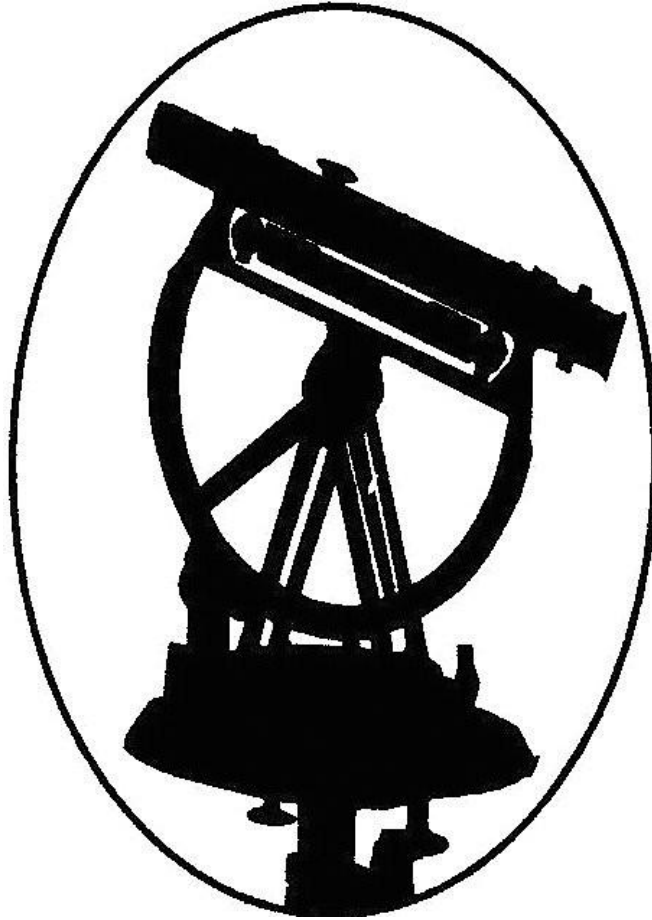


Peterborough Historical Society



Annual Report
2019

Presented at the Annual General Meeting Tuesday, June 16, 2020

Board of Directors, 2019

Dale Standen, President
Bob Taylor-Vaisey, Vice-President
Paul Lumsden, Treasurer
Don Willcock, Past President
Wayne Godward (resigned)
Jodi Aoki
Dion Gemmiti
Linda Chandler
Deborah Key

Hutchison House Management Committee 2019

Don Willcock, Chair
Bill Carson, Treasurer
Gale Fewings, Curator ex officio
Erin Panepinto, Secretary ex officio
Paul Lumsden, Property Management
Edith Betty Hinton, Gardens
Bill Corbett, Member at Large
Linda Chandler, Acquisitions/Conservation
Michael Peterman, Friends of Hutchison House

Trust Fund Trustees

Peter Darling, Chair
Marilyn McNaughton, Treasurer
Norman Savage
Dennis Carter-Edwards
Dale Standen, President PHS
(Financial Advisor: Susan Young)

President's Report

For the year 2019, the Society's Board of Directors mapped out an ambitious agenda. Ambition was necessary to address the challenges that I outlined in my annual report of 2018. These included the need to increase memberships, to recruit volunteers for the operation of Hutchison House and the Society's regular activities, and especially to find the financial resources to support the operational and maintenance needs of Hutchison House.

Much was accomplished in 2019. We addressed some challenges, we completed some special projects, and we maintained most regular programs as you will find in the accompanying reports of sub-committees.

In February the Society partnered with Peterborough Public Health to showcase the history and achievements of public health in a one-day conference, "Back to the Future: 130 years of Public Health in the Kawarthas." More than 80 attended to hear eight presentations on a range of topics. The PHS published the proceedings of the conference as the 40th consecutive annual occasional paper for 2020. The conference and its published proceedings followed the successful format of the earlier PHS conference of 2005, Edwardian Peterborough, and proved the value of this model for future conferences on Peterborough's history.

