

# Great Fall - 20<sup>th</sup> Century

The curtain rises on the last fall of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The stage is set with the echoing cry, "where has the summer gone?" Here comes autumn sparking us with vitality as our school year and organizations get rolling, firing our countryside with blazing colour and warming our fairs and celebrations. Fall 1999 heats up the final countdown to the millennium.

In this issue of Buffy's Corner we hear the school bell ring at McHugh Public School. Last year on its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, many former students and teachers exchanged stories of the good old days. Are the present-day pupils still called "McHughcumbers" as their predecessors were affectionately known?

Our favourite organization, the Brampton Historical Society, gathered at Bovaird House on September 13, joining with the "Friends of Bovaird" to enjoy refreshments and a tour and talk by James Townsend. The question of the evening, "how can our two groups amalgamate to become a stronger voice for the history of Brampton?" was warmly discussed in the lovely setting of Brampton's one and only City-protected historic home.

We look back at the unforgettable event of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, World War Two. Our unsuspecting world and a whole race of people were targeted for annihilation. Although we battled to put out the fires of madness, we were left with heaps of rubble, smoldering ash and ugly scars. We will never forget.

And the rest is history,

Buffy

We are saddened by the passing of Russell Cooper on September 27<sup>th</sup>. A memorial service to celebrate his life was held at Grace United Church on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Over 500 people gathered: family, friends, those whose lives he touched in his lifetime of giving and living. His presence was felt in the many tributes.

To me, Russell was as unique as the one candle glowing at the front of the church. With camera-like focus and precision, he recalled people and events from yesteryears. With a gardener's devotion he cultivated ideas and institutions. Quietly unassuming, he had time to listen and share with an incomparable wit and twinkle in his eyes. Among the superlatives well-deserved by him, may I add - "Russ, you were a super guy."

# Buffy's Corner

The official newsletter of the Brampton Historical Society  
*Conserve, Educate and Celebrate Brampton's History*

Newsletter #5

October 1999

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 pioneering 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:

A Tribute to Russell Cooper  
Brampton's Bovaird House  
Memories of McHugh  
BHS Elections

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**Brampton Hysterical Society Joke-of-the-Month**  
September 9<sup>th</sup>, 1999. 9/9/99. And Angie's lucky number is the number nine. So that day, she went to the races, waited until the ninth race and bet nine dollars on horse number 9. And it worked!!!! ... He finished ninth.

*Buffy's Corner, published 5 times per year, is free to BHS members (see back page for membership details)*

## All Aboard!!!!

New members: welcome to the BHS!

Bill Blance	Naomi Bruffe
Colin Campbell	Kay Drew
Andrew Jackson	Danielle Jackson
David Rupoli	Elaine Rupoli
Albert Seaman	Elizabeth Seaman

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

After an eventful summer, the Brampton Historical Society is now gearing up for an exciting Fall season of historical activities and presentations, which I'm sure you will find entertaining.

This past July, I was pleased to welcome many of you to our first annual old-time Summer Festival at Downey's Farm, despite extremely hot weather. Thanks to the hard work of our membership, in particular our Programming and Outreach committees, a great time was had by all. Special thanks must go out to our volunteers, vendors, crafts people, car show participants, the Lorne Scots Museum and Downey's Farm for helping to make it a success.



*Heather Gunter welcomes Spinner Jennifer O'Shaughnessy to the Lorne Scots tent at the old-time Summer Festival*

Special thanks must also go out to Bill Blance for his interesting talk on the history of Lacrosse in Brampton, and to the Great War Flying Museum in Caledon for a thoroughly entertaining tour of their facility, and demonstration of their aircraft. For those of you who were not able to join us I encourage you to visit this outstanding historical site, located on our very own doorstep.

Our scheduled events this fall include a tour of Churchville Village in October and a major speaking event in November to conclude our successful first year as a society. I look forward to seeing you there.

Michael Seaman

## Brampton's Bovaird House

Michael Avis, Chair, Architecture Committee



*Photo Courtesy of Friends of Bovaird*

In July 1821, John Silverthorn received a grant of 100 acres in Chinguacousy Township. The December after the accidental shooting of his wife he sold the land to Peter Chisolm, a Scottish immigrant. In 1840, Chisolm built the early Georgian-style farmhouse. The property remained in the Chisolm family for over 100 years.

