

Historically Speaking

The Newsletter of the Cobourg and District
Historical Society

January 2019 — Issue 301

A Social History of Alderville

Dave Mowat is the quintessential historian — dedicated to the subject he is presenting, possessed of massive amounts of detailed knowledge and at the same time is a warm and engaging man, one committed to expanding the understanding of the indigenous people, their culture, their values and their place in the broad picture of Canada. He has an amazing amount of detail, specific facts related to the topic at hand, be it contemporary relations, the contribution of members of the Alderville community or the individuals who fought at Chrysler's Farm against the American attempt to capture Montréal in order to isolate British and colonial forces and so hand us over to the American nation. I am looking forward to his presentation!

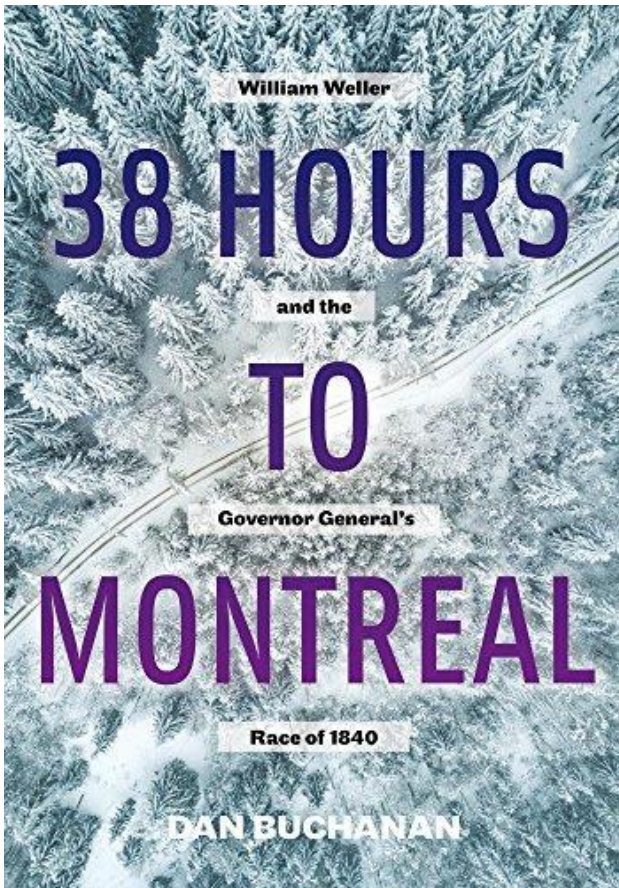


Join us for Dave's presentation on Tuesday, January 29, at Victoria Hall. Doors open at 7:00 PM for coffee and cookies. The meeting begins at 7:30 PM. Admission, including refreshments, is free for members and \$5 for non-members. Annual membership is \$25 for individuals and \$30 for a family. All are welcome so bring a friend or two!

Our Previous Meeting

38 Hours to Montréal

Dan Buchanan's newest book, *38 Hours to Montréal*, chronicles the adventure of William Weller, the Stagecoach King of Cobourg, who was challenged to get the Governor General from Toronto to Montréal in less than 38 hours. Dan entertained us with the story of Weller's success at our November meeting. The adventure started at Beverley House in downtown Toronto and ended at the Exchange Coffee House in Montréal. Considering the state of roads in the 1840s



and the stagecoach experience, the attempt to traverse this distance in just over a day was an amazing challenge. Dan's telling of the story of how William Weller accomplished this excited everyone. If you missed the meeting but want to learn more of Weller's feat, Dan's book is available from local bookshops and also from Amazon (<https://www.amazon.ca/38-Hours-Montreal-Governor-Generals/dp/1525519891/>).

Future Meetings

Tuesday, February 26, 2019 Citizens' Forum, Victoria Hall, 7:30pm	Gerry Brown <i>Armistice 18 Historical Fiction Novel</i>
Tuesday, March 26, 2019 Citizens' Forum, Victoria Hall, 7:30pm	Judith Goulin <i>Jackson and Jex: Renowned Cobourg Builders</i>
Tuesday, April 23, 2019 Citizens' Forum, Victoria Hall, 7:30pm	Annual General Meeting TBA Cobourg Sports History
Wednesday, May 15, 2019 Citizens' Forum, Victoria Hall, 7:30pm	Hugh Brewster, Moderator A Panel to Debate: <i>The Secret Diaries of Susanna Moodie</i> End of season social event

Member Matters

New Members

Please join me in welcoming our newest members: Sandra Lane, Jennifer Wiber and Tim Miller.

