



HASTINGS COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Annual Report of the
Hastings County Historical Society**

2022

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Report of the President

Richard Hughes

A report on the activities of the Society in 2022 must begin with the sad news of the passing of our founding father, Mr. Gerry Boyce. For over 50 years Gerry had led the work of the Society and inspired generations of devoted volunteer workers. He was an amazing citizen of our community: teacher, city councillor, author of the definitive histories of our County, and an inspiring leader and guide of the Historical Society. We will always be deeply indebted to Gerry Boyce and keep warm thoughts of him in our hearts.

Earlier in the year the Board had decided to create the Gerry Boyce Award to recognize people and organizations that had made a substantial and long-term contribution of the history of our community. For the first year of his award, three awards were granted, to Evan Morton of the Tweed and District Heritage Centre, Mr. Orland French, author and long-time volunteer and president at the Society and to Anne and Andre Philpot of the Marmora Historical Society.

While the year 2021 was the second year of the global Covid-19 shutdown, the scene shifted totally in 2022 as the Society brought back, with immense energy, an almost complete program of community projects. As the year began, remaining cautious as regards indoor programs, the Board of Directors decided to continue the suspension of the Annual Banquet and Celebration of Local History and the Historical Bus Tours. However, outdoor programs were renewed in many forms.

In 2022, the focus of attention for the installation of historical plaques was the Municipality of Quinte West where a partnership was formed with the City and the Trent Port Historical Society to create and install three plaques to recognize the contributions to the community of the Gilmour Lumber Company, the launch of Second World War tugs built at Central Bridge Co. and the pioneer Bleecker's Ferry across the Trent River. Local dignitaries presided over the unveiling ceremonies at these three sites with enthusiastic public participation. A fourth historical plaque was unveiled at Albert College to recognize the immense contribution to national botany by former teacher, John Macoun. This plaque is to

be mounted on a large, granite boulder and placed in a prominent garden at the school.

In the Fall, it was found possible to re-launch the series of Public Presentations at Maranatha. Guest speakers entertained large audiences in September, October and November. It was decided to hold these in the large auditorium to allow guests to spread out and avoid close contact due to the lingering Covid-19 threat. This wonderful facility provided state-of-the-art audio and video services plus comfortable, theatre seating.

The Society's newsletter, the informative and entertaining *Outlook*, was issued nine times bringing the news, coming events and, very importantly, many local, historical stories to our Members and Friends. Importantly, the newsletter was also provided free to all retirement homes and schools in the County.

The Board of Directors decided that, coming out of two years of virtual suspension of programs, the year 2022 presented a great opportunity to come back to the community with a refreshed and renewed Society. The first step was the decision to create a whole new, state-of-the-art public face, in the form of a new website and special announcements format. Much of 2022 was taken up with the planning and development and this will result in a major launch program in early 2023. Although the focus will always be on the history and heritage of Hastings County, the new website will bring it to the public in the most modern format.

During 2022, a major public works project in Belleville was the construction of the new footbridge across the Moira River and to commemorate this, the Society published a comprehensive booklet on the history of Belleville's footbridges, written by John Lowry and presented at the grand opening ceremony.

The year 2022 saw an expansion of the programs to promote local history books. The Society maintains a bookstore, physically in the Community Archives and online through the website. It is firmly believed that the stories of local history are both informative and entertaining and promote a deeper understanding of our community.

The Society concluded 2022 in a very strong position in all respects. The finances continue to be healthy; the Board is complete and always energetic; and the membership remains large and spread throughout Hastings County and well beyond. We look forward to an even greater scope of projects and activities in 2023.



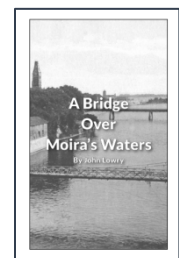
2022 Annual Report

The Community Archives was closed to the public from January 5th to 30th due to a provincial lockdown. Since then, we have been open as usual. Once again our work has been concentrated on digitizing and sharing local newspapers and assessment rolls. Our account at the Internet Archive at <https://archive.org/details/cabhc> now holds over 3,000 digitized items (up from 1,200 at the end of 2021).