A major preoccupation of the Board of Directors during the year was to develop a new strategic plan for the next five years. The Board began work on this important project with preliminary review and brain-storming in 2018. In 2019 it struck a Strategic Review and Planning Committee that set an agenda of consultations with volunteers, members and community representatives and specialists, and research of other historical societies and historic house museums. In the fall the committee worked through drafts of a plan, the final version of which the Board approved in December. Building on current strengths, the plan sets goals to achieve success in the future. Subsequently, the Board approved an implementation plan that was launched in January of this year. One objective, to update the PHS By-law for clarity, to reflect current practice and to streamline some governance procedures, has been achieved and will be submitted for approval to this AGM. Another objective, to expand communications capacity, especially in digital and online spheres, was begun by contracting to create a new, more capable website, and to expand internet bandwidth.

In my report last year I noted that in 2019 the City of Peterborough increased its Service Grant to Hutchison House Museum by \$15,000. We are most grateful for this substantial increase, which, with added revenues from bingo fundraising, allowed Hutchison House to address its ongoing challenge of meeting operating costs, to complete some projects of deferred maintenance, and to undertake some capital improvements. This was achieved with nearly break-even year-end results.

The promising start to the year 2020 has, unfortunately, been stopped in its tracks by the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic. The emergency closing of Hutchison House in March has reduced to zero its revenues from programs and events, and these are unlikely to recover even when the closure is officially ended. The Historical Society's programs are also seriously interrupted. This year without doubt will be a severe challenge for staff and volunteers. We will be more than usual dependent upon the generosity of members.

This year we are facing a major change of a different order. Our Curator of Hutchison House Museum for the past 22 years, Gale Fewings has announced her plan to retire on 30 June. This is a momentous event for the museum on several counts. Gale has served as Curator for more than half the museum's existence. Her deep knowledge and wise guidance are responsible for programs and exhibits that have made the museum highly regarded in the community. She will be greatly missed but she has left a solid legacy on which to build. We thank her profoundly for her outstanding work.

Dale Standen

Financial Report

The financial position of the Peterborough Historical Society and Hutchison House has improved over 2018 due to the increase of the Service Grant from the City of Peterborough and the result of our involvement with the Kawartha Bingo Sponsors Association and the Delta Bingo and Gaming Centre.

No funds were transferred out of the Maintenance Trust this year.

The first year of a Five-Year Plan to complete capital projects on the House and surrounding property was completed in 2019 utilizing funds from member donations and Bingo proceeds. To review the exact details of the PHS financial position please see the Peterborough Historical Society Unaudited Financial Results at December 31, 2019 prepared by Tim J. F. Nicholls, Chartered Accountant.

Paul Lumsden, Treasurer

Membership Report 2019

Membership in the Peterborough Historical Society in 2019 increased by 9 over 2018.

- 21 lifetime members (no longer an option)
- 95 individual and family members
- 4 institutional members
- 2 student members

Membership renewal letters are sent out at the end of September, with reminders in the *Bulletin* in October and November. In December personal reminders are sent, and again at the end of January. Forgetfulness afflicts all of us and we are exploring ways to make remembering to renew easier. When the new website is up and running, it will be possible to renew memberships online, and this should help members respond.

Trustees Report

The Trustees met twice in 2019 in July and October. The purpose of the meetings was to review the investments and to reinvest those that were about to come due. The vast majority of the investments are GICs. This has meant that the current investment situation has had very little effect on the trust. All of the income is transferred to the House accounts and the very low interest rates available these days has reduced that amount. The next scheduled meeting of the Trustees will be July 13th, 2020.

Peter Darling, Chair

Publications Committee

The Publications Committee of the Peterborough Historical Society put together an exceptional document as its 40th anniversary publication. Our usual publication is a single-author essay of some 20 to 25 pages. In this case we published the majority of the proceedings of an important Public Health conference held in Peterborough on 9 February 2020. It was called "Back to the Future: 130 Years of Public Health in the Kawarthas" and was co-sponsored by the PHS and Peterborough Public Health. The volume is 88 pages in length and includes papers by the late Gary Humphreys, and conference co-organizers, Rosanna Salvaterra and Dale Standen. Given the larger cost of printing, the Publications Committee was grateful to receive a grant of \$1000 from the Symons Trust Fund for Canadian Studies.

