



# Heritage News

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## Remembering Historic Mississauga and the War of 1812

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## SPECIAL EVENTS

### Genealogy Workshop

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Rick Roberts

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## A Call to Arms

### Remembering Historic Mississauga and the War of 1812

By Matthew Wilkinson, Historian, Heritage Mississauga

2012 marks the Bicentennial of the War of 1812. Although peace was concluded in late 1814, the war lasted until early 1815, and as such events commemorating the Bicentennial of the war, including re-enactments, tributes and rededications, will stretch over several years. In commemoration and observance of the Bicentennial, many dedicated cultural heritage organizations, museums, historic sites and volunteer groups are focusing energies on significant events and research projects connected to the conflict.

Heritage Mississauga, in partnership with the University of Toronto Mississauga Historical Studies Department, has undertaken a research project aimed at documenting the residents of Toronto Township (historic Mississauga) who served during the War of 1812. This research project is ongoing. Thank you to UTM students Milan Gocmanac and Suzanna Elmazi for all of their efforts, and thank you to the many individuals who have shared their research, knowledge, information and passion regarding the War of 1812 and its local connections with us, notably Fred Blair, Lois McKinney, Richard Gerrard and Richard Feltoe, amongst many others.



Barbara Martin, www

While the City of Mississauga (formerly Toronto Township) has some connections to the War of 1812 in the form of past residents who served as militiamen during the war, largely along the Niagara frontier, no battles or events of note took place within the modern boundaries of the City of Mississauga. To the east, at York (now the City of Toronto), Fort York was a military bastion during the war, and was captured and destroyed by American forces in 1813. Fort York was rebuilt in 1814 and stands today as a National Historic Site.

To the south and west conflict neared our borders as invading American forces were repelled at various battles ranging from Stoney Creek to Burlington Bay.

Volunteer militiamen from Toronto Township (now the City of Mississauga) were involved in various capacities during the War, with some serving in a support-oriented capacity with the Embodied Militia, while others seeing action in 1812 as volunteer members of the First and Second Flank Companies of the 2nd Regiment of the York Militia (with some others serving with the Lincoln Militia and other regiments). In 1813 and 1814, as the militia was reorganized, some of "our" militiamen served with the Incorporated Militia, and others served with the Royal Artillery Drivers (Car Brigade), a Rifle Company, and with the Commissariat or Wagon Department.

Cont'd pg.10

## President's Message

By Barbara O'Neil, President

### Where The Personal & Municipal Intersect: An Oral History Interview With Don Mills, Chief Librarian, Mississauga Library System

*In anticipation of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Mississauga Library System's Central Library, I met some months ago with the City's Chief Librarian, Don Mills. This was an opportunity to talk not only about some of the highlights of building what is now one of the largest public library systems in Canada (with 18 branches and over 300,000 registered users), but also about some of Don's personal memories of his career in "the System". To all of you who have spent many happy hours at your local library – enjoy our edited chat!*



*Don Mills receiving his Lifetime Membership Award from President Barbara O'Neil, 2009, HM*

**Don, your own history is quite entwined with the Mississauga Library System's (MLS) history. Can you tell us a little about your background and how you came to be in your current role?**

Well, let me start with something you probably wouldn't expect to hear. My grandfather was the Minister of Mines in Ontario in the 19-teens, and when he was elected from what was at that time Port Arthur (Thunder Bay), he relocated to Toronto. My dad, who was then about five, recalls moving to a house in Oakville, right on Lakeshore, on the eastern edge of modern-day downtown Oakville. Dad tells the story of sitting on the steps of his home and waiting for an automobile to drive by – that was the highlight of the day. I've always been kind of charmed by that.

When I came back here in 1987 and realized I was living just a short distance from the house where my dad had lived as a child, it was kind of neat.

**How did you become a librarian?**

I grew up in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and graduated with an Honors degree in English from the University of Winnipeg; I was in their first graduating class. After working with the Winnipeg Public Library System for a couple of years as an Apprentice - they actually called it that - I was accepted into Library School at UBC in Vancouver. Upon graduating in 1971, my first professional job was actually as a Librarian "bouncer". Because I was tall, I was hired by the Vancouver Public Library to be an evening manager in one of their branches, and I was told that my job was to get rid of the "rowdies". So I asked, "What happened to the previous

bouncer?" And I was told, "Oh, one night they threw him over the schoolyard fence and he didn't come back." I went to my job, prepared to be thrown over the fence, but it turned out I was bigger than all the "rowdies", so I lasted in that first professional job. My second professional job was as Chief Librarian in a small town in St Albert, Alberta as their first Librarian. That experience was kind of a preview of my time in Mississauga because St Albert was a small community that just boomed overnight. Although I was only there for about five years, all of the problems had to do with runaway growth, incredible growth. And then opportunity called and I moved to Kamloops, and from there to West Vancouver, and then fortuitously back to Winnipeg for about five years, before being enticed to move to Mississauga, where we've been ever since.

**What size was the Mississauga Library System at that time?**

The City had amalgamated in 1974, so when I arrived in 1986 I guess you could say they were still working out some of the kinks. There were 11 libraries, which had been part of the pre-amalgamated communities. In those days libraries meant a lot of files and a lot of cards, and it wasn't as easy as it is today to inter-file things. Curiously enough I had gone through a similar experience in Winnipeg, which amalgamated in 1972. When I went there in 1981, we were still cleaning up. There was an awful lot of work to be done to make one library system.

*Cont'd pg. 15*

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## From the Editor's Desk

By Jayme Gaspar, Executive Director

Each year brings with it new opportunities to celebrate our heritage and promote its preservation. Amongst the many communication updates this year on the website, facebook and twitter we also congratulated our Heritage Heroes at the 2012 awards ceremony and hosted our second annual Genealogy Workshop. Special thanks to our partner and sponsor the Halton Peel Ontario Genealogical Society for their support and to our "experts" Fawne Stratford-Devai, Dorothy Kew and Jane Watt for helping guests find answers to their most puzzling questions. We also welcomed over 250 visitors to the War of 1812 exhibit in the *Debbie Hatch Discovery Centre* "A Call to Arms: Historic Mississauga and the War of 1812".

We are celebrating the Bi-centennial all year long with commemoration activities honouring local Veterans, lectures across the City with our partners, community events and exhibits. We look forward to celebrating with you. Our shared heritage as a community is important to reflect upon during this anniversary. The City of Mississauga's motto is "Pride in our Past, Faith in our Future"; this motto is as valid today as it would have been over 200 years ago. Can you imagine Mississauga, circa 1812 and the hardships that the few hundred who lived here had to endure? Their belief in a future that promised prosperity, in part ensured that we are here today in a free country called Canada, in the City of Mississauga. We hope that you will share in this special year, look to our Community Events Calendar on our website for details on events all across Ontario.

We are saddened to report that in January 2012 we lost a friend, colleague, and tremendous supporter of Heritage Mississauga: John Briers. We first met John in 2007 when we approached him for a quote to produce our newsletter. Our printer ever since, Briers Design & Print has been there supporting our efforts to communicate heritage in Mississauga and beyond. A heritage advocate and well known member of the community of Ward 10, John was "involved" and a friend to all. We appreciate his support and expertise over the years. We will miss him.

We also saddened to learn of the passing of longtime Member of Parliament for Mississauga South, Donald Blenkarn. Don was a lawyer and businessman in the Port Credit community when he was first elected to office in 1972 representing Peel South. He served as Mississauga South



Jayme Gaspar, HM

MP from 1979-1993. He will be remembered for his deep booming voice, his dedication to the issues and generosity of his time and energy. He knew at the age of 10 that he would be a lawyer, a politician and a farmer. He achieved all three. The family farm is the Hockely Valley Tree Farm. I remember one Christmas meeting Don as he helped our family prepare our Christmas tree for transport. He will be missed.