Our summer student this year was Zac Miller, a Masters student from the University of Toronto, who was with us from May to August. Zac made good progress on digitizing our original copies of local nineteenth century newspapers, taking over 50,000 photographs in the process. These are now searchable online through the Internet Archive. These newspapers cover Belleville, Deseronto, Madoc and Stirling.

We have also been busy with outreach activities, including:

- our monthly newsletter *The CABHC Patch*
- reading room display case exhibits
- social media updates
- blog post for the Internet Archive
- online talk for the Archives Association of Ontario's annual conference



- online talks for two local genealogy groups
- in-person talk for Hastings County Historical Society
- assisting the Historical Society with their *Bridge Over Moira's Waters* booklet about the Catharine Street pedestrian bridge in Belleville
- radio interview with Mary Thomas for CJBQ

Some statistics from 2022 (last year's figures)

Visits to the archives by researchers	325 (290)
Items delivered to researchers from the vaults	140 (44)
Queries answered	563 (544)
Volunteer hours donated	1,778 (1,376)
Archival descriptions available online at http://discover.cabhc.ca	15,704 (14,716)
New accessions received	101 (103)
Talks presented	4 (1)
Images added to Flickr: http://flickr.com/cabhc	1,053 (1,006)
Views on Flickr	2,823,121 (3,339,300)
Facebook followers (facebook.com/CABHC)	685 (642)
Twitter followers (@CArchivesBHC)	416 (394)
Instagram followers (from September 2022 @carchivesbhc)	11

Programmes Committee

Jim Kennelly

For the first part of the year, the Programmes of the Society continued to be offered as Zoom presentations to our membership and to the wider community.

January: John Burzynski, entrepreneur and engineer, delivered an engaging and informative presentation on The Search and Discovery of the Avro Arrow Free Flight Models in Lake Ontario.

February: Barry K. Wilson, journalist and author, spoke on Sir Mackenzie Bowell: A Canadian Prime Minister. He delivered an engaging perspective on Bowell's time in parliament.

March: Sherry Pringle, artist and author, spoke on All The Ship's Men: HMCS Athabaskan's Untold Stories. She recounted the fascinating story of the sinking of the Athabaskan and the men who died.

April: Jim Kennelly, retired educator, spoke on The Heritage of Tyendinaga Township. Some of the early history, problems and activities of the early pioneers were shared.

May: Trevor Parsons, PHD candidate and researcher, gave an interesting look at The Canadian Diaries of Queen Victoria. He provided an interesting look at the Queen's thoughts on the Canadian scene.

June: Patrick Johnston, author, presented on Native Children and the Child Welfare System. He spoke eloquently of the Sixties Scoop and enabled a better understanding of what occurred.

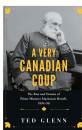
In September, we began to have our monthly presentations in Maranatha Church, College Street, Belleville on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm.

September: Dan Buchanan, historian, took us through Rum Runners: The Story of Ben Kerr and Prohibition. All enjoyed the most engaging look at rum running and the Bay of Quinte and area's involvement.

Hastings County Historical Society
Invites You to a Public Presentation

A Very Canadian Coup - The Rise and Demise of Prime Minister Mackenzie Bowell, 1894-1896

With Guest Speaker Author Ted Glenn



When Mackenzie Bowell became Canada's fifth Prime Minister in December 1894, everyone — including Bowell — expected the job would involve nothing more than keeping the wheels on the Conservative wagon until a spring election.

Plans for a quiet caretaker-ship were dashed in January 1895 when the courts ruled that the Manitoba government had violated Roman Catholics' constitutional rights by abolishing the provincial separate school system back in 1890. Catholics in Quebec demanded that Bowell force Manitoba to restore the schools, while Ontario Protestants warned him to keep his hands off.

Backed into a corner, Bowell tried three times to negotiate a compromise with Manitoba over the course of 1895, but to no avail. By January 1896, seven of Bowell's cabinet ministers had had enough. Convinced Bowell had tarnished the Conservative brand, the cabinet forced Bowell to resign and make way for a new leader who they believed could revive party fortunes in time for the coming election, the old Warhorse of Cumberland himself, Sir Charles Tupper.



