

Buffy's Corner



The Newsletter of the Brampton Historical Society

Volume 5 Number 2



The Prez Sez...

BHS President Peter Murphy

Just returned home from a perilous journey with Michael Avis to the icy slopes of Bob Crawford's bakery and farm in Norval to view the dismantled 1902 CPR station that once stood in downtown Brampton.

The purpose of the visit was to accompany two engineers, Adrian Van Schouwen of Sandwell Consulting Engineers Ltd. and Enrico Scalera of GO Transit, in their viewing of the station. Both of these gentlemen are working on the design of a new GO station for the community surrounding Pleasant at Bovaird and Creditview Road.

A heritage-style station is being contemplated and the BHS has taken this as an opportunity to lobby to have the old CPR station rebuilt or at least have parts of it incorporated into the new station.

No conclusions have been reached other than to plan another visit once the current ice age retreats.



Originally sited in downtown Brampton, the final stop of the station's whistle-stop tour is about to happen in Brampton's northwest hamlet of Pleasant, at Bovaird and Creditview. Photo courtesy of the Peel Archives.

No Oscars or Junos came our way in recent weeks but as a young organisation we can take pride in being awarded the Scadding Award of Excellence by the Ontario Historical Society.

In addition we shall be recognised with the Ontario Heritage Foundation's Community Achievement Award for the restoration of the 1857 Bristow-Fitzgerald Map of Brampton. This event will occur at a City council meeting on May 26.

Following our annual meeting, our new executive is up and serving and keeping apace with our various activities. Foremost among these is Doors Open Brampton on September 20 and 21, 2003. With 30 sites confirmed, this event will assuredly be a great success. O'Malley's restaurant is on board and that means public access to the clock in the cupola.

Special thanks go to Ron Raffan who has stepped forward to be the Program Co-ordinator for Doors Open Brampton.

The immediate challenge for the Doors Open steering committee is to receive financial sponsorship for the event. Mayor Susan Fennell has agreed to act as Honorary Chair for the steering committee and that, we hope, will make our task that much easier.

Scadding Award of Excellence

The Scadding Award is awarded annually by The Ontario Historical Society to a historical society or heritage group that has made an outstanding contribution to the field of history. It is named in honour of Canon Henry Scadding, one of the founders of the OHS and its first president in 1888. The award was presented at the OHS Honours and Awards ceremony on Sunday, May 4th 2003 at the John McKenzie House in Toronto. The BHS appreciates being chosen from the 269 OHS affiliates to receive the Scadding Award.

Buffy's Corner is the newsletter of the Brampton Historical Society, whose motto and guiding vision is Conserve, Educate and Celebrate Brampton's History.

Buffy's Corners , the original name of Brampton, was the site of the respectable tavern owned by William Buffy, considered to be the father of Brampton. His pioneer spirit lives on in the name of our journal. History "buffs" are invited into The Corner to share their stories and comments.

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Brampton Hysterical Society Joke-of-the-Month:

Left-handed people are governed by the right side of their brain. Right-handed people are governed by the left side of their brain. This means that only left-handed people are in their right minds.


Buffy's Corner, published four times per year, is free to BHS members(see back page for membership details). Copyright 2003.

All Aboard!!!

Welcome to the new members of the BHS!

Mary Ellen & Lionel Balez
Bob & Jane Crouch
Ron & Caroline Marshall
Paul Miller

Thanks to members who have renewed for 2003!



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A PLEASANT RESULT

Michael Avis, Heritage Liaison Committee Chair

It's "All Aboard" for our 1902 CPR Station. While the train has not yet pulled away, recent developments give cause for cautious optimism.

In March the BHS received a letter from the engineering firm contracted by GO Transit to do an environmental study in conjunction with the new GO station planned for the junction of Bovaird Drive and Creditview Road. Development in the area makes upgraded GO Transit services a foregone conclusion.

BHS President Peter Murphy, seized the golden opportunity to contact the engineers, bringing to their attention the fact that we had no problem with the station being situated at the proposed location, and we also, in fact, just happened to have a station that they were most welcome to use! The CPR archives in Montreal were hastily contacted and they provided us with architectural drawings completed in January 1902 entitled the 'New' Brampton Station. These were forwarded to Sandwell Consulting Engineers Ltd.

