

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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May / June 2011



President's Jottings

From the desk of Andrea Kulesh



We are including a very interesting article this issue that was previously in the winter issue of the Aurora Historical Society's newsletter. One of the reasons for doing so is that Helen Roberts wrote it in such a way that everyone can understand the procedure of donating an artifact.

The process can seem daunting if you have an item you wish to donate to a library or museum. Helen's example is easy to understand and the process stands for most historical societies and museums in Ontario. Please bear in mind that the object you hold dear and wish to donate may be just what the museum is looking for, or it can be a duplicate, have no provenance to the area or simply be unsuitable for the collection's mission. So if you are thinking about donating an item; think: how did it come in to your

possession? where did it come from? and does it have any valuable history or provenance that you are aware of?

If you wish to donate, contact the museum closest to where the article came from first. If it does not fulfill their requirements, contact the Richmond Hill Heritage Centre for information regarding donations.

The condition of the article is important in an acquisition but also each museum has a reason and usually an era for its collection and your artifact may not "fit". These initial inquiries will help to sift through the various elements required. A rare artifact that fills a need at a museum can be taken if it is in only fair condition but an artifact in excellent condition may be one of many and may not be of any use to

that particular museum. While all of this may seem fairly negative, the process is in place to help museums to be cost-effective as each and every artifact needs to be catalogued, have its condition reported, and be stored as required to maintain the collection. This is a great factor in accepting or rejecting an item that will take a great deal of funding to care for. All artifacts require care and there is a price tag to that care in order to preserve it for years to come.

Be proud of the fact that the donation of your artifact will enable us all to enjoy its educational value and that you may satisfy a collection's mandate by your generosity. There is great personal gratification in donating to a museum or archives so that everyone can enjoy your treasure.

Upcoming Events

May Meeting

May 16, 2011

Our speaker will be Dorothy Duncan who be talking about her recent book, "Feasting and Fasting," which is about the food and traditions which the different ethnic groups brought with them to Canada. During her impressive career in the heritage field, Mrs. Duncan has served as curator of Black Creek Pioneer

Village, museums advisor for the Province of Ontario and Executive Director of the Ontario Historic Society. She is also well known for her books and her advice and assistance to museums and people in the heritage field.

June Meeting

June 20, 2011

We will have our annual Strawberry Social. Enjoy some delicious strawberries and have an evening of fun.

Ontario Genealogical Society

The York Region Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society will be holding their May meeting on May 11, at 7:15 p.m. in the 2nd floor meeting Room at the Central Library. Topic for this evening will be "Finding Your Quaker Ancestors In York Region". Quakers have a long history in York Region, with a Meeting House in Newmarket, founded over 200 years ago. The two guest speakers for the evening are members of "The Canadian Friends Historical Association".

Aunt Mary's Sewing Basket

Helen Roberts

Re-print of an article from the Attic/Newsletter of the Aurora Historical Society Winter Issue 2011.

So you just discovered Aunt Mary's sewing basket hidden away in the back of the closet where you stashed it after her funeral several years ago. What to do with this treasured keepsake? – the kids don't want it (no room), you're clearing out but can't bring yourself to discard it. Aha! – maybe the local Museum or Historical Society would like to add it to their collection. How does that work?

Step 1: Phone the organization and talk to the Curator/Manager. Tell him/her about the sewing basket, its age and its history in your family. The individual responsible for collections will probably set a day and time for you to bring the basket to the office for her to check it out.

Step 2: You take in Aunt Mary's sewing basket. You give the Curator more information about Aunt Mary, her maiden name, how she lived locally all her life, attending the local school and church and some of her extended family. The Curator is interested in the sewing basket and asks you to leave it with her while she does more research. She gives you a signed receipt for the basket.

Step 3: The Curator checks out the basket; discovers that it contains some local advertising (tape measure and ruler from a local business). Since this item came from a local family and was used in this town it fits into the Society/Museum's collection policy. Something actually made in town would also qualify. The Curator now checks the collection data base to see if there are any more sewing baskets in the collection. Should there be several similar sewing baskets in the collection she would have to decide whether there were good reasons to add this one – however this is the only sewing basket of its type.

Step 4: Having decided that Aunt Mary's sewing basket would make a worth while addition to the artefact collection, the Curator phones you to set a time for you to come in and sign a donor form. This form states clearly that you are donating the sewing basket (described in detail) to the appropriate organization. In turn the Society/Museum promises to care for the item. This includes insurance for the basket under the policy which covers the

entire collection.

Step 4: Now that the sewing basket belongs to the organization it will be accessioned.

This entails assigning a unique number to the item combining the year and donor number. This number will be marked carefully on the basket and on all the items which it contains.

