

Stoney Creek Historical Society

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

NEWSLETTER

October 2007 Edition #42 Circulation: 300 copies

EXCERPTS FROM THE PETER VAN WAGNER DIARIES- PT 4.

Transcribed by Kristen Kerr

Friday July 5th 1850

Ploughing in the forenoon. Hauled a load of hay from the nigros [sic] lot. Got another load in the wagon and left it in the swale fast to a log. It then rained for two hours with a vengeance. Tim and I under the wagon. E.P. here today with Mrs. P and Mary-Ann in the evening. Alex sick after bringing the brown cow home. She ran away the other day. E.P. must have a lot of hay out in this rain. A good deal of hay out in this rain on every side. Wind west. Thunder and lightning in large quantities.

Saturday, July 6th, 1850

All hands hoeing corn. Towards night went to Mrs. Harris's. After George, Robt. Pew . . . to her not allowing me to take him home with me. Sam and Mary stayed at Fon--- while I went on the mountain. Mrs. P. went to town today with C---B--- along. Mary-Ann Pew here all day. Appointed by the town Reeve overseer on the Lake Road past B[each]. And acquired to ab---- . **[Continued on Page 5.]**

Editor's notes: Ontario roads were notorious were their poor quality in the 19th century. They were rarely funded or maintained by governments. In Van Wagner's era, private toll roads were the norm. Other roads were looked after by local people, usually, as in the case of Van Wagner, at their own request or by order of the municipal government. This usually involved organizing work teams, as Van Wagner mentioned previously, and paying out of pocket for such work. Hence a crazy quilt of well-maintained and poorly maintained roads existed, often changing mile by mile.



Van Wagner's School, 1924

The Van Wagner School (SS #4) was built in 1905 on property sold by the Gage family. The school backed on to the beach and cost \$5200 to construct. It was the third school in the area. In 1941 to more classrooms were added to the rear. When compared to the existing building, this photo clearly shows the absence of the expanded two-story bell tower and the modified roof, which absorbed the dormers seen here.

Photo from Helen Hore

Financial assistance for the printing of this newsletter has been provided by

STONEY CREEK NEWS

This newsletter issue has been sponsored by a generous donation from:
Robert W. Smith

President's Message

I would like to welcome back all our members to another season of the Stoney Creek Historical Society. This past summer seemed to fly by but I hope every one enjoyed the beautiful weather we had.

At our first fall meeting we had the pleasure of another fine speaker, as Bob Williamson spoke about a family of show people who made quite an impact on theatre in Hamilton. We have been blessed with excellent speakers for as long as I have been associated with S.C.H.S. and this year is shaping up to be another season of interesting speakers. For those members who have not been to a meeting, I encourage you to come out and enjoy these informative lectures as well as the fellowship of other members. I guarantee you will not be disappointed.

We are moving along with a memorial plaque for past president Ron Place to be placed in the garden alongside the fountain in Stoney Creek, with only the wording to be finalized. Our Christmas trip is in the making and more information will be provided as we put it all together.

Our library has been moved from its location at Steel Marketplace, and is now at Battlefield office in our storage room. Unfortunately our members can no longer use the library material, as it is no longer in an accessible order. When the time comes that the Nash-Jackson house is finished, we will move the library into a permanent room, in that building, and set it up so that members will once again have access to the books. Many thanks to the Orrs for allowing us the room to store this material in recent years and allowing our members access to the facilities.

We welcome Kathy Wakeman to our executive. Kathy will be taking on the job of

Programme Coordinator. Kathy is also a member of the Hamilton Plaquing Committee so will be able to assist us with the plaque and the wording for the Ron Place memorial.

As a public service, the Society had a brief lecture at the October meeting to inform us about the upcoming referendum on the proposed voting procedures.

Our meetings are always on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 P.M. in the council chambers of the old Stoney Creek city hall. I hope to see you there.

Bill Mitchell, President

Historical Society News

Welcome New Historical Society Members!

We extend a warm welcome to:

Rosemary Heidinger

Giles Baudoin

June Guzar

Sue Heatherley

Upcoming Speakers

Nov 7, 2007: **Robin McKee**
"Hamiltonians"

Dec 2007 – no meeting

SCHS Christmas Party

Date and location TBD

Phone convenors will notify members

Jan 3, 2008: Annual General Meeting

Speaker: **Ian Bell**

"Smuggling and Port Dover's History"

Would you prefer to help us save postage and have your newsletter delivered via email? Please send us your email address via mgemmell@sympatico.ca and you will receive the newsletter in PDF or MS Word.