A site meeting in Norval was scheduled for April 7th between the BHS, Sandwell engineers, GO Transit and City Planning & Building. Despite deplorable snow and ice conditions, we managed to get a glimpse of the dismantled station. Photographs of skids of bricks, massive wooden roof gables, Credit Valley brownstone window sills, doors and the huge window frames were taken from various vantage points. Because viewing was severely restricted, the GO representative suggested a second visit when some of the heavier pieces can be removed from the confines of the storage shed and examined more closely.

With momentum picking up, some members of council and city staff were prompted to get more involved. Looking at the needs of the new area, a community rental meeting space cannot be overlooked. In the absence of an appropriate facility in the vicinity, we believe this option justifies serious examination.

At the request of City Manager, Lorne McCool, a report outlining some of the history and significance of the station was hastily put together by Michael Halls, Special Projects Manager and was tabled at the April 14 City Council meeting. Following brief positive comments from Regional Councilor Susan DiMarco and Ward 6 Councilor John Hutton, council passed a motion that Mayor Susan Fennell send a letter to GO Transit 'officially' requesting that the use of our station be included in the plans for the new GO station.

The fate of our station has yet to be confirmed. Now is not the time to relax: there will be hurdles to navigate, concerns to address and compromises to be made. If the story unfolds as we hope it will, what a story it will make: a heritage train station restored to be used as a train station, not only in Peel, but in Brampton where the story started over a hundred years ago. Hollywood could not write a better ending!

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE BHS

March 20 - Annual General Meeting and Growing up in the Gore with Ralph Peck, author of "Before the Black Oxen Come", a collection of personal anecdotes.



Ralph Peck takes a moment for paws with a canine photo.

April 17 - Thoreau MacDonald's Sketches of Rural Ontario - Cultural Heritage Landscapes, presented by George Duncan, Heritage Co-ordinator for the town of Richmond Hill and special guest, Susan MacDonald.



George Duncan, well-known aficionado of Buffy's Corner, and Susan MacDonald shared the presentation of the works of her second cousin, Thoreau MacDonald, artist and son of Group of Seven member, J.E.H. MacDonald.

UP AND COMING EVENTS 2003

May 15 - Revisited Ghost Towns. Harold Wright gives a slide presentation of ghost towns, inspired by Ron Brown's book, Ghost Towns of Ontario.

May 24 - Walking Tour of Cheltenham with Shelley Craig, 1 p.m., United Church. Settled circa 1820, this quaint village promises a spring look back in time.

September 18 - Third Annual Show and Tell by BHS Members. Always a big hit with lots of surprises.

October 16 - Author and historical climatologist Steve Pitt presents "The Night of Hurricane Hazel and Its Aftermath". Where were you when it hit on October 15/16 1954? Water, water everywhere: 180 mm of rain in 24 hours, 81 people dead, 4000 families homeless, the list goes on. Join us on this Hazel Anniversary.

WHAT'S HAPPENING ELSEWHERE

Historic Bovaird House

Mothers' Day Teas: May 5 & 11 (by reservation only)

Brampton Horticultural Society "Garden Tour" with 'Mossie's Tea Room'. Sunday June 8th 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

563 Bovaird Drive, Brampton

Info: 905-874-2804 and www.bovairdhouse.ca.

Halton - Peel Branch, Ontario Genealogical Society

Sat. May. 10 9:00 a.m. Trafalgar Lawn Cemetery

Info: 905-631-9060

P.O. Box 24, Streetsville, Ontario L5M 2B7

www.hhpl.on.ca/sigs/ogshp/ogshp.htm

Friends of the Schoolhouse

Queen Victoria Fete: Family fun in the schoolhouse and schoolyard, May 24, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Strawberry Social in the atrium of H.J.A. Brown Education Centre, 5650 Hurontario Street (at Matheson) Mississauga, June 25, 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Visit the Schoolhouse:

On the 2nd Sunday of every month the Old Britannia Schoolhouse will be open from 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Info: 905-459-9158 & www.britanniaschoolhouse.org

Esqueusing Historical Society

Acton Town Hall - Heritage Acton members lead a tour of the former Town Hall and fire hall. Wed. May 14, 7:30 p.m. Acton Town Hall, Bower Avenue, Acton

Historical Terra Cotta - Local resident Ted von Zuben will lead a discussion on the history of Salmonville/Terra Cotta following the annual pot luck dinner. Wed. June 11 at 7 p.m., Community Hall, Isabella Street, Terra Cotta.

