

Museums - Telling the stories of our lives



This compilation of newsletters was produced by Fort Erie Museum Services between 1992 and 2016 and compiled into a book in 2025.



These newsletters were mailed to every residence in Fort Erie (approximately 12,000 addresses). They were also distributed to local businesses, health care offices, the Town Hall, community events, and travel information centres. Public feedback was very positive and people especially liked the historical stories and photographs.



These newsletters were researched, written, edited, and designed by Museum Services staff: Jane Davies (Manager 1987 - 2025), Jude Scott (Assistant Curator 2004 - 2020), and Erin Wilson (Curator of Built Heritage and Exhibits 1993 - 2010). The 2025 Museum staff responsible for indexing and digitizing these newsletters were Nicole Komar (Curator of Exhibits, Programming, and Marketing) and Jessica Steffler (Curator of Collections, Conservation, and Research).



An index is found at the back of this compilation. These newsletters can therefore be read chronologically or by using the index to look for a particular topic of interest. There are many historical stories and photographs found within these newsletters which are now made more accessible by being shared on the Museum's website.



Newsletter

The Fort Erie Museums

Newsletter is distributed to
every household in
greater Fort Erie.

Cover Photos

Clockwise from top left: Dr. Ron Williamson and Jane Davies; Jude Scott; Jane Davies; and Erin Wilson.

Contact Us

Fort Erie Museum Services Box 339, Ridgeway, LOS1N0 p • 905-894-5322 e • museum@forterie.ca

Visit Us

Historical Museum:
402 Ridge Rd.
Railway Museum:
Central Ave. at Gilmore
Mewinzha Gallery:
100 Queen St.
Ridgeway Battlefield Park:
3388 Garrison Rd.

Mission Statement

- Fort Erie's Museums care for a base of knowledge that belongs to the future.
- Fort Erie's Museums help create a strong and proud community by celebrating our shared heritage.
- Fort Erie's Museums help satisfy the intellectual needs of the community.

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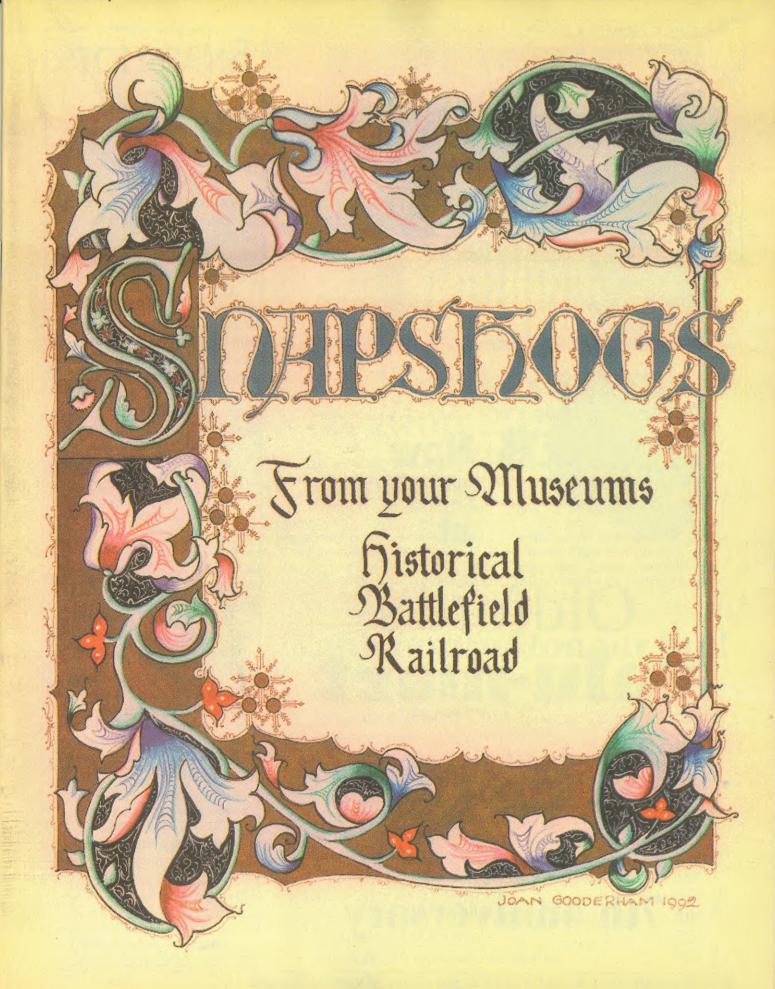
(Battle of Ridgeway 150th Anniversary)

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Oldford's valu-mart

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Celebrating our 7th anniversary

SNAPSHOTS

Snapshots is published by the Fort Erie Museum Board, Box 339, Ridgeway, Ontario, LOS 1NO.

TICKETS . BOOKLETS . CATALOGUES

We graciously thank the advertisers in this magazine for their support in helping to produce Snapshots. Without their generous contribution, it would not have happened.

The front cover was designed by Joan Gooderham of Ridgeway. It is an art form called Illumination, first used by monks in the Middle Ages to decorate their writing. A very intricate process, no publication could ever faithfully reproduce the brilliant and subtle colours in the work. The original will be on display at the Historical Museum in Ridgeway.

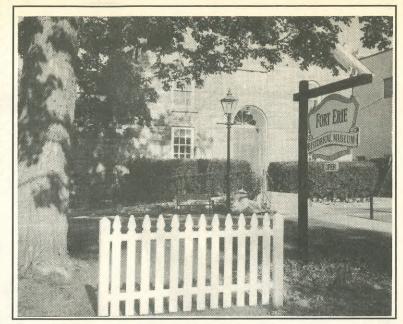
Editorial, advertising sales, typesetting, composition and colour by Mike Cloutier and Jane Davies. Some editorial contributed by members of the Bertie Historical Society.

Single copies of Snapshots can be purchased from the museum and other agents. Single issue price is \$1. (Agents reserve the right to vary.)

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Fort Erie Museum Board: Don Woods, Larry Williams, Dorothy Miller, Mike Cloutier, Vic Miller, Garnet Painter, Rick Herbert, Alan Beam, John Gibson, Bruce Moore.

The Fort Erie
Historical Museum
at 402 Ridge Road.
It was built in 1874
and served as the
Bertie Township Hall
until 1969 when the
township, Village of
Crystal Beach and
the Town of Fort
Erie were
amalgamated



Bertie Historical Society catalyst to museum's creation 20 years ago

The museum owes its existence to the Bertie Historical Society; however, the society's early beginnings are sketchy.

The first reference to a historical society is correspondence to the township council regarding local histories in 1898.

The next record was from a 1911 meeting where "a few people met to discuss the advisability of forming a historical society." Two of their objectives were to arouse enthusiasm to secure a memorial for the Ridgeway Battlefield and to secure the Peace Bridge at Fort Erie. Dr. Snyder was the president and Margaret Disher the secretary.

The next records are from 1969. A meeting was held to discuss the possibility of obtaining the Bertie Township Hall as a museum. Mrs. W. Teal was chosen chairman of the steering committee.

In 1970, it was decided to form a historical society. The executive was James Grassie, Earl Plato, Elia Lawson, Bev Jewson and Cecil Laur.

The town granted the society use of one room at the hall in 1971. Plans were made for the opening of the museum, and with

the help of many volunteers, more than 300 people attended the July 1, 1972 grand opening.

Volunteers kept the museum going with school programs, quilt shows and other special events. The town appointed a board of management in 1976 and in 1988 this board was amalgamated into the joint Fort Erie Museum Board.

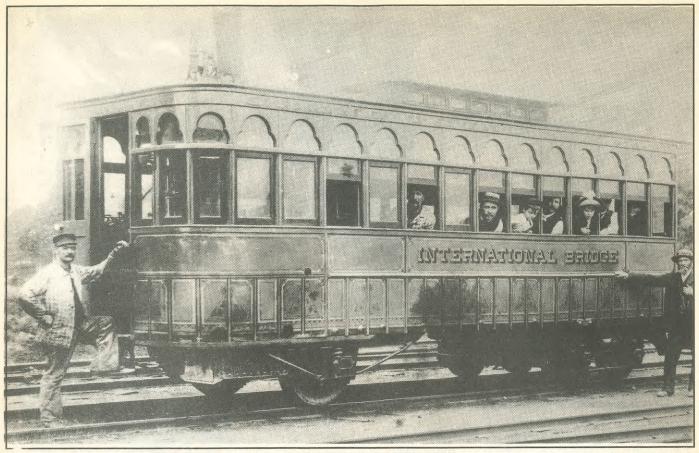
Volunteers continued to

improve and expand the museum for 16 years and in 1988 they received some help with the hiring of a full-time curator.

The museum's current success is due to the dedication of its volunteers. Their contribution of ideas, time, money, artifacts and talents ensure an exciting future for the museum.

Anniversary Honour Roll

Ontario Legislature	200
Canada	125
Ridgeway United Church	120
Rose Seaton Public School	100
Canadian Niagara Power	100
Windmill Point Church	
Fort Erie Lions	65
Niagara Christian College	60
Stevensville Firefighters	
Fort Erie Jaycees	
Steam Engine 6218	
Stevensville Kinsmen	45
Crystal Beach Public School	40
Bertie Public School	25
Fort Erie Historical Museum	20



The "Dummy" ferried passengers back and forth between Bridgeburg and Black Rock on the International Bridge from the late 19th century until the Peace Bridge opened and the popularity of automobiles caused the end of the service.





The Williams Funeral Home operated by: The Dell Family • 1909-1956

Brian Harris • 1956-61

Frank Clendening • 1961-1978

Larry Williams Since 1978

722 Ridge Road North, Ridgeway

'We got trouble . . .'

Racetrack threatened from very beginning

"We got trouble right here in Fort Erie," might have been the oft-heard statement among 'decent' people way back before the turn of the century.

Grand Circuit harness racing had been introduced to Canada by way of Fort Erie in the late summer months of 1898.

Earlier that year, anti-betting legislation in Buffalo forced the charter members to move their racing to Fort Erie, and in August the first Grand Circuit racing was conducted at the Fort Erie Race Track.

But soon after the first meeting of the circuit in Fort Erie, proponents of the sport found themselves trying to evade the grasp of morally-upstanding citizens.

In September 1898, Mr. J.W. Stockdale, a Bertie Township councillor, gave notice that at the next meeting he would sponsor a motion to prohibit horse racing of any kind in the township.

Public morals

Mr. Stockdale cited the provisions of the Municipal Act relating to Public Morals as his authority to propose the bylaw.

It was a prominent gentleman farmer by the name of Samuel Johnston, who was also a financier, contractor and lover of horse racing, who rallied opposition to the proposed bylaw.

It is important to keep in mind Mr. Johnston's role as a financier and contractor rather than his love

of horse racing.

If the council were to ban horse racing, many people stood to lose more than \$50,000. They

had furnished building materials and labour to build the race track.

The Fort Erie Jockey Club did not pay for the materials and the suppliers banded together to take over the property. They intended to recoup their investment in the race track by running races.

All this was in danger.

Headed by Mr. Johnston's name, a petition signed by 271 men of the area, was presented at the Nov. 5 meeting and Mr. Stockdale withdrew his motion.

The petition was signed by merchants, barristers, hotel keepers, blacksmiths and even barbers.

The text of the petition reads: "The petition of the undersigned ratepayers and residents of

the Township of Bertie

"1. That the Forte Erie Jockey Club has been the owner of certain properties in the Township of Bertie for some years and that the use of the said property for racing purposes has been largely beneficial to the Township of Bertie and particularly to the residents of that part of the Township (near) the track:

"2. That those who furnished materials for the buildings and for the said Race Track not having been paid, have been forced to take proceedings whereby the said property has become vested in them as a new Company with the effect, however, that they have lost over \$10,000 of their just claims against the Fort Erie Jockey Club:

"3. That it is the intention of the Fort Erie Racing Association, as we are informed, to endeavor to recoup the members of the said association being the said lien holders by carrying on the operations of a Racing Company in Fort Eries as aforesaid;

"4. That the prohibition of horse racing in the Township of Bertie would have the effect of destroying over \$50,000 of property of the said lien holders, the money, work and materials involved and which they advanced in good faith and it would have the effect of depriving the ratepayers and residents of the said Township of a large amount of legitimate income;

"5. That no good end could be attained by the prohibition of horse racing as is suggested;

"WHEREFORE your petitioners pray that it may please your Honourable Body not to take any proceedings in the direction of prohibiting horse racing in the Township of Bertie or in any other way injure the prospects of the new Fort Erie Racing Association.

"And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray."

Johnston Honoured

In 1971, the Grand Circuit of harness racing and the Ontario Jockey Club — the current owner of the Fort Erie Race Track — honoured Mr. Johnston (posthumously) by acknowledging his tremendous contribution to the sport.

After spearheading the campaign to save the track the first time it was threatened, Mr. Johnston built the Royal Hotel at the foot of Jarvis Street, just a stone's throw away from the ferry dock.

It was from this landing that sidewheelers brought thousands of horses, horsemen and racing fans to Fort Erie.

Mr. Johnston died in 1919 at the age of 64.





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* denotes past president

*Ron Winger

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Life Members

*T.O. Jones *Clifford Lightheart *A.C. Malloy Tracy Zavitz

Past District Governors Ken Christie 1974-75 Edwin Tatarnuk 1986-87

Deputy District Governors D.D. Kinsman 1940-41 Frank Savage 1952-53 T.O. Jones 1958-59 J.M. Scouler 1963-64

Region Chairman Edward A. Feiertag 1990-91

Zone Chairman Douglas Young 1967-68

District A2 **Cabinet Secretary** Emerson Wiltshire 1974-75 Rod Jones 1986-87

Lions



Youth Exchange





Sponsors of Ridgeway Lions Senior Citizens Complex, Inc.

By Bev Jewson, Bertie Historical Society

The early morning fire on Oct. 30, 1989 was the third major fire to devastate a portion of the Ridgeway business district in this century.

Cammarata's Grocery Store was destroyed twice in the first two fires — once in 1913, the second in 1947.

In the early morning hours of April 1, 1913 a lone town resident ran through the streets crying "FIRE" trying to awaken the sleeping townfolk. Thinking the bearer was just returning from a night of imbibing at the local taverns and thinking it an April Fool's joke, some residents did not respond at first.

Those who did respond rallied to form a bucket brigade to try to contain the blaze raging through the wooden buildings in the business district on the west side of Ridge Road between Hershey and Cutler Streets.

Water was hand-pumped from wells from surrounding homes and a cistern near Beeshy's store and passed along in pails to the fire.

In spite of their efforts, all the businesses on the block were destroyed, along with the Collard's stately home. Besides Cammarata's grocery store, Swartz's Drug Store, Bowden's and Murray Hibbard's Insurance were claimed by the inferno. Some businesses were quickly rebuilt, as we can see from the inscription "J.N. Swartz 1913" in the facade of the cement block building where Stuart's IDA now stands.

The second great fire started on a windy autumn afternoon, Sept.



The second big fire in Ridgeway occurred on a windy afternoon in 1947. The aftermath of this fire was the construction of an improved waterworks.

25, 1947. The town fire whistle blew and local volunteer firefighters ran through the streets alerting the town business community that the town was on fire.

This time the fire burned between Cutler and a laneway near the CN rail tracks on the same side of Ridge Road as the first fire.

Ridgeway was served by a small water supply plant on Prospect Point Road at the lake. It did not prove to be adequate to the size of this disaster.

The fire quickly engulfed the block of buildings and threatened to spread across the roadways to all the surrounding buildings since the wind fanned the flames.

Efforts were concentrated in saving the buildings that were not already destroyed. Every available citizen was pressed into emergency service to extinguish the burning embers that landed on roof tops.

A telegraph wire was sent for water to the railyards at Fort Erie, and the arrival of two engines with water helped save the entire business district.

The businesses in this block were McMorrin's Dry Goods, Detenbeck Electric, Scottish Knit Shop, Ray Morningstar's Plumbing and Robert's Gas Bar.

Cammarata's store helped prevent the further spread of the fire, since its south wall was made of brick. While it did not burn down in 1947, the heat from the fire cooked all the food and the canned goods exploded.

The next day the citizens of Ridgeway met together and formed a water committee with the goal of bringing full water service to the town.

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Snapshot

Let's swim

The world's largest outdoor swimming pool was built at Erie Beach in 1911. It, along with a children's pool, had filtered and chlorinated water.

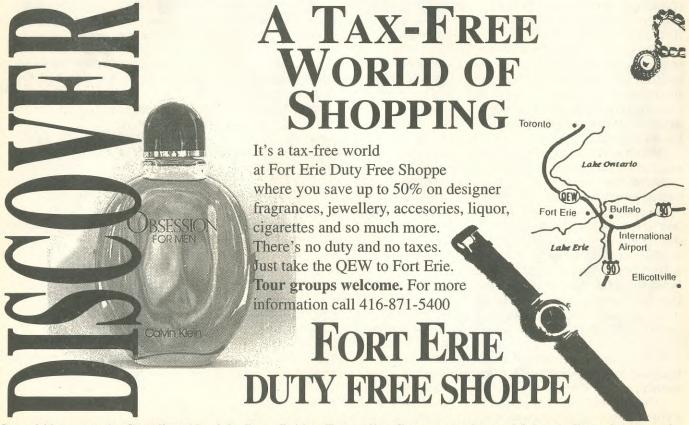
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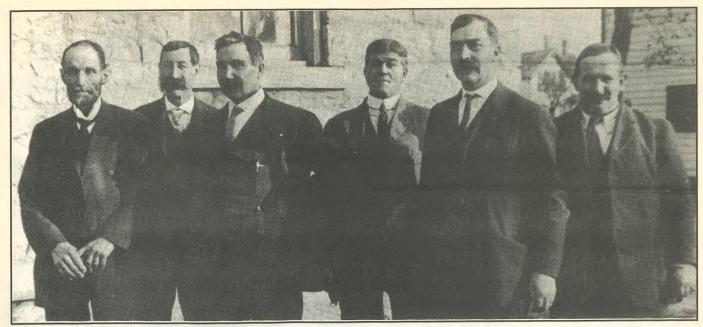
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The Bertie Township councillors in 1897 were: Ed Disher, J.W. Jewson, John Reinhardt, Ed Spear, Milton Pound, Alf Merriweather.

Be it resolved . . .

Early council aided 'distressed' citizenry

Bertie Township was given its name in 1793 after Willoughby Bertie the 4th Earl of Abingdon. He was a strong proponent of the Canada Act.

In 1807, citizens met at the first council meeting. It is not known where they met, but many of the following meetings were held at Andrew Miller's Tavern near Miller's Creek. The meetings were held annually.

Excerpts of that first meeting read: "... the Town Clerk shall keep this book to enter the marks of subscribers' horses, horned cattle, sheep and hogs, and that two dollars and a half be allowed him out of the money subscribed for his trouble. . . .

"When application is made by persons in distress, the two Wardens will call upon three subscribers and the moral character of the applicant shall be considered; a majority of these five persons shall decide on the sum to be given."

The next town meeting was held one year later in 1808 at Miller's Tavern. It was proposed that those able should subscribe two shillings each "to raise a sum to purchase a town book, and to grant temporary relief to such persons as may be in distress, and for such purposes as should be approved by the subscribers."

This meeting concluded by listing the names of those citizens who subscribed one or two shillings toward the town fund. In effect, they were the first taxpayers in the municipality. The list reads like a "Who's Who" of Bertie Township. Many of the men

played important roles in our town's history and their "subscription" was voluntary.

The first subscribers were Silas Carter, Richard Graham, Christian Hershey, Alexander Douglas, James Smith, Joseph Harper, John Baxter, Michael Sherk, John Winger, George Zavitz, Henry Trout,

Jacob Haun, Joseph Marsh, John Warren, Joseph Haun, Daniel Pound. Asa Oliver, John Hirrot, Abram Hershey, Peter Wintermute, Henry Nigh, Adam Burwell, Jeremiah Tuttle, Peter Laur, Peter Bleddo, Charles Hibbard, Michael Buck, James Wintermute, Edward Carr and Thomas Baxter.

Snapshot

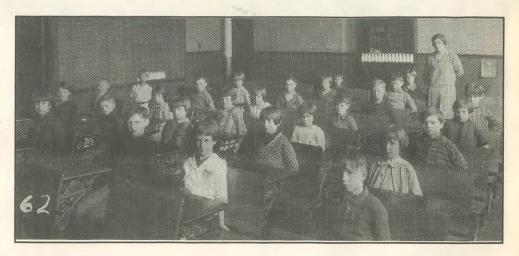
Hardscrabble

On Church Road between
House and Ott was a gathering
of homes known as Hardscrabble. Centering around Baker's
Carding Mill in the late 1800s,
some of the families were the
Carvers, Sailors, Hawkins and
Bakers. One resident describes
the large families who lived
there as having a hard time to
scrabble out a living, especially
in the hard clay soil.

Rose Seaton School

then

The senior primer class in the 1930s



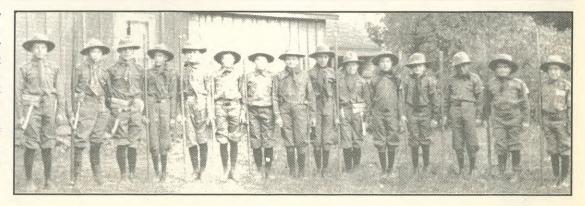
and now

Darryl Stapleton teaches former Rose Seaton teachers Beatrice Gilmore and Dorothy Hanes a lesson about computers



The first Boy Scout troop in Ridgeway proudly stand at attention for this 1911 picture. It was sent as a post card to the grandmother of one of the Scouts.





Snakes ruled the hill

Snakes, snakes and more snakes is what Captain Jonathan Carver wrote about the area around the old Fort in the mid-18th century.

Indeed, the area was swarming with snakes of all different varieties and colours. The abundance of the serpentine creatures prompted the area to be called Snake Hill, a nearby park area called Snake Hill Grove and a railway that brought visitors to the area called the Fort Erie, Snake Hill and Pacific Railway.

Capt. Carver wrote extensively about the snakes when he sailed

from Michillimackinac to the County of Sioux in 1766-67.

In his journal he describes the area around the fort, which was built only two years earlier. He devoted five full pages to the slithering serpents.

"Water snakes, tho' pretty common through all the settled

Provinces, yet are found no where in such numbers as at this place. They rest on the surface of the water and are so close to each other that in many places they cover the water for several acres . . .

the whole surface of the water for some distance appeared quite black . . .

"I have seen such multitudes of these that the whole surface of the

water for some distance appeared

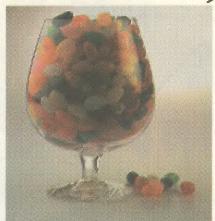
quite black . . .

"Another snake which I have never seen anywhere else is called the Hissing snake about 20 inches in length speckled with yellow and purple spots . . . their way of emitting their poison is when they are vexed they will belch out a most unsavoury smell, which if a person at the leeward takes full in his breath is immediately taken into a decline which carries him off in a few months.

"Another snake about the lake is the Black Snake . . . its belly of a scarlet or red colour. I killed several which I measured about seven feet or upwards in length."

The ultimate fate of these snakes is unknown, but we can probably thank Captain Carver for the name of Snake Hill.

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Snapshot

The first wireless message sent on the Great Lakes was in 1904 from the American shore to a Crystal Beach steamer, the Darius Cole.

We're writing a book!

And to do so, we need your help.

he Bertie Historical Society has begun the arduous task of writing the definitive history of the greater Fort Erie area. We need doc-

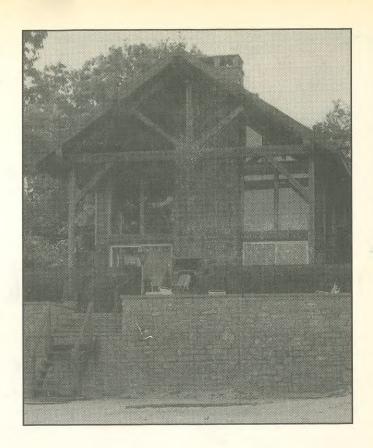


uments, stories and pictures to help us in our task.

If you can help us out, or know of somebody who can, please call the Fort Erie Historical Museum at 894-5322. We'll be happy to copy what you have and make sure you go home with your originals.

So, while cleaning out the attic, garage or barn, or rummaging through an old desk, if you find something you suspect might be helpful, think of us.

Our work speaks for itself





Completed renovations at Historical Museum - 1989

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Terrible times on the railway

William Coulthurst worked for the Railway Mail Service for 42 years and wrote of his memories of when he lived in Bridgeburg between 1889 and 1904.

Bridgeburg was almost completely a railroad town, brought into existence when the International Bridge was built. My first recollections were of long strings of flat cars, which had been used to bring wood for the woodburning engines. No car had a capacity of over 10 tons. All had hand brakes and link and pin couplings. The first duty every brakeman had when a freight train was leaving a terminal was to convey a bell rope, one end fastened to the caboose, the length of the train to the engine, where the other end was fastened in such a way that the

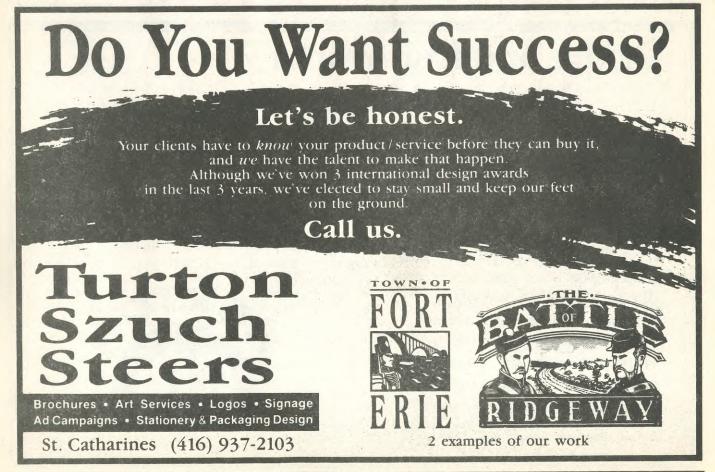
engineer would receive a signal if the jerking of the train would break a link or pin, and the train broke in two. The air brake fixed all that.

Then the automatic coupler was invented. A law was passed making them compulsory and the railroads were given three years of grace in which time all cars must be equipped with the new style coupler. These three years were terrible. It was so dangerous for yardmen to attempt to couple a car with link and pin to the new coupler that many had their fingers, hands or arms mangled and "battlefield" surgery was very frequent.

During this period I was night



clerk at the Bridgeburg station. Dr. William Douglas was the only doctor and the railway built a special telephone line from his residence to my office. Many a time I was the doctor's only assistant in performing operations, under the crudest conditions with no anaesthetics. I have no doubt whatever, that the memory of these operations was what induced the sometimes crusty, but always kindhearted old doctor to leave his estate to establish the Douglas Memorial hospital.







OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

The history of the Town of Fort Erie has been a very colourful one. It is a conglomerate of the life experiences of all of our ancestors who have lived together on the shores of the Niagara River and Lake Erie.

The Villages of Ridgeway, Stevensville and Crystal Beach have added to our wealth of historical record of this area.

On behalf of the Council and the Town of Fort Erie, I offer my congratulations and best wishes to all of our businesses who are part of our past history and future progress.

In reviewing this publication I expect that we can all draw strength and enjoyment from the richness of our past.

Yours truly,

John T. Teal Mayor

Snapshot

Erie is an Iroquoian word meaning "cat." Some tribes living around the lake were part of the "cat" nation, or Kah-Kwah. They had prominent eyes, or "eyes swelled like cats".

From this word we get Lake Erie and Fort Erie.

The Greater Fort Erie

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Bridge and Iron Works Purchased Seven Acres

"An important addition to Bridgeburg's list of industries will be the Chicago Bridge and Iron Works, who have purchased seven acres of land from W.L. Curtiss and will erect a large plant... The dimensions of the new plant have not yet been announced but the company promises to employ at least 100 men. The company are makers of steel towers, tanks and gas holders."

— Fort Erie Times March 13, 1913



X marks the spot . . .



Dignitaries were on hand for the unveiling of the historical plaque on Queen's Circle in Crystal Beach. Some of the people are Charles Woods, George Bukator, Rev. Alan Barnes, Jack Millington, Roy Cornwell, George Rebstock and Charles Glenny.

Where history's been made

Who hasn't seen the distinctive blue or green plaques that dot the country, marking sites of national or local historical significance?

These plaques are a popular attraction for tourists who wish to learn more about the area they are visiting. They provide interesting bits of information, and they also provide a physical context for the stories in history books.

Fort Erie has 11 such plaques — five at national sites and six at locally-significant sites.

The national sites relate to the War of 1812 and the Battle of Ridgeway in 1866. They were erected by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.

A memorial at the Ridgeway Battlefield was installed in memory of the officers and men who fought against Fenian Raiders on June 2, 1866

Another memorial was erected on the ground of Historic Fort Erie in memory of the 150 officers and men of various outfits of the British military and three American soldiers who died in the Siege of Fort Erie in 1814. Their remains were found during restoration of the old fort in 1937-39.

Historic Fort Erie

Inside the gates of the fort are two plaques, one giving a recount of the history of the fort and the circumstances that culminated in the deaths and subsequent burial of the soldiers on the grounds

It explains that there were actually three forts. The first and second were destroyed by flooding and ice damage. The third was destroyed by American forces during the War of 1812.

Beside it is another plaque telling of a daring attack on American ships anchored near the fort by British forces who had portaged their boats from Frenchman's Creek. Led by Capt. Alexander Dobbs, the British masqueraded as supply ships. It was the last naval battle fought on the Great Lakes in the War of 1812.

A distinctive blue plaque which was erected in Queen's Circle in

Crystal Beach provides a few more details about the sortie. The boats were launched from near Crystal Beach, and one of the boats in the raid was carried all the way from Queenston. Two of the attackers were killed, including Dobbs' second-in command, Lt. Copleston Radcliffe, R.N. This plaque was erected by the Ontario Archaeological and Historic Sites Board.

Frenchman's Creek

Another War of 1812 plaque stands near Frenchman's Creek. It was erected by the federal government. It tells of an American attack in November 1812 by advance parties as a prelude to a general invasion. While they managed to capture the bridge over the creek, they failed to destroy it and were defeated by the British reinforcements. The main attack never came.

Another plaque on the Niagara Parkway tells a part of the tale of the Mackenzie rebellion in 1837 Continued on page 18



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Where history's been made

Continued from Page 17 and the actions of sympathizers. This one, erected by the Ontario Archaeological and Historic Sites Board, stands on Thompson Road.

William Lyon Mackenzie's "Patriot" forces were defeated north of Toronto on Dec. 7, 1837. He made his way to Thompson Road on the Niagara Parkway four days later. Capt. Samuel McAfee lent him a boat and his family distracted Col. James Kerby while Mackenzie crossed the river and made his getaway.

The Niagara Parks Commission has also erected a plaque near the Niagara Parkway Marina where the Bridgeburg Shipyard used to be located.

Alexander Cruikshank

The Bertie Historical Society has also been instrumental in marking locally-significant sites. One of these is located at the homestead of Brigadier-General Ernest Alexander Cruikshank,

1853-1939.

Cruikshank was a distinguished historian and soldier who was elected Warden of Welland County. He joined the militia as an ensign and became brigadier in 1915. Three years later he became director of the historical section of the General Staff at Ottawa and held the post until his death in 1939. He served as the first chairman of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.

The society also worked for the designation of the old Bertie Township Hall as an historic site, and a plaque will be unveiled this summer marking it as such. The hall is the headquarters of the Fort Erie Museum Board and houses the Historical Museum.

The Fort Erie Cemetery Board recently had the Memorial Ridge Mausoleum designated as a historical site, based largely on its architecture. A plaque was unveiled early this summer.



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Fort Erie Jaycees

Friendship Festival Fireworks Display

> Child Identification Program

YMCA Construction

Adult Literacy Council





Snapshots

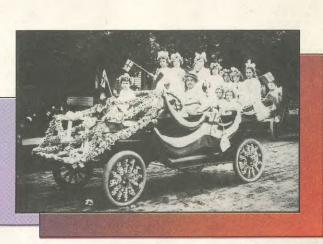


Smile

In his Derby Road photography studio in Crystal Beach, Harry Woolever invented the first automatic film developing units.

Keeping the Railroad Museum on track is the Friends of the Railroad Museum Association. The group includes Don Woods, Hank Redekop, Jim Bowman, Fred Clark, Mabel Dunn and Vic Miller.

The cars were all decorated for a patriotic parade in Bridgeburg during WW1.





In 1895, Dan Sherk, Adam Carver, Ezra Fretz, Pete Sherk, Warren Learn and Joseph Sherk helped each other with the thrashing.

Peg-leg

For three short years Ridgeway and Crystal Beach had a monorail system. From 1896-99 the Ontario Southern (Peg-Leg) Railroad operated a two car train run by re-chargeable batteries. It's "T" shaped track ran II miles at heights of 10-30 feet above ground. While billed as the "only road of its kind on earth" it was financially unsuccessful.

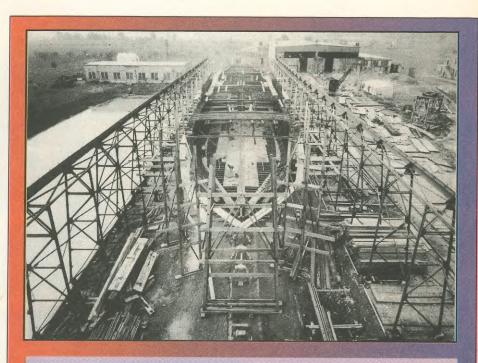
Snapshots

Stevensville

Stevensville was listed as Bertie Township's most populated community in 1812. A post office was established in 1835. With a population of 600 in 1886, it boasted many businesses, mills and two rail lines running through the town.



Josiah Henson, whose life inspired the book Uncle Tom's Cabin, escaped via the underground railroad to freedom in Canada in 1830. He arrived in Fort Erie and lived here for three years.



The Bridgeburg Shipyard used to be located at the current site of the Niagara Parkway Marina. Three different companies built many ships at the site from 1904-30, including the War Magic and War Vixen in 1917 and 1919.

The Artifacts and Festivities Committee meets weekly at the Historical Museum. Their job descriptions entail organizing and having fun. Pictured are: back row, from left, Eva Dell, Joan McNeil, Pat Mitchell, Ruth Ellsworth; middle, Jean Tripp; front, Jerry Fretz, Helen Ort, Vera Bateman and Bev Jewson.



Cross

1. Bertie Township native

Ernest ____ gained national
recognition as a writer historian
and soldier. His birthplace is
marked with a historical plaque
on Garrison Road.

2. In 1961, 240 people signed a petition to get a traffic light installed on Hwy. 3 at _____ Road.

3. Central Avenue from
Courtwright to Phipps was named
Street after the engineer
who designed the International
Bridge.

4. The train which ran from Erie Beach to the Fort Erie ferry dock was known as the Fort Erie, Snake Hill and ______ Railway.

5. Now called the Times-Review, the newspaper of the area was called the Canadian ______ Press in 1895.

6. There are two train stations at the Railroad Museum. One is from Bridgeburg, the other from

7. Harry _____ invented the automatic film developer in his photography studio on Derby Road in Crystal Beach.

8. Some tribes around our lake were part of the "cat" nation, or Kah-Kwah. The Iroquoian word for cat is ______.

9. In the mid 1800s, escaped slaves settled around Bowen Road and Ridgemount Road. They were mostly self-employed with the main industry being _____.

10. Alfred Willson and Ernest each served 13 years as Reeve of Bertie Township. Thirteen years is the longest anyone held the office.

						1						
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				15								
		16										

11. The first township meeting was held in 1807 at Andrew _____'s Tavern.

12. One of Stevensville's favourite sons is J.L. _____, born in 1875.

13. In 1961, the Fort Erie Drive-in was located on Rosehill Road near Garrison Road. Its former name was the _____ Drive-In.

14. Mr. C.N. ____ was honoured at the chamber of commerce's achievement recognition dinner in 1961.

15. The first people to settle in the area were known as Attawandaron or ______.

16. Native Canadian poet
Pauline _____ gave readings at
the Bertie Township Hall prior to
World War I.

uosuyo('91
Neutrals	.21
f	

12. Kraft 13. Mustang 14. Glenny

17. Miller

9. Logging 10. Corham

7. Woolever 8. Erie

5. Free 6. Ridgeway

3. Gzowski 4. Pacific

Cruikshank
 Ridge

The Canadian Shore The Last 100 Years



The Western New York Heritage Institute of Canisius College is currently undertaking a project to document the history of the Canadian Shore from Fort Erie to Port Colbourne. The focus will be on beach

colonies of people who lived in Buffalo but vacationed or established businesses along the shore.

Institute researchers are particularly interested in contacting summer residents who may have old photographs, newspaper clippings or other artifacts which give insight into the history of the region during the past century.

For more information, contact the Western New York Heritage Institute, Canisius College, 2001 Main Street, Buffalo, New York 14208. Or Call: 716-888-3115.

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No. 6218 turns 50

Steam engine No. 6218 was built in September 1942 by the Montreal Locomotive Works.

These trains were considered to be the finest locomotives in North America at that time. They were called "Northerns" because their 4-8-4 wheel arrangement was first introduced by Northern Pacific.

The Northern was a dual-purpose engine that rode well and was powerful enough for both heavy freight and fast passenger service.

The figures 4-8-4 refer to the four leading wheels, eight driving wheels and four trailing-wheel arrangement.

From 1942 to 1960 this engine was used for both freight and passenger service. It was retired for four years and in 1964 put back into service for passenger excursions.

More than 50,000 passengers were carried on more than 90 special trains hauled by 6218 in the seven years of its excursion service. It routinely travelled from Montreal to Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire and Toronto.

In 1973 it was retired from service and presented to the Town of Fort Erie as a reminder of the days of steam in Canada.

The engine itself weighs close to 400,000 pounds and it is 15 feet high and 10 feet wide. The engine and tender together are 94 feet long and the tender can carry 18 tons of coal and 11,600 gallons of water. It takes 3 to 4 tons of coal per hour to produce enough steam to fuel the engine.

BULLETIN!!!

We need you one afternoon a month as a volunteer to be a host to visitors to the Railroad Museum. Meet and talk to people from around the world. Get on board. Call 871-1412 for details. This page sponsored by the Friends of the Railroad Museum Association

Snapshot

WILL be sold at the Custom House, Port of Fort Erie, on Tuesday, the 24th day of March, inst. the undermentioned articles for cash only, the same having been seized and condemned according to law. Sale to commence at 12 o'clock, M.

A box of Cut Tobacco, containing 22 1-2 doz.

A Jar of Maccaboy Snuff, 13 lbs.

A box of Mustard, 6 doz.

34 lbs. Alspice, and 2 tanned Sheep

Port of Fort Eric, March 9, 1826

A Plate Stove, and 26 lbs. Stove pipe. 2 prs. Trace Chains, and 1 Halter do. 1 Griddle and 3 Dutch Lamps. 1 Side Sole Leather, 13 lbs.

6 Yds. Bed Ticking.

1 bunch Cotton Yarn, 5 lbs.

4 lbs. Coffee, 2 Books, A bundle of Papers, a string of Bells, 1 ps. brown Sheeting, 28 yds.

2 Brass Candlesticks.

KERBY, JAMBS

Collector of Customs

Back in the good old days (1837), goods seized at the border were auctioned. This particular event took place March 9, 1836. Some of the contraband included tobacco, food and bedding. Sound familiar?



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Fort Erie Lions celebrate 65 years



The Lions Club of Fort Erie, with only 45 members has taken the challenge of service in a big way. As it celebrates its 65th anniversary, the club finds it easy to think in terms of service to others.

Certainly the jewel of its recent service is the Douglas Heights Seniors Complex which consists of an 8,800 square-foot activity centre for seniors and handicapped adults and its neighbouring 56-unit apartment building. The centre provides space and equipment for many kinds of seniors activities and has developed into a warm, inviting, busy home-away-from-home. The residence, just 50 feet away, is a fully-equipped six-storey block of one- and two-bedroom apartments offering secure, comfortable pleasant accommodation in a quiet residential neighbourhood. It has been fully occupied since the day it opened.

The two-part project, valued at more that \$5.4 million, stands as ample proof that Lions with their usual ambition and determination can accomplish almost anything they set their minds to.

It should be noted that with the new seniors centre, the Fort Erie Lions Club has formed a group - the Over 70's Luncheon. On the second Tuesday of each month, a lunch is made available to any and all seniors. This is sponsored by the club, and members also provide

transportation for those seniors who are unable to come on their own. Entertainment is also provided, thus giving the seniors a nutritious meal, along with the fellowship of others.

The Fort Erie Lions now stride out on their next project, the possible re-development of the Oakes Sugar Bowl Park, with no thought of resting on their laurels.



Snapshot

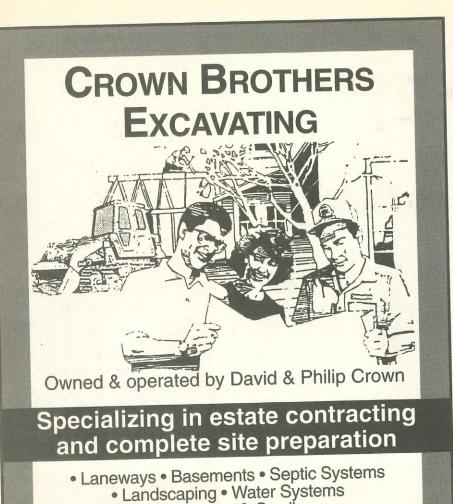
A typo forever

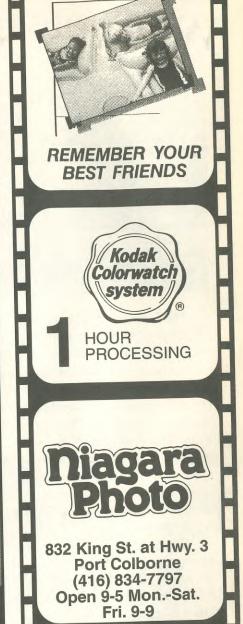
MP Christopher Bunting sent a petition to the Postmaster General in 1878 asking a post office be established in a community west of Fort Erie. He asked to have it named Amigan (after his birthplace in Ireland). The post office was granted in 1880, but due to sloppy handwriting, it was recorded as Amigari. This small hamlet, which also had a railway station, has been known as Amigari ever since. It was included in the expanded Town of Fort Erie in 1931.

Snapshot

Surprise

In 1919, a trip to Crystal Beach Park made international flying history. Mr. Larkin became the first known paying passenger to make an aerial trip across an international border. On July 23 he sent his staff of 7,000 from Buffalo to Crystal Beach aboard the Americana and Canadiana. He then paid Allied Aeroplane Ltd. to fly him to the Park where he greeted his staff when they arrived.





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Not all the fun was at the parl

As chronicled by permanent and summer residents, it appears as if Crystal Beach was the most lively and fun village to reside in.

Everyone has enchanting memories of the amusement park but the stories of life beyond the park are recalled just as fondly.

George Rebstock wrote about the Haun Sawmill located on the corner of Rebstock and Elm-

wood.

"Mr. Haun built one of the first mechanical vehicles to run in these parts. It was a large lumber truck operated by steam. Mr. Haun would

"Ray Clair is not twotiming Dot B. for loan Z. Ray is just lonely."

have fun with the youngsters by putting electrical wires into a pail of water and dropping a coin in. If you could get the coin out it was yours."

Just opposite the mill was a general store operated by Charles Bellfield, This was the local 'hang-out'

where children played games like '11 or Bust'.

"Bothered by children sitting on his counter Mr. Bellfield rigged up a little contraption. A foot



Derby Road in Crystal Beach during the village's heyday was a bustling place with lots of lively fun.

pedal was hooked up to a needle which came up through the counter and sent the culprit quickly to the floor."

Mr. Rebstock also remembered Mr. Brackbill taking the children to school in a sleigh in the winter, and after school earning money by carrying blocks of ice off the lake to Les Teal's ice house to be packed in sawdust for the summer's use.

Buffalo Mayor Buck, a summer resident in the 1920s, remembered how inexpensive it was to live at the Beach with eggs at 12¢ a dozen, chickens 25¢ each, butter 18¢ a pound and milk 5¢ a quart. He recalled old Captain Kinley as one of the more interesting characters of the beach. He rented out boats and canoes during the summer.

News of the area was covered by both the Times-Review and the Crystal Beach News. Some entries from the former paper's August 1904 edition read as follows: 5 automobiles were in evidence at the picnic grounds on Saturday.

Farmers are complaining about the roads getting unsafe for driving. *** What's the world coming to that Smith girl has gone in bathing without shoes or stockings on. *** The tent colony has been annoyed by some smart-aleck putting thistles in their beds. We hope that this rough stuff is stopped. *** Sunette, the flying lady, narrowly escaped drowning the other day, having dropped into the lake from her balloon.

The Crystal Beach News was distributed free every Saturday during the summer and featured sports, entertainment and lots of gossip. In July 1940 the following people were making news. "Ray Clair is not two timing Dot B. for Joan Z. Ray is just lonely. *** Joe A. is still carrying the torch for Patricia Ann. Come on Joe, make up your mind. *** May White and Eddie Carmelo have broken up. Too bad kids. It was nice while it lasted. *** Betty Bailey's looking cuter with her hair sliced. When's the big date Bets?"

Community

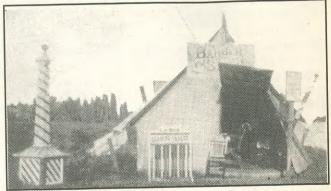
Some important dates in the history

- 1400-1650 first peoples, Neutrals or Attawandaron
- 1750 first fort built by French destroyed during Seven Years War (1756-63)
- 1764 second fort built by British named Fort Erie by Col. Bradstreet
- 1776 American Revolution, influx of settlers wishing to remain loyal to
 - Britain, United Empire Loyalists
- 1786 Philip Frey hired to survey lands
- 1789 survey of township completed by Amos Chapman
- 1793 Township named Bertie after Willoughby Bertie, 4th Earl of Abingdon
- 1792 William Dunbar builds a grist mill on Nia
 - gara Boulevard, settlement grew around mill and was called Fort Erie Rapids or Fort Erie Mills
- 1815 this settlement renamed Waterloo, after the famous Battle of Waterloo
- 1857 Waterloo incorporated as the Village of Fort
- 1870 work begins on the railroad bridge spanning the Niagara River, settlement around area named Victoria by Steven Jarvis who owned the land
- 1879 post office opens here





- and officially named International Bridge
- 1895 this area then incorporated as the Village of Bridgeburg, population 895
- 1931 Village of Fort Erie and the Village of Bridgeburg amalgamated to become the Town of Fort Erie



Earl Buck's Barber Shop was the first in Crystal Beach. He operated out of a tent, later moving to permanent and more solid surroundings in Ridgeway.

1790 - Ezekiel Dennis builds first home at Point Abino

- 1790s settlement begins in Ridgeway area
- 1838 post office opens, name of Ridgeway not adopted at post office until 1874 (town hall built in that year as well)
- 1830s influx of German settlers to area prompts name of New Germany
- 1887 post office opens under name of Snyder after Rev. T. Snyder
- 1780s area around Crystal Beach settled
- 1885 area incorporated as Crystal Beach Police Village
- 1921 area incorporated as Crystal Beach Village, population 298
 - A young couple poses for a happy picture at Erie Beach in 1919.



Millestones

of the communities of greater Fort Erie

1780s - area around Black Creek settled originally part of Willoughby Township, after 1969 became a part of greater Fort Erie

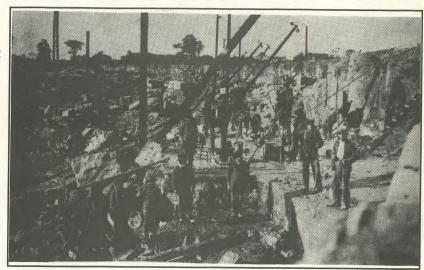
1780s - area around Stevensville settled

1835 - Post office opens officially as Stevensville

1780s - area around Windmill Point settled, known by this name due to the grist mill

1886 - post office opens under the name of **Stone Quarry** due to the quarry businesses

1912 - post office's name changed to Windmill Point



Workers at the quarry at Windmill Point sweat in the midday sun. The area was known as Windmill Point, then Stone Quarry, then back to Windmill Point.

1780s - area next to military reserve known as Snake Hill due to the abundance of snakes

1885 - picnic area known as Snake Hill Grove

1901 - name changed to Erie Beach by Frank Bardol, owner of the amusement park

1840s - community of runaway slaves established logging business

1868 - Little Africa had a population of 200

1780s - area around Ridgemount settled

1887 - post office opens officially as Ridgemount

1878 - settlement southwest of Fort Erie gets post office intended to be called Amigan but recorded as Amigari

1931 - Amigari incorporated into the Town of Fort Erie

1890s - settlement on Church Road between House

and Ott known as Hardscrabble

1780s - area southwest of Stevensville settled, known as Mulgrave

1862 - post office opens with name of Mulgrave

Other communities that did or still exist in greater Fort Erie are Cosy Dell, Skunk Hollow, Douglastown, Crescent Park, Cherry Hill, Bay Beach, Thunder Bay, Rose Hill, Waverly Beach, Yacht Harbour, Crescent Beach, Bertie Bay, Buffalo Heights and Oakhill Forest.

1969 - all of the areas in the Village of Crystal Beach, Town of Fort Erie and Bertie Township amalgamate to form the Town of Fort Erie.

These dates show the progression of hamlets to villages to towns that eventually led to the creation of greater Fort Erie. More detailed information about these specific places can be found at the Fort Erie Historical Museum, 402 Ridge Road, 894-5322.

Little Africa

With a population of 200 in 1868, Little Africa was one of the larger communities in Bertie Township. In the early 1800s, runaway slaves migrated north via the underground railway to freedom, and by the 1840s, a community had formed within Ridgemount's boundaries. Woodcutting was the primary industry and the men of this hamlet provided ties for the first rail lines and wood for the steam engines and ferries. By the late 1860s coal took over as the primary fuel and the families of Little Africa dispersed to other communities.

"A remarkable gathering"



Six octogenarian siblings a cause for celebration

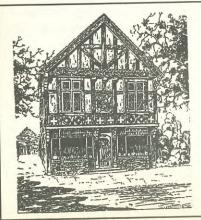
"Never before in the history of Welland County, and perhaps in the history of Canada, was there such a remarkable gathering — a gathering of a complete family — all octogenarians."

That was how the newspaper article read in 1902 as members of the Pound family gathered to celebrate the birthday of one of the octogenarians, Samuel Pound.

The six siblings were aged 80 to 87.

Samuel was the baby of the bunch. He had turned 80. He would be 170 this year.

The grandfather of these siblings was Daniel Pound. He served in the British Army during the 1776 American Revolution and immigrated to Bertie Township where he was granted land. His 200 acres covered most of Ridgeway, lying between Dominion Road, Thunder Bay Road, Gorham Road and Prospect Point Road.



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War of 1812

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10:30 a.m. Flag Raising

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7 p.m.

Fort closes til 7pm Field music

fife and drum

8 p.m.

The Siege of Fort Erie

Sunday

10 am Church parade

1:30 pm Tactical demonstration 2:30 pm March-by and

closing remarks

On-going demonstrations of period cooking, musket and artillery firing, military music, drill.

All inclusive in price of admission!

Book relates 1866 battle

The Year of the Fenians is a self-guided tour of discovery and illustrated history of the Fenian invasion of the Niagara Peninsula and the battle of Ridgeway in 1866.

This joint project was published last year by the Fort Erie Historical Museum and Canisius College of Buffalo and written by David Owen to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the Fenian inva-

This 94-page book is divided into two parts. It begins with a 14-point study of the military movements of the Fenians, complete with photographs showing what is currently at each point. A series of maps show their movements and the stages of the battle.

The balance of the book is a history of the Fenian movement in North America, including its roots in Ireland, the Civil War connection, Anglo-Canadian reactions, its decline and significance. This is illustrated with contemporary cartoons, portraits and watercolours painted by a Fenian soldier in 1866.

It concludes with a list of related articles, theses, books and contemporary accounts. Price is \$8.00.

Snapshot

It's poetic

Pauline Johnson read poetry for the public at the Bertie Township Hall prior to World War I.

Mulgrave: an almost forgotten hamlet

By Carol House Bertie Historical Society

I remember my mother telling me about a large house on Gilmore Road which contained a post office for Mulgrave. This is shown on early maps of Bertie Township but is largely forgotten today.

Some people who still remember stories of Mulgrave, and who spoke to me for this article are Mrs. Howard Fretz (nee Elva Sherk), Aden Eby and Harold Winger.