Announcements

Request for Photographs

The CDHS received the following request. If you can assist please contact Ms. Livingstone directly:

Hello:

The Hastings County Museum of Agricultural Heritage has an interactive map of all the cheese factories in this region in 1927. What we would like to do is collect prints of photographs of the factories that we can display around the map. We have found photos dating from the late nineteenth hundreds/ early 20th century in the Hastings County Archives, Tweed Heritage Centre and the Lennox and Addington Archives and are wondering if you have any photos of the cheese factories in Northumberland.


Louise Livingstone
251 Goods Road
Stirling ON K0K 3E0
(613) 395-4388
louisehlivingstone@gmail.com

Lakeshore Genealogical Society

The Lakeshore Genealogical Society has scheduled several meetings of particular interest. Their meetings are on the second Thursday of the month from 6:30PM to 9:00 PM in the Northumberland County building at 600 William Street in Cobourg.

- **February:** Kate Kennedy and Abigail Miller of The Northumberland Archives: *For Love and Money: Examining Women's Land Ownership in the 1800's*
- **March:** Bob Dawes: *Basics of DNA Analysis for Genealogy*
- **April:** Dave Clements: *The Nehemiah Smith Story*
- **May:** Wendy MacDonald from Trenton LDS Family History Centre: *Family Search Basics.*
- **June:** Peter Brotherhood: *The role of the Parish Church of St. Peter's in the development of Upper Canada*

Port Hope Historical Society Yard Sale



PORT HOPE & DISTRICT
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Fundraiser

Giant Fundraiser Yard Sale

at


Dorothy's House Museum

3632 Ganaraska Rd., Garden Hill, Ont.

Friday, Saturday & Sunday

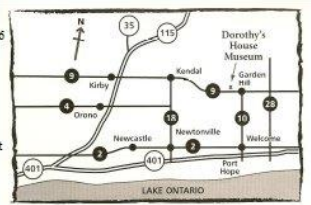
June 28 29 & 30, 2019 – 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

All proceeds go to the support and upkeep of
Dorothy's House Museum



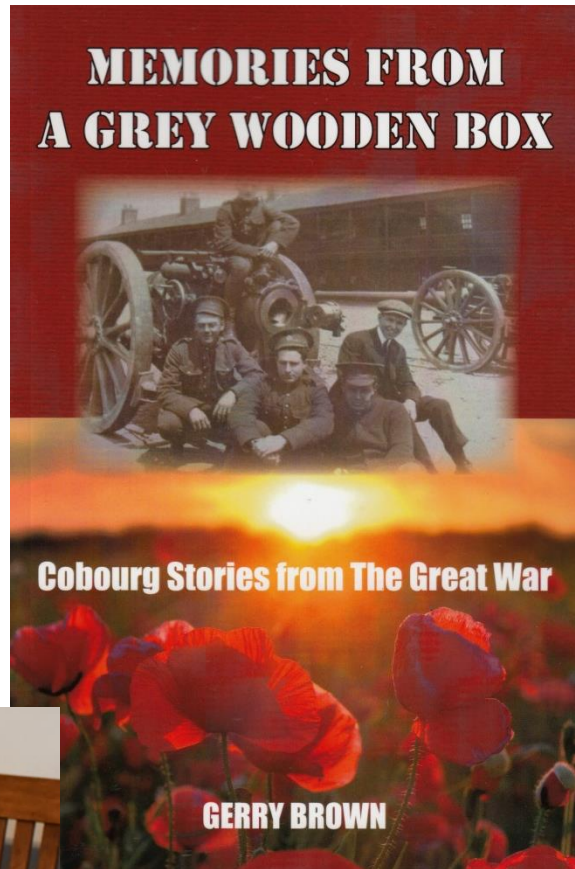
PHDHS
P.O. Box 116
Port Hope, ON
L1A 3V9

CONTACTS
Joan Parrott, Secretary
905-885-2981
Call 905 922 6439
Tim Austin, President
905-885-2814



Cobourg Author Launches New Book

Cobourg author, historian and member of the CDHS, Gerry Brown, has launched his newest book: *Memories from a Grey Wooden Box*. The book is built around a series of memories and is a mix of fictional and real characters bringing to life the Town of Cobourg as it faces the challenges of the Great War and the many changes of the 1920s. The central character, Arthur Gerson, was born in 1895, but – the result of an injury – he cannot go to war as so many did. Instead, he acts as an observer and narrator recalling events and people and giving each a perspective in the years from 1900 to 1929. Arthur is a fictitious character, but his observations illuminate the town in time and place.