Info: www.hhpl.on.ca/sigs/ehs/home.html

Peel Heritage Complex

Faux Show Week: Inspirational ideas to get your place from lacklustre to fabulous. For homeowners seeking ideas on how to paint or decorate their living space. Free. June 25 to 30, Noon - 4:30 p.m.

Info: 905-791-4055 & www.peelheritagecomplex.org

Milton Historical Society

www.hhpl.on.ca/sigs/mhs/index.htm

BHS Meetings are on the third Thursday of the month from January to May and September to November at 7:15 p.m., Heart Lake Presbyterian Church, 25 Ruth St., Brampton. Wheelchair-accessible; free to members, others \$5.

BRAMPTON AND GUELPH MEMORIES

Ralph W. Peck

When I had the pleasure of speaking to the Brampton Historical Society on March 20th the origins of the names Brampton, Chinguacousy and Toronto were discussed. Until then I believed that Toronto was a Mohawk name for "the place where the river and the lake meet".

I have recently heard a more likely explanation. An archeology expert found, at the junction of Lakes Simcoe and Couchiching, substantial poles that appeared to have supported fish weirs driven into the bottom of the lake. It was then determined that the Mohawk name for Toronto was "trees standing in water".

My recollections of Brampton and Guelph mesh, dating from the mid-1940s, reaching back almost 60 years. When the chords of my memory resonate, recollections like the following surface.

I first met Brampton and Guelph a few weeks apart in 1945. Having left R.C.A.F. service in the spring, I started life on the Toronto Gore Township farm my family had acquired while I was away. That September I enrolled in the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph and found that Brampton was the neat-looking town between the ends of my journey.

O.A.C. and visions of green fields and cattle, hogs and poultry, sheep and horses, horticulture and bacteriology, chemistry and engineering strongly attracted out-of-work soldiers, sailors and airmen. Two hundred and sixty-five W.W.2 veterans registered for the freshman year of Year '49. The largest first year enrollment equaled the other three years combined.

The veteran-freshmen's average age was several years older than other first year students and most of the next graduates. Many were married; some with children, so living quarters were in town, not in campus residences.

Age, marital status, meals, nights and weekends spent off-campus, plus the outnumbering of freshmen to sophomores all combined to ensure that the traditional hazing did not happen to the "vet" freshmen. Hazing, though often uncomfortable for the hazzee, usually instilled a long-lasting attitude of "we stand together" and "our year is best". These veteran students, driven by an urge for immediate productive employment, studied diligently, and on graduation presented a more serious and somewhat less cohesive Year'49.

Brampton Saturday mornings were when I drove my mother to town to shop for her farm household on the Eighth Line of Toronto Gore.

My brother George and I were attending the Veterinary College in Guelph, known as the Aggie College in those days. Transport from Toronto Gore to Guelph was problematic and we were car-less. We luckily found John, a student who drove from a farm near Pickering. His friend Bill always shared the front seat of John's early vintage Chevrolet roadster. Getting a ride with

John for \$2.50 each for gas was a good deal, especially with door- to-door pick up. Spring and fall trips were fine, but winter wasn't great.

You may recall that most roadsters didn't have back seats. What this roadster and many others did have was a rumble seat. January and February trips were nippy, with George and I squeezed into the little opening in the rear of the roadster, sharing it with a freezing wind on the kinder Sunday evenings and with wet freezing sleet on nastier ones. John's motto was "the student bodies must get through". In the rumble seat, half of our two student bodies from the waist up stuck out in the wide, open frosty space.

Brampton was where leaves on the stems of lovely roses were marked with a number of small perforations, which spelled "Dale". This identified the marketers of autographed roses in a large group of greenhouses on the eastside of Highway 10, north of the town.

Brampton was also where Dr. Stirk and son Gerry practised veterinary medicine. The place and the man were where I headed for help when I found something was certainly not right with our tall, rust-spotted Appaloosa saddle mare, Scarlet O'Hara.

