

Remember the Corman House

Stoney Creek Historical Society

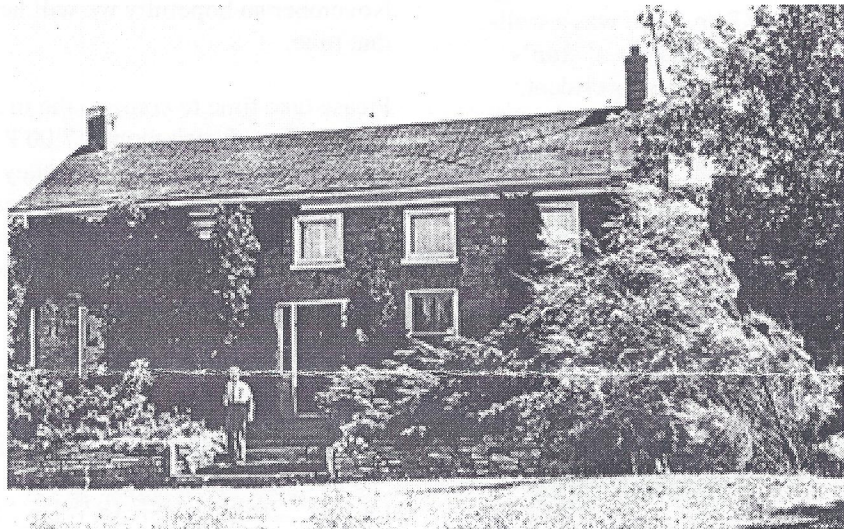
PO Box 66637, Stoney Creek, ON. L8G 5E6

NEWSLETTER

October 2008 Edition #45 Circulation: 300 copies

ENDURING STONE: A HISTORY OF "GLEN MANOR"

By Michael Gemmell



Glen Manor- 1960's

"Glen Manor", located at 22 Veevers Drive, in East Hamilton, is one of Saltfleet Township's survivors. This pre-Confederation stone farm house still stands in its original location surrounded by a sea of modern suburban development.

The site is also known as "the Veevers Estate" after the last owners of the property. At one time Glen Manor farm included a stretch of land from Quigley Road to Greenhill Ave, from King Street to the base of the escarpment. Today Glen Manor stands as a vestige from the pioneer farming era, dating back to the early settlement of Saltfleet Township.

[Continued on page 3.]

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STONEY CREEK NEWS
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The Presidents Corner

Now that summer is gone and fall is upon us we can look forward to a new season of interesting and informative speakers that our program convener, Kathy Wakeman has lined up.

I would like to report on the events that were of interest to our members. Our annual potluck picnic was held at Battlefield Park last June. As usual there were many delicious dishes and an abundance of good food for all who attended.

The unveiling of the plaque on Flag Day morning, dedicated to the memory of Ron Place was a well-attended function with all the members of Ron's family there to pay tribute to our past president. Many of the Society's members turned out for the dedication and Wayne Marsden our local MP took time from his busy schedule to say a few words about Ron's dedication to the Stoney Creek community. I would like to thank all those members who contributed to Ron's plaque and thank those who attended or took part.



Mary Place has sent a thank-you card to the members and with her permission I would like to pass her message along:

"To Stoney Creek Historical Society

I don't think there are words to tell you how much it means to me and all my family to have the plaque in tribute to Ron, installed in the Stoney Creek Parkette.

Increasingly we learn of how valued and loved he was and of how much he is missed by so many. The plaque is the crowning gesture of these feelings of appreciation for his life.

I and my family are, and will be forever grateful to those in the Stoney Creek Historical Society and any who contributed in any way to make the placement of the plaque a reality.

Our Heartfelt thanks – Mary, Children & their families, and Ron's brother, sisters and families."

I note with interest that workers have been busy all summer working on the Nash-Jackson house so we may get that library in place this year or early next year after all. Anna Bradford is scheduled to talk to the general meeting in November so hopefully we will hear good news at that time.

Please take time to come to the meetings the first Wednesday of each month, 7:00 P.M. in the council chamber of the old Stoney Creek City Hall, and enjoy the interesting speakers, good company and delicious refreshments after the meeting. I can guarantee you those Wednesday nights out are well worth the time.