Don Blenkarn, HM

have a great spring!

## Congratulations!

To the following heritage heroes who were honoured at this year's Heritage Mississauga awards ceremony on Thursday February 23rd at the Maja Prentice Theatre

**MHF Heritage Award**  
*Mississauga South Historical Society*

**Lifetime Membership Award**  
*Dr. Alexander von Gernet*

**Betty Ross Memorial Award**  
*Sandra Lindsay*

**Special Recognition Awards**  
*James Bailey, Lynn Judge,*  
*Mississauga Life Magazine, Louise Peacock*

**Members' Choice Awards**  
*Malcolm Byard, Bob Cutmore, Claudia Haddon,*  
*Streetsville Horticultural Society, Terry Wilson*

**Cultural Heritage Property Award**  
*1614 Wintergrove Gardens, Andreas Mueller*

*With Thanks to our Sponsors*



## The Darker Side: Christmas Day Shooting

By Jenny Walker

The season of goodwill was found to be sadly lacking as John Davis Terrace shot a well-known farmer to death on Christmas day 1907, yet why he did so is a mystery to this day. Indeed Terrace, aged 25, had only been in the country a short time; having landed in Toronto on the "Manitoba" on the evening of December 4th. He began looking for work as a painter but instead found employment as a farmhand for which his small frame of 125 pounds was poorly suited.

John Terrace's home town was in Wallsend on the River Tyne in the North East of England where he had left a wife and sister as he set sail for the new world. This area which marked the end of Hadrian's famous wall was one of heavy industry with coalmining and shipbuilding being the most prominent, accounting for much of the employment in the town. Shipyards like Swan Hunter, and Parsons Marine Steam Turbine Company, were famous for building the Mauritania in 1906, and the Turbinia of 1884 which revolutionized the shipping industry in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This was not a time of high emigration and questions must be asked as to why Terrace came to Canada in a period of relative growth and prosperity in his home town, especially as the voyage was particularly hazardous at that time of year.

He was taken on as a farmhand on a month's trial by James Curry, ex-Reeve of Toronto Township. On Christmas day 1907, Mr Curry had been out for dinner at his sister's house with his father William aged about 80, and a 12 year old farm boy named Jimmy Reid. The party returned home around 8pm and Terrace helped James Curry and the boy to put the horses away for the night. They all returned to the kitchen and "played checkers and read the papers until the old man retired shortly before nine o'clock". At this point, the papers of the day reported that Terrace then stood up, and picked up a shotgun which was standing in the corner of the room. He pointed it at James Curry and said, "You \_\_\_\_\_, you laughed at me when we were fixing the pump the other day. It's my turn to laugh now". James was not unduly concerned as he believed the gun to be empty. William Curry reappeared and told the immigrant to "Put down that gun! Don't make a fool of yourself". Unfortunately Terrace pointed the gun at him and fired, inflicting a mortal wound in his left breast. A struggle ensued between the younger Curry and the accused, and Terrace attacked the homeowner with a metal stove shaker which was used to shake the ash down into the lower catch pan and make the stove burn more efficiently. In the darkness and confusion,



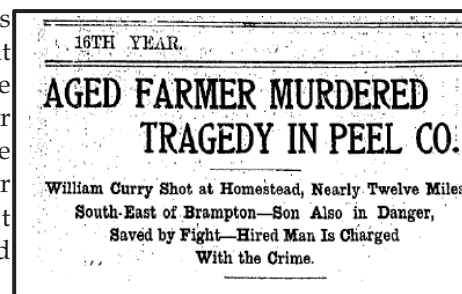
Jenny Walker

the gun was discharged again into the kitchen ceiling and eventually James Curry emerged as the victor and Terrace was bound with twine and the farm boy sent for help, but not before the accused was knocked unconscious to subdue him. A short time later, Dr Aikens arrived but there was little he could do for the victim, and William Curry died from his wounds a short while later. Crown Attorney McFayden and County Constable Broddy arrived the next morning and took the accused into custody.

Whilst there was much speculation at the time, the Toronto Star reported that the prisoner had never meant to hurt anyone and had only picked up the gun "for a bit of foolery", but the

young Jimmy Reid later testified under oath that he had seen Terrace in James Curry's bedroom earlier in the day looking for something which was later assumed to be shotgun cartridges. However the defence did attempt to discredit the boy's testimony as he had previously been "whipped for telling falsehoods" but in this case he remained resolute that he had told the truth.

The public were keen to determine Terrace's motives; one theory was that the prisoner was annoyed at being discharged. Being of slight build, John Terrace had never measured up as a farm hand and James Curry had decided to let him go but had said he could stay until after the Christmas holidays. The second motive appears to have been robbery with Terrace passing comment a few days before on how much cash James Curry kept around the farm. The third and most prevailing theory was the belief that the prisoner was mad; supported by his complaint of a headache a few days before and the fact that his father, grandfather and grandmother had all died insane. However how the court discovered this is unclear and the 19th century definition of insanity was often determined by prejudices and attitudes rather than by a clinical assessment. As the Toronto star reported on April 2nd, 1908, the prisoner was "pronounced by medical experts as an imbecile of a most degenerate type [that] would escape the gallows on the grounds of insanity". It was therefore a shock when the court pronounced the prisoner guilty on April 1st and sentenced him to be "hanged by the neck until you are dead". Whether it was shock or real insanity is unclear, but Terrace did not seem to grasp the seriousness of the situation. After the verdict was given and the death sentence passed, he was heard to reply "this puts a bit of romance into my life". Yet sentence was not carried out as



Toronto Daily Star, December 26, 1907

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## Mothers During the War of 1812: Elizabeth Ansley

By Suzanna Elmazi

*Suzanna is a fourth year student at the University of Toronto Mississauga, enrolled in the Historical Studies internship program. Her placement for the 2011-12 academic year is with Heritage Mississauga where she is continuing our research project on the War of 1812 and documenting and exploring connections to historic Mississauga (Toronto Township).*



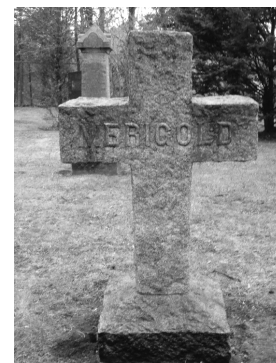
Suzanna Elmazi, HM

Being a mother during the War of 1812 was difficult. Arguably, it was the most difficult role any single person could take on. Not only were women forced to say goodbye to their husbands, but also their children, so long as they were males and of the appropriate age, they could be called to battle. Mothers could potentially lose their entire family in war.

Living with the unknown was possibly the most troubling. They knew little of what was going on in battle and more importantly they did not know whether their family members were still alive. Elizabeth Ansley, of Merigold's Point, born in Sussex County in New Jersey married Thomas Merigold Senior in 1782. Prior to the War of 1812 she bore him 10 children. In 1812 to 1814 males over the age of 16 in the Lakeshore community as well as Merigold's point joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regiment York Militia. Thomas Merigold Senior, 51, was a captain; son Thomas was also made captain at the age of 19 to 20; Daniel Merigold, 17, and Amos Merigold, 14, were employed in transporting stores from one post to another, they also held the rank of lieutenant. Elizabeth Ansley had four members of her family actively engaged in the War of 1812. Although Amos and Daniel were too young to serve on the front they still played an important role by transporting military supplies along Lakeshore road.

