

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD MESSENGER

NEWSLETTER OF THE ADOLPHUSTOWN-FREDERICKSBURGH HERITAGE SOCIETY

Issue Number 32

April 2025

A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

This oft-quoted saying is fully embraced in the *Neighbourhood Messenger*. Most of our articles are liberally peppered with a variety of images—from photographs and newspaper clippings to letters and maps—all working together to bring greater depth and clarity to the stories we share. Old maps and newspapers, available online and at the Museum of Lennox & Addington, are rich sources of illustration and can also corroborate material found elsewhere. Along with wills, deeds, and other archival material, they can often reveal previously unknown aspects of our local heritage.

Our Society

Members of the Adolphustown-Fredericksburgh Heritage Society have a common desire to deepen our knowledge of the history of our community. In researching and capturing aspects of our past, we seek to preserve, promote, and share our rich local heritage.

Our Executive

President:	Angela Cronk
Vice President:	Frank Abbey
Secretary:	Marg MacDermid
Treasurer:	Jane Lovell
Webmaster:	Susan Wright
Book Directors:	Joan Reynolds Elizabeth Vandenberg
Communications Director:	Jane Lovell

Our Meetings

The Society meets on the third Monday of the month 5-8 times a year at the South Fredericksburgh Hall at 2p.m. Check for the next meeting on our website.

All welcome!!

Our Website

<http://www.sfredheritage.on.ca/>

Our Facebook Group



Contact Us

If you have questions or suggestions regarding any aspect of the Society, including *The Neighbourhood Messenger*, please contact :

- Angela Cronk, President (373-8888)
angelacronk@gmail.com

Old photographs, however, are our true mainstay. They not only tell the stories the photographer intended to capture, but also offer glimpses into the times and circumstances of those depicted.

Each issue of the newsletter features an old photograph on the front page. These images are drawn from a collection of photographs donated to the AFHS, but we're now approaching a point where most have already been showcased. We invite readers to look through their own collections and consider sharing old photographs with us—either as donations or for scanning and return. See **From the Attic** on the last page for a list of photographs and other documents we're seeking.

A Glimpse of the Past



Photo: Jane Lovell

W.S. Herrington family & friends at Bluebell Cottage
Glen Island Resort August 5th 1897

The Neighbourhood Messenger is an electronic newsletter distributed to members of the Adolphustown-Fredericksburgh Heritage Society.

Membership to the Society is free. In addition to ensured e-mail delivery of the newsletter, Society membership entitles those interested in our local heritage to be kept informed of, and participate in, all aspects of Society activities.

Anyone can become a member by clicking [HERE](#).

If you are not currently an AFHS member, please consider becoming one!

Swing Beam Barns

Duncan & Ruth Hough

In the [April 2022 issue](#) of the *Neighbourhood Messenger*, we described the demolition and salvage of the Loyst-Casson-Barr barn, which stood on Lot 2 Concession 3 Fredericksburgh Additional, just west of Hayburn. I, Duncan, tried to determine the age of the barn and was referred to Hugh Fraser, a retired Agricultural Engineer. Hugh has authored a wonderful book *Swing Beam Barns of Niagara: Stories of Fifty Barns Built in Ontario Circa 1819-1884*. He describes and chronicles the history of fifty various swing beam barns in the Niagara area.



Old Swing Beam Barn on the North Shore of Hay Bay

Prior to reading Hugh's book, I had no idea what a swing beam was. Suddenly, I realized we had worked in and taken down such a barn. The information in this article references Hugh's book and describes local swing beam barns—existing and gone.

So, what is a “swing beam”? The inference that it somehow moves is incorrect. A swing beam is a massive beam extending all the way across an old barn with no support except posts at either side of the barn, thus creating a clear span. The beam is fixed to the posts by a mortise and tenon joint and held in place by oak pins or trunnels (“tree nails”). To support itself and the structure above, the beam is huge, at least 12 inches by 14 inches in cross-section, possibly

deeper in the centre and 32 to 38 feet long. Generally, the larger the swing beam, the older the barn. It is usually 6½ to 7 feet off the floor. These beams were hewn from mature straight pines present at time of settlement. Locally these barns were built from roughly 1810 to 1850.

Swing beam barns can be found in Eastern United States as well as Niagara and Quinte regions of Ontario. The earliest swing beam barns were comprised of three bays with a swing beam between the first and second bays. This allowed open space with no posts under the first bay. The second bay was open to the roof and usually had large doors on either side of the barn to allow wagons to enter and exit. The third bay was often used for livestock.

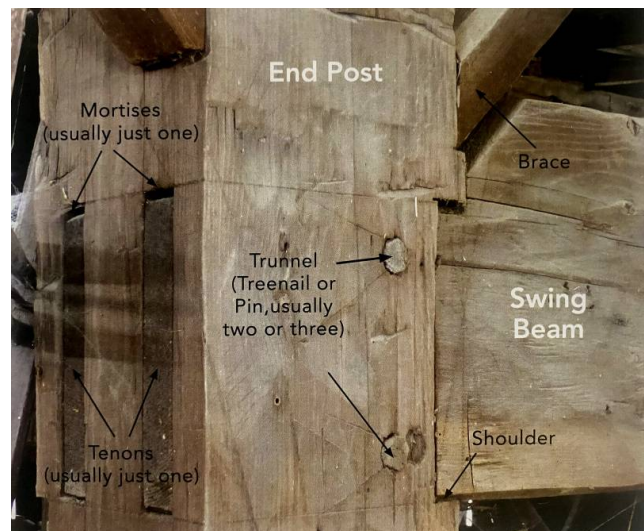
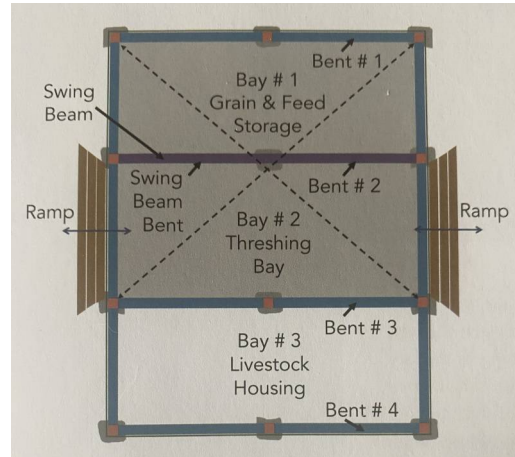
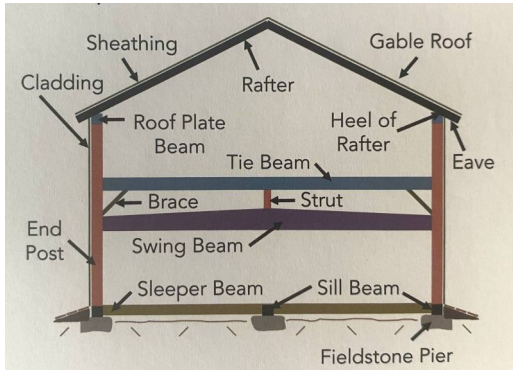


Photo: Hugh Fraser

Mortise and tenon joint

Elevation and Floor Plan of Early Swing Beam Barn

Photos: Hugh Fraser



Swing beam barns were built to allow a farmer to store and thresh wheat for sale as a cash crop. The first generation of settlers devoted all their efforts to survival. Land had to be cleared, a house had to be built, shelter for livestock and poultry had to be put in place and fences established. Some of the earliest cleared land had to be devoted to wheat for the family's own use. In his book, Hugh describes how in 1830, the average household of 6.5 people needed 60 bushels (3600 lbs.) of wheat just to survive. A good yield at that time was 20 bushels per acre. Therefore, 3 acres or more were needed for their own use. As more land was cleared, more acres could be devoted to wheat. By 1830, markets gradually developed for wheat. By 1840, large amounts of wheat were shipped to Quebec, the Maritimes, New England and also to Britain. Prices were good as well. According to Hugh's book, a bushel of wheat was worth 3 shillings, 3 pence which would be \$20.00 per bushel today. (Current Ontario price at the farm is roughly \$7.50/bushel.) Wheat production was profitable and was a source of cash. Swing beam barns were built to support the wheat industry.

Producing wheat was very labour intensive, especially the harvest, threshing, and winnowing which was the separation of the chaff and grain. The window for harvest in early fall was so short that the whole plant had to be quickly gathered and stored until it could be threshed over the winter. The swing beam barn provided an overhead mow where the sheaves could be kept dry and below that, a large open area to thresh the grain. The mature crop was cut with a cradle. The bundles were tied into sheaves of which a group of 5-7 were formed into a pyramid called a stook. Once the grain was fully dry, it was pitched onto a wagon, taken to the barn and pitched up into the mow, above the swing beam.



Cradle for Cutting Wheat



Fork for Pitching Sheaves of Wheat

Threshing took place all winter. Sheaves were thrown down to the threshing floor between the large doors. A man SWINGING a flail rhythmically beat the sheaves until the kernels were separated from the straw. Chaff and kernels were repeatedly tossed into the air, winnowed, so that the wind blowing through the large, open doors of the barn floor could blow out the chaff. Eventually, a clean product was bagged.

An alternate method of threshing was to fix a pole vertically to the swing beam. Unshod horses or oxen were tethered to this pole and were SWUNG around and around the pole until their hooves had separated the grain from the straw. In either system, a good man was able to thresh up to 6 bushels in a day.



