

Heritage on the Hill

The Richmond Hill Historical Society, P.O. Box 61527, 9350 Yonge St., Richmond Hill, ON L0C 0C9
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September / October 2012



President's Greetings

From the desk of Andrea Kulesh



Greetings to everyone. I hope that everyone enjoyed their summer. It gives me great pleasure to say that our Executive has arranged for some very interesting programming lined up for the fall season.



Kevin and Norman and selections from their collection

Of course we have to mention the wonderful program that our own members, Kevin Dark and Norman McMullen, treated us to in June at the Strawberry Social. Once again, they regaled us with interesting new royal tidbits about the six decades of Queen Elizabeth II's reign and invited us to join them in celebrating her Diamond Jubilee.

The decorations they brought back from their trip to England were lovely. They also put on a very interesting display of an assortment of highlights from their collection of royal memorabilia. Some of the pieces dated back to Queen Victoria. We appreciate all the effort that Kevin and Norman put into making the evening special.

Paul Dillman won the door prize which was a commemorative miniature china tea set to honour the Jubilee. It just happens that his

wife, Brenda, collects miniature tea sets!

Thank you to everyone else who helped to make the annual Strawberry Social very successful. I know we all enjoyed having a great dessert with Ontario strawberries and ice cream as well. Yummy!

Hope to see you all at the fall monthly meetings!



Show a leg! Kevin's sock
(Pictures by Marj Andre)

Upcoming Events

September Meeting

Our September 17th speaker will be Matthew Somerville who has been Heritage and Urban Design Planner for the Town of Richmond Hill since 2011. He will speak to us about Richmond Hill's rural past and the opportunity to connect a new

generation of residents to this history through the vector of food.

October Meeting

"The Curtain Club - 59 Years and Counting: a Journey"

Brian Moore has been a member of the Curtain Club for 43 years and is now the Director. On October 15th

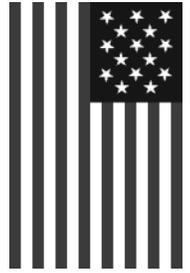
he will speak to us about the formation of the theatre company and how they got to their present location and building and their development into the company they are today.





Remembering the War of 1812 During its 200th Anniversary

Cameron Knight



The Mary Lou Griffin Local History Collection is pleased to present a four part series on the War of 1812. On July 12, 1812, American General William Hull led an American militia force of 1,000 men across the Detroit River and occupied the Canadian town of Sandwich (Windsor). This was the first act of aggression by the Americans after war was declared on Great Britain on June 18. Whether you believe that this war began the process that led to confederation in Canada or that the war was little more than a skirmish between American militia men and British army regulars, you will want to attend this four part series which seeks to give fresh and diverse interpretations of the war. You will learn about the widows and orphans the war created, about the war's impact on the Quakers, Mennonites and Tunkers (the non-resistant Christians), we'll have the First Nations perspective and finally, in terms of local history, we'll learn about how Markham Township farmer John Button established his own cavalry troop called the "Markham Dragoons."

All talks will be held at Richmond Hill Central Library, Meeting Room A. They will be from 10:30 am to 11:30 am and the price will be 5:00 per talk. Interested persons are asked to pre-register at the Central Library's Full Service Desk.

Those Left Behind: Widows and Orphans of the War of 1812, Saturday, September 22, 2012

When Upper Canada Militia men died in the War of 1812, what happened to their wives and children? Professional genealogist and published author, Janice Nickerson will discuss the fallout of this conflict from the perspective of the families left behind. Case studies will draw on her book York's Sacrifice: Militia Casualties and the War of 1812.

A Different Call of Duty: Non-resistant Christians in the War of 1812, Saturday October 27, 2012

Most Quakers resisted any acts of compliance with the military effort during the War of 1812, yet most Mennonites and Tunkers (Brethren in Christ) were active in a range of services that sometimes drew them very close to the war and in some cases, into battle. Author and translator Jonathan Seiling will provide an overview of the locations and activities during the war, of some of these non-resistant Christians, both men and women.