Much of Elizabeth's dismay came from the geographical location of her home. The location of Merigold's point was close enough to York that distant whispers of battle could be felt and heard. Particularly, when the magazine was blown up at York, a mushroom of black smoke rose which became visible enough for the women and men left back in Toronto Township to see. Anxiety about whether or not her husband and her eldest son Thomas were at York would soon follow. Mother's intuition also played a key aspect during the war. It is stated that one July night "there was a faint intermittent throbbing in the air" to which she responded "I think there is a terrible battle going on somewhere over there I feel it." The following day, she was notified that a battle at Lundy's Lane had been fought. It is noted that both her son and husband had been serving during this time. (Both survived)

Some women actually accompanied their husbands on their journeys, although Elizabeth Ansley remained at home in order to care for her family and her land. It was however uncommon for wives of militiamen to follow their husbands if they served close to home. Militiamen who maintained farms or businesses usually left their wives at home. And so, Mrs. Merigold had to suffer the emotional distress of not knowing about the safety of her family while keeping things at home in order. The question remains, is it more desirable to be actively engaged in war, or emotionally attached to it without any means of fighting in it, or knowing what is happening?



*Note: Elizabeth (nee Ansley) Merigold died in 1847 and is buried alongside her husband in Springcreek Cemetery in Clarkson under a simple stone cross that reads "Merigold".*

Merigold family tombstone, Springcreek Cemetery, HM



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# The Rebellion of 1837 Remembered

## Part One of Four: *The Four Rs*

By Richard Collins



Richard Collins, HM

Charles Dickens was not one to visit a place without leaving behind a clever commentary. So it was, during a visit to Toronto that he referred to the political climate in Canada as “rabid”.

I don't picture Canadians as the type to froth at the mouth over political issues today, but Canada was a very different place 175 years ago. The politics of Upper Canada in 1837 was the politics of the Four Rs.

First and (for the moment) foremost amongst political movements were the “Royalists” – although calling them a “movement” is a bit overstated since support for the monarchy was support for the status quo. Not that imperial rule was all that bad. Britain was a constitutional monarchy. That's a system with a sovereign (Victoria, in 1837) and an elected parliament. But Canadians didn't send elected officials to London to represent Canadian issues. Instead the queen appointed administrators to rule the distant colony on her behalf. There was a colonial assembly in Toronto to which the people elected members, but this assembly could only advise the governor, and he was under no obligation to take their advice.

More autocratic than democratic, the system worked well in a sparsely populated colony, as long as the man in charge was capable. Many of Upper Canada's early lieutenant-governors were capable men, Sir Francis Bond Head was not.

Bond Head had no administrative experience prior to his appointment as Upper Canada's lieutenant-governor in 1835, except for a one-year stint in the UK as an assistant in a department that distributed welfare to impoverished families. That he came to work each day to his London office in military regalia, circling the parade ground at Somerset House on horseback thrice before entering, shows just how withdrawn 1st Baronet Bond Head was from the common people. Based only on the opinions of the small circle of social elite in Toronto who admired (or envied) his authoritarian position in this colony, Bond Head declared in 1836, “the people of Upper Canada detest democracy”.

In making that claim Bond Head completely misread the public temperament. The mother country was proof that Parliament and the throne could rule in harmony. Devotion to the monarchy didn't mean opposition to democracy. Democracy comes in varieties. The three other “Rs” in Upper Canadian politics were variations on a theme. “Reformers” wished only to replace the sovereign's appointed officials

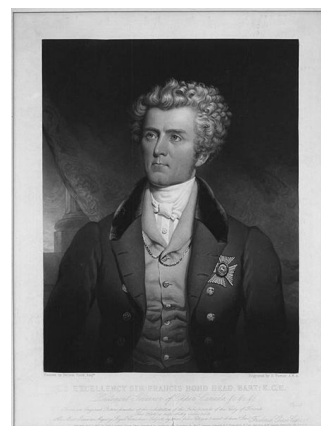
with elected ones. This was how parliament worked back home in the United Kingdom.

Within this Reform movement was a faction that felt that Canada should adopt a political process less like the UK's and more like the US's. Louis-Joseph Papineau, who led the reform movement in Lower Canada, observed, “our government should approximate ... the wise statesmen of our neighbouring republic.” Americans had rid themselves of the monarchy and replaced it with a political system whereby all positions from president of the nation to the local dog catcher were elected. Canadians who supported a US-style democracy were called “Republicans”.

For those who felt that even becoming a republic was not change enough, there was always the “Radical” option. Radicals were people who felt that appointed officials should not only be replaced but should be imprisoned (or worse) with their property divided among the people.

“Up then, brave Canadians! Get ready your rifles and make short work of [our] connection with England.”

This call to arms came from a man who would come to be known as “the firebrand”. That man was William Lyon Mackenzie. Mackenzie is often said to be the leader of Upper Canada's radical movement but, as the name implies, radicals could never be brought under one control. Mackenzie can only be considered a “leader” in that he was the one radical willing to take action to enact his own brand of political change.



Sir Francis Bond Head, www

### What Would Lewis Do?

Working at the Bradley Museums I've wondered which of the Four Rs Lewis Bradley would most likely have supported 175 years ago. As a man with Loyalist roots, it seems logical that he'd have been a supporter of the monarchy.

But as a common farmer and a Methodist, it seems unlikely that he'd support a political system where leaders derived their appointment through the wealthy (and preferably Anglican) company they kept. Bond Head was only the most recent and least competent of the lieutenant-governors to descend from this “Family Compact”. Lewis would not likely have supported the idea of a republic. Such a system would have had little appeal to a man forced to leave his

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## Mississauga Library System presents the Kathleen A. Hicks Historical Writing Award Contest

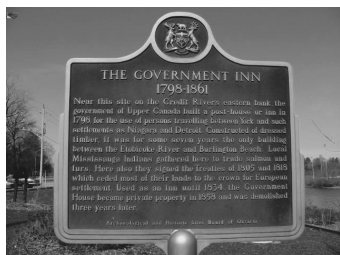
The Mississauga Library System launched an annual writing contest for local youth in 2011. Entrants were between the ages of 14-19 years. The top three, as selected by the judges, were Kayla Demers (1st place), Winston Liu (2nd place) and Julia Raftery (3rd place). Here are their stories:

### A Trip Back in Time (First Place Entry)

By Kayla Demers

You are probably thinking that this essay is going to be another typical history paper, filled with dates, people and places. It is filled with those things, but it also tells something else; a story. This paper is going to take you back to a time when Port Credit, and all of Mississauga, looked much different than what it looks today. It will illustrate how people were able to survive long and arduous trips from places like Niagara to Toronto, which instead of taking a few hours like it does today, could take up to a week, depending on the weather and the terrain. You will need to picture in your head travelling by horse and wagon along a dusty trail, and if you were lucky, some places might have wooden boards laid across them to make the road less bumpy. Get comfy, and get ready to take a trip back in time.