Flail for Threshing Wheat

If the wagon, for whatever reason, could not be driven in one large door and out the other, the team could be unhitched and they and the wagon could be SWUNG around and out through the open area under the swing beam. The area under the swing beam was also used for storing the bags of threshed grain until it was hauled by horse and wagon to a local wharf where it was shipped out by schooner. Swing beam barns are found within 10-15 miles of navigable water such as Hay Bay.

Wheat production declined after 1850. The British market became less attractive due to taxes. Continuous wheat production had depleted the soil. The lack of crop rotation had allowed insects and disease to thrive. Mechanization, such as reapers and basic threshers and the development of new wheat growing areas in the American Midwest drove prices down. Very few swing beam barns were built later than 1850. However, after 1860, the Union Government in the United States put a punishing tax on liquor to help finance the Civil War. Americans became beer drinkers and barley was badly needed. The Quinte area was ideally suited for its production. Schooners carried massive quantities across Lake Ontario every fall. The boom ended in 1890 with the McKinley tariffs. However, "The Barley Days" extended the use of swing beam barns in the Quinte area.

INTACT SWING BEAM BARN

There were and still are a number of swing beam barns in this community. Most of them were modified or moved or incorporated into newer barns, so may not appear as typical swing beam barns. However, we have found three local examples of original swing beam barns.

The Petersen Barn on Lot 4 Concession 3 Fredericksburgh Additional is the original structure and after 200 years is still a working barn. It houses livestock, feed and machinery. It still has original horizontal siding and four diamond crosses on the east end. The barn is 54 by 32 feet. The swing beam is 15 inches by 9 inches by 32 feet long. It is estimated to have been built as early as 1820. There have been suggestions that an early wharf for shipping wheat was located a few hundred yards north of the barn. If true, this would have been a real advantage for marketing wheat produced from the farm and the barn.



Petersen Barn
Exterior
&
Swing Beam



The Fretts Barn is located a few feet from Big Creek. This structure is original and includes hand-hewn beams which are surprisingly smooth. The dimensions are 60 feet long and 38 feet wide. The swing beam itself is huge, 22 inches by 13 inches by 38 feet long. Calculating the volume of the beam at just over 2 cubic meters and using a specific gravity of 450 kg. per cubic meter, the weight of the beam would be just under a Tonne. There are double braces at the walls and crossing braces at the centre between the swing and tie beams. The rafters supporting the roof are bark covered round poles. The only modern features are vinyl siding over the original horizontal siding and the addition of a few lower windows. The Fretts family owned the barn for many years. Dave Fretts remembers a hay press operating in the barn floor and hay being pitched out of the mow and being pressed into large wire-tied bales. These were hauled to the Fredericksburgh Station and shipped by rail to market. The mow floor over the threshing area is built of 12-inch notched pine boards. The barn is currently used for storage.



Fretts Barn



Swing & Tie Beams



Interior Siding & Studs



Underside of Mow Floor

The Trumpour Barn was originally located on Lot 30 Concession 3 Adolphustown at the end of Staples Lane. It was disassembled by John, Diane, and Kip Brisley in 2005 and relocated to 1078 Royal Road in South Marysburgh in Prince Edward County. It now sits on a concrete foundation. The structure is basically intact. Some timber was strengthened, the clap board siding was replaced and a new cedar shingle roof installed. The barn is 54 feet by 32 feet with a swing beam of 15 inches by 12 inches by 32 feet. Wooden floors worn by traffic exist in the first and second bays. There are many boards 16-17 inches wide and at least one is 20 inches wide. Over both sets of large doors a pentroof extends several feet from the wall and shelters the interior especially when the doors were open. An interesting feature in the first bay below the mow by the swing beam is a horse stable accessed by a narrow door with manger space for 6-8 horses. Beyond the stable is a small room probably used to store harness and tack. The remainder of the bay is open, probably used for holding hay to feed the horses or possibly for threshing. Whether or not the stable is as old as the barn is a question. According to Judy Smith, in [Voices I](#), Michael Slote, the original owner, operated an inn on the site, at least as early 1793. He sold to Paul Trumpour in 1806, who sold it to his son John in 1810. The operation of an inn required shelter for the traveller's horses. If the Trumpours continued in the inn business, probably they or Slote built the barn with stable. However, it is also possible that in the more recent years that other members of the Trumpour family installed the stable.

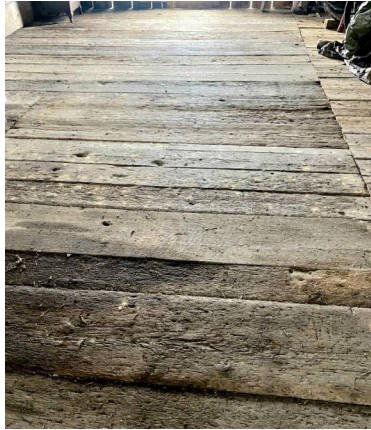


Photo: Helen (Smith) Huff

Trumpour Barn, to Right of Post 1946



Swing Beam



Threshing Floor



Trumpour Barn in New Location

MODIFIED SWING BEAM BARN

The Lennox Barn is on Little Creek Street, Lot 20 Concession 4 Fredericksburgh. The barn is 80 feet by 32 feet and is actually two barns joined end to end. The swing beam, in the western section, is a massive tapered beam, 16 inches in the centre by 11 inches wide by 32 feet long. Instead of being 6½ to 7 feet above the floor, it is 13½ feet in the air. The whole barn has at some time been raised and is now supported by a concrete wall. A lean-to on the south side shelters heifers and the west bay houses younger calves. Vertical wood siding has been added, but the original horizontal siding remains at the top of the south wall. The remainder of the barn is used for machinery storage. The extra height accommodates large equipment. The barn, old as it is, performs an equal service to a new building which would cost thousands of dollars more.



Lennox Barn



Concrete Wall & Swing Beam

The Loyst-Casson-Barr Barn, which no longer stands, existed on Lot 2 Concession 3 Fredericksburgh Additional. It measured 36 feet by 50 feet with a swing beam of 15 inches by 11 inches by 36 feet. The barn was structurally intact, but had been raised 3½ feet to increase its storage capacity. The posts at both big doors had been spliced and a field stone wall then supported the barn. The swing beam became 10 feet off the ground. The lower beam was scabbled in to support the posts.

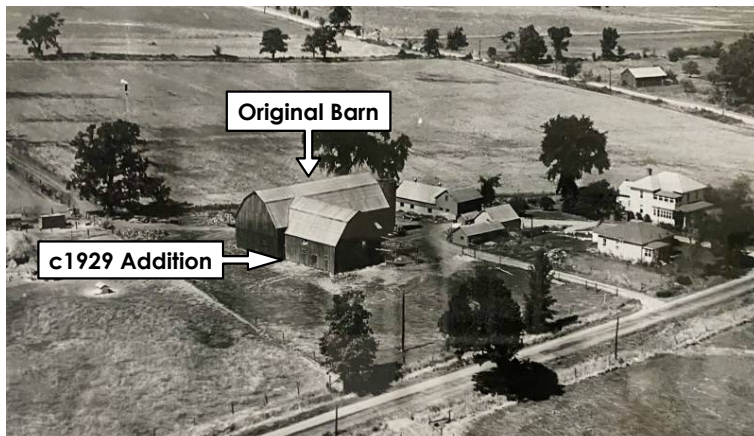


Loyst-Casson-Barr Barn



Spliced Posts

The Hough Barn The former dairy barn, except for several small, later additions, is 36 feet by 84 feet with a 32 foot by 40 foot addition facing the road. I worked in it for many years, feeding and milking



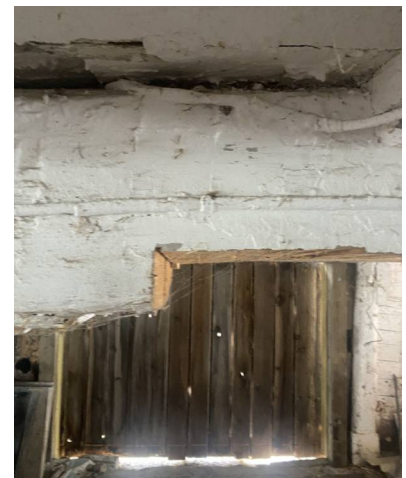
Hough Farm Early1950s

cows and filling the mows with hay. The main part was composed of two barns connected end to end, the original and another. The interior had been reconfigured many times to accommodate fewer horses and more cattle, along with improved milking, feeding and manure disposal systems. I was aware that the tie beams in the mow were hand-hewn, while the lower beams were sawn timbers or laminated beams. I was amazed to discover, under many layers of white-wash, that there were two hand-hewn swing beams. The west one, between the second and third bays, was 18 inches by

12 inches by 36 feet. It was beside what once was the threshing floor, and was exactly where and what a swing beam should be. The other swing beam in the 40 foot addition to the original barn is 12 inches by 12 inches by 36 feet but is in the centre of an extra wide mow. It seems that the beam was placed in that position, not just as a typical swing beam but as a massive support to reduce the number of posts needed to carry the hay above. Despite its age, the barn functioned as a modern dairy facility until 2001. Since that time, it has been used for storage.



West Swing Beam



East Swing Beam

DONOR SWING BEAM BARN

Farmers have survived by reusing or recycling assets for new purposes. Barns are no exception. When I visit old barns, one of the most interesting features are empty mortises, spliced purlins or plates, notches where braces once fit or a series of holes that once held ladder rungs. These indicate that this is, at least, the second time that the timbers have been used. These barns were once part of an earlier barn. A fine example is an empty mortise with four holes for trunnels. The missing beam was evidently not used intact in the new barn built in the early 1900s but is most likely located some place and in some form in the new barn or elsewhere.