In the wake of the COVID-19 virus's ominous arrival in Ontario this spring, these papers will have a special importance of their own to many of our members and readers, and will help to solidify the importance of the Public Health office in our cities and communities.

The make-up of the Publications Committee is changing this year. Dale Standen has stepped down to oversee matters pertaining to the PHS as a whole and Jean Cole, our longest serving member, has retired. Joining Michael Peterman, Elwood Jones and Bill Corbett next year will be Jodi Aoki and a person to be named later.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Peterman, Chair

Hutchison House Management Committee

The work of the Hutchison House Management Committee is reflected in the Hutchison House Museum Annual Report.

Library and Archives Report

The library is a collection of approximately 1000 books of various subjects. The main emphasis is on local history, biographies including Dr. Hutchison and Sir Sanford Fleming, but it also includes Canadian history, arts and crafts, pioneer life, medical practises at the time of Dr Hutchison, cooking, gardening. It is a non circulating library, though PHS members are free to use it. At present, it is not catalogued although some books were catalogued using Dewey Decimal System. The books are arranged by subject and then colour coded. The collection could be catalogued using an online system so users could access the material at home. We do not have the staff to have a circulating library but material can still be used in the library.

The archives is a work in progress but we are fortunate to have archivists on the board to provide assistance. Space is not an issue at the moment but secure storage for the important documents is still something that needs attention.

Susan Jewell, Chair

Annual Heritage Awards Program

In past years, the Peterborough Historical Society has presented its annual Heritage Awards at the Annual General Meeting and dinner. In 2019 the awards committee inaugurated a special ceremony for this notable event. In the evening on 19 June, Canterbury Gardens kindly provided space and light refreshments in the Atrium, with Peterborough's well-known media personality, Graham Hart, as master of ceremonies.

The awards presented in 2018 for outstanding contributions were:

The **F.H. Dobbin Award** for a publication that focuses on Peterborough was presented to **Rosemary McConkey** for her extensive work on local family genealogies.

The **George Cox Award**, which recognizes excellence in respectful restoration of cultural resources such as heritage buildings, was presented to **Trent University** for the recent restoration of the Bata Library and its commitment to a comprehensive

heritage plan for the ongoing maintenance of the campus. Dr. Michael Eamon received the award on behalf of Trent.

The **Samuel Armour Award** was awarded to **Gale Fewings** for her dedicated work as curator of Hutchison House Museum in delivering high quality education programs for two decades.

The **Martha Kidd Award** was awarded to **David Nelson** for his work of more than twenty years with the Lang Pioneer Village Advisory Committee.

The **2017 Martha Kidd Award** was presented to **Paul Millard** for the tasteful conversion of the former Knox United Church into affordable community housing. The project took more than two years but saw the preservation of key architectural elements such as the stained glass windows and exterior woodwork.

The **J. Hampden Burnham Award** which recognizes a major research project that sheds new light on Peterborough's history was awarded to the **History #3351A students of Trent University** for the development of their online history project of World War I soldiers.

The **Charlotte Nicholls Award** was not awarded in 2018.

Bulletin

In 2019, Peterborough Historical Society published ten issues of the *Bulletin*: January to June, and September to December. Produced by Marilyn MacNaughton, the *Bulletin* reached the membership mostly through email, with a few copies sent out in print format. The issues include insightful President's reports, always-inspiring overviews of the monthly goings-on at Hutchison House, write-ups of the talks presented at the monthly meetings, and notices of history-related community events.

