



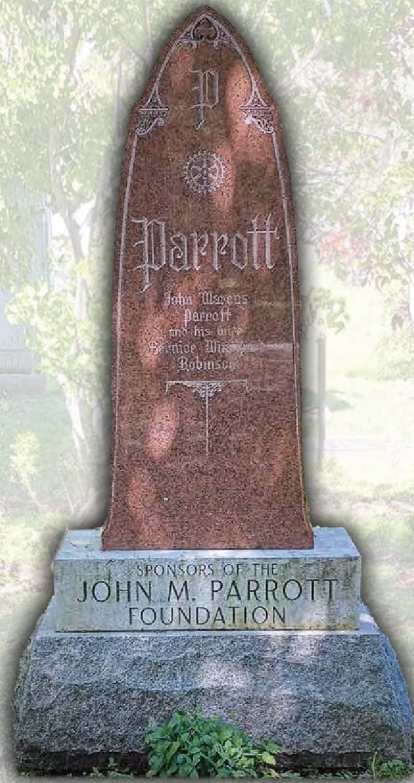
150th

Anniversary of the
Belleville Cemetery
Celebration

Walking Tour
of Selected
Monuments/Gravestones

The Belleville Cemetery Company was officially incorporated in 1872 as it was becoming obvious the local church cemeteries within city limits would quickly run out of space. Local citizens banded together to purchase the 65 acres outside of town along the Bay of Quinte, now known as the Belleville Cemetery. Each of these families purchased as many as six lots and as such became a shareholder in the company. The only shareholders then, as now, were the lot owners. The company has remained a not-for-profit organization for over 150 years and is overseen by a volunteer board of directors. All money received is put back into the cemetery towards ongoing maintenance and long-term service of the cemetery. Since its inception in 1872, the Belleville Cemetery Company has expanded their services to include an onsite crematorium, niche walls, a scattering garden and prepayment options. As of 2023, the board and staff, led by President Dan Atkinson, are committed to preserving the cemetery grounds and furthering the Belleville Cemetery Company to ensure the longevity of this pillar of the community. We are excited to celebrate the milestone of 150 years and are looking forward to the next 150. As a not-for-profit and charitable organization, the Belleville Cemetery Company carries out its work, assisted by the generosity of the community. Donations are always appreciated!

631 Dundas St. East, R. R. 2
Belleville, ON K8N 4Z2
613-962-8468
bellevillecemetery.com



Jack and Bernice Parrott

Jack and Bernice Parrott were influential philanthropists in the Quinte community. Jack grew up on a dairy farm in Thurlow Township and had six Loyalist ancestors. Bernice came from a musical family and became a classical pianist and vocal music teacher. They married in 1946 and worked together on the Parrott farm before Jack became a successful developer. They moved to a property beside the Bay of Quinte Golf Course and stayed active in the community. Jack was a school trustee, a Rotary Club member, and a board member at Albert College. Bernice participated in various organizations, including the Women's Hospital Auxiliary and the Women's Institute. They donated a rare art collection to the Parrott Gallery of the Belleville Public Library. Through the John M. Parrott Foundation, they donated millions to countless organizations and were inducted into the Hall of Honour. Jack and Bernice passed away in 2006 and 2009, respectively, and are buried in Belleville Cemetery.



Robert James Graham

R.J. Graham was born on the family farm in 1860, working there from the age of seven. At the age of 12 he became the “man of the house” and at 16 assumed the care of the family, their farm, apple orchards and co-operative cheese business at a time when all this was mired in debt. At 17 he was shipping his first barrels of apples onto world markets, the beginning of an incredible entrepreneurial adventure. He served as Mayor of Belleville from 1901-1903 and during the First World War he fed the troops. In 1916 he built his home, “Montrose.” He was recognized as a generous philanthropist, giving much to the city he loved.



Charlotte (Lottie) Sills

Charlotte (Lottie) Emma Martin Sills was born in 1873 in Belleville. She helped her family run their grocery store before marrying William Clarence Sills in 1898 and moving to Newton, New York and then to Boston. William acquired the General Motors sales franchise for all of New England and retired a wealthy man. He died in 1935 leaving his vast holdings to Lottie. She returned to Belleville and often stayed at the Hotel Quinte with her three maids. Lottie's bequests established the Bridge Street United Church Foundation and her legacy also made possible the Charlotte Sills Wing at Belleville General Hospital. Lottie died in 1961 and was buried at Belleville Cemetery.



