



### Media Release on Death of Gerry Boyce

The Hastings County Historical Society is mourning the loss of its founder, guide and inspiration for sixty years in the passing of Gerry Boyce. Known affectionately as Mr. History, he served his community with boundless energy, great determination and a pure and simple love of this region.

No one could approach his comprehensive knowledge of local history which he brought to the people through his extensive writing, including the definitive history of Hastings County in *Historic Hastings* and his vast collections of stories about Belleville and its history through *Belleville, A Popular History* along with many others.

His inspirational leadership from the founding of the Hastings County Historical Society in 1957 through his energetic guidance of generations of volunteer workers brought local history alive and put it out to the citizens of our community. What began as a small collection of priceless documents in his own home, through ever-growing collections of documents, photographs, maps and much more preserved at Glanmore Museum, the Belleville Public Library and the Heritage Centre at Cannifton, culminated in the creation of the state-of-the-art Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County.

Gerry Boyce also served his community through his active role in local politics. Mr. History occupied a seat on Belleville City Council from 1991 to 1997. Other contributions to his community included radio broadcasts, Quintisms, hundreds of colourful articles for the Belleville Intelligencer and countless academic papers. He was always the go-to guy for commentary and guidance on all aspects of local history.

Gerry Boyce will also be remembered by thousands of local residents from their student days in his history classes, livened by his passion for history and love of story telling. Over 32 years, he taught at five secondary schools, was head of a history department for six years and vice-principal for 15 years.

Earlier this year the Hastings County Historical Society created the Gerry Boyce Award to recognize long-term work and effort in gathering, preserving and publicizing the history of Hastings County. The first awards were granted this past summer.

A great community leader, an inspiration to those who followed him and to so many, a very good friend. Our community is deeply indebted to Gerry Boyce and his legacy will be with us for many years to come.