Step 5: The accession number is now entered into the collection data base. In years gone by this entailed tedious work filling out several filing cards and a condition report. Now all this work is entered into the computer. The entry will contain the donor's name, the original owner's name along with any provenance the donor has provided. It will also note the condition of the item listing any tears, broken pieces etc.

Step 6: Now it's time to store the basket. Hopefully it will be stored in a state of the art storage system which is humidity and temperature controlled providing ideal conditions for the artefacts stored there.

Step 7: What happens to Aunt Mary's sewing basket now? There are several possibilities in store. Perhaps it might be displayed in a future exhibit on homemaking skills, sewing or even objects from the 1940s (or its appropriate decade). Perhaps it could be used with a school program or a children's museum studies program.

Can you visit your donation? If you would like to check it out call the office and arrange a time for a tour.

Helen Roberts is the Past President of the AHS as well as a retired museum worker who understands the nuances of collecting institutions whether it is a museum or historical society. Courtesy of Catherine Richards, Curator-Manager, Aurora Historical Society/Hilary House National Historic Site www.aurorahistoricalsociety.ca



<http://kateym71.blogspot.com/>

Wishing Our Members Well

Two of our hard-working members, Penny Parmenter and Kevin Dark, have recently had surgery. We wish you both a speedy recovery and hope to see you up and about soon.

A Tribute to Erle Cook

Last year after Erle Cook passed away his family very kindly and generously asked for donations in memory of Erle to be directed to the RHHS. The donations totalled \$780.00. This significant amount is such a wonderful contribution to our Society. On behalf of the RHHS, the Executive has sent a letter to the Cook family to let them know how grateful we are for the donations that were sent honouring their father and his family. We also wish to thank our members who gave tribute to Erle in this way and to assure them that Erle's memory will be honoured by the Richmond Hill Historical Society in a worthwhile manner.

A Medley of Memories

Roseview Avenue 1930 - 1943 - Part 2

By Jim Monkman

(Continued from the March / April issue.)

2. Dogs

Those years were good times for dogs as well as children. Dogs only had to be confined to their yard or led on a leash during the gardening season, June, July and August. The rest of the year they were free to roam on their own or accompany children in their play.

At various times some neighbours had a dog. I remember the names of some. The Sheardown's dog was small and was named Tony; Mae Sanderson had a "Police" dog named Major; the Teetzel's had a King Charles spaniel named Laddie.

For a few years, we had a beautiful male collie dog named Barney. He was given to us by a neighbour who had moved away. They didn't have any children and as Barney kept running away and returning to us, they gave him to us. Except for the odd dog fight, which Barney always won, all went well until a widowed dentist, Dr Wright, and his teen aged daughter, Charlotte, moved into the house at the south east corner of what is now Lawrence Avenue and Roseview. They owned a female collie and they hadn't been in residence very long when Barney fell madly in love with their lovely collie. This romance did not meet with the approval of Dr. Wright and he locked her in the cellar of the house. To George's and my glee and our parent's consternation, Barney persisted in his attempts to woo her. One night, like young Lochinvar, he raced up to the house where she was imprisoned. All was locked and barred but Barney didn't give up. Through the cellar window he went carrying the window sash and glass before him. The lady collie welcomed him and they made passionate love together. Alas, unlike young

Lochinvar, he couldn't carry her away with him. In fact unable to get back out the window, he was imprisoned with his love.

In due course, Dr. Wright and Charlotte were the proud owners of half a dozen very cute collie puppies. Bob Edmunds managed to obtain one for himself which he named Carlo.

Shortly after this Barney, during an argument, chased Mae's Major into the house and continued arguing with him in the living room. A pail of water dumped over them cooled their anger and Barney scooted between Mae's legs and escaped. After this incident, Barney was exiled to my Uncle Jim Stephenson's farm.

While Bob was away during WWII, his Mother and Father had me care for Carlo whenever they were away from home and I was allowed to invite Carlo to accompany me whenever I wanted.

In those times vacant fields and bush lots in and around Richmond Hill provided homes for a large population of pheasants. The vacant fields beside the tributary of the Rouge River between Markham Road (now Major MacKenzie Drive) and Crosby Avenue was the playground for our generation of Roseview Avenue boys. One couldn't run or walk through these fields without being startled by a pheasant bursting into flight out of the long grass almost at one's feet. In Richmond Hill one Saturday every Fall was designated an open day to hunt pheasants. On those Open Days, we kids were given strict orders "not to go down to the creek to play"

On a beautiful autumn Saturday a group of us, I believe it included Keith Teetzel, Junior Sheardown, Gordon Leece and myself, had spent a good afternoon playing down near the railroad station dam and Mackey's Bush. We were about ready to go home, when we heard a train

approaching from the north. We decided to wait and see if it was going to stop. We walked north to the freight shed to where the board walk ended. Beside the freight shed was the water tank where the steam engines could take on water.