The year is 1805. The place, Port Credit. At this time, Port Credit was not the busy village that we know today. In fact, it only had a few people, if any, living there. It was filled with dense trees only broken by the Credit River. Native people would have been a common sight, in fact, there probably would have been more of them than pioneers. Travel in this time was a lot more difficult than it is today. Although they did not have the traffic congestion that we have, the conditions were a lot worse. First of all, it took a very long time to get from one place to another. Even going to your neighbour's house could take a whole day. Can you imagine how long it took to get from Niagara Falls to Toronto, or as Toronto was known at that time, York? Travel over long distances could take weeks, so people needed places to stop and rest. York was starting to become a bustling port city, but travelling from a village to the city meant travelling through rugged wilderness. This meant that travellers would have to stop and camp for the night. There were people starting to settle along the lake, but only a few, if any families, and they were not always willing to let strangers spend the night. The



Government Inn Plaque, Port Credit,  
HM

difficulty of travel was not solved by the Crown, or even the developing government we had at the time. It was solved by Lord Simcoe. He and his wife, Lady Simcoe, travelled frequently between York to the Niagara region. Lord Simcoe knew what a hard journey it was, and when he had made the trip in 1791, there was nothing at the Credit River except for the native village. Lord Simcoe wrote that he wanted an inn to be built at the harbour "for the accommodation of travellers passing to and from the seat of government through the Mississauga Tract of Land." An inn was built a few years later in 1798, and was called the Government Inn. It was operated by many different proprietors until 1858 when it became a private home, and then was torn down in 1861. The inn was important, especially in the early days of Port Credit, not only because it gave travellers a warm place to stay for the night, but also because it housed early settlers to the Clarkson area who were trying to clear their land and build their houses.

The Inn was important for the pioneer women living in the area as well. Pioneer women had to be very tough in those days. The terrain was difficult, the weather was harsh, and there was always the threat of native or animal attacks. Women were also left by themselves, for days or weeks at a time, because men often had to travel to do business or to buy supplies for their farms. This meant that the women and children were left to fend for themselves. The Government Inn provided women with the comfort that should a problem arise, they were guaranteed to always have someone close by. Being a young woman myself, I know that if I was left to take care of a house and kids by myself surrounded by nothing but wilderness, I would feel safe knowing that there would be someone close by if I needed help.

You are probably wondering why the year 1805 is an important year. 1805 connects Port Credit and Mississauga to Laura Secord, the heroine of the War of 1812. How you might ask? In 1805 Laura's father, Thomas Ingersoll, became the owner of the Government Inn. At the time, Laura was already 30 years old and married, so she did not come to live in Mississauga with her father and the rest of the family. However, it is still nice to think that Thomas Ingersoll probably wrote many letters to his daughter, and received letters from her, from this property in Port Credit, before she became the heroine of the War of 1812.

Thomas Ingersoll ran the Government Inn until his death in 1812. It continued to be used as an inn until 1834, however, the village of Port Credit rapidly grew, and more "modern" inns and hotels overshadowed the Government Inn. In 1858, the Lynd family converted the Government Inn to a private residence. In 1861, the inn was torn down and used as wood for a barn, which burned down a few years later. In 1964, a plaque was erected to commemorate the Government Inn. The Government Inn sat on the east bank of the Credit River.

Cont'd pg. 8

## Writing Contest cont'd.....

It is interesting to note that hundreds of people still travel to the same spot every year, but for a different purpose. Instead of seeking refuge for the night, people watch the annual fireworks show that the village of Port Credit puts on to celebrate Canada Day. My family and I have been going to this same spot for years, and I only just now found a way to connect myself to the earliest days, and earliest pioneers of Port Credit.

## Tracks Through Time (Second Place Entry)

By: Winston Liu

The GO train roared past, a cloud of dust blowing up in its wake. I stood on the sidewalk, watching as the green and white passenger cars retreated into the distance. It was a sweltering 28 degrees outside. Somewhere off in the bushes, a cicada burst into song. Monotonous notes were hurled into the hazy air. Sweat ran down my back, but I resisted the temptation to retreat. I was on a quest, a self-styled latter-day knight seeking a latter-day Grail. Upon my trusty, and rusty, steed, I had ridden forth to this desolate corner of town. Two individuals who possessed great knowledge about these parts had directed me here, I hoped that they told the truth. I crossed the tracks, and strode forward off the sidewalk. My shoes crunched against the rocky ballast. Only a few feet in, I realized that I had come to the right place. Half-buried pieces of rusted iron and burnt timber lay among the fist sized rocks. I forged steadily onwards, sandwiched between a weed-covered embankment to my left and the tracks on my right. My suspicions were confirmed when I spied a piece of blackened timber sticking out from a slope of rocky ballast. Burnt wood marks the spot. I stopped, looked around. Before me lay the remnants of the gates to the erstwhile 'Strawberry Kingdom of Canada'.

My search had commenced some weeks earlier, with the purchase of a heavy volume titled 'Clarkson and its Many Corners', by Kathleen A. Hicks. Among the multitude of images, a single black and white photo drew my attention. It depicted the first train station in the small hamlet that would soon be known as Clarkson. Tedious search through the tangled vastness of the internet yielded no clue as to its location, and it wasn't until this morning that I thought to consult the historians at the Benares Historic House. They had directed me here. I sat down on the rocky slope, staring across the tracks at the chain-link fences that separated the rails from the rows of tidy suburban homes beyond. It was a humbling sight. Once upon a time, I would have been seeing rolling



Clarkson Train Station, HM

fields of corn. Tidy lines of golden sheaves that strained towards the sun, crowding up against the ghostly wooden platform that lay on the other side of the gleaming rails. A simple wooden building would have stood there, a squeaky sign swinging in the wind. 'Clarkson's Corner', it would have proclaimed. A steam whistle pierced the chilly morning air, the shrill sound carrying out far over the snowy fields. A group of men and women had gathered on the wooden platform, huddled against the winter wind. They whispered among themselves, craning their necks to get a glimpse of the dim shape that lay in the distance. A banner fluttered in the breeze. 'Inaugural Opening of the Niagara-Toronto Line', it read. A single column of smoke rose in the air as a green locomotive appeared, slowly chugging its way towards the gathering. Cheers rang out through the chilly air. The great iron beast braked, steam hissing out from between its wheels. The doors of the passenger coach slid open, and a few distinguished-looking individuals stepped out. One of them stepped forward. He introduced himself as a representative of the Great Western Railway, and launched into a formal perfunctory speech. Midway through, a rattling noise issued from within the coach. The dim shape of a man could be seen through the window. He was shackled to his seat.

"That's Mr. John Carthew," one of the ladies whispered, "He tried to stop the train."

"But why?" her companion inquired.

At that moment, the polite applause of the congregation rang out at the conclusion of the representative's speech. The matter was dropped.

Presently, a great rumble echoed inside the locomotive. The bulk of iron inched forward, picking up speed until all that could be seen of it was the column of smoke that rose above the horizon. The residents chatted among themselves before thoughts of warmth and crackling fireplaces overcame their politeness. They would return to their daily routine and chores, still unaware of the consequences of the phenomenon they had just witnessed. For years to come, the railway would be the center of trade within the little hamlet. Here were the nascent days of the Strawberry Kingdom of Canada. Here was the birth of the village that we call Clarkson.

Another GO train rumbled by, bringing another trainload of passengers hither and yon. Did they think about the history of these rails that they travel daily? I wondered. Did they ever stop and think about what secrets might lay buried beneath the rocky ballast that lined the tracks? Perhaps. Perhaps not.

The past lay hidden in plain sight. As I stood there, watching the train disappear into the distance, I thought I could hear the ghosts of the past whispering to me through the fabric of

Cont'd pg. 9



## Writing Contest cont'd.....

time. Storytellers passing on the odes of their childhood. From this spot, the village of Clarkson had risen, through trade, through travel. A bustling station had once stood here, but now only rocks and dust remain. Remember the sweat and blood and tears that brought us to this point in our retelling. Remember our tales so that we may pass them to the next generation. In our memories, Clarkson's Corner lives on.