The column "Voices from Peterborough's Past", submitted by various contributors, covers topics of local historical interest:

- Performances by celebrity musicians in mid-20th century Peterborough (Ken Brown)
- Three Generations of Irish Canal Engineers (Dennis Carter-Edwards)
- All in an Evening's Entertainment at the Empire Theatre (Robert Ganton Clarke)
- The Demolition of the Grand Opera House (Robert Ganton Clarke)
- Letterheads Illustrate Peterborough's Telephone History (Jon Oldham)
- The Peterborough Historical Society Prepares for a New Century – the Twentieth! (Dennis Carter-Edwards)
- Without Projectionists, No Movies: Ernest Young (Robert Ganton Clarke)
- What a Blast! 1,100 Kiddies and Hundreds Turned Away (Robert Ganton Clarke)
- Movies and the Great Depression in Peterborough (Robert Ganton Clarke)
- Hey Kids! Drinks and Snacks at the Paramount Theatre, Summer 1955 (Robert Ganton Clarke)

Jodi Aoki, Editor

Speaker Series

Over the past year, the Program Committee has continued to look for interesting speakers and relevant topics for our regular monthly lecture series. In planning the program for the year, there is an attempt to cover key themes that are both topical and in keeping with the mandate of the Society. Our speakers are drawn from local experts to specialists from further afield.

The year commenced with a presentation by Hajni Hos, Executive Director of the New Canadian Centre, on the diversity that can be found in Peterborough, so different from the Scots, Irish and English mix that was more typical in the early years of the city. In February, Su Ditta, the Executive Director of the Electric City Culture Council, gave a comprehensive and informative talk on the many talented artists from all fields within the city. The March lecture was a team effort featuring City Archivist Jon Oldham and local historian Ken Brown presenting a unique perspective on the history of Peterborough businesses using images from company letterheads.

The keynote speaker at the Annual General Meeting was Professor Dimitry Anastakis from the History Department at Trent University who gave a very timely presentation on the history of General Motors as GM Canada announced the closing of their assembly plant in Oshawa. Reflecting the strong labour history in Peterborough, the May lecture by Bryan Palmer focused on the tumultuous year 1919 and organized labour's response to the post war challenges and post Spanish Flu pandemic. A follow up lecture on labour's response to the post COVID-19 challenges may be a future topic worth considering.

In September, Jim Forrester spoke about the labour of love that his family has undertaken in restoring the historic "Old Red House" in Perth. In October, a joint presentation by Bob Taylor-Vaisey and Kathryn Matheson gave a comprehensive overview of the scope and challenges of archiving the substantial collection of Professor T.H.B. Symons' personal papers. In keeping with the Remembrance theme, the November meeting was presented by Ted Morin who spoke with passion about the career of his father who served in the First Special Service Force (the Devil's Brigade) during the Second World War.

In addition to the regular monthly lectures, the Peterborough Historical Society in partnership with Peterborough Public Health also sponsored a one day conference on the theme of public health, past and present, to mark the 130th anniversary of the foundation of Peterborough's Board of Health. Who could have imagined a year later we would be on the brink of the COVID-19 pandemic when once again, our specialized health professionals would play such critical role in preserving the health and well being of our community. The papers delivered at the conference are now available as the Society's Occasional Paper for 2020.

Dennis Carter-Edwards

High School History Awards

The following students have received PHS awards for excellence in history:

Andrea Mcdermid Boue of Crestwood Secondary School
Cameron McQuaid and Liam MacDonald of Kenner Collegiate
Meghan Foley of St. Peter Secondary School
Alexis Thompson of Adam Scott Collegiate

We wish them all continued success in their future endeavours.

Linda Lumsden
Chair

Historic Plaque Program

Last year we reported that the Plaques and Signage committee, after having installed more than 40 plaques in about 20 years, paused to review the means of selecting future sites and of maintaining existing signage, which is the object of some vandalism.

In 2019 the Society submitted to the City for review a proposal to create a committee representing the many interested organizations in the city and county to coordinate and collaborate on the identification of sites worthy of a historical plaque. The proposal is still under consideration.

2019 Annual Report

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