



# Stoney Creek Historical Society

PO Box 66637, Stoney Creek, ON. L8G 5E6

## NEWSLETTER

Remember the Corman House

March 2019

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### CANADA HOUSE

STOOD AT THE NORTH EAST CORNER OF KING ST. AND LAKE AVE.



*Following article copied from a newspaper printed story*

**Stoney Creek May 16 th. 1919.** Yesterday was a momentous day for the old timers of Stoney Creek. It marked the passing of the old Canada House into the hands of John Bridgeman, a progressive farmer of this district, ( *Winona* ) who will use the ancient timbers for the erection of a house and barn on his property.

Let those who have pointed the finger of ridicule at the efforts of the Improvement league hang their heads in shame, for it was mainly through its activities that the sale was at last engineered, and to one especially is it due that the deal was successfully consummated without further friction. *CONTINUED ON PAGE 3*

## President's Corner      March 2019



Welcome to our first Newsletter of 2019. The Stoney Creek Historical Society (SCHS) continues its mission of preserving, recording, and capturing the History of Stoney Creek. We have a full roster of special guest speakers for all of 2019. We are fortunate to be able to have our monthly meetings at the Municipal Centre, 777 #8 Highway, Stoney Creek. Our Reference Library and Archive is at the Saltfleet Centre, 605 #8 Highway, and is open Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 1-4 or by appointment. I extend a special welcome and thanks to our newest Archive Volunteer, Alyssa Gomori. Although fully employed as the curator at the Erland Lee, House and Museum, Alyssa's enthusiasm for local history allowed her to extend spare hours of support to SCHS. Alyssa joins Judy Green, Nancy Capstick, and Bev Gray, as our Archive Volunteers.

The Hamilton Wentworth Heritage Association (HWA) held its Who's Who in Heritage in Hamilton-Wentworth 2019 on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, at Hamilton City Hall. Our own SCHS Directors Denise Wachnuik and Gary Strong were recipients of the HWA Heritage Volunteer Recognition Certificates. Well deserved and congratulations Denise and Gary. In addition, the HWA similarly recognized Arlene and Al Bridge, our colleagues at Friends of Battlefield House, Museum, and Park.

An ice storm February 6<sup>th</sup> obligated us to cancel that Wednesday's members meeting. I appreciate your support and understanding. I know that Murray Puddicombe was well prepared for his presentation on his family's Winona farm. We hope that Murray is available in the future. With March upon us, and warmer weather, I remind everyone of our "Just a Kid from Stoney Creek" t-shirts, available in all sizes from child to XXXL. Check out [www.stoneycreekhistorical.ca](http://www.stoneycreekhistorical.ca)

Speaking of ice storms, future warmer weather, and t-shirts, why not wear yours to our June 2019 meeting sponsored by Amica. I know that I'm looking forward to that special event at the former Stoney Creek Dairy location, complete with ice cream treats.

SCHS would not be able to offer its services, Newsletter, and monthly meetings without paid memberships, both individual and business. Our business sponsors are acknowledged in our Newsletters. Thank you for supporting us.

Our Landmarks of Stoney Creek limited edition (200) prints, created by Peterborough artist George Elliott, instill historical pride in Stoney Creek. It's a pleasure to see them so prominently displayed at the Stoney Creek Health Science Building, 15 Mountain Ave.S., and elsewhere.

Our condolences to the family and friends of Evelyn Wills. The support extended to our Society is acknowledged and much appreciated.

My Thanks to all of you for your support, to our SCHS Volunteers for donating their time and energy, and to our Board of Directors for their interest and enthusiasm.

Greg Armstrong  
President-SCHS

The demolition of the old structure will proceed at once, and in a few short weeks nothing but the scar on the earth where it stood for the past hundred years or more will be left as an evidence of its having existed.

In the passing of this ancient landmark, which has seen the decease of generations, there cannot but be a few sighs of regretful memory of what the old house stood for. It is a relic of a period when wine was deemed good for mankind and also of the days when beer was ripened for fully six months before offered for sale. In the ancient barroom whisky of a rare vintage could be bought in those pioneer days for the same price as a glass of two and a half per cent now.

The old house now stands like a reproach to modernism. Its sightless eyes, long since demolished by the village, who could not resist a feel of their prowess, with stones, (*note broken windows*) still stare upon the road where once the pioneers wended their painful way in wagons guiltless of springs or any other modern comfort.

### **BUT ONE TRAGEDY**

To County Constable A.C. Springstead, is due the meager details of the history of old Canada house, and yet his memory only covers about half of its existence. In his day Constable Springstead recalls many a hot battle which was staged in the old barroom, and but one tragedy.

