our [2011 Newsletter](#) (on page 3).

Linda Weykamp, wife of Walter, is the daughter-in-law of George who founded the [Weykamp Landscaping](#) business, now run by the third generation of the family.

Linda says, "My father-in-law, George, would draw, carve wood, and create art sculptures during the spring, summer, and fall months (I do not think there is a street in all of South East Oakville that does not have a garden that he did not design, plant, clean-up, or prune at one time – he was very industrious and known throughout Oakville as the Dutch gardener/landscaper with the blue truck)."