

Gathering In The Year

"It is at the Year's end that the fisherman tells of his fishing". This old Gaelic proverb inspires our final issue of Buffy's Corner in the first year of the New Millennium.

Traditionally, at year's end we look forward and make *good* resolutions for the coming year. Before we can do that, however, we need to check off the past year's achievements and mistakes.

Year 2000 came in with a bang, or did it? Remember our Y2K paranoia?

Friends had predicted my flight home from France last New Year's Day was doomed. Not so!

Charles De Gaulle Airport was devoid of tourists and bombs in the early morning hours. Parisian fireworks the previous night had been a perfect send-off. The Air France flight crew outnumbered (almost) the passengers. The champagne fizzling surpassed the Atlantic surf (almost). My Millennium dawned with a *Bon Voyage* from my French family and closed with a *Bienvenue* from my Canadian one (true).

Personal histories materialise from year-by-year events. Soon Year 2000 will be "the one that got away". Let's check out achievements before we cast our lines into the future.

Hopefully you will find this a "good news" issue. Another bumper year thanks to the BHS Boosters.

- Volunteers who devote time and energy.
- Their families who understand the devotion and make allowance and join in too.
- Presenters who super-charge our meetings with wisdom and fun.
- Heart Lake Presbyterian Church and Rev. Dawdles who offer us a meeting place.
- Andrew Cook of Peel Graphics who affords Buffy's Corner "freedom of the press" (pun intended).

We took stock. It's been a whale of a year. Now for some of those *good* resolutions!

Buffy

It is only by looking into the past that one sees the future.

Winston Churchill

Buffy's Corner

The official newsletter of the Brampton Historical Society

Conserve, Educate and Celebrate Brampton's History

Volume 2, No. 4 December 2000

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 (pun intended) lives on in the name of our journal. History "buffs" are invited into The Corner to share their stories and comments.

In This Issue:

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Electric Sparks For Cars and Parks
Prisons of Peel

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Brampton Hysterical Society Joke-of-the-Month

Buffy was at a train station looking at a beautiful 4-faced clock. She complained to the stationmaster that they all showed different times. He replied, "what would be the point of having 4 clocks if they all told the same time?"

Buffy's Corner, published 4 times per year, is free to BHS members (see back page for membership details)

Printed by Peel Graphics Inc., 10 John St. Brampton

All Aboard!!!!

Carolyn Crabtree
Marny Dadson
Sheila Martin
Lydia Robertson
Diana Tracey
Helen Varga

Remember ...
It's time to
renew your
membership
for 2001!



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

Heather Gunter

I am honoured to be chosen as President of the BHS for the second year running. We have new members and encourage everyone to renew their 2001 memberships. Everyone combined in innovative ways to conserve, celebrate and educate the history of Brampton. I would like to thank them for their efforts.

Our past four months have been most enjoyable with Dr. Terry Angle, the Men from WWII, Fred Kee's walking tour of Huttonville and horologist Martin Yates.

The Bovaird Gazebo is finally completed, thanks to Gerry Clarkson and his capable and reliable volunteers.

As president, I was honoured to represent the BHS at Woodhall Park Retirement Estate at the Remembrance Day presentation hosted by George Burrows and Bill Burrell. I attended a social tea at Mossie's Tea Room at the Historic Bovaird House, also attended by residents of Woodhall.

The 2001 programs promise to be as exciting as those of the Millennium year. We are looking forward to seeing present and future members at our Brampton Historical Society Meetings.

I don't know what our future holds, but I know who holds our future.

Note to all BHS members: the prime motivation for many of us to join the once fledgling BHS came from the demolition of the CPR railway station. The BHS is reviving that spirit with the formation of the "Save Our Station" committee. BHS Treasurer Gerry Clarkson, as Chair of the SOS committee, will get everyone on track.

What Next For Alderlea?

Michael Avis

The "For Sale" sign has gone up in front of Alderlea and she waits patiently for the next page of her history to be written. Since the end of World War II, The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 15 has been proud to call it home but has decided to search for an alternate location.

If there are any doubts as to the significance of this venerable old building, consider the following.

