

NEWS and views

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Simcoe County Historical Association

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Visit our Website

www.simcoecountyhistory.ca

SCHA

Preserving the Past,
in the Present,
for the Future.

Thursday, March 10: Our Joint Meeting with BHA

Well, the wintery weather is hopefully behind us as we gear up for the next three months of meetings. As in years past, we are partnering again with one of our member historical societies.

Please join us on Thursday, March 10 at the Barrie City Hall Rotunda at 7:30 p.m. as we welcome Commander Gregg Hannah, CD, BA (Hons), MA, rmc, pcsc who will present 100 Years of the Canadian Navy. Please see further details of his career on page 3.

On April 19, we will welcome Dr. Todd Webb of Laurentian University at Georgian's Department of History to our meeting at the Simcoe County Museum. He will present "Monarchs of the Quill": The Bad Art of National-Building in North America, c. 1800 to 1918, a discussion of four folk poets and their vision of Canada's future. More details on this

talk are available on page 2.

Lastly, we look forward to our AGM. We will return to the Sheba Shrine Hall at 141 John Street, Barrie for a fine meal and our annual elections. Our speaker for this event is Dr. Hugh Laurence, a noted lecturer on Postal History of the Queen's Bush area of western Ontario, and Philately of 19th Century British North America.

Tickets are \$35 for members and \$40 for non-members. They will be available for purchase at both our March and April meetings or call Gord Hanson at 705-721-9401 to reserve.

We look forward to a fine evening, complete with dinner music and our renowned silent auction. If you have items to donate, please contact Jill Hynes at 705-739-6220 so we can organize our wares before the big event!

SCHA 2011 Schedule – various locations

March 10 – Joint SCHA/Barrie Historical Association Meeting – 100th Anniversary of the Royal Canadian Navy, speaker Commander Gregg Hannah – **7:30 p.m. at Barrie City Hall Rotunda**

April 19 – Dr. Todd Webb (professor at the Laurentian at Georgian Program in Barrie) on Monarchs of the Quill: The Bad Art of Nation Building in North America, c. 1800 to 1918 – at the **Simcoe County Museum, Midhurst, at 7:30 p.m.**

May 17 – Our Annual General Meeting – Dr. Hugh Laurence, Senior Lecturer in Strategic Management, University of Toronto – **Sheba Shrine Hall, 141 John Street, Barrie Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:00**

President's Ponderings

by Helen Coutts

As I write these thoughts the weather outside is March like, with rain, snow, wind, blowing snow and sunshine reminding us that the end of winter is coming and we can look forward to spring flowers before long. Our bird feeder keeps bird life close at hand, and although we don't see them everyday we do see the turkeys' tracks on our lawn even today on the fresh

snow. (One day there were about 30 in the field out from the house.)

We had two sunshiny holidays, the first to Costa Rica to visit friends, the second an agricultural tour to Brazil where we saw the huge scope of the cropping: cotton, soybeans, corn, as well as wheat, oats and also grass supporting huge herds of grass fed beef.

Our timing was such that I missed two SCHA Board Meetings. (You definitely need a new president or at least a vice president.) Rest assured that the rest of the Board have planned interesting meetings for March, April and the Annual in May. That includes a joint meeting with Barrie Historical on March 10. Check the front page for details.

Details on our April Meeting with Dr. Todd Webb

As we return in April to our regular location of the Simcoe County Museum, we will hear an interesting account of four of the worst poets in Canadian history, the so-called 'four Jameses': James Gay, James McIntyre, James Gillis and James MacRae.

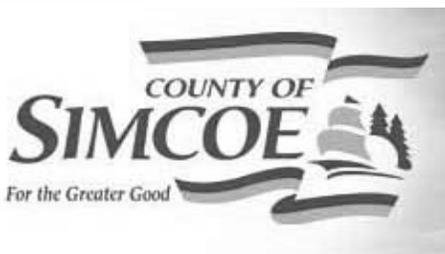
Dr. Webb's research takes issue with the literary critic Pauline Greenhill's argument that "folk poetry is not meant to be separated from the context of a particular local community"; that folk poetry must be understood as "a sort of ongoing

dialogue between the poet and the community, in which the poet brings order out of the minutiae of everyday life through verse." The presentation argues that, while contextualizing folk poets in this way may be a laudable effort to save them from the enormous condescension of posterity, it makes them appear far more parochial than they ever were.