Grimsby Archives/Grimsby Historical Society presents a Genealogy Workshop. Sat. Oct 20, 2007. \$25.00 /person. Call 905-309-0796.

Historical Genealogical Inquires

Members may submit 2 free genealogical queries per year. Non-Members must remit a fee of \$3.00 per query, which will be examined in the order received and researched as time allows, and printed in the newsletter as space allows. Please include Name, Address, and Postal Code and phone number. Send to: PO Box 66637, Stoney Creek, ON, L8G 5E6 or via email to mgemmell@sympatico.ca

Historical Society Bursaries

Each year, Stoney Creek Historical Society presents three bursaries to a high school student at each of Orchard Park High School, Cardinal Newman Catholic High School, and Saltfleet High School who excels in studies relating to history combined with community work.

This year's recipients are:

Alex Cuberovic, Orchard Park
Richelle Capriotti, Cardinal Newman
Saltfleet: *Bursary not yet awarded*

The Historical Society's Reference Library has moved. It is currently not open to the public while work proceeds at its future home, the Nash-Jackson House.

In the News...

June 12, 1903
Globe and Mail

South Wentworth Farmer's Institute News

A committee were appointed to wait on the County Council with a view to securing bonuses for convictions of automobilists traveling at undue speed on the highways

Request for Information

Annette Schulz of Grimsby is looking for information about her childhood home, which stood at 337 Barton Street in the 1960s. The house was on Barton Street between Hilton and Millen on the North side. It was a duplex with an apartment on the second floor and a red barn in back. She claims the house had been the site of one or more accidental deaths and was known to her neighbours as an unlucky house.



337 Barton Street, c.1975

The property was on a 2-acre lot and surrounded by light industry: Stewart Crane on one side and Toastmaster bakery and even a chocolate factory. It had a lovely porch and a little storm water creek to the east side of property. She remembers pear trees in the back. It also had a water cistern, which was supposedly the location of one of the deaths (by drowning).

The house, clad in grey fake-brick siding, was torn down in late 1970s to make way for a light industrial building. The Schulz family lived there from 1970 to 1975.

If you have any reminiscences or photos of this building or anywhere else in Saltfleet Township (Stoney Creek) that you would like to share, please let the Editor know (905-549-5949 or mgemmell@sympatico.ca)

Report from Battlefield House Museum

By Marnie Maslin

No, that's not a new high-rise apartment building gone up in Battlefield Park. It's still the same, impressive, 95 year-old Battlefield Monument, covered since August with scaffolding, in order to aid with a restoration project. The work on the Monument includes selective repointing of the interior and exterior masonry, repair and/or replacement of damaged stone and repainting of the windows. This upkeep will ensure that this striking Stoney Creek landmark conveys its message of memorial and peace at the 200th Anniversary of the Battle of Stoney Creek in 2013 and for years to come.

Battlefield Fall and Christmas Special Events

TWILIGHT TALES LANTERN TOUR

Dare to walk the grounds where the Battle of Stoney Creek was fought almost two hundred years ago and where our past comes alive.

Date: Saturday, October 27, 2007

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Cost: \$6.00 Adults, \$4.00 Children
(recommended for ages 7 and up)

GINGERBREAD HOUSE WORKSHOP

Children will decorate their own pre-made, homemade gingerbread house to take home. Includes a visit from St. Nicholas.

Dates: Saturdays, December 8 & 15, 2007

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Cost: \$22.00 per child. Pre-registration is required.

THE SIMPLE JOYS OF CHRISTMAS

Take a break from holiday shopping and step back in time to experience an early 19th century Christmas. Join us for music, period decorating tips, children's activities, and hearth-baked treats.

Dates: Sundays, December 2 & 9, 2007

Time: 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Cost: Regular admission rates apply

Erland Lee Museum Report

The Erland Lee Museum is going through some big changes this fall. Michael Gemmell has left the Lee to join the team at Green Venture in Hamilton East. We wish him all the best in his new endeavours.

On September 4, 2007, I, Meaghan FitzGibbon, began as the **new curator**. Let me take this opportunity to introduce myself. I was raised in Stoney Creek but have been away from the community for a few years to finish my schooling. I am a recent graduate of the University of Toronto. I have been involved with the Erland Lee Museum since 2000 as a co-op student, summer student and volunteer. On a personal note, I wish to thank Michael for his mentoring throughout the years. Coming back to the Erland Lee is like coming home and I look forward to this new and exciting challenge.