### Snapshots of Black and White (Third Place Entry)

By: Julia Raftery

*There is a bridge crossing the Credit River over which I believe most people in Mississauga have traveled. If you aren't distracted by the volume of traffic which seems to be always present, watching out for the ever-vigilant police speed trap, and if the leaves on the trees haven't hidden it from view, you might notice a beautiful black and white house on the hill.*

#### April 2011

Rachel Chambers was going to miss # 24 Ardsley St. The little white and black house she had grown up in was, as her mom liked to put it, a cottage in the city. Older than the other houses in the Riverview Heights neighbourhood, this house was about 140 years old, though it was in great shape. "I wonder what life would have been like in that house when it was first built?" she mused. Her mom interrupted her daydreams. "Oh honey! How will I *ever* be able to live in this vast mansion of a place without you?" Her mom laughed, because the idea of anyone calling their small house "vast" would be sorely disillusioned. Rachel smiled, and then went over a mental checklist of everything she needed. "Be back in a minute; I forgot my phone inside."

The old pine floors creaked as Rachel ran to the basement. She grabbed her phone, and was about to head back upstairs, when she saw something out of the corner of her eye. The ceiling of the basement had long logs of wood serving as rafters, and, as she looked more closely, Rachel noticed some carvings in the beam over the door. "How could I, after all these years, never have noticed these?" The markings were actually two sets of initials, carved into the wood. She ran her hand over the first set. "E.H."

#### October 1865

Elizabeth's father sat in his usual chair reading *The Review* (the local newspaper), and he grumbled to himself. "Somebody should really go into town and give those editors a good talking to." All she could see of her father was Mr. Hazelwood's balding forehead and his furrowed eyebrows. Elizabeth opened her mouth to ask him what was wrong, but, as she did, her mother called from the kitchen "Elizabeth, darling, please watch your brothers while I go into town? I don't want to disturb your father." Elizabeth nodded, and as her mom went out the door, she turned to

her two younger brothers and told them "You two behave yourself. I have something I need to do. Don't interrupt Papa." They nodded absentmindedly, and Elizabeth walked off. While the house had been built for a little while, and they had moved in a few months ago, she still hadn't had a chance to explore the house. She walked down the stairs, and went into the basement to look around. The ceiling was made of huge wooden beams, which gave her an idea. She ran outside, picked up a sharp rock, and returned to the basement. Reaching up, she carved her initials into the wood. "E.H." - Elizabeth Hazelwood. She stepped back, pleased with her work, and went back upstairs.

*Rachel moved her hand to the next set of initials, and traced them with her hand. "S.C."*

#### August 1971

Mr. and Mrs. Clark were having a "heated discussion". At least that's what they told Susan when she asked them why they were arguing. "Honey, why don't you go watch television?" Susan looked at her mom, rolled her eyes, and started towards the other room, but as soon as her mom closed the door, Susan glued her ear to it. She couldn't hear very well; she only heard snippets of her parents' conversation. Her mom's voice whispered urgently "You aren't really considering it, are you?" Mr. Clark was quiet for a few seconds, and then responded "You know we could use the money, and I already have some offers." A sigh. "It won't really change much... We'll still have a decent size backyard and it will give us some money to send Susan to university." They were talking about selling some of their land? This was the first time she had heard of it. It didn't really bother her; what bothered her was that her parents were hiding things from her. She went to watch T.V. in the basement, but was distracted by a small set of initials on the ceiling. "E.H.". She smiled, and pulled out her pocketknife, and carved her initials.

#### 2011

"Rachel! Come on! We don't have all day!" Her mom's voice jolting her out of her reverie, Rachel smiled. Whoever had etched those initials must have wanted to always be a part of this beautiful house. Knowing that she had at least that in common with them, Rachel took a screwdriver from her dad's toolbox and carved the letters "R. C."

*#24 Ardsley Street is the historical location in Mississauga, around which this fictional story centres. The names of the characters are purely fictional.*



## Call to Arms cont'd.....

Through this dedicated service, many of "our" militiamen were present and participated in some of the major engagements during the course of the war, including battles at Chippawa, Burlington Heights, Fort Detroit, Fort Erie, Fort George, Fort York, Lundy's Lane, Queenston Heights, St. David's, Stoney Creek, and many others. Most often, their service was less glamorous but no less important to the war effort, namely in the transport of goods and supplies, garrison duty, and road maintenance. Heritage Mississauga is in the process of documenting and exploring the city's historic connections to the War of 1812, principally through the identification of individual militiamen. Our primary aim is to identify the service records and burial locations of War of 1812 militia veterans who either lived in or owned land in what is today the City of Mississauga during the War of 1812. We are also researching militia veterans who lived elsewhere in 1812 but are buried within what is now the City of Mississauga, and militia veterans who relocated to what is now the City of Mississauga immediately after the war, between 1815 and 1825. Research and documentation is ongoing. Future research will delve into the connections of the Native Mississaugas from the Credit River and their involvement in the war. If you have information on any of these individuals or Mississauga's connections to the War of 1812, please contact us and be part of this exciting and intriguing research project! It is our hope to commemorate Mississauga's militia veterans through placing a commemorative marker adjacent to known gravesites, designed from a General Service Medal that was available for select militia veterans following the war.



*Private, Incorporated Militia, Upper Canada c1813, DofD, Gerald Embleton*



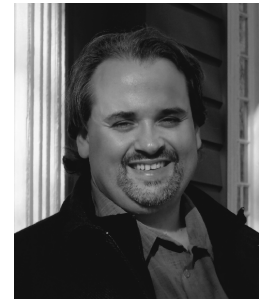
*1812 Militiaman, Private, Parks Canada, Rene Chartrand*

To date we have identified 51 individuals who served with the militia in some capacity, either in the Embodied Militia, as a member of a Flank Company in 1812, or in service in 1813 and 1814. Of them, we find compelling stories such as the Thompson brothers, William, Augustus, Frederick, and Cornelius Oliver, who all served. Cornelius Oliver, the youngest, passed away from illness in 1813 (as did their father, Cornelius Sr.), while William and Augustus were captured at St. David's in 1814 and imprisoned for the remainder of the war, and Frederick was severely wounded in another engagement. We also find stories of significant portions of families who served in various capacities, including

the Merigold family, (Thomas Sr., Thomas Jr., Daniel and Amos) and the Gable family (Henry Sr., Henry Jr., John and Samuel). The Marlatt family has perhaps had the largest loss, with three members of the family serving (John, Joseph Jr. and George), with only John returning as Joseph Jr. and George died of disease while on service, in 1813 and 1814 respectively. We also find Moses Teeter, who himself was not at the Battle of Lundy's Lane, but lost two of his brothers there. Other names on our list of militia veterans include Lewis Bradley, John Belcher Sr., Daniel Greeniaus, Frederick Starr Jarvis, Benjamin Monger, Joshua Pollard, Amos Willcox and John Wolfe, just to name a few.

We have also located 13 others who are buried within Mississauga, although lived elsewhere in 1812, including Timothy Street and Warren Clarkson. Additionally, 11 others who have ties to historic Mississauga, although lived and died elsewhere, including Sir John Beverley Robinson, Joseph Cawthra and Thomas Racey. To date, we have even identified one British Regular, Major Thomas Bradford Whetham, and one American militiaman, Richard Caslor, who are buried within the City of Mississauga, and research is ongoing!

For more information on our War of 1812 Research and Commemoration Project, please visit: [www.heritagemississauga.com/page/War-of-1812](http://www.heritagemississauga.com/page/War-of-1812)



*Matthew Wilkinson, HM*

## Humbertown Framing

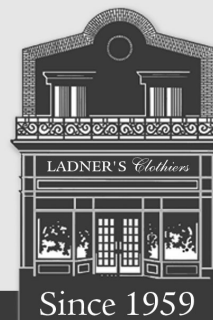
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## Mississauga South Historical Society Happenings

by Richard Collins, President,

### A Special Year of Guest Speakers



We have a theme for our MSHS meetings for this coming year – and it's the War of 1812. Thanks go out to our historian, Matthew Wilkinson for making the arrangements for our series of distinguished speakers and for planning our War of 1812 field trip in May. We'll be heading to Fort York National Historic Site where American soldiers had two field trips of their own during the war.