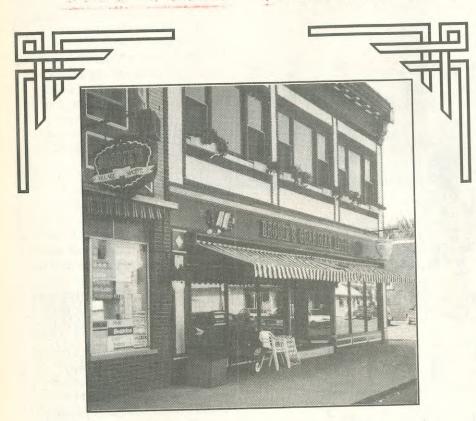
Harold has lived all his life on the century Winger farm, owned by his grandfather John. Harold remembers that the Mulgrave telephone switchboard was in this house in the early 1900s. It served about 10 people and the telephone poles ran along the south side of Gilmore Road. During thunder storms they had to pull the switch to avoid blowing out phones. Their customers became angry the next morning if they forgot to turn the switch back on. They were later taken over by Bell Canada which installed poles along the north side of the road.

Aden Eby lived in the Creighton Bitner farm and remembers walking up to S.S.#14 Bertie School. From 1862 to 1914 the Mulgrave post office operated out of this house. J. Zavitz was the first postmaster. Twice a week mail was taken from Mulgrave to Ridgeway by horse and buggy. Mail which had arrived at the Ridgeway post office by train was then picked up and taken back to Mulgrave. People would go to the Mulgrave post office to get their mail which was placed in small, square, open boxes in a cupboard on the wall of the woodshed.

Elva Fretz remembers that the post office also sold school supplies such as slate, pencils and scribblers. Note books were used only for history and geography lessons which were to be kept.

The post office closed with the advent of rural mail delivery. The first mailman was Fred Babion, who for fifteen years drove his horse and buggy or cutter six days a week to deliver the mail.

Population statistics for Mulgrave show 100 people in 1875 and 100 people in 1892.

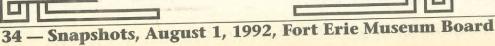


Brodie's Drug Store

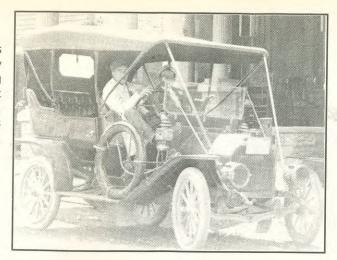
Serving the community since 1902

307 Ridge Road Ridgeway

894-2520



Herb Wright was probably pretty proud driving around in the first car in Ridgeway. Riding shotgun is Bill Willson.



Girve Fretz, M.P.

Erie



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Constituency office 12 Clarence Street P.O. Box 216 Port Colborne, Ont. L3K 2V8 (416) 835-2771 fax (416) 835-1531

Snapshot

Point Abino

The first home was built here in 1790 by Ezekiel Dennis. By the 1870s this rural community had turned industrial with a saw mill, lime quarry with kiln, sand hopper, railroad, and there was a population of 600. The quarry was operated by Fox and Holloway. The industrial era ended in 1892 when Holloway sold a 216 lot parcel to a group of Buffalo businessmen for \$27,000 and they developed it as a residential community. Names it has been known as are: Pointe A. Binot, Pointe Ebeno, Pointe de Bino (1749), Pointe Abineau (1768), Pointe Appineau (1794), Abineau Port (1798) Pointe a Beneault (1800), Pointe Abino (1800), Cape Aleneau (1807).

Visit

Mildred M. Mahoney
Silver Jubilee
Dolls' House Gallery

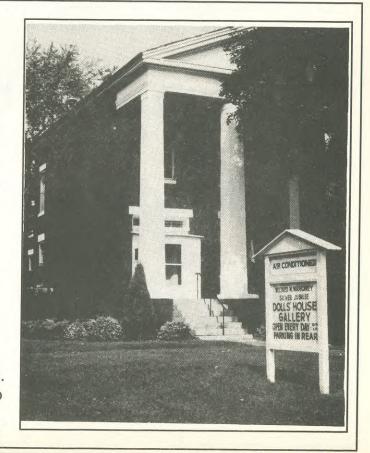
A collection covering 200 years of dolls' houses (1790 - 1980)

Open seven days a week 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. May 1 to Dec. 31

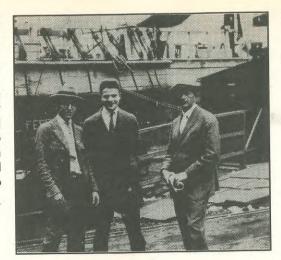
Adults\$3.00 Children\$2.00 Senior citizens ...\$2.50

Group rates on request

657 Niagara Blvd. Fort Erie, Ontario 2 miles north of the Peace Bridge



Charles Young,
Alan Collard and
Roy Sexsmith had
their picture taken
in 1920 at the old
ferry dock. The
dock was a busy
place for it served
many people who
shuttled between
Fort Erie and
Buffalo



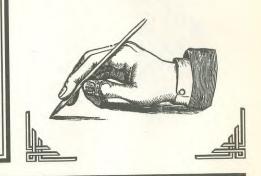
RONAL CENTRAL GOTTI Wheels NALOY-WHEELS ACCESSORIES

Keeping Canada rolling since 1987 2677 Winger Road, Stevensville, Ontario, LOS 1B0

Dear readers

As this edition of Snapshots comes to a close, we hope it has brought to your attention bits of history that may have been overlooked. The museums hold a wealth of information for those whose curiosity has been sparked.

For those with historical information to share, please call us. With your input, we just get better.





Kinsmen Club of Stevensville

Meeting the greatest needs of the community for 45 years

Family tree research may seem too arduous — a little guidance might help

esearching your family tree can be a time-consuming, sometimes frustrating, but always rewarding experience. Genealogy usually records births, marriages and deaths, but there is always much more that merits writing down.

Talk to your parents and grandparents about your family's traditions, vacations, reunions, hobbies, sports, heirlooms, illnesses, military service, automobiles, jobs, homes, religious activities, social clubs and education. All of these stories make a family's, and

community's, social history.

We know a lot about life in the l9th century because people kept diaries and wrote many letters. With the popularity of the telephone, the history we are making today us not being written. Diaries kept today will be valuable resources 100 years from now.

If you are just starting to trace your family history, the Ontario Genealogical Society has 27 branches in Ontario. The Niagara Peninsula Branch can be reached at Box 2224, Station B, St. Catharines L2M 6P6.

One place to start is the cemetery. The Fort Erie

Cemetery Board has compiled a complete reference list of the information found on headstones at each cemetery. The information is indexed to make them accessible to the public. The Historical Museum in Ridgeway has a copy of these records.

Additional sources of information are:

Ontario Archives, 77 Grenville St., Toronto, Ont. M7A 2R9

National Archives, 395 Wellington St., Ottawa, Ont. KIA ON3

Society of Genealogists, 14 Charter House Buildings, London, England ECIM 7BA

The General Register Office for Scotland, Princess St., Edinburgh, Scotland EHI 3YT

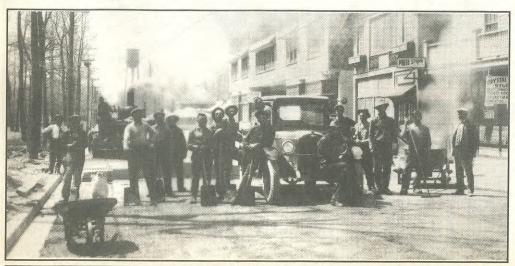
Public Records Office of Ireland, Four Courts, Dublin 7, Ireland

Buffalo Historical Society, 25 Nottingham Court, Buffalo, New York 14216

Church of Latter Day Saints (Mormons), 50 East North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah 84150

Church of Latter Day Saints, 351 Glenridge, St. Catharines

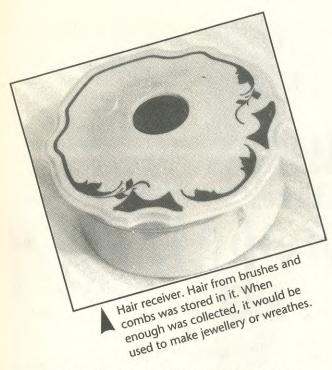
Information on records can be had from Embassies and Consulates in Canada. For information contact the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa.



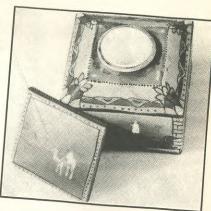
Seeing a busy road being paved is always a welcome sight. When Erie Road was paved in the 1930s, the crew stopped to have a picture taken.

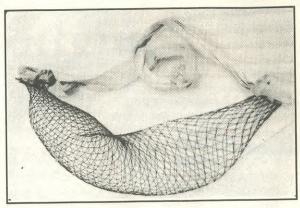


What-cha-ma-call-it?



Hand-painted china ink well. Used with a quill or stick pen for writing.





Wire bustle. Women wore these under their skirts when exaggerated posteriors were fashionable.



Make clothes work for you

creative screen printing

from



967 Helena Fort Erie 871-2731

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Fireside comfort

Enjoy the snuggly warmth of an open fire - without the mess.

Cheerful flames, on and off at the touch of a switch without soot, ash or smoke!



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Sunday, August 2, from noon 'til 5 pm

At our open houses at your three museums

Historical Museum 402 Ridge Road, Ridgeway

Battlefield Museum

Railroad Museum

Hwy. 3 near Ridge Road

Central Avenue, Fort Erie

and it's all free!

In 1946
Peace Bridge
Brokerage
started with
an idea



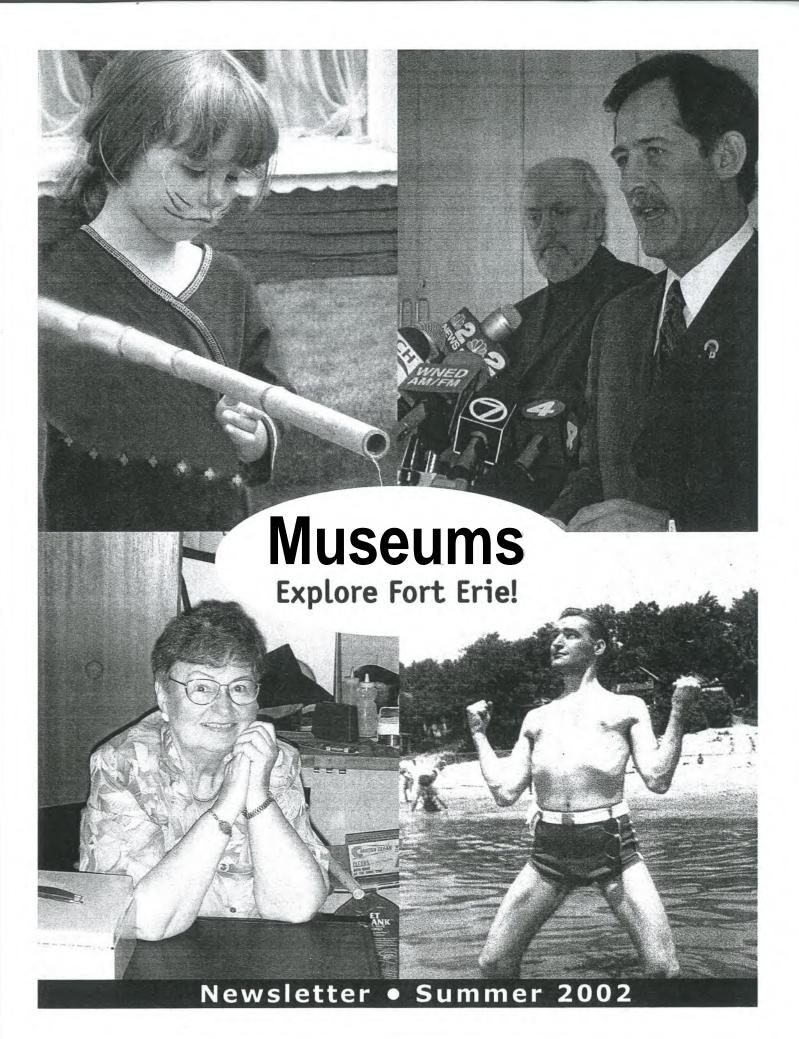
Today PBB Group encompasses



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 Customs brokerage
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 and employing 200
 people in Fort Erie
 750 across North
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Fort Erie, Ontario
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Show Kids You Care Day June 22

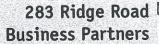
The Museum teamed up with the Library, YMCA and Leisureplex to show children that Fort Erie cares about its youth.

At the Historical Museum

kids were treated to arcade games, face painting, and free admission.

The Railroad Museum and the LaFrance Firefighting volunteers let children explore vintage fire engines with free admission to the Museum.

This family-oriented program was designed to highlight the many children's activities available throughout Fort Erie. An additional goal of the Show Kids You Care program is to encourage adults to become involved in children's activities.



The Museum has two new business partners.
As part of the fundraising efforts to develop a Museum Cafe on the Trail the Museum has leased

space to the Two Door Cupboard and Brunetta's Boutique.

This partnership is expected to last two years and will generate income for the Museum's project while establishing two exciting new shops in Ridgeway.

Brunetta Athoe's shop offers gifts, artwork and the latest fashions and accessories.

Julie Tufts' shop offers specialty foods, gift baskets and a cafe. Stop by and check them out!



"Study shows 43% consider

<u>Museums</u> more trustworthy
than Internet, Television, Books,
Magazines or Newspapers."

A study carried out by RKM Research asked people throughout the United States to compare museums with books, newspapers, magazines, radio, television and the Internet on a variety of issues.

When asked what they considered the most trustworthy source of objective information, 43% said Museums, 18% said books, 9% said newspapers, 8% said the Internet, and television, radio and magazines each rated 6%.

Administrator Jane Davies was not surprised by this study, saying that "Museums objectively convey the facts. Whether we are producing an exhibit, book or school program, it is our job to not re-write history, but to present it as it actually happened."

This survey also revealed that 86% of respondents felt "Museums were doing imaginative new things to make them more interesting places."

The study showed that "people appreciate museums because they can have fun, but they also know that they're going to come away with something more substantial."

Davies commented that "visitors to Fort Erie's Museums knew that all along!"



283 Ridge Road Lawn Sale Fundraisers

\$4,023 raised from lawn sales!!!

Museum Curator Erin Wilson outlined the benefits of this type of fundraiser.

<u>Landfill</u> — Our volunteers salvaged items from the now-demolished Bay Beach cottages. This saved countless pounds from going to the landfill site.

<u>New Volunteers</u>— Once the word got out that proceeds from the lawn sales would support the new Museum Cafe, truck loads of old and new items arrived from old and new Museum volunteers. Many thanks to Vaughn Gibbons, Leona Hall, Evelyn and Hugh Brady, Janet Cocksedge, Gil Bilodeau, Wendy Hodgkins, and Val McCormick for donating items.

<u>Traditional Values</u> — The museum volunteers who salvaged, cleaned and priced these items truly believe in the adage "Reduce, Reuse and Recycle." Our 'throw-away' society could benefit from re-visiting these traditional values. Many thanks to the lawn sale volunteers, Ted Jewson, Russ Pooler, Stan, Josephine, Robert and Russ Davies, Andrew Robillard, Larry Williams, Joan McNeil,

Bev Jewson, Jerry Fretz, Sharon Dell, Jean Tripp, Dorothy Dorge, Norma Benner, Judy LaCroix, Mary McKinnon, Carolyn Baer, Pat Mitchell, Jeanette Beroud, Janice Gibson, Dorothy Pyne, and Ruth Schaffer.

<u>Treasurers</u> — People who shopped at our sales were thrilled with their purchases proving that "One man's trash is another's treasure!"



Cleaning out your garage, basement or attic?

We need your stuff!

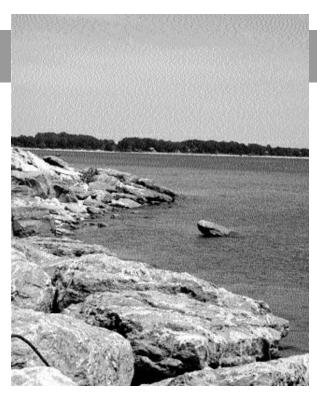
Your lawn sale items will benefit the Museum. Goods can be left at the Historical Museum or call for a pick-up (894-5322).

Archaeology Discovery Announced

Dr. Ron Williamson announced that one of the thousands of points found at the Peace Bridge site dates to 9000 B.C.



At a press conference Dr. Ron commented that "This find is proof that people have been living in this area for the past 11,000 years. Up until now, the points we have found date back 4,000 years. Each additional excavation expands the area of the Peace Bridge site and now the time-line is expanding as well. This is truly an amazing site."



Waves of Change Waterfront

Fort Erie's

Developments along Fort Erie's waterfront are being featured in the Historical Museum's temporary exhibition gallery.

"People have used the waterfront in many different ways over the past 11,000 years" said Administrator Jane Davies. "Uses include industrial, residential, commercial, recreational, and transportation." The most successful and long-lasting developments were those that worked with the natural resources instead of "using them up" for short-term gain. Examples of this are the developments along Point Abino. The pristine sand-hills no longer exist because tons of sand were shipped to Buffalo to make sidewalks. After this mining was complete the entire point was sold for \$27,000.

Contrast this to the longevity of developments that

used these resources in a renewable way...40 years of recreation at Erie Beach, 70 years of residential use at Bay Beach, 60 years of transportation with ferries, 200 years of commercial developments like ice harvesting and photography, and 200 years of recreation with ice hockey and ice fishing.

The exhibit finishes by highlighting the Town's future plans for waterfront development, all of which focus on long-range planning and renewable development. "Our waterfront is our greatest asset," said the Town's Waterfront Coordinator Signe Edgecombe. "It's great to see the Museum educating visitors about all Fort Erie has to offer."

Museum's Provincial Funding Increased

The Honourable Minister of Tourism, Culture and Communication, Tim Hudak announced an increase in the Fort Erie Museum Board's annual operating grant. "In recognition of the excellent community service provided by the Museums in Fort Erie, the Provincial government



will contribute \$18,444 annually to the Museum's operation." An appreciation reception was held at the Historical Museum on Jan. 19. Mayor Redekop is shown here thanking Minister Hudak on behalf of the community. Museum Chair Bruce Cummings commented that "this increase in funding is something the Museum Board has been working on for several years. Our grant will now be comparable to what other museums in the Peninsula receive. We thank the Province for correcting this inequity." Seventy of the Museum's volunteers shared in the reception.



Summer Students 2002



Brandy Barnhart

Brandy has completed her first year at Sir Sanford Fleming College, majoring in Social Services. Brandy brings valuable landscaping experience to this job and can be found rollerblading to work most mornings.

Zachariah General

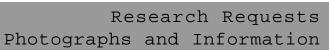
This is Zach's second year working at the Museum. An avid lacross player, Zach runs every morning then bikes to work. He hopes to pursue a career in Science once he completes his studies at Lakeshore High School.

Since 1987, the Museum has hired 56 summer students, helping Fort Erie's youth finance their post secondary studies.

Amanda Longfellow

A Grade 11 student at Ridgeway/Crystal Beach High, Amanda is well known in the community for her volunteer work with the Memorial United Church and Ridgeway Sparks. She hopes to pursue a career in teaching.

The Museum appreciates the financial assistance provided by the Ontario Student Works program.



Museum staff help hundreds of researchers each year. If you haven't seen our reference room lately, stop by! With our new scanner, printer and software, we are constantly expanding public access to our archives.

A recent request for assistance came from New York City. Irish America magazine, published in NYC, will feature an article on the Battle of Ridgeway, including pictures and facts from our collection!

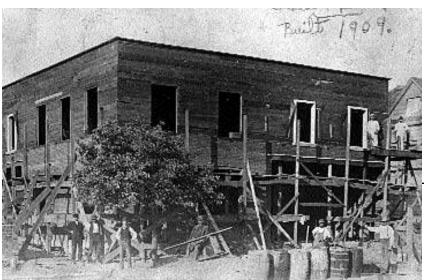


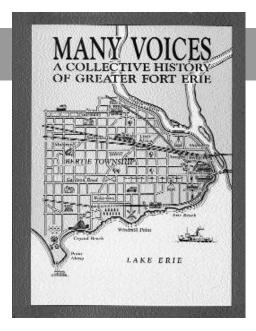
Many Voices
Part II

Have you been wondering why it's so hard to get a copy of Many Voices lately? Well, we're happy to report that it's nearly SOLD OUT!

In fact over 3,100 copies have been sold — a best-seller for a local history book!

"This fall we will be updating the book instead of just reprinting the current volume" said Assistant Curator Joan Lyons-Felstead. "The second edition will include corrections, additions, and updated information in some of the chapters.





We will also replace many of the photographs with alternate images." The second edition will have a different look but will still retain the information compiled by the 46 volunteers who worked on the original.

Barb Ruegg let the Museum copy her photograph of men building the store and bank in downtown Stevensville. It was taken in 1909 and today the building houses Mae's Restaurant.



Bay Beach Cottages Inventory

In a race against time, the Museum stepped in to photograph and inventory 29 Bay Beach homes before they were demolished. This unique cottage enclave was structured around the beach and communal courtyards, and represented over a century of seasonal living. The Museum now has 29 binders of floor plans, photographs, and architectural sampling. We hope that former residents will add their memories to this collection.





Co-op Students Fort Erie High School

As part of the new educational curriculum, all students must volunteer 40 hours during their high school term. This co-op program benefits the Museum by providing us with help for our special events.

Shown at left are Fort Erie High School students Michelle Barker, Alesha Cummings, Holly Lemaire, and Jill Bondy. The Museum is grateful for their enthusiastic support!

Attention High School Students!

The Railroad and Historical
Museums offer
work experience
in exchange for your
community volunteer
service hours.
Give us a call at
905-894-5322.

N-TEC Work Placement Program

Happy 10th Anniversary John Wanless!

This summer marks 10 years that John Wanless has been working at the Historical Museum. In return for work experience, John types the Museum's catalogue sheets and artifact accession registers. John is excellent with numbers and keeps our volunteer cataloguers on their toes!





Canada Day Fireworks Railroad Open House

Since the Canada Day Fireworks were held at the old Horton Steel property this year, coordinator Rob Everett suggested that the Railroad Museum might benefit from this attraction. He was right! The Museum was open until 10 pm that evening and 350 people toured the site while waiting for the show to begin. Happy Canada Day!

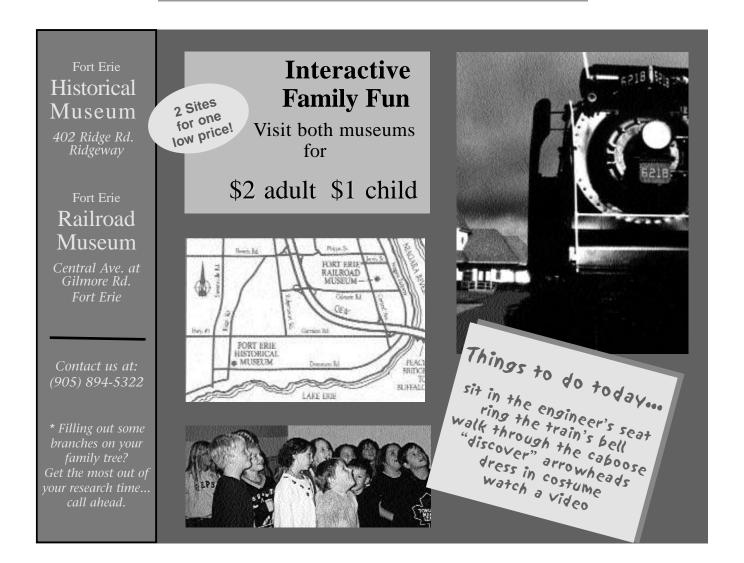


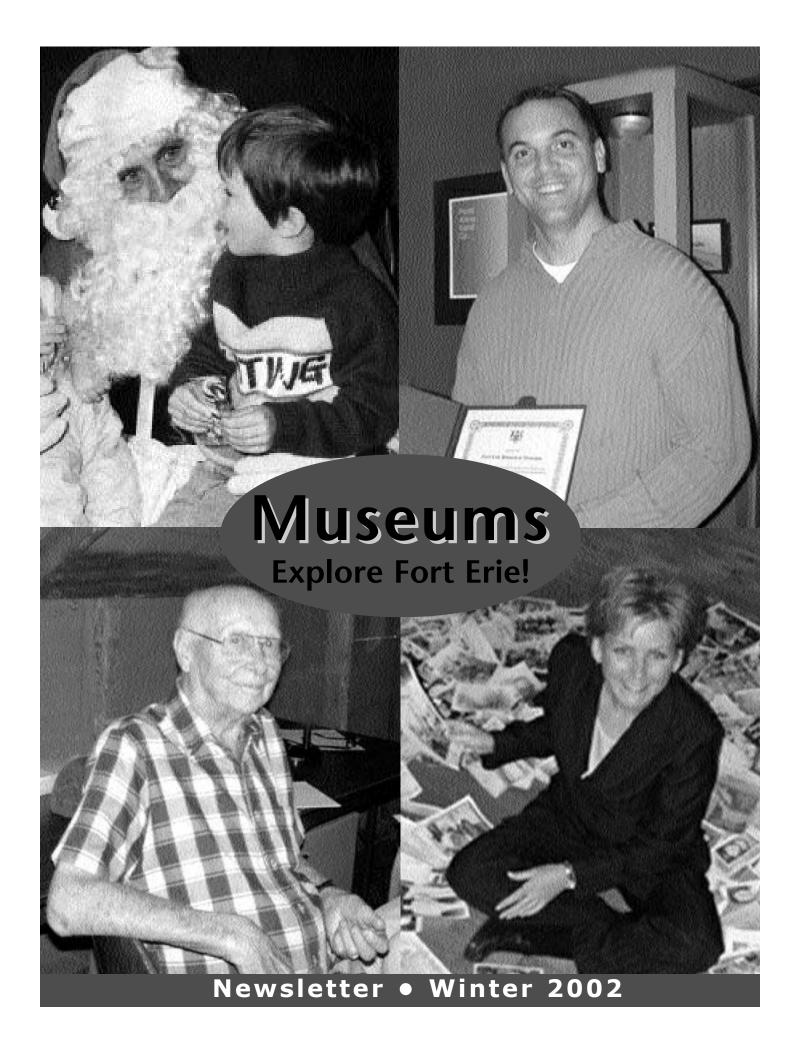
Happy Birthday 6218 You're 60 years old!!!

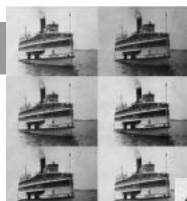
Built in 1942 by the Montreal Locomotive Works, it hauled both freight and passengers up until 1960. It was temporarily retired for four years and then brought back for special excursions or "fan runs." In 1973 it was presented to the Town of Fort Erie and has delighted visitors at the Railroad Museum ever since.



Advertising
Check out our new computer
screen ad



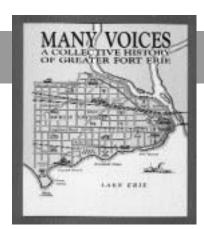




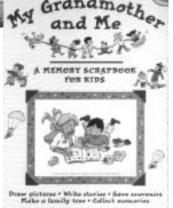
Christmas Shopping

Avoid the last minute "tie or perfume" rush. Get that hard-to-buy-for person something unique this year — shop at the Historical Museum's Gift Shop!

We have Memories of Crystal Beach Park t-shirts @ \$13;







Battle of Ridgeway cards, books and sweatshirts, from \$1 to \$18; Gramma and Me or Grampa and Me Memory Albums @ \$6; the archaeology book Legacy of Stone @ \$27; books by Earl Plato, Charlie Davies and David Owen; and a few copies of the first edition of Many Voices - A Collective History of Greater Fort Erie @ \$50. Located at 402 Ridge Road. Open Monday to Friday 9 am to 5 pm and Sundays 1 pm to 5 pm. No admission to shop!



Federal Wage Subsidy Grant

Thanks to a partnership between the Federal Government, Town Hall and the Bertie Historical Society, the Museum received a \$6,075 grant to do school programs.

Cal Bursey has been hired to design and run these programs from now until May 2003. Cal has 17 years experience doing programs at the Provincial Museum in Newfoundland.

Many of the curriculum objectives that teachers

strive to meet focus on history and using community recources. The Museum's one-hour programs fill that need.

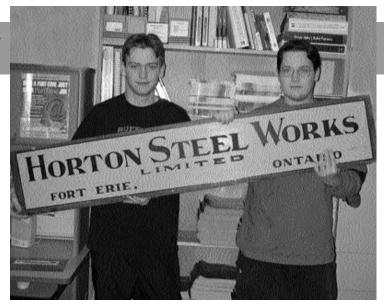


Grade 1-3 programs focus on Pioneers — with a different emphasis for each grade. Archaeology is featured for Grades 4-6 and the Fenians for Grades 7-8. These programs use artifacts and hands-on components. The cost is \$1 per student for a program delivered at the Museum and \$2 per student for a program delivered in the classroom. Call Cal Bursey at 894-5322 for more details.

Co-op Students Ridgeway/Crystal Beach High

We read in the news recently that some high school students were finding it difficult to complete their 40 hours of mandatory volunteer time.

Not so for Robert McKay and Chris Beach who stop by the Historical Museum after school to help out. They have helped with moving, gardening and office management. Currently the Historical Museum has a large computer data-entry project that needs a lot of volunteer hours to complete.



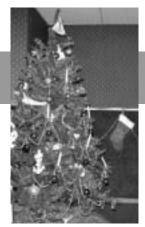
If you know of any high school students, or anyone with an hour a week to spare, have them stop by the museum, Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm, or call Jane Davies at 894-5322..

283 Ridge Road New Tenant

The Museum welcomes Lasting Impressions to 283 Ridge Road! Melody Simons, the "Gift Shop Guru" of Ridgeway leased space at the Museum's downtown facilities this fall. Rental revenues from this building go towards future capital improvements.







Ridgeway's Spirit of Christmas Dec. 6/7/8

The Historical Museum is decked out for

Christmas just in time for the annual Spirit of Christmas Celebration in Ridgeway. The community Christmas tree will once again be located in front of the Museum. On Friday evening, Dec. 6, it will be lit amidst carolers and cocoa! Inside the Museum will be exhibits on festive decorations. See you there!





Sundays at the Museum

Wondering what to do on Sunday afternoons? Stop by the Historical Museum!

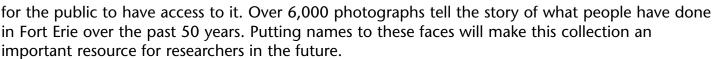
Every Sunday from 1-5 pm we will be open from now until June 2003. The newly expanded Archives is a great place to spend a Sunday especially exploring through the Times-Review's photo collection, and check out the new "Christmas Traditions" exhibit. So, if it's a rainy or snowy Sunday afternoon, stop by for some "exploring"... you might discover a relative or two.

Regular Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm hours are still in effect.

Times-Review's Photo Collection

While exploring the Archives you might even find a picture of yourself!

The Times-Review's photo collection is now at the Historical Museum in order



We all know of the frustration of coming across an old photograph without information written on the back of it. The story it could tell is gone forever ... who were these people, what where they doing, when did this happen, and where did this happen?

To all those who have come and continue to visit the Museum in order to identify these pictures ...

thank you! Your enthusiasm and persistence has resulted in the identification of about 4,000 photographs.



Doors Open Ontario

In October the Provincial Government sponsored an Open House to increase tourism along the border. The Railroad and Historical Museums combined this event with our birthday celebration

and 476 people visited the sites that weekend. The winners of the 50/50 draws were Barb Carlson and Helga Bowman. Congratulations!



™ "We're Unique

Why do some people choose to live in small towns?

A survey done by the Museum about Ridgeway showed that people valued its quaintness and uniqueness. Suburbs and highways lined with strip-malls and big box stores are the same throughout the country.

Our small town feels different because it looks different — it is unique.

Architecture can have beauty, not just function. Trees and nature are valued as much as concrete.

While change is inevitable in the growth of a town, at some point, if you demolish too much, you risk losing uniqueness — the very quality that people value.

We estimate that 80% of the grand and beautiful architecture which made Fort Erie unique is now gone. We are currently in jeopardy of losing the last stand of Carolinan forest and a significant Peace monument. If you value these things, then tell our leaders that losing them is not an option. Progress can happen without losing our uniqueness.

John Maloney M.P. re: Marcy's Woods 1-800-463-2831

Tim Hudak M.P.P. re: Marcy's Woods 382-0322

Mayor Redekop re: Town's Official Plan 871-1600

Peace Bridge Expansion Project Team 1-888-275-3360

Built Heritage

As our community grows it changes and this fall we saw a flurry of demolitions. Buildings, the people who lived in them, and the businesses run out of them,



are all part of Fort Erie's history.

Before they are obliterated from existence, the Museum makes a record of their "being" with photographs, site plans and in some cases, salvage work. All of this information is kept in the museum's archives.

One particular loss this fall was at 504 Ridge Road. This was one of the best "Victorian-trimmed" houses in Fort Erie.

If you know of any upcoming demolitions please contact Erin Wilson at 894-5322.



65 Queen St.



Prospect Point Rd near Hibbard

411 Derby Rd.



Volunteer Profile

This section of the newsletter will profile some of the Museum's volunteers.
Our first feature is the Fort Erie Museum Board. These dedicated members represent the interests of the community as they meet monthly to oversee the Museum's progress and make planning, policy and budgetary decisions. Board meetings are open to the public and are held the 4th Thursday, at 7 pm at Town Hall.

Front row, I to r: Laura Fair-Shulz, Chairman Bruce Cummings, Larry Williams Back row, I to r: Shawn Brown, Bill Kieffer, Gary Haines, Paul VanHezewyk and Axel Fair-Schulz

Oct. 28, 1943

MAIL BEFORE NOVEMBER 15T Remember to a parcels for Christmas to the boys oversens and be a so mail them in plenty of time and have them secumacked. See that your parcels contain no perish. In honour of the Historical Museum's 30th birthday Mayor Redekop expressed "the community's gratitude to the founders for their commitment, passion and foresight. Fort Erie's history is what makes us unique. By preserving our history you have given us a strong foundation with which to build a proud community. For that we thank you."

Honoured were Margaret Teal, Wilfred Teal, Bev Jewson, Ted Jewson, Jean Tripp, Ray Miller, Helen Sherk, James Grassie, Earl Plato and Ruth Ellsworth. The Museum Board commended Margaret Teal for initiating the original museum committee.

Expanded Public Archives

You asked. We heard.

In response to a need for more public research room we converted the area at the front of the HIstorical Museum into an Archives. In this well-lit area people can browse through reproductions of the museum's document and photo collection — all filed by topic.



Students, teachers, journalists, genealogists, authors and people who just love to reminisce can be found "treasure-hunting" in the Archives. Staff are available if you need help and there is no admission charge. Located at 402 Ridge Road. Open Monday - Friday, 9-5 pm and Sundays 1-5 pm.

Many Voices II

It's getting closer.

The next edition of Many Voices is at the pre-press stage. At least half of the photographs will be changed for this new edition — that's over 200 new photos!



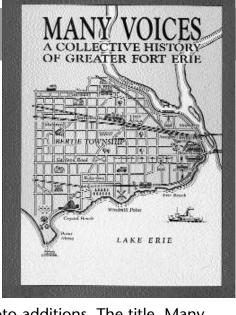
Although corrections and additions to the text are done, it's not too late to make further changes. Call Joan Felstead today if you have a concern — 894-5322.

The pre-press work includes adjusting all of the photos to achieve a clearer image. A new cover is also

being designed to reflect the new photo additions. The title, Many Voices, will remain since the stories inside are basically the same.

If the Museum Board can once again solicit sponsorship to cover the production and

printing costs, we will be able to sell the book at a price somewhere around \$30. We are hoping for a book launch in April 2003. Pictured above is Annebelle Bright at the Hermitage Guest House in Crystal Beach. To the right is the Ridgeway Band.







Museums Memorial Fund

In honour of the Historical Museum's 30th birthday, the Town of Fort Erie established a Museums Memorial Fund. This reserve fund will be invested "in-perpetuity" with the interest used to support Historical and Railroad Museum projects. Donations to the Memorial Fund will assist the Museums for many years to come and all donations receive

a charitable income tax receipt. If you wish to make a donation in memory of someone — the Museum will send a condolence and acknowledgment card to the family and that person's name will be entered into the Memorial Book, located in the Museum's archives.

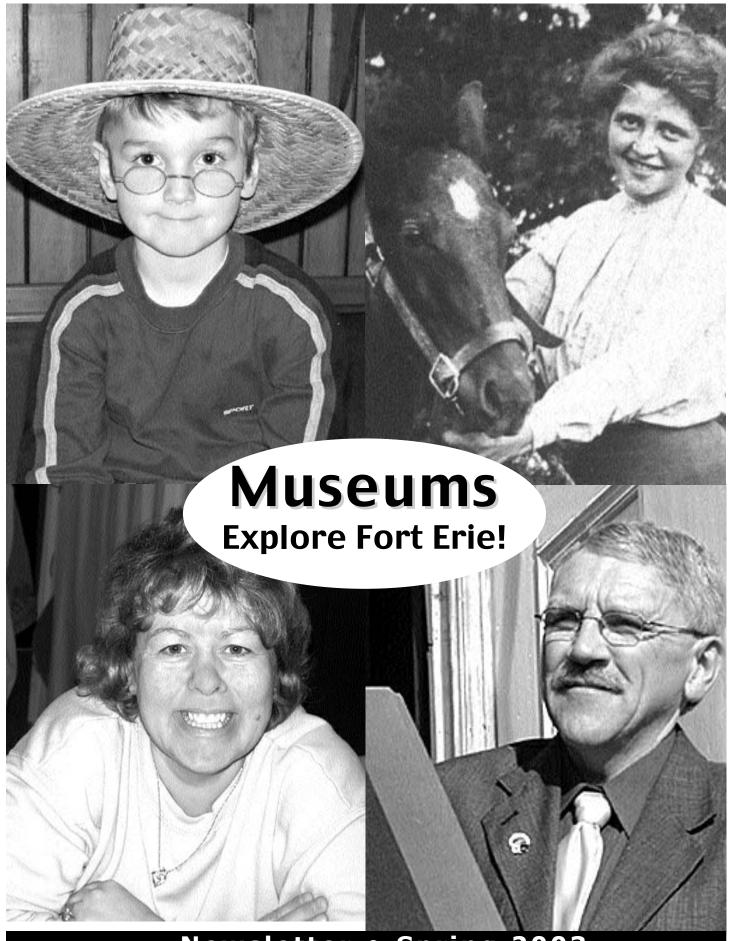
For more information about the Memorial Fund contact Jane Davies at 894-5322.

Seasons Greetings

On behalf of the Museum staff, volunteers and Board members, we extend to you and your family wishes for a safe and healthy Christmas season. Amidst all the turmoil we hope you have time to share some memories and make some new ones. Cheers!







Newsletter • Spring 2003



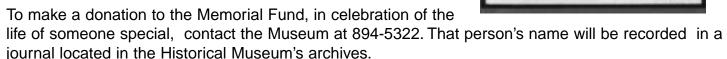
New Exhibit

This summer we will be hosting a travelling exhibit entitled "Passages to Freedom: Secrets from the Underground Railroad." This display has toured Canada and features slave narratives, a life-sized slave cabin, and models of plantation and safe houses. The exhibit is divided into three parts: Slavery, Escape & Freedom. It can be seen from June 14 to Sept. 24 at the Railroad Museum.

We will be offering Underground Railroad school tours during the last 2 weeks in June and the first 3 weeks in Sept. Call 894-5322 for details.

Memorial Fund

Recent donations have been made in memory of Allen Tripp, Madeline Faiazza and Vera Bateman.



We will send an acknowledgement card to the family and your donation will be placed, in perpetuity, into this fund. Interest from this fund will go towards supporting Museum programming.



Outreach at F.E.S.S.

Look for the Museum's booth at the F.E.S.S. 75th Reunion. On Friday May 9th hundreds of F.E.S.S. alumni will visit the Tait St. school to reminisce over old times.

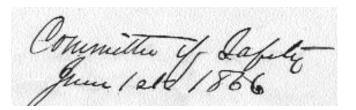
The Museum will share in those memories with a photo display of old school pictures. Most of these pictures are from the Times Review



Collection, and most are unidentified. We are hoping that the alumni will help with this identification project.

The Museum will also have a computer and printer on hand, if anyone wishes to purchase copies of these old photographs. See you there!

Many Voice II Defending the Border



1866

Just prior to the Fenian invasion local citizens, hearing of massive troop build-up in Buffalo N.Y., formed a Committee of Safety, and assigned patrol duties in the villages and at the border.

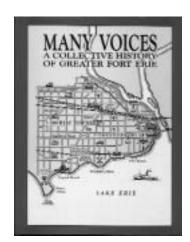
Minutes from this meeting were recently donated by Lorine Schulze. Thanks to Ron and Barb Chapman, Carol House, and Helen Sherk for facilitating the return of these documents to Canada from Pennsylvania, and for transcribing them!

In the next printing of the best-seller *Many Voices - A History of Greater Fort Erie*, the text will be updated and 1/2 of the photographs changed. Research on the war chapter uncovered new information and pictures, as shown above.



1917

The International Bridge B-1 Station is shown here guarded by the 44th Regiment WCFF. From Feb.1915 through May 1917 armed militia was stationed here, with barracks and a camp cook. They also guarded the Lake Erie shore from Point Abino to Crystal Beach.



Prior to the arrival of the militia, the bridge was guarded by Grand Trunk Railway detectives.

The next edition will be available by October 2003 at the Museum, Town Hall, Library and local bookstores. A perfect gift!



Railroad Museum Opening Soon

Preparations are now underway at the Railroad Museum for the summer season. From May 12 until Sept. 7 this site will be open seven days a week, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.



The Historical Museum is open year round, Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Beginning on June 7th until Sept. 7th this site will also be open seven day a week.

From the Archives

Museum volunteer, Sharon Dell, works every Wednesday filing and retrieving information from the Museum's archives. She answers information requests and in



her spare time is compiling a data-base of businesses from a century of local newspapers.

The archives so often uncover how our ancestors dealt with circumstances similar to those we face today. In 1919 the Smallpox virus was spreading quickly throughout Ontario and to control outbreaks, the border with Buffalo was closed.

The following front-page story appeared in the Fort Erie Times, March 19, 1920:

"Smallpox guarantine on American border is lifted

The smallpox quarantine against the province of Ontario, which has been in force on the U.S. border since Nov. 12, 1919, will be lifted at midnight tonight...The lifting of the quarantine will increase, undoubtedly, the travel from Buffalo to Fort Erie."



Another timely document is from the Margaret Disher papers. She was hired in 1891 as a teacher at S.S.#11 (Ridgeway Public) School, at a salary of \$350 per year. We don't know if Margaret composed

It is evential that we should try to enter into the point of view of other peoples, other classes than our own and of other persons than ourselves if we are to think justly and to act rightly.

It is essential that we should try to enter into the point of view of other peoples, other classes than our own and of other persons than ourselves if we are to think justly and to act rightly.

this passage herself, or copied it from another source, but obviously she was concerned with compassion, empathy and bridging cultures.

Miss Margaret Disher, c.1911

Lawn Sale

Gardening items, chairs, kitchen items, lighting, knickknacks, etc.

Plus, fill a bag for \$1!

Sat. May 3 8 a.m. 283 Ridge Rd

If you'd like to donate any "treasures" to our sale, we'll pick them up! Call us at 894-5322.



School Programs

Our special curriculum-based school programs are running at the Historical Museum until June 25th. Cal Bursey, shown here as "Pioneer Cal", is a big hit with the younger grades as they enjoy looking at artifacts, playing with pioneer toys and trying handmade soap.

The middle grades have been learning about archaeology with hands-on artifact identification games and slide shows.

The older grades experience the Fenian Raids

through role-playing, stories and problem solving activities.

Due to funding limitations, these programs most likely won't be available this fall...so if you're interested, call and book your class a space, 894-5322. There is also a travelling version of these programs, if you would like Cal to visit your classroom.

Many visitors and volunteers have been asking Museum staff "What's happening with..."

Adventures in Archaeology
Council has supported the project in principle and have asked the Native Community to discuss possible funding alternatives.

Museum Cafe @ 283 Ridge Road
We are currently using this site for much needed storage and fundraising rental income.
Future plans will be announced this winter.

Volunteer Profile

The Artifacts Committee has been faithfully meeting every Wednesday morning since 1987.

They don't usually wear hats...this shot was taken at their annual "semi-formal" birthday party! Pictured in the front row from left to right are: Jerry Fretz, Jeanette Beroud, Jean Tripp, Joan McNeil, and



Josephine Davies; in the back row are Sharon Dell, Dorothy Dorge, Pat Mitchell, and Chairman Bev Jewson (missing from the photo is Norma Benner.)

This group catalogues all the incoming artifact donations, cleans or repairs the artifacts, and keeps track of the storage areas. They also assist with fundraising, special events and act as a focus group for new Museum ideas. Their input and assistance is invaluable — not to mention that they make Wednesday morning work a lot of fun!

In 2002 these ladies clocked in 900 hours of volunteer time. New members are always welcome.

Open now Mon.- Fri. 9-5 • Open every day in June, July & Aug.

Farewell Joan

Assistant Curator, Joan Lyons-Felstead retired from the Museum in December 2002. Prior to Joan's 12 years with the Museum, she was a volunteer at the



Railroad site. Her legacy to local history is the best-seller *Many Voices*, of which she was co-editor. Joan left her mark on many areas of the Museum including the oral history projects, community and visitor studies, genealogy research, development of filing systems, and student training manuals. Her attention to detail, superb writing skills, and concern for local history, will be sadly missed. We all wish Joan well in her future endeavours.

Bob Chambers Photography

National photographer Bob Chambers surprised the Museum recently with his generous donation of photographs. His extensive collection documents



the changing faces of the Point Abino Lighthouse, the Ridgeway Station, and the 6218 steam engine. Bob has worked across Canada as a photo-journalist. He was born in Sherkston and remembers taking pictures of the 6218 with his "first good camera". Bob keeps returning to Fort Erie to capture what he feels are "the best examples of an historic lighthouse and station in Canada." Look for Bob's work in the Museum's archives and also for sale in the gift shop as postcards, notecards and posters.

ce ebrate

May is Museums Month, a province-wide celebration of heritage, coinciding with International Museum Day May 18th. For details about museum activities throughout the province visit www.museumsontario .com or call 1-800-ONTARIO.

The Royal Ontario Museum has an interactive archaeology game on their web-site. Suitable for tweens, teens and adults, you can access this site at www.rom.on.ca Click on Interactivities and then Archaeological Analysis: Pieces of the Past. Have fun!

Coming Soon...Fort Erie Museums will be introducing our own website. Pages for the site that are currently under development include:

- Hours/Directions
- 2003 Projects
- Museum History
- School Programs
- Policies
- Publications
- Newsletters
- Exhibits
- Stewardship
- Partnerships
- Memorial Fund
- Archives
- Historic Building Inventory
- Community Memories
- Gift Shop
- Photo of the Week
- Volunteer Opportunities
 What would you like to see us put on

our website???

Genealogy

Assessment Records now on computer database!

In response to suggestions from genealogists using these records, the Museum has entered them into a searchable computer format and printed out legible copies for general browsing. These records are lists who was living where, ages, and occupations of the residents of Bertie Township and Fort Erie between 1857 and 1885. These records were compiled for taxation purposes.

A sampling of the 1857 records are as follows:

Gorham, Charles	Concession 2 Lake Erie	Lot 25	Councilman
Hughs, John	Concession 5 Niagara River	Lot 3	Cooper
Learn, Peter	Concession 15 Niagara River	Lot 4	Farmer
Malieu, George	Wind Mill Point		Customs Inspector
Mathews, Jeddiah	Ridgeway	Lot 2	Inn Keeper
Sherk, Jonas	Concession 2 Lake Erie	Lot 34	Minister
Teal, Zachariah	Ridge St.	Lot 6,7	Gunsmith

Test your genealogy skills... Can you match the following old professions to their modern names?

Amanuensis
 Boniface
 Drummer
 Hind
 Farm Labourer
 Pig-keeper
 Secretary
 Innkeeper

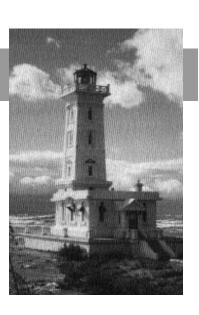
5. Porcher E. Travelling Salesman

Answers: 1=C, Z=D, 3=E, 4=A, 5=B



Point Abino Lighthouse

The Museum extends sincere congratulations to those involved in the Town's recent purchase of the historically significant Point Abino Lighthouse. The Museum is also honoured to have a seat on the Town's Point Abino Lighthouse Committee. We look forward to working on documenting and restoring this important heritage asset.

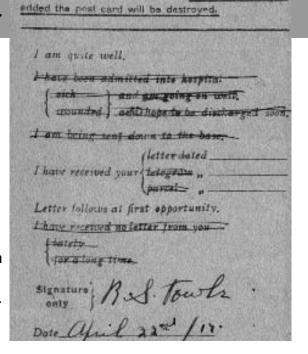


War...as old as history itself.

The booklet below was distributed by Riegle's Mill in Ridgeway during WWII, to show women how to use flour bags to make clothing and how to

cook with the food rations available.

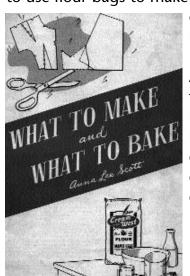
At right is a Field Card from WWI. For security reasons, nothing could be written on the card, only the sentences which did not apply to the soldier could be stroked out.

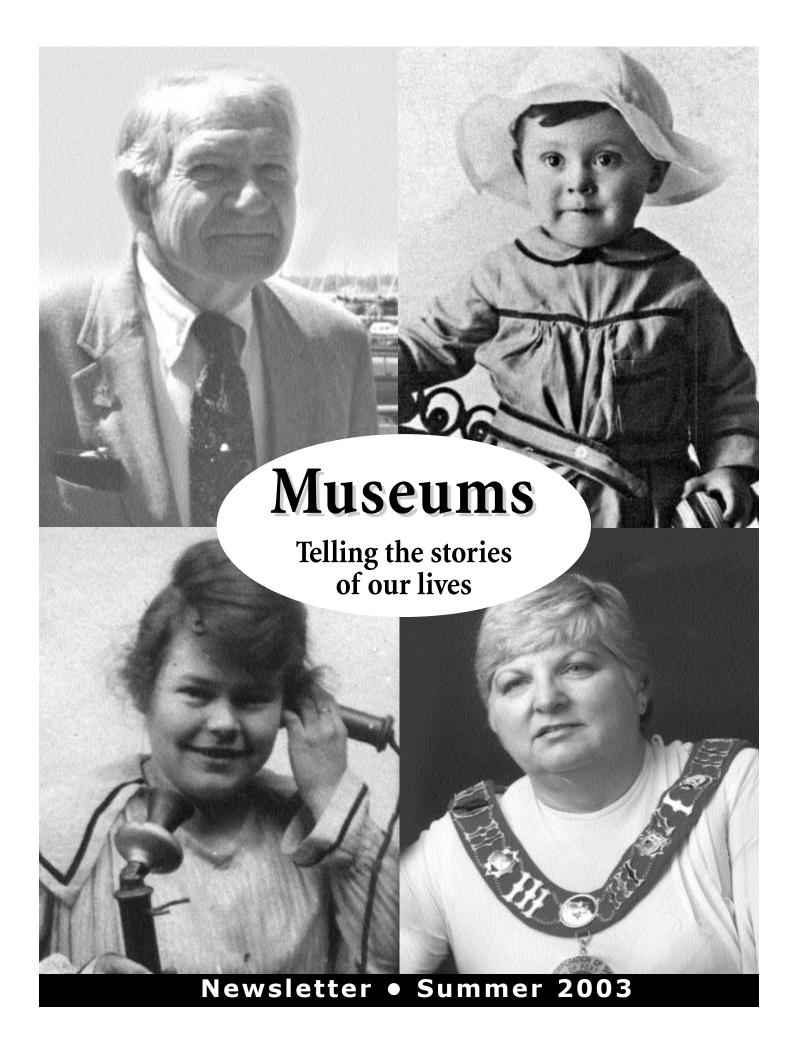


NOTHING is to be written on this side except the date and signature of the sender. Sentences not required may be erased. If anything else is

WWII soldiers marching west on Jarvis St.







Faiazza Collection

Fort Erie lost a 'pillar of the community' with the passing of Madeline Faiazza. She was one of Crystal Beaches biggest



supporters and a collector of local history. Madeline's family has donated her collection of 460 photographs and documents to the Historical Museum. There are also about 300 documents and newspaper clippings for the Museum's archival reference files. We are indebted to Madeline for her service to the community and for keeping such complete records. The photo above shows Madeline (left), and Joan Gould (right) at the 1967 Centennial Ball held at the Stardust Ballroom in Crystal Beach Park. Does anyone know who the gentleman is?

Archaeology



The Museum's archaeology collection is growing with each development project

undertaken at the Peace Bridge Site. This summer a crew of archaeologists from Archaeological



Services Inc. have been working at the corner of Forsyth and Niagara Blvd. Dr. Ron Williamson commented that this area is revealing rich pottery and chert deposits. Above is an Iroquoian point from the site. Left is Blake Williams, an ASI crew member. These new finds are being stored in Toronto.

survey

96% of Canadians believe that Museums contribute to their quality of life.