Six Nations and Their Native Allies in the War of 1812, Saturday, November 24, 2012

Many know of the story of Isaac Brock and his death at Queenston Heights on October 12, 1812 but many are unaware of the significant participation of the Six Nations and their native allies in this battle. Even the Battle of York on April 27, 1813 is informed by allegiances among the British and First Nations. Mohawk William Woodworth (Rawno:kwaw, "he dips the words"), a member of the Bear Clan will attempt to clarify the native participation in the war and their significant role in the establishment of Canada

Captain John Button and the War of 1812, Saturday, December 8, 2012

Would you believe that a militia troop of cavalry started by a farmer in Markham Township prior to the War of 1812 would be the start of a Regiment that is still in existence today? John Button's troop of horsemen performed admirable service in York, Niagara and Detroit and as couriers with destinations as far as Kingston. Celebrated genealogist, author and researcher extraordinaire, Ruth Burkholder will narrate John Button's life with special emphasis on his "Troop of Markham Dragoons."

Spinners and Weavers New Meeting Date

The Burr House Spinners and Weavers Guild has recently changed the night of their monthly meetings to the third Wednesday of the month. In the past their meetings were on the same evening as our Society. This made it difficult for members from our Society and from their Guild to attend each other's meetings. Instead we had to make a choice between the two.

We encourage our members to join in with the Spinners and Weavers' monthly meetings and we invite any interested members from the Guild to be our guests at our monthly meetings held on the third Monday of each month.

Thanks to Alena Melas, spinning and weaving instructor at Burr House, for having suggested this change which will be to the advantage of both societies. The next meeting of the Spinners and Weavers Guild will be on Wednesday, September 19th at 7:30p.m. Their program will be a large show and tell by the Guild members of the things they have made over the summer and how they made them. It is lots of fun and very informative for members as well as guests.

In search of the Gall Family

Peter Gall has contacted *Heritage on the Hill* looking for information about his family.

He writes: "I am gathering information about my family history. I am currently working on the Gall branch of the family. My grandmother Laura (Owen) Gall lived in Richmond Hill in the 1950s and was a breeder of Toy Poodles. Her daughter Gladys (Gall) Taylor was also a breeder who raised Border Collies out of a kennel in her home. Gladys married Sydney Taylor and they lived next door to the police station in 1956 near Richmond Hill. Gladys and Sidney died in a car crash around 1992. Gladys and Sydney had two children, Ronnie and Linda. I'm searching for my cousins Ron Taylor and his sister Linda. From family information collected, Linda married and I do not know her married name. I do not know where my grandmother Laura (Owen) Gall died and is laid to rest. I would appreciate any information that can be offered to aid in my search of my family genealogy."

If any of our members are able to help Peter please contact him at:

Peter Gall 519-862-2399 pgall48@hotmail.com

Queen for a Day

Congratulations to our member Grace Bly who recently turned 90 years old. She was also honoured by being crowned Queen for a Day by Mayor Dave Barrow. She was the first winner of the Queen Countdown Contest that



Staff photo/Sjoerd Witteveen yorkregion.com

was launched to promote *Queen for a Day - The Musical* which will open later this month at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. Grace was nominated for her many years of community work with organizations such as Club 35. Well done, Your Majesty!

Happy Birthday, Marion

Marion French celebrated her 90th birthday in June. She has been a member of our Society for many years. She is also very active in the community. She has volunteered at Mackenzie Richmond Hill Hospital (formerly York Central Hospital) for 23 years. She volunteers at the Richmond Hill Lawn Bowling Club where she encourages handicapped adults with their bowling. She is also a stalwart supporter of Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church. Congratulations, Marion!

