

Historically Speaking

The Newsletter of the Cobourg and District
Historical Society

May 2021 — Issue 323

The History of the ACO and Why it Matters

On May 25 Diane Chin will be telling the story of the founding of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (ACO) organization and its relationship to Barnum House in Grafton including the history of Barnum House itself.

While putting this presentation together she came across a mystery yet to be solved about the founding of the Cobourg Branch of ACO. Perhaps one of the attendees can shed light on what happened to one of Cobourg's oldest buildings and more importantly to the person who organized this building's move.

Our speaker will also touch on legislative aspects of Heritage Conservation and the many recent threats that are now upon us. And you thought COVID was our only problem!

Diane Chin moved to Cobourg in 2013. She grew up in the Beaches in Toronto so an eastward move to another lakeside community, populated by historic heritage homes was a natural fit. Diane is a former high school teacher, school librarian, principal and real estate agent. She also spent many summers working for the Ontario Government including one working as a Park Naturalist at Presqu'île. Currently, Diane is also on the Executive of the Victoria Hall Volunteers and is our Program Director. She is also a member of the Cobourg Horticultural Society, the Canadian Federation of University Women and the Willow Beach Field Naturalists. Diane is currently the Vice-Chair of ACO Ontario.



All CDHS members are invited to join us electronically on Tuesday, May 25 at 07:30 PM. Please register in advance by visiting:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_v4sES6soS9WvuVjHOET83g

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. If you have any questions concerning registration, please contact Brian Murphy, Membership Chair, at brianincobourg@gmail.com

We look forward to you joining our upcoming CDHS webinar!

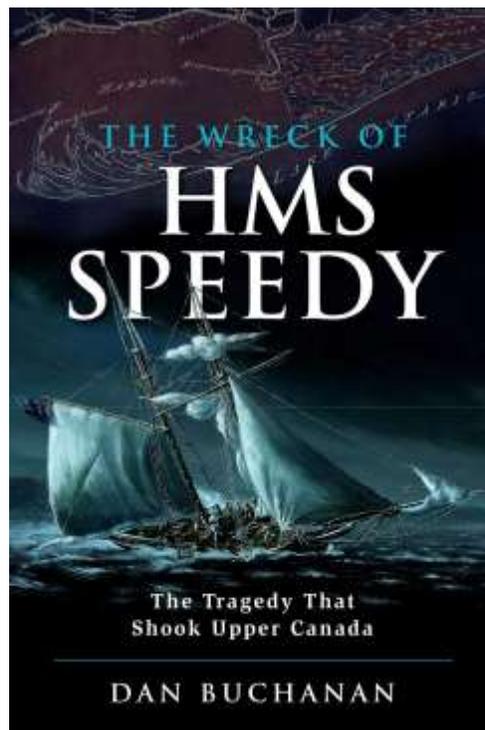
After Meeting Social

When the virtual meeting finishes don't change the channel but stay around for some fun! After each meeting we will open the Zoom webinar to everyone for a "social". You will be able to see all participants who have their camera enabled. If you have a microphone, you can ask the speaker questions one-on-one, chat with the crowd and generally do what we usually do at a physical meeting.

Our Previous Meeting

The Wreck of the HMS Speedy

Dan Buchanan spoke about his new book, *The Wreck of the HMS Speedy - The Tragedy That Shook Upper Canada*. In his presentation, Dan highlighted how one goes about making a history book and accomplishing the tremendous amount of research that went into the telling of this story, well documented in the appendices, notes and bibliography. Naturally, the story of the Speedy was recounted. It might be said that what is more fascinating, at least to some readers, is the contextual facts of life in the early 1800s, a mere 200 years ago, in the Districts of Newcastle containing the fledgling community of Deans Creek (Cobourg) and the Home District in which is found muddy York (Toronto).



During the “social” following our April meeting it was mentioned that, in addition to HMS Speedy, many other ships have sunk in Lake Ontario. The initial story of a Coburg sinking can be read at <https://www.northumberlandnews.com/news-story/3756903--a-gentleman-s-gentleman-/> The Northumberland News published a follow-up article almost 12 years later on January 15, 2014.