92% believe it is important for children to be exposed to Museums.

80% know about the Museum in their community.

78% put Museums on their list of things to see when travelling.

These findings are taken from a study called "Canadians and their Museums." This was done in March 2003 by TeleResearch Inc. for the Canadian Museums Association.

In Fort Erie we are very fortunate that quality of life issues are recognized as an important part of Town Council's strategic plans and budget allocations.

To quote Mayor Redekop..."Man can exist with just food and shelter, but why would he want to. Arts, heritage, culture and recreation are what make life worth living. The Town is working to provide a high quality of life for its residents."

Front cover...Museum supporters the late Austin Fox and Madeline Faiazza. The two older photos are unidentified. Have you written your family's names on the backs of your photos??? Every life holds many stories and the combination of these stories make up the history of our Town. What are your family's stories?





Many Voices 2 A Collective History of Fort Erie

It's almost finished!!!

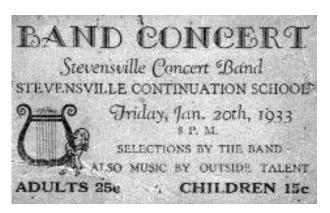
The second edition of Many Voices is approximately 3/4 done. The first edition of this best-seller sold more than 3,100 copies!

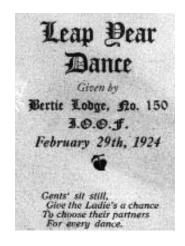
For the second edition, all of the chapters

have been updated with new articles and more than 300 new pictures. This gives us the opportunity to showcase some of the interesting new photographs and documents that have been donated to the museum since the first printing. The new edition will still be over 400 pages long, with at least 600 pictures.

Unfortunately we can't give an exact date for the release of the new edition — a staffing shortage has slowed progress. It should be ready sometime between December and February.







The Museum is extremely grateful to the members of the Holloway Bay Memorial Chapel for pledging an annual donation to the Historical Museum's capital archival project. The



chapel was built in 1894. Photo at left shows its original country Gothic design. Chapel archivist Lannie Gartner shares our

desire for additional storage and research space for the Museum's archives, and the Chapel's financial support will help us to meet these goals.

The Fort Erie Museums
Newsletter is published three
times a year and distributed
to those on our mailing list.
Place your name on the
mailing list and receive future
copies of this newsletter by
calling 894-5322.
Written and designed by

Museums

Jane Davies, Museum Curator.

Telling the stories of our lives



Underground Railroad Exhibit

This summer the Fort Erie Railroad Museum features an exhibit on the Underground Railroad.

The exhibit is divided into three sections slavery, escape

and freedom. The slavery section features stories of life as a slave, a model slave cabin and shackles used for imprisonment as shown above. The escape section details the signs and symbols used to guide people along the route of the Underground Railroad and includes a model safe-house. The Freedom section includes stories of those who made it to Canada. Fort Erie played an important role in this history as hundreds of escaped slaves found homes here. The community of Little Africa, around the Ridgemount area, had a population of 200 in the 1880s. It was one of the larger communities in Bertie Township at that time. This exhibit is on loan from the Welland Museum, with assistance from Canadian Heritage. The Railroad Museum is located on Central Ave. just north of Gilmore Road and is open daily from 9-5. *The exhibit closes Sept. 14th.*

Heritage Loop Tours

The Museum had the honour of joining the line-up of speakers at the Riverwalk opening on July 1 to unveil the Town's new Heritage Loop Tours. The first tour will feature plaques of significant archaeological findings at the Peace Bridge site, such as the longhouse, flint mining area, thunderbird gorget (necklace), birdstone. Brochures will



accompany these plaques so residents and tourists can walk or bike along these routes. Signs outlining the battles of the War of 1812 will also be done by this fall.



Using signs and tours to tell Fort Erie's stories is part of a sustainable stewardship program outlined in the Town's Tourism Master Plan. Stewardship is our obligation to care for the natural and heritage resources that rightfully belong to the future. Sustainability ensures that this stewardship can be maintained for a long time. Therefore, instead of just caring for heritage resources within storeroom walls, the Town is using heritage to create tours for visitors. Increases in tourism will increase the Town's tax base. Very innovative!

Feedback

Our spring newsletter posed several questions which all got answered with calls from... Janet Boyce - the quote we ran from Maggie Disher was from a poem by George Eliot. David Owen - the men marching down Jarvis St. are a company of American soldiers in stripped down field clothing in the spring of 1942.

Don Woods - the barracks at the B-1 Station was moved to Phipps St. for apartments.



Ridgewayfest

The Historical Museum participated in the annual Ridgeway summer festival this past July. About 960 people toured the museum and children enjoyed the free carnival games.



Scavenger Hunt

Both Museum sites are partnering with the Library for its summer reading program. Children can visit the museums for free with a scavenger hunt page which is available at any library.



Black History

The Railroad Museum participated in Black Heritage Day sponsored by the E.D.T.C. Our Underground Railroad exhibit was one of the free stops on the shuttle-bus service.

Both Museum sites are partnering with Shoppers Drug Mart for promotions and sales. Discounted admission tickets can be purchased at any Shoppers in Ontario.



Summer Partnerships

Don't forget the upcoming Doors Open event on Oct. 18 adn 19. Both Museum sites will host free open houses from 10-5. This is a Tourism Ontario program.



Memorial Fund



The Museum's Memorial Fund received donations so far this year in memory of Vera Bateman, Madeline Faiazza, Allen Tripp and Lorne Kendrick. Donations to the Memorial Fund are invested in perpetuity and the interest from this fund is used for Museum educational programs, conservation of artifacts and new exhibits. The Museum Board has a Memorial Book located in the archival room at the Historical Museum. So far 32 names are recorded in this book. For a lasting tribute celebrating the life of someone special, call the Museum at 894-5322.

Happy 100th Anniversary Station #2

Station #2 formerly the Bridgeburg Fire Department is 100 years old this year! Fireman Dan Hawkins was at the Museum doing research on the history of his station the same week that we received an e-mail inquiry from Bob and Linda Jehle of Michigan. They



had acquired this picture and asked us for its history. When we told them of the station's anniversary they donated the original photo, in its original frame, and we have made up a copy for Station #2. To quote the Jehle's, "This is our 100th anniversary gift to

Fort Erie..." The photo was taken on the east side of the former Town Hall on Jarvis St. where the Fire Department was located. Many thanks to the Jehle's for their thoughtful gift!

BORDER TRAVEL	PERMIT — (SHORT	r form H)
TO: COLLECTORS OF CUSTO	MS AND EXCISE	
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Cutler St.	Midgeway	Ont
a moldent of Canada is surtherized		

a resident of Canada, is authorized to proceed to the United States from time to time and to take with him or her NOT MORE THAN \$10 of which NOT MORE THAN \$5 MAY BE U. S. FUNDS acquired as change on previous trips under this permit and subject to the conditions on the back of this card.

From the Archives

A 1944 day-permit issued at the Peace Bridge to those wishing to travel into the United States.

Volunteer Profile

Carrie Wood has been volunteering at the Museum this past summer. She has been working with the Faiazza collection of artifacts, and answering research requests and tourist inquiries. Carrie and her two children live just a few blocks from the Historical Museum and she most enjoys "talking with visitors and working on the computer." Thanks Carrie for your interest and much needed help! Got spare time? We have a job to suit your taste - call us at 894-5322.



This summer you can find Zach General (top), Ben Featherstone (middle), and Amanda Longfellow (bottom), working at the Museums. They handle the admissions, gift shop, tourist inquiries

and site maintenance. In their spare time

they help with cataloguing artifacts.

They are busy processing the Faiazza, Irwin Industries, McDermott and Jewson

collections of archival material.

This fall Zach will be going to the University of Waterloo to study science. Ben will return to the Ontario College of

Art where he specializes in illustration.

Amanda will return to Ridgeway/Crystal Beach High School as a senior.
Since 1987, the Museum has hired 60 students, helping to finance their post-secondary studies.





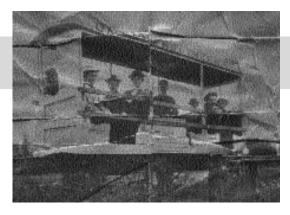


The Railroad and Historical Museums offer work experience in exchange for your community volunteer service hours.

Give us a call at 905-894-5322.

Peg Leg Donation

People find the most interesting things in their garages and attics. Gloria Trembly of Crystal Beach was cleaning out her garage and remembered her husband treasuring a rusty railroad spike and piece of track. Years ago an elderly friend of his gave these to him. The friend had salvaged them off the old Peg Leg Railway which ran between Ridgeway and



Crystal Beach in 1896-1898. It was the first electric monorail in Ontario. Gloria was happy to donate these to the museum so we could show a piece of the Peg Leg with all of our photographs.

Quote from poet Maya Angelou about your family tree...

"We are not just blades of grass, blowing in the wind, that can be cut or pulled out of existence at any time...we are all oak trees, with broad, strong roots.

Knowing that you are an oak tree makes you stand taller and act prouder as you rely upon all that has come before you."

Genealogy



Researching for the Canadian Niagara Power history book.

University of Waterloo engineering professor, Dr. Norman Ball, has been a regular visitor to our archives this summer. He has been commissioned by CNP to write a book about its history, past and present employees, and the impact of electricity on people's live. It will be the seventh book for this award-winning author. We've lost count of how many photos he has looked at but we know that some of ours will appear in the CNP book. Norman gets quite excited when he finds what he calls "good stuff" and we're so pleased

that one more person has discovered the treasure chest of intersting information in our archives. Norman is a former employee of the National Archives and Museum of Science and Technology and he was impressed with our professional looking exhibits. As a youngster Norman visited his Aunt Gladys and Uncle Bill Johnston in Ridgeway during the summers and helped make concrete blocks in the barn at the back of Chester Johnson's house!

Below is a photo from the Museum's archives showing Westinghouse promoting electicity at the Peace Bridge with its "Mechanical Man Elektro and dog Sparko."



Museums

Telling the stories of our lives

Newsletter • Spring 2004

Fort Erie Museums

Telling the stories of our lives

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Many Voices Fort Erio's history book

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Archives

Stowardship

Partnerships

Parmersnys Newslatters

Publications

Cift Shop

Volunteer Opportunities
Staff

Fort Erie's museums now have world-wide exposure!

Designed by Mike Cloutier, our new web site offers access to exhibits, photos, directions, articles and archival material 24 hours-a-day, 365 days a year. Our web address is www.museum.forterie.ca or you can access us through the Town of Fort Erie's web page at

www.forterie.on.ca

Check us out and send us an e-mail with your comments and suggestions.

Our e-mail address is museum@forterie.on.ca

Front cover...clockwise from top left
Possibly Milton Beeshy...what do you think?
Matthew Jewson at plowing match
Ruth Ellsworth, museum volunteer
Diane Montreuil, exhibit designer

The Museum has many unidentified photographs.

Stop by to look these over —you may find a relative or two!





A fabulous 100!

Members of the Museum's Artifacts Committee gathered to celebrate Ruth Ellsworth's 100th birthday.

Ruth was the first volunteer to catalogue the Historical Museum's collection. She worked tirelessly for nearly 30 years recording and caring for thousands of artifacts. She is also remembered by many as the Grade 2 teacher at Ridgeway Public School. Her grace and fabulous memory give all of us something to aspire to. Standing behind Ruth, from left are Sharon Dell, Dorothy Dorge, Pat Mitchell, Josephine Davies, Bev Jewson and Joan McNeil.

The Fort Erie Museums
Newsletter is published
three times a year.
Your friends can receive
copies of this newsletter by
calling us at 894-5322 with
their name and address.
Written and designed by
Jane Davies, Museum Curator.

May is
Museums Month
in Ontario...
celebrate
your heritage!

An Imaginary Tea

You may think it rather funny To be asked to give us money For a couple of cups of tea You've never had.

But the tea and sugar ration Gives us cause for no elation, And the shipping loss at sea Is pretty bad.

Still, the money that you send us Helps the boys who help defend us, And the fact that we are free Should make us glad.

Keep your chin up, you're not quitting: Keep right on and do your knitting: Make each sock a sock for Hitler — Get fighting mad.

Do your work — no time for basking: Just some silver's all we're asking For a couple of cups of tea You've never had.

S.H.R.

Some interesting web sites... Cyndi's List of Genealogy Sites www.cyndislist.ca

National Archives of Canada www.archives.ca

Canada Geneaological Web Project www.rootsweb.com/canwgw

LO.D.E. donation

A Fort Erie chapter of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Emprie was formed in 1914. Their mandate was to organize the community to help the war effort.

The group disbanded in 1989. Ruth Ellsworth, the last recording secretary, donated their minute books to the Historical Museum. A century ago, this service club recorded their minutes on the backs of calendar pages in order to save paper and did so with elegant penmanship. Two timeless lessons about pride in your work and thriftiness.

During WWII, fundraising was made especially challenging with imposed food rations. The chapter sent out these patriotic invitations to an "Imaginary Tea" that would take place at their salvage shop on Jarvis St., Nov. 1943.



Hockey

The Historical Museum provided posters for the tables at the Greater Fort Erie Minor Hockey Association Banquet. The over 900 attendees were reminded of past Fort Erie

residents who have gone on to play in the N.H.L., like Tom Reid (above), Mike Lalor, Pierre Pilot, Randy Burridge and Stan Drulia. Give us a call if you have pictures of these men playing hockey in Fort Erie!

Lorne Kendrick donation

Lorne Kendrick, a telegraph operator in the Ridgeway Station and later Clerk of Bertie Township donated his



collection of railroad artifacts, photographs, records and models he designed and made of



the stations in greater Fort Erie. Shown here is the Stevensville station model and a photograph of Earl Guy who delivered parcels from the station in Ridgeway.



On the move

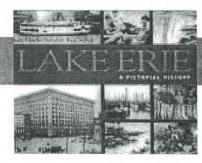
The Historical Museum has moved back to 402 Ridge Road, (above). This



past winter, the museum's offices, archives, and gift shop were located at 283 Ridge Road (right).

This was in response to sporadic but reoccurring benzene fumes in the building at 402 Ridge. The source of the benzene is being investigated by the Public Works Department.

As a solution, the Museum Board installed a BTEX monitor at 402 Ridge. Performing like a smoke detector, this machine will sound an alarm when benzene is detected. It operates 24-hours a day in order to ensure a safe environment for staff and visitors.



New in the Gift Shop

Two exciting new books are available in the gift shop. Lake Erie A Pictorial History, written by Julie and Ken

Sobol details the happenings around the shores of Lake Erie. Waverly Beach Chronicles is a collection of memories and pictures celebrating 100 years of life at the beach. Editor Debby Cohen (far right) and Kathie Goldman worked for several years collecting these stories, beginning with the minutes of the first summer resident's meeting, July 24, 1900.



THE RIDGEWAY HERALD

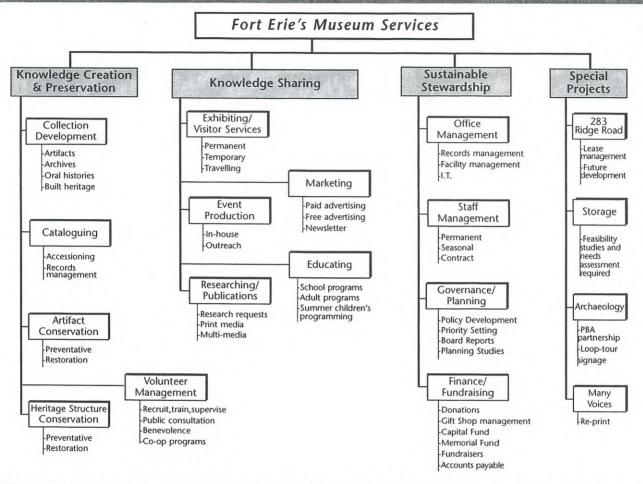
From the archives

RIDGEWAY, ONTARDA PRIDAY, AUGUST IK. 1911

For one dollar a year, citizens could subscribe to the Ridgeway Herald and be kept up to date with the latest comings and goings. Local hotels would submit their guest registers for publication and everyone would then know who was in town.

On Aug. 18, 1911 the following guests stayed at the Bon-Air Hotel: Carl Halgard of Flint Mich.; Mrs. A. Chaurin of Youngstown, Ohio; and Mrs. Jas. Cilbert, Miss Viola Cilbert and R. Kennedy of Toronto. The proprietor of the Hotel Detroit, Mr. Ross, purchased a steam yacht, the "Katonka" for the purpose of his guests.

Museum's Business Plan



The Town of Fort Erie has adopted a business plan for the delivery of museum services. The plan includes what services will be delivered (see chart above) and at what level. The complete business plan can be viewed on-line at <forterie.on.ca> and click on performance measures; or stop by the Historical Museum at 283 Ridge Road.

Remember when?

As gas prices continue to climb, remember when it was cheaper to fill up in Canada than in the U.S.? In the mid 1970s gas stations in Fort Erie had continuous line-ups of vehicles from Buffalo, so much so, that many created designated lines for their Canadian customers.





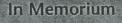
Don Woods

Don served on the Museum Board for 9 years and was a member of the Friends of the Railroad Museum for over 20 years. Don generously used his woodworking skills to restore many artifacts.



Gerry Fretz

A 10-year member of the Artifacts Committee and author of a chapter in Many Voices, Jerry used her artistic and teaching skills for cataloguing, decorating and fundraising projects at the Museum.



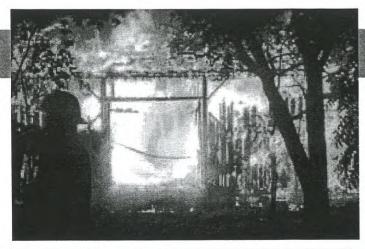


Lorne Kendrick

Lorne was instrumental Memorial Fund in negotiating the donations were donation of steam gratefully received for engine 6218 to Fort these volunteers. Erie. Lorne was the Donations were telegraph operator at also received in the Ridgeway Station memory of and the Clerk for **BHS** members Bertie Township. Lois Elliot and Ray Sider.

Have you been following the Museum's monthly articles in the Fort Erie Times? They appear on the fourth Saturday of each month. Past articles can be found in the archives at the Historical Museum and include the following:

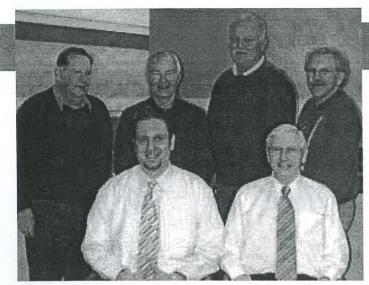
- The Aqua Queen of Lake Erie
- Shackles from the Underground Railroad
- Point Abino Lighthouse Men Hockey Team
 - The Daredevil at Irvin
 - The 1866 Citizens Committee for Safety
 - Century-old Council Duties



History lost

Last fall vandals set fire to a Museum offsite storage building and 18 artifacts were lost. In response, Council funded a temporary storage facility at the Gibson Centre. This 5,000² building will keep the artifacts safe from fire, water damage and theft. They will still deteriorate due to temperature and humidity fluctuations, hence the solution is only temporary.

Railroad • Daily 9-5 until Labour Day • Weekends until Oct. 13



2004-2006 Museum Board

Council appointed the following citizens to serve on the Museum Board for the next three years. They meet once a month to oversee the operations at the Town's three museum sites. Their primary focus is policy development, long range planning and financial management. Back row I-r - Dennis Weadon, Bill Kieffer, Councillor Paul Fell, Tim Haggerty. Front row I-r - Tom Haines, Gary Haines. Absent were Laura and Axel Fair-Schulz.

Look what we found written on the cover of Jackson Brewster's Latin textbook, dated Sept. 1, 1921. Students at Ridgeway High must have been taught this cheer the first day of school!

Strawberry shortcake
Huckleberry pie
V-I-C-T-O-R-Y
Baby in a high chair
Who put him there
Ma, Pa, sis boom bah
Ridgeway, Ridgeway
Rah, Rah, Rah!

Welcome Aboard Jude!

The position of Assistant Curator, vacant for 14 months, has been filled. Jude Scott, who worked for the Ontario Museum Association and then started her own museum consulting business, began working here in May. She will be responsible for school and volunteer programs and special events. Stop by to meet the newest member of the team!



Museum 2004 Budget

Council approved a change in the way Museum Services are funded with the passing of their 2004 budget. Over the next three years the Town will be moving towards funding the Museum's staff and utilities. This will create a stable funding base similar to that already in place for Library Services. Voting in favour of creating this stable funding base and reducing the Museum's reliance on bingo funding were Mayor Redekop, Councillor Fell, Councillor Gorham and Councillor Schular.



Kinart Donation

Betty Kinnart's photo albums and scrapbooks were recently donated to the Historical Museum.

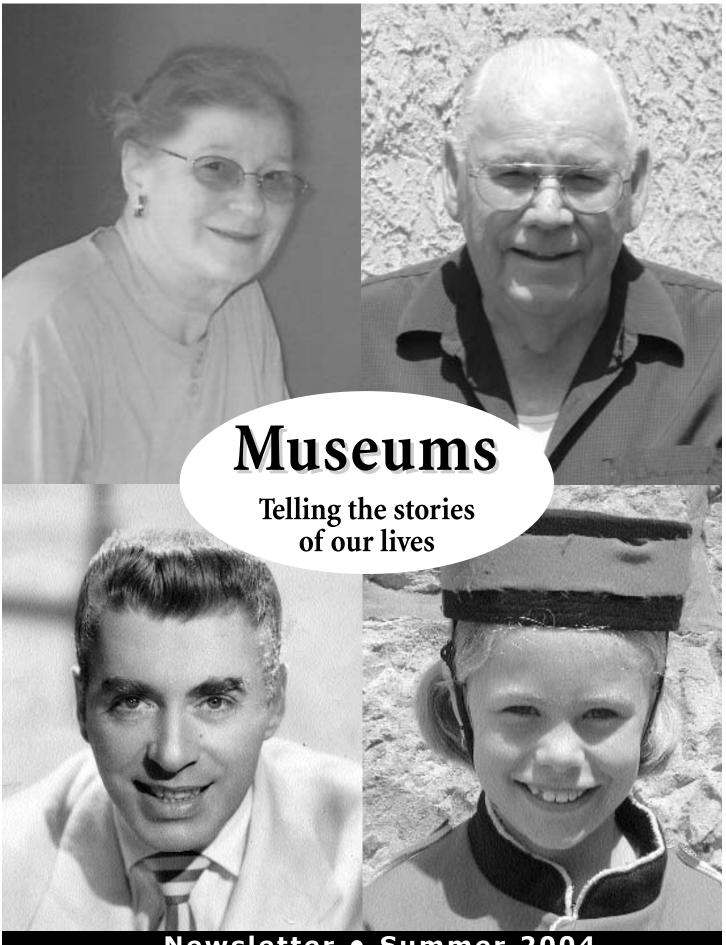
They contain candid shots of growing up in Fort Erie (like this 1934 Douglas School class picture) and many articles clipped from the Fleet newsletter (like this "Bachelor" notice). The poem reads: Gals swoon and pant and flutter. Try to squeal and only stutter. Why? It's that certain dark-haired Morrison, the maiden's joy.





This photo is from the Historical Museum's slide collection. It shows Ross and Cliff Spear c. 1919 in front of J. Weis and Son. This business was located on the west side of Stevensville Road, north of Main St. in Stevensville.





Newsletter • Summer 2004



Fleet Donation

The management of Fleet Industries is proud to announce that the collection of Fleet archives and historical memorabilia has been donated to the Fort Erie

Historical Museum. Spokesman for Fleet, Brian Oakley said "The Museum is the appropriate place for these local history items to be placed. The general public will have access to them, and we are confident that they will be preserved properly so they will last for generations to come." Oakley commented that "there is so much

history in this plant and we want to make sure these photos, documents and items stay in Fort Erie." The Museum is honoured to care for this collection which is currently being catalogued by a group of Fleet retiree's. The Museum was also allowed to produce a video-tour of the plant in operation. Oakley conducted the tour outlining the various production capabilities. The Museum hopes to add memories from the retiree's to this tape in the future. These photos show the Fleet Tuck Shop (above) and Richard Eckert, right, who retired on March 1, 1996.





Fleet Retiree's Volunteer

A new volunteer group is helping the Historical Museum record the history of Fleet by identifying and cataloguing the archival materials recently donated. They meet every Tuesday afternoon at 402 Ridge Road and they encourage other Fleet enthusiasts to join them. Clockwise from top left are Tom

Mullarky, Ken Benner, George Sherk, and Marge Havill.

Newsletter

The Fort Erie Museums
Newsletter is distributed
once a year to every household and twice a year to
those on our mailing list.
To add your name to the list
call 894-5322.
Written and designed by
Jane Davies, Curator.

Cover Photos

Clockwise from top left: volunteers Joan McNeil and Tom Mullarky; visitor Danielle Beroud; and from the archives, Art Mooney.

Contact Us

Fort Erie Museums
Box 339, Ridgeway, LOS 1N0
p• 905-894-5322
f• 905-894-6851
e• museum@forterie.on.ca
w• museum.forterie.ca

Visit Us

Historical: 402 Ridge Rd.
Open daily 9-5 until Sept. 1
Open Mon.-Fri. 9-5 for the
balance of the year
Railroad - Central Ave. at
Gilmore Road, Fort Erie
Open daily 9-5 until Sept. 1

Mission Statement

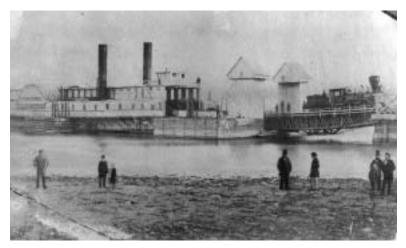
- Fort Erie's Museums care for a base of knowledge that belongs to the future.
- Fort Erie's Museums help create a strong and proud community by celebrating our shared heritage.
- Fort Erie's Museums help satisfy the intellectual needs of the community.



Warren/Lewis/Wintemute Donation

Over 300 documents and photographs from the Warren, Lewis, Wintemute and Curtis families have been added to the museum's archives. This information was provided by Martha Clendening, great-great-great-great-great-grandaughter of Abraham Wintemute (builder of the oldest existing house in Fort Erie, shown at left). This home at 487 Niagara Blvd. was built





about 1792. Also shown above is the original St. Paul's Anglican Church on the Niagara Blvd. This building was built in 1824 and replaced by a stone building in 1881. The steam ferry International was built for the Buffalo and Lake Huron Railroad in 1857. It ferried trains across the river until 1873, and ran from the foot of Beatrice Street, just north of the Old Fort, to Porter Avenue in Buffalo.

We're Back!

The Historical Museum is open again at 402 Ridge Road. A monitor has been installed, similar to a carbon monoxide detector, but it measures the levels of a chemical called benzene.

The source of the benzene, detected in the museum last fall, has yet to be determined, but the Town's Public Works Department continues to monitor the situation.



The Museum is open to the public every day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The photo above shows Museum Board Chairman Bill Kieffer examining the new monitor.



Coverlet Donation

Many residents will remember Billie Blackwood as a teacher at Ridgeway Public School. Before her move to Calgary this spring, she donated her family's coverlet to the Historical Museum. Her motherin-law, Lillian (Babion) Blackwood, of Ridgeway, cared for this heirloom for years before passing it on to Billie.

It is the Double Rose pattern, in green, red and white, and is identical to coverlets woven by the Graf family in Gasline during the mid to late 1800s.

A Moving Diary

It may be comforting to know that the sadness felt when moving is a timeless emotion. While filing the over 400piece Cruikshank collection, donated by Lee Moore, we came across pictures of Julia Cruikshank and an excerpt from her book Whirlpool Heights. In it, she recounts how difficult it was to leave her Garrison Road home. This



heritage home, currently owned by Lee Moore, stands on the north side of Garrison near Walmart. "May 5, 1904

My visit to the old place was very sad. When I saw the placard, "For Sale," nailed upon a pear-tree, I felt it was a desecration...To have lived twenty-five years in a place until it is part of yourself, then to leave it is like death...We had supper in the dear dining-room; the same old scents and sounds; they were doubly dear now I knew I was leaving them for ever. I forgot the dreary days, remembered only the beauty of my life in the red-brick house on the Garrison Road." "Aug. 9, 1904

When I reached the back part of the farm I began to cry... It broke my heart to see my garden over-

grown with weeds...In the house it was still more desolate; I could not keep back the tears... When E. and the furniture had gone I sat down in the white room, and bade good-bye to the past... As I walked down the road every step was filled with memories — sad, now that I knew I would never come back to my beautiful home.

The next morning...as the train moved out of the station the tears filled my eyes, The sun shone upon a hundred fields, and all of them I knew."

A WILLIAMS WELCOME

Thank you to Larry Williams for giving the museums a presence in the Welcome Wagon baskets. Larry has purchased over 1,000 Fenian Raid art cards from the museum, as gifts to new residents compliments of the Williams Funeral Home. Larry has been a long-standing museum supporter. He will also be presenting to each family he serves a copy of our history book, Many Voices II.



Tropical Hut Display

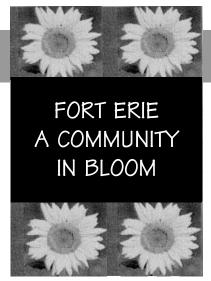
Some may remember it as Cronfelt's, some as the Tropical Hut, but all will remember the colourful signs that used to hang at this outdoor restaurant at the corner of Derby and Lincoln Roads in Crystal Beach. On display at the Historical Museum this summer, they will bring back memories of fruit drinks and sugar waffles!

Archaeology

Work has begun on new exhibits to showcase the 10,000 year-old archaeology collection. The Peace Bridge Authority has generously donated space in their new building and the Town has allocated \$150,000 for the gallery. The Museum is working with the Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre and A.S.I. on this project.

Heritage in Bloom

As part of the Communities in Bloom competition, Fort Erie was judged on its heritage preservation and interpretation programs. The Museum provided the judges with 8 pages of illustrated write-ups on the Town's three museums, *Many Voices*, the Archaeological and Heritage Master Plans, Built Heritage Inventory, Archives, and



Heritage Loop Tours. You can view this book at the Historical Museum or in the Planning Dept. at the Town Hall.



Hero of Ridgeway

Do you know on whose tombstone is engraved "The Hero of Ridgeway"? It is General John O'Neill, the commanding officer who led the Fenians during the Battle of Ridgeway. O'Neill died in 1878 and is buried in Omaha Nebraska.

Since the capital fundraising for the relocation of the Battlefield Museum exhibits to 283 Ridge Road has been put on hold, an interim Fenian exhibit has been set up at the Historical Museum. The display features weapons, medals, paintings, and maps depicting the famous invasion. A children's activity area and video of the re-enactment of the battle completes the display.



Ridgeway Summer Festival

546 people toured the Historical Museum during Ridgeway's annual Summer Festival which took place July 10 and 11.

Children decorated the Museum's sidewalks, like Josh Wood shown at left, and enjoyed the many free carnival games located on the grounds. The Museum offered free admission during the festival as our thanks for the community's continuing support. Many visitors came prepared this year with family history research questions.

How to Preserve a Wedding Dress

It may be your dress, fresh from that magical walk down the aisle; it may be your mother's, and you marvel at how tiny her waist was; or it may be your grandmother's, made with delicate fabric and tiny hand stitching...whoever wore it, a wedding dress holds treasured memories. For this special garment to be appreciated in the future, it needs special care right now.

Residue from sweat and dirt will darken over time and will leave stains which corrode the fabric. Follow these directions to help preserve your dress. Test the fabric in an inconspicuous spot with water

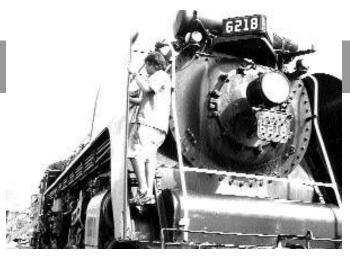


to check for shrinkage, colourfastness and fragility. This is especially important when cleaning vintage clothing. If it passes the test, line a clean bathtub with a large white towel, fill the tub with lukewarm water and a small amount of soap for delicate fabrics. Gently submerge the fabric into the water, and soak. Gently swish. Replace the water as it becomes dirty, and continue to rinse with tubs of fresh water until all traces of soap are gone. When finished, drain the tub and gently roll the garment in the towel, pressing out the water. Using the towel as a support, lift the dress out of the tub, and place onto a dry towel to remove the excess water. Using this towel as a support, carry the dress outside and place on a clean white sheet spread out in a partly shady area of the lawn. When the garment is partially dry, turn it over onto a dry sheet and leave until completely dry.

Fold the garment with lots of acid-free tissue, to keep the folds from creasing, and store in an acid-free box. Regular tissue and boxes will stain the fabric and plastic bags and boxes will create mildew.

The best place to store your dress is an area with stable temperature and humidity levels, like a closet or under a bed. The worst places to store items are the basement and attic.

The Historical Museum sells acid-free tissue and boxes. Call us if you have questions...894-5322.



A Facelift for the 6218

This summer the 6218 steam locomotive is getting painted. Summer students Zach General (at left), Ben Featherston, Amanda Longfellow, and Lindsey Williams have worked diligently scraping and painting.

Many thanks to Peninsula Paint and Benjamin Moore for donating paint towards this project.

DONATIONS

Many thanks to Anthony
Diina of Ontario
Professional Security
Services and the Crystal
Beach Amusement
Days/Crystal Beach
Market for their recent
financial donation to the
Museum and for
complimentary space at
their event.

LOTTERY SUPPORT

A heartfelt thanks to the Bertie Historical Society and lottery co-chairs, Olive and Ron Bryant for raising funds to support Museum operations — such as this newsletter.



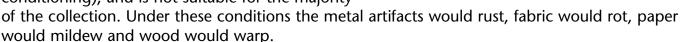
PROVINCIAL GRANT

The annual Ontario Ministry of Culture, Museum's Operating Grant was approved for the Fort Erie Museums, netting the Town a grant of \$18,444. This grant is awarded based on meeting a range of professional standards — which the Fort Erie Museums did!

Gibson Centre

The museum's off-site storage facility at the Gibson Centre is filling up. Many thanks to the Town for providing us with this building and to Ted and Larry Jewson for their moving services.

This building provides cold storage (no heat or air conditioning), and is not suitable for the majority



However, this site provides much needed storage for extra display props and cases. It also provides a fire-proof location for the oversize artifacts, many of which can only be moved by machinery.



Preserving Video Tapes

Do you have videos of important family events such as weddings, your child's activities and other memories you wish to preserve?

Unfortunately, videotapes have a limited life span - 10 to 30 years. In addition to re-recording the information onto a new tape every decade, proper handling and storage can help prolong their life.

Tapes should be handled by their plastic cases and stored upright like books. Think of the cardboard sleeve as a book jacket. Both of these enclosures help keep the tape inside safe from dust, dirt, food and drinks and tobacco smoke.

When at rest, a tape should be left at the end of the play position - not rewound. This will help prevent stretching of the tape. Also, a tape should not be paused for long periods or stored in the VCR.

Avoid storing near extreme heat and humidity (e.g., attics, basements, heat vents and sunshine). As a rule of thumb, cool and dry is the best. Keep tapes at least 3" away from magnetic fields, and not next to stereo speakers or under the TV.

Especially valuable tapes could be copied either onto your computer, another videotape, a CD or DVD. Separate storage for the back-up would ensure that at least one was preserved in case of fire, flood, theft or other disaster.

Source: CCI (Canadian Conservation Institute): Preserving My Heritage - How to Care For series.



Trees on the Beach?

An interesting collection of photos was recently acquired from the Beachcombers Senior Citizen's Association of Ridgeway.

Many of the photos are labeled Crystal Beach /1913 and depict people on the beach when it was still partially covered with trees and vegetation. These unique images are now being catalogued and will

become part of the public archives at the Ridgeway site.

INTERESTING WEB SITE

A wonderful resource for people whose relatives served in World War I can be found at www.collectionsCanada. ca/02/020106 e.html

You can search on-line for the records of soldiers from the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF). This CEF database contains the personnel files of over 600,000 Canadians. It is indexed with the soldier's name, regiment number, and Attestation (enlistment) papers.

The Attestation papers contain valuable family history such as the soldier's birthdate, birthplace, religion and occupation as well as the names and addresses of their next-of-kin.

Just click on: Search the database and follow the prompts. Entering the last name will display a list of soldiers with that name and allow you to narrow your search by clicking on the symbol "A" for Attestation paper.

Copies of these records can be ordered through this web site.



Irvin Donation

120 archival photographs and documents from Irvin Industries were donated to the Historical Museum by Robert Brost of Stevensville.
The photo at left shows the manufacturing of a FIST Ribbon Parachute in 1958; and at right is an employee modeling a "Snap & U Ring Parachute with Reserve, RCAF C4".



In the summer of 1919, Leslie Leroy Irvin wowed crowds at Erie Beach with his new invention, the parachute. With help from the Curtiss Aircraft Company of Buffalo, he jumped out of their plane, ripped open a backpack and descended to safety. In fact, the first person to parachute from a plane in Canada did so at Crystal Beach. Frank Ellis jumped on July 5, 1919. Leslie Irvin was scheduled to make the jump, but he had to cancel due to a sprained ankle.

That same year Irvin established the Irving Air Chute Company (the extra 'g' due to a clerical error) in Buffalo to supply the U.S. military. A Fort Erie plant was opened in 1925 to meet the British and Canadian military needs.

Irvin's nickname was "Sky High", which he got from a 1914 film called *Sky High* which featured one of his descents from a balloon. Irvin saw the need to adapt the parachute for use by airplane pilots and passengers. He developed the backpack and ripcord parachute which, so far, has saved the lives of more than 100,000 people who have bailed out of a plane.

After 76 years of business, Irvin Industries closed their Fort Erie plant in 2001.

Sherk Reunion

The museum participated in the annual Schurch (Sherk, Shirk) reunion which was held this year in Ridgeway. Schurch's from as far away as Switzerland attended the three-day action-packed event. The museum displayed and offered copies of historical photographs.

Flower Donations

A special thanks to the Fort Erie Horticultural Society for donating and planting flowers at the Railroad Museum; especially Rose Petran, Dorothy McLeod, Maggie Golding, Emma Carpenter, Anne Knutson, Barb Woehl, Bob Stevenson, and Bonnie Gallagher.

Doors Open

Mark Oct. 16 and 17 on your calendar. The Historical and Railroad Museums will be featured in the annual Provincial Doors Open program. Free open houses will be offered at each site, with staff available to answer your antique conservation questions.



A Grand Summer Pic-Nic

A rare poster has found its way home — a gift from the Chatham-Kent Museum. Information found on the poster includes:

"PIC-NIC AND LECTURE

A GRAND PIC-NIC WILL BE HELD IN CUTLER'S GROVE, RIDGEWAY on WEDNESDAY, JULY 19th, 1876

Under the Auspices of BERTIE LODGE, No. 150, I.O.O.F.

Proceedings to commence at 11 a.m.

In order to add to the pleasures of the day, the Committee have secured the services of the celebrated Young's Band of Buffalo

The Programme of the day will consist of A GRAND PROCESSION Of the Oddfellows headed by the Band.

Pic- Nic Dinner in the Grove on the basket system

After which, a large number of Valuable Prizes will be distributed among the successful competitors in Various Athletic Games, as Foot and Hurtle Races, Jumping, Throwing, Climbing Greasy Pole, &c., &c. Swings, Base Ball, Croquet, Quoits, and all kinds of games will be provided.

Lemonade, Ice Cream, and Refreshments of all kinds can be procured on the grounds.

A Collection will be taken up to defray the expenses of the Band.

FUN IN THE EVENING! The Committee have the pleasure to announce that they have made an engagement with the inimitable Cartoonist of "GRIP", J.W. BENGOUGH who will make rapid Crayon Sketches of well-known men in the TOWN HALL, RIDGEWAY

Tickets, 25 Cents, can be obtained at the Stores in Ridgeway, Port Colborne, Fort Erie, Stevensville Arrangements have been made with the Grand Trunk Railway for Special Trains and Greatly Reduced Fares"





The large iron sign that once graced the Fort Erie train station has returned to Fort Erie. An anonymous donor presented the sign to the Railroad Museum. It is now on display along with photographs of the old station. Many thanks to this "quiet" supporter!

New Cards

The gift shop at the Historical Museum is now carrying note cards from local artist Jean Tripp. These charcoal sketches of the Point Abino Lighthouse and Ridgeway Train Station are sold in packages of 5. The gift shops at both Museums carry unique local history and general interest items, with the Railroad site featuring wares for the "train buff". You can shop at the Museums with no admission fee.



Feeling Bilious?

When reading through your ancestors diaries and other papers, you may have noticed peculiar references to their health and wondered what they were suffering from. People caught the ague, catarrh and felt bilious.

Ague was used in the same way in which we use the term flu. The symptoms of ague were fever, chills, aches and a cough.

Catarrh was used to describe a sore throat, cough, difficulty in breathing, laryngitis or an upset stomach.

The term bilious means having too much bile. It was believed that too much of this fluid caused headache, upset stomach, diarrhea and vomiting.

One popular remedy was Moone's Emerald Oil which was made at the International Laboratories in Fort Erie. The instructions included in this box read, "A clean, powerful, penetrating oil that promotes a healthy healing" and includes directions for its use to heal ulcers, burns, cuts, poison ivy, bites, eczema, chafing, neuralgia, gout, sore throats, bunions, hemorrhoids, ingrown nails, and sciatica, just to name a few. Please call us if you know where the International Laboratories was located (894-5322.)



The Museum Board thanks the following people and businesses for their generous support of this newsletter. Please support them!





Mon-Pri San Spin Sat. San Gun Gun San 10an Jun Rose Thompson and Grand Longval Pharmacist Owners

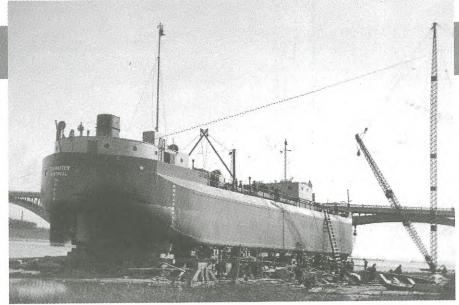
Zellers 200 Gerrison Rd. Fort Erie, Ontario L2A 5S6

Tel: 905 871 6811 Fax: 905 871 9859 Email: gerard@forterie.com









Mary McMurtry Collection

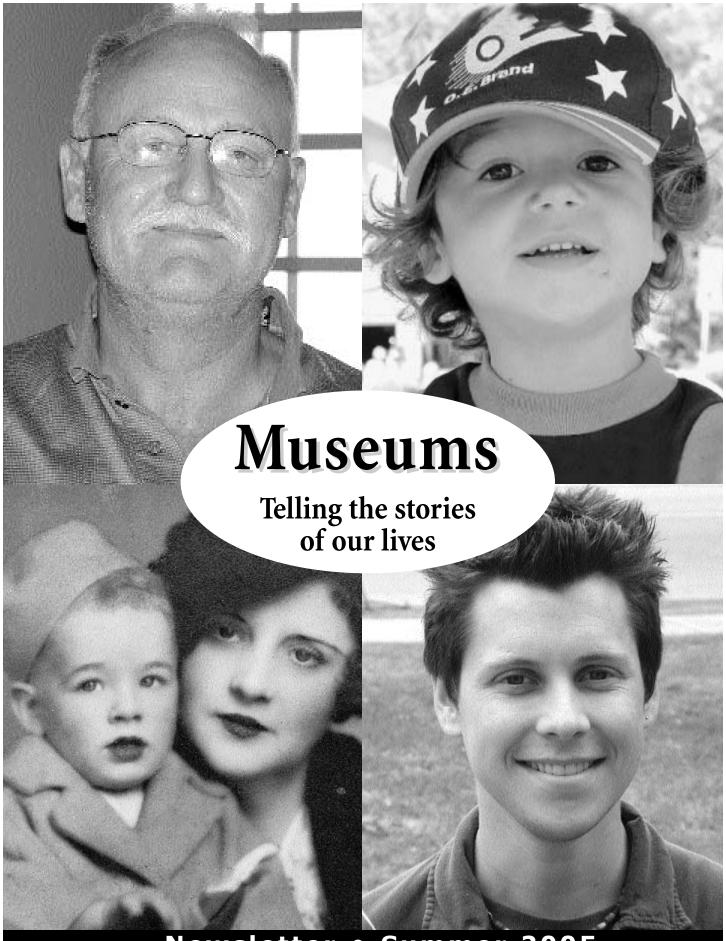
Interesting artifacts and pictures were donated to the Historical Museum by former Rose Seaton teacher, Mary McMurtry, before she moved to Barrie. These photos depict work at the Horton Steel Shipyard, which later became the Baby

Hole beach, and in 2003 was transformed into the Riverwalk. The photo above shows the Transiter which was built in 1935. At the time it was the largest all-welded vessel in the world. It served the Great Lakes until 1969 and then was a carrier in the Caribbean until 1981 when it capsized and sank while en route to Columbia.



Below is the launching of the Bruce Hudson near the Peace Bridge in 1935. Boats were launched sideways to prevent their being carried away in the swift river current. This ship also served in the Caribbean in the early 1970s and was scrapped in 1983.





Newsletter • Summer 2005



It's Done!

The much-anticipated next edition of the Canadian bestseller Many Voices, was released in Dec. 2004. Many Voices II, contains updates of the stories from the first edition and over 300 new photographs — bringing the total number of pictures to about 600. The book also includes two new chapters (Crystal

Beach Park and Policing) and many new sidebars.

The new cover shows a group of residents gathered at a crossroad - symbolic of anywhere in Fort Erie. Citizens young and old, at crossroads, hamlets, and villages, made Fort Erie what it is today, and continue to shape its future.

The book has been sent worldwide as gifts for birthdays and anniversaries and continues to receive rave reviews. It is also used by businesses for presentations to clients and colleagues. The book sells for \$34.95 and is available at the Fort Erie Historical and Railroad Museums and the Town Hall. Discounts are available for bulk purchases. Contact the Museum at 894-5322.



With thanks!

Members of the Waverly Beach Community Group presented the Museum with a \$650 donation in support of the

Museum's work in recognizing the historical importance of waterfront communities. Their donation will go towards an outreach exhibit about these communities which is currently in the planning stages. They also published a history book entitled "Waverly Beach Chronicles" which is available at the Museum. In photo, from left to right are, Kathie Goldman, Debby Cohen, Pat Schnirel and Bob Schnirel.

Newsletter

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To add your name to the list
call 894-5322.
Written and designed by
Jane Davies, Curator.

Cover Photos

Clockwise from top left: Councillor Paul Fell; child visitor; student Andrew Sinclair; and Paul Hawkins with his mother.

Contact Us

Fort Erie Museums
Box 339, Ridgeway, LOS 1N0
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f• 905-894-6851
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- Fort Erie's Museums care for a base of knowledge that belongs to the future.
- Fort Erie's Museums help create a strong and proud community by celebrating our shared heritage.
- Fort Erie's Museums help satisfy the intellectual needs of the community.



FREE Sunday's at the Museum

Visit the Historical Museum for FREE any Sunday afternoon! Assistant Curator Jude Scott (centre) has been helping visitors with genealogy research and, in the fall, with advice on artifact conservation. Seated are Rob Duffy (left) and Andrew Sinclair who are doing data entry to assist with Jude's genealogy project. Standing is Reid Canavan, the Town's IT technician who

provides us with technical assistance. See you on Sunday!

MEWINZHA

A gallery featuring Native history and the 10,000 year-old archaeology collection will open in 2006 in the Public Bridge Authority building at the Peace Bridge. It has been named "Mewinzha - A Journey Back in Time." Mewinzha is an Anishinawbek name meaning "A long time ago."

Fleet and the President

The final donation of artifacts from Fleet Industries are being processed and over 1,500 items have been catalogued so far by Museum volunteers. Shown here is a photo of the founder of Fleet Industries, Reuben Fleet (right) with President Woodrow Wilson at the inauguration of U.S. Air Mail Service in 1918.



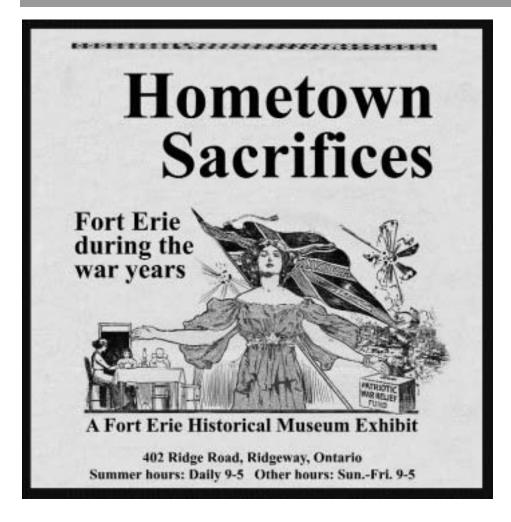


100 years of dedication

Three Museum volunteers were recognized for their loyalty and long service. Pat Mitchell (left) has been volunteering at the Museum for the past 30 years, Bev Jewson (centre) and Jean Tripp (right) for the past 35. They have been faithfully working each week

on cataloguing, conservation, research and in the early years, on displays, school programs,

hiring students, and advertising. Bev and Jean were on the committee who started the Historical Museum in 1970, and they haven't wavered in their commitment to preserving the town's history and of making everyone aware of how proud we should be of Fort Erie. THANK YOU!!!





Research

Background research for this exhibit included compiling a list of men and women who left Fort Erie to serve in a war. To date over 1,000 names appear in the gallery. If you notice a name missing, please let us know. Further information and photographs about these service men and women continue to pour

in and will become part of the Museum's archives, and will be included in future educational programs and publications.

In honour of the Year of the Veteran, the Fort Erie Historical Museum has unveiled a new exhibit "Hometown Sacrifices, Fort Erie during the war years."

During the 20th century, wars fought abroad affected the lives of everyone 'back home'. Citizens of all ages participated in the war by collecting money to finance it; by rationing and collecting supplies; or by working in war related industries. This exhibit pays tribute to the sacrifices made on the homefront, as well as those made on the front lines.

Visitors have been e-mailing the museum about this new exhibit... "We were VERY impressed!" Jean and Chip "There's a lot of respect shown here." Anonymous "The war exhibit is very impressive." Norman "You've fit a lot in a small room and still managed to leave space...room for contemplation. We all owe a great thanks to our parent's generation." Diane



Did you know?

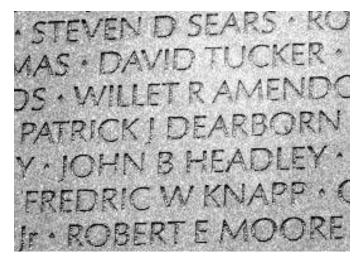
Did you know that on panel 29E - Line 9 of the Vietnam Memorial Wall is the name of a Fort Erie resident? Ridgeway's Patrick (Hicks) Dearborn began his tour of duty in Vietnam on May 30, 1965 and was killed in action on Nov. 2, 1966.

Patrick, the son of an American parent, was one of several Fort Erie residents who served in this war. At a time when many U.S. citizens were travelling west across the Peace Bridge to find asylum in Canada, Patrick travelled east and enlisted.

Lance Corporal Dearborn was one of 25 Marines guarding Dineen Hill, or Hill 25, when it was attacked at 2:00 a.m. by approximately

100 North Vietnamese. At daybreak his body was found near a foxhole. He was 18 years old. Fellow Marines remember Patrick as having a "good sense of humour, who always made everyone around him feel good." He was nicknamed "Canuck" since he sometimes used a stick and pretended to play goalie while playing catcher during baseball games.





Rationing

Throughout the ages the distribution of food between the well-off and the starving has shown mankind at its best and at its worst. During WWII food consumption was restricted at home so that it could be sent to the hungry in Britain and to the troops. Countries under siege such as Holland, where foreign aid was not allowed in, were not so lucky. Many Dutch, Russians and other peoples died of starvation. The Canadian government created the rationing program in order to relieve hunger in those with the greatest need.

Compare this to today where hunger is debated at a G-8 Summit and rock concerts held to bring this need to the world's attention.

YOUR KITCHEN

Is a Battle Station Too

FIGHT WASTE

- 1. Plan your shopping.
- 2. Plan your time.
- 3. Plan your menus.
- 4. Use all leftovers.
- 5. Learn the food rules.
- 6. Cook to retain all food values.
- 7. Have your family clean their plates.



Remember When?

What Fort Erie beach is this sand dragon quietly sleeping on?

Why Crystal Beach, of course. In the 1980's many events were held at Crystal Beach Park in an attempt to boost attendance; including sand sculpting, swimsuit and body building competitions, and band concerts. If you have pictures of Crystal Beach Park in the later years (i.e. 1960s

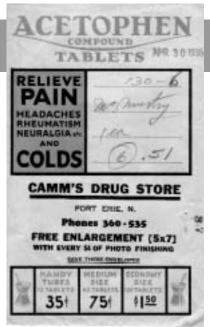
to 80s) contact the Museum. We will scan your pictures for our archives and return the originals to you. Thanks to Helen Bolton for her picture collection, including the one seen above.

