

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 14: Our Joint Meeting with BHA

Spring is coming, and so are the next three months of SCHA meetings. As in years past, we are partnering again with the Barrie Historical Association to bring a special speaker.

Please join us on Thursday, March 14 at the Barrie City Hall Rotunda at 7:30 p.m. as we welcome John Bacher, writer and environmental activist. He will speak about Edmund Zavitz, Canada’s special relationship with trees and some surprising aspects of Ontario’s environmental history, including how close we came to losing countless acres of precious farmland and forests. Zavitz was successfully able to rescue Ontario from the serious ecological threats it faced at the turn of the 20th century.

On April 16, we will welcome Jennifer Thompson, a graduate of Laurentian University at Georgian’s

Department of History to our meeting at the Simcoe County Museum. She will present “D.A. Jones: From Prophet to Profit”, the story of the bee man from Beeton. Jennifer was an entrant in last year’s Andrew Hunter Award competition.

Lastly, we look forward to our AGM. This year, our event is taking place at Midhurst United Church, 91 Doran Road, at the corner of Gill Road and Doran Road. We will enjoy a fine meal and our annual elections. Our speaker for this event is Jamie Hunter, Director/Curator of the Huronia Museum in Midland. Jamie will provide a presentation on the Penetanguishene Road’s importance 200 years ago.

Tickets are \$25 and will be available for purchase at both our March and April meetings or call Gord Hanson at 705-721-9401 to reserve.

SCHA 2013 Schedule

March 14 – NOTE! Date and Location Change! John Bacher, author of *Two Billion Trees and Counting*, “From Desert to Forest: Edmund Zavitz, E.C. Drury and the Resurrection of Simcoe County” – for a joint meeting with Barrie Historical Association at **Barrie City Hall, Huronia Room, at 7:30 p.m.**

April 16 – Jennifer Thompson, “D.A. Jones: From prophet to profit” at the **Simcoe County Museum, Midhurst, at 7:30 p.m.**

May 21 – Annual General Meeting – tickets \$25 – Jamie Hunter “The Penetanguishene Road, its beginnings and connection to the War of 1812-14” **at Midhurst United Church, 91 Doran Road, at 6 p.m.**

President's Ponderings

by Helen Coutts

Today when I went for a walk, the sun shone and my nose said it could smell spring. This person is ready for that season even though we holidayed in the Caribbean for a week in early March on the island of Granada and soaked up heat, sunshine and tropical flowers and foliage. Granada is the spice island so our lungs had a treat as well.

Your Board has been busy over the winter planning for the rest of the year and are confident that the variety of topics, the calibre of speakers and some location changes should have something for all of you. Get the dates on your calendar and plan to join us

We start on Thursday, March 14 at Barrie City Hall Rotunda at 7:30 for a joint meeting with Barrie Historical. If you've seen pictures of the Midhurst Sand Plains or wondered how so many County Forests came to be you'll want

to be there to hear John Bacher, author of *Two Billion Trees and Counting*. Check this publication for more detail.

Then in April Jennifer Thompson will share the results of research for a Laurentian University essay about an entrepreneur from early Beeton; not the presentation you'll expect.

For our Annual General Meeting and dinner in May we move to Midhurst United at 91 Doran Road for a roast beef dinner with all the trimmings including home-made pie. The church is accessible. Our speaker that evening will be Jamie Hunter with his presentation on the Penetanguishene Road, its beginnings, and its connection to the War of 1812-14. I heard and saw Jamie's account of this topic last fall and it was excellent. If our plans fall into place you'll be as excited as we are about our September meeting. Details will follow in June.

On March 23 it was my privilege to represent SCHA at the Museum on the Boyne in Alliston as Brian Baker, one of our own, joined their Wall of Honour to recognize his contributions to the Heritage of South Simcoe.

On the bird corner we were excited on Christmas Day when a Great Gray Owl stopped by. That's exceptional because they normally stay north. He was on his way farther but he dropped by again in late February. About 10 years ago one hunted below our house for an extended period and we did all the research then. There have also been a lot of redpolls as well and they usually aren't this far south either. The rest of the flock is woodpeckers, chickadees, nuthatches, mourning doves (35 one day), a few goldfinches and occasionally the cardinals. Have a marvelous spring.



