



Trafalgar Township Historical Society

## September 2019 Newsletter

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#### **TTHS Board Members**

Chair: Michelle Knoll  
Secretary: Robert Cook  
Treasurer: Lara Rowles  
Archivist: Ross Wark  
Jane Watt  
Syzan Talo  
Gordon Kaitting

# Society News & Updates

## Oakville Family History Fair

Note by Ross Wark

This third annual event will take place on Saturday, October 26, 2019 at the Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre. Many historical societies, authors, vendors and genealogical societies will be represented. This day long event (10:00AM-4:00PM) will be of interest to anyone who enjoys the history of Oakville and surrounding area.

## Jordan Munn House Restored on its New Lot



The Jordan Munn house is an early 19th century brick house built in the Classic revival style. It was designed and built by Trafalgar pioneers with local materials. The house has a timber frame construction common for barns but unique for a home. Jordan Munn founded the former hamlet of Munns corners and the home was likely constructed by him. Jordan and his mother, Millicent (nee Post) operated the Munns Inn. The brick house was an addition to the original timber frame section of the house. The timber frame section unfortunately was not salvageable.

Information taken from a Town of Oakville August 2019 council report by Oakville Planning staff.

## **ABCD: Accidents, Blazes, Calamities, and Disasters from Historic Mississauga**

Note by A. Choate Little

We welcomed the always very interesting Matthew Wilkinson as our speaker on July 2, 2019. Matthew is Historian for Heritage Mississauga and his presentation was titled: ABCD: Accidents, Blazes, Calamities, and Disasters from Historic Mississauga.

Of course, there are no barriers between Halton and Peel County and when disaster strikes, the resulting explosions and fires can be heard and seen for miles. Emergency and health professionals race to assist neighbours regardless of municipality. People in Halton saw, heard and helped in more than a few of the Accidents Matthew described. TTHS member Doug Kirkwood told us that in 1970, he was Divisional Superintendent with the Halton-Peel St. John's Ambulance Brigade when Air Canada flight 621 crashed in Brampton on July 5th. In his words, "There were no survivors, but our main duty was to provide a First Aid service for the responders. We administered anti-tetanus shots to everyone, including ourselves, that were on the site. Sunburn was one of the main problems as the recovery crews spent the days looking down searching through the wreckage. We tied triangular bandages around their heads to protect the back of their necks (they looked like the Foreign Legion). Of course we handled all the other minor injuries and treated for dehydration.

At the time of the Mississauga train derailment and evacuation in November of 1979, I was the Superintendent of the Halton-Peel Corps of the St. John Ambulance Brigade. We assisted in the evacuation of the Mississauga, Queensway and Oakville Hospitals. In addition we provided First Aid service at a number of the evacuation shelters."

Although Matthew told us of two earlier train crashes, the 1979 derailment with its cars filled with chemicals and in particular, a car of chlorine, was the most dangerous. As a result of one of the earlier main line CPR Port Credit crashes, Mississauga had an emergency plan in place, and this ensured the success of the largest peacetime evacuation in Canada (and in North America until Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans).

Heritage Mississauga is currently gathering the stories of area people who were involved with the 1979 train derailment in Mississauga as an exhibit to commemorate the 40th anniversary of this event on November 10th. To participate in this project, [click here](#).

Blazes captured the terrible devastation of fires. The old villages of Derry West and the main street of Erindale were demolished by fire, in 1867 and 1919 respectively. I was interested to learn that the old farmhouse which serves as the clubhouse for the Derrydale golf course is the only remnant of Derry West. Streetsville saw several devastating fires, and the T.W. Hand Fireworks had several devastating fires in 1942 and 1943 when they were making was munitions on their business property on Cawthra Road. There was a fire in 1978 at the Texaco Refinery in Port Credit (this Mississauga Road location is presently being developed for residences).

The Catastrophes Matthew noted were early epidemics of cholera, diphtheria and in 1918-19, Spanish flu. These diseases know no borders and we can trace them in Halton as well, by correlating gravestone death dates.

The earliest recorded Disaster Matthew told us about, is shown on the 1806 Wilmot Survey map. Fallen trees along the Credit River are drawn as having fallen in the same direction. This indicates the impact of a 1791 hurricane. In view of this information, we also should look at the Halton 1806 Wilmot Survey for similar information.