James Bovaird and his wife Fanny Ward purchased the house in 1929 and following his death in 1938 the property passed to his son William and his wife Mossie. William won considerable acclaim as a horse breeder and was Reeve of Chinguacousy Township and Superintendent of Roads. Mossie served as a local schoolteacher.

Anxious that the house be preserved, Mossie Bovaird donated the house to the City of Brampton in 1985.

Today, knowledgeable tour guides answer questions and accompany you through rooms reminiscent of a bygone era. The grounds have been re-established with roses, plants, orchards and herb gardens.

Before leaving you can browse the "Carriage House Gift Shop". Local artisans proudly display and sell their crafts. A portion of all sales is re-invested in the house to help defray maintenance and upkeep.

Steadfast and solid for 160 years, Bovaird House, an architectural treasure of early Ontario, is still very much alive and stands ready to welcome you.

Although admission is free, donations to assist with ongoing restoration programs are gratefully accepted. Bovaird House is open Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Facility rentals are available; school tours are given on request. Phone 905.874.2300

### BHS Committee Chairs

Advocacy .... Paul Hunt	Newsletter .. Dorothy Willis
Architecture Michael Avis	Outreach .... Susan Barnes
Financial..... Gerry Clarkson	Programme . Tricia Carlos
Fundraising.. Chris Kuhlman	Publicity..... Angela Dushesne
Membership. Denyse Churchill	Research .... Dorothy Willis

## BHS HAPPENINGS: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE



Speaker Bill Blance presents the prestigious Mann Cup  
Photo Courtesy of Heather Gunter

On Monday, June 14 - Bill Blance presented "A Look at Lacrosse", Brampton's oldest sport, the role it played and continues to play. He was able to bring the Mann Cup as well as other memorabilia of the sport. Some of the audience shared their own lacrosse experiences.



Fred Kee, Bill Blance, Mike Seaman and Harold Oakley carried the ball (pun intended) for the evening.  
Photo Courtesy of Heather Gunter

On the July 17-18 weekend - The BHS Summer Festival at Downey's Farm. The Lorne Scots display was one of the focal points of the two-day event.

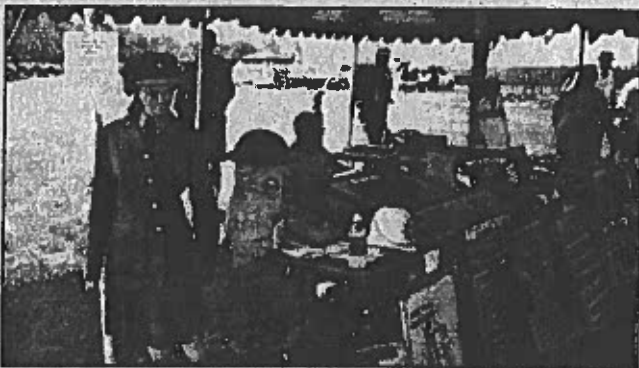


Photo Courtesy of Heather Gunter

On Monday, September 13th - James Townsend, Chair of the Friends of Bovaird House committee gave a tour of Bovaird House for BHS Members. The tour concluded with discussions over coffee and tea.

On Saturday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> - Bob Crouch, Chair of the Churchville Heritage Committee will give a day-long tour of Churchville Village starting at 9:30 am. The tour concludes with coffee and tea.

On Monday, November 4<sup>th</sup> - Mike Filey, noted Toronto historian and Toronto Sun columnist, will be our guest speaker. His books will be on sale during the evening. 7:30 p.m., Cyril Clark Library Theatre

On Thursday, November 18<sup>th</sup> - The BHS will hold a business meeting, including elections for the year 2000 executive. Read elsewhere in this issue for more information.

## WHERE IN THE WORLD???



Photo Courtesy of the Brampton Flying Club

Actually, this was a trick question because the location is not in Brampton. Thanks to photographer and history buff Albert Seaman of Brampton for his answer that the photo is of the Brampton Flying Club, which is now in Caledon. That'll teach Buffy's Corner to try and pull a fast one!

This issue's Where in the World ??? ...



This photo was taken in Brampton. Where? Send your guesses to Buffy's Corner for bragging rights next issue!!

## MEMORIES OF McHUGH



*Miss Huxley and her Grade 2 Class, McHugh School, Nov. 1945.  
Photo Courtesy of BHS member Dr. Bob Hiscox*

Former student Bob Hiscox recalls: McHugh School was an eight-room school; the teachers were all unmarried and female. Arnott Charlton was the Principal. He had a standing challenge to the students: anyone who could beat him in a race around the fairground track (across the street) would win a one-day holiday for the school. John McQueen succeeded at this, much to the appreciation of his schoolmates.

