



Dundas Museum & Archives



Unveiling of the Soldiers' Memorial, 1921

Fall Newsletter 2009

**“A GREAT TIME!”
“GOOD FUN!”
“SUCH NICE PEOPLE!”**

*A LOOK BACK AT SOME AT SOME
OF THE EVENTS ENJOYED THIS YEAR!*

Made in Dundas

Victorian family fun!

Hundreds enjoyed a perfect day on the Museum lawn.



Our annual Dundas Cactus Festival is a great opportunity for the Museum to meet a brand new audience. On behalf of the Museum's Board of Directors I would like to express our sincere appreciation to our staff and wonderful volunteers, forty-two in all, who assisted in welcoming hundreds of visitors to our three exhibition booths in August during the three day festival. Thank you!

Clare Crozier, Chair

Daytrips!

Times away, in our own backyard! We discovered that the dinosaurs at the ROM have indeed come to life in the "The Crystal",, and agreed that the architecture of the new AGO is truly delightful, drawing you on to treasure after treasure... Stratford? Always a treat. And not to forget the terrific meals, nor the poor bus driver who slept in. Bet he never does *that* again. Great excursions, with great people!



Celebrating our Terrific Volunteers! Volunteer Night 2009



Dear Friends of the Museum:

The effects of the recession has forced some museums and galleries to cancel, re-jig and indefinitely postpone or reschedule some of their programs and exhibitions. The harsh reality is, the sputtering economy is making us rethink how we go about partnering and organizing what we bring in. I can assure you that the Board and Staff of the Dundas Museum & Archives remains vigilant in adjusting exhibition schedules, tweaking hours; and worrying over sponsorships, exhibition fees, insurance, shipping, handling, storage fees, and day to day maintenance costs.

Recently the National Gallery of Canada announced that it has experienced drops in attendance as the recession deepened. Attendance between 2007 and 2008, declined 23% and is currently off 8% in its audience

“Attendance is up 34% over 2007 figures, 6% over last year’s figures.”

projections for 2009. Here at the Dundas Museum & Archives we have an encouraging story to tell; visitor attendance continues to climb. When comparing statistics

for the first six months of 2009, vis-à-vis 2007 figures, attendance is up an impressive 34%; in the first six months of 2009 we are up 6% over last year's figures.

As many of you are aware, Carolyn and her staff continually strive to offer exhibitions and programs of interest to all. That said, we recently had to cancel an 'Afternoon Tea' which was to feature Norma Sheppard as she showcased her beautiful collection of vintage bridal fashions. The tea was intended to compli-

ment the museum's exhibit: *Something Old, Something Blue, Celebrating Wedding Traditions*. I would be remiss in failing to congratulate Roberta Bailey, and volunteer extraordinaire Libby Toews, for their sterling efforts in creating this in-house exhibit. Over the summer months, visitors were amazed to learn the museum has nearly fifty wedding dresses, many dating back to the 1800s, which have been gifted to our collection.

As you can appreciate there is always a cost in bringing these programs, exhibitions and speakers to our community. At the very least we have to cover our operating costs. In order to avoid paying a cancellation fee a deadline is established in ordering tickets. If the deadline passes, and we fail to cancel, the museum is mandated to cover the cost of the event, regardless if we host it or not. As a not-for-profit organization we are simply not in a position to cover this added expense during these uncertain times. We are always distressed to tell people, who call and order tickets after the deadline, the event has been cancelled. As it is our intent to continue to offer these programs, your interest and support is appreciated. Thank you!

I would like to pass on a story which appeared in a 1956 issue of *Ontario History*, a periodical published by the Ontario Historical Society. Reporting on the death of H. Graham Bertram, 'who took a leading role in founding the Dundas Historical Society Museum,' we learn that, 'Mr. Bertram was one of the museum's most generous patrons, who contributed much of the material from the private collection formed over many years by his father, Henry Bertram, and himself. His financial assistance



was also great: in 1953 he established the H.G. Bertram Foundation which will continue to sustain the work that was always close to his heart.' To put this in its proper perspective, the Dundas Museum would not exist without the support of the founding members of the Dundas Historical Society and the foresight of Mr. Bertram in establishing his Foundation for the preservation, protection and promotion of the rich history of our community. Our citizens own these visionaries an enormous debt of gratitude!