Editorial

We thought you'd like to read a copy of the following editorial, printed in the Atlantic Journal:

"The world is too big for us, too much is going on, too many crimes, too much violence and excitement. Try as you will, you get behind in the race in spite of yourself. It's a constant strain to keep pace...and still, you lose ground. Science empties its discoveries on you so fast that you stagger beneath them in hopeless bewilderment. The political world is news seen rapidly, you're out of breath trying to keep pace with who's in and who's out. Everything is high pressure. Human nature can't endure much more."

Atlantic Journal June 16, 1883



Artifact Corner

Artifacts are catalogued to record the history behind items, so that their stories are not lost.

This bag from Camm's Drug Store shows that in 1935 it was located in Fort Erie N., and sold tubes of 12 Acetophen tablets for 35¢, developed film, and had two phone lines - 360 & 535.

Since the bag was from McMurtry's cottage in Bay Beach, this family likely shopped at Camm's Derby Rd. location.

CAO VISIT

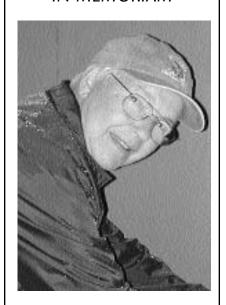
The Town's new CAO, Harry Schlange visited the Museum in July to meet the staff and volunteers and become familiar with the historical resources under the Town's care. Mr. Schlange commended the Museum on their book Many Voices, which he has been reading for background on Fort Erie. Welcome Mr. Schlange!



Thanks to the Lawson Brothers

When Laurie and Gordon Lawson (left) heard about our war exhibit, they offered to go to Washington D.C. to make a rubbing from the Vietnam Memorial Wall of Patrick Dearborne's name. Their mother Eila Lawson taught home-ec at Ridgeway High, and is now 93 years old and living with Gordon in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

IN MEMORIAM



Former Museum Chair
Bill Kieffer
passed away June 19, 2005.
Bill's generous and kind spirit
is missed by us all.

CONGRATULATIONS



Museum Administrator Jane Davies and Bruce Cummings were married on June 25, 2005.

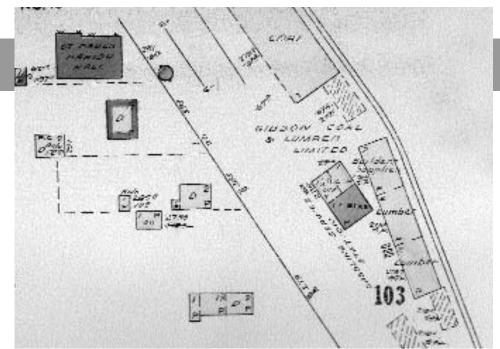
HAPPY BIRTHDAY



The Museum's 1st Volunteer Curator, Ruth Ellsworth celebrated 101 years Jan. 27, 2005.

Philately

The "Friends of Philately" (stamp collectors) newsletter is published in Halifax. Their June issue is "dedicated to the staff of the Fort Erie Museum Board and their excellent publication Many Voices." Bridgeburg postmarks are also discussed in this edition. To subscribe contact David Cooper, 28 Karen Cres., Porters Lake, NS, B3E 1K3. Born in Bridgeburg, David helps the Museum with various research projects.



Fire Insurance Maps

The Museum recently acquired a set of Fire Insurance Maps for Fort Erie. This set was made in 1951 and updated in 1961. These colour-coded maps show the location, dimension, composition and in some instances ownership of every structure in Fort Erie.

These maps were produced by the Underwriters' Survey Bureau and used by

Insurance Companies to process claims. For instance if a fire destroyed your home, an adjuster would not need to spend time investigating the claim...the map would show that you owned a 2 storey, 800 sq.ft. frame building with an attached garage; and since they would have past maps, they could also determine when it was built.

These maps provide valuable information about businesses and land use patterns. The above section shows the industrial nature of Niagara Boulevard in 1961. The New York Central Railway ran along the Niagara River, and located across from St. Paul's Parish Hall (now Redstack's Retirement Home) was Gibson Coal and Lumber Ltd. It included a 1 storey frame building with a metal roof for coal; a 2 storey frame building with a shingle roof for builders supplies and lumber; a 1 storey cement block building with a shingle roof for a gasoline service station; and a 1 1/2 storey frame office building. The areas with dotted lines represent lumber piles.

Recipes

There is nothing quite like food to evoke memories of

Low cups sugar, two eggs, one cup sour cream, one cup butter, one live teaspoon soda, roll soft.

special people and times. Warm gingerbread might remind you of Sunday dinners at your Grandma's house; and the turkey stuffing recipe that has been passed down through generations will be the one used by your children...or it just wouldn't be Christmas dinner.

The recipe above is from the Museum's archives. It has not been tested, so bake at your own risk! To make your recipe books more meaningful for your grandchildren, make notes in them of your favourites, the "flops", and for what occasions you liked to make them. Your cookbooks will become mini-diaries and something for your children to treasure.



Student Profile

The Museums are fortunate to have on staff this summer, four talented, enthusiastic and hard-working students who are responsible for maintenance, research, data entry and visitor services. Clockwise from top left are:

Alex MacDonald - taking co-op Biochemistry at Brock; with plans to become a Genetic Engineer, specializing in curing Down's Syndrome.

Amanda Longfellow - taking Education Studies at Brock, with plans to teach primary school.

Andrew Sinclair - taking History at Brock, with plans to pursue a PhD. in German history - "Bismarkian Diplomacy" and then teach in Europe.

Lindsey Williams - taking Communications and English at McMaster, with plans to pursue a career in media.





Recent Donations

Artifacts, photographs and documents about the history of Fort Erie continue to be donated to the Museum from members of the community. Recent donations include Rebekah Lodge minute books and memorabilia; Crystal Beach Park ticket boxes; Fenian Raid musket; 1920 Ridgeway High School athletic ribbons; People's United Church of Crystal Beach 1940 constitution; and photographs of Bridgeburg High class of 1926-27 and the arrival of the Prince of Wales at the Peace Bridge in 1927.



March to Ridgeway

On June 5th, members of the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry arrived in Ridgeway. They had left Hamilton on June 3rd, recreating the trek taken by their predecessors, the Hamilton 13th Battalion during the 1866 Battle of Ridgeway. This part-time reserve troop toured the Fenian Raid exhibit and then proceeded to the Memorial Cairn on Hwy. #3 in the Battlefield Park.



Data Management

The Town of Fort Erie's IT Dept. donated 5 computers to the Museum. These old machines are only useful for simple data management and will help the Museum provide a better service to the community. At right, Rob Duffy begins the daunting task of entering archival records. Rob is part of a March of Dimes training program at the Museum this summer.

Strong Families
25 years of research with
14,000 families at the
University of Alabama
showed that successful
families shared six common elements. The first
being "Commitment."
"Encourage your children
to be proud of their heritage, revel in your family
history by learning about
your grandparents' lives,
create traditions, share
stories, etc."

Tourism

A survey done by the Tourism Industry Association of America found that 81% of Americans who took at least one trip of 80 km or more from home, took in a cultural, heritage or arts activity. The survey concluded "a promising wave of opportunity for cultural and historic tourism with the affluent baby boomers nearing retirement."

When your friends visit this summer remember to bring them by the Museums. Children especially enjoy the Railroad Museum on Central Ave., where they can climb aboard a steam locomotive, sit in the engineer's seat, gaze down the track and ring the train's bell. They can also explore the interior of a caboose and train station. That site is open daily from 9-5 until Labour Day.



Funding Support

In 2004, the Town of Fort Erie accepted the Museum Board's "Results-based Business Plan" with the overall goal being to achieve a stable base-level of funding for the Museums. In 2005, Council took the Museum's another step closer to stable funding. Thank you!

The Provincial Ministry of Culture also helps to fund the Museums with their annual "Operating

Grant" program. The funding level for Fort Erie's Museums was increased by then Minister Tim Hudak, and remains the same today. Thank you!

The photo above is of the "Baby Hole" beach on Niagara Blvd., now part of Riverwalk.



Beware of Tape

The glue found in tape will eventually destroy any paper that it comes in contact with. At times, people bring in artifacts to the Museum that are beyond repair. At left is the corner of a colour brochure from Erie Beach Park. Through the years, the owners have tried to "fix" the creases and tears in this document with scotch tape. The glue in tape will turn the paper it is stuck to a brown colour. This can totally cover up any image you were trying to save. The glue also makes the paper brittle causing it to fall apart. The worst type of glue is that found in laminating sheets. In time it will

disintegrate the item that you were trying to protect.

The Museum repairs documents using an archival-grade adhesive tape that contains a "safe" type of glue. It is called Filmoplast P. If you have a lot of repairing to do, stop by the Museum and inquire about ordering a box of this tape. If you only have one or two documents to fix, bring them by the Museum and we will give you a price on repairing them. But, whatever you do...don't use tape on pictures, maps, letters, wills, certificates and all other paper documents. In time, it will cause that document's "demise."

The history of tape is quite interesting. The automobile inspired the invention of tape. In the 1920s, garages didn't have the tools to create two-tone finishes. They fastened newspaper with glue to the car before painting, but many times it left a permanent residue. In 1925, engineer Richard Drew overheard a garage worker complaining about another ruined paint job. He returned to his office at Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing (3M) and invented a product that would stick tightly, mask perfectly, pull off easily and leave no residue. That product was masking tape. The adhesive he invented was a combination of cabinetmaker's glue and glycerin. In 1930 Drew invented cellophane tape by applying the same adhesive to the new product cellophane.

Lottery Support
A heartfelt thanks to the Bertie Historical Society, lottery chairman Dan Pattison and all the volunteers who help to raise funds to support Museum operations — such as this newsletter.



Bloomin' Donation

Janet Cocksedge, owner of Tulip Tree Floral, donated a garden-full of daylilies, hostas, and lamb's ears to the Historical Museum. As these perennials grow and



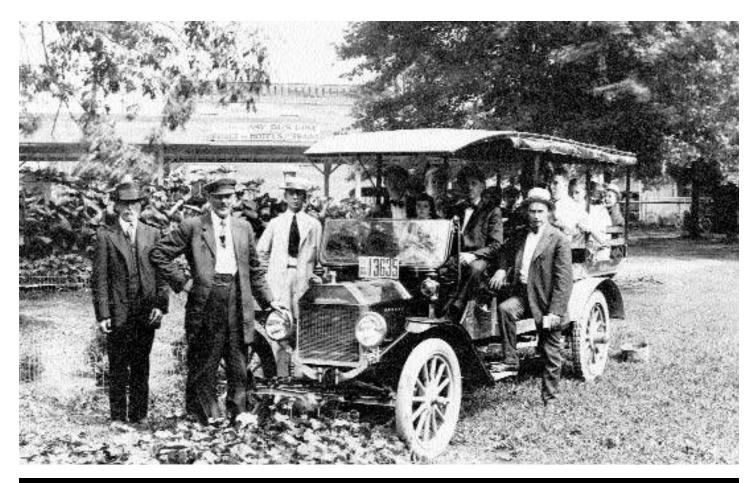
flourish they will be transplanted to the Battlefield and Railroad Museum sites. It is our hope to have full perennial beds in the future. Thank you Janet for getting us started in such a big way! An additional thanks to the Fort Erie Horticultural Society for donating and planting flowers at the Railroad site. These projects help Fort Erie to be a "Community in Bloom!"

Fron	n Beach		dge
	and F	erry	
Crystal Basch	Ridgeway	Bridge	Ferry
6.00	6.05	6.35	6.45
7.45	7.50	8.20	8.25
8.30	8,35	9.03	9.10 -
9.15	9.20	9.50	9.55
10.00	10.05	10.35	10.40
11.15	11.20	11.50	11.55
12.15 p.m.	12.20 p.m.	12.50 p.m.	12.55 p.m.
1.00	1.05	1.35	1.40
2.15	2.20	2.50	2.55
3.00	3.05	3.35	3.40
4.45	4.50	5.20	5.25
6.30	6.35	7.05	7.10
7.15	7.20	7.50	7.55
8.30	8.35	9.05	9.10
9.00	9.08	9.35	9.40
10.30	10.35	11.05	11.10
x12.00	12.05 a.m.	12.30 a.m.	12.35 a.m.

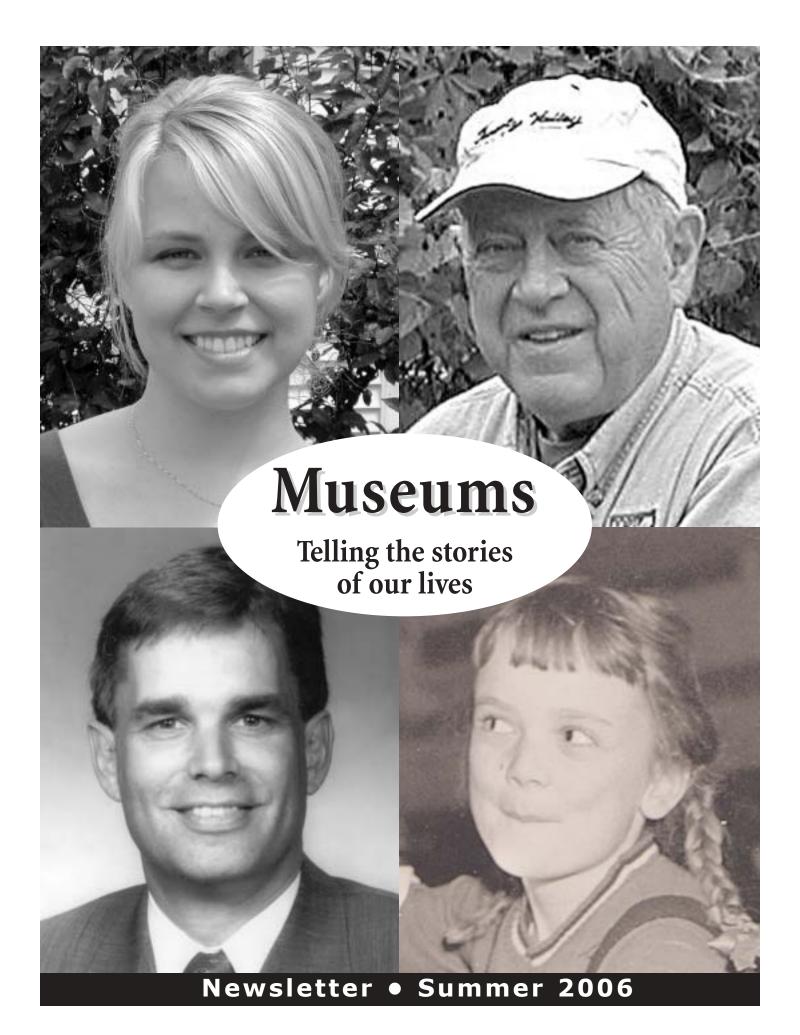
Mass Transit

Mass transit was introduced to this area in 1921 by the Red Bus Line. This was the same year that Crystal Beach was incorporated as a village. The Red Bus Line was owned by Alfred (Bob) Skerrett and Frank Millington. They provided service from the ferry boat landing in Fort Erie, down Garrison Rd. to Ridgeway and on to Crystal Beach. Bus service was provided every 30 minutes in the summer and every hour in the winter. By 1927 they were also running seven buses a day to Port Colborne. The schedule pictured above is for the year 1927. Buses began leaving Crystal Beach at 6:00 a.m. arriving at the

ferry dock at 6:45 a.m. The last bus left Crystal Beach at midnight, but not on Sundays. The photo below is of the first bus in the Red Bus Line fleet. It was a 1915 Model T Ford (the last model to feature the brass radiator.) The chassis of all Model T's were the same, the type and number of seats varied as per the customer's order. Millington and Skerrett later added three Ruggles and one REO Speed Wagon to their fleet. The photo below was taken at Crystal Beach Park looking north towards Erie Road. The roof line of the old Ontario Hotel can be seen in the background.



Fort Erie Museums • Historical • Railroad • Battlefield





Mewinzha

Grand opening Sept. 29th!

"Mewinzha - A Journey Back In Time" will open in the lobby of the

new Peace Bridge Authority Building on Queen St. This project is a partnership between the PBA, the Town of Fort Erie, the Museum Board and the Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre. Displays will feature tools and weapons dating back 11,000 years as well as contemporary Native artwork. Admission will be free. CAO of the PBA, Ron Reinas commented that "this gallery will celebrate a millennia of trade activities that have occurred on this site and honour the First Peoples who appreciated the resources and potential of this area. We are honoured to take the lead in this important project and hope that all residents will stop in the see the new gallery." Opening ceremonies for the general public will be from 2-8 pm on Sept. 29 and from 12-4 pm on Sept. 30.



The Bridge that Peace Built

Grand opening Sept. 29th!
The Peace Bridge Authority will
also be unveiling an exhibit on the
second floor of their building on
Queen St. The display "The Bridge
that Peace Built" will feature the
history of the bridge from 70 years
of planning, to the world-record
breaking build, to the international

focus of the grand opening. This exhibit is an outreach project of Fort Erie's Museum Services and is sponsored by the PBA. Hundreds of never-seen-before photographs will be on display as well as a wall of "Milestones" showing how the bridge and plazas have been constantly evolving to meet market demands. This gallery will also be open free to the public.

Newsletter

The Fort Erie Museums
Newsletter is distributed once a
year to every household and as
funds permit, to those on our
mailing list. To add your name
to the list call 894-5322.
Written and designed by
Jane Davies, Curator.

Cover Photos

Clockwise from top left: summer student Ali Schofield; Museum Board Chair David Renshaw; volunteer Charlene Haney (now Heckman); and CAO of the PBA Ron Reinas.

Contact Us

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e• museum@forterie.on.ca

w• museum.forterie.ca

Visit Us

Historical: 402 Ridge Rd. Open daily 9-5 until Sept. 1 Open Sun.- Fri. 9-5 for the balance of the year Railroad: Central Ave. at Gilmore Road Open daily 9-5 until Sept. 1

Mission Statement

- Fort Erie's Museums care for a base of knowledge that belongs to the future.
 - Fort Erie's Museums help create a strong and proud community by celebrating our shared heritage.
- Fort Erie's Museums help satisfy the intellectual needs of the community.



Community Photo Album

The Museum is still working on identifying the people, places and events from over 10,000 photographs from the Times-Review archives. We've been calling these pictures the "Community Photo Album" for they represent what Fort Erie residents have been doing for decades. Volunteers meet every Wednesday afternoon to catalogue these pictures and some-

times they invite friends to stop by the Museum to help with identifying people. The photo above is of one of these sessions. People are guaranteed to know someone within these photo

albums, whether it be a relative, neighbour or sometimes even themselves! This happened to volunteer Charlene Heckman (nee Haney) who found a photo of herself and brother Donnie at the Iroquois Bowling Alley in the late 1940s. Her mother, Ruth, ran a Children's Athletic League in Fort Erie and took children to a different sporting activity each week. During "Bowling Week" Ruth brought her two children along instead of getting a babysitter! These photo albums are located in the Museum's archives and are available for viewing during regular Museum hours - Sunday to Friday from 9 to 5.





The Swing Inn

Do you remember the Swing Inn on Erie Road in Crystal Beach? It was owned and operated by Ang Carrie (far right) in 1950. He sold it to Al Knapp in 1953, but continued to manage it



until 1957. This was a popular dance spot with both indoor and outdoor facilities. Stop by the Museum to see the collection of photographs that Ang recently donated. You may be in one of them!



The Bikini Turns 60

The bikini was designed by Louis Reard in Paris France in 1946. Reard was considering what to call his bathing suit, when the U.S. exploded a nuclear device near Bikini Atoll island in the Pacific Ocean. Reard took advantage of all the publicity that the "Bikini" story was garnering and called his newest design the Bikini. Parisian models refused to wear the tiny suit on

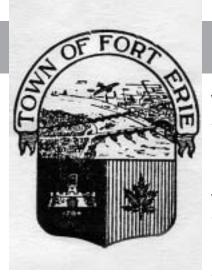
the runway, and it was banned in Catholic countries such as Spain, Portugal and Italy. The changing culture of the 1960s led to the bikini's acceptance. Annette Funicello is known for endorsing the suit through her many Beach Party movies.

Reard may have been inspired by a 4th century mosaic located in the Piazza Armerina in Sicily, which shows Roman gymnasts wearing bandeaux tops and bikini-style bottoms.

The photo above shows the Miss Crystal Beach Park competition, circa 1980, and the finalist on the right wearing a peach coloured bikini. The winner however, was the contestant on the left.

Grants

The services provided by Fort Erie's Museums are made possible through the generous support of the Town of Fort Erie, the Province of Ontario, the Community Gaming Development Corporation, the Fort Erie Museum Board's Memorial Fund, admission and gift shop revenue and through donations from many local history supporters. On behalf of all the residents and visitors to Fort Erie who enjoy these services — THANK YOU!



Fort Erie turns 150

Watch for it....
2007 will be an exciting year in Fort Erie as the town celebrates its 150th anniversary. Plans are underway for this communitywide party. Next year is also the 80th anniversary of the Peace Bridge, the 110th anniversary of horseracing at the Race track, and the 80th anniversary of Fort

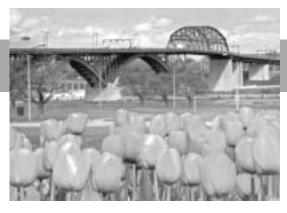
Erie Secondary School. Call 894-5322 if you want to be involved.

SUMMER STUDENTS

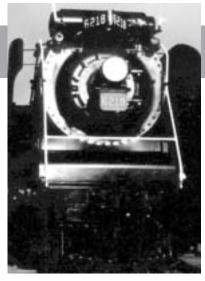
The Museums are lucky to have four talented students working this summer. Andrew Sinclair, Amanda Longfellow, Ali Schofield and Kaila Gorham are busy with cataloguing, researching, data entry and photo filing. Their work will further public access to our resources. Well done!

New in the Gift Shop

Looking for a unique gift? Check out these new gift shop items. Beautifully photographed full-colour art cards by Bob Chambers and Bill Helsdon depict local scenes. Artist prints of the Ridgeway Train Station and Holloway Memorial Chapel are rendered in black and white and are suitable for framing. A book of world-wide surfing stories



includes a chapter on a Crystal Beach adventure written by Magilla Schaus. Other new books include: "Greatcoats and Glamour Boots - Canadian Women at War" and "Life on Quaker Road". A quote by novelist Alexander McCall Smith is found on this book's cover: "A life without stories would be no life at all." We agree... which is why the Museum's newsletter is called "Telling the stories of our lives" for it is these stories, centuries of them, which make Fort Erie so unique.

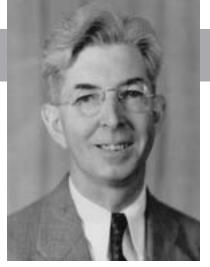


The Cure for Summer Boredom

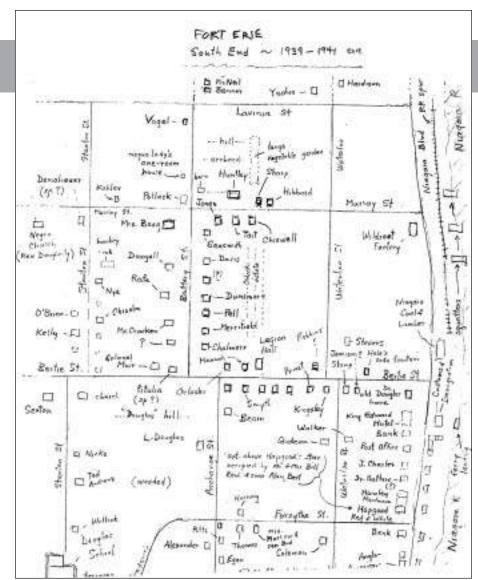
Only a few weeks remain to visit the Fort Erie Railroad Museum. Children especially love climbing aboard the grand steam engine and touring through the caboose. Exhibits on railroading and hands-on activities for children are on display in the former Ridgeway Train Station and a gift shop is located in Fort Erie's B-1 Station. The Museum is located on Central Ave. and is open everyday from 9 am to 5 pm. It closes Labour Day until next May.

Sundays at the Museum

During one of the Historical Museum's Sunday open houses, Joy Winger MacDonald stopped by with the Winger family photo album. The Museum copied many pictures of old homes since Joy's grandfather, Ward Winger (right) developed the properties at Crescent Park, Point Abino Bay, Lake View, and Oakhill Forest. He also owned a barbershop, laundry, bicycle shop and bowling alley, all located in Ridgeway. As a sideline business he caught frogs in marshy areas and sold their legs to hotels in Buffalo. He acquired the Kraft farm at Crescent Beach, which in 1923 was the seed for the Crescent Park



subdivision. He continued to acquire adjoining farms until he had over 460 acres which were used to build 200 homes. By sharing the Winger family history with the Museum it will now be preserved and used by researchers and historians. Thank you Joy!



What a Memory!

Some of you may remember Fred Sexsmith. He lived in Fort Erie and his Dad, Royal, was the principal of Douglas School. Fred now lives in Erie P.A. and was reminiscing about his hometown. He put pen to paper and drew a map of everything he remembered about the south-end from the early 1940s. His map shows all the buildings from Lavinia St. to the Peace Bridge and from Stanton Ave. to the Niagara River. He even notes where the squatters were located along the river, back alleys, hills, and orchards. Fred was born in 1929 and the Museum truly appreciates his photographic memory and his donation. His map gives perspective and context to many Museum photographs.



Royal Casino Bath House

The Museum photographed layers of history that were uncovered during the demolition of the Bay Beach Royal Casino Bath House, including the change rooms and lockers



in the basement, entrance sign, and arches that opened up onto the lake. Coverage of the Museum's work prompted Cheryl Shawnwell to drop off a photograph of her father, William Harper, in front of the Bath House. This was taken in 1922 and the detailed architecture is

quite visible. Thank you Cheryl!



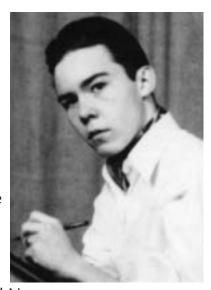
What Me Worry?

Did you know that a Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School student was Mad Magazine's cover artist from 1956 to 1962 and illustrated the famous Alfred E. Neuman? Frank Kelly (below) lived in Crystal Beach and attended high school from 1935 - 1940. His mother married a Mr. Freas and the family then moved to Hornell N.Y. During his career he was known as Frank Kelly Freas. He won eleven Hugo awards for 'Best Professional Artist in World Science

Fiction' and was illustrator for many of Mad's most memorable advertising

parodies. Frank was also the official mission artist for NASA and his posters now hang in the Smithsonian. He had a big crush on former museum volunteer J.B., of Ridgeway, and often sent her cartoon drawings with his letters. J.B. let the museum copy some of her pictures and stories about Frank.

"Neuman's" face first appeared as line drawings in the early 1900s on patent medicine labels, roadside signs for eateries and political propaganda. Mad Magazine first used this face on a 1954 cover and since 1955 he's been the magazine's official mascot. Artists like Norman Mingo and Frank Kelly Freas rendered the face as a three-dimensional character. It wasn't until 1956 that the name Alfred E. Neuman was connected to the face though. The name was "borrowed" from a comic skit on the Henry Morgan radio show, and Morgan "borrowed" it from Hollywood musical director, Alfred Neuman.





Hooking People Up

Volunteer Sharon Dell, far left, arranged for genealogist Patty Knickerbocker, far right, to share her wealth of information with other residents. Patty is now living in Pennsylvania and has an extensive computer data base on the Barnhart family, which also touches upon the Teals, Wingers and Shislers. A dozen people spent an afternoon

wth Patty at the Museum to share research. Many "missing" family members were added to everyone's family trees and people left with each others e-mail addresses and promises to share future discoveries. The Museum keeps track of genealogists who use the archives and often puts long-lost family members in contact with each other. Sunday afternoons are the best time to do research at the Museum when staff can assist you. Thank you Patty for sharing your work!



Visiting Relatives

It is always heartening to learn when people plan a "Family Tree" vacation to Fort Erie. These are some of the people who have stopped by the Historical Museum to learn more about their ancestors. Top left are J.L Kraft's grandson James and his wife Diane DeiRossi. James works on the Kraftwood property in Wisconsin. The group on the bottom left are Kraft



siblings from Wisconsin: from the left are Lamont Kraft, Marlene Voight and Ken Kraft. Both groups spent time in the archives and stopped at the Kraft historical plaque on the Niagara Blvd. Pictured top right are Kathy and Richard McKenzie, Kathy is the grandaughter of Edmund Zavitz,



who was born in Ridgeway and became the Province's first forester. They came from Kelowna British Columbia to visit Edmund's birthplace. Pictured bottom right is Marda McLean, descendant of Col. John Warren who was Collector of Customs from 1798-1812 and also ran a ferry landing on the Niagara River. If you have relatives visiting this summer, please bring them by the Museum and show off your town's



Today in History Website

interesting past. These folks told us they were glad they made the trip!

In September, the Museum will be launching its new website at www.museum.forterie.ca One of the features will include a "Today in History" segment. Each day new information will appear on the web highlighting significant events that happened on that day in Fort Erie's history, such as: Jan. 1, 1958 - Bertie Township forms its own police force and assumes OPP duties.

May 12, 1902 - Joe Gans kayos Frank Evne to win the lightweight championship of the world at the Peace Bridge Arena on Garrison Road.

June 1, 1916 - The U.S. Consulate closes its Fort Erie office.

Oct. 30, 1926 - Branch 71, Royal Canadian Legion forms in Fort Erie.

Dec. 1, 1985 - Violent storms cause high water levels rising over ten feet and flooding homes.

Adding "Life" to your Family Tree

Family Trees are usually comprised of names and dates. What makes them interesting, however, are the stories behind these names. Below are some questions that you might ask your relatives to add some "life" to your family tree. Don't wait for people to age before talking to them...everyone has a story to tell!

- How did your parents choose your name and do you have a nickname?
 - •What is your favourite family story?
- What did your grandparents do for a living? What did they like and dislike about their jobs?
 - •Did your parents and grandparents have any exceptional talents?
- •What was the house like that your grew up in?
- •What was your favourite toy as a youngster?
- •Did you have a favourite musical group?
- •Who was your favourite teacher and why?
- •Who was your best friend in grade school?
- •Who was your hero as a youngster?
- •What did you want to be when you grew up?
- •Tell me about your favourite vacation.
- •What were your happiest and saddest moments?

Gone but not Forgotten

Over the past year many old buildings have been demolished throughout town. The Museum receives every demolition



permit and then takes photographs of these buildings before they disappear. The following buildings now exist only in people's memories and in the Museum's archives:

80 Lavinia St., 314 Ridge Rd. N., 3663 Rebstock Rd., 159 Lincoln Rd.E., 488 Lakeshore Rd., 374 Ridgeway Rd., 515 Garrison Rd., 129 Albert St., 131 Albert St., 509 Niagara Blvd., 1351 Kam Rd., 354 Beechwood Ave., 1074 Walden Blvd., 121 Garrison Rd., 208 Nicholas Rd., 3234 Pine Ave., 3720 Graeber Ave., 2987 Portage Trail and the Royal Casino Bath House in Bay Beach.

A big thanks to the Town's Planning staff and to local contractors for making this record-keeping project possible.

Communities-in-Bloom

Doug Martin, owner of Gibson's Jewellers in Ridgeway, donated 7 flats of flowers to the Historical Museum just in time for the Communities-in-Bloom competition. Doug noticed that the Museum's flower beds needed sprucing-up and wanted to help downtown Ridgeway obtain a good score from the judges. On a historical note,



Gibson's Jewellers is nearing its 80th anniversary and is located in the former Beeshy's store which began as a general store selling watches, jewellery and china in 1874. Thank you Doug for caring about tradition, the Museum and downtown Ridgeway!

The Fort Erie Railroad Museum's flowers were donated by the Fort Erie Horticultural Society...many thanks to you as well!

Outreach

Recent Museum outreach programs include: top, a display at the Fenian Raid re-enactment. Board member, Mary Papp, stopped by to chat with some of the "Fenians". The next photo shows the exhibit set up at the Niagara Antique Power Show in Sherkston. Below that. Board members Sandy and Bruce Wallace (Bruce is missing from the photo!) staff the display at the Holloway Memorial Chapel Strawberry Festival at Point Abino. The Chapel is an annual sponsor of the Museum drawing on their own historic ties to the community. The last photo shows Charlene Heckman manning the photo album tent at Ridgeway's Summer Festival. Hundreds of pictures were identified that day! The Museum also had exhibits at the Fort Erie Art Show featuring paintings from the collection; in the Town Hall atrium to educate visitors about what makes Fort Erie unique; a historical perspective at the Point Abino Lighthouse; and Ruby Smith & Adriana Jacobi, Art's Council members, featured museum artifacts at the Crystal Beach Art Show. Thanks for visiting the Museum's booths and to all of our volunteers!









VOLUNTEERING...

Railroad

Meet up with fellow enthusiasts Monday mornings at the Railroad Museum. Ken Cardwell and Allan McKay are organizing this group to restore equipment and identify and catalogue railway artifacts.

Call 894-5322

Fleet

Every Tuesday afternoon several former Fleet employees catalogue artifacts & photographs from the Fleet archives. They have finished over 1,800 items and welcome new members. Call 894-5322

Archives

If you like reading about Fort Erie's past think about helping in the Archives. Every Wednesday afternoon these volunteers sort and file historical clippings and documents.

Call 894-5322

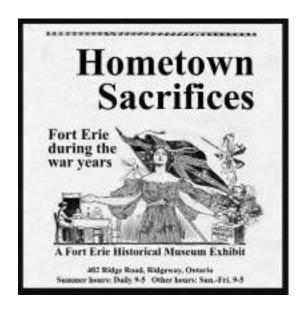
High School Co-op

If you are working on your 40 community service hours, consider spending some time at the Museum. You will gain experience with computer data entry.

Call 894-5322

School Programs

Over 500 children visited the museum for the Hometown Sacrifices school program last fall. They learned how local citizens participated in the war effort during the 20th century, making Remembrance Day ceremonies a little more relevant to them. The Fort Erie Legion has sponsored buses so that all the classes from one school will be able to view the exhibit this fall, and the museum hopes that other sponsors will come forward so that all students in Fort Erie will have the same experience.



A Remembrance Day School Program

Let the Fort Erie Museum help prepare your class for Remembrance Day.

Expose your students to Fort Erie's role in the war years, including the contributions of school children.

This 45-minute program includes 1940s film footage from local aircraft builder Fleet; excerpts from a recuitment film; an audio letter sent from a Vietnam soldier to his Mom in Ridgeway; letters from Ridgeway High School students to friends oversees; school issued war stamps; wall of 1,000 names of local service men and women; photographs, uniforms and many artifacts.

\$1 per student - Appropriate for Grades 3-12 Fort Erie Museum 402 Ridge Rd. Contact Jude Scott 894-5322

The Boys of Summer

The first official baseball uniform, a white flannel shirt, blue wool pantaloons and a straw hat, was adopted in 1849 by the Knickerbocker Baseball Club of New York City. "The blue and white colour scheme was not a random choice — early clubs wished to be associated with manly organizations such as military companies" according to the National Baseball Hall of Fame. While



cotton would have made for less expensive and more comfortable uniforms, the fabric was at the time associated with work clothing, so by donning wool uniforms, baseballs clubs aligned themselves with organizations of a higher status. The picture above is of the Crystal Beach ball team circa 1950s. Back row from left: Bob Lahaye, Bob Thompson, Ken Barnhart, Don Huffman, Burt Szilagyi, Bob Sims, Chuck Neuman, and Chick Otto. Front row from left: Frank Arrowsmith, Bob Lehave Jr., Stan Cross, Bill Cross, Norm Davison and Donny Bright. They had a dual sponsors, the Imperial Hotel and the Beachcomber Restaurant, which explains the two different shirt logos and hats that say B-I. The team played their home games at the stadium in Crystal Beach Park.



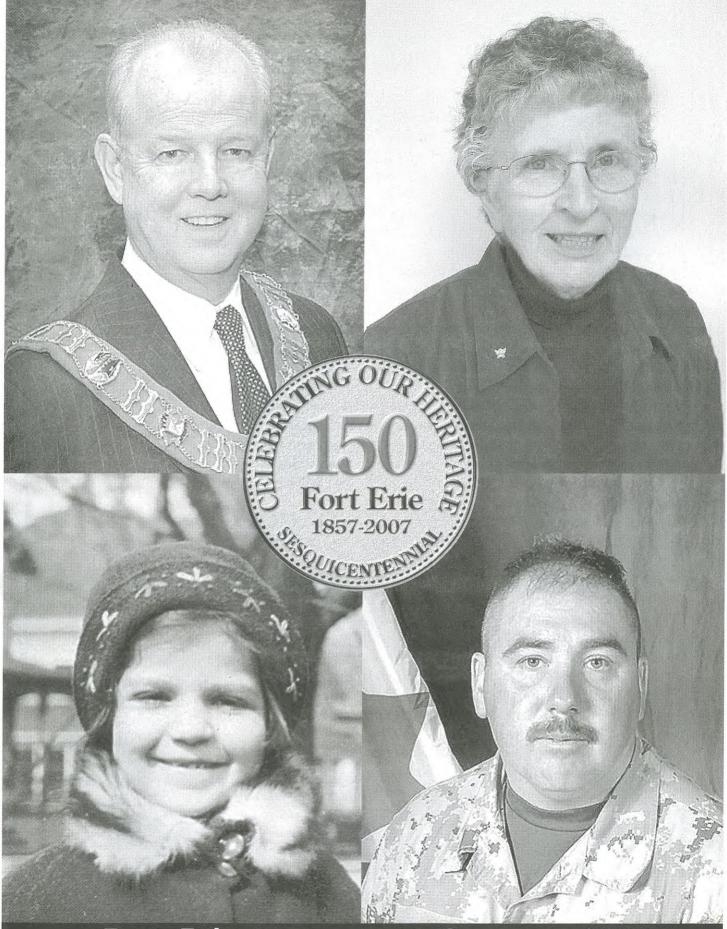
Queen's Hotel

The Queen's Hotel was located on the corner of Niagara Blvd. and Queen St. in Fort Erie. Built in the early 1800s by Benjamin Hardison (who settled in Fort Erie following his service in the Revolutionary War) and married Mary Jane Warren. Her father was Col. John Warren, first commissary of the fort and Mary was the first child born at the fort. By 1850 the property was

sold to William Wallace, builder of the Buffalo, Brantford and Goderich Railway who then renovated the lands into an estate 'fitting' his position. In the 1880s Mr. Dane converted the home into a hotel. In 1910 Harry Hawkins bought the hotel and the photo below shows it decorated for the Peace Week celebrations in 1913. Fort Erie and Buffalo were celebrating 100 years of peace between the two countries. In 1931 Harry converted the hotel into 8 apartments, then, back into a hotel following WW II. Old newspaper articles report that this building has served as the American Consul in Fort Erie; as a sanitorium for the cure of liquor addicts; and a hideout for a train robber. John Donohoe robbed the American Express Company of an estimated \$100,000 and fled to Canada where he could not be extradited. He continued to steal in Ontario where he was caught and sent to prison. It was rumoured that he buried a cache of money at the Queen's Hotel, but after several searches, no money was ever discovered. On Dec. 26, 1986 the Queen's was destroyed in a fire.



Fort Erie Museums • Historical • Railroad • Battlefield



Fort Erie Museums • Summer 2007



Happy Anniversary Fort Erie!

This year, 2007, marks the 150th anniversary of the Town of Fort Erie.
The Village of Fort Erie was incorporated on June 10, 1857.

In honour of the Town's
Sesquicentennial, this newsletter
will highlight the anniversary
events and programs being offered

this year, and celebrate 150 years of achievements in this unique "community of communities".

The name sesquicentennial comes from the Latin words sesqui (meaning one and a half) and centennial (meaning one hundred.) Therefore a sesquicentennial is one and a half hundreds, or one hundred and fifty.

The logo is a traditional symbol (a coin) representing items of value that are collected and treasured. Every citizen has played a role in the development of Fort Erie. It is that shared heritage that is collected and treasured by families, businesses, organizations and the Town's Museums. It is that shared heritage that will be celebrated in 2007.

Although formally incorporated 150 years ago, the history of Fort Erie dates to 7,000 BC, with archaeological evidence of Aboriginal activity along the Niagara River.

European settlement began in 1764 with the establishment of a British military post — the fort. This area was part of Bertie Township. By 1801 this community had a post office and was known as Fort Erie Mills, then Fort Erie Rapids and then Waterloo. That original village of Fort Erie has changed dramatically since 1857. It was amalgamated with Bridgeburg and Amigari in 1931, but the name Fort Erie remained. In 1970 this Town of Fort Erie amalgamated with the Village of Crystal Beach and Bertie Township (which included Ridgeway, Stevensville, Black Creek and Snyder) to form the Municipal Corporation of the Town of Fort Erie. Mayor Doug Martin thanked the Town's Museum and Cultural Heritage Committee for co-ordinating this anniversary year, and invited every citizen to participate in the Sesquicentennial activities. He added "Fort Erie has so much to be proud of — 150 years of exciting history shaped by thousands of citizens throughout this unique community of communities —take this year to celebrate!"

Cover Photos

Clockwise from top left:
Mayor Douglas Martin;
36-year Museum volunteer and founder, Bev Jewson;
Cpl. Albert Storm, killed in Afghanistan Nov. 2006; and volunteer Janet Boyce as a child.

Contact Us

Fort Erie Museums

Box 339, Ridgeway, LOS 1N0

p• 905-894-5322

f• 905-894-6851

e• museum@forterie.on.ca

w• museum.forterie.ca

Visit Us

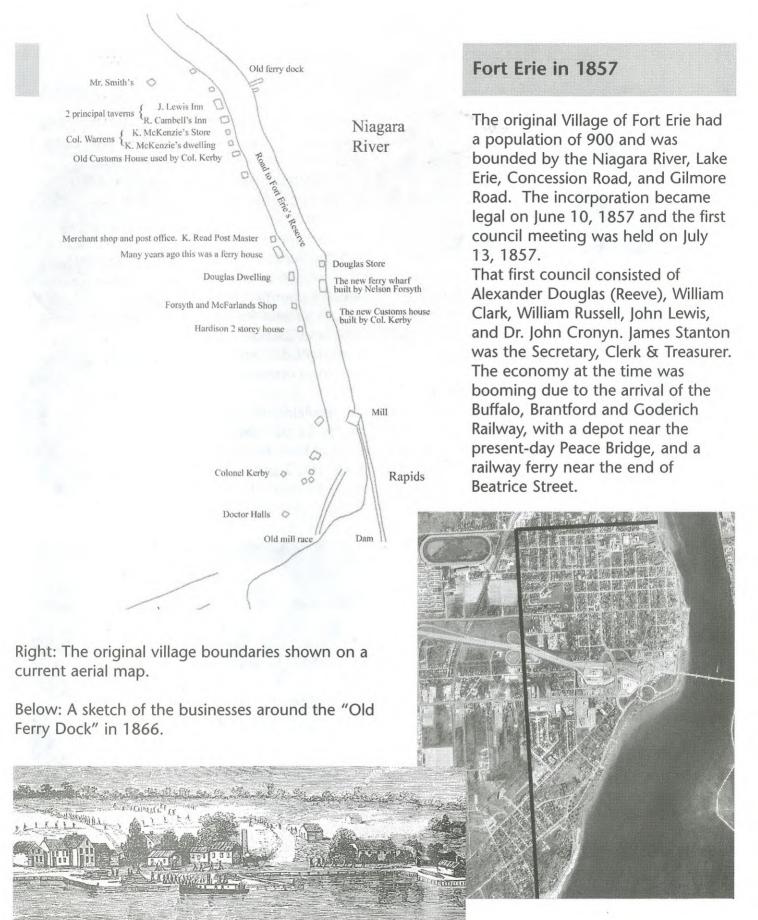
Historical: 402 Ridge Rd.
Open daily 9-5 July and Aug.
Open Sun.- Fri. 9-5 for the
balance of the year
Railroad: Central Ave. at
Gilmore Road
Open daily 9-5 until Sept. 1

Publication

Written and designed by Jane Davies, Administrator Fort Erie Museum Services Sponsored by OLG

Mission Statement

- Fort Erie's Museums care for a base of knowledge that belongs to the future.
 - Fort Erie's Museums help create a strong and proud community by celebrating our shared heritage.
- Fort Erie's Museums help satisfy the intellectual needs of the community.





Commemorative Coin

Fort Erie's 150th isn't the only anniversary being celebrated this year. Canadian Niagara Power is

celebrating 100 years since electricity was delivered to Fort Erie. In celebration of these two milestones, CNP and the Bertie



Historical Society have collaborated to produce a souvenir coin. Every child in Grades SK to Eight will receive a coin as part of a community-wide school program and as a remembrance of these anniversaries. Shown above left to right are Museum Administrator Jane Davies, thanking BHS President Harold Hampel and CNP President Bill Daley. The silver-coloured coin depicts the Sesquicentennial logo on one side and the CNP anniversary logo on the other.

A limited number of these anniversary coins are also available for sale. They can be purchased from the Fort Erie Museums for \$2 per coin. CNP will be hosting a public open house on Sept. 15 at their Bertie St. facility. The public is invited to a BBQ between 11 am and 2 pm and to view antique equipment and other displays.



Oral History Collection

The Museum's Sesquicentennial project focuses on collecting oral histories. Much information about Fort Erie's history lies in people's memories. Volunteers will be interviewing local residents and recording data connected to local organizations, businesses, schools, churches and people. These records will then be available to the public in the Museum's archives. At right is volunteer Dorothy Dorge interviewing Earl Plato. Earl is the founder



of the Bert Miller Nature Club, long-time member of the Bertie Historical Society, and former school principal. Other volunteers collecting interviews include: Charlene Heckman, Carole Parazader, Ruby Smith, Adriana Jacobi, Harold Hampel, Harry Barnhart, Joan McNeil, Bev Jewson, Sharon Dell, Bob Grimes, Mary McLelland-Papp, Sharon Healey, Robin Parisi, Rachel Pellegrini, Ken Benner, Marge Havill, Don Lefurgey, Tom Mullarky, Roger Prince, George Sherk.

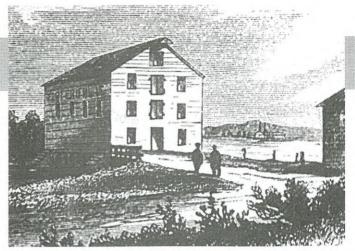
Fort Erie prior to 1857

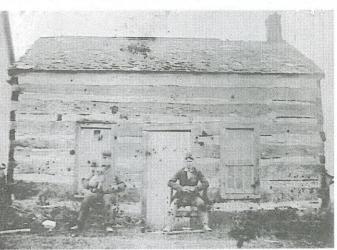
The community which incorporated in 1857 had already existed for nearly 100 years. There had been some settlement around the military Fort, built in 1764, but the village was mainly located around a grist mill near the site of the present-day Peace Bridge (see sketch at right.)

Many of the early settlers were United Empire Loyalists. Following the American Revolution (1776) many Americans wishing to remain loyal to Britain emigrated north to this area which was part of British North America. Grants of land were given to these settlers in appreciation of their loyalty or service to the Crown. The homestead to the right was built by Shannon Baxter (1837-1896) on a farm between Garrison and Nigh Roads. The land was a Crown grant to John Baxter in 1803.

An 1808 Bertie Township Council meeting notes citizens who contributed to the poor relief fund

including: Silas Carter, Richard Graham, Michael Sherk, Alexander Douglas, Jacob Haun, John Warren, Charles Hibbard, Daniel Pound, James Wintermute, Abram Hershey, and Henry Nigh.





Milestone Anniversaries

This year marks the anniversary of many other events and beginnings, such as:

195 years ago Battle of Frenchman's Creek takes place during the War of 1812

175 years ago Silas Carter builds a gristmill at Windmill Point in 1832

150 years ago Fort Erie Board of Health is formed on August 18, 1857

125th anniversary
Buffalo Canoe Club is established in 1882
110th anniversary
Fort Erie Racetrack holds its first race in 1897

90th anniversary Point Abino Lighthouse construction begins in 1917

80th anniversary Peace Bridge opens in 1927

Bridgeburg High School construction begins in 1927

Fort Erie Lions Club forms in 1927

Bridgewater Country Club (Erie Downs) opens in Fort Erie 1927

Celebrate Fort Erie's 150th anniversary with these free events and programs!

January

- 13 This Week in History & Sesquicentennial columns, Times newspaper, all year
- 28 30th Anniversary of the Blizzard of '77 -photo exhibit, Times office & Town Hall

February

- 19 90th Anniversary of Point Abino Lighthouse -Lighthouse exhibit, Town Hall, by PALPS
- 28 All Saints Anglican Church Lecture
 -Crystal Ridge Library, 7 pm
 -a Bertie Historical Society public program

March

- 12 Local History Displays -Crystal Ridge & Centennial Library, all year
- 14 Oral History Collection Kick-Off -Historical Museum, continuing all year
- 21 Canadian Niagara Power Co. Lecture
 -Crystal Ridge Library, 7 pm
 -a Bertie Historical Society public program
- 25 150th Anniversary Exhibit
 -Fort Erie Historical Museum, Ridge Rd.
 -continuing all year, Sun.-Fri., 9-5

April

- 9 "Do you know?" Photo Display
 -Times newspaper office, all year
 -Fort Erie Museum Services' exhibit
- Golden Gloves Boxing Tournament
 -Crystal Ridge Arena, 7 pm, celebrating the
 105th anniversary of the World Lightweight
 Title fight in Fort Erie (May 12,1902)
 -sponsored by Bland's Boxing Club
- 18 Crown Grants in Bertie Township Lecture -Crystal Ridge Library, 7 pm -a Bertie Historical Society public program
- 21 Walk for Earth Day and Eco-Fair
 -ecological display and activities
 -Friendship Trail at Ridge Rd., 11:00-3:00
 -sponsored by Friends of Fort Erie Creeks

May

- School Programs
 -educational kit to every primary teacher
 and Sesquicentennial coin to every child
 -sponsored by CNP and Fort Erie Museums
- 1 80th Anniversary Fort Erie Lions Club -exhibit at Lions Seniors Centre, High St. -May-June, by the Fort Erie Lions Club
- 16 Sesquicentennial Slide Show -Fort Erie Historical Museum, 7 pm -a Bertie Historical Society public program
- 19 Fort Erie Railroad Museum Open House
 -Museum complex, Central Ave., 9-5
 -celebrating the 65th anniversary of steam
 engine 6218 and the 25th anniversary of
 acquiring the B-1 Station
- 19 Big Brothers/Big Sisters Family Picnic -Sugar Bowl Park, 11-2, past and present members welcome
- 19 Rites of Spring Writer's Festival -storytelling, activities, food, Sugar Bowl Park, 12-4, sponsored by the Fort Erie Arts Council and Fort Erie Public Library
- 19 20th Anniversary of the Snake Hill Dig -archaeology display, Old Fort Erie, 7 pm -sponsored by Niagara Parks Commission

June

- 1/2 Capturing Fort Erie on Film
 -camera enthusiasts photograph Fort Erie
 scenes for Museum's archives
- 2 Stevensville Spring Festival -family events, crafts, entertainment -Stevensville Hall, 10-5, by Stevensville Kinsmen, Kinettes & Firefighters
- 10 150th Anniversary of the Incorporation of the Village of Fort Erie (June 10, 1857) -party at Fort Erie Race Track, noon -sponsored by OLG
- 10 Sesquicentennial Horse Race -family activities, pony rides, music -Fort Erie Race Track, 1 pm

Celebrate Fort Erie's 150th anniversary with these free events and programs!

June cont.

- 16 Fort Erie Sports Wall of Fame
 -new tribute wall, Leisureplex, all year
 -sponsored by the Fort Erie Kinsmen Club
 in celebration of their 65th anniversary
- Fort Erie Sesquicentennial 5K Run/Walk and 1K Kids Fun Run
 -5K/Ferndale Park, 10 am, 1K/YMCA, 9 am
 -sponsored by the Fort Erie YMCA
- 17 110th Anniversary of the First Race at Fort Erie Race Track (June 16, 1897)
 -anniversary race, music, food, games, 1 pm
 -sponsored by the Fort Erie Race Track
- 20 Fort Erie Race Track Behind-the-Scenes Tour -Race Track east parking lot, 4 pm -limited free tickets, call 894-5322 -a Bertie Historical Society public program
- 30 Friendship Festival
 -rides, food, displays, music, vendors
 -Niagara Parkway, June 30-July 2, 11-8
 -sponsored by Fort Erie Friendship Festival

July

- 1 Display about Dr. Douglas
 -exhibit in the lobby of Douglas Memorial
 Hospital (140th anniversary of Dr. Douglas
 treating his first patient, July 1, 1867)
 -by Douglas Memorial Hospital & Auxiliary
- Canada Day celebrations/Fort Erie Legion
 -open house, music, food, 1-6 pm
 -Fort Erie Legion, Branch 71, Hwy.#3
- 7/8 Ridgeway Summer Festival
 -Ridge Rd, 9-6, crafts, games, food, music
 -sponsored by the Ridgeway BIA
- 7/8 Fort Erie Historical Museum Open House -Ridge Road, 9-6, outdoor displays -celebrating the Museum's 35th anniversary
- 7/8 Healthy Living Tent
 -interactive activities and displays
 -Ridge Rd, 9-6, celebrating the formation
 of Fort Erie Board of Health 150 years ago
 -by Community Health and Wellness

July cont.