The Four Jameses were part of a wider cultural movement, and, as folk poets, they tried to deal with subjects that were of general interest in nineteenth and early-twentieth

century North America, particularly the connection between progress, whether defined in material or cultural terms, and nation building. At the same time, the way that each of the Jameses approached this issue makes them important in the intellectual and cultural history of Canada. They took what Carl Berger has described as 'the sense of power', the idea that Canada would one day become a better version of Britain itself, and made it their own.

We look forward to seeing you at this spring event!



The SCHA acknowledges the financial support of the County of Simcoe and of the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Culture.



Simcoe County Historical Association Executive

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For Membership Information, contact

Earl Elliott, Membership Chair 734-9808 earl.elliott@rogers.com

You are invited to submit photos and articles regarding your historical happenings in Simcoe County. Photos will be returned.

Mail to SCHA, Box 144, Barrie, ON L4M 4S9.

Deadline for the next issue is May 30, 2011

Details on our March Speaker, Commander Gregg Hannah

Commander Gregg Hannah was born and raised in Winnipeg, Manitoba. He joined the Canadian Forces in 1971 attending Royal Roads Military College and the Royal Military College of Canada. He graduated in 1975 with a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) majoring in English and Philosophy. He received his Master of Arts in Defence Studies with a specialization in the ethics of war, from King's College, University of London, England in 1995. He is currently a doctoral candidate at the Thierry Graduate School of Leadership in Brussels.

After the awarding of his bridge watchkeeping certificate, Commander Hannah held appointments at sea in HMC Ships ALGONQUIN, MARGAREE and TERRA NOVA. He qualified as a Shipboard Air Controller, Destroyer Weapons Officer, Combat Control Officer, and Advanced Communications Electronic Warfare Officer, and has an Advanced Surface Warfare Qualification from the Royal Navy. He has held appointments as

Executive Officer of HMC Ships, MARGAREE, ALGONQUIN, and TERRA NOVA and Commanding Officer of HMCS PORTE ST JEAN. During the Gulf War in 1990-1991, he served ashore as the Executive Officer of the Canadian Maritime Logistics Detachment in Manama, Bahrain from mid-September until November 1990 and was then posted afloat as the Task Group Operations Officer on the staff of the Commander, Canadian Task Group for the duration of the war.

Commander Hannah has held appointments ashore in Maritime Command Headquarters, Halifax as the Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff Operations, and as Staff Officer, Officer Professional Development in the Maritime Warfare Center, Halifax as the coordinator of national maritime operational exercises. He was an ASW tactical instructor, as the Deputy Commandant of the Naval Operations School, Halifax, and was a staff officer on the Maritime Staff in National Defence Headquarters,

Ottawa. There he was the Project Director for the acquisition of the Kingston Class coastal patrol vessels. He has had two Exchange postings with the RN: one as an instructor of surface warfare tactics at HMS DRYAD, School of Maritime Operations near Portsmouth and the other as a student on the Royal Naval Staff Course at Greenwich.

In 1999, Commander Hannah was appointed to the faculty of the Royal Military College of Canada as a lecturer and promoted to assistant professor in 2000 where he taught courses in ethics, military history, defence policy, and strategy. Commander Hannah was appointed to the staff of the Canadian Forces College in 2004 where he is currently a Senior Curriculum Development Officer responsible for the Leadership and Ethics as well as the Command and management curriculum for the year-long Joint Command and Staff programme.

We look forward to meeting him on Thursday, March 10 at Barrie City Hall.

Once Upon a Time at the Simcoe County Museum and Savour Simcoe

“Once Upon A Time” is a unique exhibit showcasing European life during the years 1000 to 1500 AD. Thirty storyboards feature all aspects of medieval life, from monks and monasteries to the feudal system, architecture, games and pastimes, and the crusades.

This traveling exhibit from the Bruce County Museum includes direct ties to the Medieval Times unit in the Ontario Heritage and Citizenship Curriculum for Grade 4. The Simcoe County Museum will host the exhibit from February 1 through April 30.