Bill Mitchell, President

Upcoming Speakers

OCT 1st 2008: JANE IRWIN "Old Canadian Cemeteries"

NOV 5th 2008: ANNA BRADFORD "Nash-Jackson House Update"

Jan 7th 2009: ART FRENCH "Binbrook-The Way We Were"

Feb 4th 2009: GRAHAM CRAWFORD "HIStory and HERitage"

Mar 4th 2009: BOB WILLIAMSON "William Merritt's Ditch - A then-and-now look at the Welland Canal"

Apr 1st 2009: BILL MANSON "A Brief History of Transportation in Hamilton"

“Enduring Stone”: Glen Manor cont.

The Thatcher Family

Loyalist John Thatcher, his wife Mary along with their four sons and four daughters cleared the forest in the late 1700s and developed 200 acres of land where Veevers Drive, Quigley and Ambrose Ave are today. Their farm was recorded in the 1791 survey map of Saltfleet Township (Stoney Creek) by surveyor Augustus Jones. Thatcher died in 1836.

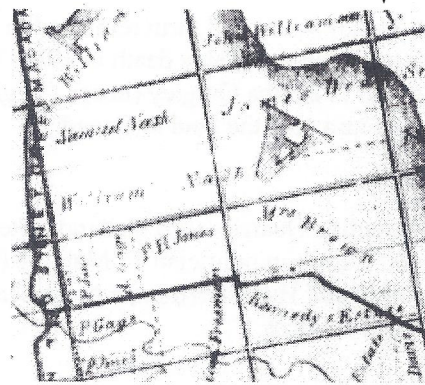
The Dean Family

In 1802 Samuel Dean (1779 - 1841), a blacksmith, married Ruth Howell, daughter of loyalist Garrett Howell of Jerseyville (Ancaster). They settled in Saltfleet (modern day Stoney Creek).

Samuel's eldest son, James (1806 - 1870), married John Thatcher's daughter Emily (1810 - 1840) in 1833 thereby assuming all operations of the Thatcher farm. The ownership resided with Emily until her early death at age 30. They had five sons. Note that the original house was designed with five upper windows. Folklore suggests that this was a deliberate nod to the Dean's first marriage. James remarried, to Barbara Knowles (1821 - 1882) in 1848.

There is some debate as to the date of construction. While the traditional date is given as 1850-51, "Glen Manor" may have been a composite of several houses constructed between 1820 - 1851 by both the Thatcher and Dean families.

The role of the Pettit family is also unclear. The Pettits have left two inscriptions at the front step of the house to remind us of their contributions. One is clearly marked “NH Pettit”. The Deans may have had the help of the Pettit family, who constructed a similar house at Concession 1.



James Dean farm (top right), 1859 map

The Gage Family

A 50-acre piece of the farm was sold from the estate in 1871 to John Gage, one of the descendants of the Gage family of Stoney Creek. Gage was a speculator and major landowner in Wentworth. He likely purchased the property as an income generator.

Gage purchased the remainder of the 150-acre piece in 1880. He conveyed the land to his son, John W Gage, in 1886.

John W Gage ran the general store at Bartonville in this era. Gage did not live in Glen Manor, but rented out the building between 1871 and 1912. Gage's fine Bartonville home still stands. It is known today at Wear's Flower Shop.



John W Gage house, 2007

Also of interest: John Gage's other son, Robert, lived at the modern site of Gage Park, which was eventually donated to the City of Hamilton.

The Glen Manor house and farm remained in John W Gage's possession until his death in 1912. The farm was sold to Bertha Quigley (hence Quigley Rd.), who in turn sold the land to Canadian Quarries.

In 1922 Canadian Quarries sold the land to several speculators: Hamilton politician TJ Mahony ("Mr. Good Roads") and Hugh Bertram, a prominent Stoney Creek resident.

The Veevers Family

The farm was purchased from Bertram and Mahony in 1934 by the Veevers siblings: Ronald, Bertram, Cyril and Raymond. All eight members of the Veevers family occupied it.



