



Hastings County Historical Society

**ANNUAL REPORT
2018**

Website: www.hastingshistory.ca
Twitter: @countyhastings

Facebook: @HastingsHistory
Instagram: (Coming Soon)

Report of the President

Richard Hughes

A vital goal of the Historical Society is to bring the great history and heritage of our area, from the shores of the Bay of Quinte to the far reaches of Hastings Highlands, to all of the people of Hastings County. I am confident that, in 2018, we have achieved this goal through the wide variety of programs that our wonderful team of volunteers has developed and delivered.

Through the entire summer period, we held unveiling ceremonies for brass historical plaques in seven communities: Corbyville, Lonsdale, Thomasburg, Roslin, Madoc, Marmora and Bancroft, to commemorate important local historical events and people. Large gatherings of residents took part in these ceremonies and celebrated their history as a community.

Audiences for our monthly Public Presentations at Maranatha, with interesting and informative guest speakers continued to grow in both numbers and enthusiasm. Averaging about 125 person per event, these events bring a full evening of entertainment and, in 2018, ranged from stories about Sir John A. Macdonald to the history of Belleville's water system. We also learned about the Great Trenton Explosion, Early Methodism in Quinte, and the problems of our soldiers at the end of WWI, among others.

We began the summer with two historical bus tours visiting key sites in the beautiful countryside of Lennox and Addington County, with colourful commentary provided by local residents. These late springtime tours were very much enjoyed as much for their historical stories as the beautiful countryside we visited.

In 2018, the Historical Society developed a new program with Mayor Taso Christopher which we entitled, *The Mayor's Hunt for History*, in which we invited school children in grades 5 to 8 to visit our historical plaques in the Downtown, complete a questionnaire and possibly win some very nice prizes. It was a good success with many schools and students participating and learning about our colourful history.

Another new project was developed in conjunction with cable television, YourTV, creating a series of nine, hour-long programs on a wide range of historical topics. I hosted the programs for the Society which brought together four to five experts on topics ranging from city history, sports history, street names, streets and houses, Glanmore, and others. These programs have been shown throughout the year to a sizable television audience.

In the last quarter of 2018 the Society began development of a major new and ambitious program to create a special website to carry information on every historical plaque in Hastings County, with photos, story background and details, maps and links through smart phones and other devices. This will be a very useful site for tourists and locals wishing to learn more about their own community.

The Society has a special program which provides speakers for retirement homes and groups, bringing stories from our past. This is very much appreciated by the seniors who often can add their personal experiences to the presentations.

An important vehicle for bringing history to the community is through our book publishing program. We are currently working on three books which will be ready for release at some point in 2019. We consider it very important that historical facts be gathered and set out in book form both to bring the whole stories together in one place and to preserve them permanently.

I cannot stress too much the importance of the Society's newsletter, *Outlook*, which brings not only to our members but also to all schools in the County, all retirement homes and many others, the news of coming events and activities but also intriguing historical stories. Its many "fans" eagerly await its delivery by post or email each of its eight months.

It is important to note that the Society participates fully in the transmission of its news and stories through several social media vehicles. We created sites on Facebook and Twitter this year and just at year's end added Instagram to this list. Initial results are very encouraging with many new and younger people following the activities of the Society. To complement this, our Website *hastingshistory.ca* continues to be a first-class site, constantly updated and improved.

Our annual Fall fundraising banquet and celebration of history cannot be overlooked in this long list. For many years we have brought national figures to Belleville; however, for 2018 we commissioned the writing of a special murder mystery play, drawing on the end of the First World War. It was very entertaining despite its ominous title of *Who Stuffed the Body in the Grand Trunk*.

All of these activities, listed here in very brief form, are the results of much work and creativity on the part of our wonderful team of volunteers. The work is enjoyable, the results are rewarding and our team is so very pleased to be able to bring our colourful history to the whole community of Hastings County.

Report of the Secretary of the Board

Mary-Lynne Morgan

Throughout 2018 (my fifth year in this position), I attended monthly Board Meetings and Special Meetings of the Board, took minutes, and sent those minutes electronically to all Board members. As Secretary, I also maintain an up-to-date list of the Board members' email addresses and phone numbers which is circulated to all Board members.