**Mortise present but no
Swing Beam**



The Clark Barn The historical plaque at the Napanee Falls describes how Robert Clark, a loyalist mill wright, was hired by the government to build mills on the site. A sawmill was constructed in 1786 and a grist mill was completed later in that year or early in 1787. This was the first grist mill located between Kingston and Niagara. Robert's son Matthew who had worked with his father was granted Lot 37 Concession 2 in Ernestown (now Loyalist) in 1800. In 2019, a large very old barn in hazardous condition was located on that site. The Clarks had owned the property until a few years before.

L&A Mutual Insurance was planning to convert the former Napanee District Co-op Mill into new office space. The idea of incorporating old timber into the project was proposed and an agreement was reached to salvage the old Clark barn. Inside was a massive tapered swing beam measuring 21 inches by 11 inches at the centre and 15 inches by 11 inches at the ends and was estimated to be 36 feet long. Such a large beam must have come from virgin timber available only to the early settlers. Matthew Clark would have had the ability to build such a large barn. Also, with his connection to the Napanee grist mill, he would have been very aware of the demand for wheat. It is very likely, that the barn was built early in his ownership after 1800.

The big swing beam and many other hand-hewn timbers were incorporated into the L&A Mutual Insurance building. Due to its taper, the beam was installed upside-down so that the flat side of the beam could support the floor above. Wide planks, probably of hemlock, were milled for use as stairs and office desk tops. Not all the salvaged timber came from the barn. Some square-sawn timbers in the building were obtained from the old Gibbard Factory. It is interesting that both agricultural and industrial history is blended into the building.



Clark Barn



**Tapered Swing Beam Installed Upside Down in the
L&A Mutual Insurance Office**

**Flooring Planks Repurposed as Stair Treads
(just visible to the top right)**

The Sills Barn In 1929, Harold and Duncan H. Hough purchased the neighbouring farm from the estate of John Sills. There was an old swing beam barn on the property. Herman John, a skilled local builder, was hired to tear down the barn and use the timber to build a 32 by 40 foot addition on the south-facing side of the existing Hough Barn described earlier. In that new section, one of the upright posts has a mortise, which indicates that it once held a swing beam which would have measured 15 inches by 12 inches.



Mortise where the swing beam once fit

Another part of the project involved converting the original barn from a gable roof to a gambrel configuration. This involved splicing the posts to support the new purlins and sourcing new rafters for the upper part of the roof. The gambrel has poles, some of which still have bark on, as rafters for the lower section. The rafters in the upper section are milled. The story is that nearly all these rafters were sourced from the missing swing beam.

The new section was built with a combination of used timbers from the Sills Barn and milled material. In the mow, there are two large apparently identical tie beams 14 inches by 11 inches by 32 feet. If they came from the Sills Barn, it must have been a large structure.

The Lloyst-Hough Barn When we bought Lot 2 Concession 3 Fredericksburgh Additional in 1977, the small barn on site had not been used for years. We felt it could be used for storage and added a lean-to on the rear which protected machinery and sometimes hay. The small stable in the west end sheltered cattle, which we pastured near the barn. The two bays in the east end were a barn floor with two large doors, and a bay with a wooden floor of 16 inch wide by 1½ inch thick planking. A single hand-hewn beam 12 inches by 10 inches ran across the barn about 7 feet off the floor. At that time, we had no idea that it was a swing beam with a threshing floor. The beam was too low to allow us to store round bales, so we cut it off at both mortises.



Lloyst-Hough Barn

We felt that the beam did have value and even advertised it through the Kingston Construction Association. There were no takers, so the beam lay in the barn, safe and dry, for many years. Later, our son Andrew was involved in cabinet making, had his own saw mill, and was interested in the beam. On examination, we discovered that someone, for whatever reason, had driven dozens of small nails and tacks into the face of the beam. Using Andrew's metal detector, we spent most of the day finding and removing metal. Fortunately, when he sawed the beam, no nails were found. Using the ancient lumber, Andrew created a large pine dining room table for his family and a beautiful vanity and cabinet for us. Quite an upgrade for a humble old barn beam.



Vanity, cupboard, mirror & table made from a swing beam

The experience with the Lloyst-Casson-Barr barn stimulated an interest in swing beam barns and their history. We have learned a lot and hopefully will learn more. We welcome information about, or directions to, other possible swing beam barns.

APPRECIATION TO Hugh Fraser for information gleaned from him personally and from his book:

Swing Beam Barns of Niagara: Stories of 50 Barns built in Ontario Circa 1819-1884 by Hugh Fraser,
Printed and Bound in Canada by Friesens Corporation, 2019, ISBN 978-1-77136-800-1

Clippings

DOG LOST.

LOST, In the Market place, on Saturday last, a large Newfoundland Dog, answers to the name of SPOT. The finder, by sending information to Messrs. Platt, Hay Bay, will be rewarded for their trouble, and all expenses paid.

Kingston, April 3, 1850.

77-6i

Daily British Whig
April 4, 1850

A stalk of western corn, measuring 13 ft. 6in. was cut from a field of Messrs. J. and W. S. Phippen, South Fredericksburg. The entire crop is about the same height. There is also on the premises a field of ordinary corn about 9 feet high.

Daily British Whig
August 17, 1887

Painful accident.

On Sunday while William Aylesworth and wife was driving to the residence of their daughter, near Hay Bay, their horse was frightened at two bicycles on the road and ran away, smashing the buggy and throwing the occupants. One of Mrs. Aylesworth's arms was severely fractured, but the husband escaped with bruising. The couple are advanced in years and sympathy is felt for them.

Daily British Whig
August 8, 1894

Our baseball club is being organized for the coming season. The prospects for the same are very bright and the "vigorous nine" expect to play a series of games with their near neighbors in which no doubt they will be successful.

[Conway - Sandhurst]
Napanee Express
April 9, 1897

Destroyed By Fire.

NAPANEE, Aug. 9.—On Friday night last about nine o'clock fire was discovered in the barns of John Rennie, Hay Bay. The barn contained nearly all the season's crop and it with twelve pigs, a spring waggon, buggy and lumber waggon, were consumed. It is not known how the fire originated. An insurance of \$1,100 or \$1,200 on barn and contents will partially compensate for the loss sustained. The barn was one of the most commodious and convenient in the neighborhood. This is the second barn Mr. Rennie has had burned. The other one was burned about fourteen years ago.

Daily British Whig
August 9, 1898

£100 REWARD

WILL be paid by the Subscriber for the apprehension and conviction of the parties who robbed and cruelly beat his Father, near Chamber's Mills, in Fredericksburgh, on the night of the 3rd of March.

JOHN V. HAM.

Kingston, March 11th, 1850.

lmw-11

Weekly British Whig
March 12, 1850

NEW RAILWAY.—Notice is given that application will be made at the next session of the Ontario Parliament for act to incorporate a railway to run from Rideau Lake, Lewis County, to Island Lake, Frontenac County, thence to Napanee River and Town of Napanee, and probably to Adolphustown village.

Daily British Whig
December 27, 1877

The Magic of Photography

Jane Lovell

In the pursuit of discovering our past, old photographs are hotly sought after and carefully scrutinized when found. We now live in times when most of us carry high-fidelity cameras built into our phones, ready to capture anything at a moment's notice. Yet, if we pause to think about it, we can appreciate how magical early photographs must have appeared when they first became available. Imagine: In just a moment, an apparatus wielded by a skilled technician could produce an image that depicted a person or scene with remarkable accuracy and detail. Even though lacking colour, a photograph was a far more realistic portrayal than could be achieved in a painting or sculpture, despite centuries of innovation aimed at achieving realism in those art forms.

Once, many of us might have believed that a "photo doesn't lie". Now, in the era of "deep fake" videos and computer-enhanced images, this is no longer the case. Photo manipulation is not new. Indeed, images were being "touched up" from the very first years of photography.

Experimentation during the mid-1800s resulted in several photographic methods becoming commercially viable. The first of these emerged in 1839 with the introduction of the Daguerreotype photograph. The development of the Ambrotype and Tintype photographs in the 1850s resulted in photographs that were quicker and cheaper to produce. Having a photograph taken had now become affordable for families of modest means. The residents of Adolphustown and Fredericksburgh and the surrounding towns and cities were quick to have likenesses made of themselves, their families, and their homes using this new technology.

These first three photographic processes resulted in "one-offs", single "direct images" captured on substrates of copper (Daguerreotype), glass (Ambrotype), or iron (Tintype). While most photographs made using these methods were small, all could be produced in larger formats by projecting on various fractions of the substrate "plate". A full plate was 6½" x 8½" in size, with a quarter plate being 3¼" x 4¼", and so on. The most common size was a sixth of a plate (2¾" x 3¼"). An exception to the "one-off" nature of these photographs was the Tintype. Fitted with multiple lenses, Tintype cameras could create several copies of the same image from a single exposure on the iron plate. The individual identical images could then be separated by cutting them from the plate with tin snips.

Due to their high cost to produce, fragility, and the limitation of producing only a single photograph per exposure, surviving Daguerreotype photographs are now extremely rare. Fortunately, several of these photos can be found at the Museum of Lennox & Addington.

Reflecting their value at the time and to prevent tarnishing of the silver used in the creating the image, Daguerreotype photographs were always encased behind glass, often in elaborately embossed or pressed leather cases.