The school had a dental room which also doubled as a nurse's room. Five dentists volunteered for a half day each week to give check-ups and fix teeth. All the kids looked forward to visiting the dentists!

Former Vice-Principal and Principal, Eva Norman tells of a school with air recycled every 20 minutes when it was built in 1923. Fresh air, brought in from eight feet above the ground, was warmed in the boiler room and sent to classrooms. Also new were tack boards made of burlap over soft wood for pinning up students' drawings and sewing.

Rubbish was burned behind the school and when digging began in 1997, old inkwells and milk bottles dating back to the 1920's were found. School assemblies took place on the landing with students standing on the stairs. In the 50's the school yard was flooded for skating in the winter. In the basement was an all-purpose room with a well that still exists, but is not used today.

Originally named McHugh Memorial School in honour of T.H. McHugh, Principal of Brampton Schools, it was built at the cost of \$58,000. In 1923, 18 Brampton public school teachers taught 800 students; 7 high school teachers, 240 students. The Conservator predicted, "Brampton will have an edifice to which she may point with pride." 76 years later Bob, Eva and countless others are still proud of their McHugh Days.

## THE CARNAGE CONTINUES

Paul Hunt  
Chair, Advocacy Committee

Last spring, there appeared to be a glimmer of hope on the horizon as the city of Brampton held a seminar put on by the Brampton Heritage Board for City councilors. At that time, the mayor invited the members of The Heritage Board and the Brampton Historical Society to his office, where he unveiled a sketch he had made of his concept of the new "Market Square".

Included in this sketch was the rebuilt CPR station located where the old Heritage Theatre sits today. Somehow or other, it disappeared from that concept plan and was never heard of again. Surely, if the city is going to spend \$20 million on this plan, sufficient funds can be found to resurrect the station also.

The Hunter houses, along with others in the Fletcher's Meadow development have been disappearing throughout the summer as well. Another one to go soon is sitting on Mclaughlin Road just north of Bovaird, where the city advertised last week for someone to "move" a house for a development to be built or a demolition permit would have to be issued. It would appear that the unofficial motto of the planning department of "Move it or Lose It" still seems to be in force.

1231058 Ontario Inc. has appealed to the city to demolish a designated home they bought on Bramalea Rd. because it would cost too much to repair. Isn't it about time that developers realize that when they purchase a property, which is a heritage resource and so designated, part of the cost of doing business in Brampton is the restoration of the property they have taken ownership of? We trust the Heritage Board and the City will take the proper action on this issue.

The proposed construction of a 25-story condominium on John Street does not seem to fit in with one of the oldest and most beautiful churches as well as the much lower buildings in the downtown area (including the new city hall) in Brampton. Wouldn't a building on the order of 12 or 14 stories fit in with the immediate surroundings a little bit better?

As I said, the carnage continues.

History and biography are open books in which great lessons for our guidance are taught by living illustrations." E.H. Dewart.

## **AROUND THE HORN**

History happens in the Flowertown ...

### **Bovaird House**

5653 Bovaird Drive  
Brampton, Ontario

Christmas Open House  
November 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Carriage House Crafts Christmas Show  
December 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

### **Peel Heritage Complex**

Christmas Open House  
November 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>

Carriage House Crafts Christmas Show  
December 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>

### **Mapmaker, Mapmaker, Make Me a Map ...**

The Millennium Atlas Reprint is undertaking a reprint of the 1877 Walker and Miles Historical Atlas of Peel County. Since the original printing, there have been three more and continued requests go unfilled.

Undocumented is the rumour that after the first printing of the Atlas, a husband was quoted as saying, while driving his carriage: "I don't need an Atlas, I know exactly where we are."

The more things change ...

Contact the Heritage Complex for more information.

### **Halton-Peel Branch**

#### **Ontario Geneological Society**

Celebration of 25 years of Looking Back  
Saturday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 1999  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Lionhead Golf & Country Club  
8525 Mississauga Road  
Brampton, Ontario

Cost: \$25 (includes lunch & coffee)

### **Democracy Rules the BHS**

On Thursday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, the BHS will hold a business meeting at which elections for next year's executive will be held. An insert with this issue gives you the chance to nominate your choices for the BHS executive. The positions to be filled are:

President

Vice-President

Treasurer

Corresponding Secretary

Recording Secretary

Legal Counsel

Russell King Cooper

January 18, 1926 - September 27, 1999

### **A Lifetime of History -**

### **A Tribute to Russell Cooper**

Sharon Larade

Collections Registrar & Regional Archivist  
Peel Heritage Complex

We acknowledge, with deepest regret, the death of Russell Cooper.

