

Historically Speaking

The Newsletter of the Cobourg and District

Historical Society

April 2024 — Issue 347

AGM + Show and Tell

Our April 23 meeting will begin with the Cobourg and District Historical Society's Annual General Meeting (AGM). We will receive several reports on our 2023-2024 activities, have an opportunity to learn the details of CDHS finances and elect officers for 2024-2025. There are further details in this newsletter's Member Matters section.

The AGM will be followed by a Member Show & Tell



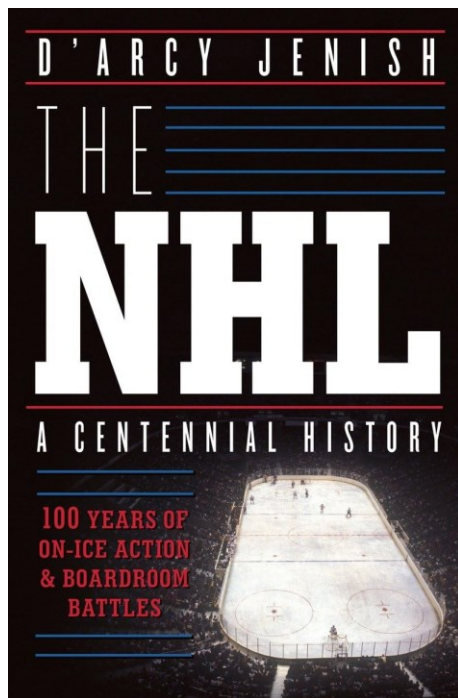
Members are invited to bring something of historical interest such as jewelry, letters, family diaries, scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, medals of family members, unusual old tools and documents or any other treasures to display for fellow members to see and admire. Tables will be set up around the room to display items brought.

Join us on Tuesday, April 23, 2024 for a fun evening. Doors open at 7:00 pm. All are welcome. Our new coffee maker is ready so bring a friend or two! Members free and guests are \$5.00.

Our Previous Meeting

History of the National Hockey League

Our March 2024 meeting featured D'Arcy Jenish – a playwright and writer of magazine features, newspaper commentary, speeches, corporate histories and corporate reports. He has authored three plays and ten books on topics ranging from the opening of the Canadian West to *The Making of the October Crisis* to *The NHL: 100 Years of On-ice Action and Boardroom Battles* to *Money to Burn: Trudeau, Mulroney and the Bankruptcy of Canada*.



Born in a Montréal hotel room in 1917, the

NHL has endured two world wars, the Great Depression, the failure of numerous franchises and the predations of the short-lived World Hockey Association. Today it is one of North America's Big Four professional sports leagues. Thousands of players and hundreds of coaches and general managers have come and gone over 107 seasons but only four presidents and one commissioner have guided the fortunes of this remarkable enterprise.

Rather than something unchanging the NHL has seen dozens of teams come and go or change their names as they relocated to various parts of North America.

Jenish documents these numerous changes with anecdotes from his interviews with the players and leaders of the NHL. Those who didn't get an autographed copy of Jenish's book at our meeting can order it from Amazon (<https://www.amazon.ca/s?k=0385671482>) or local bookshops.

For most of us, talk of the NHL and Hockey Night in Canada brings memories of the show's theme song. Some may recall that both it and A Place to Stand (theme song for Expo 67) are the work of Dolores Claman who passed in 2021. If you have forgotten, watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0F10Sc3Vcw>

Last Event of our 2023/2024 Programme

Tuesday, May 28, 2024

Social Event & Outing in Brighton, Ontario

Join us as we drive/carpool our way to Brighton, Ontario's community centre to hear Brighton resident and historian Dan Buchanan, The History Guy, present The History of the Murray Canal, which is now part of the Trent-Severn waterway. It is a story that is both complex and compelling. Presentation from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Following the presentation, we will meet for lunch at a local Brighton establishment before returning to Cobourg.

Member Matters

Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held at the beginning of our April meeting. You will be emailed several reports prior to the meeting. Our Treasurer will report "live" at the meeting and will be available to answer any questions about CDHS finances.

If you are interested in a position on the CDHS executive board you are urged to contact any current executive member to discuss duties and responsibilities. Contact information is on the last page of our newsletter.