MSHS has had a number of successful field trips in recent years by staying close to home, so I hope to get a big crowd out again for this year's trip. Fort York is so close to home that it's been said that the lakefront pioneer families of Clarkson saw the flash as the fort's gunpowder magazine exploded during the first American attack in April 1813.

Our field trip includes a guided tour of the fort entitled "Birthplace of Toronto". The field trip will take place Saturday, May 12 and the 90-minute tour begins at 11:00 a.m. Entrance fee is \$5.50 per person. I'll have further details as the day draws near.

Many of our MSHS members already know our March 20 guest speaker well. Richard Feltoe has done a number of presentations for us in the past. His upcoming presentation is titled, "Redcoated Ploughboys: A History of the Volunteer Battalion of Incorporated Militia, 1813-1815". That also happens to be the title of his soon-to-be-released book about a special but nearly forgotten force of Canadian volunteers.

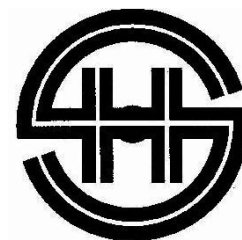
Turning in a different direction from commanders and commoners, our guest speaker for September 18 will talk about "Food, Farming and the War of 1812". Britain's legendary foe in 1812, Napoleon, is credited for having claimed that an army travels in its stomach – a commentary not on the bad posture of his soldiers but about the necessity of feeding hundreds of thousands of men on campaign and keeping supply lines open. Speaker Cheryl MacDonald will talk about the need in Upper Canada for both soldiers and the farmers to feed them.

Matthew will wrap up the year's events with a Mississauga perspective on the war. For our November 20 meeting, he'll talk about the local regiments that defended the empire. Matthew's presentation is titled, "A Call to Arms: Historic Mississauga and the War of 1812".

[www.clients.teksavvy.com/~chessie/index.htm](http://www.clients.teksavvy.com/~chessie/index.htm)

## Streetsville Historical Society Happenings

By Jean Watt, Publicity Director



The Streetsville Historical Society was pleased to welcome over 200 visitors to the Leslie Log House on December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011, when "Home for the Holidays" took place. The house was beautifully decorated for the Christmas season and children enjoyed making crafts while the adults had a tour of the house. Everyone enjoyed hot cider and gingerbread cookies. During the same time some 90 people visited the historic Timothy Street House in Streetsville.

On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 2:00-4:30pm, afternoon tea will be served at the Log House, along with scones, cream and jam. You will also receive a "behind-the-scenes" tour of the Streetsville Historical Society's archival collection. It is a great way to spend an afternoon! Tickets are \$14.90 plus tax, reservations required. Please call 905-615-4860, Monday-Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm to reserve space.

On May 26<sup>th</sup>, the Streetsville Historical Society will hold a fundraising book sale at the Leslie Log House. We need hard cover and soft cover books, CDs and DVDs. Please no magazines or Readers' Digest. Books can be dropped off at the Leslie Log House on Wednesdays or Sundays from 1-5pm. For pick up or for more information, please contact Bernice at 905-826-7198.

Streetsville Historical Society has a dedicated group of volunteers who meet every Wednesday afternoon from 1-4pm at the Leslie Log House to work on our archival collection. If you are interested in joining us, please call Anne at 905-814-5958. We welcome visitors and new members to our society. For further information, please call Jean at 905-826-1860.

## Membership has its benefits!

Consider becoming a member of Heritage Mississauga! Members receive the *Heritage News* hot off the press. Don't miss an issue. Membership is affordable and helps us to continue the work we do to preserve Mississauga's history and heritage. For more information please call me today at the heritage office 905-828-8411 ext. 0.



Jane Watt, HM

## Trivia Question Did You Know?



The War of 1812 shaped a generation, albeit one that lived many years ago when historic Mississauga (then known as Toronto Township) was in the early years of settlement and the rural farming landscape was only in its infancy. The population of Toronto Township, in 1812, is estimated to be only around 350 people, not including the Native Mississaugas. Many of those who lived through and/or served in the War of 1812 went on to leave their own mark on the place where we live today, some of whom are connected to modern road names in our City. Jarvis Street, Robinson Street and Thompson Street, in Erindale Village, are all named for veterans of the War of 1812, namely Lieutenant Frederick Starr Jarvis, Captain John Beverley Robinson, and Captain William Thompson, all of whom went on to other prominent exploits after the war. Nearby Wolfedale Road takes its name from the Wolfe family who settled along the road in the years after the war, but the patriarch of the family, Peter Wolfe, served in the War. Streetsville and Clarkson are named for veterans of the War, namely Timothy Street and Warren Clarkson, who both came to Toronto Township in the years following the conflict. Lastly (for now) is Wilcox Road, a short street near Burnhamthorpe Road and Cawthra Road (Cawthra also is a name with 1812 connections), takes its name from Amos Willcox (and his family), another local and significant veteran of the War of 1812.

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## The Darker Side cont'd.....

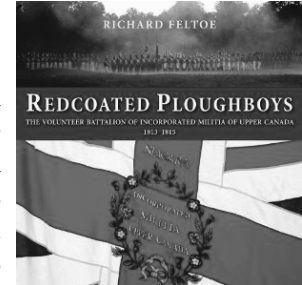
appealed to Ottawa for clemency and another theory put forward that epilepsy was the real cause of the gun being fired as Terrace was in the grip of a fit. Whatever the reason, the insanity issue was distorted enough to cast doubt on the verdict, and the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment due to his mental state.

The primary sources used for this story were newspaper articles from the Toronto Star dated between December 26th 1907 and April 11th 1908. Throughout that period, the prisoner's name changes constantly from John Davis Terrace to John David Tearse or Jack Terrace and it is unclear therefore if this is just a case of bad reporting or even if the same man originally arrested, was indeed the one sentenced. While allowances must be made for a basic lack of education by our standards, other questions remain such as why there is no trace of Terrace after he was sentenced, his period of incarceration or his eventual place of death. The mystery remains therefore of why he committed the crime in the first place and what became of him afterwards.

## New Book on the Incorporated Militia in the War of 1812

### Redcoated Ploughboys: The Volunteer Battalion of Incorporated Militia of Upper Canada, 1813-1815

By *Richard Feltoe*



Available in March of 2012 from Dundurn Press. In 1812, the future of British North America hung in the balance as the United States declared war with the avowed goal of conquering the Canadas and removing British influence from the continent forever. In response, a corps of men, drawn from every walk of life and social stratum of Upper Canada, stepped forward to defend their fledgling colony by volunteering to serve in the Battalion of Incorporated Militia of Upper Canada. After undergoing rigorous training, and fighting with distinction in numerous skirmishes and battles, it earned the prestigious battle honour "Niagara." The regiment was disbanded at the conclusion of the war, and with the passage of time, its dedicated service and efforts have faded into the dust of histories written about the War of 1812. Redcoated Ploughboys brings the story of this regiment, and the men who served in it, back to life, revealing a fascinating lost chapter in Canada's early military history.