We observed a man with a dog coming up the grade from the creek toward the railway tracks. Suddenly, the dog darted ahead. We could hear the man calling it back. I think it was Keith who said, "That's Mr. Cuttance." The red dog paid no heed but ran onto the track as the train was approaching. The dog ran down the track ahead of the train. The train was gaining on the dog and the noise of the steam engine and the thunderous noise made by the train spooked the poor dog. We watched in horror as the big black engine thundered toward the dog. At the last moment, the dog seemed to turn and jump at the engine. Perhaps it was a brave attempt to defend himself.

It was not an Open Day for pheasants but Mr. Cuttance could have been training the dog to "point birds"; maybe he was hunting rabbits or maybe just enjoying a walk with the dog. A tragic ending to a beautiful day. A horrible sight which I have never forgotten.



(Continued on page 4)

A MEDLEY OF MEMORIES

(Continued from page 3)

3. Some Kind Neighbours

Mr. And Mrs. Hopper lived on the north side of Roseview a couple of houses west of our home at the south east corner of Roseview and Ruggles. One time, when I was unable to go to school because of some childhood ailment, Mrs. Hopper arrived at our door with a lovely jar of her homemade apple jelly for me. It was a beautiful clear rosy red colour and spread on one of my Mother's homemade buns soothed my fragile stomach.

Keith Teetzel's grandparents, Mr. & Mrs. Bill Tyndall, lived in the house on the south east corner of Roseview Avenue and Church Street.

Mr. and Mrs. Charley Clark lived in the second house east of Church Street on the south side of Roseview. Their property was comprised of two lots with their home on the west side of their property adjacent to Mr. & Mrs. Tyndall's home. East of the house was a big garden and a red barn. During the winters, Mr. Clark had a long stretch of sidewalk to keep clear of snow. After a night's snowfall, he must have started early in morning because his sidewalk was always cleared of snow by the time we were passing his house on the way to school. When the property was sold, Mr. Tyndall purchased the east half of

the property which included the big garden and the big red barn.

When Mr. Clark died, Mrs. Clark gave my Dad a lovely jack knife of Charley's "to remember him by". I later learned that Mr. Clark's mother or grandmother had been a Monkman and he and Dad had known each other all their lives.

Mr. And Mrs. Percy Quantz lived on the southeast corner of Roseview and Baker Avenue. I often wondered if Mr. Quantz and Mr. Clark competed with each other to see who could be the first to have their sidewalk cleared of snow. In the cold weather after Mr. Quantz passed away, I visited Mrs. Quantz every morning and evening. Using a short handled shovel I would clear the ash out of her furnace emptying the shovel into a large metal bucket. Then, I would stoke the firebox with fresh coal. I would stay to make sure the fire was burning through the new coal with a blue flame, then set the drafts and carry the bucket of ash up the cellar stairs and out to the garage at the back of the garden. After emptying the bucket onto the pile of ashes, I would return it to the cellar ready for use in the evening. After making sure Mrs. Quantz was O.K., I would bid her goodbye and assure her I would return in the evening to fix her fire for the night. I remember how much pleasure it gave me to help such a nice elderly lady in such a small way.

Spring Song

Hark, I hear a robin calling!
List, the wind is from the south!
And the orchard-bloom is falling
Sweet as kisses on the mouth

In the dreamy vale of beeches
Fair and faint is woven mist,
And the river's orient reaches
Are the palest amethyst.

Every limpid brook is singing
Of the lure of April days;
Every piney glen is ringing
With the maddest roundelays.



Come and let us seek together
Springtime love of daffodils,
Giving to the golden weather
Greeting on the sun-warm hills.

Ours shall be the moonrise stealing
Through the birches ivory white;
Ours shall be the mystic healing
Of the velvet-footed night.

Ours shall be the gypsy winding
Of the path of violets blue,
Ours at last the wizard finding
Of the land where dreams come true.

Thank you, Peter

A special thanks to our member, Peter Smith, who kindly took our slide projector away after last month's meeting to repair it. You may remember (*how could you forget*) that it was "emitting" a rather loud noise during the presentation by Hilary Dawson. Peter assured us it was just a matter of oiling and some minor maintenance and it could be saved!! Sure enough Peter brought back the machine in better than fine working order. The membership collectively thanks you!

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Small Church Anniversary

Rose Kessler

When I was growing up all the small churches would have an Anniversary Service in May or June and a Thanksgiving Service in the fall, but the Anniversary Service was the highlight. Enniskillen would have their 24th of May service Sunday afternoon and Sunday night in the old shed with its sawdust floor. Monday there would be a supper, a soccer game and a concert. One day it snowed but they played soccer in the snow!