“It was in the old sitting room that the only life on record was wiped out” said the constable yesterday. “Two men were sitting near the great stove when a bolt of lightning struck the chimney, came down the stove pipes, passed through the stove and struck a dog sleeping beneath it. The animal ran out of the house, described a circle outside and then rushed back in and under the stove, where it immediately expired.”

Amongst the proprietors within the memory of the constable, were Samuel Morrison, Thomas Lawrence and the father of William Spera, the latter now residing in the Creek. Mr Spera also boasts the honor of having been born in the hotel while his father was the proprietor.

John Nash was also appealed to, as one of the oldest residents of Stoney Creek for reminiscences of the early days when the Canada house accommodated the travelling public. Owing to the regretful fact that Mr. Nash is at the present time confined to his bed with lumbago, he could not be interviewed for any length of time but he remembered well going with his father to Hamilton and purchasing the last coat of paint which decorated this building, that being over seventy years ago. The paint was purchased from Hamilton's drug store, at what is now the C.P.R. ticket office at the corner of King and James streets.

Mr. Nash states that ancient as the old Canada house may be, the basket factory which the improvement league seeks to tear down is still older.

*( see front page of March 2018 newsletter )*

## **IT'S BUILDERS**

The ancient hostelry was built originally by Stephen Jones, the raising of the frame of the structure being the occasion of a gala day throughout the neighbourhood, as all the settlers for miles around were bidden to the spot to assist in the erection of what was then the most pretentious building in Wentworth. As was the custom in those days, the building was christened, being named Polly's Delight, the first name being that of the wife of the builder, the latter expressing the satisfaction and the pride of his worthy spouse, who was to occupy the stateliest mansion of the country. The great timbers which form the frame work of the building, were months in preparation, being sawn by the grandfather of Lieut.- Col. Van Wagner, the latter being a man of inconsiderable age at the present time. Some idea of the age of the structure can be gained by those whose memories reach back to the constructing of the Great Western railroad, for it was in that hotel that many of the workmen were housed and it had been standing then nearly thirty years.

## **MAY ERECT GARAGE**

Upon inquiry it was learned last evening that the property upon which the old Canada house stands will in all probability be the site for a modern garage where travellers can secure the best of attention for their road miseries. The land is owned by A.C. Springstead, who stated that it was not and would not be offered for sale under any consideration. A bank made an attractive offer for the corner with the intention of erecting a modern building which was refused.

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## **STONEY CREEK MEN'S CLUB**

The Men's Club, the first service club in Stoney Creek, held its first meeting on September 22, 1944. From its earliest days, the Club took on community projects and quickly established itself as a supporter of local youth.

The main focus of the Club was its sponsorship of the Boy Scout and Girl Guide organizations which had their beginnings in the village that same year. It rented (later purchased) a small frame building on Mountain Avenue South, between Cloughs and where the Medical Building now stands, and provided the space as a Scout Hall. Within a few years, the youth groups had outgrown the building and a new space for meetings was badly needed. In 1954 the club purchased a surplus wooden building from the city of Hamilton and moved it to the ball park (Community Park) on King Street. With the hard work of Club Members and supporters and the generosity of local merchants, it became an adequate Scout/Guide Hall. Not only did they buy and maintain these buildings, they also paid the utility bills. In 1969 it was torn down and

replaced with a new, more modern hall. Then, in 1985, when maintenance costs proved too much for the Club, they handed over the management of the building to the new City of Stoney Creek. (That hall was itself torn down in 2011 to make way for the new Community Recreation Centre in the park.)

Even though they no longer had the responsibility of the buildings, the Men's Club continued to support the Scouts and Guides. In its heyday in the 1950's and 1960's, there were over 500 children involved in these programs. The members raised funds in a variety of ways including door-to-door raffle ticket sales, December Turkey raffles, auction sales, car washes, carnivals and bake sales. With their earnings, they subsidized the cost of leaders' uniforms, helped defray the costs associated with camping, bought tents, etc. In keeping with the aims of the Scouting Movement, the children were encouraged to become involved in the community and take part in fundraising activities such as paper drives and tinfoil collection. Both were early forms of recycling! The Scouts, Cubs, Guides and Brownies were not the only young people to benefit from the Men's Club.

For many years the Club held a Halloween Party at the ball park. There was costume judging and entertainment as well as refreshments. That was 'the thing to do' and most kids who grew up at that time didn't go door-to-door trick or treating at Halloween. Instead, they went to the party at the park. The Men's Club also provided sponsorship for baseball teams, hockey teams, swimming and skating lessons. They donated proficiency awards to students in the local schools. They even created a community toboggan slide on the side of the escarpment at the south end of Gray Road. But all things change. It became difficult to attract new members and as the Men's Club current members aged and dwindled in numbers, it became impossible to keep up with the Club's former fundraising activities.