Museum of Lennox & Addington
A1976.P1141

Daguerreotype photograph of unidentified woman and children in a ~3" x 3½" pressed paper imitation leather case. 1850s

The onset on the photographic age was accompanied almost immediately by attempts to render the monochromatic photographs more realistic by the addition of colour. This was achieved by artists and photographers using a variety of techniques for hand-colouring the photograph.

The first of these, employed on Daguerreotypes, involved an application of a mixture of powdered gum arabic and pigments to the surface of the photograph, fixed by the application of heat.

The emulsion creating the image on the surface of the glass and iron substrates of Ambrotype and Tintype photographs accepted a variety of dry and wet materials. This meant that either dry powdered pigments or oil- or water-based paints could be applied to the monochromatic image. Occasionally, colours were applied to the reverse (non-emulsion) side of the glass of Ambrotype photographs.



A1976.P1141 Museum of Lennox & Addington

A blue tint has been applied to the boy's tie and the girl's dress. It is possible there is a pink blush remaining on the cheeks of the girl.

A quirky artifact of the Daguerreotype process is that the image can appear as both positive and negative, depending on the angle at which the photograph is viewed.

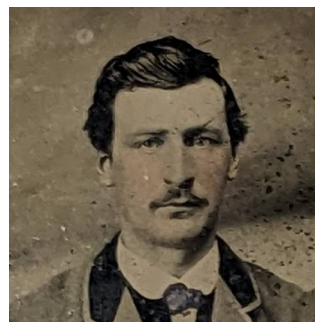


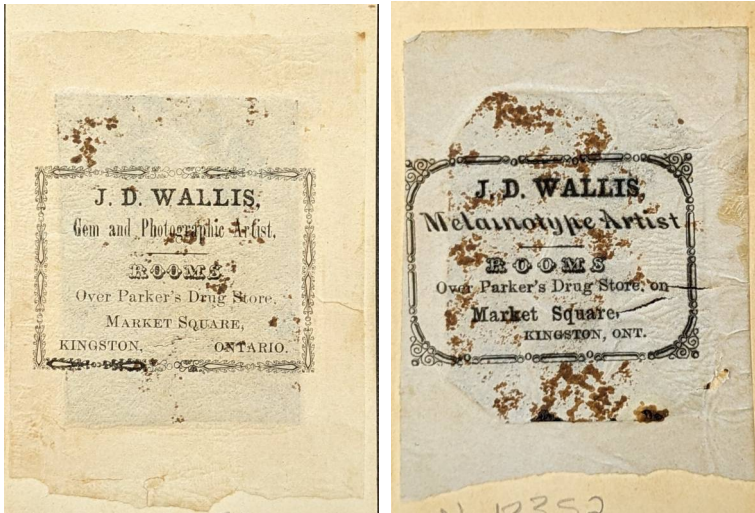
Museum of Lennox & Addington
N-13176 (detail), N-12351 & N-12352

The cheeks, neck bows, and hat details have been tinted pink in the undated 3" x 4" Tintype photograph of two unidentified women from the Hough-Young Album, originally donated to the AFHS.

The two smaller Tintypes (1 5/8" x 1 1/8") , framed as 2 3/8" x 3 7/8" *cartes de visite*, are of better quality and boast two colours each, with the cheeks tinted in pink, and the man's tie in blue and the woman's brooch in gold.

The identities of the man and woman are not known.





While it is tempting to assume that the photos of the man and woman in matching pressed paper frames were taken at the same time, it is likely they were not.

An initial clue is the backdrop behind the sitters. The man appears to be placed before some sort of scene, while the canvas behind the woman is blank. This is an unlikely scenario if a couple were to visit a studio together to have their portraits taken.

From the back, the metal photographic plates can be seen beneath the paper tissue affixing them to the frames. The photo of the man (left) has been square-cut, while the woman's photograph has had the corners trimmed.

(Note that the backing paper is stained by the rusting of the iron plate.)

The stamp identifies the photographer as J.D. Wallis, advertising himself as both a “Gem and Photographic Artist” and as a “Melainotype Artist” (Melainotype is an early name for Tintype). The application of backing papers bearing two different texts is another indication that these photos were at least framed at different times, and likely taken some time apart as well.

In the Napanee Archives catalogue, both photographs have been attributed a date of 1871. This date agrees with the time frame when Wallis operated a studio in Kingston, according to both McKendry's *Early Photography in Kingston* (active 1871-1874) and Phillips' *The Ontario Photographers List* (active 1869-1873).

The next boon in photography came with the development of glass plate negatives. Negatives not only enabled the photographer to make an unlimited number of prints from a single negative, but also allowed the image to be enlarged. Another plus: Because the photo could be created by projection through the “back” of the negative, the resultant image was no longer laterally reversed (left to right). This reversed phenomenon was an artifact to the camera's optics and the “direct image” process of the earlier Daguerreotype, Ambrotype, and Tintype photographs.

Introduced in 1851, the first glass plate negatives needed to be hand-coated with a liquid light-sensitive emulsion just before exposure, and then developed almost immediately. Obviously, this “wet plate” process was exacting, time-critical, and very difficult to use outside the studio. It took a further two decades for a practical “dry plate” process to be developed. In this new process, glass plates were factory-coated with a photographic emulsion, and once dried were boxed for use as needed. Another bonus: The negatives could be developed at any time after exposure. All in all, a far more convenient method, and one conducive for outdoor photography and the proliferation of itinerant photographers.

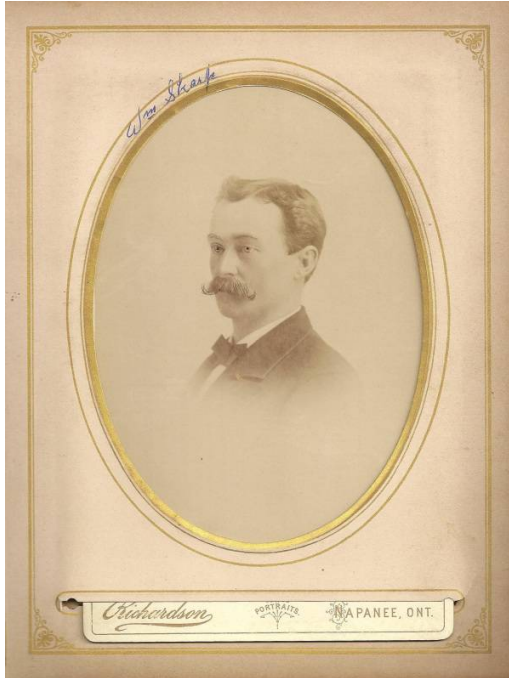
From the 1870s through the turn of the twentieth century, glass plate negatives made photographs very affordable, with a negative from a single studio sitting available to use for creating copies to give or send to friends or relatives. These copies could be of almost any size but were typically made up as *cartes de visite* (2½” x 4½”) or *cabinet cards* (4¼” x 6½”). Most were distributed as monochrome images but some were colorized.

Printed photographs presented several opportunities for the photographic artist to “improve” the final result. The first was the manipulation of the negative itself.

—Are you thinking of having your photograph taken. If so, call on J. S. Hulett and see samples of his work. He is now turning out work fully equal to that done in first-class city galleries. Mr. Hulett is now finishing cabinet photos in what is known as the scroll design, and they are pronounced by competent judges to be gems. Considerable attention is paid to the enlarging of photos either from a new negative or an old picture. These enlarged pictures are finely finished in a manner that cannot be excelled anywhere.

Napanee Express
December 13, 1889

To darken a portion of the photograph, the emulsion could be abraded with a fine powder, thereby allowing more light to pass through the negative. Fine details could be darkened by using a sharp blade to etch the dark emulsion. Lightening was a more exacting skill, requiring the application of an opaque substance, often a black varnish, as a wash or with a fine brush, depending on the desired opacity. The more opaque the image on the negative, the lighter the final image on the print.

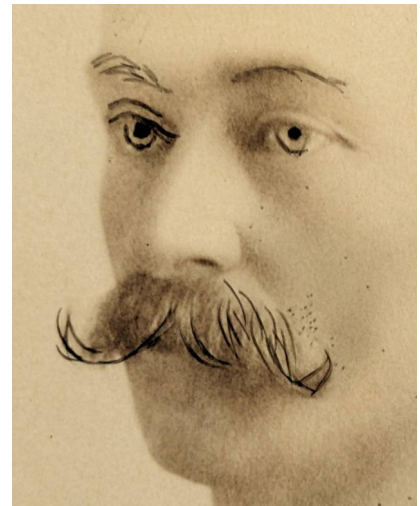


Museum of Lennox & Addington
N-13181

William/Belyat Sharp (1855-1895)

The photo of William Sharp, left, is shown as it appears in the Hough-Young photograph album. Albums of the day were designed to accept *cartes de visite* and *cartes de cabinet*, and here, the 4¼" x 6½" *carte de cabinet* photograph of Sharp is visible behind the oval cut-out. While normally hidden below the insertion slit, in this case, the photographer's mark is left visible, advertising the work of F.S. Richardson of Napanee.

More than a casual glance at the photograph, however, will reveal some very obvious touch-up work. Due to long exposure times, eyes could appear blurry or closed, and many early photographs have eyes "painted on". Sharp's eyebrows and moustache suffered from poor resolution and so were enhanced by over-sketching. The augmentation was achieved through etching the negative rather than applying ink to the print.