Ted Glenn is a professor at Humber College and writes about Canadian government and history. He divides his time between Grey County and Toronto.

Date: Tuesday October 18, 2022
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Location: Maranatha Church, 100 College Street West, Belleville



Enter by main front doors. The presentation is in the main auditorium, which allows for plenty of spacing between seats.

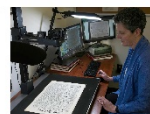
Hastings County Historical Society
Invites You to a Public Presentation

Learning to Love Lockdown: How the Community Archives Unleashed its Collections

With Archivist Amanda Hill

The Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County was established in 2010 and is the home for the documentary heritage of our region. In 2015 the archives were moved into a new facility in the Belleville Public Library building.

Archivist Amanda Hill will provide insights into the work of the Community Archives since the move, including an update on the projects to share more than 100 years of Hastings County newspapers and 15,000 historic photographs online.



Amanda trained as an archivist in England in the 1990s and was employed at Canterbury Cathedral Archives, the Essex Record Office and the Universities of Oxford and Manchester. She immigrated to Canada in 2007 and has worked here for the Town of Deseronto and the Archives Association of Ontario. In 2015 she became the archivalist for the Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County.

Date: Tuesday November 15, 2022
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Location: Maranatha Church, 100 College Street West, Belleville



Enter by main front doors. The presentation is in the main auditorium, which allows for plenty of spacing between seats.



October: Ted Glenn spoke on A Very Canadian Coup: The Rise and Demise of Prime Minister Mackenzie Bowell. This engaging account gave us a most interesting take on the political intrigue of that time.

November: Amanda Hill, archivist, spoke on Learning to Love Lockdown: How the Community Archives Unleashed It Collections. Her delightful presentation detailed insights into the Archives and updated us on the projects to share more than 100 years of Hastings County newspapers and 15 000 photos.

Historical Plaques Website

Orland French

Two years ago the Historical Society established a website to provide information on all the historic plaques in Hastings County. They include plaques erected by the Society, by the Ontario Heritage Trust, by municipalities and by private sponsors. Each plaque on the website features a page of pertinent information: text of the plaque, location and photos.



The number of plaques now recognized on our website is 140 but there are a few more waiting in storage to be erected and dedicated at historic sites. Unfortunately, the continuing COVID-19 pandemic has precluded the calling of presentation ceremonies until crowds can safely be assembled.

The Historical Plaques Website program (hastingshistoricalplaques.ca) has been augmented by the publication of the Stroll of Discovery Riverfront Trail which identifies the location of a number of plaques in downtown Belleville. An anticipated publication in the near future will identify all the plaques in the city.

The listing of Road Trips of Hastings County on the Historical Society website has also drawn attention to the location of plaques throughout Hastings County. The videos, about five minutes long, are also featured on Cogeco and YouTube. The site is also linked through County, City and tourism sites.

The value of the website has been recognized by the Prince Edward County Historical Society which approached HCHS towards including PEC historic plaques on the site. After some discussion, it was recognized that the Prince Edward locations would be better featured on their own exclusive website.

Even though there is no immediate end in sight for the COVID-19 restrictions, the value of the Historic Plaques website remains intact. Plaque-hunters can still use the site as a guide to search out plaques throughout the county. Beyond that, the website as another form of publishing the history of Hastings County.

The *Outlook* Newsletter

Laurel Bishop and Donna Fano, Editors

Despite the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic throughout the year, we were able to publish the 27th volume of our 8-page illustrated newsletter *Outlook*, issues 357 to 365, January to June and September to November. Besides informing readers of Hastings County Historical Society news, we make an effort to both educate and entertain through the stories we publish. A publication calendar is set up each year to keep production running smoothly. A regular feature in each issue is called "It's Reading Time Again" in which Michelle Hutchison introduces readers to books of local historic interest. Examples of topics our writers have covered this past year are the circus coming to town, Hotel Quinte, the telephone party line, CJBQ, Hallowe'en in the early 1900s and Belleville in the 1890s. We encourage the contribution of stories by both members of the Society and non-members.