Glendale Dairy - Circa 1940s.

The Veevers family ran a large and successful fruit and dairy farm, raising a sizable herd of Holstein cattle, and up to the 1940s operated their own dairy. Farming activities were subsequently scaled down and only the two elder brothers, Ronald and Bertram, remained on the farm.

Both Ambrose and Veevers Drive are named for the family. Ambrose Veevers was Ron and Bertram Veevers' father.

At one point in the mid 20th century, prior to the bridge being built over the Davis Creek, Quigley Rd was known as Thack (sp?) Rd after the family in the little blue house on the corner. Visitors would have to descend into the ravine on a winding "Thack Rd", to ascend the far bank and head south on modern Quigley Rd ending at Glen Manor.



Veevers dining room, c.1980

The subdivision of the original 200-acre farm in the 1960s and early 1970s reduced the Veevers property to a total of 12 acres, including a separate 10.5 acre parcel of undeveloped escarpment land.

Up until the 1950s, the farmhouse stood in its original form atop a hill surrounded by rolling pastures, woodland and orchards. Landscaping around the house, largely completed in the 1950s and 1960s, created a park-like setting of special horticultural interest featuring lawns with alleys of trees, rose and tulip beds, and a rockery. Now enclosed by a high iron fence, this garden oasis effectively buffers the house from the engulfing 20th century suburban development, dominated by single-family homes to the north and east and high-rise apartments to the west.

Neighbors characterized the Veevers brothers thusly: Ron was the gentleman farmer and the horticulturalist. Bert was the mechanic and tinkerer. Ron Veevers had an impressive apple tree with as many as 10 grafts, each a different variety of apple. He also had beehives at the rear of the property. Bert maintained a workshop in the basement for mechanical work.

The surplus land was sold for development and the last 12 acres, including the farmhouse and 1.5 acre garden, was deeded to the City of Hamilton for public use. The two brothers retained the use of the house and garden until the death of the last surviving brother in 1993.

Neighbour Bob Hampson was one of the original buyers of lots carved out of the old Veevers farm. His home was personally approved by Ron Veevers to be a side split home, unlike the rest of

the dwellings on Veevers Ave, which are back splits. The reason for the variation is the tree in the rear lawn of 35 Veevers, which Ron Veevers had a personal interest in saving. A backsplit would have required cutting down the tree.

According to Hampson, Ron Veevers bought the lot back from the developer he had sold it to, had a redesign done on the house under construction, and then sold the property to Hampson.

Architecture

This 1½ storey house, built of rough-hewn stone quarried from the escarpment, is a relatively rare example of a pre-Confederation stone farmhouse in the Hamilton area and, in its original form, a very good example of its type. It has the fine masonry work, wide horizontal proportions and restrained ornamentation characteristic of early settlers' houses dating from the 1820s through the 1850s. The well-proportioned, symmetrical five-bay facade originally featured a wide doorway with a paneled wood door and sidelights, and a somewhat unusual row of low square, upper storey windows.

As a result of extensive renovations undertaken in 1968, higher and taller dormers replaced these square windows and the doorway was modified. Despite these alterations and two modern additions, the house is in excellent condition and retains much of its original character, at least on the exterior.



Looking south where today Ambrose Ave runs- 1950s

The room designs in the late Veevers' occupancy were based upon a colour scheme for each room: the blue room, the red room, the green room, etc. The front west bedroom was Bert's bedroom. The rear bedroom was Ron's. The front east room was a spare bedroom.

The last dog the Veevers owned was a German Sheppard called "Skipper". Skipper was housed inside in a still-existing chain link dog cage. Skipper, according to neighbour Bob Hampson, was imported at great expense (\$1500 in the 1980s) from Germany and understood commands in German.

Green Venture and EcoHouse

After the death of the Veevers brothers, the home was maintained by the City of Hamilton. A Mohawk College interior design project in the mid 1990s eliminated much of the Veevers' family décor. The home was also rented out for a time.