Our current Treasurer, George Kamphorst, will not be standing for this position however he is happy to assist in the transition to a new volunteer.

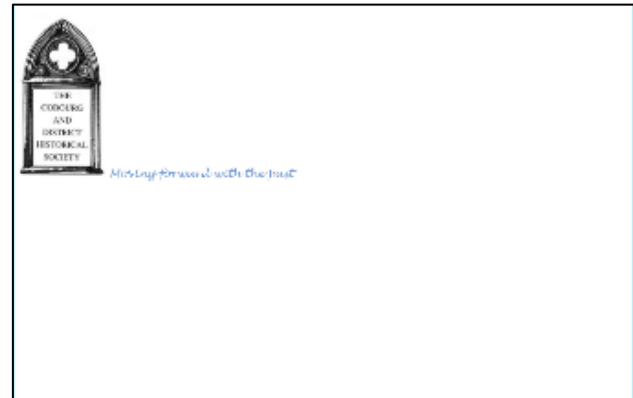
New Members

Please join me in welcoming our newest CDHS member:

- James Young

CDHS Website Updated

By early 2011 the CDHS executive realized that all groups need a website and decided to register the CDHS.CA domain. Our original website was, to be charitable, rather spartan – a blank panel except for the Faraday Hall window and a catch phrase – *Moving forward with the past* – but with no other content! The image to the right shows how our website looked on 17 Aug 2011. The great work of John Draper expanded our website to include dozens of pages of newsletters, Cobourg history, veteran interviews and much more. By early 2016 our website’s homepage was:



Recently John has decided to retire from his many years as our webmaster so that he can devote more time to Cobourg’s only source of unbiased political news and commentary: <https://cobourgblog.com/>. Thank you, John, for your many years of service!

With John’s retirement we decided that our website would benefit from changes to improve readability and use with smart phones. Steve Smiley, a local entrepreneur, has completely refreshed our website.

Visit <https://cdhs.ca/> and let us know your thoughts about the new look.

Demolition by Neglect: Port Hope File Factory



The old Port Hope file factory, a reminder of Port Hope's prosperous industrial past, has been an unused and derelict building for many years. Located on Cavan Street across from the popular Trattoria Gusto restaurant the building is in decay. A few years ago, investors planned to convert the building into trendy condos and brewery but that project never really began. In February, bricks from the building's façade crashed to the street.

Considered to be a hazard to traffic, the Town of Port Hope has approved a demolition permit for a dangerous portion of the building.

About 1853 the Globe Manufacturing Company built the first parts of the building. Two centuries ago much of industry was powered by water and this factory was no exception; the original factory included a mill powered by the Ganaraska River. In 1901 the Globe File Factory was sold to the Nicholson File Company of the United States. A new factory building was opened on Peter Street in 1955. Nicholson File was taken over by Cooper Industries in 1972 but remained in Port Hope until NAFTA enabled moving their operations to Mexico.

If you are curious about the once thriving file factory and other early local entrepreneurs there are many online sources.



View <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WI75N2iC6zc> to explore the building's interior. See <https://riddimryder.com/abandoned-globe-file-manufacturing-company/>, <https://www.heritageporthope.com/CAVAN121.pdf>, <https://2oldguyswalking.wordpress.com/2019/08/28/the-globe-file-port-hope-ontario/> and <https://www.porthopehistory.com/globefile/> for more details.

More About the Strathmore Girls

Several readers have requested additional details regarding when Strathmore was converted to a training facility for girls. In addition, some are interested in further details of what the training programs involved. The following brief article will answer some of these questions. For additional details of the history of Strathmore House and its owners prior to becoming a training school visit <https://2oldguyswalking.wordpress.com/2021/02/28/strathmore-house-to-brookside-youth-centre/>

The female inmates at the Galt facility were relocated to Cobourg in 1942 because of military training requirements in Galt. The Ontario Training School for Girls in Cobourg used buildings not originally designed for the requirements of such a school. Because of the disadvantages, it was decided after WWII to return the girls to a modern school at Galt that had been especially designed and built for their needs. The junior boy's school which had been operating in those Galt buildings in the post-WWII years was transferred to the Cobourg buildings. The swap of usage was completed early in 1951.