The Mississauga South Historical Society welcomes Richard Feltoe to the Lorne Park Library on Tuesday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012, 7:30pm, for his talk on the Redcoated Ploughboys. Books will be available for purchase at the talk, or through contacting Dundurn Press:

[www.dundurn.com/books/redcoated\\_ploughboys](http://www.dundurn.com/books/redcoated_ploughboys)

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## What's happening at the Museums of Mississauga



Our annual Mississauga Maple Syrup Festival: Maple Magic will take place once again at the Bradley Museum on March 10th to 18th and 24th to 25th. The event will run on weekends from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and weekdays from 12 to 4 p.m. Enjoy guided tours of the sap line, horse drawn wagon rides, pancakes served daily in the Log Cabin, crafts, games, maple samples and more! Family admission is just \$17.17 (+ tax). Looking further ahead, drop by the Museums of Mississauga on Sunday May 20th, 1 to 5 p.m. in celebration of May is Museum Month. Enjoy free guided tours and historic demonstrations at all three sites, Bradley Museum, Benares Historic House and Leslie Log House. See page 16 of this newsletter for more events at the Museum.



## Restoration of Grange Gardens

By Louise Peacock (Louise is a Mississauga-based custom Landscape Designer and Horticulturist)



Gardens at The Grange, Louise Peacock

Starting Spring 2011, with the approval of Heritage Mississauga, I began the process of restoring and beautifying the Grange garden space immediately surrounding the building.

The first area that I picked to work on was immediately outside the back door (also the public entrance) to The Grange. In the 1800's this would have been the kitchen garden, and might have been used to grow medicinal and cooking herbs, with a few ornamental flowers thrown in here and there.

Thanks to Mississauga Parks staff, this area had recently received new soil and a liberal topping of mulch, which I took advantage of.

Although the ultimate goal is to fill the beds with the sorts of plants the pioneers might have used, there is also a need to provide visual impact since this bed is what you see when you enter The Grange.

Therefore, with budgetary constraints in mind, I gratefully accepted donations of Hosta from a client, which I split and planted under the tree. Unfortunately we were in the midst of a hot, dry spell so a lot of watering had to happen in order for these plantings to survive. I was also able to obtain some other perennial plants which might have found their way into such a garden - Common Yarrow; Lemon Balm; Sweet Woodruff; Fiddlehead Fern and several types of perennial Geranium.

The City of Mississauga Parks department had a mandate to plant a large number of annuals in the gardens and in exchange for some planting help, I was able to get some of those for the edge of the bed, which I bulked out with a few additional plants I found at a really good price.



City Staff at The Grange, Louise Peacock

So, for now we had a visually appealing planting, but what of the herbs? My research showed that Rosemary, Thyme, Savory and Sage (among others) would have been welcomed by the cook in the 1800s. Toward the end of the season, I found a few of these plants on sale, and for a small outlay of cash (under \$10.00) purchased them and installed them in the sunniest section of the bed. This area is a bit of a challenge, since it is dominated by a large deciduous tree, which sucks up moisture

and nutrients from the bed, and shades it for a good part of the day. However, once established, the perennial plants that I planted should be able to survive and even prosper.

Although the back door bed is my priority, I found some other areas on the grounds that could also use some help. After discussing it with the City Gardener, Jennifer, I forged ahead with some further embellishments with the help of a batch of plant donations from various friends, and more annuals from the City.

## Updating the Meadowvale Village Heritage Conservation District Plan



In 1980 the City of Mississauga created the Meadowvale Village Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act, making Meadowvale Village the first established Heritage Conservation District in

Ontario. Since 1980, several changes have been made to the Ontario Heritage Act including amendments made in 2005 that specifically pertain to Heritage Conservation Districts. The Ontario Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Sport have recommended that all municipalities update their Heritage Conservation District Plans every five to seven years to keep them up-to-date with current legislation. In order to ensure that the Meadowvale Village Heritage Conservation District Plan is current, Heritage Planning Staff from the City of Mississauga's Culture Division will be initiating a process to update the plan in consultation with Meadowvale Village residents, stakeholders and the City's Planning Department. This process will take more than a year to complete. The end result will see the increased protection of this most valued heritage asset in the City of Mississauga.

With excerpts from the Corporate Report presented to the Mississauga Heritage Advisory Committee on Tuesday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012.



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## Program Plus

By Jenny Walker, Program Developer

As 2012 gets underway, Heritage Mississauga is in full swing (along with the rest of the country) preparing to celebrate the bicentennial of the war of 1812. The commemoration of this pivotal historic event looks set to provide much of the summers' entertainment as crowds flock to view fabulous re-enactments of 19th century battles and daily life; there are even plans to recreate sea battles using 19th century tall ships in the Port Dover area. A comprehensive list of events in Southern Ontario have been posted on our website and will be updated regularly but please contact us if you have any events not listed and we'll happily include them.

Closer to home, I wanted to let you all know about a new HM product which we unveiled just before Christmas when Councillor George Carlson was presented with a "House History" of his new property in Streetsville. The land was originally owned by his family in the 19th century, and his Father Kelly, worked on the house in the 1940's upon his arrival from Saskatchewan. George purchased the house in early 2011, moving in with his two sons to establish a Carlson presence on the land once again.

The frame holds a list of previous property owners, a picture of the house from 1921, and a copy of the original survey map from 1877 together with Heritage Mississauga's seal to complete the picture. If anyone would like to purchase a similarly unique gift for their home, then please contact us for pricing and delivery times and we will be happy to help you.



Jenny Walker



Councillor George Carlson, HM

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## Rebellion cont'd.....

home in the newly-formed United States as a child. Separated by nearly 200 years, I'll never know enough about the kind of man Lewis Bradley was but I instinctively feel that he wasn't a radical. I don't know why I feel this way. Lewis was, after all, a farmer and when it came time for Mackenzie to put his radical movement into action his army consisted almost entirely of men who worked the land.

That left Lewis only with the moderate reformers. Even within the reform movement there were shades of gray. The historic riding of 2nd District, York West (which includes all of modern-day Mississauga) fielded three Reform candidates for Lewis to choose from in the 1836 election. Mackenzie was one of those who claimed to be running as a Reform candidate, although he was clearly a darker shade of gray than the others. Whatever Lewis's decision, it couldn't have been an easy one.

William Lyon Mackenzie will live on in history as the leader of the Rebellion of Upper Canada, but in truth he started out by trying to improve government peacefully. But that's a story for next time.

## JANE'S WALK

Jane's Walk 2012: Rebel  
Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012



In connection with National Youth Arts Week (May 1-7, 2012), Jane's Walk returns to Mississauga on Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, on the theme of Rebel and Rebellion, connecting to the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Rebellion of 1837. For more information, please visit:

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When I moved to Mississauga in 1987 our library system was smaller than Winnipeg's: less staff, smaller collection, less well-developed. But it was ripe for growth and the Library Board was seeking somebody who would oversee this as well as oversee the building of the promised new Central Library. Mississauga had done some good bookkeeping and the money was in the bank, just waiting to be used. In fact, on the very day I was hired, I was basically told, here's \$30,000,000.00, now get busy.

#### How long did it take to complete the project?

It was five years before the new Central Library eventually opened its doors. It was a dream project, and much-needed. Prior to 1987, the old Central Library was vastly over-used and under-resourced. It was a pretty sad



Central Library, Sherry Brandy, [www](http://www)

building. It was down at what they call "5 & 10", essentially at the corner of Confederation and Dundas. It was really constrained by the lot size. In fact, on Sunday afternoons we had to hire guards who would keep people from going into the building until someone left, the library was so crowded.

#### What stands out in your mind when you think of those 5 years of building? Had the site been determined? How advanced were the plans at the time you came on board?

The site was really a huge open field. There was nothing around here, except for City Hall which had just been completed the week I was hired. My wife and I were visiting on a house-hunting visit from Winnipeg, on the day that City Hall was officially opened by Prince Andrew and wife. The City had done a tremendous amount of homework and ascertained through surveys that what was going to draw the most business to the area was going to be a Central Library. So it was the business community, or the potential business community, that Mississauga was looking to attract. We needed a good central library. It was slam dunk.