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
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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 31, 2013

Renew your membership for 2013! If you have not already, please support the SCHA by submitting your membership form at the March meeting, or by mailing it to Box 144, Barrie, ON L4M 4S9. Dues are \$12 for an individual and \$15 for a couple of family.

Details on our April Speaker, Jennifer Thompson

On April 16, we will welcome Jennifer Thompson to the museum for our monthly meeting. Jennifer is a resident of Severn Bridge, and a graduate of Laurentian University at Georgian College in Barrie. She is currently completing the Masters of Environmental Studies/Science degree at Nipissing University in North Bay. Her major research paper focuses on the interaction between aspiring and commercial apiculturists in Beeton and Brantford, Ontario, and how leaders in the industry like D.A. Jones and E.L. Goold used boosterism and various agricultural education tools to promote the bee-keeping industry.

Jennifer's research for her paper for

the Andrew Hunter Award focused on David Allanson Jones (D.A.) who is celebrated in his hometown of Beeton as the "Bee King of Canada".



Through extensive analysis of primary source data from the Simcoe County Archives and the Archives of Ontario, such as the

Beeton World, farm journals, agricultural societies and fairs, this study showed that Jones was not acting out of altruistic motives to expand the apicultural industry in Beeton, but was instead relying on his skills as a businessman and entrepreneur to support his family through a changing agricultural landscape. This was noticeable when he did not educate locals to ensure their success and introduce them to the market. He was not physically visible in the community nor a promoter of community events. He did not support local bee-keepers' ventures, and ultimately did not establish a solid foundation for the industry.

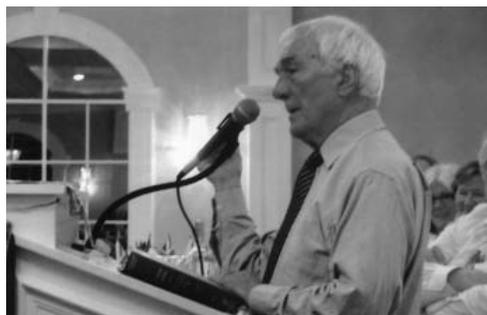
15th Annual John A. Macdonald Dinner

by Dr. Dick Johnston

The 15th annual John A. McDonald Dinner was held Saturday January 12, 2013 at the Best Western Mariposa Inn in Orillia. Again, the evening was sold out with 220 in attendance including guests from Ottawa, Toronto and Kingston.

The toast to Canada was carried out by Drs. Khaled and Hannan Abdel-Razel, recent new Canadian citizens. They both spoke eloquently of the values of Canada. In addition, Head Table guests Albert and his wife Nynka Greer, were recognized for Albert's recent appointment to the Order of Canada.

Guest Speaker Richard Gwyn gave an outstanding talk based on his second John A. book, *Nation Maker: John A. McDonald, His Life, Our Times, Volume 2, 1867 to 1891*. Mr. Gwyn spoke about John A.'s experiences in the 1870s and 1880s with First Nations



which is an appropriate topic given the circumstances in Canada. His poignant statement "no John A, no Canada" resonated with everyone in the room. Richard Gwyn is the first speaker to be invited back for a second time to the annual dinner, having first spoken in 2008.

It was also announced that the Orillia Historical Society, under Orillia Museum of Art and History (OMAH), has established a bi-centennial anniversary committee to celebrate John A's 200th birthday in 2015.

Community Partnership Program Funds

The Board of Directors of the SCHAWish to announce that funds for Community Partnership Programs are available throughout the year. In the past, most funding has been distributed in November, prior to the fiscal year

end. The Board regularly supports the April Heritage Fair, but would like proposals from other member societies who need monetary support.

Past projects have been as varied as our member groups! We have

supported publications, plaques, renovations, special displays, research projects, and other ideas.

Please forward your group's plan to Box 144, Barrie, ON L4M 4S9, Att: Community Partnership Program.

The War of 1812: reminiscences and recollections

by Jill Hynes

The following notes were compiled by the author for a presentation to the SCHA in October, 2011. This is the second installment of the series and publication will continue in upcoming issues of this newsletter.