The 1950-1951 government report on Cobourg's training school included the following:

Vocational Training

Many girls committed had reached their academic maximum, therefore a programme of remedial reading and social studies was provided in conjunction with vocational training. These girls assisted the dietitian in the kitchen; learned to operate power machines and sew by hand; and use domestic laundry equipment. During the year six girls received training as Nurses' Aides. The Beauty Shop, in charge of a qualified instructor, operated four evenings each week and twenty-one girls completed the course. The garden was most successful, all pupils participating in this activity.

Girls attending academic school received as much vocational training as possible, working in kitchen on week-ends and having sewing and laundry periods during the week.

Fifty girls, who had attained Grade 8 or higher, attended typing classes. Several of these girls reached a typing speed of 55 words per minute, and others secured certificates for Gestetner operating, and have obtained office positions in the community.

Individual preferences were considered in assigning vocational classes, and the necessity for work habits acceptable to the community, was emphasized.

Avocations

Appreciating that poor use of leisure time had been a fault of most committals, an effort was made to develop interests in constructive activities. Basketball, volleyball, and soft ball teams competed with Port Hope and Cobourg teams. Skating and swimming were the most popular sports. The Ontario Hospital again permitted us to use their bowling alleys on Saturday afternoons throughout the winter.

Every girl attended one arts and crafts period each week. An exhibition was held in April 1950, to which many citizens of Cobourg were invited. Some of these exhibits were sent to the Canadian National Exhibition, the Ottawa Exhibition, and the Warkworth Fair. Donations of material and leather from interested business firms assisted greatly in this work.

Sixty-five girls received piano lessons, and fifteen, singing lessons. Efforts were made to include as many girls as possible in dramatic and musical productions. "H.M.S. Pinafore" was performed on the lawn in August 1950, and guests were invited from Cobourg. At Christmas, "The Shoemaker's House" was produced for the Rotary Club. The school won a prize for a "Chorus in Unison" at the Northumberland County Music Festival.

Small clubs continued to play an important part in school life. Apart from encouraging girls to develop interests, they created a sense of group responsibility. Play reading, Junior Red Cross, Garden and Bible Study, were some of the groups which functioned throughout the year.

The complete report on the activities of the girls is available at:

<https://archive.org/details/p2annualreportcorr1951/page/6/mode/1up?q=cobourg+strathmore>

Details of the typical activities of the boys after they returned to Cobourg are available at:

<https://archive.org/details/p2annualreportcorr1953/page/21/mode/1up?q=cobourg>

The Golden Plough

John Jolie

This Fall marks the 50th anniversary of the First World Ploughing Match. Plowing matches go back about 200 years. In England, John Christian Curwen founded the Workington Agricultural Society and spent his life promoting agricultural innovation in England, including competitions. The idea of farming contests spread over the Atlantic and soon our region had similar events.

The plowing matches gained enough stature that a decision was made to make the competitions an international event. It was at the 1951 British Plowing Match in Stirling, Scotland, that Canada was awarded the honour of holding the first world event and Cobourg was to be the host community! Invitations were sent out to National Champions from around the world.

Our local committee used the land owned by the county, on which the Home for the Aged stood (at the junction of William, Burnham and Elgin Streets). The property stretched northwards past the Highway 401 (not yet in existence). Foster Russell, publisher of the *Cobourg Sentinel Star*, was the chairman of Publicity for the event and his book is the main source for this story. Russell, a person who did not understate the news, noted that to host the first plowing match meant "that Cobourg will have the honour... never before given to any town in Canada... something that no other town or city can claim in the whole universe."

Governor General Vincent Massey travelled from his home at Batterwood north of Port Hope to open the matches on October 6, 1953. Massey proclaimed that events such as these gave farmers the chance to see new techniques and to get back to the "roots in that ancient fellowship of the soil." The view from the top of the hill, taking in the large tent city must have been impressive. Seven nations were represented. The large number of you fee1 and organizations indicated the extent of the involvement of local citizens. Many of the thousands of visitors were fed by church groups. Bands from all over the country performed. It was noted that the Timothy Eaton tent poured 24,000 free cups of tea. Many local residents brought out their rural family heirlooms for display. From all accounts, the Plowing Match was a huge success.