Once approved by the Board, the minutes and the monthly reports are filed at the Society's office for archival purposes. As Custodian of the seal of the Society and of all books, papers, records, correspondence, contracts and other documents belonging to the Society, I can report that these items are all filed in the Hastings County Historical Society office in the Archives/Library building in downtown Belleville.

My thanks to Richard Hughes and Dan Atkinson who filled in for me when I was on vacation.

**Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County
Amanda Hill, Archivist.**

Highlights of 2018 include the accession of materials from Moira and Quinte Secondary Schools and student registration cards from Belleville High School and Belleville Collegiate Institute and Vocational School. Records were also received from the Township of Wollaston, the Township of Marmora and Lake, and the Quinte Curling Club.



School, c.1959

The table below summarizes the activities within the Archives, with 2017's figures in parentheses for comparison.

Visits to the archives by researchers	562 (641)
Items delivered to researchers	185 (93)
Emails/phone queries answered	451 (545)
Volunteer hours donated	3442 (3,859)
Archival descriptions available online at http://discover.cabhc.ca	9,713 (7,817)
New accessions received	137 (110)
Images added to Flickr: http://flickr.com/cabhc	5,076 (2,312)
Views on Flickr	1,594,358 (617,571)
Facebook fans (facebook.com/CABHC)	216 (153)
Twitter followers (@CArchivesBHC)	300 (215)

We have also been active with various outreach activities, including our monthly newsletter, social media updates, and a variety of talks, tours, and displays.

**Publicity and Public Relations
Mary-Lynne Morgan**

It is my responsibility to send out some online advertising and reporting for the monthly Public Presentations and special events of the Hastings County Historical Society. To complement this, during 2018 the Board created the position of Chair of Social Media Outreach (Jonathan Chircop) and appointed a new webmaster (Heidi Rooke). They have taken my basic publicity

and extended it into the realm of social media with online posts, live streams of events etc. The Society now has a presence on Facebook, and Twitter, and an updated website.

One of my ongoing chores involved constantly updating email contact lists for media organizations, since these outlets continue to become even more highly concentrated. As in the previous year, throughout 2018 several regional newspapers disappeared altogether or were subsumed into larger conglomerates. In general, the number of local media workers continues to shrink to the point that they are heavily overworked and demand very specific ways of submitting information, especially for the various print media. Similarly, Quinte Arts Council has also developed a do-it-yourself entry system for its weekly calendar of events. I continue to add electronic sites for our monthly media announcements. I regularly input information onto six online sites, which involves re typing the same information six different times each month! It would be nice to be able to do one input and send it to several different sites, but I am not aware of how that can be done yet.

Due to the summer plaque project in which unveilings took place approximately every two weeks, there was considerably more publicity work throughout summer 2018 than in previous years.

Articles were submitted for several issues of the HCHS *Outlook* and Quinte Arts Council *Umbrella*. Email notices were sent out for each monthly public presentation, the bus tour, the annual banquet and other special events to all area weekly and daily newspapers, quarterly magazines, and various selected websites, as well as all area radio/TV outlets. Since media outlets are required by law to provide Public Service Announcement space, I always sent brief PSA format notices as well as longer descriptive articles to get our information into Coming Events listings both in print and on radio and local TV.

Another job in this portfolio is keeping track of all media coverage, clipping the articles/photos and scrapbooking them. As of this writing all media coverage from 2000 to the end of October 2018 is now in scrapbooks in the HCHS office for future reference.

This broader coverage has led to a continuing increase in the attendance at monthly public presentations and the annual bus tour over the past year.

Programs

Jim Kennelly

In 2018, the Society enjoyed a successful year of presentations at Maranatha. We were pleased with both the facilities and the co-operation of the staff. Attendance was steady, averaging 125 persons.

January - Historian and Author Rick Revelle on Eastern Canada in the early 1300s Through the Eyes of Four Algonquin Brothers: Mahingan, Kag, Wagosh, and Mitigomij.

February - Author and Historian John Boyko on Sir John A. MacDonald - Hero or Villain?

