

INTELLECTUAL PROFITS

Periodic Newsletter of the Community History Project
Mail: c/o Spadina Road Library, 10 Spadina Road, Toronto M5R 2S7
Office/Archives: Second Floor, 79 Queen Street East – 416-515-7546
Annual Membership: \$20 individual, \$35 family
Meetings: In Office Fourth Thursdays in Months September to June



FOR A GROWING SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT

In 1995, when we began to look at salvaging and restoring the Tollkeeper's Cottage to carry out the purpose of every local historical society to preserve and advocate for heritage within our study area, we could not have guessed that it would take thirteen years of research and hard physical work, massive amounts of energy, over 12,000 hours of volunteer labour and have a value of more than \$750,000.00. And when we started, we did not know how truly rare and special was our humble little wooden building. We could never have dreamed that it would be of interest to people as far away as British Columbia or be eligible for eventual National Historic Site designation. But we began . . . and along the way every member has made a contribution of some kind. We need also to be grateful to the many non-members who have supported our work and made donations. So it is time for every member to exercise our hard-won bragging rights! We have something to be very proud about. For those who have not yet visited the Cottage, please enjoy it on our website www.tollkeeperscottage.ca. On the next pages, is some more information and a couple of pictures.

SAVING HERITAGE ASSETS

Members will recall that Bertram Sturrup left us two sets of buffalo horns in his Will. These had been brought back from the 1885 Rebellion by Colonel Albert Gooderham. They were not items that enlarged our understanding of the family as such, and we decided that they were better placed in some other facility. On Dorothy Duncan's advice, we contacted Parks Canada and the horns are now proudly housed in a building where Gooderham once served in battle, and where the buffalo were killed. Late last year, we received the uniforms of a soldier who had served in World War I. The collection was passed along to Paul Federico who did some research on the insignia and learned that the gear had belonged to a soldier from Quebec. The whole collection is now resting in the regimental museum of Les Fusiliers de Sherbrooke. The regiment is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2010 and the curator of the museum is delighted to have items dating back ninety years. We must be grateful to Paul for getting the collection to the right place on our behalf. It is the same with the historic items now used to furnish the Tollkeeper's Cottage; these have come to us from many donors who carefully preserved them and donated them to us with Dorothy's approval. We could not have afforded to purchase them IF the rarer ones could be found. Come and see the iron stand for a rush light donated by Douglas and Monica Campbell, or the whale oil lamp donated by the Lloydtown Rebellion Association. Let there be no mistake: Canadians love their heritage!

THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE TOLLKEEPER'S COTTAGE



Marilyn Spearin on the left and Catherine Watts on the right stand on the front porch of the Tollkeeper's Cottage. Both women have given many hours to the grubby work of restoration and are now ready in their hand-sewn costumes to meet visitors to our little museum on Davenport Road.

Marilyn and Catherine took a two-week course in order to become docents and operate the museum. Others who took that course have moved on and we are now looking for new people – men or women or young people - willing to become docents. One must first become a CHP member then wait until the course starts. The course includes some local history, the history of the Cottage, information about wooden buildings and vertical plank construction, information about the evolution of the province's road system from aboriginal trails to built roads, information about the 19th century tolling system and rates charged, information about the natural heritage of the escarpment, information about the indigenous species (plants and trees) around the Cottage and in the park, and how to operate the buildings. Potential docents may wish to take Bruce Ferreira-Wells' walking tours this fall in order to become comfortably knowledgeable about local heritage. Docents will actually look after the buildings and learn to interpret them and their contents. Special staffing will be arranged for visiting tours on Tuesdays, and for scheduled special programmes such as lectures, fundraising, etc.

At the 1 July opening, a small dining shelter was set up to cover two special benches for shaving cedar shakes which had been previously split off the quarter rounds with a froe. In this picture, Roberta O'Brien shows how the shake was shaved to fit properly on the roof. Every single shake on the Cottage roof was handmade by this method, and Roberta and David Hanna were making shakes for the porch roof. Visitors could buy one and put their name on it before it is nailed in place. All of our volunteers learned how to shave shakes, but only a few learned how to use the froe. In order to raise funds for the next batch of expenses, we are still selling shakes for \$20. We are also selling big bags of cedar shavings for people to use as mulch, and unshaven shakes for use in cooking planked fish or steaks at the barbecue.