Kenneth Chisholm, builder of Alderlea, was a businessman of immense stature. K. Chisholm & Company occupied the three-storey Chisholm Buildings at the corner of Queen and Main Streets. The general store sold hardware, supplies and dry goods. Proving very successful at his Brampton location, Chisholm opened a branch in Orangeville (1864) which also proved profitable. He also established Eldorado Mills, a flour mill on the Credit river. He then diversified and opened a sandstone quarry at The Forks of the Credit. Between 1880 and 1900 many prominent buildings in Toronto, including the Parliament Buildings at Queen's Park, were built of K. Chisholm and Co. stone. Chisholm also found time to be a director of both the Central Bank of Canada and Ontario and the Sault Ste. Marie Railroad plus he was Vice-President of the well-known Haggert Manufacturing Company.

His call to civic duty did not go unanswered. Kenneth Chisholm was re-elected eleven times as Reeve of Brampton between 1867 and 1879. He served as Peel County Warden (1868 - 1870) and MPP for Peel (1873 - 1892). Following his retirement from Queen's Park he became Peel County Registrar until his death in 1906. If that was not enough, he was also postmaster for Brampton for 20 years, a founding member of Peel Pioneers, belonged to the Peel Militia and served as President of the Board of Trade. As beneficiaries of his philanthropy, the people of Brampton received church buildings and even a concert hall.

In the 19th century, Alderlea, with its 4-acre lot, which stretched from Main Street to Elizabeth Street, was regarded as the finest home in Peel County. The front lawn of Alderlea was purchased in 1902 to create popular local landmark Gage Park, the first municipal park in Brampton.

It is now almost 100 years since the creation of our much-loved park. Let us hope that we can again demonstrate the cultural vision and political will to make sure that now Alderlea itself forever remains in some useful capacity as a dignified monument to one of Brampton's most distinguished sons.

CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

Paul Hunt - Chair, Advocacy Committee

The latest buzz among those of us interested in preserving historic architectural and heritage buildings, was the recent awarding of the Prince of Wales Prize. This award is considered the ultimate recognition of excellence for the preservation of heritage, and was awarded to the town of Markham, the winner over nine other communities.

What they accomplished, was not done instantly. It was the culmination of years of implementing by-laws and other policies, negotiating with and cajoling builders to include historical buildings within their subdivisions as part of the development. They also established the Markham Heritage Estates subdivision, where homes can be moved and saved from the wrecker's ball. From time to time it is necessary to move a building, i.e. if a major road has been designed to go right through it. Naturally the best thing to do is to leave the building on its original lot.

Recently Heritage Markham held its 25th Anniversary Awards. The Mayor of Markham, Mr. Don Cousens, stated that one of the proudest moments of his life, was when they announced at a ceremony in Calgary, that Markham was the first winner of the Prince of Wales Prize. He also pointed out that the key to Markham's building preservation success has been the efforts of not just municipal officials, but the entire community, including LACAC's and the owners of historical buildings and homes.

The abysmal record of the City of Brampton during the same period, including its governing bodies, as well as the citizens, should make us all ashamed of our efforts and ourselves.

The recent revival in the interest of heritage preservation in the city was brought on by the request for demolition permits for two houses on Main Street South, and the pending sale of the Legion's building on Elizabeth Street South, known as Alderlea. This revival should mark the beginning of a new era in the history of Brampton. We too could be the recipients of The Prince of Wales Prize. However, it will take resolve, and probably "blood, sweat and tears".

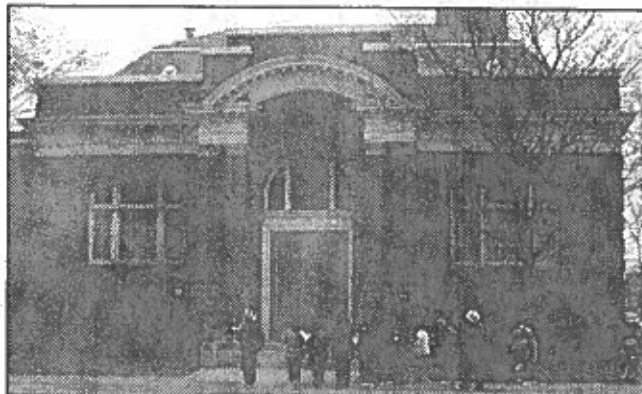
(Information taken from an article in Daily Commercial News of Oct.30/00, written by W.D. Lighthall, with permission of the author.)

Buffy's Instant Lexicon:

LACAC - Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee. In Brampton this is known as the Brampton Heritage Board and is funded by City Hall.

Pitcher Picture Pleases Peel Patron

Joyce Wright, BHS Member



This grand building was funded with \$12,500 from Andrew Carnegie and still wows architectural aficionados.