Preparations were under way in the United States, where the government U.S.-British relations worsened as a result of the British policy that allowed them to board U.S. vessels and impress American sailors into His Majesty's service. Because of America's expansion into British-held lands in the West, in Canada, and in Florida (Spanish-held at the time), anti-British factions in Congress accused Britain of provoking Native American attacks on American frontier communities. In November 1811, Governor William Henry Harrison of Indiana fought the Shawnee nation with American troops at the Battle of Tippecanoe. Though the president had not authorized the use of troops, the incident roused support for military preparedness as war with Britain looked probable.

Alan Taylor, in his recent work *The Civil War of 1812: American Citizens, British Subjects, Irish Rebels and Indian Allies*, makes the following observations: Britons defined Upper Canada as a set of absences: as free from the social and political pathologies attributed to the United States. They celebrated the colony for lacking the land jobbing, Indian warfare, African slavery, Republican electioneering, libellous newspapers, majoritarian intolerance, and mob violence that blighted the republic.

In 1792 Patrick Campbell boasted that the settler in Upper Canada

could "get lands for nothing, be among his countrymen and run no risk of ever molested by the Indians, tarred or feathered." The British promoted Upper Canada more for what it was not than for what it was.

Because of that negative appeal, Simcoe was only half successful in recruiting Upper Canada's settlers. He enticed families who did not identify with the republic, but he did not attract many who cared deeply for the empire. Most Upper Canadians lacked both the motives and the means to challenge their rulers, or to support them. Disengaged from politics, most of the newcomers saw little reason to regret, and some cause to celebrate, their settlement in a colony where a British elite would govern them at the king's expense. The newcomers cared much for their families, farms and communities, but far less for the empire, which they regarded as an absence of demands upon their imaginations, emotions, or pockets.

In 1812, a British officer noted, "The settlers, thus enclosed by thick woods, are occupied chiefly with the laborious concerns of husbandry. Those events which are related to their own state of life, seem alone worthy of their notice. The tumults of contending nations, or the factions of a distant state are listened to with few emotions of interest."

For a different perspective, return to the words of Amelia Ryerse Harris as she recalled her experiences during the years leading up to the war and the war itself:

In 1810 my father showed signs of failing health. A life of hardship and great exertion was telling upon a

naturally strong constitution. He decided upon resigning all his offices, and his resignation was accepted upon this assurance, that from ill-health he could no longer fulfil the duties they involved. The Hon. Thomas Talbot was appointed his successor as colonel commandant of the militia, and the late Judge Mitchell succeeded him as Judge of the District and Surrogate Courts.

At this time there were strong rumours of war between America and England, and the militia anticipated being called into active service. At the close of 1811, a large body of the militia which my father had organized waited upon him, and urged him to resume the command, as in him they had confidence. Colonel Talbot was a stranger amongst them, and lived at a distance. My father at that time was in the last stage of consumption, and died in the June following, in 1812, aged sixty years.

Six days after his death war was declared, and then came troubles to my widowed mother in various shapes. My father in seventeen years had seen a lonely wilderness changed into a fruitful country. Most of the original log-houses had given place to good frame buildings, and the inhabitants generally seemed prosperous and content. Immediately after the declaration of war, the militia had to do military duty and neglect their farms.

British troops passed through Port Ryerse, on their way to Amherstburg and Sandwich, and every available building was used as barracks. All merchant vessels were converted into ships of war, and they, with one or

two small ships belonging to the Provincial Navy, were placed under the command of Captain Barclay, of the Royal Navy; Captain Finnes, R. N, was second in command. His ships were all of light tonnage; there were several transports, which were in constant use conveying troops and army supplies to Sandwich and Amherstburg. The lake was clear of enemies, as the Americans were blockaded within Erie Harbour, where they had two or three large ships on the stocks. They could not cross the bar at Erie without lightening their ships and taking out part of their guns. This they could not do in the presence of Barclay's fleet. When the weather was too rough for the blockading squadron to remain outside the harbour, it was too rough for the American fleet to get over the bar; consequently we felt very safe. This was during the summer of 1813.