This is certainly shaping up to be an exciting time of year. The Museum's volunteers are preparing for an encore presentation of "**Sports Final**", a murder mystery tentatively scheduled for Saturday October 20th. We are also preparing for the 15th Annual Local Artist Show, open to all local artists, which runs from Tuesday October 30th to Sunday December 2nd.

Following the Art Show, the Erland Lee will begin decorating for the Christmas season. "Country Christmas" at the museum starts Tuesday December 4th and will run through to Sunday December 23rd, with an Open House on Sunday December 16th.

For more information on the Erland Lee Museum's upcoming events please visit our website at www.erlandlee.com. I would also like to invite everyone to come by the Erland Lee to join in the fun. I look forward to meeting all of you.

-Meaghan FitzGibbon

P.S. Van Wagner diaries continued

Sunday July 7th, 1850

Here today Robt. Pew and his two children, W. Holmes, Elias Pettit and Mrs. Pettit, Wm., Mrs. Pew and Mary-Ann Pew, Albert Carpenter, Dr. Brown and Mary, Edith V. W., Hill and lady and child, Robt. Waddel and John V. W., Henry V. W. and lady. Most of whom were here to dinner. The day has been pleasantly spent.

In the morning, we went down to E.P.'s. Soon after, came up, took our wagon and s--- for Binbrook. Met R.P. and came back. Spoke to David and Thomas Williamson this evening as they were passing. Wind East in the forepart of the day, South in the after past and at present North. Heard some talk about the table rock at the falls giving way a few days ago. Confirmed the Musk---

Editor's notes: *Doctor Brown was also the resident Dentist (as he referred to in JW Hopkins' 1868 diary). Albert Carpenter owned one of the local toll roads (modern King Street at Parkdale Ave).*

Monday July 8th, 1850

Took Alex Rolls this morning to Wm. Boyce with the following message:

*William Boyce
Saltfleet July 8th 1850*

Being appointed overseer on the Road, owning no front of the land you occupy, by the Town Reeve.

I hearby give you notice to remove your Cord Wood from said road within six days from the date here. If you fail in so doing I shall proceed to advertize and sell it according to law.

P.S. Van Wagner

When this note was handed to him, he took it between his fingers and asked what it meant. Alex said it was something about the cord wood. Boyce [threw it down]. Mary picked it up. John Clusk (?) then read it where upon Uncle Billy vented his vengeance in cursing me and E.P. most "beautifully".

Editor's notes: *William Boyce lived just east of the Stoney Creek Lagoon, on edge of Lake Ontario (see map below). The road in question is the now vanished Lake Road, not the modern Lake Ave.*

The day has been fine. Wind east. Hauling in hay for E.P. in the forenoon, for myself in the afternoon. 1 large load cloves, ½ load from negro's lot. Jim mowing. Alex co---ing.

Tuesday July 9th

Hauling hay (2 loads) out of the swale. Helped George Fox in the afternoon haul timber for Waddel's stone house and brought a load of hay from the Upper plain. Wind East. Just got Cory (?)'s . . . to help haul the boat. Tim (?) commenced cutting the orchard. Sold a calf to a fat butcher yesterday for two dollars

Wednesday July 10th

Hauled 3 large loads of cloves from the clove field. Mrs. P went to town, brought home that Maguire (?)'s child and nurse. Heard today that W. Hopkins would rent his farm for one hundred and fifty dollars a year. The meadow (?) will pay one half the rent if the play could be rented for two or twelve years. I would consider the rent reasonable. Mrs. H --- here all day on a visit. J and J.W. went to town with his buggy to get it repaired. Pasture very scarce with us - our cows are as thin as boards. This is a caution, look out for the future better (?) Wind east with some sea. Wheat turning.

Thursday, July 11th

Went for hay to the Upper Place from that to the surveying Party. Run down the T—

between Galbreath and Hopkins and Wordhouse (?) and "Hopkins".

Friday July 12th

Mrs. P. at Waterdown. Waterdown wollen [sic] factory burnt last night. And Beardsmore's Tannery night before last. Both insured. Cause of the fire not known. Jerry Lee and Mrs. Called today. And this evening Edith, Mary, Harriet Galbreath and John V. W. about. Mrs. Wright called in, Cory is very sick. His eldest daughter and his mother have come to see him. At work on the shed in the forenoon. Hauled in two large loads of cloves from the Orchard and one from the Negros lot. Wheat opening fast. Fox framing Waddel's stone house (?) Wind West.

