



Historically Speaking

The Newsletter of the Cobourg and
District Historical Society

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In a Box of Letters

Linda Nicol will present *The Story Told in a Box of Letters from a Navigator in WWII to His Young Love* at our October meeting. This is a story of romance, hardship, courage, and grief in WWII as told through the letters of an Australian Airman to a young women in Edmonton, Alberta. How did they meet and why was he so far from home? What was it like to be a navigator waiting for deployment in Britain in 1944? And who was the stranger who contacted the women 43 years later? Come to the meeting to learn the details of a romance from almost 75 years ago!

The meeting begins at 7:30pm on Tuesday, October 27. Everyone is encouraged to arrive early to enjoy coffee, tea and cookies. Take this opportunity to reconnect with members you haven't seen since the spring, 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

The 2015-2016 season at CDHS started with a bang! Alison Scanlan detailed the rise and fall of Coeey Rifles in Cobourg. Founded by Mrs. Scanlan's grandfather and great uncle, the H.W.



Coeey Machine and Arms Company was an important part of Cobourg's industrial past. Until quite recently Coeey was one of the largest employers in Cobourg. Her presentation was illustrated by a variety of Coeey artifacts that are now owned by Scanlan and other Coeey descendants. There was a standing room only crowd of

The Home of **COOEY RIFLES**

Favourite of Canadian Sportsmen



H. W. COOEY MACHINE & ARMS CO. LIMITED
COBOURG - ONTARIO

CDHS members together with a number of relatives from the Coeey family.



A five-acre property at the corner of Tremaine and King Street West was once occupied by the H-W Cooley Machine and Arms Company and later became the home of the *Cobourg Daily Star* newspaper. It has been proposed that a park with walking trails be developed on the former factory site with heritage signs depicting its industrial past.

Tidbits from *The Evening Guide*

While researching railway topics, CDHS member David Savage noted several interesting items in issues of *The Evening Guide* of Port Hope:

Plans Submitted

From *The Evening Guide*, March 27, 1911

“The plans for the proposed new Grand Trunk Railway station and improved yards at Cobourg were submitted to the Town Council for inspection. The blue print shows a vast improvement over the present station and yards, with abundance of tracks for storing and making up trains. The tracks will be raised considerably to relieve the heavy grade. The new station will be erected between Division and George Streets, will be constructed of cut stone up to the window sills and finished off with brick. The baggage room is to be connected with the main building by a platform similar to the Canadian Northern Railway, with an umbrella top to protect passengers from the sun’s rays and the rain.

The blue print of the Division St. subway was also laid before the Council, and also the plan for the grade of the track from the ferry dock, from University Avenue to the main line. If the contemplated work is carried out there will be busy times around the Grand Trunk station this summer.”

New G.T.R. Station

From *The Evening Guide*, November 21, 1911

“At last the long promised new Grand Trunk station has materialized, and it is acknowledged to be one of the most up to date east of Toronto. The building is modern in every respect, constructed of pressed brick and well finished inside. The architecture is imposing and all sanitary improvements are included. The waiting rooms are fairly large, the agent’s quarters and operator’s departments are light and airy, and in every way an acceptable improvement to the old station. The bar and lunch room are rather small, but as no meals are to be served there, it is thought the accommodation will be ample.”

In 1911 it required only eight months to progress from the first viewing of tentative plans to completion of an imposing building together with new tracks and streets for access. How long did the recently completed enhancements to the VIA station require?

TRIVIA Night

50/50 DRAW PRIZES CASHBAR NIBBLES

Everyone is welcome – come and have fun!

Friday, November 27, 2014

7:00PM – 10:00PM

Legion Village Pub, 111 Hibernia Street, Cobourg

Tickets: \$5/person (CDHS members \$2/person)

**Purchase tickets in advance at the October CDHS meeting
or call (289)252-1684**

Future Meetings

Make plans to attend our Fourth Annual Trivia Night on Friday Nov 27 at Legion Village Pub from 7pm to 10pm. There will be the usual cash bar, 50/50 draw **PLUS** during break we will be featuring personal stories from “War Brides” living in Cobourg. If you know any war brides please have them contact Carla Jones at (289) 252-1684.