The property was leased to the environmental education organization, Green Venture, in 2002, as a base of operations for their work. Green Venture moved in in April 2002 and started to transform the home. While maintaining the integrity of its heritage designation, Green Venture created offices on the second floor out of the old bedrooms. Office renovations were completed in 2003. Additional environmental demonstrations are continually being added indoors and outdoors. Attempts are being made to restore portion of the home to its c1900 look, including the recent installation of a heritage garden in the front of the building.

Today Glen Manor is still an important site in east Hamilton, true to its Saltfleet Township roots, but with a forward-looking view of the future. Donated for use as a "heritage and horticultural center" Glen Manor shows the great potential reuse that can be wrought from a heritage property.

With files from Norm Spanos, Bob Hampson, Mabel Burkholder, and Erland Lee Museum.

STONEY CREEK NEWS CELEBRATES 60th ANNIVERSARY

This article appeared in the 60th anniversary edition (Aug 5/08) of the Stoney Creek News.

In 1986, the Stoney Creek Historical Society was reborn after the sudden demolition that year of the Burton Corman house, the home of one of Stoney Creek's prominent mid 20th century political figures.

Stoney Creek Historical Society's mandate since 1986 has been to preserve and promote local history and the identity of Stoney Creek. The Society supports the Battlefield House Museum and the Erland Lee Museum both financially and with volunteer labour. The Historical Society publishes works of local history and organizes monthly guest speakers to lecture on a variety of historical topics to the 150+ membership.

The Stoney Creek News and Stoney Creek Historical Society share a common date: 1948. In 1948, the original Wentworth Historical Society ceased operations after 40 years of service to the community. It is fortunate then, that the Stoney Creek News was born that same year!

Stoney Creek News' articles has been not only a look at the immediate present of the community (on the day or week they were written), but have also become one of the defining sources of historical memory of Stoney Creek over the last sixty years. If not for the Stoney Creek News, who would have recorded the birth of Stoney Creek Flag Day or Winona Peach Festival? Who would have recorded the 1960s triumphs of Stoney Creek's Optimist Club Little League teams at Little League World series?

Back issues of Stoney Creek News now provide a valuable resource for those seeking the 20th century story of our community. Many can be found in local library archives and through the Erland Lee Museum.

Since 2004, the News has sponsored the Society's quarterly Newsletter. The motto of the Society, found in the Newsletter masthead, is

"Remember the Corman House" and the Society's logo is a drawing of that lost piece of local heritage.

Stoney Creek News also supported a series of Christmas House Tours from 1999-2004, providing publishing support and helping promote this examination of the most interesting houses in Stoney Creek.

By encouraging people to take an interest in their community around them, Stoney Creek News has been helpful in encouraging people to seek out the society for information, and to provide information or donated items relating to the history of the area.

Thank you to Stoney Creek News for all your help since 1948. Good luck with the next sixty years.



1973 Stoney Creek News

Erland Lee Museum News

Thanks to lovely weather, our volunteers, and summer students, summer 2008 events at the Erland Lee Museum have been very successful. In May, the Museum held its annual Victorian Tea on Queen Victoria's Birthday, drawing 80 guests. In June, museum volunteers performed "Sports Final", a Murder Mystery Dinner at the Museum, and 36 suspects were in attendance. Though the weather was at first uncertain, we ended up having a beautiful day for the Strawberry Social at the Museum on June 28th.

On August 16th, the fourth Annual Country Marketplace took place at the Binbrook

Fairgrounds. The event helped raise funds for the Museum, and featured merchandise of all kinds, a draw, food, and entertainment for the whole family. The Museum was also involved in the Niagara Fruit Education Centre's "Peachland" at the Winona Peach Festival. We featured a peachy craft, as well as our display.

Our summer students have prepared two new displays; one showcasing the History of Education in Saltfleet, and the other Fruit Farming in Winona. The new Education exhibit features items from the Lee Family, the Smith Family, and even an early 20th century school desk.



Amberlea Dewar's Fruit Farming display was the highlight of our exhibit at the Winona Peach Festival and will continue to be on display in the Museum's Drive House throughout the fall.