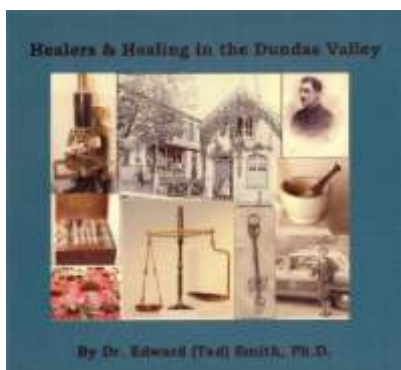
Many of us are at a period in our lives where its difficult to find something for that special occasion, especially for family and friends. May we suggest a gift of a museum membership. A Dundas Museum & Archives membership has much to offer: in its programming, exhibitions, archival research centre and out-of-town day trips to the Shaw Festival, the Stratford Theatre, the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Royal Ontario Museum. As per Mr. Bertram's wishes there is no admission charge for anyone to visit the museum, however, a donation box is available to show your appreciation and support. It really is the best bargain in town!

Respectfully,

Clare Crozier
President & Board Chair

Healers & Healing in the Dundas Valley

A book to be published this fall by the
Dundas Museum & Archives



Healers & Healing in the Dundas Valley offers a fascinating opportunity to explore the legacy of healing, and those who have been healers, throughout the generations in Dundas from the time of the First Nations until the opening of the McMaster Medical Centre in 1971.

The book's author, Dr. Edward (Ted) Smith, Ph.D., was educated at McMaster University (B.A., M.A.) and the

University of Guelph (Ph.D.) where he specialized in Canadian history. Dr. Smith teaches at the University of Guelph and lives in Hamilton. He has written a number of books on the history of the Hamilton area, including *Hamilton Doctors 1932 – 1982* (2004) and (with Jerry Disher, P.Eng.) *By Design: The Role of the Engineer in the Hamilton-Burlington Area* (2001).

"This is not only a history of medical science and of physicians and surgeons. It is much more than that. You will meet nurses, mothers, medicine women and medicine men, homeopaths, chiropractors, dentists and pharmacists: healers all."

*You are invited to the Book Launch of
'Healing & Healers in the Dundas Valley'*

Friday, November 6, 7:00 pm.
at the Museum

The author, Ted Smith, will be in attendance to give a short introduction to the book and to sign copies.

A great gift for yourself, or another!

Introducing...

Shaun House, Digitization Assistant

We are pleased to introduce Shaun House, who began working at the Museum this summer as Digitization Assistant. Although Shaun's tenure with



Shaun House

us was to have been completed at the end of August, additional funds made available through the Young Canada Works grant program have allowed Shaun to remain employed with us until the end of the year. He is working Thursdays and Fridays while he attends the University of Toronto School of Information where he studies in the Archives stream.

Shaun's project has been to build upon the work of our volunteers in describing and scanning the photograph collection. Shaun has mastered (or at least tamed) the iO program, and is sharing his expertise and experience with volunteers. He has also contributed significantly to the Museum's content on *Our Ontario* which you can read about elsewhere in the newsletter. Shaun is newly married. He and his wife, Nadine, live in Dundas with their two cats.

Shaun, you are a great asset to the staff team!

Welcome, Sharon & Mary Jean!

The Board of Directors are pleased to announce that Sharon Mareck and Mary Jean Monte have joined the



Sharon Mareck



Mary Jean Monte

Museum staff. They join Teresa Gregorio in sharing the Weekend Staff positions, assuring a warm, knowledgeable welcome to all Saturday and Sunday visitors as well as supporting the docents working with them. They also fill the role of Administrative Assistant during the week, as needed. Sharon's background in business, and Mary Jean's in teaching, bring rich skills. Combined with their warm personalities? They are perfect in their new roles. Sharon and Mary Jean, we are very glad you are with us!

