

Historically Speaking

The Newsletter of the Cobourg and
District Historical Society

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Forgotten Cemetery: The Facts Exhumed

Carla Jones, a very active Cobourg and District Historical Society member, will discuss her research into a somewhat derelict local cemetery. In 2010, on her first walk as a new Cobourg resident, she headed north on William Street and then turned into a driveway that led to a group of very old headstones surrounded by a black iron fence. There was no name on this little “cemetery” nor any indication of who built it. Take a journey of discovery with Carla as she started her research in the year 1832 on the 388 William Street property that is now part of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church.

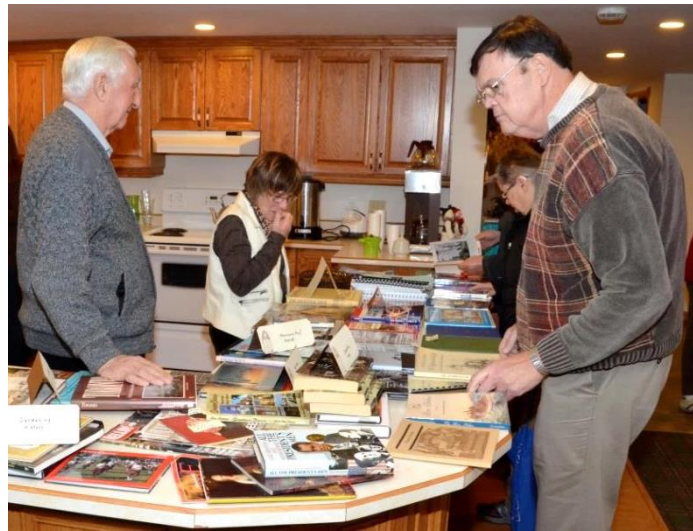
The meeting begins at 7:30pm on Tuesday, January 27. Everyone is encouraged to arrive early to enjoy coffee, tea and cookies. Take this opportunity to reconnect with members you haven't seen recently, catch up with friends, and introduce yourself to a new member. This is a meeting not to be missed. Visitors are welcome.

Our Previous Meeting

Historical Trivia Night



The Cobourg and District Historical Society's third annual Trivia Night was a great success! Encouraged by better weather than the blizzard of last year's



Trivia Night, a capacity crowd at the Legion Village Pub consumed copious quantities of potato chips while vying to display their

knowledge of Canadian trivia. Prior to the questions there was a table of history related books for sale at bargain prices. home-baked cookies and welcome coffees.



Later in the evening Leona served her



The questions were selected and posed by Quiz Mistress Alison Torrie-Lapaire. After often heated discussions each team entered their best guesses onto an answer sheet which was then marked by competitors at an adjacent table. The winning teams were: First Place: The Hibernia Hustlers (perfect score - 35 points!), Second Place: The Rowdys (33 points), Third Place: Going to Town (32.5 points) and Fourth Place: Four Amigos (32 points)

It was a very close game - especially between the first four teams! There were 11 teams in total.

The CDHS executive would like to thank everyone for their kind donations of books. And of course to the purchasers who generously contributed by purchasing books and buying 50-50 raffle tickets. A special thanks to Alistair Commins for his 50-50 prize contribution!



Future Meetings

Our schedule for 2015:

<p>Tuesday, February 24 Peter Wilson <i>Nineteenth Century Historical Atlases</i> Victoria Hall, 7:30pm</p>	<p>Tuesday, March 24 Ken Willcocks <i>The Restoration of an Ore Car: the Cobourg Connection</i> Victoria Hall, 7:30pm</p>
<p>Tuesday, April 28 Annual General Meeting <i>Photo Quiz: How Well Do You Know Cobourg?</i> Victoria Hall, 7:30pm</p>	<p>Tuesday May 26 Tea, Tipples and <i>Long Lost Letters</i> with special guest James Cockburn Meet at 66 King, Cobourg, 7:00pm</p>

Introibo ad Altare Dei

A Man for all Seasons



Since 1988, this portly businessman has hardly left King Street. He's been out there in all weather, through all seasons, but he doesn't always remain in the same location. When he appeared in 1988 he was standing in front of the Henley Arcade on the north side of the street staring up at the clock in the tower of Victoria Hall. Now he poses on the other side of King.