- 16 Fort Erie Town Hall Open House
 -Town Hall, 1-4, guided tours of all departments, historical slide show
- 16 Sesquicentennial Council Meeting
 -Old Fort, 6 pm, proclamations & heritage
 awards to celebrate the 150th anniversary
 of the first meeting of the Fort Erie
 Village Council on July 13, 1857
- 28/29 Crystal Beach Summer Festival
 -music, food, displays, games
 -Waterfront Park, Crystal Beach, 10-5
 -sponsored by the Crystal Beach BIA

August

- 11 Fort Erie LaFrance Association Museum -open house, 10-4, Concession Rd. -firefighting equipment, displays, also Fire Company No.1s 145th anniversary
- 19 An Old-Fashioned Family Picnic
 -Old Fort Erie, 11-2, games and displays
 -bring your family and your picnic basket

September

Church Services
-local churches are invited to hold
commemorative services in September
-Sesquicentennial display at St. John's
United Church, Sodom Rd.

- 7/8 Celtic Festival 20th Anniversary (1987)
 -Old Fort Erie, competitions, music, food
 -Friday 5-9, Saturday 10-8
 -sponsored by Loch Sloy Highland Games
- 14 Sesquicentennial Bench and Tree -unveiled on the Friendship Trail at Ridge Rd. -sponsored by the Town of Fort Erie, 4 pm
- 15 Canadian Niagara Power Co. Open House -equipment, displays, food; celebrating 100 years of electricity in Fort Erie -CNP building, Bertie St., 11-2
- Peace Bridge Lecture
 -PBA Administration Building, 7 pm
 -a Bertie Historical Society public program

Events and Programs cont.

September cont.

29 Heritage Day celebrating the 75th anniversary of NCC

-Niagara Parkway, NCC campus, 9-5

-heritage displays, crafts, food, music

-Niagara Christian Community of Schools

October

- 17 125th Anniversary Buffalo Canoe Club -lecture, photo display and tours -Canoe Club, Erie Road, 2 pm -sponsored by the Bertie Historical Society and the Buffalo Canoe Club
- 17 "Niagara Reads Niagara" lecture -Niagara Falls historian Sherman Zavitz -Centennial Library, 7 pm

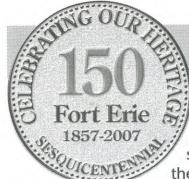
November

- 4 Race Track Symposium
 -art and lectures about the history of the
 Race Track, 1-5, Crossroads
 -sponsored by the Fort Erie Arts Council
- 80th Anniversary of Fort Erie Secondary School building (cornerstone laid Nov 18, 1927)
 -students photograph "A day in the life of a F.E.S.S. student" for the Museum archives
- 21 War of 1812 Lecture
 -Crystal Ridge Library, 7 pm
 -a Bertie Historical Society public program
- 26 Council Presentation
 -re: the 195th anniversary of the Battle of
 Frenchman's Creek (Nov 28, 1812), and
 the upcoming War of 1812 anniversary
 Town Hall, 6 pm, Niagara Parks Commission

December

- Meteors Sesquicentennial Home Game

 Fort Erie Leisureplex, 7 pm
 celebrating their 50th anniversary (1957)
 sponsored by the Fort Erie Meteors
- 9 St. Andrew's-Knox Presbyterian Church 40th Anniversary Celebration -Central and Highland Ave., 10-11 homecoming service and activities



Free with Coin!

Hey Kids...
You recently received a commemorative coin at school. You can now visit

the Fort Erie Historical Museum (Ridge Rd.) or Fort

Erie Railroad Museum (Central Ave.) for free during July and August — just show the coin to the front desk staff. (Offer good when accompanied by a paid adult) The Museums are open daily during the summer months from 9-5.

The coin is also sold at the Museums for \$2.

Anniversary Party and Open House

On Sunday June 10 at noon, there will be an anniversary party for the Town of Fort Erie at the Fort Erie Race Track. It is sponsored by the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG) and all citizens and interested guests are welcome to attend. Cake, speeches and displays will be featured, followed by a Sesquicentennial horse race, commencing at 1 pm.

On Monday July 16, the Town Hall will be open to the public for "behind-the-scenes" tours. Running from 1-4 pm, guided tours will depart every 15 minutes and a historical slide show will be presented in Council Chambers. A special Sesquicentennial Council meeting will follow at 6 pm at the Old Fort.



VOLUNTEERING...

Photographs and Memories

Every Wednesday afternoon volunteers meet to identify and catalogue photographs from the Times collection and interview residents for the oral history project.

Fleet

Every Tuesday afternoon several former Fleet employees catalogue artifacts & photographs from the Fleet archives. They have finished over 2,000 items and welcome new members.

Archives

If you like reading about Fort Erie's past think about helping in the Archives. Every Wednesday afternoon these volunteers sort and file historical clippings and documents.

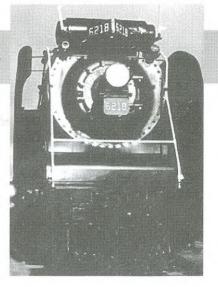
High School Co-op
If you are working on
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Interested?... Call the Museum at 894-5322

Museum's Anniversaries

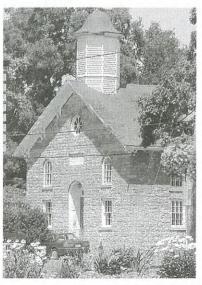
Fort Erie's Museums will be hosting free open houses in celebration of three anniversaries. Steam engine 6218 turns 65 this year and 25 years ago the B-1 station was moved to the Railroad Museum. The first free open house takes place on Saturday May 19th, from 9 am-5 pm, at the Railroad Museum on Central Ave.

Sesquicentennial displays will be set up as well as children's activities. On the same day from noon-4 pm is the "Rites of Spring Writer's Festival" at the Sugar Bowl Park. This free event includes storytelling and book readings.





Free Open House May 19th - Railroad Museum, 9-5 July 7 and 8 - Historical Museum, 9-5



The Historical Museum in Ridgeway opened 35 years ago. The Bertie Historical Society began collecting local history and were given one room in the Bertie Township Hall for exhibits and educational programs. This site now features exhibits on the Fenian Raids, Fort Erie's role in the War Years, and an Archives. It is the headquarters for Fort Erie's Museum Services, which include: Ridgeway Battlefield Park, Mewinzha, the Bridge that Peace Built, and Heritage Loop Tours.



Living in Fort Erie 150 years ago.

The year was 1857 and Canada was not yet a country. One of the bloodiest wars in Canadian history had ended 43 years earlier and many Fort Erie residents could still remember that War of 1812.

Prior to incorporation, this area was known as Waterloo. It had a military post (1764), ferry service (c.1775), grist mill (1792), Customs (1798), stage coach (1798), post office (1801), school (1817), and church (1824). There were farmers, carpenters, blacksmiths, innkeepers, merchants and doctors, to name just a few of the occupations.

The economy was booming due to the arrival of the Buffalo, Brantford and Goderich Railway in 1854. The railway provided many jobs, and as the population grew, so did the need for more homes, stores, tradespeople, taverns, schools and churches.

When the village incorporated in 1857, it had a population of 900. That same year a new steam ferry, the "International" was launched at the foot of Beatrice St. It transported trains across the Niagara River to Buffalo.

The school, S.S. No. 1 Bertie, was located on the southwest corner of Waterloo and Forsythe Streets, and was also used for the first Council meeting on July 13, 1857.

Council's first business was to purchase stationery and a corporate seal. By-laws were passed to appoint a Tax Collector, Overseer of Highways, Constable, Pound Keeper and Fence Viewers.

In August of that year a Board of Health was appointed — through dire necessity. Asiatic cholera was rampant in Buffalo and the Board focused on preventative measures to reduce the spread of this plague.

In September the village purchased its first equipment — a road scraper, two pick axes and twelve shovels. These were put to quick use as residents often complained about the terrible condition of the streets. The main business of Council soon became discussing the need for sidewalks, drainage ditches and road repairs.

Taxes were few — the revenue collected from taverns supplied most of the required funds.

And so, with optimism and confidence, the 900 residents of Fort Erie faced the future as a newly incorporated village.

Little could they know of the tragedies that loomed on the horizon -- of the 1862 fire that nearly levelled the business district; the 1866 invasion of the Fenians; or the 1873 pull out of the railway as it moved one mile north to the new International Railway Bridge.

In 1857 though, the economy was booming and the future indeed looked bright.

Taken from information in the files of the Fort Erie Historical Museum Archives

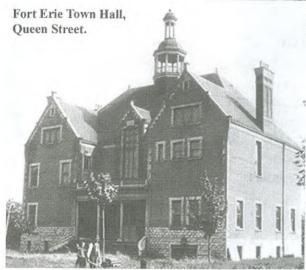
Fort Erie after 1857

Over the ensuing 150 years the Village of Fort Erie has changed dramatically. It amalgamated with Bridgeburg and Amigari in 1931 to become the Town of Fort Erie. Then in 1970, it joined with the Village of Crystal Beach and Bertie Township, which consisted of Ridgeway, Stevensville and Black Creek.

In 2006 the population of Fort Erie was 29,925. The municipality covers 168 square kms and has 832 kms of roads.

The 2007 Council consists of Mayor Douglas Martin, Sandy Annunziata, Martha Lockwood, Ann-Marie Noyes, Richard Shular, Bob Steckley and Tim Whitfield. The Chief Administrative Officer is Harry Schlange.

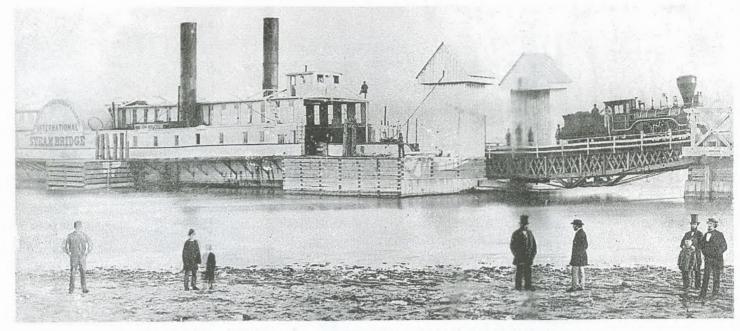






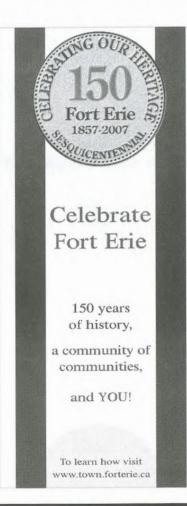
A Council-appointed Museum and Cultural Heritage Committee is charged with the responsibility of managing the Town's Museums. They also act as an advisory committee on built heritage and Point Abino Lighthouse matters. The 2007 members include Chairman Dave Renshaw, Mary McLelland Papp, Charlene Nigh, Gary Haines, Tom Lewis, Ruth Bruyns, Bill Jones, and Councillor Tim Whitfield.

Fort Erie Museum Services falls under the Community and Development Services Department, directed by Rino Mostacci. Staff include Administrator/Curator Jane Davies, Assistant Curator Jude Scott, and Curator of Structural Heritage Erin Wilson.



In 1857 how did trains cross the Niagara River?

When the Village of Fort Erie was incorporated in 1857 the International Railway Bridge did not exist. The Buffalo and Lake Huron Railroad built a steam ferry boat to transport trains from Fort Erie to Buffalo. This steam-powered sidewheeler made its inaugural trip on Dec. 2, 1857 and travelled from the foot of Porter Ave. in Buffalo to a dock near the foot of Beatrice St. in Fort Erie.



Thanks to our sponsor...OLG!

The OLG has generously sponsored the printing and distribution of this historical newsletter. They are also the sponsor of the 150th anniversary party which will be held on June 10th at the Fort Erie Race Track commencing at noon. Dareck Stevenson, General Manager of the OLG Slots Fort Erie

remarked that "Fort Erie's Sesquicentennial is an important community event that we are proud to be associated with. The OLG extends its congratulations to all Fort Erie citizens on this milestone anniversary year."



Museums

Telling the stories of our lives

Newsletter • Summer 2009



On The Move

Volunteers at the Historical Museum have been working in cramped quarters for the past 38 years -- using former Bertie Township Hall rooms for artifact storage and work areas. Prior to 1970, the room shown at left was a 2nd floor galley

where spectators gathered

to watch Council proceedings. In 1971, when the Bertie Historical Society started a museum, this area was modified for artifact storage. These artifacts are now stored in a newly renovated space at 20 Lewis St. Sharon Healey (left) and Norma Benner (right) worked at packing the collection in preparation for the move. The photo at right shows the same room full of boxes.





478, 479...

Prior to being packed, each artifact was counted, and its size and composition recorded.
These numbers

were used to determine the type and quantity of shelving necessary to store them properly. Large textiles will be stored on rolls; small coins etc. in drawers with many compartments, and artifacts of similar types will be stored together. Pictured above are members of the Wednesday afternoon volunteer group counting the textile collection. From left to right are Ruby Smith, Harold Hampel, Adriana Jacobi and Harry Barnhart.

Newsletter

The Fort Erie Museums
Newsletter is distributed to
every household in Fort Erie.
Written and designed by
Jane Davies, Curator.

Cover Photos

Clockwise from top left:
volunteer Sharon Dell and
her grandson Ylan Dell; Tim
Whitfield (Councillor serving
on the Museum Board);
Helen Ramey Ort (former
volunteer); and Ryan Hampel
(student who packed most of
the artifacts).

Contact Us

Fort Erie Museums

Box 339, Ridgeway, LOS 1N0

p• 905-894-5322

f• 905-894-6851

e• museum@forterie.on.ca

w•museum.forterie.ca

Visit Us

Historical: 402 Ridge Rd.
Open daily 9-5 June-Sept.
Open Sun.- Fri. 9-5 for the
balance of the year
Railroad - Central Ave. at
Gilmore Road
Open daily 9-5 June-Sept.

Mission Statement

- Fort Erie's Museums care for a base of knowledge that belongs to the future.
- Fort Erie's Museums help create a strong and proud community by celebrating our shared heritage.
- Fort Erie's Museums help satisfy the intellectual needs of the community.

20 Lewis St.

The newly renovated facility at 20 Lewis St. is a great example of a community partnership.



The Boys and Girls Club of Niagara purchased the building and will offer after school and other recreational programs for youth in Fort Erie. Tenants in the building include other charitable organizations and the Town of Fort Erie. The building will provide storage for Infrastructure Services, the Clerks Department and approximately 5,000 square feet for Museum Services.

The Museum will have space for artifact storage, cataloguing and conservation work space, and storage for records, gift shop stock, and exhibit and event supplies.

The Mentholatum Company traces its roots to Wichita Kansas. In 1889, Albert Hyde started a new

soap and shaving cream business, despite a severe economic depression. Working with pharmacists and physicians, he invented a mentholbased cough syrup and Mentholatum Ointment. In 1906, his son Charlie opened a Canadian subsidiary, Mentholatum Inter-American Inc. and built a 10,000 square-foot building in Fort Erie. In 2004, the manufacturing operations were moved to New York state, and the offices to St. Catharines. Current Mentholatum products include: Deep Cold, Deep Heat, Mentholatum Rub, OXY, pHisoderm, and Softlips lip balm.





Hours and Admission

While this newsletter allows you to learn a bit about local history in the comfort of your own home...you may wish to experience it first hand by visiting the following sites:

 Mewinzha: A Journey Back in Time (Archaeology collection and Native art), Peace Bridge Administration Building, 10 Queen St., Monday - Friday, 9am - 4pm, free.

• Fort Erie Railroad Museum, 400 Central Ave., daily May 23 - Sept. 1, 9am - 5pm, donation.

• Fort Erie Historical Museum, 402 Ridge Road, daily June 14 - Sept. 1; Sunday - Friday for the balance of the year, 9am - 5pm, donation.

Also, check out the Museum's exhibit in the Town Hall atrium, our genealogy and archives centre in the Historical Museum, or our web site at www.museum.forterie.ca



Get Connected

Calling all genealogists! Part 2 of the Huffman family tree series will be offered at the Historical Museum, 402 Ridge Road, on Sunday Sept. 27 from 1 - 4 pm. This will be of interest to those tracing the Huffman, Benner, Jansen, Anger and Near family trees. Please bring your records, pictures, artifacts, computers, and research and be ready to swap information, learn about your

descendants and meet a few new relatives! Please call ahead to reserve a seat, 894-5322.

Point Abino Lighthouse Tours

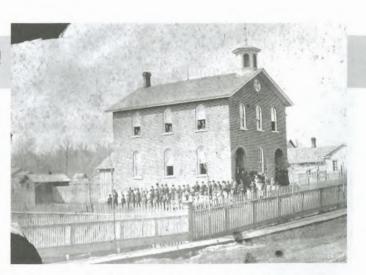
Interested in visiting the Point Abino Lighthouse? You can walk or bike out to the lighthouse from late June until Labour Day, Mon.- Fri. 3 - 6 pm and Sat.- Sun. 10 am - 6 pm (with the exception of tour dates.) Prior to entering the point, stop at the gatehouse for permission.

Or you can join a trolley tour. Advance tickets can be purchased at the Leisureplex, contact Facilities.

Or, you can join a trolley tour. Advance tickets can be purchased at the Leisureplex, contact Facilities Management at 871-1600 ext. 2431. The 2009 schedule is: June 13 & 27, July 11 & 25, Aug. 8 & 22, Sept. 12 & 26. Each tour date has four tours: 10 am, 11:15 am, 12:30 pm, & 1:45 pm. Ticket prices are: adult - \$6.00, youth (12-16) - \$3.00, and children under 12 - free.

Happy 100th Anniversary RCBHS!

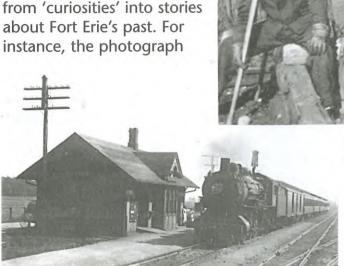
On Dec. 30, 1908 the ratepayers of S.S.No.11 Bertie voted to establish high school classes to be held at Ridgeway Public School. This included grades 9, 10 and junior matriculation. The photo at right shows students in front of the Public School, pre-1880 (additions were added to this building in 1880.) In 1927 the Ridgeway Continuation School was built on its present 10-acre site. A 1930 by-law created the Ridgeway



and Crystal Beach High School, which meant that senior matriculation courses could then be offered. In preparation for this anniversary, Bev Jewson poured over records at the School Board office and compiled a school history which is available in the archives. This building still stands at 241 Ridge Road N., and is the home to Niagara Funeral Alternatives and BonEnfant Law Offices.

Do You Remember?

Thanks to everyone who has been following the "Do You Remember" series in the Fort Erie Times newspaper. The information we receive each week turns photographs from 'curiosities' into stories about Fort Erie's past. For instance, the photograph



above has the words "Railroad gang - Stevensville" written on the back. These men deserve to be recognized for such back-breaking work. Do you recognize any old relatives?

station in Stevensville, shown at left. It was built in 1914 and closed by the CNR in 1959.

This station is still in Stevensville, moved from its

This station is still in Stevensville, moved from its original location to become a private residence.

Michigan Central Railway had a passenger

Search and Find

The Museum's genealogy database was used in a police investigation.

A firearm, used in a major crime in Alberta, was traced to a Bertie
Township resident who passed away in the 1930s. Police asked the Museum for assistance in finding his descendants, and with our computer database, we were able to provide this information in under 5 minutes.

Operation S.P.A.C.E.S.

The Museum's relocation and renovation project for 2008/09 has many facets and has been named Operation S.P.A.C.E.S. (Space for Personnel, Artifacts, Conservation/Cataloguing, and Exhibit/Event Supplies.)
Pat Mitchell is shown at right packing. Volunteers are now needed to help with unpacking,

collapsing boxes and bagging shredded paper. This work is done at the Mentholatum site, 20 Lewis St., on Wednesday mornings ...if you're interested call Jude Scott at 894-5322.





Battle Paintings "Fly Home"

Alexander Von Erichsen (1819-1878) was an artist and Confederate soldier, who painted hundreds of Civil War battles.

In 1866 he followed the Fenian soldiers (Civil War veterans) to Buffalo and documented their invasion into Upper Canada with 24 watercolour paintings. The Fenian's goal was to capture

Upper Canada, hold it "hostage", and trade this land with Britain for Ireland's freedom.

The ensuing 'Battle of Ridgeway', a tactical victory by the Fenians, was a catalyst for Confederation, resulting in the Dominion of Canada in 1867. Beside a few sketches in period newspapers, Von Erichsen's paintings are the only firsthand images of this event which led to the creation of Canada.

In 1994 the Fort Erie Museum, and the Williams Heritage Memorial Foundation purchased 19 of these paintings. Of the remaining five paintings, two related directly to the Battle of Ridgeway and were owned by Virginia historian John Quarstein, who recently sold them to the Museum. Larry Williams, Museum supporter, donated his time and an airline ticket, to fly to Virginia, and ensure the paintings safe transport back to Ridgeway. Shown above are John (left) and Larry (right).

These paintings can be viewed at the Historical Museum. They are not only an accurate depiction of this historic event in Canadian history, but an interesting collection of mid-19th century art.

Summer Retreat

During the turn of the last century, a popular summer retreat for Buffalo residents was the Whitehall Club. Although the postcard at



left says Bridgeburg, it was located a few miles north of Bridgeburg's limits



in a hamlet known as Cozy Dell. The hamlet extended as far north as Anger Ave. and included about 25 homes. The 1907 telephone directory lists the Whitehall Clubhouse at Cozy Dell. Although located in Canada, the American flag on the picture above, suggests that this was a private club. Although the exact location of this club is not know, there is currently a boat launch in the Cozy Dell area.

We're Still Here in Ridgeway

There's nothing like the presence of six tractor trailors and a crew of moving men to get people talking! Rumours have been flying around Ridgeway that the museum has closed or that we had a fire and had to move to another location. All of these stories are false!

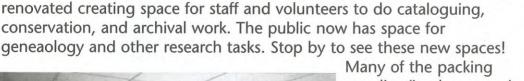


We are still here, still open, and because of this move are now able to provide better service to the public. Bird's Movers were awarded the contract to

move the artifacts from the storerooms and the exhibit/event supplies, to the Mentholatum building. This freed up space within the Museum, so the archives and work areas previously in hallways, closets and washrooms, now have actual space. Seven rooms have been

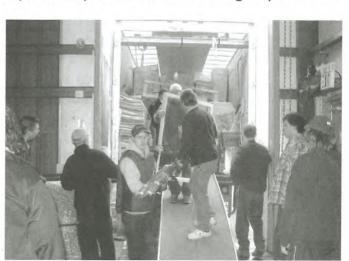
supplies (i.e. boxes and

shredded paper) were donated by Beatties, Ten Thousand Villages, Joe's ValuMart, the Bargain Shop, the Liquor Store, and Lasting Impressions.





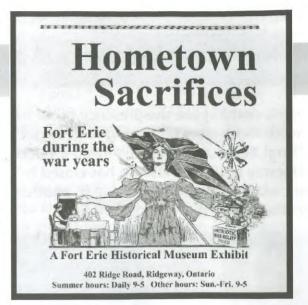
If you are in the process of moving and would like boxes or shredded paper, please call the Museum. We will just be recycling these items, unless someone else can use them.





Last Chance

Don't miss this opportunity to see the Hometown Sacrifices exhibit at the Historical Museum. After a very successful run, the gallery will be coming down at the end of 2009. It features Fort Erie's role during the war years, including local industrial development, rationing, and collecting supplies. The exhibit also pays tribute to the men and women who left Fort Erie to serve their country, with over 1,200 names listed, uniforms, medals, tapes, and several binders of personal histories.





The Sherk/Fretz Connection

Howard Fretz and Elva Sherk were classmates at S.S.No.14 Bertie back in 1918 (see photo below) and they were later married in 1924. Their daughter, Kay Steckley, brought in over 40 historic fami-

ly photos, depicting life in rural Bertie Township. Kay's great grandfather, David Sherk, was the local butcher (pictured above). He was also Reeve of Bertie Township in 1920.

In 1800, John Fretz and his friend John Sherk, both settled on farms in Bertie Township. The marriage of their descendants, Howard and Elva merged these two farms under one household.

S.S.No.14 was located on Gilmore Rd., between Burger and Point Abino. The picture below shows the third school building (built in 1907), and the students from the 1918-19 class which included: Viola Fretz, Pearl Winger, Elva Sherk, Vera Johnston, Howard Fretz, Aden Eby, Ralph Winger, John Ruegg, Lois Noake, Viola Hill, Alta Fretz, Clara Winger, Warren Hill, Harry Fretz, Thelma Johnston, Ellen Burger, Rhoda Noake, Lydia Winger, Clarence Fretz, Arthur Winger, and Roy Learn. After the school closed in 1965, this building was converted into a residence.





Museum & Cultural Heritage Committee

Interested in local history, built heritage, the 6218 steam engine, the Point Abino Lighthouse, the Museums, policy development or advocacy? Then the MCHC might be for you. This group meets about once a month and there are currently some vacancies. Members, from left to right, are Charlene Nigh, David Renshaw, Joseph Lischka, Mary McLelland-Papp, and Keith

Overend (absent from photo, Councillor Tim Whitfield). If you are interested please contact Carolyn Kett, Town Clerk at 871-1600 as this is a Town Council appointed committee.

The BHS founded the
Historical Museum and began
collecting artifacts in 1971.
Their concerns regarding
sufficient storage were
addressed with the move to
the Mentholatum.
In support of these efforts,
the BHS donated \$1,000
towards artifact shelving.
Many thanks to our founders
and steadfast supporters!

Federal Grant
Thanks to support from MP
Rob Nicholson, and the
Department of Canadian
Heritage, a \$62,950 grant
was received to offset the
cost of artifact shelving.
This program focuses on preserving Canada's heritage by
supporting local museums.
This initiative also makes the
artifacts more accessible for
researchers and staff.

For the past 13 years,
Holloway Chapel has been
supporting the Museum's
quest for archival space with
a yearly donation. Their
support helped establish the
new archives and research
room at the Historical site.
The church has an extensive
history collection, currently
under the stewardship of
Archivist Lannie Gartner.

Trails, Flowers and Bridges

Everyone is invited to attend the remaining three Bertie Historical Society heritage lectures. These are held on the third Wednesday of each month, at 7 pm, at the Crystal Ridge Library (unless otherwise noted.) On Sept. 16, is a presentation on the Shagbark Trail by Dawn Pierrynowski. This will be held at 6 pm, on the trail, Burleigh Rd., just north of Dominion. On Oct. 21, Carolyn Baer and Winnie Swallum will be doing a presentation on the Horticultural Society and Communities-in-Bloom. The last program for the year is on Nov. 18. Mike Cloutier will be speaking about his book, "Peace Bridge The Dream and its Evolution".





Our Volunteers Rock!

A new Volunteer Policy and application process has been adopted by the MCHC (excerpts below). If you are interested in becoming a Museum Volunteer, please call Jane Davies at 894-5322.

Volunteer, Don LeFurgey, is shown at left packing the Fleet artifacts for the move.

Fort Erie Museum Services' volunteers can expect to:

- Be given a volunteer activity that is meaningful, interesting and challenging.
- Be informed of the screening and placement process where the skills, dignity and needs of each volunteer will be respected to ensure a suitable match to the volunteer positions available.
- Be received by staff as colleagues.
- Receive appropriate training, supervision and clear direction.
- Receive encouragement, recognition and appreciation.
- Be given safe, healthy, adequate and accessible environment.
- Have their time recognized as important.
- Feel part of an important team.

Volunteers for Fort Erie Museum Services will be expected to:

- Understand & support the Museum's mission, structure & policies
- Obey all safety and security regulations, policies and guidelines.
- Complete the orientation and training provided.
- Be flexible in accepting assignments; perform assignments to the best of their ability; and accept the guidance of their supervisor.
- Provide timely notification to the supervisor regarding absence or termination.
- Serve as a goodwill ambassador on behalf of the Museum within the community.

Volunteer Benefits

Intangible benefits include: supporting a healthy community; the opportunity to meet and interact with people of similar interests; the opportunity to learn new skills; and the knowledge that you are caring for a non-renewable resource that belongs to the future — Fort Erie's heritage.

Tangible benefits include: free admission to the Fort Erie Railroad and Fort Erie Historical Museum; invitations to museum events and recognition ceremonies; and written references (subject to performance and length of service).

Back It Up!

How many copies do you have of your most precious photographs and important information? We hope it's two, because there are many ways for things to go missing.

The fast advancement of technology can mean those wedding, birthday, or christening pictures or VHS tapes may not be readable anymore. Digital CDs and DVDs will be obsolete in the future too.

The safest way to store important papers and images is by printing two hard copies. Good quality paper will last for centuries, if stored flat in a cool, dark and relatively dry environment.

Keep one copy at a friend or relative's house just in case tragedy strikes. Museum staff often hear stories of pictures lost in a fire or thrown away while settling an estate.



New in the Gift Shop

Buffalo historian, William Kae has now published two books about the history of Crystal Beach. "Steamers of the Crystal Beach Line" showcases the many ferries and steamboats that transported passengers to Crystal Beach. It's 200 pages are filled with hundreds of nautical images, extensive histories, and interesting trivia. In July 2009, his second book will be released, "Buffalo and

Toronto Entertainers Converge: Crystal Beach Live". Over 200 pages feature hundreds of pictures of Crystal Beach Park entertainment — from aerialists, daredevils, celebrities, animal acts, athletes, and acrobats, to the numerous musical groups who attracted untold millions to the park each year.



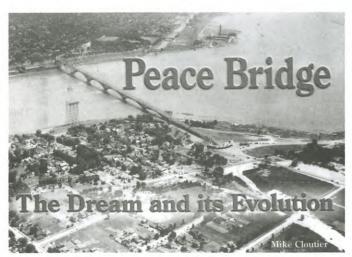
Histories of these international and local groups will bring back sweet memories to those who spent summers dancing at the Park.

With the first edition of The Year of the Fenians selling out, a revised and

updated edition was released last year. Author and local historian, David Owen, is credited with researching and assembling this extensive and concise history of the Battle of Ridgeway and the

Fenian movement. The book also

includes a driving tour following troop movements.



Sponsored by the Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority, local publisher and historian, Mike Cloutier, released a comprehensive book about the history of the Peace Bridge. Hundreds of photographs from both sides of the border, grace the 95 pages of "Peace Bridge - The Dream and its Evolution."

These books, and many others, are available in the gift shops of the Historical and Railroad Museums.



Letters from Santa

Every Wednesday morning the Artifacts

FAIRY TOYLAND

Committee

works at cataloguing recent artifact donations which included this set of three coloured letters from Santa Claus. Santa mailed these letters to Patricia and Thomas Goodwin in Crystal Beach, during the 1940s. The nearest large department store was in Buffalo, and they remember going to J.N. Adam's to visit Santa on the sixth floor in "Fairy Toyland". Santa would write to them each year enticing them to bring their parents to Adam's for more Christmas shopping. These add a unique element to Fort Erie's financial history of cross border shopping and marketing. Other recent donations include: photographs and local business information from the Nyla Gorham estate and political and police records and photographs from the Bruce Finch estate.

Survey Says...

In Nov. 2007 the Museum commissioned the firm of Eric P. Jones and Associates to survey residents to determine their feelings towards heritage. The results included the following (+/- 5% accuracy):

- 99.2% believe it is important for a community to celebrate its heritage
- 96.9% believe that a community's heritage can be used to promote tourism
- 98.4% think that museums are valuable institutions for preserving a community's heritage
- 98.2% think that museums are valuable institutions for teaching a community about its past Thank you Fort Erie for such a strong show of support...we won't let you down!



Plans for the 6218

Leave a piece of metal outside, trap water around it, and it will rust. This is what has happened to the 6218 steam engine. Fixing this situation is not impossible — just complex and costly. The steps include: removing the metal 'jacket'; removing the asbestos and fibreglass; soda blasting; repairing all rusted areas; replacing spacers; creating drainage; painting; and installing a new 'jacket'. The MCHC has established a "Friends of the 6218" group to work on fundraising, community awareness and advocacy projects. If you are interested call Dave Renshaw (991-0673) or Mary McLelland-Papp (894-8451).

Memorial Fund

In 2002 Council established a Museum's Memorial Fund. This program gives citizens the opportunity to make a donation to the Museum celebrating the life of someone dear to them. The donations are invested in perpetuity, unless otherwise specified, and interest from this fund goes towards Museum programming. All donations receive an



income tax receipt, and acknowledgement and letters of condolence are sent from the Museum. A Memorial Book containing these names is on display in the Historical Museum's archives. Listed in the order which donations were received, the Museum's Memorial Fund celebrates the lives of:

Marvin Baker
Florence Prystawski
John Wheatman
Marvin Baker
Orval Pooler
Mary Ann Porter
Robert Adams
Marian Aiken
Dorothy Campion
Arden Climenhage
Joan Cross
Dorothy Cornwell
Doug Cornwell
Carolyn Hesser

Don Huffman Anne Maksinuk Jack Perry Peggy Lipton Frank Mann Bruce Matthews George Whillier Jean Wright Vida Collard Eldon Knapp Shirley Beam Robert Disher Kay McNabb David Slatter

Thomas Baxter
Helen Davies
Allen W. Tripp
Madeline Faiazza
Vera Bateman
Austin Fox
Jean Fox
Lorne Kendrick
Mike Anderson
Geraldine Fretz
Lois Elliot
Don Woods
Bill Kieffer
Barbara Chapman

Luella (Judy) Riegle Stephen Fox Ruth Schaffer Ted Reeks Ruth Ellsworth Dorothy Dobson Robert Brown Harold "Bud" Smith Ted Jewson David Cooper Andre Robillard Patrick Hannigan Wilfred Teal Madolyn Tait



Conservation Room

Volunteer Jean Tripp (at left) has been working at the Museum for over 38 years. Her artistic talents are put to use cleaning, repairing and encapsulating paper documents, maps, booklets, photographs, deeds, etc. These conservation tasks used to take place on a small table in the records storage room, but now with the records moved to the Mentholatum building, Jean, and

museum staff have room to work preserving the many pieces of Fort Erie's heritage.

History of Your Property and Home - Historic Deeds

Our archives includes original deeds from Bertie Township, Fort Erie & Crystal Beach and an inventory of Crown Grants for each lot in Bertie Township. We can search our data base with your property lot and concession number to find the original property owner. You can call the MPAC office (1-866-296-6722) with you lot and concession (Roll#) and they can tell you when your home was built. The historic deeds for your property can be accessed by first going to the Land Registry Office at 59 Church St., St. Catharines. Give them your lot and concession number and they will help you search for the abstracts. This lists all of the instrument numbers which were assigned to that piece of property. You can print these abstracts for 50¢ per page. You can see the historic deeds either on microfilm at the Registry Office, or bring these numbers back to the Museum and we will pull the original deeds for you. These deeds contain information pertaining to new structures erected, liens against the property, owners names, transfer dates and in rare instances, blueprints and other attachments.

Why Collect?

There are many reasons why people collect or save things. Sentimental reasons tie things to memories. Financial reasons link things to money and anticipating their increase in value. Hobbiests try to amass quantities of things (e.g. stamps or spoons from every country; different kinds of birdhouses or comic books). Some people collect things for their aesthetic value — it's not about quantity, but quality and beauty.



The Historical Museum collects things for none of the above reasons. We collect things for the information they provide — the stories they can tell. Artifacts are tangible evidence of the changing face of a community. Personal values and preferences have no bearing on whether an artifact is collected or not. Collecting decisions, when put together over time, must reflect the community as a whole.

The Historical Museum's collection reflects, with equal weight, the stories of all the communities within greater Fort Erie. Museum artifacts recognize the importance of the lives of farmers and factory workers, doctors and entrepeneurs, teachers and homemakers — how together they built a community. It is difficult to understand the importance of a museum artifact when considered in isolation. One must study them together to see stories emerge. Stories like the changing values citizens have placed on the waterfront; or the centuries old tradition of cross-border smuggling.

The new artifact facility at the Mentholatum site will give museum staff an opportunity to view the collection as a whole — to determine voids and identify duplication. Collecting is the first step in creating exhibits and interpretive programs. It also provides researchers an opportunity to study various aspects of history. Collecting your heritage — just one of the services provided by the Museum.

Spirit of Fleet II

Retired Fleet employee, and company "photographer", Harold Fyke, donated a collection of pictures from the plant. At right is the Spirit of Fleet II rebuilt in 1980 for the company's 50th anniversary. Employees donated their time and the company donated some of the funds to restore this Cornell in memory of the 1000th Cornell built at Fleet in 1943. The original Spirit



of Fleet I was donated to the R.C.A.F. for the war effort. The restored Spirit of Fleet II was given back to the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum in Mt. Hope. From left to right are Anne Bolkeny, Olga Lusak, Marge Havill (museum volunteer) and Janet Andrey.

Provincial Museums
Operating Grant
Fort Erie Museum Services
has once again met the conditions to receive a \$34,000
Provincial grant. These
requirements include providing cataloguing, conservation,
research, exhibit and interpretation services to the public.

High School
Volunteer Hours
The Museum offers high school students the opportunity to earn their community volunteer credits or a co-op credit. Various tasks from data entry to cutting shelving liners have been done by students over the past year.

Provincial Student
Careers Grant
Each year Museum Services
employees four students who
are funded in part by the
Province of Ontario. Students
work at data entry, filing,
research, cleaning, grounds
maintenance, front desk
services, and gift shop sales.

Caring for "French Ivory"

Due to the high cost of ivory, an American billiard company offered a \$10,000 reward for the invention of simulated ivory. In 1873, John Hyatt of Albany, N.Y. perfected a plastic he registered as Celluloid. Thin sheets of plastic were forced into solid blocks, and cut across the grain to look convincingly like ivory. Products such as dresser sets were popular, and since the highly fashionable French were admired in America in the early 1900s, companies stamped their pieces "French Ivory", etc. Collectors recommend searching for pieces marked "TCC" for John Hyatt's The Celluloid Company or "Amerith", one of their trademarks. Celluloid is very flammable and should not



be displayed in direct sunlight or close to flames. Clean with a mild glycerine soap. Never remove price tags with nail polish remover, as this will cause the chemical breakdown of the entire piece.



Halfway House

In the 1800s and early 1900s, Nigh Road was the major route between Ridgeway and Fort Erie. The half way point was marked by a hotel, to give travellers and their horses a chance for rest and refreshments. Named the Halfway House Hotel, it was located on the north east corner of

Nigh and Stonemill Roads, in the community known as Stonequarry.

The nearby quarrying industry also brought workers and business to this area. The hotel was originally wood and had a long open driveshed. It was later replaced with a two-storey cement block building. Inside, on the first floor, was a beverage room on the left, restaurant on the right and kitchen and post office at the back. Rooms for let were on the second floor. While the assessment records show various farmers living here, the first record of an inn keeper was Lawrence Martin in 1875. He was 24 years old at the time. The 1876 Page's Atlas shows William Benner as the owner of the property. In 1880 and again in 1885, the assessment records show Michael Krieger (Kregar) as the Hotel Keeper and Merchant. In 1906 William Huffman purchased the hotel and sold it in 1909. Lula May Hawkins' obituary reads that she and her husband, Edward, owned the Halfway House — but no dates were noted. During the 1900s, residents remember Gordon Haun operating the hotel. In 1964 Steve and Wanda Kirchmayer sold the hotel to Samuel and Hazel Candella. The building was destroyed by fire in the 1970s, possibly caused by the propane heating tanks which were stored in the basement.



Fort Erie Museums · Historical · Railroad · Battlefield

Museums

Telling the stories of our lives

Fort Erie Museums Newsletter • Summer 2011

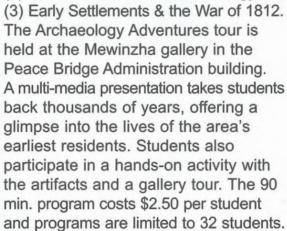
Attention Teachers!

The Museum is pleased to announce that school programs on a series of curriculum-based topics are now available. Curator of Programming, Marketing and Exhibitions, Meredith Leonard, is a certified teacher with past experience delivering school programs at the Museum of Ontario Archaeology. Here in Fort Erie, she has developed hands-on learning



activities for a variety of grades for the following topics:

- (1) Fenian Raids and Confederation;
- (2) Native Studies and Archaeology;





Two options exist for the Confederation/Fenian program: the Museum's Educator can bring a 'mini-museum' to your students, or your class can visit the Historical Museum in Ridgeway. Students will interact with art and artifacts, while participating in hands-on learning activities. An educator's resource guide, containing background information, supplemental lesson plans and historical resources, is included with each 90 minute program.

Check out the Museum's web site for further details on these and future 1812 programs <www.museum.forterie.ca> If you're interested

in booking a tour, of if you have questions, please call Meredith at 894-5322.



Newsletter

The Fort Erie Museums
Newsletter is distributed to
each household in Fort Erie.
Written and designed by
Jane Davies, Administrator.

Cover Photos

Clockwise from top left: student Anya Baker; veteran and pastor of Windmill Point Church, Nelson Merry; volunteer Jean Tripp; unidentified child from Museum's archives.

Contact Us

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p• 905-894-5322
f• 905-894-6851
e• museum@forterie.on.ca

Visit Us

w. museum.forterie.ca

Historical Museum:
402 Ridge Rd.
Railroad Museum:
Central Ave. at Gilmore
Mewinzha Gallery:
100 Queen St.

Mission Statement

- Fort Erie's Museums care for a base of knowledge that belongs to the future.
- Fort Erie's Museums help create a strong and proud community by celebrating our shared heritage.
- Fort Erie's Museums help satisfy the intellectual needs of the community.

Preparing for the Bicentennial

The Historical Museum's new exhibit "Regency Fashion" will help you prepare for next year's 1812 Bicentennial. Volunteer Joyce Capern donated reproductions of costumes worn during the early 1800s. Visitors of all ages can try these on and get ideas for making your own. Joyce noted that the type of clothing worn during this period is quite easy to reproduce. She used a lot of thrift store items, so the cost was minimal. The



of thrift store items, so the cost was minimal. The exhibit includes patterns and on-line resources.

If you are doing historical research about the War of 1812, a public archival research database will be available next year. Volunteers Charlie Capern and Joe Lischka have been reading the material within the Museum's reference collection and summarizing the books and documents. These summaries are being entered into the database, so if you would like to know if the Museum has information about a certain aspect of the war, we can direct you to the appropriate resource.

The Museum's gift shop has been expanded to include 1812 items including: reproduction china and buttons, art cards, mugs, magnets and books such as "The War That Both Sides Won"; "War of 1812 - Western Hooves of Thunder"; and "Guidebook to the Historic Sites of 1812".

Volunteers Dave Renshaw and Keith Overend have produced a driving tour map highlighting 34 significant sites in Fort Erie and Buffalo. The map is available on-line at <www.FortErie1812.ca>



Hours and Admission

While this newsletter allows you to learn a bit about local history in the comfort of your own home... you may wish to experience it firsthand by visiting the following sites:

- Mewinzha: A Journey Back in Time (Archaeology and Native art);
 and The Bridge that Peace Built exhibit, Peace Bridge Administration
 Building, 100 Queen St., Monday Friday, 9am 4pm, free.
- Fort Erie Railroad Museum, 400 Central Ave., daily May 21 Sept. 1, 9am - 5pm, donation.
- Fort Erie Historical Museum, 402 Ridge Road, daily June Sept. 1, Sunday - Friday for the balance of the year, 9am - 5pm, donation.

Also, check out the Museum's exhibit in the Town Hall atrium; the genealogy and archives centre at the Historical Museum; and the web site at www.museum.forterie.ca Both the Historical and Railroad sites feature unique items in their gift shops. Questions? Call the main office at 905-894-5322.

Ambulance needed!



In 1948 the Crystal Beach -Ridgeway Kinsmen

HELP KINSMEN AMBULANCE FUND

Draw for

1st Prize
FRIGIDAIRE
REFRIGERATOR

2nd Prize
SUNBEAM
MIXMASTER

3rd Prize
GENERAL ELECTRIC
FEATHERWEIGHT IRON

Auspices Crystal Beach-Ridgeway Kinsmen Club

Labour Day, September 6th, 1948, at Crystal Beach

Your donation, which assists us in purchasing and maintaining the ambulance, is gratefully received and appreciated.

Donation Receipt - 25c each or 5 for \$1.00

No

7313

led a drive to purchase an ambulance for the community. The raffle ticket above shows that funds from the draw were also going towards its maintenance. The first prize was quite generous since the average cost of a refrigerator in the 1940s was

\$240, the average income in 1949 was \$2,950, and a gallon of gas cost 17¢. The photo at left shows the new ambulance in front of the Crystal Beach Town Hall and Fire Station on Lincoln Road E. Please contact the Museum if you have more information about the Kinsmen ambulance.

Sleuthing skills

Research often requires "sleuthing" skills. The Museum's Research Volunteers recently filled in some blanks from a 1970s heritage buildings survey — many of the buildings were missing street numbers. Harold Hampel, Harry Barnhart, Ruby Smith, Adriana Jacobi and John Gagnon, identified these properties by driving around town with the



old photographs. Thanks to their efforts, we can now respond to research requests such as "Do you have any information on 2782 Eagle St.?" (pictured above) The answer, now, for many of these properties is "Yes" — and 2782 Eagle used to be S.S.#7 school, built in 1880.



New in the gift shop

This photo of the McLeod family at their Point Abino Rd. farm is one of many photographs featured in the new book entitled "Live, Work, Play - Daily life as seen through the archives of Fort Erie Museum Services." The book features 70 photographs from the Museum's collection. Many of these images have never been published before.

This limited-edition book makes a great presentation gift and sells for \$85.

Anonymous Angel

The Museum gratefully acknowledges financial support from an anonymous donor in 2009 and 2010. The estate of this long-time Fort Erie resident selected the Museum and the donation will go towards Museum research and public programming.

Provincial Grants

The Museum gratefully acknowledges the support of two Provincial Ministries: Employment and Culture. The Employment grant (\$3,879) subsidizes student wages, and the Culture grant (\$34,731) goes towards operating expenses.

Memorial Fund

The following recent donations have been made to the Museum's Memorial Fund for:
Fred Truckenbrodt (Crystal Beach resident and collector), and Margaret Teal (Ridgeway resident and driving force in establishing the Museum).

Looking to the future

Museum volunteers and students have been busy entering records into a data base to make information more accessible to the public. Christian Baker (right) is entering data about the artifacts. The Museum's other students, Jennifer Hanna, Anya Baker and Desiree Runka are also busy doing site and grounds maintenance, customer

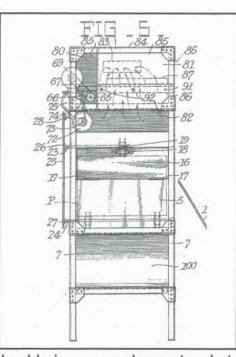


service, cataloguing, scanning photographs, filing and responding to research requests.

Volunteers Sheila Barnhardt, Darla Love, Tonia Cunningham, and Mary Ellen Winger have been entering funeral home, cemetery records and artifact cataloguing sheets in the data base. Darla has entered 6,915 cemetery records and Sheila 11,221 funeral home records. The future for research at the Museum looks very bright!

What is it?

This diagram from a United States Patent paper was recently uncovered by volunteer researcher Erin Wilson. She found a series of patents on-line that were issued to Fort Erie residents for their inventions. This patent, #1,668,995, was issued to Harry Woolever of Crystal Beach on May 8, 1928. He was an Assignor to Eastman Kodak Company



of Rochester New York. That should give you a clue as to what this machine was used for. Woolever used this machine in his business on Derby Road in Crystal Beach. The answer is found within the "Woolever Studio" story in this newsletter. Future Museum newsletters will feature other inventions patented in the United States by enterprising Fort Erie residents.

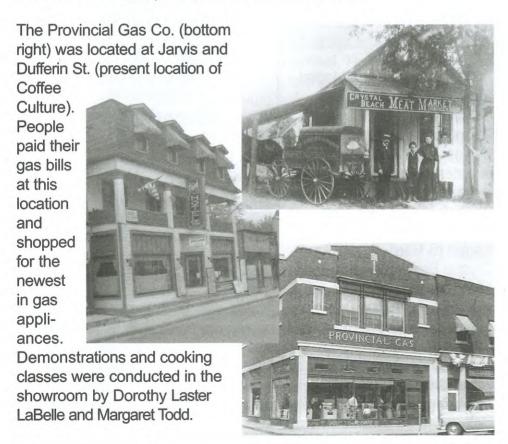


Sorting and Filing

Volunteers Val McCormack (left) and Ruth Coulthurst work in the archives at the Historical Museum with documents and pictures like the ones shown here. The Crystal Beach Meat Market (below) was run by H. Winger and Sons. The ad card notes it was located on Erie Rd., 3 or 4 doors west of Derby. In the photo from left are the Wingers:

Harold, unknown, Verna, and Walter, as well as a "hired man".

The ad card for the Park Hotel (below left) tells us that B. Hugger was the proprietor, it offered a choice of 50 rooms, the American Plan was \$1.00 per day, and the phone numbers were Frontier 29G and Bell 55. It notes the location as "Central Avenue new Park Entrance", but a city directory lists it at 22 Derby Road. Does anyone remember if Derby Road was ever called Central, or was this just a local name given to the "central" road leading into one of the entrances to Crystal Beach Amusement Park?



The Beauty of Patina

Patina is a dull sheen which develops on furniture, jewelry and paintings after years worth of little chips, cracks, dust, and oxidation, and is a feature to be valued.

Antique dealers caution against stripping or even polishing your family heirlooms, because patina is irreplaceable. Once you remove it to make a piece look "like new" it's gone. Dealers often use patina to help establish the date, and value of an antique.

The book *Culture and Consumption* notes that patina was used in the 16th and 17th centuries to distinguish people of high standing from the rabble.

"Any nouveau riche merchant could buy a new silver plate. But a family with a silver plate that had patina showed that the plate was in the family's possession for several generations, and that the family was, therefore, no newcomer to its present social status. Newness

was the mark of commonness, while the patina of use was a sign and guarantee of social standing."

Nice try ...

Does anyone remember Garden City Beach? Museum researchers uncovered this gem in the Aug. 2nd 1930 newspaper. An ad for the grand opening read: "Finest Bathing Beach in Canada - Located at Humberstone and Bertie Town Lines at the Lake Front." The beach boasted picnic tables on the lake and in the grove, band concerts and water sports. Holloway Bay Road is the dividing line between the two townships, so this lakefront development was located at Marcy's Woods. The developer was Gordon Haun, who never owned property at Marcy's Woods. This anomaly was answered in the Aug. 5, 1930 newspaper with the following story "Gordon Haun received notice from the township clerk to remove all buildings and property from the road allowance between the two Townships." So Garden City Beach was set up on a road allowance and lasted only 4 days. Thanks to our volunteer researchers: Sharon Dell, Ruth Coulthurst, Joan McNeil and Janet Boyce.

Brothers

'Brothers' was the headline in the Buffalo Evening News for this Nov. 15, 1939 picture. The caption read "The three Anderson brothers of Ft. Erie are among the 50 members of Canadian regiments who are completing the first leg of a journey that will take them to the Western Front... left to right are, William Anderson, 19; Robert J. Jr., 26; and Edward, 21." The younger brother appears to be in the



middle, so we suspect the newspaper either mixed up the first two names or ages. If you know the Andersons, please call us with their names and let us know if they returned home safely.

While history depends upon accurate facts, those facts are also a source for great historical fiction. Imagine the story that could unfold from this picture — the shared experiences these brothers had prior to this moment, and the separate adventures and challenges each faced before returning to Fort Erie. If you enjoy writing and are looking for inspiration, the Museum's archives has thousands of photographs and documents that may just be the beginning of a great novel!

This photograph is one of many artifacts catalogued each week by volunteers Bev Jewson, Dorothy Dorge, Pat Mitchell, Josephine Davies, Jeanette Beroud, Sharon Healey and Allanah Beroud. If you have old photographs that you would like to donate or loan, please contact Jude Scott at 894-5322.



Fleet history continues

Don't miss this opportunity to see the "Journey of an Artifact" exhibit at the Historical Museum. This gallery features artifacts from the Fleet collection and oral histories from former Fleet employees. The exhibit traces how artifacts are collected, documented, conserved, exhibited and interpreted at a Museum. The oral histories include transcriptions of interviews from over 25 former Fleet employees, talking about their careers at Fleet during the 1940s-2004. The exhibit will be replaced this winter with one about the social history of Fort Erie during the War of 1812. The Fleet collection is being documented by vounteers Don LeFurgey, Roger Prince, George Sherk (left) and

Ken Benner; while Tom Mullarky and Marge Havill continue to help confirm information.