Gerry Brown is a retired history teacher who began reading historical novels at age eight. Often dismayed by the history curriculum in secondary school, he believes the day-to-day lives of people in whatever time and place are a more interesting and valuable

study than treaties, constitutions or political theorizing. Deeply interested in the War of 1812, this, his first story of the 20th Century, is engaging, personal, and a thoughtful commentary on The Great War.

“Through the genius of Gerry Brown, we see with Arthur’s eyes his strange fascination with World War 1 and how he tries to make sense of it all: the battles, the mud, the barbed wire, the boys he knew who didn’t make it home and the ones who did that were never the same. It feels like we were there celebrating the Armistice on the streets of Cobourg with Arthur. The setting is Cobourg but the story could be a slice of life in the wartime era for any small town in Canada. *Memories From A Grey Wooden Box* should be on everyone’s bookshelf.”

Judith Goulin, Past President of the Cobourg and District Historical Society

Memories from a Grey Wooden Box is published by Lighthouse Press of Cobourg and is available for purchase for \$15 (HST Included). For more information, contact Suzanne Séguin at 905-372-3984 or by email at sseguin@bell.net.

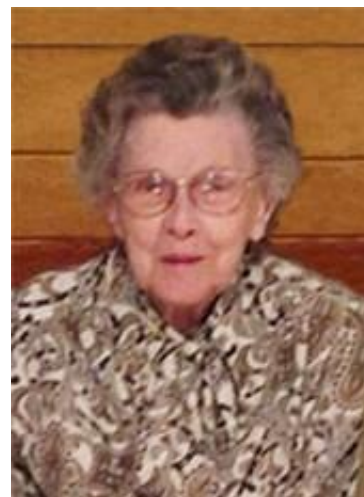
In Memoriam

Mary M. L. Rimmer (née Wicks)

November 23, 1922 - December 25, 2018

Long time CDHS member, Mary Rimmer, died on Christmas Day 2018. Perhaps you don't think you knew her, but you cannot have missed the tiny fun-loving woman who always sat in the front row on the window side of our meeting room.

I knew her only as a fellow member of CDHS during the last 16 years. Mary was one of the kindest, sweetest, caring and thoughtful people I have ever known. A few years ago, when she decided that it was just getting too onerous to attend our meetings, she took the trouble to phone me to let me know why she wouldn't be coming any more. It was almost like an apology, because she enjoyed CDHS very much.



Dorothy De Lisle, also a long-term CDHS member, told me that Mary and her husband welcomed the De Lises when they came to Cobourg many years ago. Mary, she said, was not only a kind and considerate person who became a friend, but related some of Mary's talents that the rest of us may not have known about. Mary was an avid gardener, a lawn bowler, a knitter who went to great lengths to obtain the right wool as witnessed by The De Lises bringing special wool back from New Zealand at her request. At one time Mary was a professional singer with the Lesley Bell Singers and more currently she sang with the choir at Calvary Baptist Church in Cobourg.

The amazing Mary Rimmer, who was much-loved, will be greatly missed in our community.

Barnum House Opens Once Again



The Architectural Conservancy of Cobourg & East Northumberland (ACO C&EN) has recently inked an agreement with their provincial counterpart to open Barnum house for their own use and for those who would like to rent it.

Barnum House, located just west of Grafton on Highway #2, has a long and storied history as a private home and as a significant public building. For the ACO of Ontario, the provincial organization which oversees ACO C&EN, it is the founding building and hence reason for its existence. Eric Arthur, a professor of architecture discovered the building in 1933 at the height of the depression. Unable to afford it personally, he established the ACO to finance it. ACO owned it until 1958 at which time ownership was transferred to Haldimond

Township. In 1982, the Ontario Heritage Trust (OHT) purchased it. Between 1989 and 1991 OHT undertook extensive restorations to ensure the long term conservation of the site. At that time, the Trust completely rebuilt the crumbling foundation, replaced the cedar shingled roof, restored the windows and siding and reproduced the original paint colours and wallpaper of the interior. A modern two storey addition was added at the rear to serve as a gallery and administrative centre. Since then it has served as a museum containing donated artifacts that are representative of the 19th century.

Let us go back to the beginning. Eliakum Barnum immigrated to Haldimond Township from the US in 1807. Barnum married Hannah Ewing and raised four children. He quickly prospered through the operation of a tavern and small distillery. He acquired large tracts of farmland including the tract where Barnum House sits today. He purchased this lot from James Norris who had owned the lot and a frame house on this site. That frame home burnt in April 1813 accidental fire by billeted British troops. Barnum used the original foundation of 1811 to build the home around 1819 which is the home we see today. It is one of Ontario's finest examples of neo-classical architecture.

