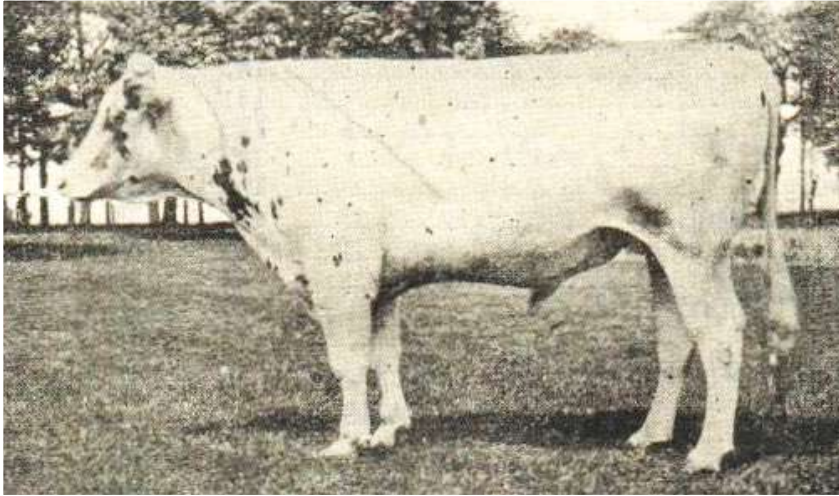


Oakville Historical
Society
since 1953

Historical Society News

www.oakvillehistory.org

FALL FAIR



If in need of a bull of serviceable age come and look over the LAKEVIEW HERD, you will find something outstanding and at an attractive price. The herd is under Government supervision and there is not an animal under six months old which has not passed the last three tuberculin tests.

Take the Radial Car from the Fair Grounds to Trafalgar and motor five miles WEST on the Highway, and you are at Lakeview Barns.

E.F. OSLER

-

Bronte, Ont.

A note from the Society President

Even though our office has been officially closed to the public it has been a busy place.

We welcomed back Meghan Headrick and Ian Greer, as “summer” students. They’ve been working hard on digitizing the non-photo parts of the collection and other projects. One longer-term project will be preparing an online exhibit of our plaques and information to go with them. While we don’t have an accurate count, we think there are over 300 plaques out there. The project will take some time but the first batch should be available for viewing by the time you read this. We received notification this week that we’ve been approved under a different federal program for funding for two more students for 16 weeks of full-time work. There’s lots to keep them busy.

While the office building was officially closed we took the opportunity to do some renovations. The front office room has been repainted after some repairs to the walls and sloped ceiling and the pine floors in that room, the main entry room, kitchen and tech room have all been professionally refinished. We also bought new area carpets for the office, tech room and library/board room. The archives room was looking pretty bad so we moved everything out of it, ripped up the carpet, levelled the floor (it was in very bad condition and about 1 inch out of flat over 4 feet), repaired the walls and ceiling, painted and put down interlocking vinyl. The room looks much better if I do say so myself and the vinyl floor is much more appropriate for an archives room. Next will be the

north entry room and eventually the library/board room. It’s been almost 30 years since these rooms were last painted. The outside of the building needs a bit of work as well.

I’d like to thank those who participated in our Annual General Meeting in late June. At the July Board Meeting the Board re-elected the following officers for the corporation. I’ll be continuing as President, Susan Wells will be continuing as Vice President and Mark Verlinden and Marie Descent will be staying on as Treasurer and Secretary.



Archives Room - Before



Archives Room - After

The past few issues of this newsletter have been joint with the Bronte Historical Society. We’re sorry to report that we will no longer be including their content and wish them well.

George Chisholm

Oakville *Scottish* Country Dance Group

By Ruth Verlinden



When my husband and I became 'empty nesters,' there was no more driving to soccer practices, music classes, part-time jobs, and to the plethora of activities with children. It was not our style to sit in front of the TV after dinner, and we were looking for an interesting, social way to spend our evenings. A friend mentioned that she and her husband went dancing once a week. It was not ballroom, not swing, not salsa, not square dancing. It was Scottish Country Dancing.

Since it was at a convenient place, on a convenient night of the week, at a time that allowed my husband to get home late from working in Toronto, and since I love to dance, I told him about it. To my surprise, he agreed to try it! The following Tuesday night we arrived at the

neighbourhood school gym where we joined two dozen friendly people and a teacher, Anne. This class was specifically for people new to Scottish Country Dancing. We began by learning the footwork: a bit of a skip, then pointing the foot out in a slight fling, although never with the toe up like an elf or a leprechaun! It is not Highland Dancing, with high stepping over crossed swords. It is very similar to square dancing, but without a caller, and quite elegant if the footwork is done properly.