Of course there were a lot of needs, and still are: Community Centres, pools, an art gallery. It was amazing to me to arrive to find that when the community had been asked their opinion, it responded, "It's a library we want." In 1987, the Library Board had a Master Plan but they had never presented it to the Mayor and Council. I had the unenviable job one day of going up to City Hall and saying, "Here's our Master Plan for library service" and the City management said, "Are you crazy?" But as a result, we immediately got a number of branch sites that were going to be partnership opportunities with recreation facilities and schools, which has served us tremendously well. They were prime sites in terms of public transit access.

The construction period went really smoothly, and we were involved in decision making right down to the details

of putting levers on the doors, which is a small point, but was consistent with accessibility guidelines, and just makes sense when you are moving through a building and carrying things. No sooner was the library open then it was pretty widely acclaimed. We had a lot of visitors. A lot of cities were thinking about central libraries, talking to architects. Groups came for tours. Invariably they would ask what would you do differently, and I had to scratch my head long and hard to think of anything significant I would change. The Library Board and the Friends of the Library came together at that time and started to take on a lot of the fundraising and donation activities. We had to buy an awful lot of books through that period to get ready for opening day because we had miles of shelving to fill.

#### What other challenges did you face?

In the early days, everybody reported to the Chief Librarian. I had about 15 or so direct reports when I arrived and I wasn't use to that model of management. We had a lot of work to do behind the scenes with growing card catalogues, though to Mississauga's credit, ours was one of the first library systems to automate its backroom processes. But it was a very primitive automation, compared to what we are used to today. The public wasn't even allowed to use the computers. When we put the first computer out at Central Library for the public to touch, staff was convinced that they would either ruin it or they would run from it. There was no way the public would take to automated searching!

September 22<sup>nd</sup>, the official opening day of Central Library, was a challenge in itself. We were waiting for our final approval from the Fire Department. The fire wardens had to tour the building and declare it safe. It wasn't. The fire alarms and bells were just not interconnected satisfactorily. No member of the public could enter the building, though staff had been working in there for weeks. The agreed-upon solution was that if we stationed someone in a chair on the roof to watch for smoke, we could open. So for the first month, there was a fellow whose job it was to sit on the roof and watch. I could look down and see him when I had lunch at the City Hall restaurant, sitting on a chair on the roof, on the lookout for any whiff of smoke. Fortunately it was nice weather at the time.

*Look for part two of this Oral History Interview in the Spring edition of Heritage News.*

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# Heritage Matters

## Heritage Mississauga Events

**Apr. 28, 2012** - Genealogy Workshop, 10am-3pm, at The Grange Fee \$10.00

**May 16, 2012** - Annual General Meeting - (6:30pm), at The Grange

### Art Gallery of Mississauga

**March, 1pm** Stroll (er) Tuesday - First Tuesday of every month, FREE tour of the exhibition. Strollers, prams and childcare devices welcome. Visit the gallery website for events and programs scheduled. [www.artgalleryofmississauga.com](http://www.artgalleryofmississauga.com)

### Friends of the Britannia Schoolhouse

**Apr. 10, 7pm-9pm** Join us at our monthly meeting to review and plan future activities. Please RSVP by April 3rd at 905-821-9262. Visit the schoolhouse website for events and programs scheduled. [www.britanniaschoolhousefriends.org](http://www.britanniaschoolhousefriends.org)

### Halton Peel O.G.S.

**Mar. 25, 2pm** - Brampton Library - Rick Roberts - "Introducing Family Tree Maker 2012"

**Apr. 22, 2pm** - Oakville Library - Charyl McDonald "Women and the War of 1812"

**June 1-3**, Kingston, Ontario - the Ontario Genealogical Society's Annual Conference. For more information contact Jane Watt [jwatt@ica.net](mailto:jwatt@ica.net) 905-281-1701

### Mississauga Arts Council

Visit the website for events and programs scheduled. [www.mississaugaartscouncil.com](http://www.mississaugaartscouncil.com).

### Mississauga South Historical Society

See page 11 of this newsletter for program information

### Museums of Mississauga

Offering several special events and programs this spring. Pre-registered programs: to register call Customer Service at 905-615-4100 ext. 3 or visit [www.connect2rec.ca](http://www.connect2rec.ca). May 5 & 12 - Mother and Daughter Tea, May 13 & June 24 - Old Fashioned Spa Day, June 17 - Cooking Sweets and Sours for the Pantry.

**Monthly Afternoon Tea and Tours** are back! To reserve a spot please call 905-615-4860 ext. 2110. Spring Session: April 8, May 27 & June 10 at the Bradley House Museum and will include a tour of the historic Bradley House followed by a traditional tea in the LogCabin.

**Museum Exhibits:** Currently on display at the Bradley Museum Anchorage is *JALNARvisited: The 85th Anniversary of the award-winning Novel by Mazo de la Roche*. The Visitors Centre at Benares Historic House features the exhibit *Oriental Influence* until April 12th. The Harris family of Benares, and in particular Annie Harris Sayers, had an interest in the "Far East". Both exhibits are open Mon. to Fri. 10am-4pm.

### Streetsville Historical Society

**April 12, 7:30pm** Speaker Joe Paquette, Metis in Mississauga, Specialty Care, 4530 Mississauga Rd. Room 102 Check page 11 of this newsletter for more program information

### Trafalgar Township Historical Society

**Mar. 23, 1pm-3pm** Open House and Archives Day at Palermo Schoolhouse, 2431 Dundas St. W. Oakville.

**Apr. 24, 7:30pm** - Alison Little, Enoch Turner Schoolhouse Foundation, Ontario Heritage Trust "Schoolhouse in Action: Breathing Life into your Historic Educational Building" For more information contact Jane Watt [jwatt@ica.net](mailto:jwatt@ica.net) 905-281-1701

## Heritage Mississauga Presents: Exhibits at The Grange

A host of new exhibits will be showcased at The Grange in the early months of 2012. In the Discovery Centre and Gallery opening on March 6<sup>th</sup>, we welcome back senior art students from Rick Hansen Secondary School, and opening on April 3<sup>rd</sup> we are delighted to host an art show from Erindale Secondary School entitled "Rebel".

In our Lower Meeting Hall at The Grange, we are delighted that ALFEW (Artists Looking For Empty Walls) will continue to exhibit their collective works. "Aggregation 8" scheduled to open on March 6. All works are available for sale through the artists. Special thanks to Louise Peacock for organizing the ALFEW exhibits. For more information on ALFEW please visit: [www.wezel.com/art/alfew.htm](http://www.wezel.com/art/alfew.htm).

Also, in partnership with ALFEW, Heritage Mississauga is excited to host its 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Heritage Art Contest, entitled "Capturing Mississauga's Heritage", with this year's contest themed on the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Rebellion of 1837, and specifically on the route rebel leader William Lyon Mackenzie took through historic Mississauga (then known as Toronto Township), in his flight for freedom following the failed rebellion. Submissions are welcome. Please visit [www.alfew.com/contests](http://www.alfew.com/contests) for more information.

The submission deadline is June 8<sup>th</sup>, and the art exhibit will run from June 19<sup>th</sup> to August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012, in the Discovery Centre Gallery at The Grange.



**Carollers at The Grange December 4th, 2011.** Special thanks to members of the St. Peter's Anglican Church Choir for their heavenly voices and all those who shared in our 51st birthday celebration.

*For more Heritage Matters please call  
Jane Watt at 905-828-8411 ext "0"*