We are now preparing for fall and once again, the Erland Lee Museum is calling all artists for its **16th Annual Local Art Show** to be held from **November 2, 2008 to November 30, 2008**. There will be free admission to the art show; regular admission for a museum tour. New artists welcome! There will be an Art Show Opening on November 2, 2008 from 1-3 p.m. Refreshments will be provided. Hope to see you there!

New this year is the Erland Lee Museum's participation in the **"Christmas House Tour for Glanbrook Home Support Programme"** on **Saturday November 29 and Sunday November 30**. The museum will be decorated in a Victorian style with homemade ornaments, painted glass and natural foliage. There will also be an encore

viewing of our exhibit about the origins of everyone's favourite North Pole resident, culminating in Coca-Cola's depiction of the Santa Claus that became popular in the 1930's.

I hope you will come out and visit us this fall. Remember we are now open Wednesday evenings from 5 to 8 p.m. Please call the Erland Lee Museum, 905-662-2691, for more information about any of our upcoming events.

Meaghan FitzGibbon
Curator

TRACING **SALTFLEET TOWNSHIP'S** **EDUCATION HISTORY**

By Kristen Kerr

Since I first started as a summer student at the Erland Lee Museum in 2006, I have learned a lot about Stoney Creek's history by answering research inquiries, investigating "mystery artifacts", speaking with history enthusiasts and listening to the stories that visitors have to tell. This summer, much of my time at the museum has been spent researching and collecting artifacts relating to Saltfleet's educational institutions for a new display.

The Lee's new exhibit, entitled "The History of Education in Saltfleet," examines how schooling in Saltfleet Township has evolved over time, from its beginnings in the 18th century as log cabin schools with itinerant tutors, to the modern educational systems in Stoney Creek. The display features an overview of local school architecture, outstanding Saltfleet teachers, historical textbooks and photographs, and the stories of local contributors to Education in Ontario. I would like to thank the Educational Archives and Heritage Centre of Hamilton Wentworth for loaning several educational artifacts to the display. Items like the "Chautauqua Industrial Art Desk", the "Indian Clubs," and the discipline strap really help to illustrate what life was like for students in the early 20th century.

Many interesting tidbits presented themselves during my research for this project. For example, when Hillcrest SS No. 11 was built in 1919, it was

the most expensive school ever opened in Canada. Gertie Althouse was a very compelling character; she taught at the Lee School S.S. No. 9 for seven years, boarded at the Lee's 'Edgemont Farm' and married her former student and Edgemont farmhand, Walter Johnson. I also learned that the infamous dunce cap was not used in Wentworth County, but the strap certainly was. Some 'crimes' at Van Wagner's School S.S. No. 4 that called for its use included snowballing, teasing the girls, raiding supply closets, hiding catfish in the teacher's desk, and changing the clock. Lastly, I noted that in 1922, it was thought that teachers should "spray the mouth with a solution of silver nitrate to cure smoking"; that disciplinary "flogging" was an art form; and that boys should be allowed to fight, because it was "an improvement on constant bickering."

Not all of the surprising facts I came across made it into the display or even this article, but it was a fun experience researching the history of Stoney Creek's schools. I've been very lucky in having a summer job where you get paid for doing things you love to do.

Sources (display and article):

"*School Management*" *Ontario Normal School Manual*. 1922.

1891, 1901 Census

Pell, John W. History of Stoney Creek Schools

"*Memories of Van Wagner's Beach and Parkview Survey*". Ed. Cheryl MacDonald, 1995

Educational Archives and Heritage Centre

Saltfleet Then and Now. Ed. Kay Dwyer. 1975

Monroe, Paul. A Brief Course in the History of Education. 1908

REMINDER - The Stoney Creek 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.

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.

Battlefield House Museum Events

TWILIGHT TALES LANTERN TOUR

Battlefield House Museum and Park
Walk the grounds where the Battle of Stoney Creek was fought almost two hundred years ago, and where our past comes alive. Be entranced by local tales and fantastic fact as you follow the glow of lantern light.

Date: Saturday, October 25, 2008

Time: 7:00 p.m. Ages: 7 years and older.

Cost: Regular admission rates apply to the museum.