One weekend when browsing through antique shops, I discovered a group of little china pitchers with pictures on them. As I picked one up, I noticed a picture of the old Brampton Library. The writing on it said "Carnegie Library, Brampton, Ontario". The shop owner told me he had collected pictorials for 30 years, many with Niagara Falls and Toronto on them, since they were souvenirs. He had never seen one with Brampton on it.

It was made in Germany - the picture was put on at the time of production. I bought the little treasure but was puzzled by the name "Carnegie" on it.

Although I have lived in Brampton for over 35 years, I have never heard the name Carnegie associated with any building in Brampton. With an interest in historical buildings, I have been on "Friends of Bovaird House" for ten years.

Andrew Carnegie, the American philanthropist, gave money to libraries around the world; Brampton's was constructed in 1906. Andrew Carnegie was one of America's most successful businessmen and perhaps the world's richest man. He was committed to the notion that education was life's key.

Carnegie was convinced of the power of access to information, which he learned from the libraries he grew up with. It was a lesson he never forgot, and it motivated him to start the campaign to fund libraries throughout the world. By the time he died in 1919, he had given away over \$350 million.

His legacy lives on in the hundreds and hundreds of libraries that his wealth made possible. Brampton's Carnegie Library is the only such library in Peel.

The Carnegie Library was designated by the City of Brampton under the Ontario Heritage Act on January 25, 1982. Ed.

BHS HAPPENINGS: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

September 21

Prisons and Reformatories in Early Upper Canada with Dr. Terry Angle.

See the article on page 7

October 19

Brampton Remembers - Stories From Our Second World War Veterans: Bob Post, George "Potsy" Burrows, Bill Burrell, Bill Bettridge, and Donald Campbell



Help, she's surrounded! Bill Bettridge, Bob Post, Bill Burrell, and George "Potsy" Burrows captivated BHS President Heather Gunter as well as the audience of 75 people.

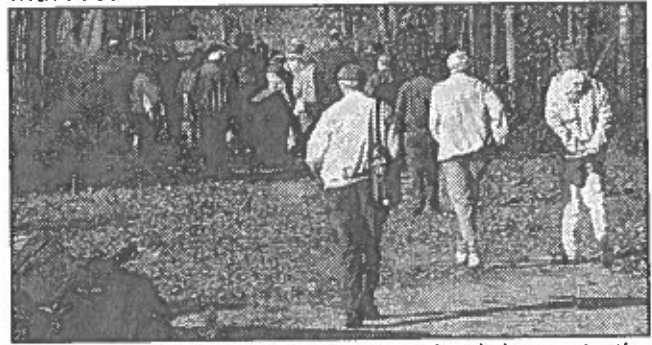
We saw the human side of a terrible time. Special thanks to BHS member Arthur Alder who provided his posters as an authentic setting for the presentation.



BHS Military Authority Arthur Alder with Bill Burrell.

Saturday, October 21

Autumn Walking Tour of Huttonville Village with Fred "Mr. Huttonville" Kee



A plethora of historical enthusiasts make their way to the Credit River.

The tour featured Park, Powerhouse, Woollen Mills, Dam Site and vintage houses of the village with a fine lunch afterwards at the historic Huttonville United Church.



Knit one, purl two: Jack Hassell shows off a weaving machine in the Woollen Mill during the Huttonville walking tour.



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Generators Since 1933

Buffy's Corner is printed thanks to the generosity of Peel Graphics Inc.

BHS HAPPENINGS: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

November 16

Martin Yates and The Craft of Watch-making

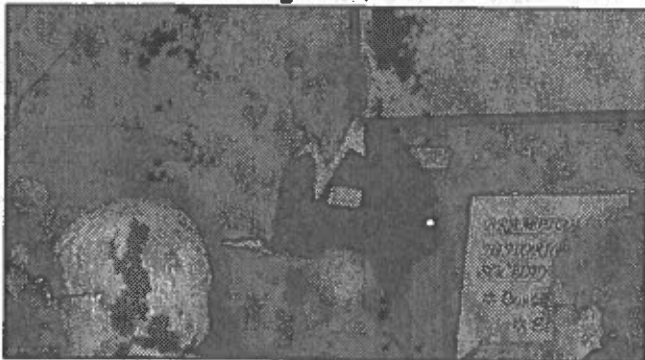


Everyone's geared up for a demonstration by Martin Yates

Horologist Martin Yates gave an informative presentation on the history of timepieces; at the end he clocked in with a report on recent developments and goings-on with the Dominion Clock Tower which came from Midland Clock Works, Darbyshire: bushings in the pillow blocks might be seized. He has sent pictures and information about its current difficulties to a Boston company familiar with this type of clock.