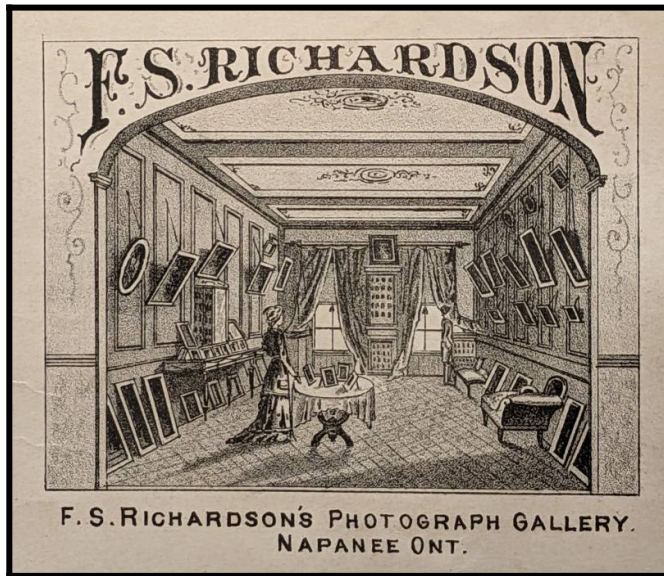
Dating the Sharp photograph has proven a challenge. There were several William Sharps in Lennox & Addington in the last decades of the 1800s. However, the Hough-Young album also includes a photo of Ida Sharp, identified as the wife of Will Sharp. Confusingly, William was more commonly known as Belyat, with the name William appearing only in the 1881 census and on the 1892 marriage certificate recording his marriage to his third wife Mary Jane La Pointe. Sharp's first marriage to Sarah Sproule in 1877 was cut short by her death just under a year later. Listed as a widower in 1881, he went on to wed Ida Louisa Galt some time before the birth of their son in 1883. Ida did not survive the birth of their second child, dying in 1886. Sharp succumbed to tuberculosis in 1895.



N-13181 Museum of Lennox & Addington

Back of Sharp photograph

In his photograph, Sharp appears as a youngish man, but could easily be in his 20s or 30s. Considering his short and tragedy-filled life, it might be more likely that he had a photograph taken in the years prior to his first marriage, or after his second. A mid-1870s to mid-1880s date for the photograph is well within the time frame of the style of photograph and falls within the period when the photographer F.S. Richardson was in business.



Born in New York City in 1852, Frederick Samuel Richardson arrived in Canada a year before the 1871 census was taken. Just 19 years old, he was listed as a photographer living in the Napanee household of his father, an ornamental painter. By 1878 Richardson had established a gallery. Various newspaper articles and directory entries have the gallery on Dundas Street, for a time beside the Harshaw Block. Richardson last appears in the directories in 1915 but is listed as a photographer with his own store in the 1921 census. He died in 1925, aged 72, a few days after having "taken suddenly ill while at work in his photographic gallery".

As proprietor of one of the oldest businesses in Napanee at the time, Richardson had been capturing the images of the citizens of town and environs for 55 years.

Source: Meacham's 1878 Illustrated Historical Atlas of the Counties of Frontenac, Lennox and Addington

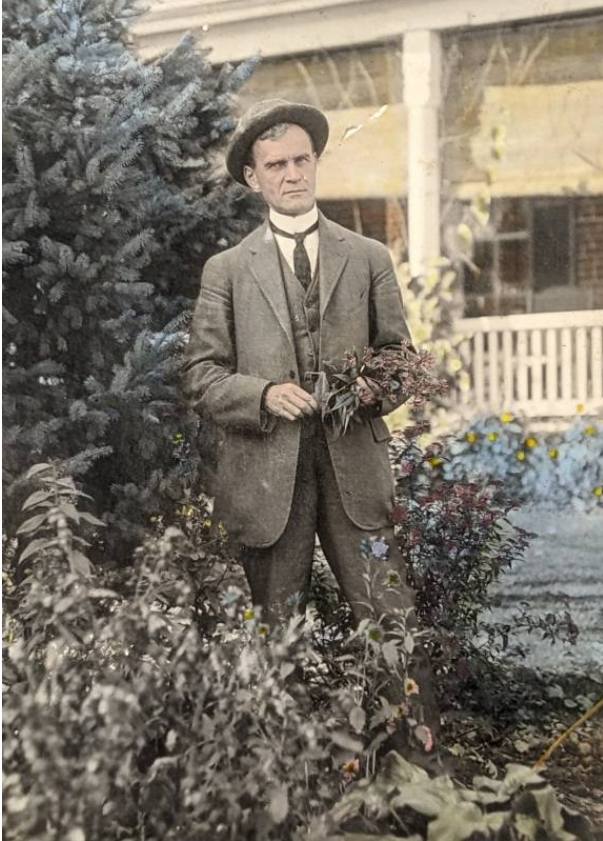
Adding colour to printed photographs was done via the hand application of dyes, watercolours, oils, and pastels. The result was hugely dependent on the skill of the colourist.

Early examples mimicked the style of colouring used on Daguerreotype, Ambrotype, and Tintype photographs, with just a few portions of the image highlighted with colour. This now often appears crudely done, as in the circa 1881 photo of my two great-aunts. Differential fading may explain the sharp contrast between the red and blue details of the dresses and the more subtle shading of the cheeks and chair upholstery. Close inspection suggests considerable over-painting of the girls' hair. It is unknown whether the colour was added when the photograph was taken or sometime later.

With the ability to produce many copies from a single negative, versions of the same photograph made their way into the albums of multiple family members. Colouring photos added expense and not all versions were coloured. An example of this is the 1913 photograph appearing in the [April 2018 issue](#) of the *Neighbourhood Messenger*. This photo was from Lena Herrington's Album. The same photograph in her brother Had's album has been colourized, with various portions of the women's clothing sporting blue highlights.



N-08935 & N-08935b Museum of Lennox & Addington
Victoria Day 1913 at Camp Le Nid



**N-09182 Museum of Lennox & Addington
Walter Stevens Herrington (1860-1947) circa 1912**

Despite the fairly wide-spread embrace of these new photographic methods by amateur photo enthusiasts, the bulk of photographs from the late 1800s and early 1900s came out of photographic studios. By the mid-1930s the colouring of photographs had advanced considerably. This is evident in the photograph of Ruth Duffett, right, taken when she was approximately 10 years old. The photographer was clearly skilled, not only technically, but also artistically, capturing Ruth in a relaxed pose before a backdrop that highlights and balances the sitter within the simple staging of the shot. The colourist, too, exhibits great skill in the choice of muted and complimentary colours and the realistic tinting and shading of the skin. Ruth's hands are particularly well done.

Much of the work of early photographers and inventors revolved around achieving realism. However, another stream of work was directed towards using photographs to mimic hand-drawn portraits and paintings. The solar enlarger was chief among the tools enabling

Another of Had's photos shows his father W.S. Herrington in the garden at their Dundas Street home in Napanee. Clearly the green of the tree, grass and vegetation below the veranda have faded to blue, but likely still true are the pink of Herrington's face and hands, the darker pink of the flowers he has just picked, the bright yellow of flowers below the veranda, the red brick wall of the house, and the lightish green of some of the other foliage.

Obviously, these "snaps" from the Herrington albums suffer from potentially crude colouring and lack of durability. Common among these photographs, however, is the non-obscuring nature of the tinting. Unlike the 1881 photograph of the two young girls, where the colouring over-painted the details of the photograph, all the monochromatic details of the original photo remain. The putty-pink uniform colouring of the skin, however, lacks realism. Indeed, some of the simple blushing of cheeks used on earlier non-negative photographs appear considerably more realistic.



**Photo: Susan Wright
Ruth Wright (née Duffett) (1925-2011) mid-1930s**

photographers to produce affordable “portraits”, comparable to those drawn or painted while sitting before an artist. Employing the enlarger and using the sun as its light source, the photographer projected an image of a head and shoulders from a negative onto lightly sensitive photographic paper. Typically, these “portraits” were enlarged from small negatives to life-sized. The enlargement process and the low-contrast print accentuated any blemishes on the negative and often resulted in the print lacking sharpness. Over-sketching with “crayons”, often black and white chalky pastels, could correct and augment the image. Two such portraits can be found at the Museum of Lennox & Addington.

The large (16” x 20”) “charcoal portraits”, right, are shown without their frames, propped up against the side of the farmhouse where the portraits had most recently resided. The lot on which the house is located was registered to Captain Peter Ruttan in 1802, and stayed in the Ruttan family until 1921. Initial assumptions were that these portraits were of Elisha Ruttan and his wife Susannah Outwater, believed to be the last Ruttans to live in the farmhouse.



Photo: Eric Ruuth

“Charcoal Portraits” from photographs

Subsequent investigation raises questions about who the portraits depict, when the photos were taken, and when the portraits were produced.