Over time, the Club was forced to focus less on providing financial support to community's youth and gradually became more of a social club. At that time most of the Club's remaining funds were donated to Dr Bob Kemp Hospice. Recently the Club decided to disband and donate what money remained to the Stoney Creek Food Bank. With this decision the longest serving service club in Stoney Creek has ended. Generations of children benefited from its community spirit. It will be missed.

Pictured above: 1 st. Scout Hall on Mountain Ave. S.

*submitted by Nancy Capstick*





2 nd & 3 rd Scout Halls Stoney Creek Community Park

### Upcoming Speakers at Stoney Creek Historical 2019

- Wednesday, March 6** at 7:00 pm **Speaker: Lezlie at Niagara Bound Tours**  
**Topic: Black history in Niagara**
- Wednesday, April 3** at 7:00 pm **Speaker: Margaret Sault**  
**Topic: Mississauga of the New Credit First Nation**
- Wednesday, May 1** at 7:00 pm **Speakers: Anayis & Tamar- two sisters**  
**Topic: share their heritage with a personal account of Armenian history!**

**The Stoney Creek Historical Society's Archives and Reference Library** is located at 605 Highway 8. We are generally open on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 1pm - 4pm. Visitors and researchers are always welcome. Please come and join us.

#### **Committee Chairs / Co-ordinators**

Archives: Nancy Capstick, Bev Gray, Judy Green,  
[archives@stoneycreekhistorical.ca](mailto:archives@stoneycreekhistorical.ca)

Telephone: June Guzar  
Membership:

Social: Bev Gray, Carolyn Briggs  
Programming: Kathy Wakeman

Website: Jillian Harris  
Newsletter: Doug Green

Please contact *Doug Green* by telephone at ( 905 ) ( 662-4065 ) or by email at [newsletter@stoneycreekhistorical.ca](mailto:newsletter@stoneycreekhistorical.ca) or [dougagl@hotmail.com](mailto:dougagl@hotmail.com)  
If you have questions or answers regarding our newsletter content or contributions or if you wish to receive your copy of the newsletter via e-mail. Help us reduce mailing & printing costs.

## Stoney Creek Historical Society Board of Directors

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Past President	Mary Lewis	( 905 ) 643-3665
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	Kathy Wakeman	( 905 ) 561-9040
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Director	Denise Wachnuik	( 905 ) 741-3047
Director	Marie Robbins	( 905 ) 662-1813
Director	Jillian Harris	

## Member Business Directory

Amica at Stoney Creek		135 King St. East	(905) 664-8444
Bertram & Barry Insurance Ltd.		6 Lake Ave. S	(905) 662-8645
Chamber of Commerce		21 Mountain Ave S	(905) 664-4000
Comic 1 Books	Casey Parsons	67 King St. E.	(905) 664-3777
Donald V Brown Funeral Home	Julie Brown	36 Lake Ave Dr	(905) 662-2948
Dr. Keith Millar		304 – 15 Mountain Ave S	(905) 662-2312
Erland Lee Museum			
Karen Cerello CPA Professional Corporation		42 King St. E. Unit 4	(905) 662-2848
Legacy Picture Framing		3 – 178 Barton St.	(905) 662-0085
Queenston Stationary	Mario Figueroa	38 King St. East	(905) 664-3360
RBC Royal Bank	Paul Kelzer	917 Queenston Rd.	(905) 564-6575
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TD Canada Trust	Michael Zeoli		
The Innsville	Bob Hemberger	1143 Hwy. 8	(905) 643-1244

# STONEY CREEK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE HISTORY OF STONEY CREEK*

**I WOULD LIKE TO ACQUIRE/RENEW MEMBERSHIP IN THE S.C.H.S.      2019 RENEWAL**

NAME (S) \_\_\_\_\_ MONTH \_\_\_\_\_ DAY \_\_\_\_\_ YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

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| 1. SINGLE - \$20.00 ( CANADA POST ) | 2. SINGLE WITH EMAIL - \$15.00 |                       |
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PLEASE INDICATE IF YOU WISH TO RECEIVE OUR NEWS LETTER BY EMAIL OR CANADA POST.

PLEASE SEND TO : STONEY CREEK HISTORICAL SOCIETY,P.O. BOX 66637,STONEY CREEK, ONTARIO, L8G 5E6

WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT AND LOOK FORWARD TO YOU ATTEND

PLEASE INDICATE IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN SPONSORING OUR NEWSLETTER FOR A \$35.00 DONATION

MEMBERSHIPS CAN ALSO BE RENEWED ONLINE USING PAYPAL.

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[archives@stoneycreekhistorical.ca](mailto:archives@stoneycreekhistorical.ca)

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