March – Belleville’s General Manager of Environmental Services, Perry Decola, on A Brief History of Water and the Drinking Water System in Belleville.

April - Author Steve Manders on The First Spike – A Look at the Early Railroads of Eastern Ontario.

May - Society Director Trevor Parsons on From Hastings County to Africa: Belleville’s Sir Gilbert Parker and British Imperialism in Africa.

September - Author, Journalist and Historian Orland French on Early Methodism in the Quinte Area.

October - Film Producer Sean Scally presented his film on The Trenton Explosion of 1918.

November - Major William March on I’m Alive, What Now? Canadians at the End of World War II.

Historical Brass Plaque Committee

Following the very successful program of developing and installing historical brass plaques in Belleville to mark its 200th anniversary in 2017, the Society decided to carry this program across Hastings County in 2018. In total, seven historical brass plaques were developed covering: Chisholm’s Mills at Roslin, The Thomasburg Spring at Thomasburg, The Bancroft Hotel at Bancroft, The Village of Lonsdale, MacKenzie’s Mills at Madoc, The Miners of Marmora and Lake at Marmora, and The Hamlet of Corbyville.

All of these plaque unveilings were arranged as community events, with invited guests, speeches, media coverage and full ceremonies. These plaques were arranged through Campbell Monument Ltd. In all of these communities, the authorities and the population were very pleased to receive the plaques which were displayed in prominent places for both local people and tourists to see and enjoy.

Celebration of History Annual Fundraising Banquet Committee

Each year the Historical Society arranges a special fundraising banquet bringing a nationally known guest speaker. In 2018, it was decided to bring a different event to the public. Since 2018 was the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I, the Board decided to arrange to have a special play written specifically for this event in the form of a humorous murder mystery, but drawing on the fact soldiers would now be coming home.

The play, entitled *Who Stuffed the Body in the Grand Trunk* was written for the Society by Ken McDougall of the Stirling Festival Theatre. The capacity audience at the Travelodge Hotel enjoyed this play thoroughly as it was interesting, humorous and well presented by the actors. At these events, the main fundraising aspect is in the table sponsorship by local businesses and again in 2018, this was highly successful.

Bus Tour Committee

Mary Lynne-Morgan

The Bus Tour Committee for the 2018 trip consisted of Orland French (research and commentary) and Mary-Lynne Morgan (advertising, ticket sales and general administrivia). Our *Adventures in LA LA Land* bus tour included stops at Flinton, Northbrook, Bon Echo, Tamworth and Newburgh among other locales.

The team approach continued to prove especially useful on the day of the trip when Orland was free to concentrate on his commentary and Mary-Lynne handled ticket taking, payment to the lunch providers and generally kept the trip on a tight schedule. Since Orland was unable to act as resource on the second trip, I looked after onboard commentary myself. As in previous years, I produced a hand-out booklet that was given to each ticket holder on the day of the trip. It included the itinerary, maps, details on each location and archival photos.

We sold out the first trip and had only two seats vacant on the second trip. Some of the credit for this may lie in extended and early advertising. A verbal announcement at the January HCHS Public Presentation, coverage in the *Outlook* and *QAC Umbrella*, and email notices to the various area print, broadcast and online media generated such a demand that the original bus tour was sold out in mid-April and the second tour by early May.

In an effort to capitalize on Orland's extensive knowledge of Lennox and Addington County, we have decided to complete our tour of this County in 2019, by concentrating on the southern part of the County – United Empire Loyalist Land. As I write this report, most of the planning and making contacts with local resource people has been completed, and the buses booked for May 25 and June 8 in 2019.

There is a limit to how far afield we can travel and still get back by around 5:30 p.m. This fact and the desire not to repeat ground that has been covered in previous recent tours, limits where we can plan for future trips. We are running out of ideas! It may be that the tours will take on a different format, as in single destination tours.

The annual bus tours are not only a good source of revenue to support the many programs of the Society, but also a great way to reach a new constituency, many of whom later attend monthly presentations and become members of the Society.

Membership Committee Report

Elizabeth Mitchell

The statistics in this report reflect the state of memberships at the end of December 2018. The totals include people who have already renewed for 2019, as well as those who have not yet renewed.