The use of the drawknife and froe are only two of the skills that the volunteers had to use, or learn, in working on the Cottage. Examples of some other skills were: splitting strips of cedar lathing and nailing it in place for plastering, scrubbing wood using water and sand, identification and analysis of layers of material as these were being stripped away to reveal the first stage of construction, how to strip away paint containing lead and how to do this without damaging the wood underneath then how to dispose of the unwanted paint, how to identify hand-planed tongue-in-groove wood, learning what the different imported nails were for from examining the nails actually in the old building, and from a huge beam brought in for trimming and installation how to identify the tools used for its previous functions and to relate this information to a beam actually in the Cottage that had been brought from somewhere else and re-used (lesson: recycling was fairly common in the nineteenth century). Two big slabs from that huge barn beam are mounted against the west wall of the modern Addition and can be appreciated for all of the hand work they reveal.

Gillian Federico played on her Irish harp through both official openings. This was done to draw attention to the fact that those who collected tolls from our little cottage were all Irish, except for a single family in the 1860s. Gillian played melodies that the Irish tollkeepers and their families would have known, but she did not tackle music known to nineteenth century Methodists which was the denomination of all of the tollkeepers at Davenport and Bathurst. The music and the harp are the stuff of legend! And we would like to have Gillian back to give a proper concert at which she could also sing. Let us know if you would like such an event this winter.



Quebecers treasure the cultural influences brought by the Irish to their province. In contrast, Toronto has lost of its Irish heritage and replaced it with an orgy of alcohol on March 17. The Tollkeeper's Cottage will continue to offer to the public some insights into Toronto's Irish heritage with information about this history in the city, about Irish cuisine, art, poetry . . . and music. As a teaching facility, the Tollkeeper's Cottage will also offer information about Canada's oldest road, about Toronto's aboriginal landowners who lived in the immediate area, about the trade made possible by Davenport Road's existence, and about the first non-native explorers and mapmakers: the French. However, it must be said that the French did not have sodabread with sweet butter and marmalade! We will leave the explanations about this to a lecture on Canadian foods by Dorothy Duncan whose two books may be purchased at the Tollkeeper's Cottage as long as they last!



This dear little girl is Kirsty Federico who, like her parents, is a re-enactor. She spread her white picnic cloth on the grass and played with a miniature tea set during the opening on 1 July. She was behaving like a well-brought-up child of the nineteenth century but, like any child of Tollhouse No. 3 on Davenport, was alone with an imaginary tea partner until a real visitor came along.

Several of our most generous benefactors were unable to be present at either of the openings of the Tollkeeper's Cottage. So the thanks and appreciation of all must come in this form. Starting in 1995, architects Klaus and Marjut Dunker have served the project through many initial trials by the former Parks Department, and through the difficulties posed by the physical site. They were unable to attend the openings because Marjut was celebrating her birthday in Finland with her entire family. So we wish her many more happy ones, and express our greatest appreciation of their joint contributions over thirteen years! Keep in mind that they worked *pro bono*! For all who know her, Dorothy Duncan's generosity is measureless! She has been an advisor, consultant, teacher about museum and archival records, instructor in the training course, donor of funds, and donor of a host of historic furnishings, and a creative fundraiser. She kept a number of items donated by others in her garage for many months. If there was a way of being helpful, Dorothy would find and explore it. And you need to know, she did all this while selling her house, packing, moving to Orillia, and scooting around Ontario giving workshops, lectures, and various kinds of help to other societies. Because of Amanda McConnell's personal interest and sharing by Grassroots Albany's members, we have some fine plantings around the site and in the park – a contribution with very long-term benefits! Many many thanks to these good friends of heritage.

