

# Peterborough Historical Society

## 366th Bulletin

March 2010

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**PHS Meeting,  
Tuesday March 16, 2010  
at 7:30 pm  
Peterborough Public Library  
Lower Level Auditorium  
Aylmer Street, Peterborough**

**Voices of the Town –  
Vaudeville in Canada  
by Jon Oldham**

Jon will share some of the design challenges that needed to be overcome – from keeping Oklahoma Jack's pants from falling down to preventing the reproduction **Kinetoscope** (modeled after the Roy Studio's) from overheating.

Images from the **Balsillie Collection of Roy Studio Images** as well as behind-the-scenes images of the exhibition during construction will illustrate Jon's fascinating presentation.

**Mary Lavery**

The Peterborough Historical Society is pleased to present Jon Oldham, Programming Assistant and responsible for marketing for the Peterborough Museum & Archives. Jon will talk about his experiences while developing the Museum's traveling exhibit called *Voices of the Town – Vaudeville in Canada*.

The exhibit was formed in order to build on experiences gained during the Museum's partnership in the award winning **Traveling Exhibit Partnership Project**. It is also a vehicle for sharing images from the Balsillie Collection of Roy Studio Images with a broader Canadian audience.

*Voices of Town – Vaudeville in Canada* has been touring Canada since its opening in 2005 – most recently as the featured Exhibition at the Elgin and Winter Garden Theatres - Toronto's famous vaudeville location.



**For your Information:** Wed April 28th at 7:30pm - TVA AGM. Dennis Carter-Edwards from Parks Canada will discuss sunken treasures of the Trent Canal. Refreshments to follow. Held at St. John's Anglican Church (Lower Church Hall.)

### .....from the president

The roast beef dinner, Silent Auction and AGM was a success enjoyed by all. Many thanks to the staff of Princess Gardens for the delicious meal and lovely setting. Many thanks also to Enid Mallory and Kathy Hooke assisted by Barb McIntosh and Linda Lumsden in organizing and displaying the 100 items for the Silent Auction.

At the AGM the new Board of Directors for PHS was elected for 2010: Mary Lavery, Dennis Carter-Edwards, Bob Green, Linda Lumsden, Barbara McIntosh, Michael Townsend, Enid Mallory, Gail Corbett. Our sincere thanks to Kathy Hooke who is retiring from the Board after many years of service to us.

As you will note our Board of Directors is small in numbers, hard working - and in need of some new members. Please consider this rewarding volunteer task.

We are short of applications for the five PHS Heritage Awards, Deadline for submissions is March 8.

Here comes Spring

Mary Lavery

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Mary Lavery preparing Hutchison House for the Whiskey Nosing event in 2009



### LAST CALL!

The deadline nominations for PHS Heritage Awards is March 8.

Applications may be obtained from Hutchison House, Trent Valley Archives, Peterborough Museum and Archives, and Peterborough City Hall.

Mary Lavery

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Peterborough Historical Society presents

# Whisky Nosing


## Wednesday April 28, 2010

### 7:00pm - 11:00pm

Gather at Hutchison House then proceed to  
St. Andrews United Church

Single malt whisky tasting  
Scottish Country Dancers  
Scottish food  
Optional wine  
\$40.00

Tickets at Hutchison House  
or phone 740 - 2600



Whisky Nosing experts from the An Quaich Society will present three unique and distinct single malt whiskys for your appreciation.

Get your tickets early as there are limited numbers available and you don't want to miss this great event.



**Peterborough Historical Society's  
Annual General Meeting, Dinner and Silent Auction  
February 16, 2010**



Catherine Dibben and Peter Darling



Kathy Hooke, Alex Wood, Lea Wood



Cara Peterman and Mary Lavery

Don Willcock, Dorothy MacNaughton,  
Mary Charles, Marilyn MacNaughton



### Hutchison House Report

Last February when I returned from visiting my daughter and her family in England I was pleasantly surprised to find that Ann Baker and her family had taken it upon themselves to make the scrubbing of the keeping room floor their Family Day project. A whole year has come and gone since and again it was time to scrub the floor. This is no easy task and it requires hand scrubbing bare wood on bended knee. So you can well imagine my delight when I mentioned to Ann that we were going to clean the floor and she said "You should have some men do that. I'll find you some!"