TIMEPIECES
Repairs and Sales of Antique and Modern Watches & Clocks
R. M. Yates
HOROLOGIST
118 Mill Street
(West of Main Street)
Georgetown, ON G7C 2C8
905-873-8980

Annual General Meeting



Pro Tem chair Paul Willoughby gets nominations from the floor for the 2001 BHS executive. After the Florida recount came in, the BHS Executive looked like this ...

President..... Heather Gunter
Past President..... Paul Hunt
Vice President..... Michael Avis
Treasurer..... Gerry Clarkson
Recording Secretary..... Janice Smith
Corresponding Secretary..... Peter Murphy

BHS NEWSMAKERS

Webmaster Brian Bonsma is building a website for the BHS: www.bramptonhistoricalsociety.com. At press time, the site is under construction but worth a visit.

Congratulations to BHS member Rowena Cooper who received a "2000 Heritage Recognition Program" award from the Ontario Heritage Foundation for her commitment to heritage preservation through her volunteer activities with various heritage organisations in Peel Region over the last 25 years, and at Peel Heritage Complex for over three decades.

BHS Past President Michael Seaman has resigned as Chair of the Program Committee. We appreciate his efforts and contributions to the BHS's early success.

Kudos to Albert Seaman for his new web site, which is now up and running at www.axxent.ca/~alseam.

Thanks to Kay Drew and Joan Hutchins who will organise refreshments for monthly meetings in 2001. Elsie Tindale will assist.

Also thanks to Marge Gibson who will send out occasion cards on behalf of the BHS and Al Brooks who will set up before and after meetings.

Congratulations to Mayor-elect Susan Fennell on her historic Citizen's Agenda victory.

We've Got Mail!

Dear Editors,

I received Buffy's Corner today. Once again you have intrigued me and expanded my local history horizons. I joined the BHS because your newsletter seemed to have such an active and with-it group behind it. Your meeting schedule seemed so varied. The walking tours especially interest me. I picked up a copy at the Peel Archives ... and wanted to let you know how much I enjoy your publication.

Yours truly,
Gayle Dzis

FORESHADOWING WINTER'S WINNERS

January 18, "Canada's Newspaper Legend - The Story of J. Douglas MacFarlane" with Richard MacFarlane

February 15, History of Caledon with Heather Broadbent

March 3, "Antiques Road Show" Noon - 4:00 p.m. joint venture of the BHS and Historic Bovaird House at HBH. Appraisals by Ward Brownridge for \$5 an item.

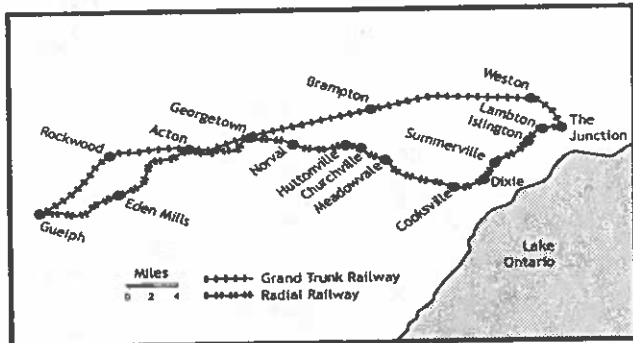
March 15, "Researching Heritage Homes" with Diane Allengame-Kuster

April 19, "I Remember Sunnyside" with Mike Filey

ELECTRIC SPARKS FOR CARS AND PARKS

Buffy the Editor

The Grand Trunk Railway brought Brampton commerce and prominence as "County Town". But the Radial Railway gave our surrounding villages notoriety. Leisure time, a new phenomenon a century ago, drove city folks to ride the radial for fun in the sun.



The Toronto Suburban Railway (1917 - 1931)

Map courtesy of Trillium Graphics and Information Design

The Toronto Suburban Railway opened in 1917 with four passenger cars driven by 1500-volt direct-current motors. Averaging more than 25 to 40 miles per hour (when on straight stretches of track), the TSR brought Torontonians to Eldorado and Huttonville Parks, affectionately dubbed "electric parks". Amusement rides, boating and swimming, pavilions, playgrounds - ideal spots for reunions and church picnics. Not to mention the exciting trip there, of which one passenger said, "The thing went so fast and swayed so much that I thought it would leave the tracks at every one of the sharp curves on the line."