Without Russ's tenacity and hard work, it is fair to say that the Complex probably wouldn't exist. As President of the Peel County Historical Society, he established here in Brampton a museum of regional importance, bringing professional standards of management and exhibition to what had, till that time, been little more than a collection of artifacts stored in basements and barns. Russ's personal passion for collecting and his generous gifts to the Complex are his legacy to the community.

Russ was a founding member of the three Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committees in the Region of Peel. In addition, he received national acclaim for his work as the administrator of Black Creek Pioneer Village, from which he retired in 1991.

Russ's interests were not only in the heritage field - he also served as a member of the Brampton Police Commission, the Ontario Police Commission and was an honorary member of the Police Association of Ontario. He also served on the board of Peel Memorial Hospital, the Credit Valley School of Nursing, and the Credit Valley Conservation Authority.

But heritage was his love, and it was in the heritage field that he excelled. Whether it was volunteering at the Mormon Family History Centre, tracking down long forgotten churches and cemeteries, helping the Halton Peel Ontario Geneological Society, or sleuthing his own genealogical connections, Russ never flinched from challenge. In fact, he delighted in uncovering the historical truths and was always generous in sharing his work, his thoughts and his opinions. We will all miss his wisdom and advice.

We extend our deepest sympathies to his wife Rowena and the entire Cooper family.

A memorial fund is being set up in Russell's memory. Donations will be accepted at the Peel Heritage Complex.

## BHS HISTORY MAKERS

Tricia Carlos and Michael Seaman are "tying the knot" with their wedding on October 2, 1999. Congratulations and best wishes!!

James Townsend is moving from Brampton shortly. An active member and Chair of The Friends of Bovaird House and charter member of the BHS, James was honoured at our recent visit to Bovaird House. President Michael Seaman gave him a gift in appreciation of his contribution to the BHS.

Mr. and Mrs. Downey of Downey's Farm generously provided us with a venue for our summer festival and gave a donation to the BHS. Many of our visitors commented on the great facilities for all ages at the farm and our thoughtfulness in arranging for lovely hot summer days to remember next winter.

Michael Seaman presented Bovaird House with an 1850's map of Brampton to be stored at the Bovaird House until the time when we have a place of our own to house it.

## BRAMPTON GOES TO WAR

September, 1939 ushered in World War Two with the townfolk of Brampton and their fellow Canadians initially reacting as slowly as the very news itself, broadcast via telephone, telegraph and typewriter in the pre-"on-the-spot" televising era.

On September 1, Hitler invaded Poland. This was followed two days later by two events: Britain and France declared war; and a German submarine torpedoed the passenger liner Athenia. This tragedy off the coast of Ireland killed 112 passengers, many of

whom were Canadian. On September 10, Canada declared war.

Volunteers headed to the Brampton Armouries where the Lorne Scots under Lt. Col. Louis Keene and Major Lent were mobilizing two companies and two provost sections. The rate of pay for a private soldier was \$1.30 per day.

Knowing that sugar and flour would soon be scarce, many began hoarding supplies. The Brampton Conservator reported on September 7 that "shopkeepers expressed the opinion that the sales volume reached about eight times the volume and some who left the buying till the last minute found limits had been put on quantities to be purchased." Homes were readied to billet soldiers from neighbouring counties until they moved to Liverpool in January, 1940.

During the war more men served with the Lorne Scots than any other unit and the regiment fought in every theatre of war that involved Canadian troops except Hong Kong.

At home, fund-raising events took place at Huttonville Park. Sing-a-longs and community get-togethers were held on Sunday nights. The crowds watched the latest hit movies such as *Gone With The Wind*, followed by the names of local lads being flashed across the screen. During the summer, big bands played on the open stage under the stars. The money raised bought cigarettes, a luxury for soldiers overseas.

Sacrifices continued until the end of the war as Brampton did its bit for Canada and the Empire.



### Application for membership in the BRAMPTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number : \_\_\_\_\_

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 Denyse Churchill, 85 Wellington St. East  
Brampton, ON L6W 1Y6