That June the horses were on pasture. One day when I visited them, all except Scarlet were grazing contentedly. She was lying down and looking dispirited. I managed to get her up and walked her to a stall in the barn. Neither water nor hay nor oats could tempt her to respond. I hurried to phone Dr. Stirk who was in his office and came right away. I led a reluctant Scarlet to him. She stopped in front of Dr. Stirk and fell dead, just missing him.

The autopsy revealed her insides looked as if they had been pickled. The Veterinary College reported the mare had eaten quantities of a very noxious weed, likely from the banks of the west branch of the Humber River that curved through our farm.

Guelph was also the site of another institution, the Ontario Reformatory for young offenders. One pleasant May day in 1946, at the end of my first college year, my father cheerfully drove me home to the farm for the summer. When we reached Brampton we stopped at a hardware store on the east side of Main Street. My obviously proud Dad said to the proprietor, "I'm bringing this fellow home from Guelph." The curious merchant looked me over and asked, "How long was he in for?"

Brampton was also the home of a tall blonde girl whose presence caused me to drive into town quite often. Ah, long-gone romantic youth. Now, these many decades later, an anonymous quotation may be appropriate: "When you have forgotten my kisses, and I have forgotten your name..."

Ralph Peck's book "Before the Black Oxen Come" with more memories can be purchased from him (\$18.25 incl. tax and mailing). Phone: 416.510.8163

HERITAGE HEADLINES

Michael Avis, Heritage Liaison Committee Chair

A Prize for Pam

Citizens interested in the promotion of local history and heritage were pleased to learn that Brampton Guardian staff writer, Pam Douglas, has been awarded the Commemorative Medal for the Golden Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen of Canada. The Heritage Canada Foundation cited Pam for her significant achievement and distinguished service in her area of endeavour and exemplary commitment and contribution to heritage.

Pam's insightful articles on the saving of Alder Lea, repairing the Dominion Building clock, the rebirth of the old Hewetson Shoe Factory and the fate of the CPR Station, (an issue close the hearts of the Brampton Historical Society) are delivered in an accurate and interesting manner. Our community is richer because of her and those who know that the promotion and illumination of our heritage is vitally important to the cultural development of our city realize that in Pam we have a truly gifted ally.

A Splash of Colour on the Heritage Canvas

The Brampton Cemetery on Wilson Avenue could prove to be a busy spot on Brampton Day, September 20. The city cemetery, which contains the remains of numerous prominent former local residents, will again be a popular site on the Doors Open Brampton 2003 (Sept.20-21). This year the cemetery will feature not one, but two special events!

Along with being a Doors Open Brampton site, the cemetery will see the official unveiling on Brampton Day of an Ontario Heritage Foundation plaque denoting the gravesite of John Wycliffe Forster (1850-1938) a local portrait painter (born in Norval) of international acclaim.

His subjects were a who's who of Canadian politics including Sir John A McDonald, Egerton Ryerson, William Lyon Mackenzie and William Lyon Mackenzie King plus many local prominent Brampton residents. He had the opportunity to paint Queen Victoria, Their Imperial Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan and Alexander Graham Bell.

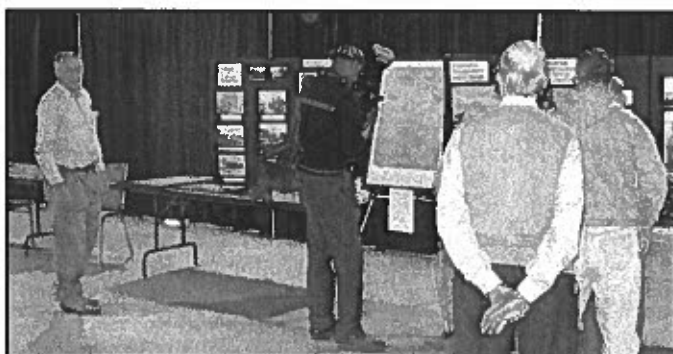
Forster's works now hang in such places as the Royal Ontario Museum, the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, the Art Gallery of Ontario and the National Gallery of Canada.