Tuesday January 26, 2016 , George Parker <i>From Forest to Farmland: Surveying Hamilton Township</i>	Tuesday February 23, 2016 , Allan Kirby <i>Historical Folk Songs from Eastern Ontario</i>
Tuesday March 22, 2016 , Ted Rafuse <i>The Ontario Car Ferry Company: Cobourg to Rochester</i>	Tuesday April 26, 2016 , Tom Holden <i>The 1878 Northumberland Atlas in Google Earth Annual General Meeting</i>
Tuesday May 24, 2016, Bus Trip, <i>Museum Secrets: Trenton and Belleville</i> Details to be announced	

Membership Matters

Local Radio Show

The fourth Tuesday of every month, which is CDHS meeting day, be sure to tune in to Northumberland 89.7FM on your radios at 8:45am. You can also listen online at <http://tunein.com/radio/Northumberland-897-s209644/>. Alison Torrie Lapaire, our Programme Chair, is a regular guest on the *Discovering Yesterday* segment. She will be speaking about the upcoming CDHS speakers and programming, and will be sharing stories from Cobourg’s past."

Speaker Introductions

The Programme Committee requires volunteers to introduce and thank our speakers at our regular meetings. We provide the biographical information from the speakers as well as tips on crafting a great introduction and thank you! If you are willing to take on this important task at an upcoming meeting, please contact any member of the Programme Committee.

Very Rewarding Work

Our Programme Committee has been hard at work brainstorming ideas for an exciting season of speakers and events! If you have suggestions for future guests or wish to join the Programme Committee, please feel free to approach any of the members.

Announcements

Lakeshore Genealogical Society Meetings

On November 12, Bob Dawes will discuss Scotland from Abroad. This presentation will cover on-line resources for doing genealogy research in Scotland using both free and pay sites. It will demonstrate how you can use the free sites to improve the quality of your pay-per-view searches and results.

Lakeshore Genealogical Society meetings are from 6:30 to 8:30pm in the Cobourg Library, Rotary room. Each meeting has a program ranging from member discussions to guest presenters on topics of interest to genealogists and family historians, whether researching locally or far away. Visitors are welcome. For further information email info@lakeshoregenealogicalsociety.ca or visit www.LakeshoreGenealogicalSociety.ca

Heritage Fair

The Port Hope Historical Society will sponsor a Heritage fair on Sunday, May 1, 2016 from 10am to 4pm at Lion's Centre, Thomas St., Port Hope. For further information phone (905)885-2981 eMail info@porthopehistorical.ca.

Cobourg Museum Foundation Fundraising Dinner



The 4th annual fundraising dinner for the the Cobourg Museum Foundation will be on Friday October 16th, 2015 at the Best Western in Cobourg. The guest speaker will be Jeremiah Brown who is a Cobourg Olympian and Silver Medalist in the London 2012 Rowing competition. Tickets are \$60 (\$20 tax receipt). You can purchase tickets at The Victoria Hall Box Office (service charge applies), The Sifton-Cook Heritage Centre (141 Orr Street) or by phoning Mary at (289) 252-0280.

Cobourg Fire Brigade

(reprinted from *Cobourg 1798 – 1948* by Edwin C. Guillet)

Vitally linked with the history of Cobourg is the fire department. When the fire alarm sounds and the sleek lines of Cobourg's fire pumper are a streamlined blur as the machine speeds along the streets to the fire, the spectators perhaps do not realize how intimately fire brigades are connected with the history of the town. Back along more than a hundred milestones of time are to be found many events in which the fire brigades of previous decades figured prominently. Among these are the famous old Windsor Hotel fire, which was marked by the loss of three lives; fires in which the business section of the main street was changed overnight; fires which removed famous old landmarks; and conflagrations in which heroic rescues were made.

There were many humorous incidents to lighten the sadder pages of fire-brigade history. It would have been a side-splitting experience to have been present at the famous roundhouse fire of 1870, and we will close with details of this boisterous affair.

The building was the Cobourg and Peterborough Railway roundhouse near the present ferry dock. To that fire hustled Jack McIntosh, Jack Moffat, and Jack Meehan. McIntosh poked the hose through the north window; Moffat aided by Meehan, slipped the nozzle through the south window. The hose line jerked as the water tore through the passage, forcing the air out ahead of



it. There was spluttering at the nozzle ends and then the water rushed out in a torrent- not into the fire but one stream into McIntosh's face and the other into the face of Jack Moffatt! The surprised men spluttered and choked, but consternation gave way to mutual anger as each man, convinced that the other had

deliberately directed the hose at him, dropped his hose and sailed into the other with fists and arms flying. They went at it with all the vim and vigour their outraged dignities could muster; and when the rest of the Fire Brigade arrived they found them still hard at it, with the fire blazing away merrily!



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