Woolever's Photo Studio

Throughout his career, Harry Woolever had photo studios on Ridge Rd, Jarvis St., the Crystal Beach Park mid-way and Derby Rd. (right). In the 1940s the Derby Rd. location also operated the Canadian National Cable and Telegraph office. Harry invented and

patented the Automatic
Film-developing Machine
(shown previously in this
newsletter). It utilized a
series of tanks to hold the
developing chemicals and
an overhead rack that held
the film. The rack was powered by a water-jack and
automatically moved the



film from tank to tank. Film could be developed and pictures printed in one hour.

PHOTO STUDIO



Louise (Beroud) Huffman worked at Woolever's and the middle photo shows her hand-tinting photographs. Other employees included: Betty (Mathews) Courier, Ralph Westhouse, Marlee (Heximer) Millar, Sally Mountain, Pauline Moore, Emma Englehart, Etta Wright, and Charlotte Claus. At left is the Erie and Ridgeway Road entrance to Crystal Beach Park.



Museum & Cultural Heritage Committee

Interested in local history, built heritage or the Lighthouse? Then the MCHC might be for you. Top row from left: John Hill, Keith Overend, John Bartlett, Charlie Capern; bottom row from left: Margaret Feaver, Mary McLelland-Papp, Joyce Capern, Charlene Nigh (absent Dave Renshaw). Watch for their new "Did You Know?" series in the Fort Erie Post. For example: "Did You Know

that the first 'modern submarine' was commissioned by the Fenians? Irish inventor John Holland designed and built his "Ram" in 1881 for the express purpose of sinking British war ships. Disputes within the Fenian leadership over financing this weapon scuttled the project. Holland took his idea to the United States Navy who worked with the Holland Torpedo Boat Company. They eventually become General Dynamics, one of the world's largest defense contractors." (From the book *Fianna*.)

Bicentennial of the War of 1812-14 fast approaching ...

The Town's 1812 Bicentennial Committee is busy preparing events for 2012-14, including parades, driving tours and re-enactments. Further details are found on their web site <www.FortErie1812.ca>

The following is from a "Travel Intentions Study" done for the Province of Ontario. Americans and Canadians were asked "Based on what you know or have been taught, who won the War of 1812?" Among Americans, 54% said the American's won; 9% said the British or Canadians won; 24% said it was a stalemate and 11% said they didn't know.

Among Canadians, 58% said the British or Canadians won; 22% said it was a stalemate; 10% said the American's won; and 7% said they didn't know.

We have lift off!

While Oliver Benner was working at Horton Steel, he collected articles and photographs of its history. When settling Oliver's estate, his brother Ken came across this material and donated it to the Museum. A May 1970 Horton newsletter notes this accomplishment: "Apollo 11 Saturn V space vehicle prior to the first manned flight to the moon last summer. In the background is a double wall Hortonsphere vessel which stores 850,000 gallons of liquid hydrogen at minus 423 degrees F." It's one of five vessels built by Horton CBI to store liquid oxygen, hydrogen and nitrogen for NASA at Merritt Island, Florida.



All Aboard!

On July 4, 1920 Octave Possinger took his sweetheart Adelaide Rose to Crystal Beach Park (right). They were accompanied by Octave's sister, Helen, and her boyfriend Bennet (below).





Three fortunate things happened since then:

(1) they took pictures of their trip on the Canadiana;

(2) Octave and Rose married, so these pictures remained in the family; and (3) their daughter, Norma Benner, found this album and donated it to the Museum. These images depict what it was like aboard the fondly-remembered Canadiana — the ferry that brought visitors to Crystal Beach Park. The Canadiana was built in Buffalo in 1910.

specifically for the Crystal Beach Park run, and continued to delight travellers on that trip until 1956.

From the Archives...

Imagine receiving a get well card from your pharmacist when you picked up your perscription? The card below was handed out by Kib Billings who worked at Kamm's Drug Store on Jarvis St. It was donated by Evelyn Lichtenberger. The insert at right is from the Arrowhead newspaper, printed in 1934 for Scout Troop One,



The Arrowhead

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Published Monthly by Troop One, Ridgeway, Ont. Boy Scouts of Canada

Headquarters-Troop Cabin, Lakeview Road, Ridgeway.

Editor-in-Chief-W. R. Conibear Editor-Tom Jones Publishers-The Print Shop

November 1934 Circulation 100 copies

Price 2 Cents

EDITORIAL

Why the paper? In the words of the

Ridgeway. Stories include working on the new Scout cabin on Lakeview Road north of Hazel St. Archives Committee volunteers use the archives to

assist the Museum with filing and responding to research requests. Members include: Sharon Dell, Joan McNeil, Janet Boyce, Sheila Barnhardt, Norma Benner, Val McCormack, Erin Wilson and Ruth Coulthurst. Joan and Norma were recently honoured for volunteering at the Museum for 20 years.



Where did the time go?

A celebration was held at the Museum to honour three long-service volunteers. Bev Jewson (40 years), Jean Tripp (40 years) and Pat Mitchell (35 years) were feted, roasted and gratefully thanked. Their vast of knowledge of local history has added to the information the Museum can provide to the public – what a legacy! They often work with their grandchildren (Daniel Jewson

and Allanah Beroud), whom they have recruited as new volunteers. The Museum looks forward to many more years of their invaluable contributions – thank you for not retiring!

Town Hall builder's journal

Many thanks to Bob Lund for letting the Museum copy his great-grandfather's business journal. James Edsall was a local tradesman who built the Bertie Township Hall in 1874 (currently the Historical Museum). He also built S.S.#5 School, and did work for residents including Hugh Sherk, John Baxter, and Ralph Disher. His journal includes the amount and cost of materials used,

	18	06
60	1	60
		31
		75
	2	75
	2	00
1	3	38
	1	25
	60	3 - 2 - 2 - 3

labourers, their rate of pay, and payment notes from clients. The journal spans c.1868-1871.



1909-1942. Papers include the Bridgeburg Review, Ridgeway Herald, and Fort Erie Times.

Read all about it!

Very soon, you will be able to read our early newspapers thanks to an initiative of Jerry Dell. Jerry and his fellow volunteers, Gary Haines, Charlie Capern and Norma Benner have been photographing each page and digitizing the images. By next sumer these will be available on the Museum's public access computer. To date they have photographed 18,830 images, from Ridgeway Herald, and Fort Erie Times.

The Mann Collection

The Mann homestead (right) was located on the east side of Prospect Point Rd. just south of

Card of Admission to

Reserved Seat ——

Official Opening of Mather Park

Saturday, August 31st, 1940 ——

at 3 P. M., Daylight Saving Time

Please present Ticket to Usher

Dominion. Although the home no longer stands, the family



donated these photographs along with other memorabilia including a ticket to the opening of Mather Park in 1940. Many thanks to Terry Hobbs for bringing in this material.

Alien Encounters

On "Encounters with Aliens on the Day" you will find a Ridgeway reference <www.ufoinfo.com/onthisday/June21.html> On June 21, 1954 Mr. and Mrs. Guy Baker "saw a disc-shaped object hovering over Ridgeway. It was 40 feet in diameter and had several rotating, flashing lights around the rim. The object crossed the road and landed in a field. They drove their car to get a closer look and it stalled. The car had never given them trouble before or after the sighting. After the object left, they found a large, brown, circular spot in the pasture where the disk had been resting." This incident was also recorded by Gregory Falla with the British UFO Research Association (BUFORA).

Exhibit at Town Hall

Check out the Museum's exhibit case in the Town Hall atrium — upcoming displays include:

- Toys and Playthings
- Vaudeville comes to Crystal Beach
- A Retro-Christmas
- Are you ready for the Bicentennial of 1812?
- The Blushing Bride



Are you interested in trains?

If so, you may want to help the cause to repair the steam engine at the Railroad Museum. The Friends of 6218 are looking for volunteers and financial support. As a Federal Registered Charity, they can issue income tax receipts for donations. You can contact Mary McLelland-

Papp at 894-8451 for further details. The picture above is from the archives and was taken in 1957 in front of the CN Fort Erie Station (formerly the GTR Bridgeburg Station). From left are railway men Glenn Hutton, Bill Young, Roly Goodacre, and Harry J. Barnhart.

Fort Erie Museums · Historical · Railroad · Battlefield · Mewinzha

Need help earning a badge?

The Museum is pleased to offer after-hours and weekend programming for Cubs, Scouts, Brownies, Guides and other interested community groups. Tours and activities will meet badge expectations while offering opportunities for learning, discovery and fun! Guides and Scouts will earn their "Heritage Badge" with activities including a family tree workshop, early settler's crafts, and tours about Fort Erie's heritage. Brownies will earn their "Aboriginal People in Canada Badge" and Cubs their "Aboriginal Awareness Badge" by examining archaeological artifacts, playing traditional Aboriginal games and touring the Museum. The program costs are: Cubs/Brownies \$4/child and Guides/Scouts



\$5/child, with a minimum charge per group visit of \$40 and \$50 respectively. For more details go to www.museum.forterie.ca or call Meredith Leonard at the Museum at 894-5322.

Daylight savings time or just wasting time...

Thanks to Barbara Rooke for sending us a 1918 Toronto Telegram article on the problems created at the International Bridge over daylight savings time. The United States converted to dayight savings on April 1 of that year, so in order to arrive on time in Fort Erie, trains had to wait one hour in Buffalo before crossing the river. This was especially frustrating for Americans who rushed to catch the train and then, while waiting, realized they could have walked across the bridge in less time. Passengers heading into Buffalo arrived 55 minutes before leaving Fort Erie. Railroad officials hoped that Canada would adopt daylight savings time soon but acknowledged, "It does no good to talk; this is war time."

Going "sew" well at the Mentholatum

Volunteers Joyce Capern (left) and John Gagnon work along with Norma Benner and Assistant Curator Jude Scott, every Wednesday morning at the Mentholatum. Over the past two years they have unpacked most of the boxes from the Museum's move and are now busy organizing the material. The focus this year is on the textile collection. Joyce is sewing padded covers made



of unbleached cotton for hangers. John has been adjusting shelves to find "spacing efficiencies". The volunteers' favourite artifacts include the original Fenian Raid uniform, the ship bell from HMCS Fort Erie, an ornate wall clock, picnic pants, and the fence stretcher. In 2012 there will be an opportunity for the public to tour the Mentholatum facility — watch the newspaper for details.

Human Trafficking

An interesting article was published in the Journal of American Ethnic History by Dr. William Siener, on how international groups of traffickers sought to thwart the Chinese Exclusion Act on the Niagara Frontier border. Networks included government and elected officials and railroad workers on both sides of the border who either participated in or tacitly condoned the evasion. In 1908 the trafficking syndicate was organized by Thomas O'Brien. He "met immigrants in a storefront on Queen Street in Toronto, took them by train to either Stevensville or Bridgeburg... drove them to Fort Erie and hid them in the barn of (owner named in article), until they could be rowed across the Niagara River." If you're interested in learning more about this unique aspect of Fort Erie's history, you can read the complete article in the Historical Museum's archives.





Two sides to the Racetrack

Bob Ruch lived at the Fort Erie Racetrack from 1932-1952. His father, Henry Ruch, was Superintendent during that time and the racetrack provided housing for the superintendent's family. Prior to working at the track, Henry was the Water Works Superintendent for the Town of Fort Erie. Bob recently donated his family's photo album to the Museum which included many "behind-the-scenes" pictures of the track. Top left shows workers on a break outside the stables, and the bottom is of an outdoor party at the clubhouse. The people in these photographs had very different experiences and memories of their time at the track. Bob married the woman in the foreground of the top photo (Morry Hucul), he spent most of his career working at Fleet and his son, Gerry, has a law practice on Jarvis St. (Ruch and Williams).

Some Historic C.O.D.

Genealogy research often uncovers causes of death (C.O.D.) that you might not recognize such as these listed below. Thankfully, many historic diseases are now curable or preventable, such as:

- Ague (Malarial Fever)
- Bad Blood (Syphilis)
- Biliousness (Jaundice linked with liver disease)
- Black Plague (Bubonic plaque)
- Canine Madness (Rabies)
- Chilblain (Swelling of extremities caused by exposure to cold)
- Cholera (Acute severe) contagious diarrhea)
- · Chorea (Convulsions, contortions and dancing)
- Consumption (Tuberculosis)
- · Grippe (Influenza-like symptoms)
- Horrors (Delirium and tremors)
- Milk fever (Disease from drinking contaminated milk)
- Nervous prostration (Extreme exhaustion from excessive physical and mental activities)
- Puerperal exhaustion (Death due to childbirth)
- Rickets (Disease of skeletal system)
- Scurvy (hemorrhages under skin, spongy gums, lack of vitamin C)

Check out the new Erie Beach signs...

Interpretive signs now grace the Erie Beach section of the Friendship Trail. Signe Hansen, Parks and Open Space Development Manager, worked with contractors and the Museum to produce four plaques telling the story of Erie Beach Amusement Park. Hansen noted: "Visiting the park was a magical experience and it is hoped these plaques will convey the sights, sounds and emotions that



made the attractions at Erie Beach so special for hundreds of thousands of people. They are presented as scrapbooks to convey the personal stories connected with the park." The plaques are located on the Promenade portion of the trail, east of Helena St. Pictured above, Dave Renshaw, Chairman of the Museum and Cultural Heritage Committee, looks over the new plaques.

"Do You Remember?"

Many thanks to the Times for hosting the Museum's "Do You Remember?" photos. The response has been tremendous, and thanks to present and former residents, hundreds of people and photos have been identified.

Milestones

- Founder of the 1969 Bertie Historical Society, Margaret Teal, passed away in May.
- The first Chairman and Treasurer of the amalgamated Fort Erie Museum Board, Vic and Dorothy Miller, celebrated their 60th anniversary in June.

Survey Says

Your voice can be heard in two new surveys at the Historical Museum. "What interests you about Fort Erie's heritage?" and the "Regency Fashion Exhibit what did you think?" are both available for your input.

The Ridgeway Rocket

Do you remember the newspaper put out by Ridgeway Public School called "PS11 The Ridgeway Rocket"? The 1961 issue sold for 25ϕ , and had an advertisement revenue of \$21 which went towards the Junior Red Cross. Advertisers included: Sam Lee's Chop Suey House, phone 370; Ridge Dairy, phone 15 and Kacurs' Food Market. The Editor (name not included) wrote a one page editorial on the pros and cons of school uniforms. Included under pros was: "There is no doubt, that in the case of girls, a jumper and middy is much more appealing than 'slacks'." The paper included interviews and quotes from the teachers: Mrs. Hamer - "It is more important for teachers to be respected than popular with their pupils." Mrs. Ruston - "...believes in strict discipline along with fun for the children." Mr. Savage - "...thinks teenagers should stay as they are because they are not really as bad as many people claim." Compositions included "The Canadian Flag" by Brenda Jones; "The Impact of the USA on Canada" by Deirdre Collins; "and "Automation" by Gary Albach. A poll in Ridgeway showed favourites to win the Stanley Cup: Montreal -27, Toronto - 22, and Chicago - 7.

Harvey Holzworth Collection

Harvey Holzworth was well known throughout Fort Erie and Western New York as a collector of local history, and as a person who loved to share his knowledge with others. His passing in 2009 was a loss to the heritage community. Harvey will also be remembered for the work he did with the Canadiana Preservation Society and in later years with the Point Abino Lighthouse. The executors of Harvey's estate generously allowed the Museum to copy his Fort Erie photo



that Harvey's love for history would be remembered and honoured. This digital photo display can be seen at the Historical Museum. Some of these images include: a hot-air balloon launch near the stadium at Erie Beach Amusement Park (top); the Theatre Royal in Crystal Beach Park (left); and an airplane beside the Casino at Erie Beach Park. Airplane shows were a featured summer attraction at that park.

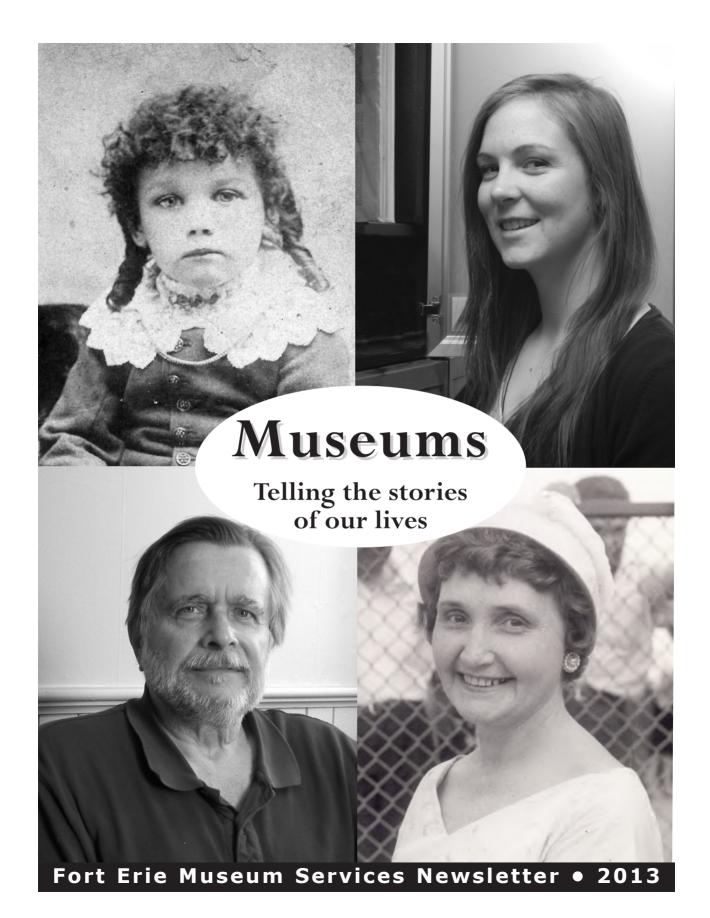


Lakefront Residents

The Museum is looking for historic pictures of cottages and summers spent at the lake. Many lakeshore families date back 5 to 6 generations and represent a unique aspect of Fort Erie's heritage. To have your photographs and family's history included in the Museum's archives. contact us at 905-894-5322. We will scan and return your original pictures.



Fort Erie Museums · Historical · Railroad · Battlefield · Mewinzha





You Can't Beat the Beach

Summer resident Tom Waters recently donated many Crystal Beach images and souvenirs to the Museum so that others could share in these memories. At left is a cigarette silk advertising Crystal Beach. These were found in cigarette packaging in the early 1900s. Images included animals, entertainers, and scenery. Cigarette packs had previously contained cards of sports

figures etc. and the move to silk images was an attempt to appeal to

the female market. Women collected these silks and used them to make quilts and other household items.

The matchbook below advertises trips on the Canadiana. We wish to posthumously



recognize Tom's generosity, as he has since passed away.

The collection from another former resident, Courtland "Bud" Claus, is also featured throughout this newsletter (his father Frank appears on the cover). Below is John Rebstock (founder of Crystal Beach Park) and Helene O'Neill (Courtland's mother) on the beach in 1919. Courtland was appreciative of the Museum's history book *Many Voices*



and in his autobiography he notes that "In the twilight years of my life comes the reflective realization that the 'many voices' of my generation, now becoming a whisper, will soon be silent." Courtland's writing, memories and "Voice" have found a place, in perpetuity, in the Museum archives.

Newsletter

The Fort Erie Museums
Newsletter is distributed to
every household in
greater Fort Erie.
Written and designed by
Jane Davies, Administrator.

Cover Photos

Clockwise from top left:
Frank Claus; student
Cheryl Copson; Bertie
Historical Society founder
Margaret Teal; and
volunteer Joe Lischka.

Contact Us

Fort Erie Museum Services Box 339, Ridgeway, LoS 1N0 p• 905-894-5322 e• museum@forterie.on.ca

Visit Us

Historical Museum:
402 Ridge Rd.
Railway Museum:
Central Ave. at Gilmore
Mewinzha Gallery:
10 Queen St.
Ridgeway Battlefield Park
3388 Garrison Rd.

Mission Statement

- Fort Erie's Museums care for a base of knowledge that belongs to the future.
- Fort Erie's Museums help create a strong and proud community by celebrating our shared heritage.
- Fort Erie's Museums help satisfy the intellectual needs of the community.

Attention Teachers!

Andrea Wilson, the Museum's Curator of Programming, Marketing and Exhibitions is shown with items from the *Classroom Outreach Kits*. These curriculum-based kits include several lesson plans, reproduction artifacts, activities and historical resources on the following topics:



• Early Settlements & the War of 1812

Grade 1: The Local Community; Grade 2: Traditions / Celebrations;

Grade 3: Early Settler Communities

Native Studies and Archaeology

Grade 4: Rocks and Minerals; Grade 5: Early Civilizations; Grade 6: First Nation People; Grade 7: History – New France

Fenian Raids and Confederation

Grade 8: History - Confederation

An *Archaeology Adventures Tour* is also available at the Mewinzha gallery. This multi-media presentation takes students back thousands of years, offering a glimpse into the lives of the First Peoples. Students will participate in a hands-on activity with artifacts followed by a gallery tour.

Programming is also available for Cubs, Scouts, Brownies and Guides. These include badge-related activities on the following topics: Guides and Scouts (Heritage Badge); Brownies (Aboriginal People in Canada Badge); and Cubs (Aboriginal Awareness Badge).

Check out the Museum's web site for details on these and other programs <www.museum.forterie.ca>

Museum Hours

While this newsletter allows you to learn a bit about local history in the comfort of your own home... you may wish to experience it firsthand by visiting the following sites:

- Mewinzha: A Journey Back in Time (Archaeology collection and Native art), Peace Bridge Administration Building, 10 Queen St., Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., free
- Fort Erie Railway Museum, 400 Central Ave., daily May 21 Sept. 1, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., donation
- Fort Erie Historical Museum, 402 Ridge Road, daily June Sept. 1; Sunday - Friday for the balance of the year, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., donation
- The Fenian Raids, outdoor exhibit at the Ridgeway Battlefield Memorial Park, 3388 Hwy.#3, free

Also, check out the Museum's exhibits in the Town Hall atrium; the genealogy records in the Historical Museum's archives; the *Bridge that Peace Built* exhibit at the Peace Bridge Administration building; and the web site <www.museum.forterie.ca>. Need help? Call the office at 905-894-5322. Above photo shows data entry volunteers Tonia Cunningham and Mary Ellen Winger.



New in the gift shop

The Historical Museum's gift shop offers many unique items including Scherenschnitte (at right). The art of paper cutting dates back to the 1700s with silhouettes being the most popular examples. Other new items include historical magnets, 1812-related books, notecards, souvenirs, local



history books, postcards, reproduction toys, Crystal Beach Park books, T-shirts, and *Many Voices II* - A Collective History of Greater Fort Erie.

Fort Erie Railway Museum Now Open!

After months of construction work on the new Central Fire Station, the Fort Erie Railway Museum is once again open. Site plans included improved landscaping and security cameras filming the site 24 hours a day. So the next time you're travelling Central Ave., check out the improvements at this new municipal multi-use site. The gift shop has also been revamped and boasts a host of train-related items. A related story about the 6218 steam engine repair project appears later in this newsletter. The Railway Museum is open daily from 9-5 until Labour Day. For further details call 905-871-1412.



Stevensville Storms and Opera

Fort Erie Museum Services collects and interprets the history of greater Fort Erie. Here we feature a bit of Stevensville's story. The picture at left was taken on Bowen Road after a snow storm in 1937. The men are from the Welland County

Good Roads

Committee and were touring the area to inspect the roads. Stevensville was part of Bertie Township at the time and we wonder if they passed inspection, given the one-way road access?

This ticket is for a Grand Ball at the Stevensville Opera House! Please contact us if you know about the opera house, Erie Camp 108 W.O.W., or the Grand Ball. We wonder if this was a Chautauqua-like event.



Exhibits at Town Hall

Stop by the Town Hall atrium and see the 1812 exhibit "Divided Loyalties". Throughout the year the permanent display case will feature these topics:

- 1812 Archival Material
 - Central Fire Station
 - Hat's Off and
 - Celebrations!

Driving Tour Map

A self-guided tour of significant sites from the War of 1812 has been developed by Dave Renshaw on behalf of the Town's War of 1812 Bicentennial Committee. This map is available at <www.forterie1812.ca> Click on Resources to take the tour.

Original Manuscript

Are you interested in the War of 1812? The archives features the David Owen Collection, including an original manuscript written by Owen entitled *The Fortifications at Chippawa*. Many thanks to David for sharing his research and collection with the public.

University of Toronto Intern

The Museum is pleased to welcome Cheryl Copson for the summer (picture on newsletter cover). Cheryl, a Master of Museum Studies student at U. of T., is completing a 12 week internship placement. She chose Fort Erie because of the wide variety of experiences and sites offered here and the opportunity to job shadow three long-standing professionals. Cheryl's projects include cataloguing artifacts, making protective book jackets and rolled textile supports and supervising a volunteer committee. If you follow women's rowing you can also find Cheryl practicing on the Welland Canal, as she trains with the Provincial Rowing Association.

1812 Offerings

Charlie Capern and grandson Colin Howe greeted visitors at the Museum's 1812 database launch last spring. Charlie and fellow volunteer Joe Lischka spent two years reading and annotating the 1812 archives. They entered this information into a database which people can now search and be directed to the appropriate material. The database is available on



the Museum's website at <www.museum.forterie.ca>

The Historical Museum is also featuring two exhibits on 1812:
• Regency Fashion -- What Fort Erie Wore in 1812 allows visitors to try on reproduction costumes to gain some first-hand knowledge

of living in that era. These costumes were expertly sewn and generously donated by volunteer Joyce Capern.

• Friend, Foe, FIRE! Living in a War Zone during 1812 examines, in a street-like setting, what life was like for local residents who were living on the front lines during the battle. The display includes the perspectives of women, merchants, pacifists and families.

Both exhibits are open daily during the summer at 402 Ridge Rd.



From the Archives ...

The Museum's archives is like a big puzzle box — full of thousands of documents, photographs and information which, when put together, tell the story of Fort Erie. This advertisement for Pattison's Furniture in International Bridge (which became Bridgeburg) is from the Glenna Laur collection.

The picture is of John Henry Jackson (at left) arrested for robbing

and shooting William
Lindsay. Lindsay's relative,
Bill Aiken, brought us this
picture of Jackson in 1915
outside the Welland County
Courthouse. Lindsay was
spared harm from the bullet
because it hit a folded up
newspaper he had in his
pocket. Our records show
that Jackson, who claimed



he had a good alibi, escaped days before the trial, prompting a county-wide manhunt. The Aikens continue to research this saga.

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The page at left is from a U.S. Customs Inspector's notebook. Frank Susat recorded ferry crossing times and shipments made between the Buffalo. Erie Beach and Crystal Beach docks. This 1916 entry shows the 25¢ war tax applied to all goods. The duty charged included china 50%, ale 45%, cigarettes 25%, and toys 35%. Eggs, fish and other fresh meats were duty free. On July 3rd one sack of peanuts, one sack of corn and a can of molasses (ingredients for caramel corn!) arrived at Erie Beach along with six barrels of dishes - to be returned July 5th.

Happy 100th Anniversary

Coca-Cola in Ridgeway John Kieffer started the Coca-Cola Bottling Works in Ridgeway in 1913 Located on Rebstock Rd. between Ridge and Prospect Point, soda from this plant was delivered by horse and wagon to local hotels and stores. When the company was sold, it was renamed Northern Springs and the plant moved to Garrison Road. Rosehill Auction now stands on that property.

Horton CBI

In 1913 the Chicago Bridge and Iron Co. expanded their business into Canada by moving to Fort Erie. The name was changed to Horton Steel Works in 1921 in honour of founder Horace Horton, and then changed to Horton CBI in 1972. The company was well known for designing and fabricating steel structures throughout North America. The local plant on Central Ave. closed in 1996, but Horton CBI continues to operate in Niagara Falls and Calgary. Horton was famous for building Canada's first elevated storage tank; first welded oil storage tank; and first all welded ship.

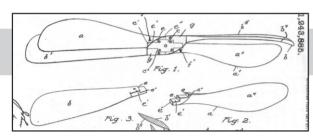
Who let the cows out?

Photographs are often triggers to stories. Make sure your family's stories aren't lost by recording them in journals, blogs or on video. The picture at right is of Daniel Claus' cows sauntering through Lake Erie at the end of Prospect Point Road in 1914. At this time farms were still



prevalent near the lakeshore and the lake provided much needed water for livestock.

If you like writing fiction, old photographs can provide inspiration. Choose one of the pictures in this newsletter and use your imagination to create a story to go with it. What happened just before the picture was taken, what happened next, what were the people thinking, etc.? This can be a great summer vacation activity in response to the "Mom, I'm bored" syndrome!



Patent 1,243,885

John H. Smyth of the village of Bridgeburg was granted a U.S. Patent on Oct. 23, 1917 for his invention shown at left. It took over a year for

this patent to be granted. Do you know what he invented? The answer is found later in this publication.

The JELL-O Girl Entertains

The JELL-O Company, which was located on the Niagara Blvd. in Bridgeburg, often marketed to girls in hopes of developing loyal customers at a young age. The *JELL-O Girl* was featured in booklets targeted to children, such as the one at right. It included the following:

"My Dear Playmates: I love to play grown up. Don't you? One day my mother said I ought to learn to do some grown-up things, so she taught me to make JELL-O. I'd like every little girl to know how. That's why I wrote this book. Your loving friend, The JELL-O Girl



JELL-O Horseradish Relish: Dissolve a package of Lemon JELL-O in scant pint boiling water and 2 T. vinegar. Add 1/2 green pepper chopped, 1 pimento chopped and 1/2 c. grated horseradish. Pour into hollowed out green peppers. When set, cut in slices. Serve with meat or fish."



Quarter Century Club

Museum Administrator Jane Davies completed her 25th year working at the Museum in 2012. She was the first Museum employee as the Town's Museums had been run by volunteers before her arrival. At a recognition party she was asked to recall her proudest accomplishment and answered with her top three -- the history book *Many Voices*, the artifact storage facility, and the exhibits at the Peace Bridge Administration building. She was quick to add how many projects have yet to be finished, so retirement isn't on the horizon quite yet! Congratulations from Museum staff and volunteers.

Time Marches On...



This property at 283 Ridge Road has had many uses over the years including: Hardison's General Store, Brown's Bakery, Hilborn's Drug Store, Lightheart's Dry Cleaning and a temporary home for the Fort Erie Historical Museum. Plans are now being considered for a new use

for this property in conjunction with Ridgeway's Civic Square.

Anne (Hilborn) Winger recently donated many related photographs as her grandfather, Fred Brown, had owned the bakery and her father, Clarence Hilborn, the drug store (shown above). Below left is the Coronation Day Parade on Ridge Rd., May 12, 1937. Centre picture is of Clarence inside the pharmacy (which operated from the late 1930s to 1960s). At right is the Hilborn family, (Clarence, Jessie and children Jim and Anne) taken in 1943 before Clarence left for WWII. These pictures capture a range of emotions — from joyous children in a parade; to a proud business owner; to a worried war-time wife.



Many thanks to Anne and Ron Winger for making the trip from Port Rowan to bring these pictures back home to Ridgeway.





Finally Finished!

Jerry Dell and Norma Benner are shown looking at the computerized version of the Museum's newspaper collection. Jerry generously offered to photograph every page of over 100 years of newspapers from the Museum's archives and process these images onto DVDs. Jerry's records show that almost 1,000 hours were spent on this project, resulting in 82,326 digital images. Page-turning assistance was provided by Norma and Charlie Capern. Museum researchers can now look through these newspapers on a computer. The next step is to 'OCR' these files which will allow them to be searched by key



words. The Museum is very grateful to Jerry, Charlie and Norma for their commitment in seeing this very time-consuming project through to the end. As a result, these fragile newspaper resources will no longer be handled, yet the information they contain remains accessible. Job well done!

Fort Erie ... a "Heritage Tree" with very deep roots

It was recommended in *Fort Erie's Heritage Millenium Plan* that the vast amount of history in this town could not be contained within the walls of a Museum ... how true! In response, Museum Services has focused attention on outreach programming and encouraging the community to get involved with celebrating the town's heritage. The community partnerships developed in 2007 during the town's 150th anniversary were a good example of this concept. This spring Council adopted a process for installing heritage signage on municipal properties. Included in this report is a *Heritage Framework*. Adopted by the Museum Committee, it breaks Fort Erie's heritage down into 24 topics and within each topic highlights the key events, people and places that could be commemorated. The intention is to create heritage driving or walking tours throughout the community on various topics. With strategic planning and by involving the community at large, a cohesive tourism product could be developed. Contact the Museum if you're interested in heritage signs.

This fall an Ontario Jobs Creation Project will provide the town with support to inventory current heritage signage. One such sign, located in Ridgeway Battlefield Park, honours Edmund Zavitz, Ontario's Chief Forester. Born in Ridgeway, Zavitz developed a scientifically-based plan in 1904 and convinced governments and farmers to reforest 30% of the lands in southern Ontario. Prior to this the forests had been stripped by lumbermen and farmers. The results were devastating. Floods were common, wildlife disappeared, forest fires a daily occurence and farmland turned to blowing sand. His biography, *Two Billion Trees and Counting*, is available at the Museum. Due to the Zavitz plan, flooding in towns all but stopped, forest fires were dramatically reduced and the numbers of native fish and fowl increased. Farming was once again prosperous. As Mark Cullen noted in a *Toronto Star* article, "The next time you thank a tree for providing a much finer place to live, work and play, be sure to provide a nod to Edmund Zavitz, the father of reforestation in Ontario."



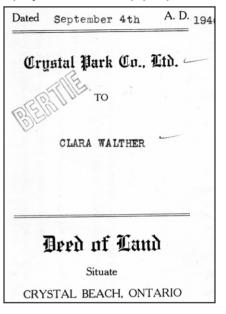
2,000 done 59,000 to go

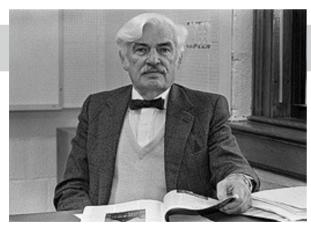
The Museum's volunteer archivists have taken on an enormous project that will help people

who are doing genealogy or property research. The volunteers are indexing

about 61,000 land deeds from the archives. Once this information is entered into a computer, the public will be able to search a name to find out where their family lived, who they purchased or sold property to, the selling price, etc. The deeds cover Bertie Township, Fort Erie and Crystal Beach and range from the mid-1800s to the 1950s.

Shown clockwise around the table from the foreground are: John Gagnon, Karen Angle, Joyce Capern, Robin Evans, Keith McKinnon, Ruby Smith, and Harry Barnhart. Harold Hampel, Dorothy Dorge and Marlene Magee were absent when this photo was taken.





MRI - Magnetic Resonance Imaging

Robert Pound, co-founder of the technology resulting in MRI, was born in Ridgeway. Among his most important contributions to science were: the first empirical confirmation of the general theory of relativity (one of Albert Einstein's key theories) and the co-discovery of nuclear magnetic resonance (the basis of MRI). Robert was born in 1919 and lived in Ridgeway until he was four. He went to school here during

the fall months until he was 16, as his family had a winter home in Buffalo. His ancestors, the Pounds, were UELs and his third cousin, Janet Boyce, is a Museum volunteer. During WWII he worked at MIT developing microwave radar equipment for submarines. He taught at Harvard until 1989 and was a University of Oxford scholar. A 40-page transcript of an interview with

Dr. Pound is in the Museum's archives. It is fascinating to read how he validated Einstein's theory that gravity can distort space and time. If you're interested in science, stop by the Museum and ask to see the Robert Pound file, or check out his achievements on-line.

From a Grandiose Idea to Honey Boo Boo

If you were reading the local newspaper on March 23, 1934 you might have been surprised to learn that the "World's largest television" was being built at Horton Steel in Fort Erie. The article follows:

"Sees Television in Every Home ...

Speaking before Fort Erie Lions last night, [Mr.] Sanabria of Chicago is building here at Horton Steel a veritable Frankenstein, looking much like an enormous sea serpent, which will be completed for the re-opening of the Chicago World's Fair in about two month's time. He predicted in the not far-off future use of television in making hook-ups with the larger theatres in the country as a commonplace matter. The average person thinks television by wire is some sort of fake, but actually it has not been fully developed because of extreme difficulty in transmitting high and low frequency over wire. It is the ultimate aim, he says, to make television as common in the home as radio. He looks to the time when the average television user will be able to see the world's foremost actors, musicians and entertainers with ease. The transmitter of the huge machine being built here weighs five thousand pounds and it has a thirty foot screen."

A Snapshot in time ... 1953

A cataloguing record is produced for every artifact donated to the Museum. Volunteers who help with this process include: Bev Jewson, Pat Mitchell, Josephine Davies, and Sharon Healey. These records are entered into a database and the computer can guickly

find artifacts relating to specific names, topics, businesses, dates, etc. This database also identifies gaps in the collection. We wondered what was happening 60 years ago and found the following: Carl Waters

was at Crystal Beach Park riding the cars in Kiddie Land: the United

Church Men of Ridgeway were hosting a roast beef dinner, charging \$1.50 a plate; and Rev. Joseph Killoran from the Crystal Beach Roman Catholic Church was ordained in India. Above is a card marking his Silver Anniversary. If you have a historical question, the answer may be in the Museum's cataloguing database.

United Church Men of Ribgeway

ROAST BEEF DINNER

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18th, 1953

Dinner 5.30 - 7.45

Ticket \$1,50



Wartime Housing for Fleet

During WWII Fleet Aircraft Ltd.'s work force was at an all-time high. People from all across the country moved to Fort Erie for these jobs and lived in government-built homes in the vicinity of Concession, Bertie, Aberdeen and Gilmore. By the mid-1950s these homes were offered to the general public, but incentives for Fleet employees remained. A 5 room bungalow was

\$7,650 with a \$765 downpayment for Fleet workers and a \$1,530 down payment for everyone else. Mortgage payments, including taxes, averaged \$60/month. This 1943 photo taken at 55 Mary Street shows left to right, Ethel McCune, Betty Lorimer (home owner), and Alice Greer.

Artifacts & Archives

Caring for Fort Erie's heritage requires patience and accuracy. The result — information is transferred to the next generation. Volunteers who assist with this include: Jean Tripp, Val McCormack, Joyce Capern, Robin Evans, Norma Benner, Cassy Quinn and John Gagnon.

Fleet Collection

Fleet retirees work at the Museum cataloguing the company's archives.
Volunteers include:
George Sherk, Roger
Prince, Don LeFurgey Dan Fletcher and Ken Benner.
This group has sadly lost two stalwart and devoted members -- Tom Mullarky and Marge Havill.

Research Assistance

The Museum assists the public with research and the most frequently asked questions involve built heritage and genealogy. Volunteers who help answer these questions include: Sharon Dell, Janet Boyce, Darla Love, Ruth Coulthurst, Norma Benner and Joan McNeil.



Are you interested in trains?

If so, you may want to join the *Friends of 6218* who are fund raising to repair the steam engine at the Railway Museum. The 6218 was built in 1942 and was donated to the Town in 1973. The *Friends* are looking for financial support and

fund-raising volunteers. As a Federal registered charity, they can issue income tax receipts. Contact the Friends chairman Mary McLelland-Papp at 894-8451 for further details or check out their website at <www.friendsof6218.ca>. The picture above was taken in 1949 and shows Engineer Roy Matthews on his last run before retiring after 46 years on the job.

Summer Signals Student's Return

The Museum welcomes four students who are assisting the operation this summer. Their duties include admissions and gift shop service, site maintenance, artifact conservation, cataloguing, built heritage planning and database entry. With their combined experience and enthusiasm, we're looking forward to a successful summer.



At right Jude Scott, who is Curator of Collections, is shown with students Christian and Anya Baker. Christian is majoring in Astrophysics at McMaster and his computer skills will be put to use on many projects including classifying photographs and assisting with the financial records. Anya is majoring in English Literature at McGill and is adept at standardizing the information within the database and researching and editing information requests. The remaining two students are Shiloh Bell, a graduate of Willowbank School of Restoration Arts and Robbie Brant who is completing grade 12 at Ridgeway High. Shiloh will be working with Andrea Wilson assessing the heritage buildings at the Museums and developing a multi-year maintenance plan. Robbie's focus is on site maintenance and database entry. He intends to continue his studies by taking Police Foundations.



Frozen Pies and Food Lockers

Before every home had a freezer, people rented frozen food lockers from local businesses such as Fretz and Sons (trucks shown at left). Residents of Ridgeway kept their frozen meat at Disher's, located at the corner of Hibbard and

Prospect Point Road. At this site, Merrils Disher also ran a feed mill, a chick hatchery and sold "Blue Coal". Harold Hampel remembers delivering flyers for their opening in the early 1940s. His wife Lorraine remembers the frozen lockers as a large very cold room with different sized openings in the walls for the food. People rented whatever size "locker" they needed and there were no doors on these cubicles — the honour system prevented theft. Her father, Ira Nigh, managed the chicken hatchery. In the Museum's collection is a waxed and printed paper container (like an ice-cream tub) which was used to store frozen food in these lockers -- prior to the invention of Tupperware!

The letterhead at right is from the Stevensville Eviscerating Station, which offered frozen meats and claimed to be the "First Makers of Frozen Pies in Canada."

EVISCERATING STATION
NIAGARA BLVD. - NEAR CHIPPAWA
Phone: **103** Stevensville

TRY OUR FAMOUS FOX HAVEN FROZEN CHICKEN, TURKEY, BEEF PIES FIRST MAKERS OF FROZEN PIES IN CANADA — AND STILL FIRST IN QUALITY



Fun at the Fair

Many thanks to Glenna Laur for adding photographs and stories of Bertie Fair to the Museum's archives. Major James Laur was very active with Bertie Fair and his

records note that the fair was organized in 1853. It was held at the corner of Garrison and Ridge Roads until 1874 when it moved to the new

Town Hall (now the Historical Museum). It 1902 it moved to the Fort Erie Racetrack, running until the Association disbanded in 1942. Approximately 2,500 attended this event each year at the racetrack. The top photo shows George House at the fair. He was a Councillor, Deputy Reeve and Warden.



Local Hero Removes Bomb

In 1965 Lieutenant David Renshaw took a terrifying six mile, 20 minute ride with a live bomb cradled in his arms. As reported in the newspaper, Renshaw was serving with the Royal Canadian Engineers in British Columbia where the WWII relic was found beneath a garage floor. Renshaw commented "I could see the safety pin was still in, but it was so rusted the pin could have been powdered inside and the bomb exploded anytime during the trip." It was successfully detonated at a gravel pit.

Patent 1,243,885

The answer to the patent question posed earlier in the newsletter is... Aircraft Double Propeller Blades. An excerpt from the patent follows:

"I, John H. Smyth, of the village of Bridgeburg, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Propellers for Aircraft... The object of this invention is to obtain an increase of driving power at the usual rotational speed, and this object is attained by providing the propeller with a set of double blades arranged at such angles of incidence as to produce a greater leverage, and consequently more power at the same rotational speed, or the same power at a lower rotational speed, than in the case of a propeller having a set of single blades. The essential feature of the invention is not so much the shape of the blades, but it is the principle of arranging the blades in pairs, with the components of each pair at different angles."

Check out the new Battlefield signs...

Coming this fall, Museum Services will unveil an outdoor display at the Ridgeway Battlefield Memorial Park. Signs with pictures, maps and text, will be installed to tell the story of the 1866 Fenian Raids. Visitors will learn about the motivation, battles and



consequences of these raids from the perspective of local residents, the Fenians and the country at large. This significant battle claimed the lives of 9 Canadian volunteer miltia. These raids were also a catalyst for the Confederation movement, and as a result, Canada became a country one year later. The solemn battleground stands with much of the same topography as existed when the fighting occurred nearly 150 years ago. This display is made possible through the generous support of Farm Credit Canada and the Bertie Historical Society. The park is located on Hwy.#3 just east of Ridge Road. An unveiling program is scheduled for Wed. Oct. 16th at 6:30 p.m.

Museum and Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee — Volunteer Opportunities

Interested in local history or built heritage? The MCHAC might be for you. This committee advises on the Town's museum and heritage issues. Current members include: David Renshaw, Charles Capern, Keith Overend, Charlene Nigh, Mary McLelland-Papp, Margaret Feaver, and Councillor Hill. They meet on the third Monday of each month at 10:00 a.m. Contact the Clerk for details, 871-1600.

If you are interested in helping but not going to meetings, there are two opportunities to work on special projects without being a member of the formal committee. Call the Museum for details.

- (1) Built Heritage complete heritage building inventories and research properties for heritage designations. Required skills include a good knowledge of old building styles and construction techniques and the ability to research the history of buildings and their former occupants.
- (2) Newspaper Articles research and write articles to be submitted to the newspaper as part of this committee's monthly series featured in the Fort Erie Post called "Did You Know?"

In Memorium

In recognition of a lifetime of community service, in public office and as an educator, mentor and volunteer, we acknowledge the many contributions of Paul Fell, including serving on the Museum Board. At right with Gary Fornasiero and Chris Coulis.



"Do You Remember"

Many thanks to the Times for featuring the Museum's "Do You Remember" column. The response has been tremendous, and thanks to present and former residents, hundreds of people and photos have been identified.

The Claus Connection

Unbeknowst to each other, a man from Texas and a man from Florida each allowed the Museum to copy their family photos this past winter. It turns out they are third cousins and both grew up in Ridgeway. Bruce Wright is Philip Claus' grandson and Courtland Claus is Frank Claus' son. Frank and Philip were brothers. In 1861 Courtland's great-grandfather, Jacob, purchased substantial farmland and the stone house on Yacht Harbour Road. The home was built by Mathias Haun in 1803 and was used by the militia in the War of 1812. It remained in

the Claus family until 1967. Courtland donated the 1803 crown grant to the Museum. Jacob

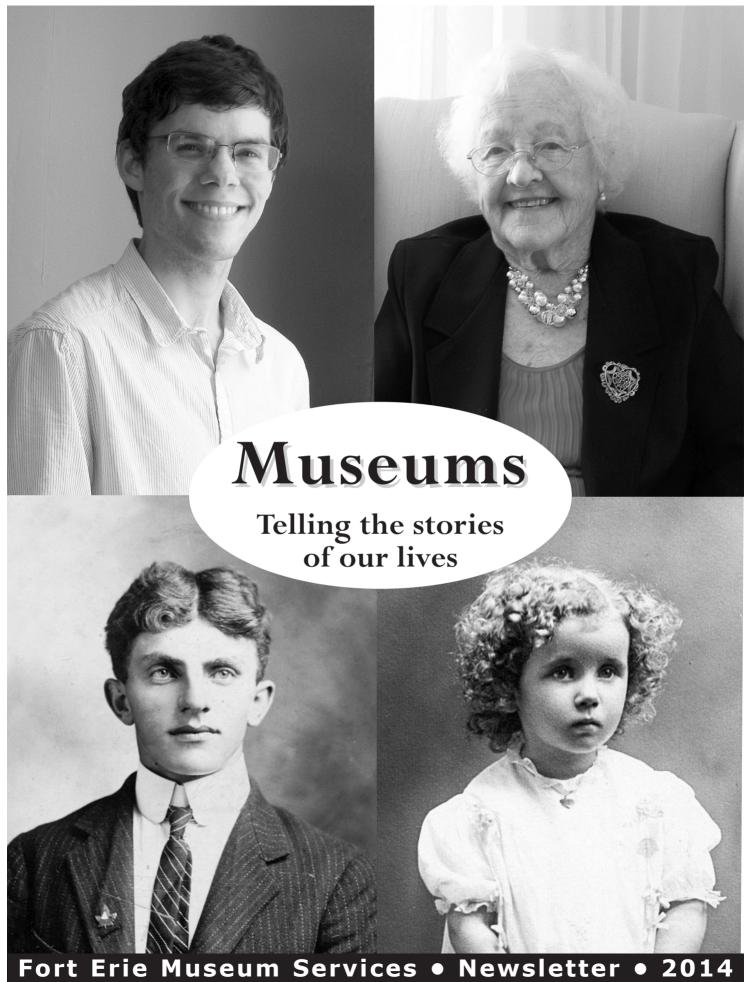


Claus was originally a bootmaker in Ridgeway, coming to town in 1855 with \$3. A 1914 article notes that he "became one of the wealthiest land owners in Bertie Township." Thanks to Courtland, these are a few of the many Claus stories now available in the archives.

The photo at top is of Bruce's mother, Violet Claus, c.1918. At left is Courtland's photo of raising Lightship 82, c.1914, with Kitty Burke and Courtland's parents Helene O'Neill and Frank Claus. This ship sank off Point Abino and as a result, the Lighthouse was then built. The men below are unidentified, but you can see the undeveloped shoreline of Yacht Harbour Road including the stone house.



Fort Erie Museums · Historical · Railroad · Battlefield · Mewinzha





Battlefield Exhibit Open 24/7

Spread the word... in three years Canada will celebrate its 150th anniversary. An event which hastened the Confederation movement happened right here in 1866 — the Battle of Ridgeway. To celebrate and honour this nation-building battle, Fort Erie Museum Services has installed an exhibit on the battlefield located on Hwy.#3, just east of Ridge Road. Most

of this battlefield is undisturbed, giving visitors a visceral sense of the brave actions and sacrifice of the local militia and Queen's Own Rifles who found themselves fighting here against veterans of the Civil War.

Admission is free and the park is open seven days a week. Many people are aware and proud of the role Ridgeway and Fort Erie played in the formation of Canada and this exhibit gives them a place to share that story with family, friends and guests. The exhibit answers: "Who were the Fenians and why did they invade here?"; "What was it like for local residents living on the front lines?"; "Where was the action?"; "What was the connection to farmers and farming?"; and "What were the consequences?"

This project was funded in part through the generosity of grants and donations from: Farm Credit Canada, the Bertie Historical Society, the Capern family, Fort Erie Bingo, and memorial tributes for Victor Miller.

The Museum worked with Page Graphics to design this interactive experience on this historic battleground; pictured above is owner Gary Page at one of the introductory panels. As you stroll through the



entrance to the park, exhibits can be seen in the cabin windows and on the pavillion walls. Pictured at left looking at the timeline and battle maps are Rick Brady, Director of Community and Development Services and Jane Davies, Museum Administrator/ Curator.

Newsletter

The Fort Erie Museums
Newsletter is distributed to
every household in
greater Fort Erie.
Written and designed by
Jane Davies, Administrator.

Cover Photos

Clockwise from top left:
Christian Baker; student,
Ruth Coulthurst; volunteer,
and from the archives
Grace Johnston and
Chester Johnston.

Contact Us

Fort Erie Museum Services
Box 339, Ridgeway, LoS 1N0
p• 905-894-5322
e• museum@forterie.on.ca

Visit Us

Historical Museum:
402 Ridge Rd.
Railway Museum:
Central Ave. at Gilmore
Mewinzha Gallery:
100 Queen St.
Ridgeway Battlefield Park
3388 Garrison Rd.

Mission Statement

- Fort Erie's Museums care for a base of knowledge that belongs to the future.
- Fort Erie's Museums help create a strong and proud community by celebrating our shared heritage.
- Fort Erie's Museums help satisfy the intellectual needs of the community.

The Maple Leaf Forever

Alexander Muir wrote *The Maple Leaf Forever* after he fought in the Battle of Ridgeway. Muir was born in Scotland and moved to Scarborough in 1833. He taught in several schools throughout the city and was principal at Leslieville from 1860-1870. He enlisted to serve with the



Queen's Own Rifles shortly after it was formed in 1860, and was sent to Ridgeway in 1866 to fight against the invading Fenian Army. He wrote the song a year later and it served as the unofficial national anthem until 1939. It is also the regimental march of the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada.

The QOR is a Reserve Regiment of the Canadian Armed Forces, making it the longest-standing



modern military unit in Canada's history. This unit and soldiers have a distinguished and storied history which is celebrated at the QOR Museum, located at Casa Loma in Toronto. Members of the QOR and Association continue to commemorate the Battle of Ridgeway through participation in exhibit openings (2013 Battlefield Park photo at left) and through their annual Decoration Day ceremony at the Memorial Cairn each June. For further information on the QOR go to <www.qor.com>

Museum Hours

While this newsletter allows you to learn a bit about local history in the comfort of your own home... you may wish to experience it firsthand by visiting the following sites:

- Mewinzha: A Journey Back in Time (Archaeology collection and Native art), Peace Bridge Administration Building, 100 Queen St., Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., free
- Fort Erie Railway Museum, 400 Central Ave., daily May 17 Sept. 1, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., donation
- Fort Erie Historical Museum, 402 Ridge Road, daily June 7 Sept. 1;
 Sunday Friday for the balance of the year, 9 a.m. 5 p.m., donation
- The Fenian Raids, outdoor exhibit at the Ridgeway Battlefield Memorial Park, 3388 Hwy.#3, free

Also, check out the Museum's exhibits in the Town Hall atrium; the genealogy records in the Historical Museum's archives; the *Bridge that Peace Built* exhibit at the Peace Bridge Administration building; and the web site <www.museum.forterie.ca>. Need help? Call the office at 905-894-5322. Above photo shows visitors Adriana Jacobi and Charlene Heckman at *Mewinzha*.