Boat sank off Cobourg shore in July 2002

COBOURG – Looking out into the cold waters of Lake Ontario, Paul Marshall can’t help but wonder how his dad’s sailboat sank almost 12 years ago.

During the evening of July 17, 2002, Bob Marshall and Peter Smith set off from Cobourg’s harbour in Mr. Marshall’s Philip Rhodes 36-foot wooden sloop, but the two men never returned. The boat sank and a CFB Trenton search and rescue team found the bodies of Paul Marshall’s father and Mr. Smith early the next morning, five miles offshore between Cobourg and Port Hope.

“I think about my dad every day. I want to know what happened,” Mr. Marshall said. “The boat is out there, taunting me.”

Mr. Marshall said he was told by the Canadian Coast Guard at the time, the water that night in July was 18°C and both men, who were found wearing lifejackets, died from hypothermia.

While some boat debris was found with the men’s bodies, the elder Mr. Marshall’s boat was never recovered.

“The coastguard people tell me the boat’s location is unknown and the water is so deep, divers may not get down far enough to recover it,” OPP Constable Holly Maxwell told *Northumberland News* at the time.

Mr. Marshall was told by the OPP he could look for the boat, but if it was found, to leave it untouched, “for forensic reasons,” he said.

He said he’s been in contact with a professional diver who has volunteered to help find the boat.

Mr. Marshall said that with modern technology available to divers, he believes, “we will one day find the wreck.”

He is offering \$1,000 to anyone who helps locate his father’s missing boat, which had the name ‘CASAWOPI’ painted across its stern.

Although he believes he’ll one day find the boat, Mr. Marshall is not so sure modern technology can determine what caused his father’s boat to sink.

“I’ve always thought in my mind, (the boat) popped a plank somehow,” he said. “I am confident I’ll find the boat. It might take awhile, but we’ll find it.”

And even though his father’s boat had a radio, no distress call was made. Mr. Marshall said if his father’s boat popped a plank, there would have been just seconds to radio for help. He said radios and cellphones are not enough help in an emergency.

“Even in the middle of summer, in the middle of the lake, you don’t get much time to act (in an emergency). Don’t go cruising unless you have a dingy and keep a life vest on deck at all times,” he said. “If my dad had a dingy with his boat, he might be alive today.”

Another Mystery Uncovered

Carla Jones

For several years, before CDHS was on-line with our own website, the historical society published an annual *Historical Review* that outlined the programme events for that year. In the *Historical Review* #3 - 1983-1984, on page 54, I read the following:

COBOURG HARBOUR PLAQUE

On this site in 1829 the first pier was built by private local enterprise known as the Cobourg Harbour Company. In the year 1841 alone, 597 vessels of over 50 tons each and many smaller vessels docked here. Due to increased activity, protective piers were added in 1843 and in the 1870's. Tolls were charged for harbour usage and goods transported included lumber, grain, and later, iron ore. In the 1840's and 1850's Irish emigrants landed here embarking on a new life. 1859 saw the dream of an international port die with the failure of the Cobourg-Peterborough Railroad. The America's Cup Challenger "Countess of Dufferin" and the steamship "Cobourg" called this port home. Between 1907 and 1950 the large freight-car/passenger ferries, "Ontario 1" and "2" sailed between Cobourg and Rochester. Today, with the assistance of the Federal Government, it has become an important small craft harbour.

Erected - Cobourg and District Historical Society - 1984

After my searching on-line produced negative results, I asked Ken and Leona if they knew where this plaque erected by the CDHS in 1984, could be located. Had they ever seen it?

Former Cobourg Mayor, Peter Delanty (a member of CDHS) advised that there were two plaques at the Marina. One plaque was dedicated to the sailing vessel "The Countess of Dufferin" which launched in Cobourg and competed in the sailing race for the American Cup. It is located at the east end of the marina at Division Street.



Years of neglect have not been kind to the “Countess of Dufferin” plaque. Currently the plaque is mostly illegible and, from a cursory inspection, may be beyond repair.