And if you're starting to plan ahead for summer activities, don't forget about the Fourth Annual Savour Simcoe – Celebrating our Heritage, Agriculture and Regional Cuisine. The event will once again be celebrated on the beautiful outdoor grounds of the Simcoe County Museum surrounded by trees and artifacts of our rich agricultural history.

This is a culinary event showcasing the quality food and those who grow and produce it in Simcoe County prepared by the finest chefs in the County!!

Early Bird Tickets are on sale now!
Date: Sunday, August 28th, 2011
Time: 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Cost: \$45.00 per person Early Bird until June 30, 2011

\$55.00 from July 1st, 2011

(includes all food and beverage tastings and admission to Simcoe County Museum)

Be sure to visit www.simcoecountyfarmfresh.ca/savoursimcoe in the coming weeks for more information about this year's presenters.

13th Annual John A. Macdonald Dinner

by Dr. Dick Johnston

On Saturday, January 8th 2011, the 13th Annual John A. Macdonald Dinner was held at the Mariposa Inn, Orillia. Under the aegis of the Orillia Museum of Art and History, a sold-out crowd was treated to an outstanding lecture by Arthur Milnes, Research Fellow at Queen's University. The evening was chaired by Wally Bremner who again did a great job. Wally is stepping down after ten years as Chair of the John A. Dinner Committee.

This year, again, we were able to phone, during the dinner, John A.'s great grandson, Hugh Gainsford, now living in Saskatoon. He was able to speak with Arthur Milnes and other members of the head table. Hugh is now 92 years of age and in excellent health, but was unable to make the

dinner in 2010 and this year. He has attended all of the other dinners to date, flying in each time from initially Winnipeg and then Brandon. More recently he has moved to a retirement home in Saskatoon to be closer to his daughter. He is a big part of the spirit of the John A. Dinner.

There were a number of guests in attendance, including MPP Garfield Dunlop, MP Bruce Stanton, and former City Councilors Ralph Cippola and Wayne Gardy. The evening was dedicated to the memory of dinner founder Jim Angus who passed away earlier this year. He was Past President of the Orillia Historical Society.

Arthur Milnes was introduced by Bruce Alexander of Toronto. Arthur

Milnes' talk ranged between a number of former Prime Ministers and included anecdotes on Jimmy Carter and Lyndon Johnson. Arthur also stressed the need for all Canadians to build on the bi-centennial of John A.'s birth in 2015. A standing ovation recognized the excellent presentation. A dozen roses were presented to Wally and Coco Bremner because of their work over the past ten years. In addition, as Arthur and Alison Milnes have their wedding anniversary on Sir John A.'s birthday, they too were presented with a dozen roses in celebration.

Requests for tickets for next year's dinner are already being received. Tentatively, the date is set for Saturday, January 7, 2012.

Past Treasures Enliven the Present

by Helen Yielding

As usual, the popular "Show and Tell" meeting of the Tecumseth & West Gwillimbury Historical Association attracted a large audience. And, as usual, it was a delightful meeting. Memories, artifacts and stories were in abundance.

Four members showed photos and pictures. Lois Fallis had a framed 1908 photo of the Mendelssohn Choir which included her aunt and mother. Betsy Flood displayed a painting by a well-known artist of her grandmother's dog; unfortunately, shortly after, the dog was stolen. Blown-up photos of Tim Orlick's grandfather's outing to a 1921 aeronautical event in Ottawa revealed that Charles Lindberg was a guest there just 2 months after his crossing of the Atlantic in 'The Spirit of St Louis', an amazing find for Tim.

Another amazing 'found' object was a 1913 cheque for \$2,949,434.00 paid by the Ford Motor Co. to a bank in payment of a loan. Don Mossie explained that the cheque and some photos of the first

Assembly Line Plant and early Ford cars were found lodged in the back of a filing cabinet that had not been thoroughly emptied.

Personal items are always interesting. John Northwood displayed some early razors and the leather strop that was used in sharpening the razor's blade. Franz Aschwanden commented on a variety of leather camera and binocular cases. Hazel Johansson brought her father's Bible, Sunday School records and his pocket watch. Another watch, given to Chevrolet employees in 1927, bore a faceplate that resembled a car grill and a radiator-style winder. This item is part of George Phillip's timepiece collection. Very personal items from Barbara Northwood were delightful: items from her mother's trousseau. A dress, a nightgown and a pair of silk bloomers were handmade by the bride-to-be.