The known provenance of the portraits narrows the candidates for the identity of the sitters. The Ruuths purchased the Ruttan farm in 1948. Sometime later, the neighbouring Reynolds family gave the Ruuths the portraits because they believed that the portraits were of the Ruttans and were part of the farm history. The back of one of the portraits is inscribed with the following:

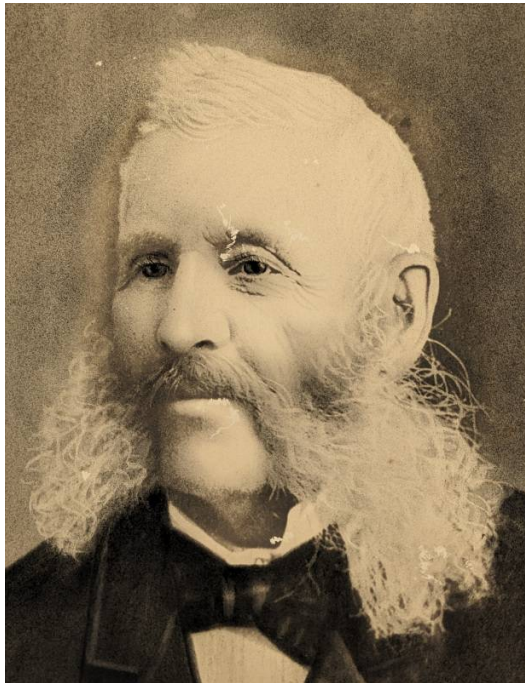
Wm Reynolds
Hay Bay Rd
N Fredericksburg
Bay Centre PO
Napanee # 1012

As documented in the [November 2019 issue](#) of the *Neighbourhood Messenger*, William Reynolds arrived in the Adolphustown area in the late 1880s as part of the British Home Children program. Long before that time, the Ruttan farm had been split in two, with brothers Stewart and Elisha residing on the East and West Farms, respectively. In 2012, William’s grandson reported that his grandfather lived on the West Farm, the home of Elisha Ruttan. However, the 1901 Census has William Reynolds, aged 21, living as a “servant” on the East Farm with Elisha’s brother Stewart. Since Home Children were released from their contract at age 18, it is possible that William had gained employment with the brother (Stewart) of his former sponsor (Elisha).

Bay Centre PO (Post Office), on the north shore of Hay Bay, was open from 1909-1913 which coincides with a potential gap in William’s history at or near the Ruttan farms. The 1901 census has William at Stewart Ruttan’s. Stewart died in that year and the farm was transferred to his son. Presumably William was no longer needed as a hand. By the 1911 census William was a tenant farmer on a farm adjacent to the Ruttan farms. It is possible that he found employment on the north shore of Hay Bay between 1901 and 1911.

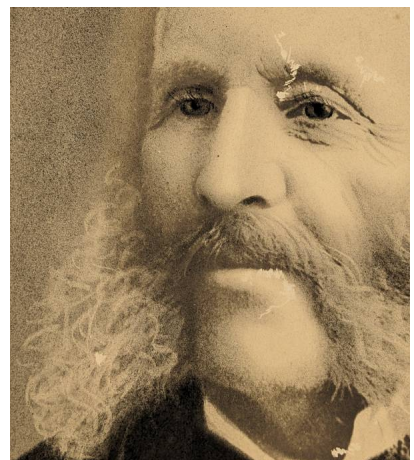
Elisha Ruttan’s wife was Susannah Outwater. Her brother Nelson had inherited the family farm in North Fredericksburgh, originally granted to thier father Belyat. The Outwater farm was just a few lots to the west of the Hay Bay Post Office. It is possible that William Reynolds worked on the Outwater farm or one of the nearby farms owned by the Parks family. (Susannah Ruttan’s mother was Elizabeth Parks.)

All that is known for sure is that William received the portraits while living on the north shore of Hay Bay, sometime between the opening of the Hay Bay Post Office in 1909 and 1911 when he returned to near the Ruttan farms. It is possible that while working for the family of his former sponsor's wife, he took possession of the portraits for sentimental reasons, having no other "family" in Canada.



The supposition has been that the portraits are William's former sponsor, Elisha Ruttan (1824-1916) and his wife Susannah Outwater (1835-1893). Susannah died at just 58, and so it is possible the photograph was taken as late as the early 1890s. However, the woman in the portrait appears to be much older than someone in her mid-50s. Elisha who was 69 at the time of Susannah's death, would likely have looked younger than the man appearing in the portrait, whose sunken cheeks and white hair indicate either old age or illness. Of course, Elisha could have had his photograph taken sometime after Susannah's death.

Perhaps it is the process of producing the portraits that make the sitters appear old. While their clothing has been over-sketched and "coloured-in" in a very basic way, great care has



been taken to render the facial features, presumably in an attempt to faithfully follow details in the original photographs. Some of the strokes on the brow of the woman and around the eyes of both sitters are perhaps overly bold, potentially rendering the overall impression of more elderly people than they were at the time. Note the pronounced over-sketching of the man's beard.



Detail AFHS Photo

Mr. & Mrs. E Ruttan

The undated photograph, left, is identified as “Mr. & Mrs. E Ruttan”. It is often difficult to see resemblances when comparing photographs taken years apart. Certainly in this case, little similarity can be found between the younger couple and the older people in the portraits.

Elisha leased the point at the west end of the West Farm to Camp Le Nid. He is mentioned several times in material related to the camp, including in a 1904 camp diary which contains the entry: “Saw Mr. Ruttan, 80 past, jump over a fence”. The circa 1902 photograph, below, from W.S. Herrington’s photos of Camp Le Nid, includes a bearded man appearing to be at least a generation older than the other men in the photograph. It is likely that this man is Elisha Ruttan, clearly robust. He did indeed turn 80 in 1904, and lived more than a decade after that. In both these “known” photographs of Elisha, he sports a full beard.



Elisha Ruttan (supposed)
at Camp Le Nid
circa 1902



N-11022 Museum of Lennox & Addington
Camp Le Nid at Ruttan’s Point circa 1902

Other aids in dating photographs are clothing and hair styles. The woman’s dress and the man’s small-lapel jacket, waistcoat, bow tie, and stand-up collar were all fashionable from the 1860s to the turn of the century. However, the man’s extravagant side whiskers and the woman’s hat might narrow the time frame somewhat.

Side whiskers were in fashion from the mid- to late-1800s, but were quite prevalent in the 1880s.

The fairly unusual small hat perched high on the woman’s head might be a mourning cap. Such hats were made popular by Queen Victoria who wore mourning attire after the death of her husband in 1861 until her own death four decades later. If this is a mourning cap, it might have been worn by Susannah’s mother Elizabeth (1802-1884) after the death of her husband Belyat Outwater (1785-1864). If the portraits are indeed of Susannah’s parents, the photographs would have been taken very early in the evolution of photography with the one of Belyat taken in the first years of prints from negatives. Elizabeth’s photo could have been taken immediately following or several years after Belyat’s death.

A major selling point of the “crayon enlargements” was that they could be made from existing negatives, potentially many years after the photograph had been taken. Photographers in Napanee and Kingston were actively advertising these enlargements in the late 1880s and early 1890s, making it equally plausible that these portraits were made of Belyat and Elizabeth Outwater (using negatives from the 1860s) or Elisha and Susannah Ruttan (from negatives taken around the same time the portraits were produced). Crayon enlargements were still being made around 1910, when William received the portraits, although it is also possible they had been made earlier and were simply framed and sent to him at that time. A final curiosity: It seems odd that William would have been in possession the portraits prior to the death of Elisha Ruttan in 1916.

A colour example of crayon enlargements is a somewhat unusual “painting” of St. Alban’s church in Adolphustown. The 14” x 11” framed picture shows a very “soft focus” image of the church dwarfed by the abundance of foreground greenery. Fortunately, the image of the church along with the framing tells us much about the provenance of the picture.



St. Alban's Archive

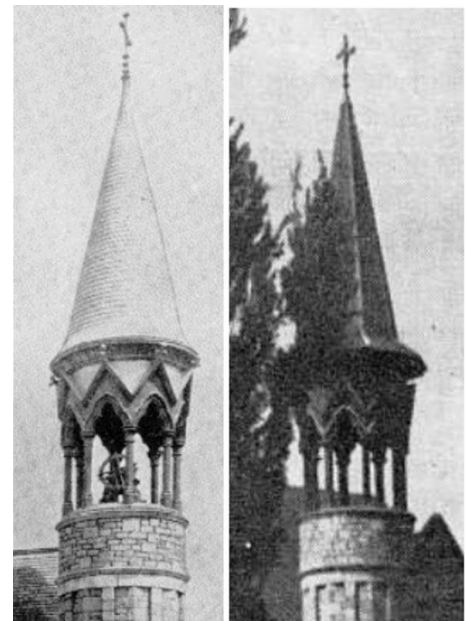
St. Alban's Church

St. Alban's was completed in 1890. In 1909 the steeple blew down, to be replaced in 1911 by a steeple of a slightly different design. The church in the picture appears to have a steeple shaped like the original steeple (right), rather than the replacement which features a “witch's hat brim” (far right).

The back of the “canvas” bears a stamp of the “Merchant Portrait Company” of Toronto. The company specialized in a process of creating a “portrait” from a photograph, and was listed in Toronto directories and the Napanee papers from 1894 to 1920.

Also on the back of the canvas are notes indicating that the picture was to be delivered to “Mrs. Harold Mallory” of 379 Macdonnell Street [Kingston], and was paid for by “Miss Allison: (\$2.00). Frances Mallory (1919-1993) was the niece of Mary Allison (1878-1974). According to social notes in the papers, both were living in Kingston between 1942 and 1944. By 1959 Mary had moved to Napanee.

The picture was framed by Gartland's Art and Gift Shop at 338 Princess Street in Kingston. As a 21-year-old, Micheal Stanley Gartland opened his business at 237 Princess in January 1924.

Canadian Architect
& Builder

1892

AFHS Photo

1924

It was not until January 1930 that his move to the 338 address was announced. In business until Garland's death in 1984, the shop, still doing custom framing, was sold and renamed.

With all of these "clues", it seems likely that the photograph of St. Alban's was taken shortly after the church was completed, and the "painting" made by the Merchant's Portrait Company in the late 1890s when these pictures were popular. The picture may have been commissioned by Mary at that time. It was framed later—possibly when both Frances and Mary were living in Kingston in the early 1940s, but perhaps not. Mary may have taken it in to be framed in the 1950s or '60s, paid for it, and then had it delivered to Frances.