Olympian Runs at Crystal Beach

A year before Jesse Owens' stunning four gold medal performance at the 1936 Berlin Olympics, he raced at the Crystal Beach Park stadium (located on the east side of Ridgeway Road at Erie Road). It's been written that Owens "wasn't afraid of Adolf Hitler or Jim Crow, but he feared his rival Eulace Peacock." He lost to Peacock in that 1935 race (photo at left shows the stadium,

but not this race). The Museum is assisting writers who are producing a movie called "Race", a French/German/Canadian co-production. The story of Owens and Peacock is compelling and unfolds in this *Sports Illustrated* article at http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/longform/peacock/

Many Ways to Make a Difference

People often ask how they can support the Museum — here are some ideas:

- Bring friends and guests to visit the Museum sites and gift shops.
- Donate local history artifacts or let the Museum scan your old photographs.
- Donate to the Museum's Capital or Memorial Fund. The former supports large projects and the latter is invested and the interest used to support operations.
- Donate to one of the Museum's special projects: repairing the 6218 steam engine or installing a memorial to the Ridgeway Nine the nine soldiers who lost their lives at the Battle of Ridgeway.



Saved From the Dustbin

In 1824 a wooden Episcopal Church was built along the Niagara River just south of Gilmore Rd. This was replaced by a stone building in 1881 — St. Paul's Anglican. Therefore, this picture of the original church dates between 1824-1881.

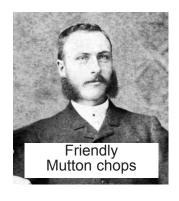
It was donated by Mrs. Shirley, a descendant of one of the parishioners. Her g. g. g. grandfather was William Stanton who had 22 children. William's daughter Charlotte married Col. John Warren. Janet Shirley is their g. g. g. granddaughter.

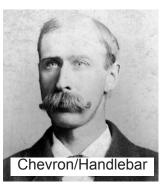
Mr. Mikel was helping Mrs. Shirley 'downsize' and found this picture. He sent it to the Museum with this note: "I'm very glad it's found a good home. It came quite close to getting put in the dust bin!" We have seen this image in old newspapers but now, thanks to Mr. Mikel, the original is safe.

Fort Erie Museums • Historical • Railway • Battlefield • Mewinzha

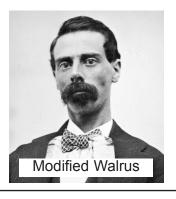
Movember

This November why not sport a classic historical mustache? Here are some examples from the Museum's archives:









Culture... the 4th Pillar of a Sustainable Community

There are four pillars for a sustainable community and cultural vitality is one of them — along with economic development, social equity and environmental responsibility. "Research confirms that quality of place has become a key competitive advantage for cities in attracting and retaining people — people who in turn attract investment and new business. Key factors in determining quality of place are: uniqueness and authenticity — a product of a distinctive local history, built heritage and natural landscapes. Municipalities are turning increasingly to culture and heritage as part of economic renewal brought on by the decline of traditional industries. This is part of a larger global shift from an economy based on the production of goods and services to a knowledge-based economy focused on creativity and innovation" (from a Municipal Cultural Planning Conference).

This is good news for Fort Erie, since there is an abundance of unique local history on which to capitalize, develop and promote.

Giants in Fort Erie

At the turn of the last century, vaudeville and circus acts performed at Erie Beach and Crystal Beach Amusement Parks. Many performers from these side shows (or freak shows as they were called) stayed in local hotels, including the van Droysen Sisters (shown at right). This card was handed out when they stayed at the Royal Hotel in Fort Erie, which was



located on the Niagara Boulevard just north of Jarvis Street. They were billed as 'Giants' but in fact were neither sisters nor van Droysen's. Hilda (at right), was born Dora Helms and she married a man whose stage name was William van Droysen. After his death in 1925 she teamed up with Kaatje van Dyk who took the stage name Elsa van Droysen. Hilda was 6' 7" tall and Elsa 7' 1".



From the Archives

Myrna Gare recently donated photographs and archival material connected to the Sterling Shop (below) which was located on Ridge Road. This photo shows her father, Wesley Borden Evans, standing in front of the store which operated from 1929-1963. He was a jeweller and also sold clocks, china, silver etc. Myrna was a

professional twirler. The photo above is a 1967 publicity shot for her performance at the Inferno Hotel in

Buffalo. Also performing that night were George Jessel and Tony Bennett.

A prophetic name, the Inferno Hotel was destroyed by fire in 1968. The Sterling Shop building still stands and is now the home to an aquarium supply store called 'Swimming Along'.

Mr. Evans' competition was Beeshy's china shop. In the 1900s there was sufficient business to support two such

stores as this pre-dated internet shopping and mega-malls.



150th Anniversary

The 150th anniversary of the Battle of Ridgeway is fast approaching. The Queen's Own Rifles Association is organizing a celebration worthy of this nation-building battle. A battalion of soldiers will be arriving in Ridgeway in June 2016 — watch for upcoming details.

Ridgeway Nine Memorial

Fort Erie Museum
Services is committed to installing a memorial for the nine soldiers of the Queen's Own Rifles who lost their lives during the Battle of Ridgeway.
Contact the Museum at 894-5322 if you would like to support this tribute to these brave men.

What's playing on your iPod?... WWI edition

Songs are often used to acknowledge shared experiences. This is especially true for the emotional music from WWI. While the technology used to share songs has changed over the centuries, their ability to stir the spirit has not. Here are some titles that you might remember from a 1918 book in the archives titled *Songs The Soldiers And Sailors Sing*: My Bonnie Lies Over The Ocean; Give My Regards To Broadway; Keep Your Head Down Allemand; Little Brown Jug; Over There; Rocked In The Cradle Of The Deep; When Johnny Comes Marching Home; When You And I Were Young, Maggie; Yankee Doodle Dandy.

Book of Remembrance

The Battle of Ridgeway was a catalyst in Canada's formation, yet the nine soldiers who lost their lives in this battle were removed from Canada's Book of Remembrance.
Contact your MP to have their names reinstated.
Their sacrifice deserves to be remembered.



Support Needed for CN 6218

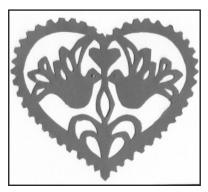
The Friends of 6218 are fundraising to repair engine CN 6218 and are canvassing for fundraising volunteers and financial support. There is also an opportunity to help by providing historical background to some of the Railway Museum artifacts. For details, contact Friends chair Mary McLelland-Papp at (894-8451) or through their website at <www.friendsof6218.ca>. This picture,

taken in Fort Erie was recently donated to the Museum by Shirley Shearing.

Tribute to WWII Flying Officer Allan Troup

Volunteers provide context to the Museum's collection. Thanks to volunteer Harry Barnhart, a Christmas card signed "Al", became evidence of one of Fort Erie's servicemen who fought and died in WWII. Harry recently donated a scrapbook of local items, including this card. Harry told us the card was sent to his father in 1941 by Flying Officer Allan Troup (they were cousins.) Allan was shot down over Germany on Dec. 12 of that same year. During his service he was recognized for sinking many German merchant ships. In his letters he writes: "I'll describe 'flak' and what it's like aimed at you when I get home... The other boys live longer, while we have a terrific turn over in crews... It's by far the worst job in the war and you just pray nothing will hit you as you fly through about 3 miles of solid barrage... So far we've been lucky... If I last until spring, I'm going to ask for something easy, such as night bombing." Fort Erie's Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron 337 is named after him. Flying Officer Troup's signature and history are now on file in the archives — thanks Harry.

The Ice Caves Live On



Many thanks to Joyce Capern and Larry Mathewson for supporting the Museum's gift shop program. Larry is allowing the Museum to sell his Ice



Caves DVD. If you missed seeing this natural phenomena, his DVD is the next best thing. Joyce is producing various handicrafts (like the 'scissors cutting' card at left called Scherenschnitte), redwork, ribbon embroidery and samplers. Stop by the Historical Museum and check them out!

No Shortage of Search Engines

The Museum assists many researchers and we routinely stress the importance of using primary sources. Navigate the internet by choosing the right search engine for your research needs.

If you're looking for primary sources: If you're looking for historical information:

http://memory.loc.gov http://www.fordham.edu http://www.sil.si.edu http://www.historyworld.net

If you're looking for sites chosen by experts: If you're looking for books, maps or art:

http://infomine.ucr.edu https://www.worldcat.org

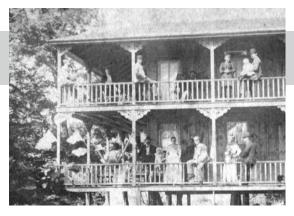
http://libguides.com http://maps.nationalgeographic.com

http://www.infotopia.info http://www.artcyclopedia.com

A primary source is a first-hand account of an event (i.e. letters or maps). Second-hand accounts (i.e. books) are secondary sources and they often contain opinions on past events. The Museum's website contains local history resources as well as links to our archives, reference and collections databases. Check them out at <www.museum.forterie.ca>

Wish You Were Here!

If you vacationed at Crystal Beach 100 years ago you may have stayed at the Hermitage Hotel. Owned by the Cheney family, these pictures are from their c. 1908 guest album. The Hermitage was located on the hill at the end of Ridgeway Road overlooking what is now the Palmwood Hotel and the Cpl. Albert Storm playground. John Rebstock



(developer of Crystal Beach Park) remembered the Hermitage as Crystal Beach's first hotel. It was followed by many hotels in Crystal Beach that served the tourism market as people flocked to the amusement park and beach amenities. Pictured above is the Hermitage with wrap-around balconies.

At left, hotel quests



enjoy the cool waters of Lake Erie dressed "appropriately" in wool bathing suits and stockings.

At right, a bus service that ran from the hotel to the Ridgeway train station.



100th Anniversary of WWI

1914 marked the beginning of WWI — a global war that lasted four years and resulted in over 37 million casualties. The Historical Museum's archives has WWI research binders that contain documents, photographs and names of citizens that left Fort Erie to fight in this war. Stop by the Museum to peruse these binders, to research your relatives, or to ensure that the servicemen and women you know are included.

While the fighting did not reach Fort Erie, there was a guard stationed at the International Train Bridge from 1914-17. A company of 60 men from the 44th regiment guarded the bridge and border. Pictured above is Sgt. Jack Pattison with the B-1 train station in the background (now located at the Fort Erie Railway Museum). Below, Sgt.





Pepper inspects the troops in front of the barracks which were also located near the train bridge.

WWI Prisoners of War Held at Bridgeburg

Early on in WWI, 22 Austrian Guard reservists crossed into Canada at Windsor and boarded a train for Buffalo. They were headed to New York City to board a steamer to Holland. They were armed with razors, earth picks and a few days of provisions. Arriving at Bridgeburg (now Fort Erie) on Aug. 23, 1914, they were spotted and single-handedly arrested by Immigration Inspector J.R. McNeel. Before being transferred to Kingston, they spent two weeks in Bridgeburg being guarded by six soldiers of the 44th Regiment. Accounts of their stay were recorded in the Ridgeway Herald:

"Every man has a mattress and is furnished with three meals a day. The only work they have to do is keep their prison clean. They spend much of their time playing cards and singing to a harmonica."

"With orders to shoot the first man that attempted to get away, the prisoners were marched to the town hall. A large crowd gathered to see the procession up Courtwright St.... it had the same nature as a Victoria Day celebration, except that there was no band and the fixed bayonets of the red-coats were very business-like in appearance."

"A religious service for the entirely Roman Catholic group was held by Rev. Mitchener, pastor of Knox Church, at the town hall with the aid of a camp organ. They sang songs in their own language and were so affected that they broke down and tears streamed down their faces."

Facebook, Twitter and Tweets

The definition of a tweet is "a short burst of inconsequential information." Facebook was created in 2004 and Twitter in 2006, but the fascination with knowing what other people



are doing is not new at all. What's new is the speed in which the information is delivered and who is doing the posting. Historic newsletters talked about other people, today's postings are mainly about ourselves.

Calling cards were given out when visiting and they were collected as you would Facebook friends. *The Rookers Weekly* was a handwritten newsletter filled with personal updates much like Twitter or Facebook postings. A 1918 edition reported: "Earl Sherk was out fishing on Tuesday"; "Mildred and Elsie were in town for the quilting party"; "M.V. spent Sun. in St. Kitts"; "Jean went to prayer meeting last week with her blouse on wrong side out". The *Thunder Bay Flashes* newsletter, June 1964 edition states: "The Muscatos just returned from Puerto Rico"; "Thunder Bay Golf course officially opened last Sat."; "Bill C. reportedly up, about, and feeling ever so much better. Take it easy Uncle Bill!"

Do You Remember? ... Yes You Do!

Many thanks to the *Times* for continuing to partner with the Museum in publishing the *Do You Remember?* series. We are grateful to all the people who respond each week by identifying the unknown people in the photographs. There are thousands of stories comprising Fort Erie's heritage and like pieces of a puzzle, the Museum collects, identifies and arranges these pieces into images that the community can share and celebrate. By calling the Museum to identify the who, what, where, when and why of these photographs, you are giving the Museum more accurate information with which to work. It's the community working together to preserve its own heritage. Well done!



Happy 10th Anniversary

The Fleet Cataloguing Committee and Deputy Administrator/Curator Jude Scott both started working at the Museum in 2004. The volunteers provide historical background to the Fleet artifact collection. Clockwise from bottom are: George Sherk, Don LeFurgey, Dan Fletcher, Peter Griffiths, Joan MacDonald, Jack Cunningham, and Jude Scott. When asked what she was most

proud of over the past 10 years, Jude noted helping establish the Museum's records database, editing the history book *Many Voices II*, and curating the 28,000 artifacts at the Mentholatum building.

Fort Erie Museums • Historical • Railway • Battlefield • Mewinzha

A Great Big THANKS to our Volunteers!

The Museum's work program is supported by 40 volunteers in the following areas: cataloguing, conservation, records management, database input, research and heritage photography. Staff provide training and volunteer management and the volunteers' work enhances the services that the Museum delivers. There are currently volunteer positions available on the Land Records Transcription Committee which meets at the Historical Museum every Monday from 1:30 - 4:00 p.m.

Many thanks to the following volunteers for their generous donation of time and expertise: Karen Angle, Jinette Augustine, Sheila Barnhardt, Harry Barnhart, Norma Benner, Janet Boyce, Charlie Capern, Joyce Capern, Ruth Coulthurst, Tonia Cunningham, Josephine Davies, Sharon Dell, Dorothy Dorge, John Gagnon, Chelsea Gordon, Harold Hampel, Sharon Healey, Bev Jewson, Joseph Lischka, Valerie McCormack, Joan McNeil, Pat Mitchell, Keith Overend, Ruby Smith, Jean Tripp, and Mary Ellen Winger. Fleet and Museum Committees' names appear in separate articles.



70th Anniversary of D-Day

How do we thank a generation who sacrificed so much, so that our lives would be better? For a start, we should remember and appreciate their efforts. This year is the 70th anniversary of D-Day — the tragic, yet successful, WWII surge that led to a victory for the allies. Many brave Fort Erie men and women served in that war and their service is forever remembered



within the Museum's archives. Stop by the Historical Museum and ask to see the WWI and WWII reference binders. They contain the names and papers of citizens who left Fort Erie to serve in a war.

Life on the home front was a significant part of the war effort. Fort Erie citizens, of all ages, rationed and salvaged resources so that these could be shipped overseas. This included the rationing of gasoline, butter, sugar, meat, and coffee; and the salvaging of rubber, fat, bones and milkweed. Money was also needed to pay for the war and Fort Erie joined the Canada-wide effort by selling and buying Victory Bonds. The photo at right shows the Victory Loan rally held at Mather's Arch c. 1942.





Outreach Exhibits

This year the Museum took its show on the road with several outreach events. In May, pottery from the archaeology collection was featured in a talk given by Gregory Braun at the Peace Bridge Administrative Building. In July, a display and interactive activities on the Battle of Ridgeway were installed on the front lawn of the Historical Museum for visitors to Ridgeway's Summer Festival. Also, a display was produced for Crystal Beach Park Memories Day which featured 'Signs from the Park'. The Town Hall atrium hosts the '1812 Divided Loyalties' exhibit and seasonally changing display case. The current theme and guessing game is about shoes. A military exhibit is planned for the fall.

Horticultural Society

Many thanks to our new community partners, the Fort Erie Horticultural Society for their work on the flower beds at the Fort Erie Railway Museum. Despite spring's late start, your planting advice and volunteer efforts are bloomin' wonderful!

Heritage Arts Legacy

The Museum is pleased to support Heritage Arts Legacy with their project of plaquing the graves of the War of 1812 veterans. Legacy members are using the Museum's database to research the names and locations of these grave sites. A worthwhile project indeed.

Ridgeway Blooms

Many thanks to the Ridgeway BIA for their downtown beautification project. The Historical Museum participated by purchasing a flower barrel to help enhance the look of Ridge Road. Stop by to check out the businesses and see the downtown core in bloom!



Battlefield Cabin Repairs

Due to a generous donation from the Bertie Historical Society, the Battlefield cabin on Hwy. #3 is being repaired. This cabin stood on the front lines during the 1866 Battle of Ridgeway and was moved to the Memorial Park in 1976. The exterior is being returned to it's original appearance (but using modern materials) in response to needed repairs and the upcoming

150th anniversary of this battle in 2016. Pictured above are the BHS executive: Bill Everett, Flo Everett, Harold Hampel, Sharon Dell, and Jean Tripp. In the back row is Andrea Wilson, Curator of Marketing, Programming and Exhibitions who is overseeing this maintenance project.



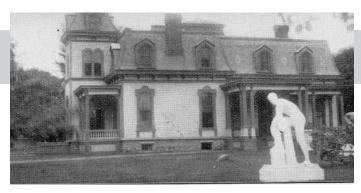
UN Declares 2014 International Year of Family Farming

This year highlights the potential family farms have to eradicate hunger and preserve natural resources. Family farming is

linked to world food security; contributes to a balanced diet; safeguards the world's agro-biodiversity; and can boost local economies. If every household in Ontario spent \$10 a week on local food, there would be an additional \$2.4 billion in the local economy at the end of the year. Keeping this money circulating grows those dollars to \$3.6 billion and creates 10,000 new jobs!



Go to http://www.ontariotable.com for further details, and remember to support local roadside produce stands. Farmers markets are located at: Ridgeway Village Square, Saturdays at 7:30 a.m.; Fort Erie Racetrack, Sundays at noon; and Port Colborne Market Square, Fridays at 7:00 a.m. Photo at top left is of Carl Englehart plowing with his team; at right is Wilson Teal loading hay.



Lottery... an "Artful" Deception

The Kentucky Lottery Co. conducted business throughout North America and in 1902 ran lotteries out of 33 Princess St. in Fort Erie. They operated under the auspices of the Canadian Royal Art Union. Photographs in their promotional book

showed many sculptures on the front lawn of this grand home. As a side note, oral histories claim these sculptures came from the Pan-American Exposition, which was held in Buffalo in 1901. The Lottery Co. promised to award 3,434 prizes totalling \$53,092 in a twice-monthly public draw. People were asked to mail in their money and lottery numbers would be assigned. Tickets were 25¢ - \$1. The lottery came to an abrupt halt as noted in this headline from the *Buffalo Courier*, Feb. 1902: "KENTUCKY LOTTERY AT FORT ERIE IS RAIDED — Manager Taken Into Custody For Fraudulent

Use of the Mails And Taken to Niagara For Trial."

The building also has a storied history. It was the Earp house in the 1870s; used by the Mechanic's Institute for a public library in the early 1900s; owned by the Rose family in 1912 (Annie Rose was a sister to J.L. Kraft); operated as the Erie Lane Hotel or Tavern from the 1940s-70s; Grammy's Tavern in the 1980s; and Long Shotz Hotel and rooming house since 1992. It burned in November 2013.





SOS!

Lew Anderson was the Point Abino Lighthouse keeper for almost 40 years until it was decommissioned in 1995. He is pictured

here in his office within the lighthouse. He donated his files to the Museum's archives and they included a 1963 letter from Richard MacLean to the Federal Dept. of Transport which stated: "This is to inform you of a service that was shown two of my friends and myself by Louis Anderson. In the evening of June 21... we three were sailing a small boat adjacent to Point Abino... this craft upset, spilling us in the water. The light [from the lighthouse] stopped in our direction for a short space of time. This was the first indication that anyone saw us go in the water. I would like to thank your young man Anderson for playing an important part in saving the lives of my two friends and myself." Lew Anderson passed away this June and he left a legacy of helping many boaters as resident lighthouse keeper.

For information about lighthouse tours call 871-1600 ex. 2431. Pedestrian and bicycle access is available June 21 - Labour Day, Mon.- Fri. from 3-6 p.m. and Sat.- Sun. from 10-6 p.m. Remember to stop at the entrance gate to fill out an access permission form.

A Chance To Be Involved

Every term, Council appoints 8 citizens to serve on the Museum and Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee. This group also meets as the Museum Services Standing Committee and the Municipal Heritage Standing Committee. Current members include: David Renshaw, Charles Capern, Keith Overend, Charlene Nigh, Mary McLelland-Papp, Margaret Feaver, David Ellsworth, Stacey Horton-Steele, and Councillor John Hill. Some of the committee's projects for this term include: advising on neighbourhood plans; advising on Museum policy and work programs; writing the *Did You Know?* newspaper series; supporting the 1812 Bicentennial Committee; and preparing a built heritage inventory. If you are interested in serving on next term's committee contact the Clerk's Dept. at 871-1600 after the October 27 municipal election.

Seduction

An interesting entry appeared in the 1908 Police Magistrate Register. On Aug. 20th Edward T. was charged by Jessie H. with "Seduction under promise of marriage." The case was heard by Justice Rathvon and the following sentence pronounced "Edward and Jessie were married on Aug. 20th."

One of our volunteers noted: "It was a life sentence for both of them!"

Can you imagine the events that led up to this trial, the trial itself or their lives afterwards? This could be the premise for a novel or movie. If you are a writer, the Museum's archives are laden with story ideas.

A glimpse into their lives is possible using the Museum's database. Edward died when he was 56 years old and Jessie was listed as his wife; therefore, they stayed married for 36 years. Two years after their marriage they had a son who tragically only lived for 24 years. Jessie lived to be 86.

Students Support Museum Services

The information in this newsletter is just a tiny leaf in the forest that is the Museum's collection. Genealogists, researchers, and those who reminisce on social media rely on the Museum as the public repository of Fort Erie's heritage. The Museum used to manage this information with a paper-based system. Now, a computer database is



making information retrieval more efficient. Helping with this transition are the Museum's summer students: Christian Baker, Robbie Brant, Martin Lee and Daniel Pampano (pictured from left, Robbie and Martin). In addition to admissions, gift shop sales, and site and grounds maintenance, they are busy with cataloguing, conservation, exhibit maintenance, event support, marketing, and research. The database projects include: entering records from the Railway, maps and audio/video collection.

Do These Topics Peak Your Interest?

The Museum is pleased to partner with the Bertie Historical Society on one of their monthly public programs. On Sept. 17 Andrea Wilson will present "Art Work of the Fenian Raid"; on Oct. 15 Charles Capern will present "Finally It's Over — the War of 1812"; and on Nov. 19 Pat Street will talk about the "History of the Fort Erie Legion". Programs are open to the public and begin at 7:30 p.m. at the Crystal Ridge Library (except for the Sept. 17 program which will be held at the Historical Museum).

Long-standing society member, Earl Plato, recently released his newest publication, *The Wintemute Warriors* at a book launch held at the Historical Museum. This book and many other local history titles are available in the gift shop.

A Woman Should Have a Bank Book

It is a woman's right that she should have the handling of the money for household and dress expenses. The careful housewife plans for the various things she needs and saves for them. She realizes that loose cash kept in her purse soon goes—it tempts her to spend.

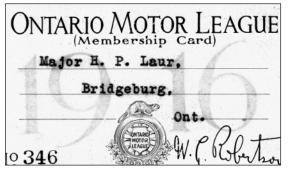
We've come a long way from this old bank advertisement. Today, six of Fort Erie's ten banks are managed by women.

Grape Catsup Recipe

5 lbs. grapes [about 10 cups]
1 pint vinegar [2 cups]
2 lbs. brown sugar [4 cups]
1 tablespoon each cinnamon, cloves,
allspice and pepper
Boil grapes and put through sieve.
Return grape mixture to pot,
add remaining ingredients.
Simmer 1 hour. Serve.

From an undated cookbook

Cross-Border Living



As a border town, Fort Erie's history includes the story of summer residents. In the late-1800s.



Buffalonians, eager to escape the heat of the city, built homes along the Canadian lakeshore. Generations of families have called Fort Erie their summer home ever since.

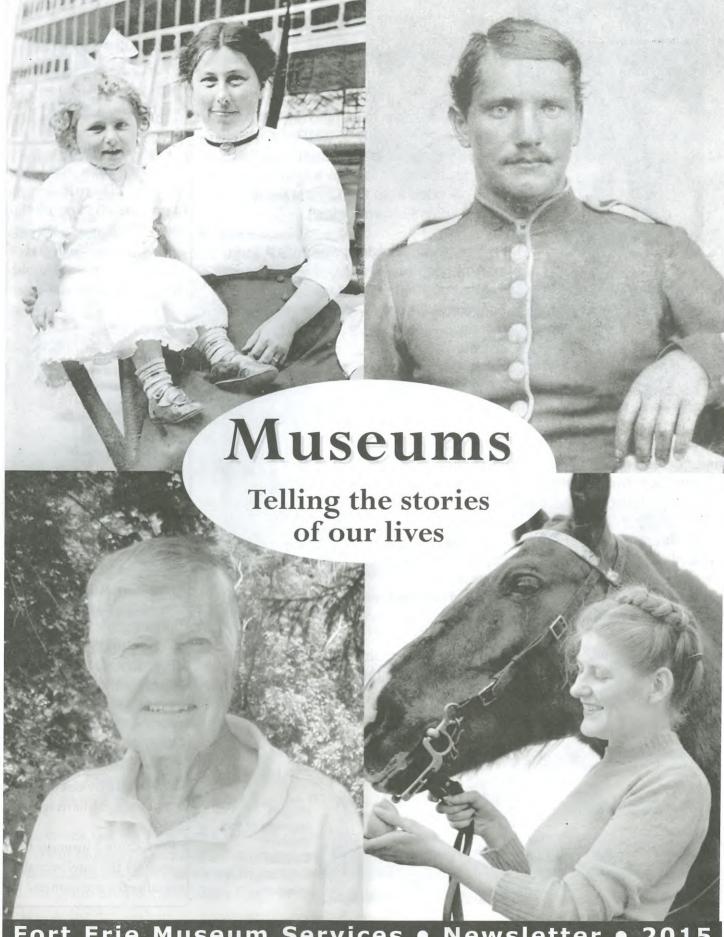
Re U.S. CUSTOMS 7-DAY PERMIT.

By a ruling of the Treasury Department at Washington, D.C., the Collectors of Customs at Buffalo, Niagara Falls and Lewiston are authorized to permit Canadian owners to bring their automobiles to the United States for a temporary stay of not exceeding seven days, where such owners exhibit membership cards certifying they are members in good standing of Ontario Motor League. It is still necessary, however, for members to obtain the New York Motor

As part of the Museum's mandate to collect and interpret the history of Fort Erie, we began a project called "Life on the Lakeshore". Summer residents who would like their family's history included in the archives can contact the Museum. Virginia and Charles Harrington did just that. These photographs are from Harrington house at Bay Beach. Pictured below is Charles' grandfather, also named Charles.

Being a border town also made it convenient for trips to the United States. In 1916 Major Laur of Bridgeburg, now Fort Erie, applied for an Ontario Motor League card. This allowed him to bring his car into the United States for seven days. In order to drive his car though, he also had to obtain a New York Motor Vehicle License.





Fort Erie Museum Services • Newsletter • 2015



Geronimo...

Frank Ellis was the first Canadian to parachute from an airplane over Canada, and he did so on July 5, 1919 at Crystal Beach. Frank (at left) was working that summer taking passengers on 10 min. airplane rides from the Crystal Beach airfield (plane shown below).

One of his passengers was Bill Chilson, an American parachutist who was hired to test out the new Irvin parachute.

Following his successful jump, Bill left the

parachute at the beach for the night.

Frank took advantage of the opportunity and decided to "test it out". He and his co-pilot Don Russell, repacked the chute — having never packed a chute before. Ellis said "It [the parachute] looked like a bag of laundry and weighed as much as a sack of cement. It took all my strength to struggle out...! was standing precariously

on the wing and a fraction later the wind whipped me off and I plummeted down. I don't remember the fall too well. It happened too quickly."

For a life preserver, Frank wore a rubber inner tube from the plane's spare tire over top of his one piece bathing suit (above). The next day he jumped again! Frank's spunk, guess work, and unauthorized use



of property contributed to this "jump into history."

Symbols of Safety

Images courtesy of the Western Canada Aviation Museum.

Newsletter

Fort Erie Museum Services
Newsletter is distributed to
Fort Erie households.
Written and designed by
Jane Davies, Administrator.

Cover Photos

Clockwise from top left:
Helen and Daisy Ramey at
Crystal Beach Park; Phillip
Ort, Private in the Fenian
Raids; Vera Learn and
horse Melody; and Harold
Hampel, Museum volunteer.

Contact Us

Fort Erie Museum Services
Box 339, Ridgeway, LOS 1N0
p• 905-894-5322
e• museum@forterie.on.ca

Visit Us

Historical Museum:
402 Ridge Rd.
Railway Museum:
Central Ave. at Gilmore
Mewinzha Gallery:
100 Queen St.
Ridgeway Battlefield Park
3388 Garrison Rd.

Mission Statement

- Fort Erie's Museums care for a base of knowledge that belongs to the future.
- Fort Erie's Museums help create a strong and proud community by celebrating our shared heritage.
- Fort Erie's Museums help satisfy the intellectual needs of the community.

Get ready — next year is the 150th!

The battle that made Canada — that's what many call the Battle of Ridgeway. In 1866 the Fenian Army invaded Fort Erie and Ridgeway. These Irish veterans from the American Civil War intended to capture Upper Canada and offer it back to Britain as a trade for Ireland's freedom.

Photo of downtown Ridgeway during the 50th anniversary parade in 1916.

Soldiers were deployed to Ridgeway and to the

Fort Erie dock to fight the Fenians. While the Fenians may have won this battle, the benefits for our



country were long-lasting. Politicians and citizens realized that they could not rely on Britain to defend this land and that confederation of the provinces would allow for better national security. Canada became a country one year later.

The 150th anniversary of this battle will be celebrated next year with soldiers from regiments that fought in the 1866 campaign returning to Ridgeway on June 4th. At left centre is Lt. Col. Banerjee of the Queen's Own Rifles and Maj. Colic from the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry (2nd from left) during a recce at Battlefield Park. Watch the media for further details.

Museum Hours

While this newsletter allows you to learn a bit about local history in the comfort of your own home... you may wish to experience it firsthand by visiting the following sites:

- Mewinzha: A Journey Back in Time (Archaeology collection and Native art), Peace Bridge Administration Building, 100 Queen St., Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., free
- Fort Erie Railway Museum, 400 Central Ave., daily May 17 Sept. 1, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., donation
- Fort Erie Historical Museum, 402 Ridge Road, daily June 7 Sept. 1; Sunday Friday for the balance of the year, 9 a.m. 5 p.m., donation
- The Fenian Raids, outdoor exhibit at the Ridgeway Battlefield Memorial Park, 3388 Hwy.#3, free

Also, check out the Museum's exhibits in the Town Hall atrium; the genealogy records in the Historical Museum's archives; the *Bridge that Peace Built* exhibit at the Peace Bridge Administration building; and the web site <www.museum.forterie.ca>. Need help? Call the office at 905-894-5322. Above photo shows visitor Gary Page at the Ridgeway Battlefield Park exhibit.



Laundry Day

Next time you drop your dirty clothes into a machine think of Rebecca Anguish (and all your ancestors) who didn't have such an easy time on laundry



day. Rebecca was the hired girl for the Edward Miller family.

While we may think the wash board old-fashioned, when it was invented in the 1800s, it revolutionized wash day. Prior to that, clothes were beaten and stirred with sticks, called beaters, usually in streams or rivers.



It's no wonder that wringer washing machines were so popular when they were offered to Fort Erie residents. Westinghouse had a display of its latest appliances in the Canadian Niagara Power building which stood on Queen St. in Fort Erie.

Summer Students

Students Christian Baker, Martin Lee, Daniel Pampano, and Andrew Roesch are busy supporting the



Museum by delivering visitor services, artifact cataloguing, exhibit and site maintenance, event support, conservation, marketing, database entry, research, filing, and scanning community photographs — like the ones pictured here.

Genealogists, researchers and those who reminisce on social media rely on the Museum as the public repository of

Fort Erie's heritage. Working with the Town's IT Dept., the Museum has created a computer database so that this history is easily accessible.



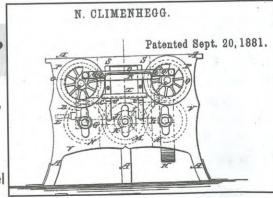
WHITEHALL CLUB.

The photos shown here are of the Whitehall Club that

was located on the Niagara River, just north of downtown Fort Erie, in a place that was called Cozy Dell.

What is it?

On September 20, 1881 the United States Patent Office granted a patent to Nathaniel Climenhegg of



Ridgeway, Ontario. Nathaniel invented this machine to assist farmers. Turn to page ten of this newsletter to find out the details of Patent No. 247,311.

Honouring the Niagara Movement

As part of our outreach program, the Museum produced a plaque for the Niagara Movement. In 1905, 29 men gathered at the Erie Beach Hotel to form this organization, which was a forerunner of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP.) The principles they wrote became the cornerstone of the modern civil rights movement.

An unveiling event was led by the Community Development and Gaming Corporation with assistance from Fort Erie Heritage Arts Legacy and Cynthia Skinner. The Waverly Beach Community Group contributed funds towards this plaque which is located at the end of Helena St.

On hand for the unveiling were Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown and Fort Erie Mayor



THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON

July 24, 2015

I send warm greetings to all those gathered to honor the Inaugural Conference of the Niagara Movement.

America's heritage was forged by courageous men and women who—equipped with an unwavering sense of justice—organized, agitated, and advocated for change. In reflecting on the spirit that led W.E.B. DuBois to call for justice and equality over a century ago, we are reminded that our progress has grown from the collective efforts of generations who challenged our country's conscience. Wielding love stronger than hate and hope more powerful than insult or injury, they fought to build a future where no one is a second-class citizen and no one is denied basic rights. Today, as we enjoy the blessings of a stronger and fairer society, let us acknowledge that our journey is not yet complete and recommit to the work of perfecting our Union.

As you mark this historic occasion, I hope you reflect with pride on the ways the people of the Niagara region—spanning political borders and braving harsh boundaries—came together to advance liberty's cause. I wish you all the best for a memorable and enjoyable event.



Wayne Redekop (photo at left). Remarks from President Barack Obama (above) were delivered by Megan Smith, Chief Technology Officer and Assistant to the President.

Megan grew up in Fort Erie and Buffalo and is Ruby Smith's step-daughter.

Consider a "Staycation"

Cultural Tourism is becoming more prevalent as visitors choose their holiday destinations based on the variety and quality of cultural products. (From the Creative City Network of Canada.)

Many tourists come to Fort Erie because of the wide range of cultural, historical and natural heritage amenities offered within our town. If you're looking for something to do this summer, consider a "Staycation" ... be a tourist in Fort Erie and check out the local museums!



She loves you, yeah, yeah, yeah...

Aug. 15th is the 50th anniversary of the Beatles playing Shea Stadium. Fort Erie girls had their own boy band to swoon over — the Ultratones. In the 1960s these young men played gigs throughout the town. From left to right are: Eugene Pilato, Bob Harrison (no relation to George!), John Johnston, and Dave Bellhouse. While we have photographs of the band, we are

missing the band's music. So this is a call out to the Ultratones — please contact the Museum if you would like to share a recording of your music or memories of your band! Music is a component of the upcoming "Made in Fort Erie" exhibit and your band is part of that story.

Many ways to make a difference

People often ask how they can support the Museum — here are some ideas:

- · Bring friends and guests to visit the Museum sites and gift shops.
- Donate local history artifacts or let the Museum scan your old photographs.
- Donate to the Museum's Capital or Memorial Fund. The former supports large projects and the latter is invested and the interest used to support operations.
- Donate to one of the Museum's special projects: repairing the 6218 steam engine or installing a memorial to the Ridgeway Nine — the nine soldiers who lost their lives at the Battle of Ridgeway.

Fort Frie Club Fort Erie

Dear Sir:



OURSELF and family are invited to attend an Automobile Parade to be held under the auspices of the FORT ERIE CLUB, on Wednesday

Evening, November the 10th., at 8.00 p. m. to celebrate the opening of the Fort Erie-Bridgeburg Boulevard.

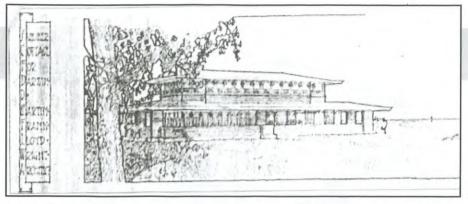
Your car is requested to be at the Club premises at 7.30 p. m. The parade will cover the entire route of the new concrete Boulevard, returning to the Club where luncheon will be served as well as at the Anglo-American Hotel. The Welland Brass Band will be in attendance.

100th anniversary of Automobile Parade

This invitation was sent out in 1915 encouraging families to attend an Automobile Parade to celebrate the opening of the new "Fort Erie-Bridgeburg concrete Boulevard." It was organized by the Fort Erie Club and lunch was served at both the Club and the Anglo-American Hotel. This hotel was located on the Niagara Boulevard, which connected the villages of Fort Erie and Bridgeburg. Perhaps, this new concrete boulevard was what is now Niagara Boulevard? The parade was held on Nov. 10th and did not start until 8:00 p.m., so it would have taken place in the dark. If anyone knows more details about the Fort Erie Club, please call the Museum.

Frank Lloyd Wright Bay Beach Cottage

In 1909, Darwin D. Martin hired Frank Lloyd Wright to design a cottage for Bay Beach. "This summer house was to be a long two-story prairie style building with horizontal board and batten



treatment. The cottage would sit on a gently sloping grade down to the broad sandy beach. The lot Martin purchased had 120 feet of lake frontage. Wright's rendering of the cottage is a study in composition inspired by the architect's love of Japanese prints." Unfortunately, the cottage was not built. This information appeared in the *Western New York Heritage Magazine*, Spring 1999 edition.



Support needed for CN 6218

The Friends of 6218 are fundraising to repair the steam engine that is located at the Fort Erie Railway Museum on Central Ave. They are canvassing for financial support and fundraising volunteers. The engine currently needs several thousand dollars of repair work in order to stabilize the rusting interior and exterior. For details, contact Mary

McLelland-Papp, Friends chair, at 894-8451 or through their website at <www.friendsof6218.ca>. This picture shows Fort Erie engineer George Havill helping three ladies from CN 7179.

Looking for a unique gift?

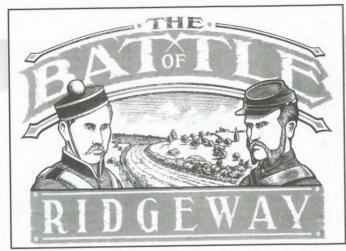


The Historical Museum's gift shop features local history items on many different topics, from Point Abino Lighthouse note cards to Comet Roller



Coaster magnets. There are books on the Fenian Raids, War of 1812, Crystal Beach Amusement Park and historical fiction by many local authors. Volunteer Joyce Capern continues to supply the gift shop with samplers, ribbon embroidery cards, paper cutting and penny rugs. The gift shop is located at 402 Ridge Road and is open from 9-5, seven days

a week until Labour Day; and then Sundays through Fridays for the balance of the year.



Planning to celebrate the 150th?

Next year is the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Ridgeway. This conflict has been called "The battle that made Canada" because it gave urgency to the Confederation movement. Citizens and politicians realized that they could not rely on Britain to defend this land and that creating a unified country would provide better protection for all. The invasion and battle with

the Fenian Army happened on June 1-3, 1866. Canada became a country one year later.

If your organization or business is planning on holding an event or program to celebrate this anniversary, please contact Jane Davies at <jdavies@forterie.on.ca> or Russ Wilson at <rwilson@forterie.on.ca>. The Town has formed a Coordinating Committee to help with marketing and coordination of activities in 2016.

The 125th anniversary was celebrated with support from many service clubs. Shown here in 1991 from left are: Fort Erie Jaycee members, Kirk Fretz and Gerard Longval presenting a cheque to Curator Jane Davies and Museum Board chair Larry Williams.



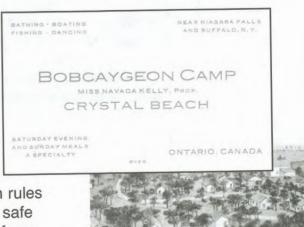


Summertime fun in Crystal Beach!

There were many tourist cottages and camps in Crystal Beach during the 1900s. Beam's Tourist cottages (right) were located on Rebstock and

Derby Road. Cabin rules

included "All motorized vehicles must operate at a safe speed, not exceeding 10 mph." The card above is from Bobcaygeon Camp. If you know where this was located, please call the Museum at 905-894-5322.



Breaking News: First motor vehicle here... A new school needed

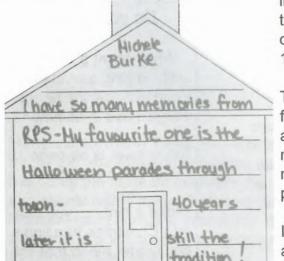
The Museum has digitized copies of local newspapers, thanks to volunteers Jerry Dell, Charlie Capern and Norma Benner. These are available by appointment for viewing in the archives. Two interesting entries in The Bridgeburg Review, April 2, 1931 edition are:

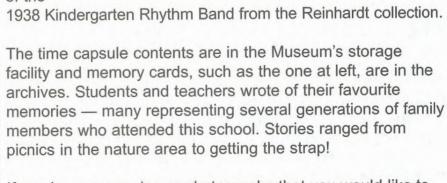
- "The Stewart Motor Corporation turned out its first truck in its new Canadian Plant in Bridgeburg... The vehicle rolled off the assembly line at 2:20 pm and was shipped to Toronto after a road test. This truck is believed to be the first motor vehicle to be assembled in Canada as a result of the new tariff regulations... While only a few men are employed at the start, it is the intention of the company to proceed with the erection of a Canadian factory." [Those plans for a larger Canadian factory never came to fruition. This Buffalo-based company operated from 1912-1942.]
- "The problem of securing more school accommodation will again face the Bridgeburg Board of Education...Rose Seaton, principal of Phipps Street school, declared that many pupils eligible for promotion in various classes could not be promoted owing to lack of room in the classes above... the acting chairman of the board [said] consideration of more school accommodation should be deferred until after amalgamation so that the [new] building may be located to serve the both municipalities." [Fort Erie and Bridgeburg amalgamated in 1931. A new public school was not built at that time.]

Gone but not forgotten

Many photographs, documents and memories of the second Ridgeway Public School (SS#11) are now safe in the Museum's archives. Teachers at the school collected memorabilia to add to the Museum's collection. Residents also contributed,

including this photo of the





If you have memories or photographs that you would like to add to the files, please contact the Museum.



Links to Fenian Raids

Did your ancestor fight in the 1866 Fenian Raids? If so, the Museum would like to hear from you.

The Museum is compiling a list of descendents of the soldiers who fought to defend our country 150 years ago in preparation for the Battle of Ridgeway anniversary. These ancestors will be recognized

at the 2016 ceremony and information about the soldiers will be placed in the Museum's archives.

The photo above is of Francis Dell, Beverley Jewson's great grandfather. The photo on the cover is of Phillip Ort of New Germany. He is the great grandfather of Josephine Davies. Both men served with the 19th Battalion Volunteer Infantry and marched with Col. Peacocke's men. The photo at right shows Bev (left) and Josephine (right) with the Fenian Raid paintings. If you are related to a soldier who served during the Raids, call the Museum at 905-894-5322.



Patent No. 247,311

It's a feed cutter! The drawing shown on page four of this newsletter was included in the patent granted to Nathaniel Climenhegg. It included detailed instructions as to how this machine would efficiently cut straw, hay and other substances without clogging the gears.

We're #8!

The Town of Fort Erie's new website has 209 pages and the Museum was the 8th highest visited page during the month of May. Check out the new website at www.town.forterie.ca then click on Culture and Recreation to find the Museum's pages.

The first Communities-in-Bloom

Many thanks to the Fort Erie Horticultural Society for planting and maintaining the circular bed at the Railway Museum.

In 1931, the Bridgeburg Horticultural Society ran a program similar to Communities-in-Bloom. Toronto gardening experts were brought in to speak at the Town Hall; a competition was held for the best kept gardens; and 50 Norway Maples were planted on public streets. The scoring criteria for the competition was: 15% ground plan, 20% suitability of trees and plants, 15% arrangement, 25% care and condition of plants and lawn, 15% charm and originality, and 10% lawn and shrubbery not connected with the garden.

Do you know?

What do rat poison, a fishing lure, toothpaste, and a magazine about magic have in common?

The answer is on page 15 of this newsletter.

Need a hint you can add Christmas tree lights and ginger ale to that list.



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

The Queen and I offer you our heartfelt sympathy in your great sorrow.

We pray that your country's gratitude for a life so nobly given in its service may bring you some measure of consolation.

George R.I.

V-E Day Victory in Europe

May 8, 1945 was the end of WWII in Europe and 70 years ago Fort Erie celebrated with a parade. The photo



at right shows this parade at the foot of Jarvis St.

Many Fort Erie residents lost their lives during WWII including Sgt. Carl G. Baker of Ridgeway. The condolence letter at left was sent by King George VI to Carl's parents, Mr. and Mrs. George Baker.

A great big THANKS to our volunteers!

The Museum's work program is supported by many volunteers who work on projects such as: cataloguing, records management, conservation, database input, research, filing, and photographing built heritage.

Many thanks to the following volunteers for their generous donation of time and expertise: Jim Allender, Karen Angle, Jinette Augustine, Arthur Battison, Janet Boyce, Charlie Capern, Joyce Capern, Enzo Castelnuovo, Ruth Coulthurst, Jack Cunningham, Tonia Cunningham, Josephine Davies, Kelsea Dawn, Sharon Dell, Dorothy Dorge, Dan Fletcher, John Gagnon, Chelsea Gordon, Peter Griffiths, Harold Hampel, Wendy Harkins, Bev Jewson, Don LeFurgey, Joseph Lischka, Joan MacDonald, Valerie McCormack, Joan McNeil, Pat Mitchell, John Morningstar, Keith Overend, Nancy Pye, George Sherk, Jean Tripp, and Mary Ellen Winger.

Do You Remember? ... yes, you do!

Many thanks to the *Times* for partnering with the Museum on the *Do You Remember*? series and to everyone who has called the Museum to identify the people, places, dates, and events within these photographs. You're giving the Museum more accurate information for our research and programs. It's the community working together to preserve



its own heritage. Well done! Did anyone's relatives play in this RCAF orchestra?



Frozen!

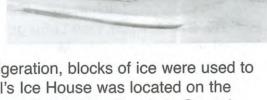
If you thought this past winter was bad, just remember the Blizzard of '77. The

photo above shows the snow that blew into the Palmwood restaurant. Digging out, from left to right, are: Tony Papalia (owner), Howard "Smokey" Trider, and Jimmy Johnston.



A cold winter used to mean cool profits for the Teal family and cool drinks in the summer for local residents. The photo at left shows men

cutting ice from Lake
Erie. These blocks would
then be packed in straw,
stored in a warehouse
and delivered to homes
in Crystal Beach and
Ridgeway throughout



the summer. Prior to refrigeration, blocks of ice were used to keep ice boxes cool. Teal's Ice House was located on the northwest corner of Erie and Cambridge Roads in Crystal Beach. The picture above was taken in the mid 1930s.



Another memorable snowstorm happened during the winter of 1937. The photo at left shows owner Garnet Brodie digging out the sidewalk in front of his drugstore on Ridge Road.

Fort Erie's Song

In 1987 Council adopted the "Official Fort Erie Theme Song" in By-law No. 64-87. The lyrics are as follows:

There's a special feeling here It's where I want to be,
There are friendly faces all around
Fort Erie is the place to be.
Fort Erie

Hear the rhythm of the river As it rushes neath the span, The bridge of peace and friendship That joins two separate lands. Fort Erie

Refrain:

lake

Fort Erie's where I want to be Fort Erie is the place for me, It's my home and it's where I want to be,

Fort Erie, come share it with me.

Walk along sandy banks Through flowers and tree lined drives, Wind filled sails along the

Watch seagulls soar and dive. Repeat Refrain

It was written by John
Michael Adamo and Armin
St. George for C.J.F.T. Radio
Station and donated to the
Town of Fort Erie. The
Museum has a copy of the
by-law but not the musical
score... and at nearly 30-years
old, is it time for an update?

Museum and Cultural Heritage Advisory Com.

Each term, Council appoints 8 citizens to serve on the MCHAC. This group also meets as the Museum Services Committee and the Municipal Heritage Committee. The committee's projects include: advising on Museum policy and work programs; preparing a built heritage inventory and advising on the designation of heritage buildings and



heritage trees. Current members are: seated left to right, Margaret Feaver and Stacey Horton Steele; standing left to right, Councillor Stephen Passero, Charlene Nigh, Keith Overend, and Charles Capern. Absent from photo: David Renshaw, Mary McLelland-Papp, and David Ellsworth.

Bootlegging, Fresh Air and Flirting

Volunteer Bev ten Den has been reading though Welland Telegraph microfilm looking for stories that relate to the greater Fort Erie area. She has compiled reference binders of this information, sorted by location and date, which are available in the archives. Fort Erie entries for Aug. 28, 1891 include:

- Old Daddy Albright was taken to Welland on Monday charged with keeping and selling intoxicating drinks. This is about the hundredth time he had been charged with the same offence.
- Mr. Albert Rainey's little boy, who was ordered by the doctors to Fort Erie for pure air, is much better.
- One of Buffalo's smart young dudes was charged before the magistrate on Monday with being disorderly and flirting with the village girls... a serious offense against the public morals for a Yankee dude to flirt, [the Magistrate] inflicted a fine of \$15, which the young man promptly paid towards the enrichment of fair Canada.

"SKIDDO"!

Anoise Like a Snake signifying motion in opposite direction Requested without Delay. Intimates that your absence is preferable to your Company, it Conveys the admonition that in case you are slow in making your exit, you will be assisted on your journey. Fills a long felt want. Like the Sign-\$-indicates Dollars so SKIDDO is always known by the numerals



Stupid Pie Recipe

3 egg whites, beaten stiff 20 Ritz Crackers, crumbled pinch salt

- 1 c. brown sugar
- 1 c. chopped nuts
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 [c.] shredded coconut

Fold together. Grease pan well. Bake for 30 min. at 350 degrees. Chill and top with whipped cream.

From Mildred Kennedy c.1970



The Krafft Connection

Crescent (or Pleasant Point) Dairy in Fort Erie was opened in 1902 by George and William Krafft, father and brother respectively of J.L. Kraft. This photo from the Hopley collection shows Harry and Ed Krafft delivering milk from their farm on Kraft Road.

Vera Learn, shown on the cover, was married to J.L. Kraft's nephew. Her in-laws ran the Melody Riding

Stable and the Fort Erie SPCA from their barn on Kraft Rd in the 1940s. When the stable closed, all the horses were sold except Melody (on cover). The farm house is now part of the Fatima organization.

Niagara Investment in Culture Grant

Many thanks to the Region of Niagara for supporting the Made in Fort Erie exhibit with a \$13,281 grant. Their Niagara Investment in Culture program provides support to cultural groups throughout Niagara.

Niagara Community Foundation Grant

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Niagara Community Foundation, which is a public foundation serving the people of Niagara. Their \$4,000 grant will go towards the Made in Fort Erie exhibit.

Local Donations

Many thanks to two local citizens for donating funds towards the Made in Fort Erie exhibit. Their contributions sponsored a Century telephone, which was manufactured in Bridgeburg, and a book written by local author Lobsang Rampa.



Calling all Quilters

The Museum is partnering with several groups for a quilting "Extravaganza" on Wed. Sept. 16th. This show will be held at the Stevensville Hall from 1-7 p.m. and will feature quilts from both the Museum's collection and on loan from many residents. There is no charge for the show or for the evening talk by Nina Stahlschmidt on Canadian Feed Bag quilts at 7- 8 p.m. Nina is also offering a quilting workshop in the morning at a cost of \$15. Call the Museum to register. This event is a partnership program between the: Fort Erie Public Library, Bertie Historical Society, and Bowen Road Women's Institute

with support from the Niagara Investment in Culture program and the Niagara Community Foundation.