The little man is, of course, the sculpture that graces the King streetscape. His creator, sculptor William McElcheran, christened him *Introibo ad Altare Dei*. Cast in bronze in Italy, *Introibo* stands at 6' 6" and weighs 650 pounds. He is not unique -- he's a clone. Four of him were cast before the mold was destroyed. One remains in Italy, another is at Commerce Court in Toronto and the other one is in a private collection in Philadelphia.

This exuberant sculpture, Cobourg's first outdoor public work of art, was purchased by the Art

Gallery of Northumberland with the aid of a government grant. He is on extended loan from the gallery to the town of Cobourg for all of the citizens of Northumberland County.

Between 1988 and 1994 *Introibo* was repeatedly vandalized. He was knocked over several times and also spray painted on other occasions. He was removed from King Street and traveled to the former CDCI East (now Cobourg Collegiate Institute) where he spent some time in storage. But *Introibo* had a champion! It was through the efforts of well-known Cobourg businessman, Bill Patchett, that the sculpture was returned to his post on King Street. Bill said: "It was time he came out of the [storage] closet. It is a creation and it's time he was back in the public eye." This time, the traveling man was placed on the south side in front of Brocanier's Clothing for Men, with a security camera keeping a vigil for his safety. Long-time citizens of Cobourg would describe the location as in front of the old Allen building at 23 King Street West.

McElcheran was a complex man -- a deep thinker with a penchant for philosophy. Thus he imbued his creations with many layers of significance. His work is mainly figurative, about man's relationship to his urban environment -- business and commerce. The businessman is a recurring theme in his work.

So who is *Introibo ad Altare Dei*? His rather odd name is significant, words taken from the beginning of the Latin Mass that translate as *I will go unto the altar of God*. McElcheran explains his creation this way: “When people think of a saint in ideal terms, they tend to conjure up spiritual images, not the corporal (or corpulent) ones associated with my sculpture. When we think of someone really evil, we think of some fat Italian, some Mafia type. And you get a figure that looks like Pope John XXIII, put him in a fedora hat and he’d fit right in with a Jack Levine painting of a Mafia funeral.”

So the whole point of making *Introibo* look like a pope, a holy man, was to reinforce the theme that an individual’s preconceived notions about reality are constantly being challenged by experience. To simplify the sculptor’s words: looks can be deceiving, things are not always as they seem, or don’t judge a man by his hat! *Introibo ad Altare Dei*, the businessman, is Everyman, fraught with human foibles, sometimes a saint and sometimes a sinner.

Today, William McElcheran’s little businessmen pose in art galleries, public places, private collections and corporate head offices. Additional works by this noted sculptor can be found in cities throughout Ontario as well as in Calgary, Tokyo and Munich.

Next time you stroll along King Street, take time to have a good look at *Introibo ad Altare Dei*. Read the inscription and enjoy this interesting work of art. And a final question: Where do you think *Introibo ad Altare Dei*’s next travel destination will be? Will Cobourg’s man for all seasons find a main street in another city, one with a warmer climate?

“INTROIBO AD ALTARE DEI”
By William McElcheran, RCA
Cast 1987 AD

**Purchased by the Art Gallery of Northumberland with a Grant from
The Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Culture and
Communications. On extended loan to the Town of Cobourg for the
Citizens of Northumberland County**

AGN

Sources Consulted

Files: Art Gallery of Northumberland

Burning Questions

Our older members recall the Cobourg of the past. In addition, many CDHS members have expert knowledge of various historical topics. To tap this wealth of expertise, our newsletter will periodically include a “Burning Questions” section and solicit everyone’s answers to the questions posed. Later newsletters will include the best answers. If there is sufficient interest the topic will be discussed at a CDHS meeting.