Eliakum Barnum played a significant role in the local community. He helped to found the first school in the township along with St. George's Anglican Church. He acted as a Justice of the Peace and Lieutenant-Colonel of the Third Northumberland Battalion.

Smith Barnum, Eliakum's older son received part of this father's land holdings during the 1940's. He was a prosperous farmer and became the first warden for the United Counties of Northumberland and Durham.

James Barnum, Eliakum's younger son who married Edith Lyon in 1853, remained in the home after inheriting the property when his father died in 1877. James died in 1907 and the house remained in the family for another 10 years. Eliakum Barnum had two other children, Sarah and Harriet, who did not have ownership of the property. Harry Prentice bought it in 1917 and it was during his occupancy that Eric Arthur discovered it.

His style of architecture, the neo-classical style, is influenced by American architecture popular in New England at the beginning of the 19th century. Naturally they were inspired by British architects Robert and James Allan. It has a wealth of ornamental details – a triangular pediment across the façade, arcaded pilasters and Greek style cornice decorations. The centre is two storied with wings on each side. Eric Arthur described it in this way: "There is no house of similar size and material in the United States that is the superior of the Barnum House in Grafton."



ACO C&EN is excited to be acting on behalf of ACO Ontario and the Heritage Trust to open this home upon occasion to the community.

Letter from Cobourg

The following letter was obtained from a history enthusiast, Joyce Grieve, who currently lives in Calgary Alberta. Cobourg resident's complaints seem timeless!

Cobourg, C.W. Nov. 12 1855

Dear brother in law,

I write you a few lines to inform you that I am quite well as well as all Mr. Laing's family, thanks to God for his blessing, and I hope that this will find you all in the enjoyment of the same. I had a letter from Alexander during the summer and he and his wife were well. I did not answer his letter as I expected Sophia to be here and was waiting her arrival to send him all the news. Our friends at Kingston are likewise all well.

The European war seems to have an effect upon this country, as the prices of all kinds of produce have increased very considerably these last two years, and the present exceeds the preceding. It is however fine times for the farmer, and they are all soaking money. Instead of disposing of their produce in trade as was the almost universal custom a few years ago, they now receive cash for everything, and find a ready market. The wheat is now selling at 10/- to 10/3 a bushel here, oats 2/6 potatoes 2/- to 2/3, hay from 12-14 dollars a ton. Mr. Laing has bought another 100 acres of land. The prices of provisions have also been kept up by the construction of the railroad which has been built between this town and Peterboro, and the expense of which has been defrayed entirely by the town of Cobourg. This has added very considerably to our taxes. They amount this year to a dollar or five shillings in the pound and they may be even more next year. However we hope the trade will pay well and this will relieve us very considerably from our taxes in the future.

The provincial Exhibition for Upper Canada held its meeting this year in Cobourg. There was an immense number of people present, many more indeed than could find accommodation, and the neighbouring towns of Port Hope, Peterboro, Grafton, Colbourne etc. were all crowded. There was a great show of cattle, horses, implements of husbandry and roots and grain, besides ladies work and several thousand pounds more expended in provisions.

I was very much distressed at hearing of my sister Margaret's husbands and daughters death, and thinking she may require some assistance in her present circumstances. I enclose in this a draft for five pounds sterling which you will draw for her in any of the Banks in Duns. I am sorry the amount is not larger but I am not able to send her any more at present. I trust however at a future time to be able to relieve her wants if should under the necessity of requiring it.

No more at present but remain

Your affectionate sister in law

Mary. Smith

Cobrg Canada West North America

CDHS Executive for 2018 – 2019

President	Leona Woods	leonawoods@sympatico.ca (905) 372-7624
Past President	Alison Torrie Lapaire	alisontorrie@gmail.com (905) 269-8094
Vice-President	Carla Jones	cgrucelajones@gmail.com (289) 252-1684
Secretary	Carla Jones	cgrucelajones@gmail.com (289) 252-1684
Treasurer	George Kamphorst	gfkamphorst@gmail.com
Membership	Vacant	
Programme Chairperson	Diane Chin	dianemchin@gmail.com (289) 435-2015
Programme Committee Members	Leona Woods Judith Goulin Art King Gerry Brown Alison Torrie Lapaire	leonawoods@sympatico.ca jgoulin@hotmail.com artking69@gmail.com blackcat21@sympatico.ca alisontorrie@gmail.com
Members-at-Large	Gerry Brown Diane Chin Reva Nelson	blackcat21@sympatico.ca (905) 372-3984 dianemchin@gmail.com (289) 435-2015 rnelson29@cogeco.ca (416) 656-0994
Newsletter Editor	Ken Strauss	ken.strauss@pebblebeach.ca (905) 377-9854