Stuart Calhoun demonstrated an elongated framing square, a tool which

belonged to his uncle. Using two screws and know-how, Stuart demonstrated how this tool could be used to scribe a circle! A different tool, a swivel plane or scorpe, got a different sort of workout shaping a wooden chair seat in the hands of Bruce Chambers. Vera Stoddart's postal scale, etched with postal rates, reminded us of a time when stamps cost as little as 2, 3 or 5 cents a letter.

Dave Chambers displayed some very early American newspapers, one from 1785. June Chambers read current news, a thank-you letter from a previous guest speaker who is approaching 100 years of age. Kent Chambers introduced a mystery item, an old, well-used toy tractor unbeknownst to him which materialized in his ditch.

We'll give the last word to Bob Watt. He had an itemized statement from a local Funeral Home for \$104.35 which included the casket, flowers and gloves. No H.S.T.

Fun Things to do with the Orillia Museum

OMAH Bus Trip to the Art Gallery of Ontario

Includes guided tour of current exhibit "Maharaja: The Splendour of India's Royal Court"

Friday April 1, 2011

Cost: \$60 + HST for adults and seniors (65+)

\$45 + HST for AGO members and students (under 25)

Includes coach fare, AGO admission, and one-hour guided tour by an expert of the Maharaja exhibit.

For more information or to reserve your place, call the museum at 705-326-2159 or e-mail programs@orilliamuseum.org.

Or, if you have some younger historians to entertain, try this:

This March Break promises to be an exciting one that will take your children or grandchildren on an artistic and historical adventure, Around the World in Five Days!

From March 14 to 18 children aged 6 to 12 can visit the continents of the world without leaving town. Art, crafts, and games from both ancient and modern traditions will be the focus of the following themed camps:

Monday - Awesome Asia

Tuesday - Naturally North America

Wednesday - Astonishing Africa

Thursday - Extraordinary Europe

Friday - Stunning South America

Sign up for select days or the entire week! 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. Daily fee for members is \$28 and non-members is \$30. Weekly fee for members is \$130 and non-members is \$140. For more information visit our website at www.orilliamuseum.org/programs/march_break.htm

Last Call! The Andrew Hunter Award 2011

The Andrew Hunter Award is offered annually for historical research on Simcoe County, Ontario, written by an undergraduate student for a course in any university or college. In this seventh year of competition, we look forward to receiving many worthy entries for each of the two awards being offered.

Conditions: The entry shall be an essay between 3,000 and 5,000 words in length or a fourth year undergraduate thesis paper (no length restriction) on some aspect of the history of Simcoe County, Ontario, written in English or in French. The author must have been a part-time or full-time undergraduate student in a degree program at an accredited university or college at the time of writing. The essay must have been written to meet the requirement



of an undergraduate credit course during the 2010-2011 academic year. The thesis paper must have been submitted for grading in the 2009-2010 academic year. Entries become the property of the Simcoe County Historical Association and may be published as part of an essay collection.

Submissions: Essay entries shall be postmarked by April 8, 2011 and undergraduate theses shall be postmarked by January 28, 2011. Submissions will not be returned to the contestants. Papers must be typed in Times New Roman 12 point font, double spaced, and should not bear the instructor's comments or grade. Three

copies must be provided. A cover sheet must list the author's name, address, phone number, year of study, school affiliation and department, and the name of the instructor for whom the paper was written.

Entries should be sent to:

The Corresponding Secretary

Simcoe County Historical Association

P.O. Box 144

Barrie, ON L4M 4S9

Adjudication: Entries will be judged by a distinguished panel appointed by the Simcoe County Historical Association. The winners will be announced in early May 2011 with the presentation of the awards to take place at the Annual General Meeting of the Association.

Award: There will be two awards offered in Canadian funds, one for \$500 for the best undergraduate essay and one for \$500 for the best undergraduate thesis. The Simcoe County Historical Association may edit the winning entries for the purpose of publication.