Membership Report

Elizabeth Mitchell

The statistics in this report reflect the state of memberships as of December 31, 2022. The totals include people who have already renewed for 2023, as well as those who have not yet renewed. Totals include people whose latest membership year was 2019, 2020, and 2021, as well as those who had 2022 memberships. Most of these overdue memberships are email subscribers to the *Outlook*, who may not be as aware of renewal times, compared to those who receive the paper edition and got a renewal form with their copy. During the pandemic we tended to be lenient to those who did not renew, but we plan to tidy up these long overdue renewals in the coming months so that our statistics correctly reflect our actual membership totals.

In spite of the continuing pandemic, we have had another very good year in terms of memberships. In addition to renewals, we recorded 6 new memberships for 2022 and 16 brand-new memberships for the year 2023 already by the end of 2022. Because our membership year runs from January to December, to avoid complicated bookkeeping, anyone who joins from September to December is counted as a new member for the following year, so the 16 new memberships for 2023 actually joined between September and December of 2022, many at our Public Presentations. As of December 31, 2022, we have 245 memberships (247 in 2021), for a total of 315 members (314 in 2021). [Note that Family and Senior Family memberships are counted as 2 people.] Sadly, one of our long-time members, Vera Morton, passed away during 2022.

Many of our members like to renew in person at our monthly Presentations, usually between November and March. In spite of the fact that our in-person gatherings only started again in September 2022, many of our members renewed for 2023 even before early November when we printed a reminder in the *Outlok* and included a membership form to all those who had not renewed for 2023. Response has been good, and we expect renewals will continue to arrive in January. Many people even sent generous donations along with their membership cheques.

We decided to extend the complimentary one-year memberships for our 2019 Banquet sponsors for another year and continued to mail the *Outlook* to them during 2022. Many of these people and businesses have supported us year after year, so we hoped that the *Outlook* arriving in their mail every month would

remind them that we are still active and continuing to spread the word about Hastings County history. However, towards the end of 2022, the Board made a new request for Sponsors, resulting in 12 Sponsors who contributed very generous donations. Some are long-time supporters and some are new Sponsors. We regretfully made the decision to discontinue the Complementary *Outlook* mailings to those who did not respond, and remove them from our membership list, so the total in the statistics reflects the actual number of Sponsors at the end of 2021.

Publications for Sale

Michelle Hutchison

Numerous local authors and historians have penned books describing the life and times of settlers in Hastings County. In an effort to share this rich history, the Hastings County Historical Society (HCHS) offers over 35 books for sale. Those who wish to peruse the books by shopping in person may do so at the book store, located in the Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County on the second floor of the Belleville Public Library. A select number of books are also displayed for purchase at the monthly Public Presentations at Maranatha Church.

For those unable to visit the bookstore in person or who prefer the on-line shopping experience, the HCHS website offers another option to view the selection under the bookstore tab. Arrangements can then be made for delivery to the purchaser. A small number of titles are also placed for sale at select local bookstores. The Outlook newsletter, published nine times per year, features a brief overview of some of the interesting and informative books that are available. Book sales have been increasing year over year as efforts to promote local history continue.

Special Events

To commemorate the construction and opening of the new footbridge across the Moira River, Society volunteer John Lowry prepared and the Society published a colourful, 15-page booklet entitled, *A Bridge over Moira's Waters*. The booklet traced the history of bridges across the river at this point and was circulated at the grand opening event.



Historical Plaques Unveiling Ceremonies

The Society created four new memorial historical plaques in 2022, three located in the Municipality of Quinte West and one at Albert College in Belleville. The three in Quinte West honoured the Ferry Crossing of the Trent River in the pioneer days of Trent Port, the contribution of the Gilmour Lumber Company to the development of Trenton and the WWII Boat Building and Launching site. At Albert College a plaque was unveiled to honour former teacher and national botanist John Macoun.

The New Logo and Website

The Board of Directors decided that the time was right to modernize and completely update the Society's logo and website, bringing them up to 21st Century standards and appearance.



The new logo brightens and refreshes the brand appearance of the Society. The website remains the Society's main vehicle to communicate with the wider public by providing a wide range of information on current events, programs, history of the Society, stories and so much more. The new website will also incorporate the currently separate historical plaques website. The Society contracted with Snap 360, a well-known local company and the work began in late 2022, to be completed in spring 2023.