Ann was true to her word. At 1pm. on February 18<sup>th</sup> Ann arrived with her crew consisting of her father Walter, brother Jamie, and friends Kevin and Keith. In no time at all they set to work on the floor and within one hour the floor looked fabulous. In fact, they did such a good job that the volunteers who saw it later asked if someone had actually sanded it. I guess Ann was right....we did need some men for the job. Ann and her gang all live in Cavan, so from now on, I will always think of them as '**Ann & the Cavan Boys**'. Thanks gang! Same time next year?

We were very fortunate to have Sir Sandford Fleming student **Laura Stein** working at the house for the past few months. I may have mentioned in a previous report that Laura's part-time position was made possible through a Young Canada Works in Heritage grant from the federal government. Laura has a passion for historical clothing as well as being a skilled seamstress. She worked very closely with our costume expert Barbara Earle during her placement. It's been nice for Barb to have an able assistant who is as interested in the fashions of yesteryear as she is herself. However, sadly, the funding for Laura's position comes to a close at the end of February. We have all enjoyed having Laura on the team and wish her all the best of luck in her future.

In coming weeks the staff and volunteers will be busy moving our reference library to the boardroom upstairs and with **March Break** programming. This year the museum will offer five different half day programs for youth ages 6 years and up.

Four morning programs will begin at 9:30 am and run until noon. They are as follows: Tuesday, March 16 the children will sew Teddy bears; Wednesday, March 17 they make dream catchers; Thursday, March 18 is kaleidoscopes; and on Friday, March 19 book binding will round out the week.

The only afternoon program offered during March Break will take place on Tuesday, March 16 from 1 to 4 pm. Members of the **Embroiderers' Guild of Peterborough** will conduct a workshop for children ages 6 years and up. They will be teaching some basic fundamentals of needlework. Participants will construct a small needlework scissors pouch for tiny folding scissors (scissors included) and a simple bookmark to take home.

In honour of their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary the Guild is committed to sharing the joy of needlework with the youngsters in our community. They are hoping to host more classes for children at Hutchison House throughout the year. An exhibit of works completed by members of the Embroiderers' Guild of Peterborough will be on display at the museum throughout the summer.

As always, thank you to all of the volunteers for your constant support and assistance with all things new and olden.

**Gale Fewings**





### From PHS Archives

Doug Campbell, introduced by Al Brunger as "Mr. Streetcar," presented us with a history of the Peterborough streetcar system at our last meeting, April 21. It was a story of wheeling and dealing, and of ambitious plans that may have been doomed from the outset. But it is a story that left its tracks on Peterborough history.

The first stab at initiating a streetcar system for Peterborough came in 1883 with the formation of the Ptbo. Street Railway and Transfer Company. A rather grand company name, but proper financing could not be arranged and the project went nowhere. Interest resurfaced in 1891 when the Peterborough and Ashburnham Street Railway (P&A) was formed. The P&A system was to be run with Westinghouse equipment from the J.M. Brill Company of the United States. The C.G.E. also had an interest in a streetcar system and was spurred to action by the foreign competition.

The race for the franchise was on. Council could not decide between the two companies and there was a plebiscite. C.G.E. came out the winner, but in an abrupt turnabout decided it didn't want to run the system after all and leased the franchise to PICA.

PICA's subsequent failure led to a Sheriff's Sale in 1898. Several Company directors made a substantial profit on the sale, buying the company back at twenty-five cents on the dollar. Although it laid down track, the PICA failed to operate a railway, and lost the franchise in 1901. The following year the Peterborough Radial Railway was formed, rehabilitated the old track, and added new track to form a system that measured, in total, only 6 miles. Streetcars ran in Peterborough, nine of them altogether.