Our Cover Story

Put Victory First: Dundas Fights on the Home Front

October 27, 2009 – January 17, 2010



Victory Bond Drive in Dundas

Opening Reception: Tuesday, October 27 at 7:00 pm.
Refreshments will be served.

The World Wars of the 20th Century touched virtually every aspect of life at home. Everyone - of every age - did what they could to assure victory.

'War effort is something, which is as microscopic in the unit as the individual, but as mighty in the sum total as an army.'

- Elsie MacGill, Canadian Aeronautical Engineer

Put Victory First: Dundas Fights on the Home Front shares stories of men, women and children of the Valley Town: spurred on by patriotism and fully mobilized for the war effort in support of our soldiers engaged overseas.



Our Guest Curators are Lisa DeCicco, Alyssa Gomori, Alexandra Saly, Stephanie Smyth, Julia Stacey and Emily Waugh. Each is a student. Each has spent hours at the Museum learning the best practices for exhibit planning and taking them from the theoretical to reality. Each has researched the war effort, and researched more.



Their passion for sharing the story is inspiring. They would say that's because the story is so inspiring.

Put Victory First: Dundas Fights on the Home Front

Unveiling of the Dundas War Memorial, 1923

With Pride and Respect

He hefted himself, all 5'8-¼" of a proud veteran, onto the window ledge of the Grade VIII classroom on the southwest corner of Dundas Public School. November 11 was fast approaching and, tossing out the regular lessons for the morning, he talked to the students about his experiences in Europe during WW I. No dusty textbooks, just memories of a young soldier who signed up at the age of 18 to do his duty to King and Country, accepting whatever the consequences might be. He kept the class entranced for the morning and those memories have lingered in the mind of one student for over 70 years.

On the morning of November 11th, Mr. Murray would form up the student of Dundas Public School and, flags flying, they would march to the Cenotaph in Market Square at the corner of Sydenham and King Streets. He limped a bit, but that did not stop him; anyone who knew him well would often comment that he marched everywhere, never walking but marching as tall as possible, given his stature. He was proud of the efforts made by his Country, and his small part.

Those students who marched with the Principal understood the sacrifice and respected the memories of soldiers they would never know because their teacher had made WW I come alive and real for their young minds.

Jean Murray



The Students marching to the Cenotaph, November 11th

Our Ontario!

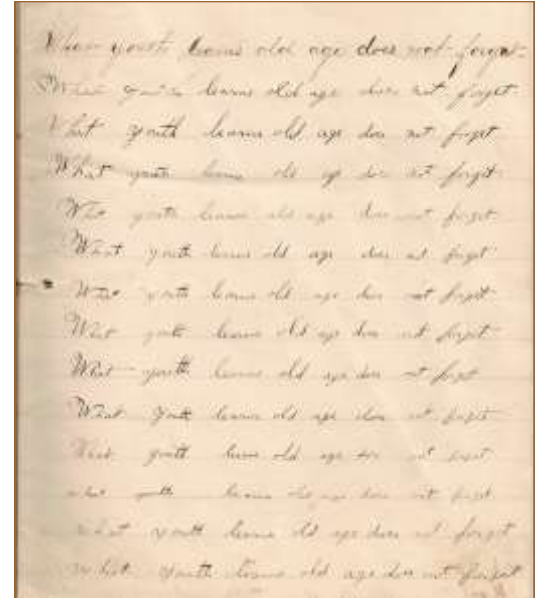
The Museum is always looking for ways to make our collections available to as many people as possible. A new initiative for us is *Our Ontario*. *Our Ontario* is a site dedicated to bringing the digital collections of archives, museums, libraries and other cultural and heritage organizations to a world wide audience. The Dundas Museum & Archives is participating with our Photograph Collection. We are pleased to announce that over 100 images from our collection are "up" on *Our Ontario*. It is an extraordinary site. If you have internet access, have a look: www.ourontario.ca.

Voices from the Past: School Days!