A PROGRESS REPORT

The grounds around the Cottage and the parkland generally have received some special attention from Grassroots Albany, and because of a grant of \$2083.50 from the Clean and Beautiful City Secretariat's Neighbourhoods Beautification Initiative Programme. The money helped to pay for the stone stile and railed walkway and steps up the slope giving access to the upper levels of the park from the south side. Councillor Mihevc supported our application. Our two opening events gave us \$585.00 from sales (five books were stolen!) of publications, cedar shakes, and donations. The shakes sell for \$20.00 and purchasers can write their name on the shake with a permanent marker and the shake will be mounted on the porch roof. From our first Saturday of regular museum hours, with Catherine Watts and Marilyn Spearin in period dress, we received only \$11.02 in donations (in lieu of paid admissions). On the following Saturday, Rolande Smith conducted a walking tour in French and Marilyn operated the museum on her own but had developed a technique to elicit better donations so, with the sale of one shake, she generated a total of \$90.42. But we did very well at the Salsa Festival in running the Bounce Tent and took in \$888.10. All of these funds, along with three private donations, have paid for a backlog of invoices waiting for payment.

Work is still being done: the wooden railing for the wheelchair ramp is now being built and will have to be painted. A request has been made of Councillor Mihevc's office to see if there is any standing grant programme which can pay for the concrete curb cut for wheelchair access. The steel posts and glass roof over the side entrance at the Addition, and steel security grilles for the three historic windows on the Cottage exterior have to be made. Larry Priestman, through his unique skills and with a contribution from Bill Kindree, has mounted a rack of lights for the main space in the Addition and over the computer area, but we still need another pair of lights for that room to finish it. Some eavestroughing is needed, two smoke detectors, mountings for the donated microwave, all the doors with display space for the storage unit, a raccoon-proof finishing top for the chimney, and sufficient revenue from admissions to pay for gas and hydro and – eventually – a telephone and computer hookup. The historic pieces still required to furnish the Cottage are listed at the back of the Donors Book, but a priority must be the acquisition of some proper ticking to make paliasses for the two beds to be put together in the bedroom which still needs to be finished. There, Catherine is completing pointing and puttying the windows, after which paint can be scraped away and the window woodwork throughout the Cottage can all be painted. That much would give a single coat of paint over everything, and the planned second coat would have to wait until next year. And there will be odd items, like a wall-mounted brochure rack . . .

We must get back to developing some fundraising programmes, such as a gigantic cookie sale with Mr. Fusco's donation. All ideas are welcome. Some rentals of the space would help. We have one rental booked already.

THE 400th ANNIVERSARY OF QUEBEC CITY

Commemoration of the actual day (3 July) when Samuel de Champlain founded the future city four hundred years ago has passed, but the celebrations continue with that unique flair found only in Quebec. You can visit the *Musee du Fort* and see a huge model of the city as it was in 1750 and learn about the battles that influenced Canada's history. You can go to the Citadelle and take a guided tour of the home of the Lieutenant-Governor or visit the regimental museum of the famous "Van Doos" or Royal 22nd Regiment. At the Museum of the Ursuline Sisters you can learn how these nuns taught the children of settlers and native people alike in the depths of the seventeenth century forest. In Lower Town, so beautifully restored, you can see why there is a long waiting list of people wanting to live there, or visit the suburbs which were already old and established by the time most Upper Canadian communities came into being. There are walking tours, bus tours, boat tours, tours by horse and caleche, and maps available for driving tours. And an absolute must is experiencing authentic Quebec cuisine at the famous *aux Anciens Canadiens* Restaurant, or at *Auberge do Tresor*. So special is this city to North American history that you owe it to yourself to join in the celebrations. Go to quebec400.qc.ca or www.bonjourquebec.com and make reservations via 1-877-BONJOUR (266-5687)

SAMUEL DE CHAMPLAIN born c 1650 at Brouage France, died 1635 at Quebec City

The "Father of New France" arrived in this country in 1603 on a voyage with Francois Grave Du Pont travelling up the St. Lawrence River through countryside occupied by the Algonquin Indians. He went to Acadia in 1604, then as an official cartographer in 1605 and 1606 he explored and mapped the eastern coastline as far south as Cape Cod, looking for a suitable place in which to establish a colony. But it was in 1608 the Sieur de Monts sent him to found a colony at Quebec as an aid to protecting the developing trade in furs and the alliances formed with those who brought the furs, the Naskapi and Montagnais of the St. Lawrence and Ottawa River regions, and with the Hurons spread out above the Great Lakes. Protecting that trade involved military action at Lake Champlain in 1609 and in 1615 in Iroquois territory south of the Great Lakes to support his new allies. In this same year, he was in Huronia and sent his young assistant, Etienne Brule, with some Huron guides, into southern Ontario. They travelled via the Toronto Carrying Place Trail and were the first white men to see Lake Ontario and Niagara Falls. Champlain was skilled in administration and in producing reports; one of the latter resulted in the founding of *Le Compagnie des Cents-Associés*. War broke out when the English Kirke brothers captured Quebec city briefly, but Champlain returned in 1633 to serve as Governor. After his death, he was buried in his city, although the precise location of his remains is somewhat uncertain. His reports and published writings are critically important historical records of the beginnings of the country in the sense of political administration, and of the people who were already living here. His maps reveal the huge scope of his interests and observations in the meticulous drawings of flora and fauna he put in the margins. It is worth digging into some of the literature about this truly great Canadian hero, and thanking him when you visit his city.

LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS

James Orr continues to be generous and has donated another fourteen volumes to our research library. These include: *La Salle* by E.B. Osler; the Hopwood edition of David Thompson's *Travels in Western North America 1784-1812*; *Letters From North America* by Antoine Silvy S.J.; the standard reference work *Canadian Clocks and Clockmakers*; and the two-volume boxed set *The Irish in Canada*. Of this collection, one volume, published in Toronto in 1875 appears to be a first book of Canadian history specifically for use in the schools as a textbook. This book is extremely interesting, particularly in the light of modern research. Some quotes reveal how interesting is the text:

Seneca, a Latin writer, utters the following prophecy in one of his tragedies, "There will yet come a time when the ocean will loosen the bonds of matter and a vast country be discovered." The Carthaginians also reported that, about B.C. 300, one of their vessels under the direction of Himilcon, having boldly stretched its course westward into the Atlantic, arrived at a vast and fertile land watered by large rivers, and covered with magnificent forests. (p. 9, para 1).

The following statement compares the increase in population during twenty years:-

Census of 1841 - Upper Canada 465,000

Lower Canada 691,000

Census of 1851 - Upper Canada 952,000

Lower Canada 890,000

Census of 1861 - Upper Canada 1,396,000

Lower Canada 1,111,000

(p. 290)

In March, the Reciprocity Treaty between Canada and the United States expired, by lapse of time, and has never since been renewed; the American Government refused to sanction such renewal, hoping that the necessity to Canada of commercial connection with the States would force the former into annexation. (p. 299 para 3)

Having previously donated a personal history of professional theatre in Canada by actor-director Vernon Chapman *Who's In the Goose Tonight?* CHP's president ordered Chapman's sequel which his family published just after his recent death. This book, *My Subtext Was Too Loud* has just arrived and was accompanied by a CD containing a host of pictures from Chapman's huge collection made over his career of more than seventy years in the business. Chapman also wrote the *History of Canadian Actors' Equity* which was published by that professional organization. Chapman was a long-time resident of CHP's study area and was very interested in CHP's work. A trip past the City Clerk's office at City Hall, allowed a glimpse at what seemed to be a pile of brochures so a request was made . . . the result of which was the donation to CHP of *Train Country*, an illustrated history of the CNR. Our collection on railway history is excellent and growing!

NEW DOCENTS AND TRAINING COURSE

Most of the members who took the two-week training course have gone on to other things and we now have only **two** trained docents who have made their own costumes. Operating the museum every Saturday is just too much for these people and the president combined, and we are looking for new members to train and serve as docents. The more docents we have trained, the greater is the likelihood of working in pairs and enabling us to open to the public more than one day per week. Keep in mind that Tuesdays are reserved exclusively for tours of schoolchildren or seniors, and the president is taking care of the bookings and tours.

What is involved? First of all, the person must be a paid-up CHP member (for insurance reasons). He or she must be willing to operate the museum at least once a month and work alone until we have enough people trained to work in pairs. The docent adopts the character/persona of a person from the actual historical record and interprets the building, its contents, history, area etc. from that perspective. He or she must be willing to take on some of the normal maintenance of the household, building, and grounds in keeping with the role being played and to keep records of the day's operations, sales, and events. The docent must be willing to make his or her own costume under the guidance of our expert.