Summer cottages sprang up along the Credit River. The Toronto-Guelph line carried passengers and goods (milk, flour, bricks etc.). Streetsville, Churchville, Meadowvale and Norval were convenient stops along the way with platforms or wooden shelters. Georgetown led with the finest station and an electrical substation. Toronto and Guelph had mere waiting rooms.

The last trip on the TSR, August 15, 1931, signalled the end of thrilling adventures (especially in snowstorms and thunderstorms). The TSR was not profitable.

Its problematic and costly construction through rough terrain had lasted five years. World War 1, The Great Depression, and the development of automobiles and trucks transformed the times and ultimately brought about the decline of the radial railway.

Steam railroad entrepreneur/developers - Sir William Mackenzie and Sir Donald Mann - were forced to hand over control to the government-owned Canadian National Electric Railways Company.

The Toronto Suburban Electric Street Line did advance transportation. Initially the "glorified streetcar" was touted as the ideal mode of travel. An electric-powered railway coach, rolling over tracks on roads, was faster and cheaper than horses and carriages.

The Metropolitan Street Railway had opened in the late 1800's to shunt along Yonge Street. The village of Aurora to the extreme north noted iron rails weighing 275 kilograms being hauled six at a time by horse-drawn wagon from steam railway stations to be laid for tracks. Would the radial reach further?

Reach it did. It radiated in all directions; The Toronto and Mimico Railway, The Toronto and Scarboro Electric Railway, Toronto & York Radial Railway Company, The Schomberg and Aurora Railway, and the TSR.

The Radial Railway brought people to new places where communities took hold. It activated modern interurban sprawl and commuter-chaos highways.

Today in a field at Creditview Road and Steeles Avenue, electric utility poles stand facing north to Eldorado Park, forlorn and forgotten markers of The Toronto Suburban Railway, final link of the Radial Railway.

Resources:

From "Wolf's Den" to Huttonville, 1996

Halton County Radial Railway @ <http://www.hcry.org/>

Stamp, Robert M., Riding the Radials, The Boston Mills Press, 1989.

Wellington County History, Volume 4, 1991

BHS ACHIEVES IMMORTALITY ON CELLULOID!

Rowena Cooper, Reference Archivist, Peel Archives

In the middle of September part of the Museum and the Archives at the Peel Heritage Complex were turned back into a Jail.

A made-for-TV movie starring Lou Gossett Jr. and Robert Urich called "For Love of Olivia" was partially shot in the Complex with the Archives becoming the entrance to the "Logan County Jail".

When the set director was setting up the props, she placed a desk right in front of the Archives card file catalogue with the notice board immediately above it. Very carefully she took the pile of BHS newsletters turned each one to a different page and pinned them all over the notice board. They looked pretty good too!

We hope that the shot of the notice board does not end up on the cutting-room floor!

BHS Meetings every third Thursday, 7:15 p.m.
Heart Lake Presbyterian Church
25 Ruth Street, Brampton

PRISONS OF PEEL

Dr. Terry Angle Chief Education Officer
Ministry of Correctional Services

My presentation to the BHS focused on how correctional jurisdictions throughout the western world gradually shifted from punishing to trying to rehabilitate offenders. The shift in social thinking brought about by penal reformers, clergy, philosophers and correctional administrators occurred primarily during the 19th century.

There was a cross-fertilisation of ideas that originated in Europe that were tried in North America and vice-versa. Reform notions were freely exchanged and correctional experiments were tried on both sides of the Atlantic. Correctional systems were revolutionised as a variety of experiments related to penal reform were initiated.

During the BHS speaking engagement, I intentionally avoided talking about prisons in the Region of Peel but will now review some of the experiments carried out in this part of Ontario.

The first jail of significance in Peel County was the Brampton Jail on Wellington Street. One of 32 stone jails built in Upper Canada and Ontario during the nineteenth century, it was adjacent to the courthouse. It served the area from 1867 until 1977. With a construction cost of \$17,000, it contained 25 cells without windows, air vents or indoor plumbing. By the time the place closed two or three men were kept in cells designed to hold one person. Today the old jail serves as a museum and art gallery in The Region of Peel Heritage Complex.