WORKSHOP: GINGERBREAD HOUSE WORKSHOP

Battlefield House Museum and Park
Children will decorate their own pre-made, homemade gingerbread house to take home. The workshop includes a visit with St. Nicholas.

Date: Saturday, December 6, 2008

Time: 10:00 a.m. Ages: 2 to 12 years.

Cost: \$22.00 per person. Pre-registration required.

THE SIMPLE JOYS OF CHRISTMAS

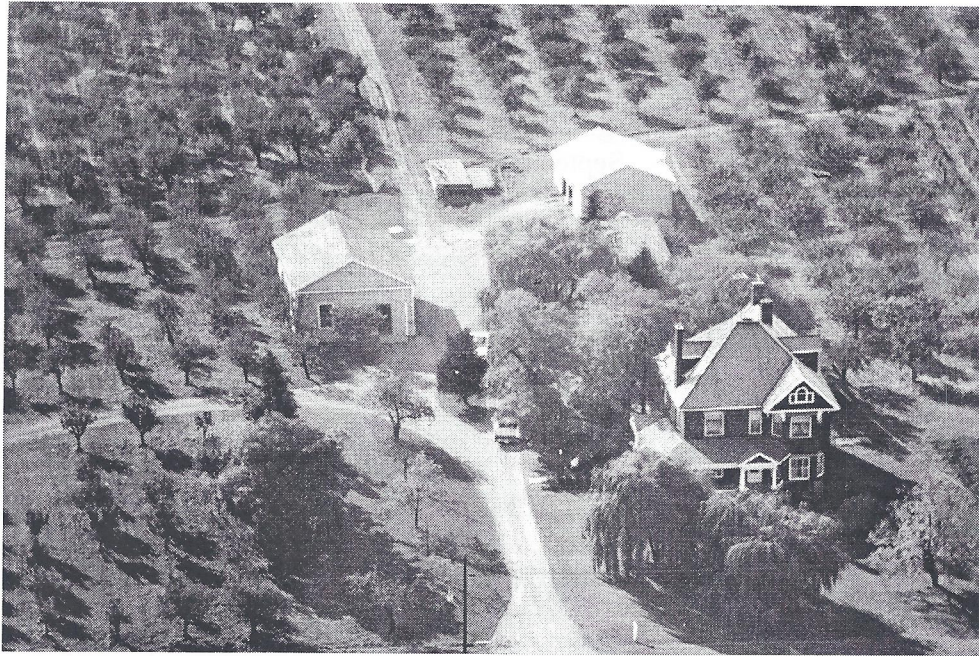
Battlefield House Museum and Park
Gather your family together, take a break from the stress of holiday shopping and step back in time to experience an early 19th century Christmas. Be warmed and welcomed by a crackling fire and relive a holiday when tallow candles lit the way and evergreen boughs bedecked the mantles. Join us for music, period decorating tips, children's activities. Historic merchants will be selling tasty treats and unique gift items. Bring your camera for a photo opportunity with St. Nicholas himself

Date: Sunday, December 7, 2008

Time: 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Ages: All

Cost: Regular admission rates apply to the museum.

A Blast from the Past:



*604 Hwy #8, 1957
Photo courtesy of the Orr family*

Editor's notes:

Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee (also known as LACAC- Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee) is looking for additional stories and information about the William M Orr house, which is now a commercial building.

This photo shows the 1911 home in its original farm setting, prior to the Heritage Drive subdivision being constructed. The shed on the left of the drive was the original home of the Fruitland Wesley Methodist (United) Church, moved to the farm in the 1880s.

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: Stoney Creek Historical Society
PO Box 66637
Stoney Creek, ON
L8G 546

For information on Memberships, please call
905-662-4065

Visitors and New Members Welcome!

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

Coffee and Refreshments follow
 Info: 905-662-2248

Stoney Creek Historical Society Executive 2008-9

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

Members Business/Institution Directory:

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
Dr. Keith Miller		304-15 Mountain Ave S.	(905) 662-2312
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
Simpson & Watson LLP Barristers and Solicitors		950 King St. W. Hamilton	(905) 527-1174
Winona Gardens	Georgina & Jeff Beattie	1381 Highway #8	(905) 643-2161

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