I remember one time my sister and I wanted to go to Enniskillen anniversary as their guest speaker was young and single. Our car was broken so my sister and I walked three miles to Enniskillen and three miles back home, but he was a real handsome minister.

Enfield would hold their service in June. During the week before the service the ladies would get together for a cleaning bee to clean the stove pipes, wash the windows and pews and finally wash the old wooden floor with a scrubbing brush crawling under the pews to do so.

The girls always got a new dress for the Anniversary Service and sometimes a Toni permanent. Boys got a new shirt and a haircut.

On the Saturday before the service, the girls would decorate the church with flowers. No buying flowers, they were donated from people's gardens.

The whole of the Sunday School, all ten of us, would sing. I still have one of the hymn books we used then.

The women always wore dresses, hats and gloves - never slacks! The men wore three piece suits, a tie and a fedora hat.

Yes, there were also church mice. When we sat up at the front we could watch them running around.

Most of the congregation walked to church or came by horse and buggy or horse and cutter in the winter. The minister had three churches in his charge, Burketon, Enfield and Enniskillen, and would travel from one to the other by horse and buggy or cutter.

The only music was an old organ or piano. I remember Rev. Plant saying, "you come to church to learn about God not to be entertained." We sang the good old hymns from the hymnary.

I remember memorizing the books of the Bible, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, the 23rd Psalm, etc.

The three churches were never locked, there was always wood in the wood box so if your car broke down or other problems arose, the church was always a place of refuge.

There was no air conditioning. When a window was opened to let in the summer breeze, the flies would come in also.

There was never an after service coffee time as there is

now. It seems people won't come to church unless coffee and cookies or donuts are served after the service.

Some of the costs of those days:

1927 - Tuning the piano \$2.00

1929 - Caretaker for lighting fires in the stoves on Sunday mornings \$25.00 per year

1933 - Window panes \$1.35; Enfield's share of the minister's salary was \$105.00 per year

1934 - 25 cents to be used a gift for sick; admission to concert adults 20 cents, children 10 cents

I am very proud to say Enfield church is still there and it is open two Sundays each year. In 1977 it was designated a heritage site.

It is worth the drive to Enfield to visit the old church. It brings back many good precious memories of the times I attended church and Sunday school there.

When going to the house of God, I still think women look their best in dresses and men in suits, not in shorts or jeans.

Oh well, times have changed but thank you, God for Enfield Church and my memories.

This article was reprinted with Rose Kessler's kind permission. It was first printed in "Heritage on the Hill" in the Spring of 2005.



2011 Heritage Village Day Opportunities ! Volunteers Needed !!

Andrea Kulesh

Our annual Heritage Village Day is fast approaching in June. This year we would like to be able, once again, to have a good presence at the RHHS display. Last year the weather was so terrible that the wonderfully planned day was indeed a wash-out. Cheryl literally had to pack up in the wet weather and leave. So, let's rally and put our best effort forward this year! We are asking once again for:

Volunteers who can cover table duties and greet visitors.

Volunteers with a skill that they would like to demonstrate. (It can be anything that you enjoy as a hobby and would like to show off a little!)

Volunteers to take photos and **Volunteers** who can operate a photo printer. We will be using Marion Hill's photo boards which we previously used a few years ago. (training available!!)

Volunteers to help with the various activities we are hoping to do during the day for fundraising.

We have a few ideas that we are talking about. We are hoping to have a raffle and so we would need to sell tickets. We will have our new packages of Richmond Hill heritage buildings note cards on sale as well. It is vital for our Society to make our presence felt on a day where heritage is highlighted. The RHHS has a long history of its own and we can showcase our commitment to ensuring the history of Richmond Hill is promoted at such a wonderful public event. Awareness is key to keeping our past alive in our ever-growing community. There will be sign up sheet for volunteers at our May meeting. You can sign up for an hour or two if you wish. If you have any questions please ask Andrea Kulesh.

We welcome all talents!!!!

RHHS Long-Standing Members

Avonelle Monkman

Some time ago, I was sorting through old Historical Society newsletters and came across a 1990 May/June newsletter listing members of the Society at that time. I thought it was interesting to note that of the 140 members listed, 38 are still members of the Society. Congratulations to these members who have renewed their memberships for the last 21 years!

Bob and Gail Blackburn
Emily Bowman
Margaret Brace
Allan Channon
Colin Crawford
Alice Dewsbury
Bob and Bernice Edmunds
David and Janet Fayle

Jack Fullman
Elinor Graham
James Graham
Dorothy Gummersal
Bert and Elva Hunt
Jessie Hutchinson
Lucille King
Doris Leno

Mary Lloyd
Don and Janet Lockwood
Laura McMullen
Marianne May
Jim and Avonelle Monkman
Penny Parmenter
Nancy Price
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