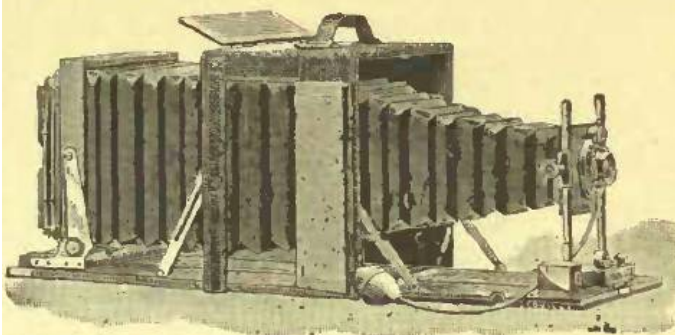
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The first century of commercial photography saw the evolution of its "magic"—from the initial wonder inspired by the sharp realism of early images, to the sleight of hand employed by photographers and artists in the years that followed. The photographs from this era do more than document people and places; they also reveal what was important to those who created or commissioned them.

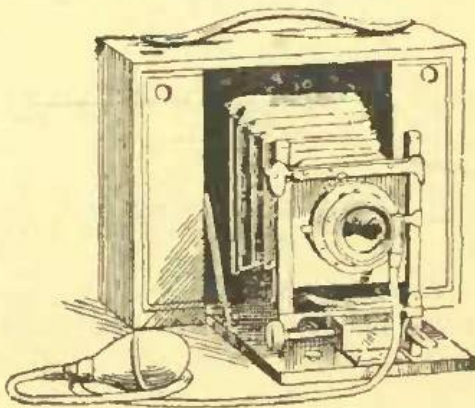
Photographic Department.

Eaton's Fall & Winter Catalog

1899-1900



The latest addition to our cameras is the long focus solograph, which is without doubt one of the finest high-grade cameras made, the 4 x 5 is \$45.00, and the 5 x 7, \$55.00 each, complete with one double plate-holder and Bausch and Lomb shutter. For further particulars write us. Short focus, 4 x 5, \$35.00; 5 x 7, \$45.00.



No. 4 Cartridge kodak, for 4 x 5 pictures.

This is a folding kodak, fitted with the cartridge system, and uses either cartridges or glass plates; is fitted with carefully tested rapid rectilinear lens and Eastman's pneumatic release shutter, fitted with iris diaphragm stops; this shutter has three speeds of instantaneous exposures; it makes short-time exposure by squeezing the bulb and closing when the bulb is released, and regular time exposure. A wide angle lens

can be supplied for \$5.00 extra when so desired. This kodak is provided with a rising, sliding and falling front, two viewfinders, has an index for focusing, and when used with plates may be focused on the ground glass; the plate adapter is simple and compact. Prices as



follows: Kodak complete, for film cartridges, \$25.00; plate adapter for glass plates, \$2.50; double plate-holders, \$1.00 each.

Deaths from Diphtheria in Adolphustown & Fredericksburgh

Susan Wright

A list of children from the area whose deaths were confirmed to be caused by diphtheria.

1862

Jan 31 - Sophia Phippen, age 10

Mar 5 - Laura Phippen, age 12

1877

Jan 4 - Samuel F. Unger, age 5

Jan 12 - Anna M. Embury, age 1

Jan 19 - Helen M. Embury, age 2

Jan 21 - Bertha Edith Unger, age 3

Feb 2 - Clara Withers, age 2 months

Feb 9 - Egerton R. Loyst, age 17

Feb 23 - Aremantia Jones, age 10 months

Mar 8 - Emma Adams, age 18

Mar 11 - Alice Adams, age 14

Mar 14 - Rodie Adams, age 4

Mar 15 - Ida Adams, age 6

Mar 18 - Annie Adams, age 8

Jun 30 - Mary Etta Huffman, age 8

July 3 - Joseph Huffman, age 5

Sep 28 - Earl W. Pringle, age 3

Nov 5 - Clara Sills, age 7

Nov 14 - Henry Ayrhart, age 10

Dec 14 - Rebecca Brown, age 5

Dec 15 - Dorothy Maria Brown, age 13

Dec 28 - Eva Ann Brown, age 15

1878

Jan 15 - Amos Wilks Mambery, age 6

Feb 5 - John F. Young, age 9

Mar 10 - Susan Hudson, age 4

Mar 10 - John Pollard, age 10

Mar 10 - Elizabeth Pollard, age 2

Mar 19 - Philip W. Pollard, age 4

Mar 19 - Jane Hudson, age 7

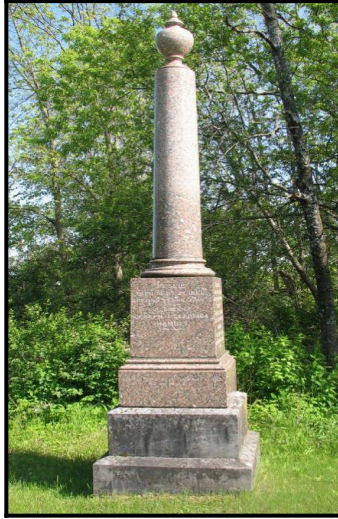
Mar 29 - Thomas F. Pollard, age 6

Mar 29 - John Oscar Fitchett, age 9

Jun 6 - William Artyd Young, age 4

Jun 13 - George E. Young, age 6

Jun 15 - Albert O. Young, age 4



The Hambly Family Stone

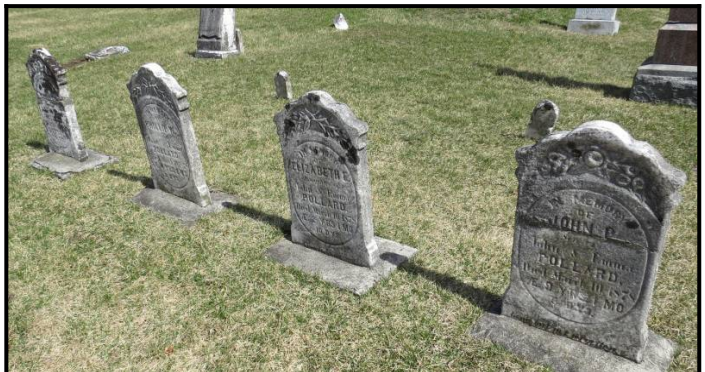
McCabe Cemetery
North Fred

Joseph & Clarinda
Hambly
lost five of their
children to diphtheria
in the fall of 1886.

The Mallory Family Stone

Adolphustown United
Church Cemetery

Ezra & Phila Ann
Mallory
lost two of their
children to diphtheria
in November
1889.



The Pollard Family Stones

St. Alban's Cemetery

John & Emma Pollard of Adolphustown lost four
of their children in 1878.

Diphtheria reports in local papers 1862 - 1897

TRIPLE FATALITY.--Within the past week Mr Edley Brown, of North Fredericksburgh, has lost three children from diphtheria. Of the seven children attacked, three died, and a niece who came to nurse the patients was attacked and her recovery is doubtful.—

Peter Chalmers, of Adolphustown, has a family of six children all down with diphtheria of a most malignant type.

A daughter of Mrs. Hunt, North Fredericksburgh, died of diphtheria Monday. Another little girl living in the same township, daughter of J. Hambly, has been given up by the doctor.

At Fredericksburgh, of Diphtheria, on 31st January, 1862, Sophia Phippen, aged 10 years, 11 months and 9 days. Also, on March 5th, 1862, Laura Phippen, aged 12 years, 7 months and 23 days, daughters of Mr William Phippen.

Deaths From Diphtheria.

Diphtheria has been doing deadly work in the vicinity of Napanee. Joseph Hambly's eldest son, aged 24, was carried off and three children are now ill. Children of A. G. Hamilton and W. Hawley have succumbed to it.

Afflicted With Diphtheria.

The family of E. A. Mallory, Adolphustown, have been prostrated with a virulent type of diphtheria, and on Nov. 18th the youngest daughter Ella died. At latest accounts the second daughter Mabel was slowly recovering, the youngest son, Harry, was very ill, and Mrs. Mallory was ill with physical and nervous prostration.

Joseph Hambly, of North Fredericksburgh, has been severely afflicted. Four of his children have died of diphtheria within the past six weeks.

A seventh child of Joseph Hambly, Fredericksburgh, died last Saturday from diphtheria.

1881

Nov 20 - John Gurren, age 2

Dec 27 - Florence Gurren, age 8

Dec 28 - Lillian May Gurren, age 4

1882

June 4 - Mary Ellen Post, age 19

1885

Mar 18 - Percival Howard Young, age 5

1886

Aug 14 - Joseph Frederick Hambly, age 19

Sep 8 - Ida May Hambly, age 6

Sep 15 - William Arthur Hambly, age 24

Sep 21 - David Leslie Hambly, age 15

Sep 25 - George Albert Hambly, age 17

Dec 20 - J.B. Huff, age 2

1887

Feb 9 - Ethel Maud Woodcock, age 2

1889

Nov 18 - Ella Mallory, age 12

Nov 27 - Harry Mallory, age 16

Dec 14 - Rose May Pollard, age 8

1897

Oct 23 - Wilbert Leslie Lloyd, age 4

Oct 25 - Archibald Stuart Post, age 7

Oct 30 - Florence May Elliot, age 11

FREDERICKSBURGH.