The Brampton Heritage Board thought it fitting for this sesquicentennial year that Forster receive the recognition he so richly deserves. Application was made to the Foundation who quickly endorsed the submission.

Watch for details of the plaque unveiling. Everyone is welcome to participate, taking a moment to reflect on the life of one of our most gifted sons.



Hustle and bustle at the BHS booth; Merte Middlebrook in authentic historical dress at the Peel Agricultural Society Heritage Day at the Brampton Fairgrounds on April 26.



The crowd at the BHS display on the Peel Agricultural Society Heritage Day makes way for Brampton Guardian photomeister Joel Robertson to practice his craft. BHS Treasurer Gerry Clarkson (left) thinks he has successfully avoided our camera by stepping back for this photo.

BRAMPTON FALL FAIR

150th ANNIVERSARY

September 11-14, 2003

905-843-0210



Take a break during harvest season to celebrate another sesqui event in Brampton - the 150th anniversary of the Brampton Fall Fair.

Keep an eye out for more details in The Guardian.



Kee Notes From Fred

By Fred Kee

Westervelts Corners - Number 10

This is the final story on the hamlet of Westervelts Corners, commonly remembered as "Number 10".

This farm, which contained 100 acres, more or less, is described as the east half of Lot 10 in the 1st concession of West Chinguacousy Township, west of Hurontario Street and south of Number 7 highway.

Now, on the Tremaine Map of Peel County, dated 1859, this land was deeded to George Wright, likely the same person who had owned the parcel that was the northwest corner of Main and Queen Streets. George Wright had been able to convince the Grand Trunk railway to come to Brampton and build a railway station in 1876.

In Volume 4 Number 2 of Buffy's Corner I wrote that David White purchased two acres on the east side of highway 10, part of Lot 10 Concession 1 East Chinguacousy.

Now sometime in the early 1900's David White purchased this farm from George Wright and the farm became the home of his son Stafford.

Stafford White had three of a family, George, Ida and James. About 1930 Stafford White built a service station with gas pumps on the corner of the farm to service both Highways 7 and 10.

Now son George and his wife operated this station and sold British American oil products for a few years.

I believe about 1936 this station was leased to Thompson Russell and George and his wife went farming. Ida, the daughter, married Matt Gowland, who after his war years fighting fires in Britain, returned home to become Brampton's Fire Chief, a job he held until retirement.

Upon Stafford White's retirement to a house on Bovaird Drive, James became owner of the farm.

A brief real estate boom in the fifties was to see the Kellam farm on the west half of Lot 10, which had been my birthplace, and the White farm sold for large (at that time) sums of money.

The Peel Gazette headlines of May 1953 reported the White Farm sold for \$125,000 by realtor Fred McBride to an undisclosed buyer, subject to Brampton supplying water and sewer services.

It would be many years before either of these farms would be developed.

In the sixties Kodak purchased the Kellam farm and built a very impressive factory, which was to be removed in the eighties and replaced by residential development.

It would be much later before the White Farm was developed with a mix of both commercial and residential.

At present very little open space remains and the junction of highways 7 and 10 has become a major traffic intersection with the need for road widening to accommodate daily traffic.

Let's hope this story brings back many memories.

An Even Dozen Kee Notes

Fred Kee, a founding member of the BHS, has offered his memories on the last page of Buffy's Corner for 12 issues. Readers expressed enjoyment of his homespun tales; we depended on his experience, support and contacts. Well-known for his years of voluntary vision and service to Brampton and area, Fred served as Brampton Councillor, LACAC Chair, School Board and Parole Board member, and worked for innumerable causes. He arranged the donation of Bovaird House to the City, was the "mystery man" who wound the clock (our motto) in the Dominion Building for 5 years, and organized the book From "Wolf's Den to Huttonville". Thanks to Fred we've been there. Where? In Westervelts Corners ... No 10

Application for membership in the **BRAMPTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY** (bramhis@rogers.com)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Additional Household Members: _____

Signature: _____

I enclose a Household Membership fee of \$20 for a full year

I wish to enclose an additional donation to the Society of \$ _____

Please mail cheque or money order to:
Brampton Historical Society
c/o Peter Murphy, 32 Wellington St. East
Brampton, ON L6W 1Y4
American money accepted at par