Saturday July 13th

Read today in the paper of the death of General Taylor on the eighth of this month.

Editor's notes: "General Taylor" was Zachary Taylor, in fact the 12th President of the United States. A War of 1812 veteran and hero of the 1848 Mexican-American War, he died in office on July 9, 1850.

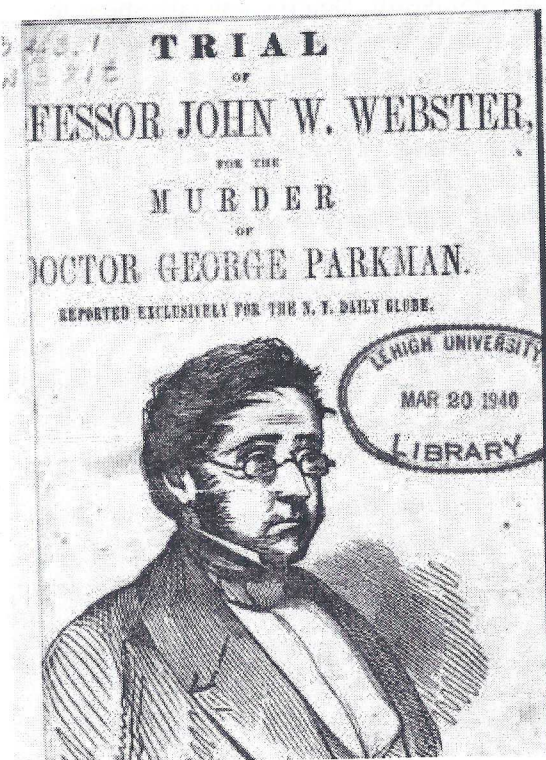


US President Zachary Taylor

Lost my driving whip last night. Out to Stoney Creek in the AM. Saw Mr. Hopkins who told me he had displeased Esq. Williamson in selling of lot to Waddel to build a stone house on. Townsend and John here about noon. Wet day. Managed to get in two loads of clover out of the orchard. Cory still has the delusion tremors. Read Webster's "Confessions of the [Murderer] of Dr. Parkman".

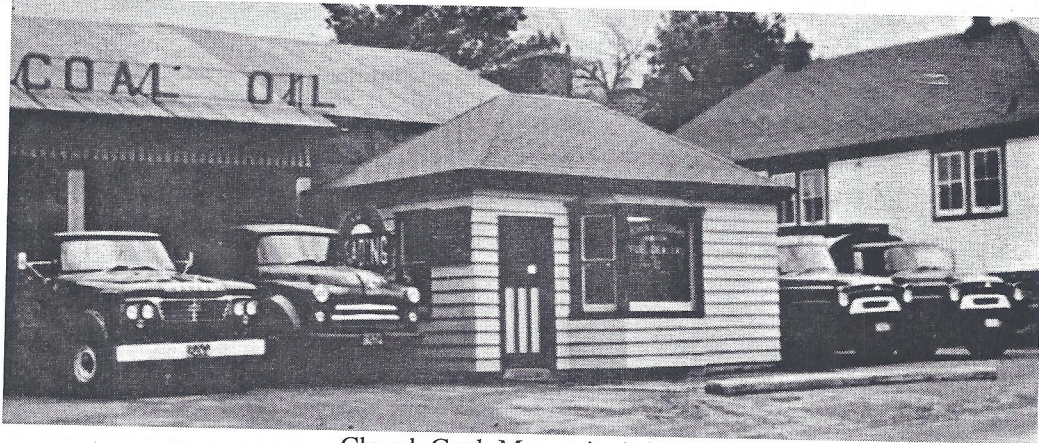
Editor's notes: The murder of Dr George Parkman was one of the earliest uses of forensics to solve crimes. Dr. John White Webster, a professor of chemistry and mineralogy at the Harvard Medical School, murdered Dr. Parkman, a wealthy benefactor in 1849. Dr. Webster was hanged for the murder after the identification of the charred dental and denture fragments found in the Harvard chemistry laboratory furnace belonging to Dr. Parkman.