A new training course given over a two-week period in the Cottage itself is timetabled at 7 pm evenings as follows:

- Mon 3 Nov – the tolling system in Upper Canada and elsewhere, road companies
- Tue 4 Nov – history of Davenport Road and Tollgate No. 3 (construction, architecture)
- Wed 5 Nov – the world around Tollgate No. 3 (forest, farms, escarpment, aboriginal peoples and places, creeks)
- Thu 6 Nov – daily, weekly, monthly operations of the road company and tollgate, rates, currencies, records
- Fri 7 Nov – evolution of road system, road-building and types, bridges
- Mon 10 Nov – everyday life in Upper Canada in 19th century
- Tue 11 Nov – everyday life in the Tollkeeper's Cottage, cooking, laundry, school etc
- Wed 12 Nov – interpreting the Cottage and its contents
- Thu 13 Nov – period dress (meeting in the studio of the expert to discuss period dress, patterns, where to find appropriate materials and details, how to sew
- Fri 14 Nov – operating the buildings, security, emergency measures

The Cottage must generate sufficient revenues from visitors in order to pay for the regular operating costs (insurance, hydro, gas, cleaning supplies). It will do this through voluntary contributions (in lieu of paid admissions) from visitors, sales of publications and other items, and donations. Donations of \$20 or more can receive a tax-deductible receipt as long as the name and mailing address of the donor is recorded and kept with the money separate from other revenues. Until the Cottage is generating sufficient revenues, we will not be able to have a telephone or computer hookup.

Please tell potential member-docents to sign up soon by calling 416-515-7546.

TIMETABLE: to end of December 2008 – changes possible

- Aug 2, 9, 16, 23 Saturdays – Tollkeeper’s Cottage museum open 10 to 5
4 Mon – Simcoe Day in the Tollkeeper’s Park and in the Cottage 10 to 5
Mississauga sacred ceremony dedicating birch trees at 10 am
heritage community exhibits through park’s upper level to 5 pm – free
sponsored by the Toronto Historical Association – supported by
Councillor Joe Mihevc
23-24 Sat-Sun – CHP with special exhibit for 2 days of Mississauga Pow wow
at New Credit Reserve near Hagersville – all are invited to attend and
learn about the land claim negotiations over the Toronto Purchase –
details on flyers at Tollkeeper’s Cottage
- Sep 6, 13, 20, 27 Saturdays – Tollkeeper’s Cottage museum open 10 to 5
14, 21, 28 – Sundays 5:30 pm first three of four neighbourhood \$5 walking tours of
areas around the Tollkeeper’s Cottage – include a tour of the Cottage at no
extra charge – tours go rain or shine – by Bruce Ferreira-Wells
25 Thu – regular monthly meeting of CHP at Queen Street offices, 7:30 pm
- Oct 4, 11, 18, 25 Saturdays – Tollkeeper’s Cottage museum open 10 to 5
5 Sunday – fourth and final \$5 walking tour of neighbourhoods with Bruce F-W
11 Sat – birdhouse-making workshops, children up to grade 6 with an adult and
own hammer, \$12 with all materials supplied, take home the birdhouse
with additional information about attracting birds, sign up for morning or
afternoon session by calling 416-515-7546
23 Thu – regular monthly meeting of CHP at Queen Street offices, 7:30 pm
25 Sat – Apples and Pumpkins annual sale of heritage apples and pie pumpkins -
with some baked goods and heritage recipes for apples and pumpkins -
at the Tollkeeper’s Cottage – also apple bobbing for children – 10 to 5
- Nov 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Saturdays – Tollkeeper’s Cottage museum open 10 to 5
11 Tue – Remembrance Day, sunrise ceremonies at Prospect Cemetery
27 Thu – regular monthly meeting of CHP at Queen Street offices, 7:30 pm
- Dec 6, 13 Saturdays – Tollkeeper’s Cottage museum open 10 to 5 (then closed until
Sat 10 January 2009)
13 – Christmas Sale of Home Baking, Tollkeeper’s Cottage 10 to 5
19 Fri – joint Christmas party with Scotiabank staff in CHP offices – details TBA

First CHP meeting of 2009 is Thursday 22 January at 7:30 pm at the Tollkeeper’s
Cottage addition.

*Note for Those in Need: A Tim Horton’s is to open soon at the site of the former crappy
“donut” shop on Davenport Road. By September, we expect that everything will be
finally sorted out at the Tollkeeper’s Cottage and that we will be able to make our own
tea and coffee there. The same timetable holds for the Queen Street offices.*