The second plaque is located by the gas and pump-out station as you

walk out to the centre pier. It speaks to the beginning of Cobourg and its early success as a sea trading hub on Lake Ontario.

The Cobourg Harbour plaque is of a different design using cast letters. It is still in excellent condition even after enduring 35 years outside in the worst of Cobourg weather. Thank you, Leona, for thinking to contact Peter and to Ken for taking the images of the plaques. When you're out and about taking in the fresh air, stop and have a look for the plaques. Their condition doesn't reflect well on the CDHS and we will certainly discuss at our next Executive meeting. Thoughts regarding repairs are welcomed.



Member Matters

AGM

Dear CDHS Member,

As you know, we are holding our Annual General Meeting via a Zoom Webinar. You will receive three reports (Programme, Membership, President) in advance, for you to review. If you have any questions about this material please contact Carla Jones at cgrucelajones@gmail.com.

Would you be interested in joining us on the CDHS Executive? Due to retirements and changes in commitments the positions of Secretary and Publicity Chair are open. Short descriptions of duties are:

Secretary:

The Secretary records and archives the minutes and records the results of votes at each meeting of the Board of Directors and informs Board members of upcoming meetings.

Publicity Chair:

Responsible for posting events and updates of the society's events on all pertinent social media sites such as Facebook and local on-line papers.

If you are interested in either of these positions, please contact Randy Barber who is the Nominating Committee Chair. He can be reached at randy.barber1947@gmail.com or by phone at (905) 377-9421

Would you be interested in joining our Programme Committee? The more ideas the better. Even if you do not join the committee your ideas are welcome via email or if you wish to meet as part of the Programme committee, let us know. There is no commitment to be part of the Executive.

We look forward to a Zoom AGM with you, followed by our May presentation.

Carla Jones, President CDHS

Books Donated

CDHS has received a donation of hundreds of books of historical interest from the estate of the late Eric Winter, Cobourg's Poet Laureate. Randy Barber is preparing a list of the books. Stay tuned for further details.

Announcements

Hastings County Historical Society

The Hastings County Historical Society has many resources available on their website including their monthly newsletter: <https://www.cabhc.ca/en/index.aspx>

Curious About Lawn Bowling?

There has been a lawn bowling club in Cobourg for over a century. To learn more about the club's history and current activities visit their website at <https://cobourglawnbowlingclub.weebly.com/club-history.html>

Virtual Tours

Travel is currently restricted but there are virtual tours of numerous sites of historical interest. For example, the Frank Lloyd Wright designed Martin House has a variety of guided tours. Visit <https://ci.ovationtix.com/35631/production/1035593?performanceId=10679593> to reserve a seat.

Do you wish that you could visit Canada's Parliament? Instead of driving to Ottawa try: https://lop.parl.ca/sites/Learn/default/en_CA/VR

Perhaps you fancy visiting a little further afield. Vancouver's [Museum of Anthropology](#) offers many opportunities to experience its attractions online by visiting <http://collection-online.moa.ubc.ca/home>

CDHS Executive for 2020 – 2021

President	Carla Jones	cgrucelajones@gmail.com (289) 252-1684
Past President	Leona Woods	leonawoods@sympatico.ca (905) 372-7624
Vice-President	Randy Barber	randy.barber1947@gmail.com (905) 377-9421
Secretary	Open	
Treasurer	George Kamphorst	gfkamphorst@gmail.com (905) 375-8563
Membership	Brian Murphy	brianincobourg@gmail.com (289) 634 2727
Programme Chairperson	Diane Chin	dianemchin@gmail.com (289) 435-2015
Programme Committee Members	Judith Goulin Gerry Brown Brian Murphy Randy Barber	jgoulin@hotmail.com blackcat111343@gmail.com brianincobourg@gmail.com randy.barber1947@gmail.com
Members-at-Large	Gerry Brown Hannah LeBlanc	blackcat111343@gmail.com (905) 372-3984 h18leblanc@gmail.com (905) 376-4937
Newsletter Editor	Ken Strauss	ken.strauss@pebblebeach.ca (905) 377-9854