The Simcoe County Historical Association is under no obligation to grant the awards. For more information, see www.simcoecountyhistory.ca

COMING EVENTS

of our Member Societies

Alliston Historical Society – contact Jackie Baillie

705-435-5626 or
cknowles@rogers.com

Meet at Museum on the Boyne, Fletcher Cres., Alliston 2:00 p.m. Second Wednesday of the month February - June & September - November.

Barrie Historical Association – contact Doug Hamilton

Meet at Barrie City Hall – 7:30 p.m.
www.barriehistorical.com

March 10 – Joint meeting with SCHA

April 14 – AGM – see website for details

Collingwood District Historical Society – contact Joan Miller

705-445-1119
Meet at Leisure Time Club, 100 Minnesota Street, Collingwood – 7:00 p.m.
www.historicallyspeakingcdhs.ca

March 7 – Annual General Meeting – Eileen Crysler and Marie Cruickshank will present “The Way We Were”

April 4 – Christine Cowley – History of the Collingwood Grain Elevators

May 2 – Richard Lex – The Tremont Hotel - Restoration and New Life

June 6 – Captain Bruce Sheppard – Shipping on the Great Lakes

Essa Historical Society – contact Olive Lee

Meet at Thornton Library fourth Saturday of the month except July, Aug. & Dec. – 1:30 p.m.

Friends of Historic Fort Willow – contact Gord Hanson

<http://fortwillow.com>

Genealogical Society – contact Linda Mitchell

Meet at Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
79 Ferris Lane, Barrie – 2:00 p.m.
www.simcoebogs.com

March 5 – Janice Nickerson – Crime and Punishment in 19th Century Ontario

April 9 – Jim Onyschuk – OneNote: A Tool for Organizing Your Research Electronically

May 7 – TBA

June 4 – Robyn Zuck from the Barrie Public Library

Huron Museum Huron Ouendat Village – contact Jamie Hunter

549 Little Lake Park Road, Midland – Call 526-2844
www.huroniamuseum.com

Innisfil Historical Society – contact Donna Wice

Meet at Knock Community Centre, 10th SR at 9th Line, Innisfil – 2:00 p.m.
www.innisfilhistorical.ca

March 19 – Police Chief Bruce Davis

April 16 – Innisfil Old girl May Reive(now 100) and her children Garry and Nancy – Tales of Innisfil

May 21 – Millie Kellough – Amateur Innisfil photographer John Thompson’s work (early 1900s)

Museum on the Boyne – contact Katie Huddleston-Naieb

250 Fletcher Crescent in Riverdale Park, Alliston – Call 435-0167

Orillia Museum of Art and History – contact Gloria Taylor

30 Peter Street South, Orillia – Call 326-2159 www.orilliamuseum.org

to April 9 – International Women’s Day Art Show

April 12 to May 14 – 17th Annual High School Art Exhibit
Opening Reception: April 14 – 6-8 p.m.

April 12 to May 14 – Lakehead Visual Arts Students Community Art Wall

May 17 to June 25 – All-Ontario Open Juried Art Exhibition

Opening Reception: May 17 – 7-9 p.m.

History Speaker Series – contact Dan Byers

Meet at St. Paul’s United Church, Peter St. and Coldwater Rd., Orillia – 7:30 p.m.

March 16 – Mike Hill (Artistic Director) – Fifty Years of the Mariposa Folk Festival

April 20 – Lynn P. Hodgson – Camp X

May 18 – Chip Wiecz – The South Pole

Penetanguishene Centennial Museum and Archives – contact Nicole Jackson

13 Burke St. at Beck Blvd.
Call 549-2150
www.pencenmuseum.com

April 23 – Easter Eggstravaganza

May 18 – National Museum Day

Simcoe County Museum – contact Kelley Swift-Jones

1151 Highway 26, Midhurst – Call 728-3721

to April 30 – Once Upon a Time – Medieval Traveling Exhibit

May 15 – Vintage Fashion Show

June 2 – Night at the Museum

Stayner Heritage Society – contact Dorothy Millsap

www.staynerheritagesociety.com
705-428-2540

Tecumseth & West Gwillimbury Historical Society – contact June Chambers

Meet at Tec We Gwill Hall, Newton Robinson, 7:30 p.m. Call 905-775-7144