A pamphlet report of the 1850 trial, very similar to what Van Wagner must have been reading, can be found on the internet at Lehigh University's digital collection. <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/crime/browse/>



Joel Utter and one of Campbell's boys eating English cherries on their own hook this evening. Mr. - - - mapping from Williamson's house to the long house about Sty Creek. -P.S. Van Wagner, 1850.

A Blast from the Past:



Clough Coal, Mountain Ave. S.
1963

Editor's notes: John Clough and Sons was in operation from 1919. Clough started by running a feed store and shipped farmers' produce on the H.G.&B. extension that ran into his property. This was later converted to ship coal. At the time of this photo the business was shipping coal and heating oil. The building on the right side of the photo was the Stoney Creek Scout Hut (also called "Scout Hall" and "Brownie Hall").

It may have been built as early as 1915. The Women's Institutes record a cooperage at the site. The business was owned by David Davies of Waterdown in 1915, and bought by W.J. Martineau in 1916. At some point, the building was sold to John Clough & Sons.

There is a gap between Clough and 1945. The building was used at some point in the 1920s-30s by the Saltfleet Recreation Club, but that service club failed before World War Two. In 1945 the Stoney Creek Men's Club began renting the property from the defunct Recreation Club. They took over ownership of the building soon after.

With the assistance of the Stoney Creek Men's Club, Wolf Cubs, Girl Guides and Brownies were started in Stoney Creek in 1944-46, and meetings were held in the building. The Scouting program, which had been discontinued from 1928-1948, was revived in 1948 and also used the building. This was when the name "Scout Hut" became attached to the property.

The building housed the Stoney Creek Alliance Church from 1955-58, despite objections from the village council. Winning grudging approval, the congregation helped fix up the building and held services there until their "parsonage church" was complete. In 1969, the land was sold and the building demolished, to make way for the Stoney Creek Medical Building.

Photo from the Stoney Creek News, June 5, 1963

Stoney Creek Historical Society Executive 2007

<i>President: Bill Mitchell</i>		<i>1st VP: Greg Armstrong</i>	<i>2nd VP/ Newsletter Michael Gemmell</i>
<i>Correspondence Secretary: Anna Orr</i>		<i>Past President: Bill O'Reilly</i>	<i>Treasurer: Judy Green</i>
<i>Director: Mary Place</i>		<i>Director: vacant</i>	<i>Director: Mary Lewis</i>
<i>Program: Kathy Wakeman</i>	<i>Archives: Cheryl Gemmell</i>	<i>Social Convenors: Betty and Mike Petis</i>	<i>Recording Secretary: Harriet McInnis</i>

YES! I would like to acquire/renew membership in the Stoney Creek Historical Society.

_____ Individual membership \$ 10.00 annually
_____ Family membership \$18.00 annually
_____ Business Membership \$25.00 annually

Name(s) _____

Address: _____

Phone Number : _____

Email: _____
Receive newsletter by email? Y/N

Send to: **PO Box 66637, Stoney Creek, ON. L8G 5E6** or call **905-662-4065** for more information.

Visitors and New Members Welcome!

Meetings are held at Stoney Creek City Hall,
Saltfleet Room
1st Wednesday of each month
beginning at 7:00pm.
September to June

Coffee and Refreshments follow
Info: 905-662-2248

www.stoneycreekhistoricalsociety.701.com

Sponsors of individual Newsletter editions (\$30.00 donation) receive a charitable income tax receipt. Call 905-662-4065 for info.

Members Business/Institution Directory:

Appraiser/Quiltmaker/Lecturer	Judy Lyons	1231 Hammond St. Burl.	(905) 639-2441
Britannia Cleaners	Ed Strecker	17 King Street East	(905) 662-4971
Chamber of Commerce	Dave Cage	21 Mountain Avenue South	(905) 664-4000
Connection Key Travel	John and Mary Fraser	889 Barton St., Unit 2	(905) 643-7444
Erland Lee Museum	Meaghan FitzGibbon	552 Ridge Road	(905) 662-2691
Flowers by Dianne	Dianne Black	9 King Street West	(905) 664- 6621
Forsyth Hagar Accounting	Anne Forsyth	42 King Street East, Unit #2	(905) 662-2848
Queenston Stationery	Thao Khac Phung	38 King Street East	(905) 664-3360
Royal Canadian Legion	Branch 622	12 King Street East	(905) 662-4171
Winona Garden Shoppe	Georgina & Jeff Beattie	1381 Highway #8	(905) 643-2161

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