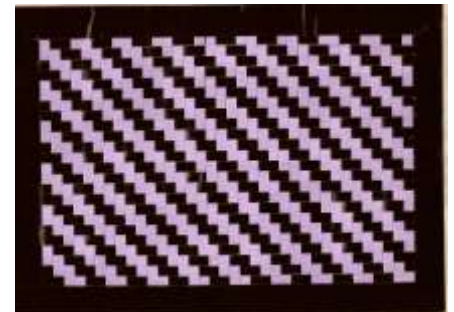
September brought with it a new school year. The excitement of new classrooms, new teachers, new friends has dimmed in the face of daily lessons and, of course, homework as the students settle into the school year. The Museum has in its collection a wonderful selection of school books, both texts and exercise,



Ontario were subjected to a course in Temperance. This was in compliance with an Act to provide for the teaching of Temperance in the Public Schools. This act was unanimously approved by the Legislature of Ontario, its members concerned that “many contract the habit of using intoxicating liquors through ignorance, and that even the best education imparted in our Public Schools is not an offset to the ruin which frequently results...”.



Students’ individual exercise books and art projects offer a view of the expectations and skills of children. We see the neat rows of Jeannie Anderson’s cursive writing and the fountain pen scratchings as John Jewett masters “reduction”.



We see Beatrice Bremner’s intricate paper art projects and her brother Freddie’s charming art project.



These documents are delightful, but they are also vital to our understanding of the classroom and how it has evolved over time.

dating from the 1860s to the 1930s. We are also privileged to have the school books belonging to Mary and Helen Bain, the children of the Hon. Thomas Bain and his wife Helen. All offer a glimpse of what Canadian children were required to learn over time.



Sandra Kiemele
Archivist

It is interesting that, in addition to reading, history, civics, grammar, physical science, chemistry, geography, French, and Latin, in 1887 students in

Mysteries from History

Last newsletter our mystery involved a toppled tree and a crumpled cabin. Well, mystery solved! The image was taken in 1927 after a violent windstorm felled a tree on the Lawn Bowling Club headquarters in the Driving Park next to the wading pool.

You are invited to enjoy
a lovely dinner, fine companionship
and wonderful entertainment

at the Dundas Museum & Archive's

Christmas Memories Dinner

Saturday, November 28, 2009

Reception at 5:30 pm.
Dinner at 6:30 pm.

Dundas Town Hall Auditorium
(Fully Accessible)
60 Main Street, Dundas

\$50 per person for Museum Friends
\$55 per person for Non Members

Call the Office at 905.627.7412
for your ticket.

Volunteer Profile ~ Lisa DeCicco!

Lisa is a McMaster student, currently in her 5th year of Honours History and Religious studies. A year ago, she 'wandered' into the McMaster Student Centre and came across the Volunteer Fair. 'The Dundas Museum seemed ever so interesting to me. I was so excited to see what it was like to work in a museum; to see what it was like behind the scenes.' Lisa has been volunteering at the Museum ever since.



An Oakville resident for most of her life, Lisa discovered Dundas in her 2nd year at Mac. 'Dundas is a lovely, quaint community. It is so different from the rest of Hamilton. The community has a welcoming feel to it, as everyone makes you feel as though it is home.'

'The Dundas Museum is truly a second family. Everyone is so welcoming to the volunteers and the visitors to the Museum. It is unlike any other museum I have ever visited.' Lisa's volunteer work, including being a docent and one of the Guest Curators of our 'Put Victory First' exhibit, certainly contributes to the welcome visitors receive. Thank you, Lisa, for all that you bring to us!

Compassion is Everything: R. Sheldon Murray

Principal, Dundas Public School



Sheldon & Nellie Murray

'A man of honour and integrity, tough but always fair', were words spoken by former students of Ralph Sheldon Murray, Principal of Dundas Public School, 1926 - 1947. The echo of these words describe the charm of our town of Dundas in this year of 2009. Mr. Murray was known affectionately as 'Si'. It is only recently that I have learned this was his code identification during his career as a dispatch rider in World War I.