Matthew mentioned that terrible flooding (and weather) occurred in 1875 with the Credit River and Port Credit hit hard. It is thought that a volcanic eruption in Iceland was behind this. In 1923 a "cyclone" touched down near Hornby and then travelled east into Peel County. In 1935, the Erindale dam broke, and in the living memory of a number of us, Hurricane Hazel occurred in 1954. 1969 saw a natural gas pipeline explode at the intersection of Airport and Derry Roads which resulted in the loss of many older Malton village buildings.

This brief recap of Matthew's presentation does not do justice to his storytelling ability, his enthusiasm and knowledge. Thank you, Matthew.

### **Township of Trafalgar Police Boys Band. Diary of August 1956 to January 1958.**

Note by Anne Choate Little

We have now uploaded the complete diary kept by Ted Waller and preserved for many years by his mother into our internet collection. Ted was a drummer in the Band from August 1956 to January 1958.

The diary includes newspaper articles and photograph clippings, Ted's handwritten notes about practising, events and band mates, gig setlists, gig dates and locations. The band played celebratory parades in the area as well as competing in Toronto and going to Niagara Falls and Buffalo, NY, and as far as Ohio.

Thanks to Ted and bandmate Walt Wilson, we now have quite a number of photographs and records in our internet collection.

The diary was digitized by Dave Hook, which is greatly appreciated. Thank you, Dave.

Here is the [link to the diary](#).

### **Victoria Park, Victoria Hall and Rink Postcard Revisited**

Note by R. Wark and A. Choate Little

Thanks to a request by Evie Campbell, Digital Heritage Assistant with the Oakville Public Library, we took another look at a postcard from the collection of Ross Wark that has long been in our internet collection. Our record had just the barest of information but we remembered an 1885 reference to skating in September in Oakville in the diary of visitors to the Hall Farm in Drumquin and checked out the reference. Ross quickly provided more information and we have improved our digital record of the postcard showing Victoria Hall and the public skating rink in Victoria Park, town of Oakville.



Victoria Park was located on the east side of Reynolds Street, bordered by Sheddon Avenue and Allan Street. In later years, it was a baseball park and presently, it holds tennis courts. The park name changed to Wallace Park



at some point, and at time of this writing in 2019, documents for consulting for changes to the area by the Town of Oakville can be found on the Town website.

This is our [Victoria Park digital record link](#).

The ice skating rink is on the left and Victoria Hall is the building on the right of the postcard. There was no artificial ice, of course. Victoria Hall was also used for plays and other social events.

The ice rink was new in 1920 as per the books listed below. The Trafalgar Township Historical Society has a diary which documents a group of people from Drumquin coming to skate in September 1885, so we know there was previously - if not still after the ice rink was installed - a roller rink in warm weather.

This postcard photograph could date to 1915 to 1935.

Further information about Victoria Park, the Hall and rink can be found in the books: Oakville and the Sixteen, and, Oakville; A Small Town 1900-1930 by Frances Robin Ahern.

Here is the link to our internet record of [the diary of "The American Four" visit to the Hall Farm, Drumquin in September 1885, and their excursion to skate in the town of Oakville](#).

## Commemorating Rural School Sections

Note and photo by Ross Wark

A cairn erected by the Drumquin Women's Institute in May of 1970, commemorates Trafalgar Township Schools closed when Percy Merry School opened in September of 1958. This school, located on Britannia Road, closed in June 2003.



## **Picnic in Lions Valley Park**

Note and photos by Ross Wark



**Knox Sixteen Presbyterian Church**

length of the park and back for a picnic lunch under the sheltered pavillion. After a box lunch, Mayor Rob Burton welcomed our special guest who enjoys visiting smaller communities for less formal occasions.

The Lions Club is to be thanked for setting in motion the park's founding in 1967. We thank members of the Knox Sixteen (founded in 1845) and the Rev. Patrick Gushue for hosting this event on such a beautiful summer day.

On Thursday, July 25th, Oakville members of several cultural, social, historical and conservation groups met with Elizabeth Dowdswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, for a picnic in the park, formerly known as Proudfoot's Hollow.

We gathered in Knox Presbyterian Church Sixteen for an informal meeting with the Lieutenant Governor at 10AM. She did a "walkabout" up and down the aisles shaking hands with those present.

At 10:30AM, an Oakville Transit bus transported us to the park down the hill, and tour guides from the town, Conservation Halton, and Lions Club members led us the



**The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, Mayor Burton and Guests**

## **Munn's United Church Celebrates 175 Years!**

Article written by Ross Wark with material provided by Gayle Redshaw (Fish)

On Sunday, June 2, 2019, members, former members, and friends of Munn's United joined together to celebrate this faith community's 175th anniversary.