As of December 31, 2018, we have 214 memberships, for a total of 269 members. [Family and Senior Family memberships are counted as 2 people.] These numbers are down from the 2017

report, when we had 235 memberships, with a total of 293 members. However, the main reason for what appears to be a drop in numbers is simply a drop in the number of one-year Complimentary memberships we gave in 2018. This is due to the fact that for the 2017 Banquet, we had a record number of sponsors (34), several of whom sponsored half-tables, whereas we had only 17 sponsors for the 2018 Banquet, but each sponsored a full table.

We are continuing to attract new members. There were 19 new members in 2018 and 11 new members so far for 2019 who joined after September 2018, and got a “year-end bonus” because our membership year runs from January to December. Many of our new members are people who came to one or more of our monthly Public Presentations, picked up our latest *Outlook*, and decided to join.

The number of people deciding to take out a Life membership continues to increase. Currently we have a total of 50 Life members (45 in 2017). Although we have a good number of “younger” members, the 65+ age group continues to dominate, as can be seen in our audiences at monthly Public Presentations.

The breakdown is as follows:

50 Life memberships (45 in 2017)

27 Individual memberships (33 in 2017)

22 1-Year Complimentary memberships (Banquet sponsors and Archives Advisory) (39 in 2017)

16 Family memberships, counted as 2 people, for total of 32 people (20 Family memberships in 2017)

56 Senior memberships (age 65+) (56 in 2017)

39 Senior Family memberships, counted as 2 people, for total of 78 people (38 Senior Family memberships in 2017)

4 Non-profit Organizations (Friends of Glanmore National Historic Site, Bay of Quinte Yacht Club, Heritage Belleville, and Allan County Public Library) (same as 2017)

A note of interest: Allan County Public Library, in Fort Wayne, Indiana, has a large Genealogy collection, and has had a Non-profit Organization membership for many years.

0 Corporate memberships (Proctor & Gamble was our only Corporate member in 2016, but has not renewed since)

***Outlook* Newsletter Report**

Donna Fano, Co-editor

Laurel Bishop, Co-editor

The nine issues of volume 23 of *Outlook*, the illustrated newsletter of the Hastings County Historical Society, were published during 2018 in the months January to June and September to November. The newsletter served to keep members up-to-date on the Society’s Public Presentations and special events held by the Society such as the unveiling of a number of historical plaques throughout Hastings County during the past summer.

Summaries of the monthly public presentations were provided by Bill Kennedy, while Laurel Bishop continued her series “*On the Home Front*,” with excerpts from *The Intelligencer* in 1918

giving a picture of Belleville and vicinity during the First World War. The excerpts ended in November 2018.

A special issue in November commemorated the end of WWI and the victory of the allies.

Several historic books and two local plays were promoted during the year. Readers are encouraged to contribute articles on historical topics concerning Hastings County as long as they have not been previously published elsewhere. Readers are also encouraged to suggest topics for future articles.

Outlook Newsletter Distribution

Elizabeth Mitchell

As of December 31, 2018, we had 334 names on our *Outlook* newsletter distribution list. This includes 212 personal members, 58 schools, and 64 places that receive courtesy copies. "Courtesy copies" are those that go to local media, retirement and nursing homes, government offices, politicians, museums, historical societies, and libraries. (This designation is to differentiate them from "Complimentary memberships" which include a year of the *Outlook*, and are given to Banquet Sponsors and Archives Advisory Board members.)

Having the *Outlook* available electronically to those who request it has cut down greatly on both printing and mailing costs. At the end of 2018 we had 97 members who had opted for email delivery, and 115 who prefer paper copies. As well, 6 recipients of courtesy copies asked for electronic delivery, making a total of 103 copies that are not printed on paper.

Hastings County schools account for 81 copies. This includes 34 public elementary and secondary schools, plus the Hastings & Prince Edward School Board office; and 18 separate elementary and secondary schools plus the Algonquin & Lakeshore Catholic District School Board office. Public and separate high schools get 3 copies each, addressed to the Principal, the Librarian, and the History Department. Elementary schools get one copy each. All these go to the Board office on Ann Street for delivery through the school board courier system.