The first programme-oriented correctional facility in Peel was the Brampton Ontario Training Centre situated on several acres of land at the corner of McLaughlin Rd. and Queen St. It was modelled after the Elmira State Reformatory in New York State. The specialised institution opened in 1947 and provided rehabilitative programmes for young adult first offenders between the ages of 16 and 21. Academic and trade-training programmes were available. It was closed in 1977 and for awhile served as the training centre for the Ontario Provincial Police. Today parts of it are used as a temporary school by the Peel District School Board.

The Ontario Women's Guidance Centre, commonly referred to as Ingleside, opened in 1959 south of the men's correctional facility. Ingleside was the first half-way house established for female offenders in Ontario and some of the women who served time at the Andrew Mercer Reformatory in Toronto were transferred here towards the end of their sentences. Halfway houses were a popular reform notion in the 1950's. Ingleside operates today as part of the Vanier Centre for Women.

The Vanier Centre opened in 1969 just as the Mercer Reformatory was closing. Another correctional experiment in our region it, combined milieu therapy

with a modern prison-design concept popularised in California. It was named after the late Madame Vanier, wife of the former Governor General of Canada.

Soon the adult female offenders will be moved to a new facility in Milton. The institution will then be retrofitted and expanded to become the largest young offender facility in Ontario.

The Ontario Correctional Institute was yet another correctional experiment in Brampton. Opened as a treatment centre in 1974, it continues to operate with the same focus. It will be closed within the next two to three years as other treatment units are established elsewhere in the provincial correctional system.

Peel Region has seen a variety of correctional experiments. Ideas, trends and initiatives that were spawned elsewhere in the world made their way here. The experiments introduced here, although not original, helped transform the correctional system in Ontario.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Historic Bovaird House

Open House

SE corner Kennedy Road and Bovaird Drive, Brampton
December 2 & 3, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Info: 905.874.2804, bovairdhouse@hotmail.com

Halton - Peel Branch, Ontario Genealogical Society

Halton Region Museum & Archives

Linda Twitchell, Paul Attack, Tim Kingsbury

Sunday, January 28, 2:00 p.m.

Chinguacousy Branch - Brampton Public Library

150 Central Park Drive, Brampton

Info: call Dorothy Kew 905.631.9060

Friends of the Schoolhouse

The Old Britannia Schoolhouse Christmas Open House

An opportunity to purchase a variety of stocking stuffers, reminiscent of times gone by, see The Schoolhouse decorated for Christmas, and enjoy Christmas music, mulled cider and goodies.

December 3, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Info: 905.459.9158

Esqueusing Historical Society

Barber Brothers and Their Families

Join Mary Finley as she explores the role of her Barber ancestors in the history of Georgetown and Streetsville.

Wednesday, January 10, 7:30 p.m.

Knox Presbyterian Church, Georgetown.

KEE NOTES FROM FRED

Fred Kee



What's cookin'? Fred Kee kicks back with a delicious tale.

It is obvious that electricity was one of the greatest assets to the growth and economy of Brampton.

It was in 1896 that James Oscar Hutton (son of James Patterson Hutton), well-known lumberman and Reeve of Peel County, built a powerhouse and installed a generator driven by a Leffel water wheel which required a 7½-foot head of water to power his woollen mill.

About the same year, he erected a 2,200-volt power line to Brampton where at that time the

street lighting was furnished by old carbide lamps that had to be lit each night.

A new arc lamp in front of the Queen's hotel (Queen's Square Building) shone so brightly that it enabled people as far away as the railway crossing on Queen Street to read the small type of a newspaper.

In 1903 John McMurchy purchased the property from Oscar Hutton and continued to supply power to Brampton until 1912 when a plebiscite vote by a close decision switched its power supply to the fledgling Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario, which had come into existence May 14, 1906.

By this time several subscribers were enjoying hydro which included William Shoes, Brampton Knitting Mills, Haggert Foundry and some of the more prosperous stores on Main and Queen Streets.

The power plant remained in operation for many years, supplying power to McMurchy Mills, both in Huttonville and Brampton. It also ran the carding and shodding machine as well as the gristmill that was housed in the powerhouse.

Many of the houses in Huttonville enjoyed Hydro many years before Ontario Hydro came to Huttonville. In 1954 the side dam of the mill raceway was washed out with the help of Hurricane Hazel thus ending the operation of the powerhouse and Huttonville Woollen Mills.

Remember ...

**It's time to renew your membership for 2001!
It's easy!! Just send us the form below .**

**Gerry said to be assertive with this reminder...
so we used bold type.**

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Additional Household Members: _____

Signature: _____

I enclose a Household Membership fee of \$20 for a full year or \$10 for a half 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
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