P.R.R. did poorly financially, and in late 1914 it merged with the Electric Power Company Limited (E.P.C.). In early 1916 the E.P.C. was absorbed by the Hydro Electric Power Commission (forerunner of Ontario Hydro) thus block-

ing City attempts to gain control of the Company and thrust the Peterborough street railway system into public ownership. Through the early 1920's the city sustained an interest in what was still considered a potential moneymaker, but a deal could never be arranged with the Hydro Commission. In 1926 the Commission cut back its services, and in 1927 discontinued service altogether.

The Peterborough streetcar service had faced many problems. Doug pointed to barriers both physical and financial.

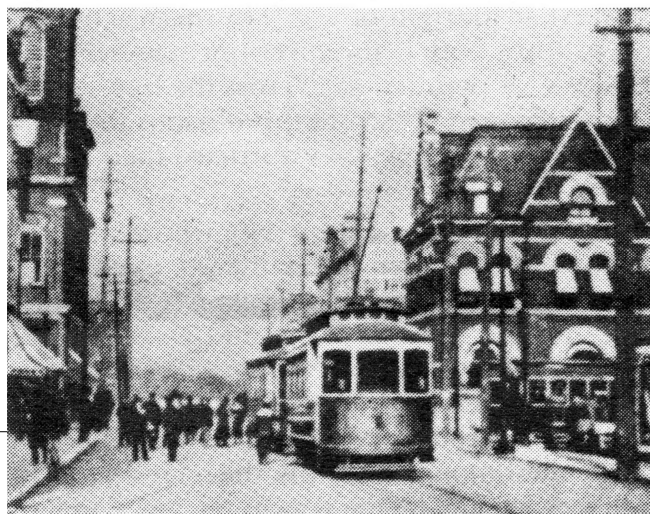
Because streetcars could comfortably handle no more than a 4% grade, the high land to the west restricted development in that direction; the river restricted development eastward. The railway was forced to run primarily parallel to the river, through the business district.

The streetcar systems were doomed financially. The cost of cars (even second-hand), track, land, and maintenance, were all drains on coffers. Travelling at a speed of 8-10 M.P.H. and at a cost of five cents per ride at a time when wages averaged three to five dollars a week, the streetcar did not offer residents much but novelty. Most workers preferred to save their money and walk the relatively short distances covered by the system.

In March 1927, just over sixty years ago, Peterborough saw the last of the streetcars. Buses were brought in, cars became more popular and affordable, and Peterborough's streetcar service vanished.

Susan Ramey

From the 159<sup>th</sup> Bulletin, May 1987



**Hutchison House Museum**

**Owned & operated by the  
Peterborough Historical Society  
270 Brock Street  
Peterborough Ontario  
K9H 2P9  
Phone 705- 743-9710  
hutchisonhouse@nexicom.net**

**Curator: Gale Fewings  
Management Committee:  
chair: Michael Townsend**

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Bill Corbett  
Barb Earle  
Betty Hinton  
Michael Peterman  
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**Mark your Calendars**

**PHS General Meetings**

Tuesday March 16, 2010, our guest speaker Jon Oldham. His topic will be Vaudeville in Canada.

Tuesday April 20, 2010 our guest speaker Robert Winslow. His topic will be how local history makes it to the 4th Line Theatre.

**Hutchison House**

**Heritage Luncheons** are on Wednesday, April 7, and May 5. Call the office at 743-9710 for details and to book tickets.

**March Break**

- Teddy Bears - Tues. March 16 (9:30 – noon)
- Needlepoint Scissors Pouch (includes folding scissors) Tues March 16 (1-4pm)
- Dream Catchers – Wed. March 17 (9:30 – noon)
- Kaleidoscopes – Thur. March 18 (9:30 – noon)
- Book Binding – Fri. March 19 (9:30 – noon)

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Bulletin submissions for the March issue due by March 17, 2010 (day after meeting).

[www.nexicom.net/~history](http://www.nexicom.net/~history)