During this summer General Brock called out the militia of Norfolk, and asked for volunteers to go with him to Detroit; every man volunteered. He made his selection of the strong and active young men. Right gallantly the militia throughout the province behaved during the three years' war, casting no discredit upon their parentage, the brave old United Empire Loyalists.

to be continued

Tiffin Centre Spring Tonic

Saturday April 6 & Sunday April 7

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Adults \$10,

children 12 & under \$5, infants free

Pancake breakfast (served until 2 p.m) with maple syrup made on site, see how maple syrup is made today and long ago, horse-drawn wagon rides, crafts, live entertainment and more! In partnership with the Rotary Club of Barrie.

Last Call! The Andrew Hunter Award 2013

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 2012-2013 academic year. The thesis paper must have been submitted for grading in the 2011-2012 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 22, 2013 and undergraduate theses shall be postmarked by June 30, 2013. 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 2013 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 and October -
November

Barrie Historical Association – contact Doug Hamilton

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

Mar. 14 – Joint Meeting with SCHA –
see pg 1

May 9 – AGM Sheba Shrine \$35 –
Ken Weber – The Gay Nineties: A First
Stab at Women’s Lib

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

Mar. 4 – AGM – Beverly Westcott –
David Williams: A Man for His Time

April 1 – Bill Brodeur – President of
“The Ship’s Company” – Sailing the
Bay: The Early Years

Essa Historical Society – contact Olive Lee

705-458-9971

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 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.simcoeboogs.com

April 13 – Dorothy Duncan – Hoping
for the Best, Preparing for the Worst

Huronian Museum Huron Owendat Village – contact Jamie Hunter

549 Little Lake Park Road, Midland –
705-526-2844

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

Mar. 16 – Student presentation –
Emily Carr

Museum on the Boyne – contact Katie Huddleston-Naieb

250 Fletcher Crescent in Riverdale
Park, Alliston – 705-435-0167

Orillia History Speaker Series – contact Daniel Byers

Meet at St. Paul’s United Church, Peter
St. and Coldwater Rd., Orillia – 7:00
p.m.

Mar. 20 – Mark Fletcher, David
Jefferies, and Jane Sorenson – OMAH
Reborn: The Newly Renovated Sir Sam
Steele Building, Past, Present, and
Future

April 17 – The Treaty of 1837:
compensation re. the relocation of
Orillia’s Chippewas

May 15 – John Smith – Highlights of
Orillia’s Industrial Past

Orillia Museum of Art and History – contact Lynda Whiston

30 Peter Street South, Orillia –
705-326-2159 www.orilliamuseum.org

Closed until Spring for Renovations!

Penetanguishene Centennial Museum and Archives – contact Nicole Jackson

13 Burke St. at Beck Blvd.
Call 705-549-2150
www.pencenmuseum.com

Ramara Historical Society – contact Cathy Westcott

westcott.cathy963@gmail.com

Meet at Udney Community Centre,
2347 Concession Road 10 (east of
Orillia)

7:00 p.m. Third Thursday of the month
(except July and August)

Mar. 21 – Gay Guthrie – Antique
Bottles: bring your own bottles

April 18 Jon Radojkovic – Timber
Frame Barns with author, timber frame
builder and inspector

May 16 – Antique Tea Cups & Tea Pots
– bring your own teapots and tea cups
for show and tell

June 20 – Box Car Meeting at Cecil
Byers 4100 Sideroad 20 – just east of
Uptergrove – Tour the box cars and
explore Ramara’s railway heritage on
site

Simcoe County Museum – contact Kelley Swift-Jones

1151 Highway 26, Midhurst –
705-728-3721 museum.simcoe.ca

Mar. 9-17 – March Break Public
Activities

April 24 – Simcoe County Regional
Heritage Fair

June 8-9 – Wheels and Tracks in
Motion

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.

Third Monday of the month January-
May and September-November Call
905-775-7144 or 905-936-4086

Mar. 18 – Ken Purvis – Military Music
of the War of 1812

Apr. 15 – Alan Foster – Wild Flowers
of the past

May 20 – Carolyn Knowles – Mill
Wheels to Automobiles in Alliston

June 9 – Our Annual Picnic