Ellen Bilbrough

Ellen Agnes Bilbrough, born in Leeds, England in 1841, met Annie Macpherson, a child welfare activist, in London. They worked together briefly before traveling to Belleville, Ontario in 1869, escorting 100 boys to a safe home. With the support of the community, they opened Marchmont Home, where Ellen became the Matron. Tragedy struck as fires destroyed the property in 1871 and 1875. In 1876 a new brick home was built at 193 Yeomans Street. Ellen took charge in 1877 after Annie's departure. She brought back orphans from Scotland, married Reverend Robert Wallace in 1887, and together they ran the Marchmont Home. Ellen's meticulous record-keeping included a photo of each child upon arrival. She passed away in 1900, and the Home closed in 1913, having had over 10,000 children pass through its doors.



The Corby Family

The hamlet of Corbyville is named after the Corby family who left a lasting mark on the area. Henry Corby, baker, grain merchant and miller, began distilling whiskey in 1859. He was also active in politics, serving as Mayor of Belleville 1867/68 and a Member of the Provincial Parliament 1867/75. Following Henry's death in 1881, his son Henry Corby Jr. led the successful expansion of the family business. He was also active in politics, representing Hastings West in Parliament 1888/91 and serving in the Senate from 1912 until his death in 1917.



Samuel Shaw Lazier

Samuel Shaw Lazier was born 1840 near Milltown, Tyendinaga Township into a family of enterprising millers and lawyers. He was educated at Victoria University and Osgoode Hall and was called to the bar in 1864. He practised with his brother as Lazier and Lazier for ten years. He became Master of Chancery for Napanee and Belleville (Civil Law Court) in 1874. He joined the 15th Battalion, Argyle Light Infantry in 1865 and from 1876 to 1895 held the rank of colonel. He built Belleville's finest home, Kirkclawn, in 1879. Traveling the world with Margaret Robertson, his wife, they were presented to Queen Victoria and the Prince of Wales and were received into British Society. Samuel Shaw died in Belleville in 1928 at the age of 88.



Sir Mackenzie Bowell

Mackenzie Bowell emigrated from England with his family in 1832. Apprenticed to the *Intelligencer*, by the 1850s he was owner of the newspaper. Bowell saw active service in the Militia Rifle Company, retiring as lieutenant-colonel. He rose to Grand Master of the Orange Order for British North America. Elected to the House of Commons in 1867 for Hastings North, Bowell was appointed Minister of Customs, Railways and Defence and Militia. He entered the Senate becoming government leader and Minister of Trade and Commerce. In 1894 Bowell was appointed prime minister. The Manitoba Schools Question divided his government leading to a Cabinet revolt, which forced his resignation. He served in the Senate until his death in 1917, age 93.



Billa Flint

Billa Flint was born in Brockville, Ontario in 1805 and arrived in Belleville in 1829. He quickly became a force in Hastings County. Over the next sixty years, his business interests would include merchant, lumberman, land speculator, industrialist, religious leader, temperance advocate, philanthropist, and politician. Additionally, his public service included serving as Mayor of Belleville, Magistrate of the Peace, Reeve of Elzevir Township, Warden of Hastings County, and a member of the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council for the United Province of Canada. He died in Ottawa in 1894 at the age of 89. His biography is compiled in the book *Billa Flint, King of Hastings County* by Armand P. La Barge.



Colonel William Nisbet Ponton

William Nisbet Ponton was born in 1856 at Sidney Cottage, home of his grandfather, William Hutton, first warden of Hastings County, son of James Ponton and Anna Hutton. Educated at Upper Canada College and U. of T. with Masters in Modern Languages. Called to the bar in 1881, he practised in Belleville, specializing in property and estates. Appointed K.C. in 1908. He served many prominent corporate clients, including Merchant's Bank. He served five years as Alderman and 30 years on Board of Education. Ponton commanded the 15th Battalion, Argyle Light Infantry, 1892-1901. Member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church and Grand Master of Masonic Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M., 1921-23. Died in Belleville, September 1939.