Diphtheria has become almost epidemic in a large portion of South Fredericksburgh. From the bay shore to the northern limit of the township this dreadful disease is scattered. Several deaths are reported, children being the principal sufferers. One of the attending physicians is reported as stating it to be one of the most malignant types he ever met. Many schools are closed in consequence. In South Fredericksburgh the Hawley, Hamburg and Sillsville schools are closed, being in the infected district. The adjacent schools at Big Creek and Little Creek in North Fredericksburgh are also closed by order of the trustees, as a precautionary measure.

Nov 5 1897

Reflections

In this issue of the *Neighbourhood Messenger*, we are introducing **Reflections**. For this new column, readers are invited to share stories from the past—anything from a memorable event to everyday moments or how things were once done. Please consider becoming a contributor!

The Day Our House Caught Fire

Lois O'Hara

Our house caught on fire. It was in March 1944.

My sister Jean was boarding in Napanee to go to high school. My brothers Bob and Merton were in public school. I was still 5 years old and lying on the sofa with my mother. She was snoozing but I was awake, looking at the ceiling. I asked her, "What is that black thing curling around the stove pipe?"

She looked up, then jumped up to check what was happening upstairs but the front hall was full of smoke. She slammed the door shut and ran to the back door and yelled for my father Clarence to come from the barn. Our house was on fire!

Everything happened fast—phone Central—the operator Mrs. Gallagher would open all the rural lines and make one mighty long ring. Everyone knew this meant an emergency. The men for miles around, when they knew where the fire was located, grabbed all their pails and travelled to our place as fast as they could. Cars lined up all along the road.

First, we had to box up 100 baby chicks, recently arrived and put under a heater in a spare room, until they were big enough to survive in the brooder house, but still under the heater.

My job was to run as fast as I could next door to the Simmons' house to tell San Simmons our house was on fire. Our neighbours did not have a phone. When I got there, I was out of breath and didn't speak. San had to ask me what was wrong. He grabbed his jacket and wore his ankle-high mackinaw boots. Later, he said the water went over his boots.

At our house, Mother strained some milk into a pitcher and ran down the back yard to put the pitcher on a fence post. She probably wondered if we'd have anything left to eat or drink after our house burned down. I put my little red table and chairs set under the kitchen table thinking they would be protected there.

We had to tell Grandma Davis our house was on fire. She threw her china chamber-pot out her bedroom window, onto a snow bank, thinking it would survive the crash. It didn't.

Pails of water were relayed from the outdoor pump, the kitchen sink pump which brought water from the cistern, and even left-over bathwater from the upstairs tub. So, some men were throwing water from above and some were throwing water from below.

My brothers looked out the east window of the school house and saw all the cars. Bob had to run home at recess to see what was going on. Mary Mack, then living in the east end of her father's house, came and took me up to her place until the commotion settled.

At noon, Mary called Bob and Merton into her place for lunch. They ate fast and then ran down the road to see what was happening. Jean learned about all the excitement when she came home for the weekend.

Fire Damages House Near Dorland

Dorland March 4. — Considerable excitement was created on Friday forenoon when an S.O.S. went out over the telephone lines when the residence of Mr. A. C. Davis was discovered to be on fire between the ceiling and upper floor. By the prompt response and strenuous efforts of the neighbours, the fire was extinguished but not before considerable damage was caused by smoke and water and a large hole had to be cut in order to reach the flames.

Napanee Beaver
March 8, 1944

Luckily for us, Herman John was just driving by on his way to work. His truck was loaded with wrecking gear. He was able to rip out a section of the burning bedroom floor and living room ceiling. It was thought either a chair with blankets over the back was sitting too close to the stove pipe in the boys' bedroom—or another theory was the boys had had a pillow fight and a pillow rested by the stovepipe. Either way, blankets or pillow next to the hot stove pipe started the fire.

We had a gaping hole in our living room ceiling for a few weeks before it got repaired. Father could stand on the living room floor and with a broom handle, poke the boys' mattress, to get them up in the mornings.

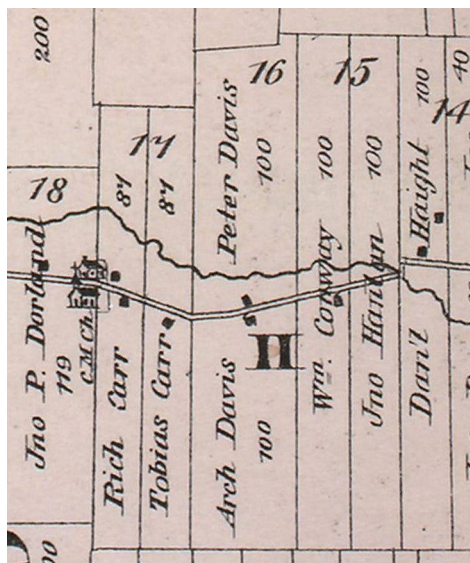
I have to say Herman John was our hero. He saved our house that day!

Then and Now

Jane Lovell



Circa 1882



1878 Illustrated Historical Atlas of the Counties of Frontenac, Lennox and Addington

5051 County Road 8

**South Half of Lot 16 Concession 2
Adolphustown**

The 200-acre Lot 16 was granted to Henry Davis in 1789 and divided into two 100-acre lots in 1861. Unlike most other lots in Adolphustown and Fredericksburgh, and those lots surrounding it, Lot 16 was split into North Half and South Half rather than East Half and West Half.



2025

According to a history written by Lois O'Hara (née Davis), the house appearing in the c1882 photograph, and shown on the 1878 map south of the road, was built in 1867.

The property remained in the Davis family for 190 years, with the farm being sold in 1965, followed by the sale of the house in 1979.

Note: The schoolhouse mentioned in Lois's story about the house fire can be seen opposite the church between lots 17 & 18 on the 1878 map.

AFHS News

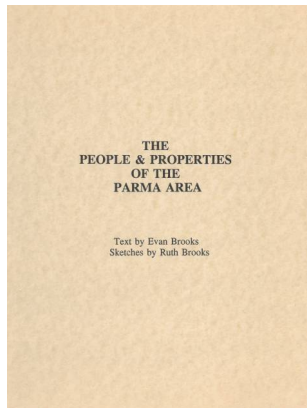
Angela Cronk

Welcome to Spring!

We know that spring is here when we start planning our annual Fish Fry and begin sprucing up our cemeteries. We have already tidied up the unique little Diamond Cemetery on the edge of Hay Bay. (Thanks to the folks who helped out!) Posters/notices are out about Fish Fry (catered by Mundell's of Kingston) on May 4 at South Fredericksburgh Hall. New display boards of our local history have been created and can be viewed from 4:30pm along with a number of antiques. And there will be draws too! We hope you will join us — email jane.lovell@kos.net to reserve tickets.

I would also like to say a special thank you to our small (but mighty!) group who work to keep the long and important history of our area alive!

From the Book Shelf



The People & Properties of the Parma Area

By Evan and Ruth Brooks

Evan Brooks, with the aid of an old Atlas and the assistance of family and friends, recorded the names and activities of the families and properties of the Parma area (the westerly portion of the 2nd Concession of South Fredericksburgh Township).

Ruth Brooks, a well-known local artist, has illustrated every page with delightful pen and ink sketches of rural scenes.

See our website (<http://www.sfredheritage.on.ca/Books1.htm>) for a full list of AFHS publications, along with a brief description of each book.

A Curious Thing

The item at right is a Hat Stand. As I have a collection of antique hats I have had this in my house for many years, but just looked it up online to find one exactly like it, and to my surprise it can be purchased for a crazy price of \$256.22 tax included!! As it has a spring on it and an attachment to hold it on a table or shelf, I have thought that it might have been used to make a hat. I will have it on display at the Fish Fry with one of my antique hats on it!!

Angela Cronk



December's
Curious Thing

What is this?



Submitted by Angela Cronk

Please contact angelacronk@gmail.com if you recognize this item. Tell us what it is called, what it is used for, during what era it was used, and anything else known about it.

Do you have some weird thing hanging around your home or barn? Take a photo of it and send it in – we can feature it here in a future issue.

From the Attic

We are looking for old photos and documents from Adolphustown, North and South Fredericksburgh. ***Just about any old photograph would be of interest: photos of people, homes, farms, schools, churches, or community or family events.*** Even if you do not know the people or places in the photos, maybe someone else in the community does. Old publications relating to township businesses, schools, and churches often contain fascinating details of life in their era.

Some specific items we are looking for:

OLD PHOTOS or Real Photo POSTCARDS:

- The Adolphustown Town Hall
- The South Fredericksburgh Town Hall at Sillsville
- The U.E.L. Cheese Factory, Adolphustown
- St. Paul's Church, Main Street Adolphustown
- The Old Store at Adolphustown
- The Old Hotel at Adolphustown
- Conway Store
- Conway Wharf
- Phippen Cheese Factory
- Fredericksburgh Train Station
- McDowall Presbyterian Church
- Camp Le Nid
- Glen Island
- Tarry Hall

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Letters or postcards bearing postmarks from local towns and villages
- Correspondence to or from someone serving overseas during either WWI or WWII

BOOKLET:

- Constitution and Roll of Officers and Members of Camp Le Nid, 1902

If you are looking for any specific photos or documents, let us know and we will add it to our "Attic" list.

Newly added items will be highlighted in blue!

Contribute to *The Neighbourhood Messenger*

We publish *The Neighbourhood Messenger* several times a year. If you have an old photograph or newspaper clipping to share, or a story to tell, let us know. Please send submissions to jane.lovell@kos.net.

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