Two years later, to commemorate the event, the stone cairn was erected. Prime Minister Lester Pearson and Paul Martin Sr., Minister of Health and Welfare, attended the ceremony. The monument stands immediately in front of the realigned Elgin Street, in front of the Golden Plough. The unveiling of the cairn was on September 12, 1955. Paul Martin Sr. was the keynote speaker. Then, within a few weeks, Martin went to New York

to address the United Nations General Assembly. His U.N. speech was reported in the October 6, 1955 issue of the *Cobourg Sentinel Star*. Here is a small part of Martin's speech to this world body:

Mr. President... two weeks ago, I had the pleasure of visiting the Canadian Community of Cobourg... and of dedicating a Cairn of Peace in commemoration of the First World Plowing Match held here two years before. I mention this... because atop the cairn was a Golden Plough bearing the inscription: THAT MAN MAY USE THE PLOUGH TO CULTIVATE PEACE AND PLENTY... WHAT BETTER SYMBOL COULD BE FOUND FOR OUR DETERMINATION TO BRING ABOUT THE BIBLICAL PROPHECY: THEY SHALL BEAT THEIR SWORDS INTO PLOUGHSHARES...

In commemoration of the event, the Home for the Aged was renamed the Golden Plough Lodge. The organizing committee at the time preferred to use the old spelling "plough."



The Golden Plough Cairn.
Photograph © John Jolie 2004

This material was originally published in
Historical Review 21 in 2004.

Announcements

Lakeshore Genealogical Society

Cobourg Street Names – Who & Why on Wednesday, May 8, 7:30pm – 9:00pm, Cobourg Public Library, 200 Ontario St, Cobourg or by Zoom. Please register for this event by email to LGSregister@gmail.com The speaker will be Peter Delanty.

Many of the streets in Cobourg are named after notable early settlers and former mayor, Peter Delanty will combine both recent and early history to entertain with stories of how many of these streets gained their identity.



Trent Valley Archives Theatre

The Trent Valley Archives Theatre's performance of "Tide of Hope" will be at the Market Hall Performing Arts Centre in Peterborough on Wednesday, May 15 and Thursday, May 16. "Tide of Hope" is a play commemorating the 200th anniversary of the Peter Robinson Settlers that is written by Edward Schroeter and directed by Gerry McBride. It follows David Nagle, an Irish land agent and rent collector who must flee to Upper Canada with the Peter Robinson settlers of 1825 to escape the wrath of Irish rebels fighting against English tyranny. Visit <https://trentvalleyarchives.com/tvat/> for further details and to purchase tickets.

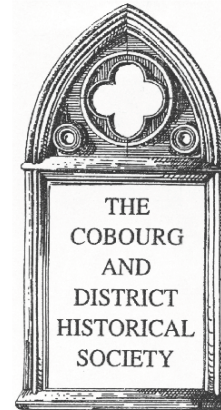


Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin

The Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin – former Supreme Court Justice and best-selling author – will be speaking at Victoria Hall on Friday, May 3, 2024 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$30.00 and are available in Cobourg at Acanthus Interiors, Let's Talk Books and the Victoria Hall Box office (905-372-2210) or <https://experiencecobourg.ca/concert-hall-victoria-hall/> The event is hosted by Victoria Hall Volunteers and The House Lawyer: Carrie A. McArthur Low and Beebee and Associates.



Join Us Tuesday, April 23, 2024



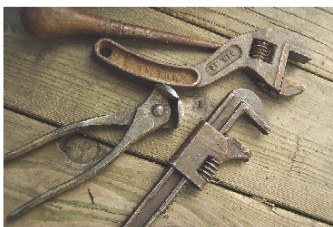
Show & Tell *(following our AGM)*



Members are invited to bring something of historical interest to display to fellow members and their guests to admire.



Bring items from the past like special objects, jewelry, letters, family diaries, medals of family members, old tools, documents, letters or any treasure to display.



Tables will be set up around the room to display items brought. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for setup if needed.

Concert Hall in Victoria Hall

Members free, Guests \$5, ALL ARE WELCOME

🕒 Doors open at 7 PM 🕒 Meeting starts at 7:30 PM
For Member information, Brianincobourg@gmail.com

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