Sir Gilbert Parker

Sir Gilbert Parker was born in Camden East and trained as a teacher serving at local schools including what is now the Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf, before leaving Canada in 1886. Parker traveled, ending up in London writing novels of romantic fiction popularizing Canadian history which became best sellers. He was elected to Westminster in 1900 as a Conservative Unionist serving until his retirement in 1918. Parker was a staunch imperialist and a strong voice for colonial interests in London. He was a good friend of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Joseph Chamberlain and during the First World War headed British propaganda efforts in the United States. In 1902 he was knighted by Edward VII for contributions to Canadian literature and in 1915 was made baronet. He died in London in 1932.



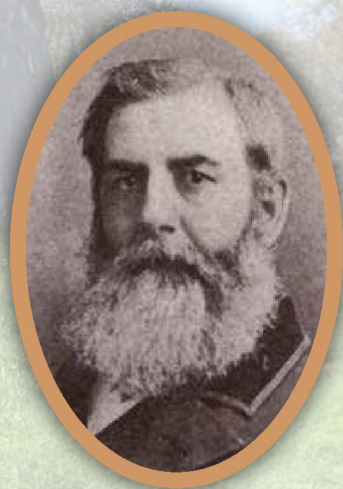
Dunbar and Susanna Moodie

Susanna (Strickland) Moodie was born in Bungay, U.K. in 1803. Dunbar Moodie was born in 1797 in Melsetter, Orkney Islands. They married in 1831 and immigrated to Canada in 1832, hoping for a better future, away from the economic downturn in England. They had seven children; two died as children. After experiencing problems establishing a homestead in Duoro Township, the couple settled in Belleville. Known for her books, *Roughing It in the Bush* and *Life in the Clearings*, Susanna Moodie died at Toronto in 1885. Dunbar Moodie, also an author and contributor to literary magazines, became the first sheriff of Victoria District and died in Belleville in 1869.



Samuel Thomas Greene

Samuel Greene was born in 1843 in North Waterford, Maine, one of seven children. Samuel was born deaf; he graduated from what became Gallaudet University in 1870 and applied to teach at the newly opened School for the Deaf (Sir James Whitney School). He was its first deaf teacher and used sign language and written English to teach. Noted as a gifted teacher with outstanding skills, he became famous for his eloquent public addresses in sign language. Greene was an avid sportsman and encouraged his community to engage in sports. He died in an iceboating accident in 1890. His fine memorial at Belleville Cemetery is notable for the fingerspelling engraving of his last name, near the base.



William Canniff

William Canniff was born in Thurlow in 1830 of Loyalist ancestry. After a short stint in the Army of the Potomac during the American Civil War, Canniff became an ardent Canadian patriot. He promoted the settlement of the Northwest by English-speaking people and published two books on surgery and on the medical profession in Upper Canada. He helped organize the Canadian Medical Association in 1867. His greatest achievement was the writing of *The Settlement of Upper Canada with Special Reference to the Bay of Quinte*. This book fostered Loyalist sentiment in the late 1800s and preserved masses of material that would have been lost to future generations. He died in Belleville in 1910.



The Hastings County Historical Society has a selection of books available to the public at the Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County, located on the 2nd floor of the Public Library in Downtown Belleville, 254 Pinnacle Street. These books are also available through Hastingshistory.ca, our website.

There are books available about a number of the individuals mentioned in this tour of the Belleville Cemetery. These include:

The Accidental Prime Minister, The Biography of Sir Mackenzie Bowell

Billa Flint King of Hastings County

Montrose, A History of the Graham Family

Marchmont Distributing Home, Belleville, Ontario, 1870-1925 (Ellen Bilbrough's organization)

Samuel Greene First Deaf Teacher - A booklet about OSD/SJW school

The Hastings County Historical Society was founded in 1957 and is a not-for-profit organization that works to preserve and provide information about the county; to promote interest and research in local history; to promote activities and events related to the history and culture of Hastings County; and to support the work of the Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County. It sponsors 9 Public Presentations a year on the evening of the 3rd Tuesday of each month, September to June, but not including December. These are free of charge and the general public is invited to attend. These are held at Maranatha in Belleville.

We have been pleased to work with the Belleville Cemetery in this celebration of its 150th Anniversary.



254 Pinnacle Street
Belleville, ON
613 966-6712 (Gary Nicoll-President)