For the six independent schools (Sir James Whitney, Belleville and District Christian School, Quinte Mohawk School, Trenton Christian School, Albert College, Quinte Christian High School), we cannot distribute the *Outlook* through the school boards, so we must mail them, except for Sir James Whitney, which is hand-delivered by Donna Fano.

According to my calculations, as of December 31, 2018, we required approximately 260 paper copies of the *Outlook* for members, courtesy copies, and schools. As well, we like to have a number of extra copies in order to have some available at the Community Archives and to take to the monthly Public Presentations. Being able to welcome visitors with a complimentary copy of our newsletter is a good way of encouraging them to come back, and possibly become members. Our present printing of 320 copies ensures that we have a good supply for our needs.

Social Media

Jonathan Chircop

2018 was a very exciting and successful year for the HCHS as a whole, but more specifically for our online presence. The HCHS created a new position of Director of Social Media. Board member, Jonathan Chircop took on the task of developing, maintaining and monitoring new social media platforms.

First, a Facebook page was developed and by January 1st, 2018, our Facebook page had 319 followers. As of December 31st, 2018, this following had grown to 439 (a difference of 120 followers.)

The two most popular Facebook posts of the year were, first, on March 14th, a picture and description advertising the first episode of YourTV's show "Out of the Vault". The picture was taken at Glanmore National Historic Site and showed host Richard Hughes, and guests Doug Knutson, Lois Foster, and Mayor Taso Christopher. The post was viewed by around 1,670 people and received close to 120 engagements (likes, comments and shares).

The second most popular post was on July 23rd, a picture of one of our event posters, advertising our historical plaque unveiling at Mackenzie's Mills in Madoc. The post was viewed by 1088 people and had 53 engagements.

In June of 2018 the Society joined Twitter. It has aided us in connecting with our partners, member's and other local time organizations. As of December 31st 2018, we had accumulated 103 followers and counting.

During our plaque unveiling at Thomasburg Spring, we recorded an experimental live video stream to our Facebook page. It was very successful although, the video quality and sound were not the best. Consideration is being given to doing a live stream in the future, with better equipment and possibly a professional volunteer photographer.

In December, an Instagram account was created for the HCHS, to be formally launched in January 2019. Our Instagram account will feature a short description and photos that have been collected over the years, including images from the Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County.

Website: www.hastingshistory.ca
Heidi Rooke, Webmaster

The year 2018 was another very busy year for the website with constant addition of material to keep it fully up-to-date and ongoing improvements to keep it attractive and informative. The tasks in 2018 included:

- Updating various sections with current information while standardizing the font and size used throughout the site. A key goal is to keep the photo gallery updated with public presentation and other event photos throughout the year.
- The business cards of all sponsors were placed in the rolling ad space in the website's right navigation.
- A visible link was added to the homepage and other pages to the 'Become a Member' location and we will use this space every Christmas to promote membership as a great gift idea.
- Another visible link was added on the homepage to the location of past editions of *Outlook* in the Archives.
- The 'Calendar' was updated to add all HCHS events, presentations and bus tours, as well as other events, including Glanmore National Historic Site.
- Articles from past editions of *Outlook* are being added to 'Recent Posts' and are also being featured as articles in the centre space on the homepage. We also plan to link 'Recent Posts' to 'News Items' under the 'Home' tab so site users can look back at various articles posted after they get bumped out of the top four 'Recent Posts' on the homepage.
- Space at the bottom of the left navigation is being used to promote the 'Bookstore': more to come in 2019 as the 'Bookstore' is updated.
- The *Outlook* newsletter is sent to subscribers monthly.
- Eblasts are sent to all site users to promote/advertise public presentations and other events.
- Inquiries received at the website are sent to info@hastingshistory.ca and forward to the appropriate person, including new and returning member sign-ups.
- Traffic to the website has slightly increase over the last year, hopefully due to regularly updating of information and articles.
- The central goal of the webmaster remains to continuously add new and interesting information and articles that encourage visitors to regularly return to the website. All content ideas and suggestions are welcome.