Burning Question #7

It is the practice in Cobourg to name streets after its former mayors. Some names, however, have been excluded. Does anyone know why the names of Mayors William Floyd, George Guillet and Peter Delanty do not grace our street signs? Is it possible that Gillett Court is a misspelling of Guillet? Although there is a Delanty Road, it commemorates Mayor John Delanty rather than Peter Delanty.

Question submitted by Judith Goulin

Ore Cars Block Street

I have always found it curious how little documentation there appears to be regarding the day-to-day details of the ore car trains running up and down Spring Street. I was delighted to come across this item about the “ore dumpers” in the Cobourg *Sentinel* of June 17, 1873:

“A correspondent invites attention to what has become a nuisance to people passing to and fro on Seminary Street [now University Avenue] near the Car Works. It appears that the ore dumpers are very often allowed to block the street and that sufficient precautions are not taken by the employees of the railway not to impede the free passage of carriages etc., as well as pedestrians passing along the street. The managing officers of the company are doubtless not aware of anything of this kind, and we know that their attention has only to be directed to it in order to secure a speedy remedy.”

The writers in those days really had a way with words!

George Parker

Membership Matters

Membership Request

Is there anyone who would be interested in speaking to the seniors group at St. Michael's Church about the history of Cobourg? The group meets monthly on a Sunday at 2:00. The following dates are available: Sunday, March 22; Sunday, April 12 and Sunday, May 17. This would be a lovely goodwill gesture on the part of CDHS. Please let Judith Goulin know if you are willing to help. Judith can be contacted at (905) 372-7684 or jgoulin@hotmail.com.

Membership Renewal

We have reached a milestone of ninety paid up members for 2014/2015. We are still waiting to hear from eleven of last year's members. Will we hit the 100 mark by the end of this year? For your convenience Alma Draper will bring renewal forms to the Trivia Night.

Of our 90 members, we have one in Salt Spring Island, B.C., two in Calgary, two in Brighton, one in Belleville and two in London. Although these members might not get to our meetings, they write to say how much they appreciate the newsletter, and in return we thank them for continuing to support Cobourg's Historical Society. All memberships not yet renewed are past due. Please mail your dues and membership renewal form to Alma Draper, 10 Madison Street, Cobourg, ON, K9A 5R2.

Look Through Your Bookshelves

This season we will once again feature our popular sale of history-related books. Please look through your bookshelves for any books you no longer want and make room for others you may want to buy! Your generous donations will assist with our historical society's operating costs.

Announcements

Small Town Radio

Small Town Radio is looking for programs created by local community personalities and groups, and the CDHS is very interested in participating. This is a great opportunity we have to present Northumberland's history in a fun way. Contact Carla Jones at (289) 252-1684 or email cgrucelajones@gmail.com if you would like to participate in bringing our history to the air.



Sifton-Cook Heritage Centre Request

Rob Hunter is working on an exhibit for next year at the Sifton-Cook Heritage Centre, His focus will be on the industries that were on the site at the southeast corner of Termaine and King Streets. These industries include the Woollen Mills, the Matting factory and the Coeey Rifle factory

Rob hopes that some of our CDHS members may have photos of the buildings or people who worked there, perhaps samples of the materials and goods produced, or story about the industries that they would be willing to loan the Heritage Centre for the 2015 season.

If anyone has information please contact Rob Hunter at robert918@bell.net or (905) 373-4975.

Lydia Pinkham

Judith Goulin is researching the Cobourg branch of the Lydia Pinkham factory that manufactured women’s medicine here c.1917-1960. Since there is little specific information that has been recorded, she needs answers to these questions: What year did the Lydia Pinkham factory close in Cobourg? What specific products were manufactured in Cobourg? Approximately how many people did Lydia Pinkham employ?

If you have any information or know someone who does, please contact Judith Goulin at jgoulin@hotmail.com or (905) 372-7684.

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