



## City of Peterborough Digitizes Historical City Directories

July 19, 2016

The City's Heritage Preservation Office announced that a long-awaited project to digitize a local collection of City and County directories has been completed. With the oldest volume dating back to 1858, the annually published directories are a rich resource for researching a wide range of topics related to City history and family genealogy.

The digitization of the directories means that the public can now access them from anywhere with an Internet connection. The collection of digital books is located online at: <https://archive.org/details/peterboroughcitydirectories>.

A key feature of the digital collection is the keyword search capability, which makes it much faster to scan for specific names or words. Digitization also preserves the old, fragile and irreplaceable printed volumes by protecting them from the wear and tear of repeated handling.

"It's wonderful that the City can use modern technology to make these valuable historical resources more widely available," said Mayor Daryl Bennett.

City directories were published annually as a guide that listed the names, addresses and professions of people in a particular town, city and sometimes county. As records of city life, city directories have become a well-used primary resource for historical research of people, businesses, buildings and communities. In addition to names and addresses, a city directory may also contain a business directory, government directory, and listings of town officers, schools, societies, churches and post offices. Many local businesses placed advertisements in the directories, which provide fascinating insights into the economic, social and technological trends of the time.

A total of 115 books were scanned, with directories contributed by the Peterborough Public Library, Peterborough Museum and Archives, Trent Valley Archives and Trent University Archives. Funding for the project was provided by the Peterborough Public Library.

Although all the available directories were scanned, there are some years for which they

are missing. The City would like to issue a call to any members of the public who may have copies of directories that are missing. They are invited to help complete the collection by loaning their copies to be digitized. The missing years are: 1884, 1886, 1889, 1891, 1892, 1896, 1900, 1902, 1911, and 1930. Anyone with directories from these years can contact Kathryn Matheson, Heritage Researcher by phone at 705-742-7777 ext. 1491, or by email at [kmatheson@peterborough.ca](mailto:kmatheson@peterborough.ca).

## **For more information:**

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