R. Sheldon Murray answered the call to become principal for the fall of 1926. A stipulation in his contract required that he be a married man. He was not, but rules are rules. Sheldon and Nellie Betzner, of Greensville, pushed forward their planned wedding date from June 1927 to June of 1926, setting busy tongues of the small town wagging. In 1930 their first child, Marguerite, was born, proving the gossips wrong. I followed 4-½ years later.

In his new position of authority, Dad had more rules to follow, rules which did not sit comfortably with this man of a caring and compassionate nature. Dad believed discipline meant helping another to understand the nature of the error and finding a way to correct that behavior. But in those days, discipline by school standards, meant punishment, often taking the form of the dreaded STRAP! That punishment was harder on Dad than the child, and became more painful when the child was his younger daughter.

In those more trusting days, bikes ridden to school were left unlocked. The rule (that word again) was 'No one will touch any bike which does not belong to him/her'. The rules were usually obeyed - except for the day I lost my self control. Not having a bike of my own, I 'borrowed' one and rode it once around the playground before returning it, unscathed, to its rack. Well, a pal of the school bully had been watching 'the Principal's daughter'. Before long the school bully proceeded to snap a spoke of her own bicycle, and report it as 'my' crime, to the Principal.

Punishment was meted out in the Office, with an audience listening to be sure I was not allowed to escape charges. I was not. To be honest, my palms received just one slap on each hand. The desk took the rest. Dad's father-heart would not allow him to carry out the full allotment. Tears flowed profusely, Dad's and mine, followed by sincere promises to never do that again. Before I left, I received a hug from his loving arms, not something part of the usual disciplinary code. Punishment had been perceived to have been done. Tears were shed. Life went on. This was Dad, whose loving heart held all children in invisible arms.



Jean Murray

Jean Murray (Thanks, Jean!)

"The Little Shop"

Dundas Museum Christmas cards will be available soon!

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS SALE!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6TH
1 PM – 4 PM

20% OFF ALL ITEMS
FOR MEMBERS

10% OFF
FOR EVERYONE ELSE!

Hot Apple Cider and Cookies
and a free gift in the Lucky Dip!

Come and Join the Fun



Bill & Jean McMicking,
themselves married 53 years!

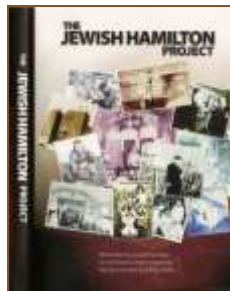
Something Borrowed Something Blue A Celebration of Wedding Traditions

Enjoyed by all!



Paige visited with her Mom. Dressing up like a bride was very popular with our young visitors.

Bill Shaffir, a professor of sociology at McMaster University and Wendy Schneider, editor of the Hamilton Jewish News, have completed a five year project documenting the stories of the Jewish Hamilton community from the 1930's through the 1960's.



The interviews focus on areas of everyday life such as education, the synagogues, the neighbourhood, occupations and anti-Semitism.

The DVD is now available. The *Little Shop* at the Dundas Museum & Archives is proud to make this unique history available. The cost is \$25.00

The Last of the Last Page

"Keep up telling the story."

"Keep up telling the story.' Just five words, but five words that pack a punch. They were written in the Museum's Guest Book.

The visitor had already expressed to staff how much he had enjoyed learning about Dundas in the course of his visit that day. Passionate about his own community, he was pleased to be returning to Toronto with a greater understanding and appreciation of Dundas through its years.

But his visit to the Museum had also, unexpectedly, touched long forgotten family memories. He was quite delighted to be going home, that afternoon, to share them with others.

"Keep up telling the story." What a wonderful request, rich in its possibilities. Thank you. We will, in as many and varied ways as we can.

Stories that will echo across the miles, and across the generations.

Take care.

Carolyn Westoby
Museum Manager



Gallery Hours
Monday to Friday: 10 am. to 5 pm.
Saturday & Sunday: 1 to 4 pm.

Archives Hours
Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 10 am to 4 pm.
Reference Collection only
on Saturday & Sunday: 1 to 4 pm

Dundas Museum & Archives
139 Park Street West, Dundas, ON L9H 1X8
905.627.7412 mail@dundasmuseum.ca