A Christmas tragedy

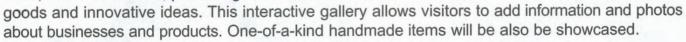
The volunteers helping to research items that were made in Fort Erie discovered Messervey Industries within the files in the archives. Bert Messervey made Christmas tree lights in the former St. Andrews-Knox Presbyterian Church building on Courtwright St. He imported the bulbs from Japan to Buffalo and then produced the light sets in

Bridgeburg. In 1931, while Bert was inside the building, it exploded due to a gas leak. He was severely burned but was able to drive himself to Millard Fillmore Hospital in Buffalo, where he subsequently collapsed and died. Bert was 43 years old. The factory next door (Sargon/Arner Pharmaceuticals) was completely destroyed.

Made in Fort Erie

The products in the Do You Know? quiz on page ten were all made in Fort Erie! They include: Rat Nip, produced by the Buffalo Specialty Co., which had a plant in Bridgeburg in the late 1800s; the Williams Wabler fishing lure, manufactured in Fort Erie; Ingersoll's ledene Prophylactic Toothpaste, manufactured in Bridgeburg; and W.G. Edwards' magazine devoted to magic, published in Bridgeburg.

This fall, the Historical Museum will unveil a new exhibit called "Made in Fort Erie" to celebrate the creative and industrious citizens who have, and who still are, producing homemade items, manufactured



The Northern Springs bottling plant was moved from Crystal Beach to Garrison Road prior to 1950. Rosehill Auction now stands on that property. They also produced Coca-Cola, Orange Crush and Hires Root Beer.

Many patent medicines were made in Bridgeburg, such as "Purifico". It was bottled in a former stable which had no sewer or water services; its creator, Dr. Eleanor Burnsides claimed it cured cancer. Although Dr. Burnsides was the president of the Women's Christian Temperance Union in Buffalo, her products contained 10-14 % alcohol.



The photo at top is of the World's Dispensary which was located in Bridgeburg.

Cruisin' in Ridgeway

A big thanks to June Baker Robinson for the photos and information on the Motorette car, advertised as the "Nifty Little Land Ship". It was designed by two Buffalo aircraft workers in 1945 and endorsed by Hollywood royalty such as Bob Hope (pictured at right).

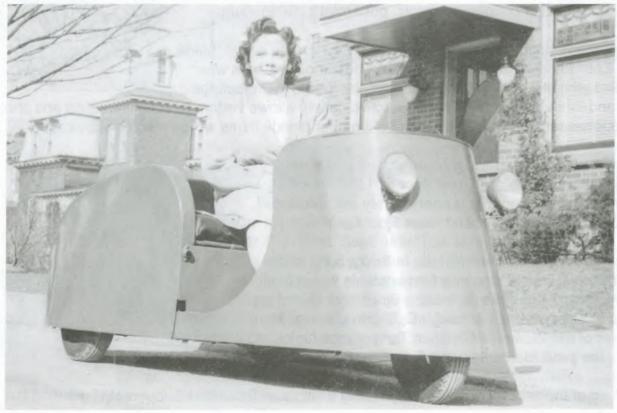
George Holmes of Crystal Beach secured the rights to sell the Motorette in Canada. He imported the machines in parts to reduce Customs charges and then assembled these cars in his garage in

Crystal Beach. In 1947

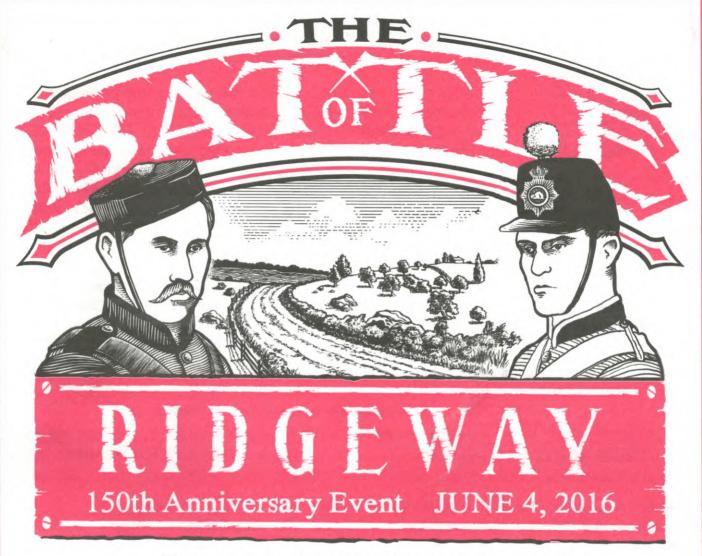
Holmes moved the assembly plant to the Planing Mill on South Mill Street in Ridgeway, next to the railroad tracks. At some point the plant was moved to Wilson's Garage on the south east corner of Ridge Road and Cutler St. It ceased operation in the fall of 1948.

TELEPHONE RIDGEWAY 300 INVOICE DATE YOUR ORDER NO. RIDGEWAY, ONTARIO

The car is shown below in front of the current Downtown Dollar store on Ridge Road. It was powered by a one-cylinder, 4.1 h.p. engine, had a maximum speed of 30 mph, and could hold 2 passengers and 6 cubic feet of cargo. This "Gold Mine on Wheels", as it was called, boasted 80 miles/gallon gas consumption (34 km/litre by today's standards). Any entrepreneurs interested in bringing this back?

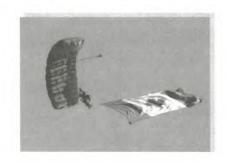






- Parade Ridge Road (noon)
- Ceremony Battlefield Park (1 pm)
- Festival Crystal Ridge Arena (3 pm)









Welcome from the Town of Fort Erie

On behalf of the Town of Fort Erie, it is an honour and privilege to welcome back to our community, descendants of the regiments that fought in the Battle of Ridgeway — The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada and The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry (Wentworth Regiment), as they join with us to commemorate the 150th anniversary of that battle.

The 1866 Fenian Raid and Battle of Ridgeway are pivotal events in the history of Canada, Fort Erie and the Canadian Armed Forces. This battle provided a much needed catalyst to the Confederation movement which resulted in Canada becoming a country one year later.

The Village of Fort Erie and Bertie Township were indebted to those regiments for protecting citizens in 1866, and we extend our gratitude to today's soldiers for their committment in celebrating this anniversary and for their service to our Country.

Mayor Wayne H. Redekop

The Battle of Ridgeway

The Battle of Ridgeway occurred on June 2, 1866 between the Canadian Militia and the Fenian Army. These Irish-American veterans from the U.S. Civil War intended to capture the British Province of Canada and use it to barter with Britain for Ireland's freedom.

Canadian soldiers were deployed to Ridgeway and to the Fort Erie dock to fight the Fenian Army. While the Fenians may have won these battles, they lost the campaign — retreating back to Buffalo where they were subsequently arrested by the United States government and charged with violation of the U.S. Neutrality Act.

Canadian politicians and citizens realized that they could not rely on Britain to defend this land, and that confederation of the provinces would result in better national security.

Canada became a country one year later.

June 4, 2016 Events

Parade Ridge Road to Hwy.#3 - noon

 Military March from Crystal Ridge Arena to Ridgeway Battlefield Park

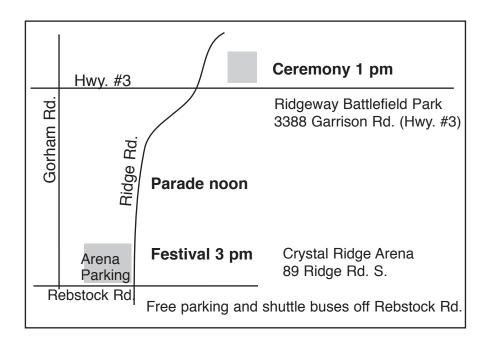
Ceremony Battlefield Park, 3388 Hwy.#3 - 1 pm

- Parachute Drop
- Military Memorial Ceremony
- Rededication Federal Battlefield
 - Period Cornet Band
- Plague Unveilings and Book Launch
 - Tributes to the Soldiers

Festival Crystal Ridge Arena, 89 Ridge Rd. S. - 3 pm

- Military Tactical Demonstrations
- Weapons and Uniform Displays
 - Historical Artifact Displays
 - Food and Music
- Interactive Childrens' Activities

June 4, 2016 Event Map



Highway #3 will be closed from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm on June 4th between Gorham and Ridgemount Roads.

This closure will allow for additional spectators to view the ceremony at Ridgeway Battlefield Park.

With Hwy. #3 closed, traffic will be rerouted via Stevensville Road to Bowen Road to QEW.

Parking is off Rebstock Road behind the Crystal Ridge Arena.

Free shuttle buses will take people from there to Ridgeway Battlefield Park between 10:00 am - 11:50 am. Return bus service will begin following the ceremony (approximately 2:30 pm).

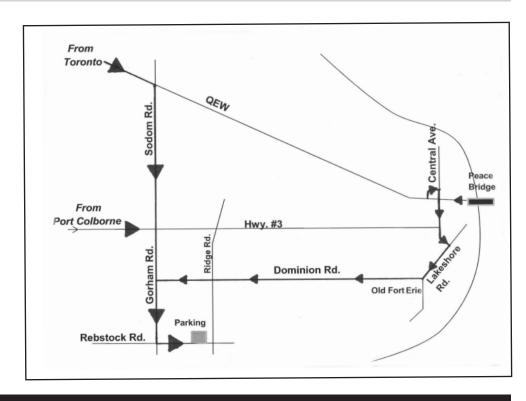
Directions to Event

From Toronto: Take the QEW Niagara to the Sodom Rd. exit., turn right, drive 13km to Rebstock Rd. Turn left, event parking is on the left.

From Buffalo/Peace Bridge:

Take first exit (Central Ave.). Turn right, go to Lakeshore Rd., turn right. At the Old Fort turn right onto Dominion Rd., go to its end at Gorham Rd. and turn left. At Rebstock Rd, turn left, event parking is on the left.

From Port Colborne: Take Hwy. #3, turn right at Gorham Rd., turn left at Rebstock Rd. Event parking is on the left.





The Parade

The soldiers will "Step Off" from Crystal Ridge Arena at noon and parade to Ridgeway Battlefield Park. This military march up Ridge Road will include skirmishers firing arms at Village Square, Dominion Rd., Nigh Rd. and Hwy. #3. There will be a 10 min. stop (see *Freedom of the City* below).

Local troops from Girl Guides of Canada, Scouts Canada and Cadets will line the parade route, in uniform, waving Canadian flags to greet the soldiers. Many local businesses and homes along Ridge Road will also have Canadian flags in their windows as a show of support for the troops.

In the military, the word parade is a generic term used in a variety of settings. For instance, when forming soldiers up first thing in the morning for roll call, the command is "Get On Parade"; when driving a military vehicle, a safety check is done before setting out which is called "First Parade"; lining up to get paid is a "Pay Parade"; and forming up for medical attention is a "Sick Parade".

Spectators who are already at Battlefield Park will be able to see the parade as it turns onto Hwy. #3. They will also be able to watch the entire parade on their cell phones via a link available on the Town's website <www.forterie.ca> (reception depends upon your individual service plan provider).

Freedom of the City

Freedom of the City ceremonies date back to Medieval times as a means of protecting the public. Before a military unit would be permitted inside a city's walls, they had to earn the trust of the local populace, usually by some valiant action. If a city's leaders felt the unit could be trusted, they were granted this privilege and invited to enter the city with "drums beating, colours flying and bayonets fixed."

Today, this is a ceremonial honour usually granted to a unit with historic ties to a city and comprises two parts: the granting of this right with the presentation of a scroll by the Mayor to the Commanding

Officer and the exercising of this right by the military unit which then marches through the city.

The Moyal Hamilton Light Infantry

WENTWORTH ALGMENT

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On June 4th, *Freedom of the City* will be granted at Ridgeway Village Square (283 Ridge Road) at 12:15 pm. The people at Ridgeway Battlefield Park will be able to watch this on their cell phones with a link available on the Town's website <www.forterie.ca> (reception depends upon your individual service plan provider). The *Freedom of the City* presentations will be on display at the festival at Crystal Ridge Arena between 3:00 - 6:30 pm.

The Ceremony

- **1. Welcome** (Master of Ceremonies, WO (ret'd) Robert Dunk, CD)
- **2. Canadian flag presentation** (by the Commanding Officer of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, Lt. Col. Sandi Banerjee to the Mayor of the Town of Fort Erie, Wayne H. Redekop)
- 3. Greetings from dignitaries representing the Crown, Federal, Provincial & Municipal Governments
 - 4. Bronze plaque in memory of those soldiers who lost their lives as a result of being deployed to the Battle of Ridgeway

(Captain Padre John Niles, MSM / unveiled by the Commanding Officer of The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, Lt. Col. Sandi Banerjee and the Commanding Officer of The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry (Wentworth Regiment), Lt. Col. Jan-Peter Hoekstra)

- 5. Memorial wreaths at the Federal cairn
 - **6. Last Post** (Bugler)

Please stand, remove your hats and remain standing until the conclusion of The Veterans' Prayer.

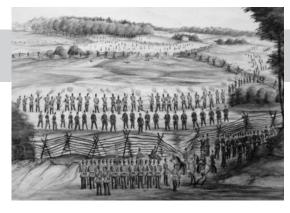
- 7. Rifle volley / Observe a moment of silence / Rifle volley Note to spectators: guns will be discharged at this time.
- **8. Rouse** (Bugler) **9. Veterans' Prayer** (Captain Padre John Niles, MSM)
- 10. Royal anthem, National anthem, The QOR regimental march The Buffs, The RHLI regimental march Mountain Rose (Composite Band of the Regiments)
- **11. Soldiers step off** (Appreciation to soldiers, Russ Wilson, 150th Anniversary Committee Co-chair)
- **12. The Ridgeway Nine Memorial** (Ron Craig, The QOR of C Association / unveiled by Charles Capern, Fort Erie Museum & Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee-MCHAC and Bill Everett, Bertie Historical Society)
 - **13. Heritage Ironwood tree plaque** (Stephen Passero, Fort Erie Councillor / unveiled by Darren Kearns, Town of Fort Erie Arborist; Charlene Nigh and David Renshaw, MCHAC)
 - **14.** First Hand Accounts of the 1866 Fenian Raid and Battle of Ridgeway book launch (Jane Davies and Jude Scott, Fort Erie Museum and Cultural Services)
- 15. Recognition of descendants of soldiers who served in the 1866 Fenian Raid campaign (Jane Davies, 150th Anniversary Committee Co-chair)
 - **16. Concluding remarks** (Russ Wilson, 150th Anniversary Committee Co-chair) Poppies may be placed at the Federal cairn following the ceremony.

DZ Ridgeway Nine

The ceremony will open with a paratrooper dropping into the east section of Ridgeway Battlefield Park and unfurling a 38' Canadian flag. This area will then be declared an official Military Drop Zone — DZ Ridgeway Nine. This will appear on all Canadian military maps indicating a safe landing zone. The paratrooper is from The Queen's Own



Rifles of Canada. In the Canadian Army, airborne pathfinders are paratroopers who secure drop zones, gather intelligence, brief follow-on forces, and also conduct ambushes and reconnaissance behind enemy lines.



The Regiments

On June 2, 1866 four regiments of Canadian Volunteer Militia (841 soldiers) fought the Fenian Army at the Battle of Ridgeway: the 2nd Battalion, Queen's Own Rifles of Toronto; the 13th Battalion Volunteer Militia (Infantry) Canada; the York Rifle Company; and the Caledonia Rifle Company. The first two regiments continue to serve our country today

as The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada and The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry (Wentworth Regiment).

They were called to duty by the Governor-General of the Province of Canada, Charles Monck. As Commander-in-Chief, he issued the following proclamation on June 1, 1866: "The soil of Canada has been invaded, not in the practice of legitimate warfare, but by a lawless and piratical band in defiance of all moral right ... Upon the people of Canada this state of things imposes the duty of defending their altars, their homes and their property... The Commander-in-Chief relies on the courage and loyalty of the volunteer force and looks [to] ... their performance of the sacred duty which circumstances have cast upon them."

The role played by these regiments at the Battle of Ridgeway gives them the distinction of fighting in the first battle of the modern Canadian Army — the first regimental units having been formed under Canada's Militia Act of 1855.

Rev. David Inglis, Presbyterian Minister embedded with the 13th Battalion during the battle testified that: "I am bound to say, that the officers and men of the Queen's Own and the 13th Battalion behaved throughout the battle with coolness and gallantry... The hospital, no less than the battle-field proved the noble courage of our men, and it would have moved the stoutest heart to tears, to see those boy heroes suffering as they did, without a murmur or a groan."

Fenian Raid Medals and Land Grants

Recognition of a regiment's or soldier's service in a military campaign can be marked by the following: the awarding of battle honours; having their names included in The Books of Remembrance (if they died in that campaign); the awarding of service medals; the awarding of land grants; or the receipt of a pension.

While the first two recognitions have yet to be realized, service medals, land grants and pensions were awarded to many of the soldiers who served in the Fenian Raid campaign of 1866.



The Canada General Service Medal, shown at right, was issued in 1899. Veterans had to apply to the government in order to receive this medal. The recipient must have been: (1) a survivor of the engagement; and either (2) on active service in the campaign; or (3) on duty protecting citizens against further potential attack; or (4) detailed for specific service.

There were 16,668 of these medals awarded and of those, 15,300



were awarded to Canadian soldiers and 1,368 to British soldiers. Each soldier's name, rank and unit was engraved on the rim.

In 1901 the Province of Ontario granted land to soldiers who served during the Fenian Raid (land

grant pictured at left.) A soldier, or his next of kin had to apply before receiving the 160-acre parcel of land. Most of these land parcels were located in Northern Ontario.

The awarding of these medals and land grants came too late for many of the soldiers who died prior to 1899 and 1901.

Shortly after 1866, the County of Welland issued a medal to the soldiers who served with the Welland Canal Field Battery during the Fenian Raid (battle at the Fort Erie dock). This engagement and medal are described on page 18.



The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada

The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada is the oldest, continuously serving Regiment in Canada, and the only reserve infantry battalion with a parachute tasking. Officially formed on the 26th of April 1860 as the 2nd Regiment, Volunteer Militia Rifles of Canada, its original independent Rifle Companies

predate the Regiment and Canada. In 1863 the name was adopted to the 2nd Regiment, Queen's Own Rifles of Toronto, and later by Royal proclamation, to The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada. The silver maple leaf and the "Big 2" denote its seniority in Canada.

Today the Regiment's home station is located at Moss Park Armoury Toronto, with pending completion in September 2016 of Dalton Armoury in North York. The Regiment continues to deploy soldiers to

Poland, Ukraine, the Sudan, Iraq and the Sinai/ Golan Heights. Their motto "In Pace Paratus" means "In Peace Prepared". Their Commanding Officer, Lt. Col. Sandi Banerjee was also involved with planning this event.

Battle Honours include: NORTH WEST CANADA, 1885. THE BOER WAR, South Africa, 1899-1900. WORLD WAR I: Ypres, 1915, '17; Gravenstal, St. Julien, Festubert 1915; Mount Sorrel, Somme 1916; Pozieres, Flers-Courcelette, Ancre Heights, Arras 1917, '18; Vimy 1917; Arleux, Scarpe 1917, '18; Hill 70, Passchendaele, Amiens, Drocurt-Queant, Hindenburg Line, Canal du Nord, Pursuit to Mons, France and Flanders 1915-1918. WORLD WAR II: 1939-1945; Normandy Landing, LeMesnil-Patry, Caen, Carpiquet, Bourguebus Ridge, Faubourg de Vaucelles, Falaise, Quesnay Wood, The Laison, Bouglogne, Calais 1944; The Scheldt, Breskens Pocket, The Rhineland, Waal Flats, The Hochwald, The Rhine, Emmerich-Hoch Elten, Deventer, North-West Europe 1944-1945. SOUTH-WEST ASIA, Afghanistan.



For further information on the QOR, visit their website at <www.qor.com> or their Museum at Casa Loma in Toronto. Their Museum's website is <gormuseum.org>.



Ensign Malcolm McEachren

Thirteen members of The QOR of C made the supreme sacrifice during the Ridgeway campaign, with Ensign Malcom McEachern being the first modern soldier to be killed in action defending his home and native land.

Ensign McEachren was a store manager and Sunday school teacher in Toronto. He was 35 years old, married and had five children. The QOR Museum will display Ensign McEachren's tunic at the festival.

Riflemen Alexander Muir who also served with The Queen's Own and fought at Ridgeway, was so inspired after the battle that he later wrote "The Maple Leaf Forever", considered to be our original national anthem.



The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry

The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry is an infantry regiment of the Canadian Forces Reserve. The RHLI was formed in 1862 as the 13th Battalion, Volunteer Militia (Infantry) Canada, but had its roots in local units of Volunteer Militia, notably the 1st and 2nd Companies of Volunteer Rifles

(Hamilton), formed in 1855, and the Volunteer Highland Company (No. 3 Co.) formed in 1856.

Today they operate from the Armoury on James St. in Hamilton. Their motto "Semper Paratus" means "Always Ready". Among other light infantry tasks, they conduct training in amphibious operations in conjunction with units from the Royal Canadian Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. Their Commanding Officer involved with

planning this event was Lt. Col. Gary McQueen. His command will conclude prior to the event, and on June 4th the RHLI will be led by Lt. Col. Jan-Peter Hoekstra.

Battle Honours include: THE BOER WAR, South Africa 1900. WORLD WAR I: Ypres 1915-1917; St. Julien, Festubert 1915; Somme 1916; Arras 1917-1918; Vimy 1917; Passchendaele, Amiens, Hindenburg Line, Pursuit to Mons, Gravenstafel, Mount Sorrel, Pozières, Flers-Courcelette, Ancre Heights, Arleux, Scarpe 1917-1918; Hill 70, Drocourt-Quéant, Canal du Nord, France & Flanders 1915-1918. WORLD WAR II: Dieppe, Verrières Ridge, Tilly-la-Campagne, Falaise, Clair Tizon, Forêt de la Londe, Woensdrecht, Goch-Calcar Road, The Hochwald, Xanten, Groningen, Falaise Road, South Beveland, The Scheldt, The Rhineland, Twente Canal, Oldenburg, North-West Europe 1942, 1944-1945. SOUTH-WEST ASIA, Afghanistan.

For further information on the RHLI, visit their website at <www.rhli.ca> or their Museum at 200 James St. N. in Hamilton. Their Museum's website is <www.rhli.ca/museum/museum.html>.





This sword (shown at left) was used by Lt. John Gibson during the Battle of Ridgeway. It will be carried by Lt. Col. Hoekstra during the parade and ceremony on June 4th.

Casualties - 13th Battalion Volunteer Militia (Infantry) Canada

The 13th Battalion had three soldiers who died shortly after the Battle of Ridgeway from diseases contracted during that deployment. Their deaths speak to the importance of providing adequate equipment and resources to soldiers before sending them into battle. The soldiers who fought at the Battle of Ridgeway were not supplied with sufficient food or water. It was a scorching hot day on June 2, 1866 and, after fighting this battle, the soldiers were understandably exhausted, hungry and thirsty. While marching back to Port Colborne, many quenched their thirst by drinking water from farm ditches. These three soldiers died from diseases contracted from that contaminated water: Private James Cahill. Private Daniel Laker and Private James Morrison.

Lest We Forget

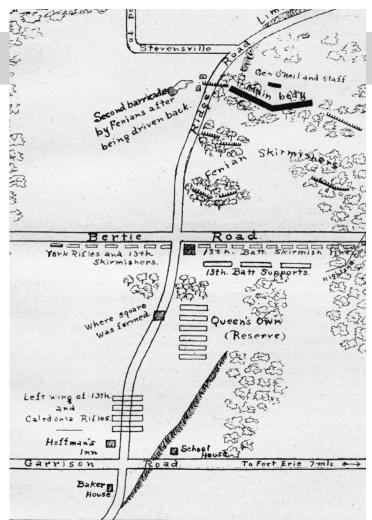
The Great War Veterans' Association (predecessor of the Royal Canadian Legion) adopted the poppy as its *Flower of Remembrance* in 1921. It is a symbol of honour and ultimate sacrifice inspired by the poem *In Flanders Fields*.



The Royal Canadian Legion Branches 71 and 230 will be partnering with this 150th anniversary event by conducting a Poppy Campaign on June 4th. Poppy donations support Veterans and their families.

As a sign of respect, poppies should be worn on the left side close to the heart. They can be worn at times other than leading up to Remembrance Day, such as ceremonies to honour soldiers.

Following the June 4th ceremony to honour the soldiers who fought during the Fenian Raid, people are encouraged to place their poppies at the memorial cairn before leaving Ridgeway Battlefield Park.



Nationally Designated Battlefield

The Battle of Ridgeway battlefield grounds were designated a National Historic Site by the Federal Government in 1921.

This designation was updated in 2008 to include boundaries for that heritage site. Those boundaries include part of the Ridgeway Battlefield Park.

This park land was purchased by five veterans who fought at the Battle of Ridgeway: Major-General Sir Wm. D. Otter, C.V.O., K.C.B. of Ottawa; Brig.-General Sir John M. Gibson, K.C.M.G. of Hamilton; Lieut.-Col. J.E. Farewell, R.O. of Whitby; Sergt. Alex. E. Wheeler, of Toronto and Henry Swan, Esq. of Toronto.

They presented this land to a Board of Trustees at the 50th anniversary event, held on the battlefield in 1916.

Honouring "The Ridgeway Nine"

In 1916, plans were announced by veterans of the Battle of Ridgeway to erect a memorial to "The Ridgeway Nine" — the nine soldiers of The Queen's Own Rifles who died on the battlefield or within a few days of the battle. This memorial, however, did not come to fruition. This will be rectified in 2016 with a statue unveiled on June 4th. This memorial was made possible due to generous donations from The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Association, the Bertie Historical Society and Fort Erie Museum Services. The design for this memorial is pictured at right and it includes a plaque listing these soldier's names. You are invited to



visit the north end of the park and pay tribute to these nine soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Honouring all the Casualties

A bronze plaque honouring the soldiers who died within one year of the Battle of Ridgeway either in action or of subsequent wounds or disease will be unveiled on June 4th near the Federal cairn. This plaque (below) was sponsored through generous donations from The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry (Wentworth Regiment) and Fort Erie Museum Services.



In memory of these soldiers who were called to duty for the Battle of Ridgeway June 2, 1866. They died in defence of this land and its people.



Queen's Own Rifles Ensign Malcolm McEachren Killed in Action Private Christopher Alderson Queen's Own Rifles Killed in Action Private Mark Defries Queen's Own Rifles Killed in Action Queen's Own Rifles Private Malcolm McKenzie Killed in Action Private John Mewburn Queen's Own Rifles Killed in Action Private William Smith Queen's Own Rifles Killed in Action Queen's Own Rifles Private William Tempest Killed in Action Sergeant Hugh Matheson Queen's Own Rifles Died of Wounds Corporal Francis Lackey Queen's Own Rifles Died of Wounds Private Arthur Reed Queen's Own Rifles Died from Disease Private Thomas Lockie Queen's Own Rifles Died from Disease Private James Cahill 13th Battalion (RHLI) Died from Disease Private Daniel Laker 13th Battalion (RHLI) Died from Disease Private James Morrison 13th Battalion (RHLI) Died from Disease Corporal William Carrington Died En Route 47th Regiment of Foot

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

British Army

The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada

The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry (Wentworth Regiment)

Fort Erie Museum Services

Battle of Ridgeway Period Paintings

The 23 period watercolours featured in the book *First Hand Accounts of the 1866 Fenian Raid and Battle of Ridgeway* were painted by Alexander von Erichsen around the time of the battle. These are the most comprehensive collection of images that exist of this conflict. Owned by the Fort Erie Historical Museum, the entire collection is



being published for the first time to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Ridgeway.



Many of these paintings depict events reported in an 1866 publication by W. C. Chewett, however the topographical and building details in some of his works point to von Erichsen having been in Ridgeway.

Recent research has shown that von Erichsen lived in Canada in 1866. The 1861 census shows his occupation as "painter" and his residence as Holland Landing (northwest of Toronto). He would have been aware of the Fenian invasion as Canadian regiments existed in that area under Lt. Col. Dennis and Lt. Col. Booker.

In the 1980s these paintings were owned by Vivian (Latham) Jewell and were kept in her attic in Newport News, Virginia. She inherited the paintings from her aunt, Jane Latham, who was the sole surviving relative of Pauline von Erichsen (Alexander's granddaughter).

In 1990 when Vivian and her husband Charles learned that these paintings were of the Fenian Raid, they came to Fort Erie to see the battlefield. By chance they connected with historian David Owen, author of *The Year of the Fenians*, who put them in touch with Jane Davies, Curator of the Fort Erie Historical Museum. These 23 paintings are now part of the Museum's collection due to generous donations from Larry Williams, the Williams Funeral Home and the Jewell family.

Von Erichsen's motivation in so carefully recording this raid and battle remains unknown. Whatever his reasons, we have all greatly benefited from the skill and care he took in documenting this critical period in Canadian history.

A rotating selection of these watercolours can be seen at the Fort Erie Historical Museum, 402 Ridge Rd., Ridgeway.

For six months during Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017, the entire collection of 23 watercolours will be on display



at the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa. Visit their website for further details <www.warmuseum.ca>

Book Launch — First Hand Accounts

To commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Ridgeway, Fort Erie Museum Services published a book of first hand accounts and paintings from the 1866 Fenian Raid. Written by Jane Davies and Jude Scott, this 78-page book gives the reader a sense of living through the conflict by focusing on quotations from people who were there at the time.



A first hand account is not a cohesive explanation of an event. Rather, it can be a raw emotional narrative, informed by traumatic experiences that colour an eyewitness' perspective. It can be a political attempt to rationalize unpleasant actions and associate them with a noble cause. It can be an artistic venture meant to capture the spirit of an event, with less regard to strict chronologies.

This book's focus is on the people who invaded and those affected by the invasion. This is accomplished with quotations from many sources, including: soldiers on the front lines; doctors caring for the wounded; citizens fleeing from the enemy; and telegraph officers providing up-to-date intelligence.

The following are examples of these first hand accounts:

"My mother, alone with her children, was awakened at early dawn by the noise made by numerous vehicles passing through [Stevensville], and on going to the front door of our house... saw women and children... huddled in wagons along with a few articles of furniture, bedding and provisions... One of the women, wringing her hands frantically, called out to my mother: 'The Fenians are coming. They are only a few miles behind. They are killing men, women and children as they go.' "

Michael Gonder Sherk, Stevensville resident

"I soon learned our soldiers had nothing to eat since the day before; and I went along their line of march and asked our people to bring out for them all the cooked food on hand. ... surely some one blundered, that men were sent into battle without food in this part of the country."

Dr. Nathaniel Brewster, Ridgeway resident

"The battle was now opened in earnest, and nothing but the whistle of bullets and the roar of the rifles could be heard. ... And it was at this time that we had the sensation fully and keenly experienced, of facing death in its most terrible form — in full health, young, active, very fond of life. There we stood — bullets whizzing past our ears, not knowing the moment one might go through our heads." *Private Alexander G. Gilbert, 2nd Battalion, Queen's Own Rifles of Toronto*

This book was made possible through generous donations made by family and friends in memory of the late L. Victor Miller. Victor was a Fort Erie Town Councillor and the first Chairman of the Fort Erie Museum Board. He and his wife, Dorothy, served on the board for many years.

This book can be purchased at the Museum and the event for a special anniversary price of \$18.66.

Contact Fort Erie Historical Museum www.museum.forterie.ca 13



The Festival

A festival will be held from 3:00 - 6:30 pm in the park at Crystal Ridge Arena which is located at 89 Ridge Rd. S.

Featured will be military tactical demonstrations of 19th century battle tactics by the RHLI (WR) 13th Battalion Ceremonial Guard and the QOR Pioneers and Skirmishers.

Displays at the festival will include:

- Canadian military modern weapons,
- Canadian military parachuting equipment (you can try on the equipment!),
- Canadian military mountain equipment (you can try on the mountaineering gear!),
- art activities for children (become an 1866 "war correspondent")
- make your own medal children's activity
- create your own postcard activity
- Freedom of the City presentations.
- Canadian military vehicles (as available)

Exhibits from the QOR Museum, the RHLI Museum, and the Fort Erie Historical Museum will include:

- · Ensign McEachren's tunic,
- · a rifle used by a QOR soldier,
- a sword used by a Fenian officer,
- a sword used by a 13th Battalion officer,
- a statuette given to Mrs. Pring for hosting QOR officers in her home in 1866,
- Fergus Scholfield's medals Canada General Service & Welland County,
- and other Battle of Ridgeway historical items.

The festival will give the public an opportunity to talk with the men and women serving with the QOR and RHLI. Many of these soldiers have been on deployment to Afghanistan, serving our country—just as their their forebears served our country when they were deployed to Ridgeway in 1866.

Music at the festival will be performed by the Orono Cornet Band. This band plays music from the

mid to late 1800s on original period instruments.



A BBQ will be hosted by the Ridgeway Lions Club, featuring hamburgers, hot dogs, peameal bacon and sausage. They will also host a beer tent with all proceeds going towards their community outreach programs.

Free parking and shuttle buses for the festival is off Rebstock Road. The Crystal Ridge Branch Library will be closed on June 4th to accommodate this festival.



Did You Know...

.. that a Jamaican-born soldier served with the York Rifle Co. during the Fenian Raid? Private Charles Robertson took ill marching to Niagara the day after the battle and was later moved to Toronto where he suffered a stroke. He survived, got married and had a family, living to age 68.

... that there was a friendly fire casualty in Fort Erie following the invasion? On June 3rd, Private Bart Macdonald of the Thorold Volunteer Company, wearing civilian clothes and walking amidst Lt. Col. Peacocke's column, was mistaken for a Fenian and shot by the 47th Regiment of Foot.

... that a Mohawk soldier from the Grand River Reserve, Peter Martin, later known as Dr. Oronhyatekha, served with The Queen's Own Rifles at the Battle of Ridgeway? Encouraged by the head of the Oxford School of Medicine, Oronhyatekha became the first North American indigenous person to attend Oxford University.

New Exhibit — Journey of a Fenian Sword

In 1934 Russell Teal, exploring the Ridgeway battlefield grounds from his family's nearby home, found this sword in the hollow of a tree where it had been hidden from view for 68 years. The *Toronto Daily Star* featured his discovery in an article (Getty Images photo at right).

This sword was made c.1836 at the Ames Manufacturing Co. in Massachusetts. They supplied swords during the U.S. Civil War (1861-65).

In 1866 many veterans of the Civil War joined the Fenian Army and fought at the Battle of Ridgeway. They were equipped with weapons

from the Civil War. The fate of this particular Fenian officer is unknown, but for whatever reason, his sword was hidden in this tree. Perhaps the officer was wounded and his comrades hid his sword with the intention of retrieving it at a later date. We will never know, but it remained hidden in this tree until 1934 when it was discovered by Russell.

Later in life, Russell moved to northern Ontario taking the sword with him. He gave it to his friend and



neighbour, Hector Renaudette. Hector cared for the sword over the years in the hope that it would eventually return to Ridgeway. This happened in 2015 when the Fort Erie Historical Museum acquired it from him. Now 150 years after the battle, this Fenian officer's sword has completed its journey back to Ridgeway and will be on display during the festival on June 4th and afterwards at the Fort Erie Historical Museum.

The painting at left depicts Fenian soldiers and their swords at the Battle of Ridgeway (Fort Erie Historical Museum collection).



150th Event Partners and Participants

The 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Ridgeway event co-chairs, Jane Davies and Russ Wilson, gratefully acknowledge the following partners for their generous contribution of time, talents and resources towards this commemorative event. Appreciation is also extended to the hundreds of volunteers for their enthusiastic and patriotic support in recognition of this "Battle that made Canada".



The Town of Fort Erie



The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada



The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry (Wentworth Regiment)



The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Association



Thirteenth (XIII) Regiment Foundation



The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Pioneers and Skirmishers



RHLI (WR) 13th Battalion Ceremonial Guard



The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Museum and Archives



The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry Museum



Royal Canadian Legion Branches 71 and 230



Dr. Peter Vronsky



Ridgeway Lions Club



St. John Ambulance



Girl Guides of Canada



Scouts Canada



Royal Canadian Air Cadets



Royal Canadian Sea Cadets



Royal Canadian Army Cadets

MCHAC

Fort Erie Museum and Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee



Niagara Regional Police



Niagara Parks Commission

150th Planning Committee

The Planning Committee members include, front row I. to r.: Bob Dunk, QOR of C Association; CO QOR of C, Lt. Col. Sandi Banerjee; Jane Davies, Manager, Fort Erie Museum Services; Russ Wilson, General Manager, CGDC, Town of Fort Erie; CO RHLI, Lt. Col. Gary McQueen; Dr. Peter Vronsky. Back row I. to r.: Dave Lavery, QOR of C Association; Al Stouffer, Coordinator-Community



Liaison, Town of Fort Erie; CWO Paul Martin, RSM QOR of C; Ron Craig, QOR of C Association; Tim Fletcher, Thirteenth (XIII) Regiment Foundation; CWO Dan Ruiter, RHLI; DCO, QOR of C, Major Shawn Stewart; Jude Scott, Curator of Collections, Fort Erie Museum Services. Absent from photo: 2nd Lt. Richard Moll, RHLI; MCPL Graham Humphrey, QOR of C; 2nd Lt. David Pampe, QOR of C.

Food and beverages will be available at the ceremony at Ridgeway Battlefield Park between 10:00 am - 12:30 pm.

Food and beverages will be available at the festival at Crystal Ridge Arena between 3:00 - 6:30 pm, hosted by the Ridgeway Lions Club.

Corporate Sponsors and Participants

With thanks to the Town of Fort Erie; Hamiltons Insurance Service, Orono; and Fort Erie Economic Development & Tourism Corporation for contributing funds towards this 150th anniversary event.

In addition to the event partners, the following businesses and organizations provided assistance for the event: Ontario Ministry of Transportation, PrintNinja, Canada Post, Dunn the Mover Ltd., Page Graphics, Pacific Productions Intl., Premium Image Photography, WeeStreem, J&B Pro Music, EMS, Canuck Pizza Truck, Quick Silver Catering, Ridgeway BIA, Crystal Ridge Community Centre, All Nations Fellowship Church, St. George Catholic Church, Rosehill Auction, Miller Maintenance, Santa Claus Parade Volunteers, Tammy's Breck-N-Ridge, The Region of Niagara, Brian Teal, Cafe by the Bridge, the Buffalo/Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority, Crystal Ridge Branch Library, and Town of Fort Erie staff throughout all departments

Also, sincere gratitude is extended to any event partner, volunteer, organization, business, sponsor or participant that may have been unintentionally omitted from these lists.

The Battle at the Fort Erie Dock

The second engagement to happen on June 2, 1866 was the battle at the Fort Erie dock. After fighting in the Battle of Ridgeway, the Fenians returned to Fort Erie. Canadian volunteer militia from the Welland Canal Field Battery and the Dunnville Naval Brigade were stationed at the dock in



Fort Erie (Niagara Blvd. at the foot of Murray St.). Fighting ensued, and being strongly outnumbered, the 77 Canadian volunteers surrendered. The painting above depicts this engagement with a Canadian soldier being shot in the leg. Gunner Fergus Scholfield served with the Welland Canal Field Battery and was wounded in the leg at that battle.

Shortly after 1866, Welland County issued medals to the 77 soldiers who fought in this battle. Fergus Scholfield received that medal (shown below) and a Canada General Service Medal.

To commemorate the 150th anniversary, Fergus' two medals are now part of the Fort Erie Historical Museum's collection. This achievement was made possible through a generous donation and with assistance from Mark Fraterrigo of Yankee Trader Relics and Roger Brewer of Akron Display Cases. Our thanks to everyone involved in bringing this Canadian soldier's medals back to Canada.

Following that battle, Fergus' left leg was amputated. In compensation for his injuries and service, Fergus was given the commission of lighthouse keeper in Port Maitland, where he lived until his death at age 80. He was also the uncle of Mrs. A. Jackson and Mrs. C. Quirk, both of Bridgeburg.

The face of the Welland County medal has an embossed cannon and the words "FORT ERIE JUNE 2, 1866". Embossed on the reverse is "PRESENTED BY THE COUNTY OF WELLAND" and each soldier's name is engraved in the centre. The script writing on this medal reads, "Fergus Scholfield".



These medals will be on display at the June 4th festival at Crystal Ridge Arena park.

After June 4th, they will be on display at the Fort Erie Historical Museum, 402 Ridge Road in Ridgeway.



A Lasting Tribute

In honour of the 150th anniversary, the Town of Fort Erie has named a street after one of the soldiers who died at the Battle of Ridgeway — Private Christopher Alderson who served with the 2nd Battalion, Queen's Own Rifles of Toronto. Ed Lenchyshyn, President of Park Lane Home



Builders, chose the name for this street that will run off Rebstock Road, just east of Ridgeway Road.

Private Alderson was shot in the chest while "forming square" on Ridge Road, just south of Bertie St. He was a 38 year-old messenger for the Toronto Education Department. He was recently married, and his wife Janet and her nine year-old son from a previous marriage were left destitute.

The naming of the street was managed by Kira Dolch, Manager of Development Approvals at the Town of Fort Erie. Background information on Private Alderson was provided by Dr. Peter Vronsky.

Webcast 30 Second Delay

Spectators at the event who wish to view the live stream on their cell phones should be aware that there will be a 30 second delay between the event and the webcast. Using ear buds will prevent confusion between the live and the web audio. A link will be available on the Town's website www.forterie.ca (reception depends upon your individual service plan provider).

150th School and After School Opportunities

To commemorate the 150th anniversary, the Fort Erie Historical Museum has given every student in Fort Erie a bookmark which depicts the Canada General Service Medal that was given to soldiers who fought in this engagement.

These souvenir bookmarks were also given to the Cadets, Scouts, Cubs, Guides and Brownies who lined the parade route to welcome the soldiers. Learning about this battle and participating in the 150th event will help each child earn a history badge.



The Fenian Raid is covered in the Grade 8 school curriculum under History:Confederation. The Fort Erie Historical Museum offers both outreach kits and in-class presentations on this topic. Students interact with art and artifacts, and participate in hands-on learning activities designed to fulfill curriculum expectations. For information about these school programs contact Andrea Wilson, Curator, Marketing, Programming and Exhibitions at 905-894-5322 or visit the Museum's website <www.museum.forterie.ca>

Contact Fort Erie Historical Museum www.museum.forterie.ca 19

The Fenian Brotherhood



The Fenian Brotherhood was the organization behind the 1866 invasion of Fort Erie. Their Secretary of War, General

Thomas Sweeny, pictured at left, noted the following in a March 1866 speech:

"The Irish Republic calculates to have, by the first of April, fifteen millions of dollars at its disposal in ready cash. This will give transportation and maintenance for one month to thirty thousand men, a greater number than were ever before mustered to the conquest of the Canadian possessions."

"To the People of British America:... We are here neither as murderers, nor robbers, for plunder and spoliation. We are here as the Irish army of liberation... To Irishmen throughout these Provinces we appeal [to you] in the name of seven centuries of British iniquity and Irish misery and suffering, in the names of our murdered sires, our desolate homes, our desecrated altars, our million of famine graves... to stretch forth the hand of brotherhood... and smite the tyrant where we can."

Col. John O'Neill (above right) led approximately 800 Fenian soldiers during this invasion and noted: "They [the Canadians] did fight bravely. I have been in many battles during the past four years but never did I witness an advance more beautifully made... But... they underestimated the courage and unyielding spirit of their opponents. Opponents who were tried soldiers of many battles fighting not for pay but to avenge seven hundred years of wrongs to their country and ready to die for Irish independence."



British Lt. Col. Peacocke and Local Volunteers

Some residents in the Niagara Peninsula have an ancestor who served with the 19th Battalion, St. Catharines. This volunteer militia unit was assigned to Lt. Col. Peacocke's column and marched from Chippawa to New Germany (Snyder) and

then on to Fort Erie. As Commanding Officer of all Units (Regular and Militia), Lt. Col. Peacocke (photo above) and his men did not see action during the June 1-3 Fenian Raid. By the time they reached Fort Erie the Fenians had retreated to Buffalo. Soldiers serving in this column continued to guard the border against possible further incursions.

While at New Germany, a British soldier with the 47th Regiment of Foot died of heat stroke. Corporal William Carrington is buried in the St. John's Stevensville United Church cemetery on Netherby Road and his name is included on the bronze plaque to be unveiled at the ceremony (see page 11).

Many descendants of soldiers who participated in the Fenian Raid will be attending the June 4th event including the families of Albert Stares, Francis Dell, Phillip Ort, Edward Loosley, Alexander Watson, James Watson, and James Bedley. If you have information, photographs or artifacts from a relative who was involved with the Fenian Raid please contact the Fort Erie Historical Museum at 905-894-5322.

Musical Celebrations

Musical tributes will be performed by the Composite Band of the Regiments during the parade and ceremony.

Period music will be performed by the Orono Cornet Band at Ridgeway Battlefield Park between 10:30 am - 12:30 pm. They will also perform at the festival. This period brass band





The Fenian Raid and College Students

On the day before the Battle of Ridgeway, some of the soldiers were studying for exams at University College in Toronto (now U of T). John Mewburn (at left), from Stamford near Niagara Falls, had just finished his third year. As a volunteer with the QOR Co. 9 University College Rifles, he died while in Fenian custody. Private Mewburn is one of "The Ridgeway Nine" (see page 11).

A veteran of the Battle of Ridgeway John M. Gibson, who later became Brig.-General, remembered June 2nd thusly: "I had been attending law

lectures in Toronto on the day the battalions were suddenly sent to the front... The alacrity displayed by the Queen's Own and the Thirteenth... in mustering and proceeding to the front as they did is undoubted evidence of the loyalty and martial spirit animating the young Canadians who filled the ranks of these battalions. There is no room for even suspicion of want of bravery."

150th Cancellation Stamp

The Canada Post Office in downtown Ridgeway generously offered to cancel all letters by using this logo starting on June 2nd to honour the 150th anniversary of this battle. Much appreciation is extended to Postmaster Donna Carver for spearheading this project. Plan to stop by the post office at 295 Ridge Road N., mail yourself a letter or



postcard, so you too can have one of these cancellation stamps as a souvenir of this historic event!



Ridgeway Battlefield Park Exhibits

The exhibits within Ridgeway Battlefield Park are open to the public year-round and are located at 3388 Highway #3 (Garrison Road) in Ridgeway.

In 1929, the Federal Historic Sites and Monuments Board erected a memorial cairn on the south side of Highway #3 across from the park. This cairn was then moved into the park c.1966 as part of the 100th anniversary initiatives.

In 1976, a house was moved to the park by the Bertie Historical Society with support from the Ridgeway and Crystal Beach Lions Club. This house, donated by the Roadhouse family, was formerly the Teal home which stood on Ridge Road just north of Highway #3 during the battle.

In 2013, interpretive displays throughout the park were unveiled by Fort Erie Museum Services to illustrate the Fenian Raid and Battle of Ridgeway. These included a 15-foot long map and timeline showing the military manoeuvres within Bertie Township. The former Teal home was converted into an outdoor exhibit space with window displays depicting events connected with the Fenian Raid.

150th Creative Expression Contest

The Fort Erie Museum and Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee is inviting school-age children, who are residents of Fort Erie, to enter a Battle of Ridgeway Creative Expression contest. Prizes will be awarded in the following two categories: visual art (drawing, sketching, colouring, or painting); and written composition (poetry, essay, or short story). Mail entries to: MCHAC Contest, Fort Erie Museum, Box 339, Ridgeway, ON, LOS 1NO. The contest runs for the month of June with prizes being awarded in July. For further information contact <femchac@gmail.com>. The MCHAC also sponsored the Canadian flags that were given out to parade spectators during the June 4th event.



Battlefield Tours

Prior to the ceremony (between 10:30 am - noon), Dr. Peter Vronsky will be conducting guided historical tours within Ridgeway Battlefield Park. These informative talks will run for approximately 20 minutes and will depart from the park pavillion. Tour capacity is limited — sign-up sheets and departure times will be posted in the pavillion on June 4th.

Heritage Tree Plaque Unveiled

The Ironwood tree stands at the north end of Ridgeway Battlefield Park. This tree has been dated c.1864, which makes it a "Witness Tree" to the Battle of Ridgeway. As a two-foot tall sapling, it was likely protected by a hedgerow or fence during the battle.

The Ironwood is known for having the hardest wood of any species in Canada. Ironwood trees rarely grow beyond 12m and are fairly short-lived, making this 150+ year-old tree significant for not only its age, but also for its link with the Battle of Ridgeway.



The Fort Erie Municipal Heritage Committee recommended that the Ironwood tree be designated and this recomendation was adopted by Fort Erie Town Council on May 4, 2015. The heritage tree report and plaque were coordinated by Town of Fort Erie staff: Darren Kearns, Signe Hansen, and Dave Heyworth.



Fort Erie Historical Museum and Archives

One of the hosts of this 150th event is Fort Erie Museum and Cutural Services. This section, under the Town of Fort Erie's Community Services Department, is responsible for the Fort Erie Historical Museum, Ridgeway Battlefield Site, Fort Erie Railway Museum, Mewinzha Archaeology Gallery, and the heritage plaquing program.

The Fort Erie Historical Museum's exhibits include artifacts from the Fenian Raid and Battle of Ridgeway. Within the archives is an extensive collection of photographs, publications and reference material, organized by category for ease of searching.

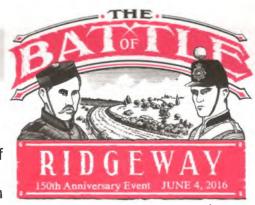
The Fort Erie Historical Museum is located at 402 Ridge Road N. in Ridgeway. It is open 9 am - 5 pm, Sunday - Friday all year long, and open every day during July and August. Admission is by donation.

The Fort Erie Railway Museum is located at 400 Central Ave. in Fort Erie and is home to the CN 6218 steam engine, the Ridgeway and B-1 train stations, and exhibits on Fort Erie's railway history. This site is open daily from 9 am - 5 pm, Victoria Day weekend until Labour Day. Admission is by donation.

The Mewinzha gallery features archaeological artifacts dating back to 2000 BC and a collection of art from Native artists. This partnership project with the Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority is located at 100 Central Ave. in Fort Erie. On the second floor at this location is "The Bridge That Peace Built" exhibit, which is also open to the public, daily from 9 am - 4 pm. Admission is free.

The Battle of Ridgeway Contemporary Accounts and Consequences

Canada became a country on July 1, 1867, leading many historians to conclude that the 1866 Battle of Ridgeway was a catalyst to Confederation. To quote Peter Vronsky, author of Ridgeway, The American Fenian Invasion and 1866 Battle That Made Canada, "Confederation in 1867 made Canada on



paper; Ridgeway made it in its people's hearts. It was Canada's Bunker Hill, down to its subtext of national identity flowering in battlefield defeat, tempered by a common resilience to fight another day — to never surrender. When Canada was being made, Ridgeway was the battle that made Canada."

To quote Gunner Albert Reavley, who served during the Fenian Invasion with the Welland Canal Field Battery, "The Fenian Raid was a great shock to the people of Canada ... It proved that Canada, however well-behaved, was liable to attack, thus demonstrating the need of defence, and what was still more important the need of unity. ... Following two conventions of the Fathers of Confederation, the raid gave a decisive impulse to the union movement."

The 1866 Fenian Raid created much alarm which quickly spread throughout British North America. The following 1866 newspaper headlines appeared in *The New York Herald*, New York City:

"June 2, 1866

WAR

REVOLUTION IN CANADA.

THE FENIAN INVASION.

FORT ERIE CAPTURED

The Mayor of the Town Reported Killed.

Bridges Burned and Telegraph Wires Cut.

RAILROAD TRACKS TORN UP.

CANADIANS RUSHING TO ARMS.

A BATTLE EXPECTED TO-DAY."

"June 6, 1866

THE WAR.

GREAT ALARM IN CANADA.

PEOPLE FLEEING TO THE STATES.

RUN ON THE SAVINGS BANKS.

GOLD TWO HUNDRED PER CENT PREMIUM.

Fenians Still Pressing Towards the Border.

The Fenian Prisoners on the Steamer Michigan Released ...

All Fenians Violating the Neutrality
Laws of the United States
to be Arrested."

Scope of Museum Services Newsletters Index

Listings in this index relate to the following topics:

- Amusement Parks
- Anniversaries
- Businesses
- Churches
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- Military Regiments
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- Railway and Trains
- Schools
- Ship Names
- Wars and Conflicts

Since these newsletters were produced by Fort Erie Museum Services, references to the Museum's sites, programs, exhibits, etc. are not included within the index. Staff names appear in the index only when they are mentioned within an article.

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