Original church meetings were held at the Munn's family homestead in 1823. In 1844, this site of Munn's Methodist church was established. The present structure was built in 1898.

Activities began at 9:30AM with the laying of a floral wreath on the Munn family grave in the cemetery across Dundas Street from the church, followed by the dedication of a new Peace Garden.

The worship service was led by the church minister, Rev. Kate Young with the sermon delivered by her husband, the Rev. Neil Young. The choir and a youth Jazz Band provided the music.

A catered lunch followed the service. Many artifacts - from quilts to hand forged nails to oil lamps - provided a glimpse into the area's rural past.

Munn's United Church will be open during Doors Open on September 28th. Drop by for a tour of this historic building.

### **Milton Historical Society's September Historical Walking Tours**

MHS will host their second group of Historic Walking Tours in September, on Sunday afternoons starting at 2:00PM on 16 James St. You can register online at [www.miltonhistoricalsociety.ca](http://www.miltonhistoricalsociety.ca) (under "Activities" tab). Feel free to drop by the office or call 905-875-4156. There is a limited number for each tour so book now!

Cost: \$10 per person (cash at the door).

Sunday, Sept. 8th - Historic Victoria Park area.

Sunday, Sept. 15th - Historic Main St.

Sunday Sept. 22nd - Historic Mill & Victoria St. area.

Sunday Sept. 29th - Historic Martin St.

## **Recent Donations**

### **Dispatches From the Battle of Trafalgar, The Times, November 1805**

Note by A. Choate Little

Mr. J. Brazier has given the TTHS an original special supplement of The Times newspaper which contains the October and November naval dispatches of C. Collingwood, Vice-Admiral, sent first to the Admiralty Office of Great Britain. The Royal Navy's Commander-in-Chief was Vice-Admiral, Lord Viscount Nelson who commanded from the ship, Victory. The Victory led the weather column and the Royal Sovereign under Vice-Admiral Collingwood led the lee column against French and Spanish ships.

To protect the newspaper, which has been kept by the Brazier family for so many years, it will be kept by the TTHS in archival quality protectors and not put on lengthy display. Mr. Brazier also gave us a photocopy of the



dispatch pages which can be readily viewed. Bronte Historical Society also has an original – and indeed, it is thanks to Betty Strong that we now have a copy, too.

We have not made a copy of the newspaper pages for our internet collection as there are many authoritative websites for Nelson and the Battle of Trafalgar. In addition to [Wikipedia coverage](#), this website includes [a map of the ships sailing into battle](#). For information from the French, [this website](#) is interesting.

[This website](#) has a few of the dispatches typed out for you to read.

The land of Trafalgar Township, Halton County was purchased from the Mississauga First Nations in 1805 and the Township was created by the government of Upper Canada in 1806. The Township was named after Cape Trafalgar which was near the battle site, and new residents also often chose municipal names with a connection to Nelson and the battle.

### Early Churches Booklet Contribution

Note by Ross Wark

Recently, Jan Duff donated a booklet titled “Early Churches of Nassagaweya and Nelson Townships, Halton County”, compiled by Trudy Mann. Every early denomination is written up in detail. Similar congregations existed in Trafalgar Township as well.

## Upcoming TTHS Events

Dates and Times	Events
Friday, September 20, 2019 1:30–3:30pm	<b>Open House, Research, Reminisce</b>
Sat., September, 28, 2019 10:00am–4:00pm	<b>Family Heritage Fair, Desk &amp; Book Sale Heritage displays, activities. Sandwich lunch bags kindly provided by Viva Oakville Seniors Residence</b>
Tuesday, October 1, 2019 7:00pm	<b>Guest Speaker Evening: J.D.M Stewart: Speaking on his novel Being Prime Minister and will be selling autographed copies</b>
Friday, October 18, 2019 1:30–3:30pm	<b>Open House, Research, Reminisce</b>
Monday, November 11, 2019 11:00am	<b>Trafalgar Memorial Remembrance Day Service located on Oak Park Blvd., just South of Dundas</b>
Friday, November 15, 2019 1:30–3:30pm	<b>Open House, Research, Reminisce</b>



### **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.

### **Guest Speakers & Meetings**

**Location:** Old Palermo Schoolhouse, 2431 Dundas Street West

All are welcome to attend our guest speaker evenings to learn more about North Oakville, Trafalgar Township through informative and interactive discussions. Light snacks and refreshments are provided.

Have an idea for a guest speaker? Please contact Michelle at [michelle@tths.ca](mailto:michelle@tths.ca)!