Condolences

Doris Empringham

We are sad to announce that Doris Empringham passed on July 31st. She had not been able to attend our meetings since she fell and broke her hip but previous to that she attended meetings on a regular basis. We extend our sympathies to her family

Sam Cook

Sam and Betty Cook were members of the Society and, while they did not attend meetings on a regular basis, were always interested in what was happening in the Society. Sam passed away July 16th. Sam was very active in our community. He had been editor and publisher of *The Liberal*, chairman of the York Central Hospital board of trustees and chairman of the Richmond Hill Hydro Commission.

Date: Nov 4, 2012 Time: 11:00—5:00

**\$45 per person—price includes bus transportation, lunch
and admission to heritage sites.**



Rebel Tour!

Commemorating the 175th Anniversary of the
Rebellion of Upper Canada

Follow the 1837 route of the rebels
from Lloydtown to Toronto!

Stops along the route:

- the Rebel Statue in Lloydtown
- Gibson House, North York
- Mackenzie House, Toronto
- Bruce Bell, story teller, Toronto

Contact the museum at 905-833-2331
or kingmuseum@king.ca for more
information or to register.

The tour starts and ends in Schomberg.

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How Well Do you Know Richmond Hill?

Fred Hearn

I hope the members of the Society have your thinking caps on and are ready to again test your knowledge of Richmond Hill. Have more fun with this quiz by not turning to the answers until after you have made a valiant effort to come up with the five correct answers. I hope you all enjoy the questions and I wish you the very best of luck!

1. There was once a family-owned restaurant on the west side of Yonge St. between Arnold Cres. and Levedale Rd. The restaurant was called "The Town Inn" and specialized in both Chinese and North American food. The Restaurant was gone by 1980. What was the surname of the family that operated the restaurant throughout its entire existence?
2. On the east side of Yonge St. just south of Centre St. there now stands a small park. The park is named in honour of a now deceased barber whose shop operated on the site for many years. What is the name of the small park?
3. On May 12, 1974 a stone was laid at York Central Hospital to commemorate the opening of a wing that is named in honour of the person who laid the stone. The stone is located just inside the main entrance under a portrait of this person. Who laid this stone?
4. In June of 1974 a life-long resident and future actress graduated from Richmond Hill High School. She would go on to be a leading actress in the Canadian television production of "Road to Avonlea." She would also go on to be the principle actress in the Canadian television production of "Tool Time." What is the name of this life-long resident and actress?
5. In 1923 a new arena was built on the present site of the "Elgin Barrow Arena Complex." In 1955 a major upgrade made the hockey arena far more valuable and reliable. What was the upgrade that was made to the hockey arena in 1955?



(Answers on page 6)



98 Years Young

Doris Leno has been a hardworking member of our Society. She is a Founding Member in June 1975 along with Alice Dewsbury, Janet Fayle, Don Hicks, Louise Case, Pat Hart, Mary Dawson, Brian Cowen and John LeClaire. She was Secretary in 1976 and President in 1980, 1981 and 1987. She also served as Social Convenor and Newsletter Editor. Doris also worked on the restoration of Burr House when it was acquired by the Town. Doris still attends many of our Society meetings. She was 98 on September 6. Congratulations, Doris and Many Happy Returns!

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Senior of the Year Award



Pictured left to right: Vito Spatafora, Regional Councillor, Reza Moridi, MPP; Bert Hunt; Dave Barrow, Mayor of Richmond Hill (Photograph by Paul Dillman)

Our own Bert Hunt was honoured at the annual Seniors Barbecue, put on by the Town of Richmond Hill, at Mill Pond in June. Bert was presented with the 2012 Hill Senior of the Year Award. Bert was also present at the July 9th council meeting when Councillor Lynn Foster congratulated him on his many volunteer activities.

Recipients of this award can be nominated only by the municipality, not by the general public, and only one award is given in each municipality.

We all know how hard-working Bert has been within our Society and within other organisations in Richmond Hill. He deserves to have his many accomplishments recognised. Well done, Bert!

Answers to Quiz on page 5: 1. The Lew family 2. Ranson Park 3. James R. Langstaff M.D. 4. Mag Ruffman 5. In 1955 artificial ice replaced the unreliable natural ice surfaces used in the arena



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