The official organization, The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, headquartered in Edinburgh, Scotland, was established in 1923. It has over 11,000 members internationally. The Oakville Scottish Country Dance Group has existed since 1956. There are also groups in

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Hamilton, Burlington, Toronto, Kitchener, Fergus, St. Catharines, Grimsby; in fact there are groups everywhere in the world. Many avid dancers participate every week in several groups within easy driving distance of their home. They also seek out dancing opportunities as part of their vacations. You can include an evening of dancing on your holiday almost anywhere, even Japan, Paris, Moscow or Honolulu! One year there was a cruise that included Scottish Country dancing every afternoon on board.

The Royal SCD Society publishes books of dance instructions, and is in charge of certifying the teachers. The process of becoming a teacher is rigorous, and the role of teacher is challenging. An evening typically has about ten dances, so the preparation for those classes is phenomenal. As a rule, the teacher memorizes all the dances of that evening, so that they can instruct the class without reading the notes. In fact, they apologize if they need to refer back to the written instructions!

In the past, men wore kilts to the classes. A few years ago, I was in a grocery store when my daughter said 'Mom, there's a man here in a kilt. You probably know him'. Sure enough, it was a dancing friend. Who else would be wearing a kilt while buying groceries in Oakville? However, there is no requirement to wear a kilt, and no expensive costume or equipment is involved at all.

Some of our members are getting on in years, but still love to dance. Where else would you find people in their sixties, seventies and eighties skipping to a jig or a reel? It is true that, for some, their 'skip' might be more of a 'rhythmic walk' now,

but they are moving fast and in time to the music, for two hours once or twice a week.

A special aspect of Scottish Country Dancing is the polite convention that you never dance with the same partner. If you arrive with someone, you may dance the first and last dance of the evening with that person, but for the rest of the night, you choose other partners for each dance. Isn't that delightful? Single people are as welcome as couples, and can be assured of dancing all night long.

For many members, dancing is a passion that involves several nights a week, and several gala parties a year where everyone gets to dress up in gowns and kilts. Good exercise, good music, friendly happy evenings.

Once we are out of our COVID state and are allowed to touch each other again, come and see what it's all about. We hopefully, will again be at the QEP Community and Cultural Centre at 7:00 on Tuesday nights in September.

Photo with permission of Oakville Scottish Country Dance Group





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Memories of Falgarwood

By Joyce Stephenson

I don't think that the area of Falgarwood up on the Red Hill has been given much attention in our Town's history, probably because it is so young! I thought that it would be an interesting project during this time of isolation in the spring of 2020. So here are the memories of the Stephenson Family: Gerry, Joyce, Laura (6), Karen (4) and Tim (2) who arrived in Oakville in April of 1967.

When Gulf Oil transferred my husband Gerry from Calgary to Toronto, he was the one who arrived here in February in order to search for a place to live. His office was on Mount Pleasant Road in uptown Toronto. We could not afford a house in Toronto, so the next best plan was to buy outside of the city and commute. It was right at the time the Government of Ontario was planning the GO train from Oakville to Pickering. So the search for a house was in either of those locations. Oakville was the best choice, so a back split home was purchased at 1188 Grange Road in Falgarwood, just one block from Falgarwood Public School. That was a prerequisite in my mind, to be close to a school for our three kids.

A few weeks after our big move from Calgary, the GO train began its runs into Union Station and beyond. Gerry was on the first run sometime in May. But he still had to take the subway to Davisville, followed by a bus ride, or a fairly long walk over to Mount Pleasant. That became his daily commute for 19 years.

Meanwhile, back on Grange Road, I began the settling-in process. I could never have imagined how difficult it was to keep clothes and floors clean before the landscaping was done. It was that red soil that stuck to everything. It became the bane of my existence when it came to gardening! Digging in that soil was back-breaking! But surprisingly, over the years, we



1188 Grange Road, late 1960s

found that some plants and shrubs thrived in it, and of course tons of good top soil were added to the red soil over the years.

When we first arrived, Falgarwood was a very small community about five years old. The approach to the subdivision from the Q.E.W. was by Upper Middle Road, a narrow two-lane country road with deep ditches on either side. Arriving at the Eighth Line and taking a left turn took us down past farm land and abandoned apple orchards, and one large farm house, still occupied. It was a crooked dirt road that led us into the subdivision at Gainsborough Drive. Making our way along that street past Falgarwood School, we turned right on to Grosvenor Street which at the time ran only between Gainsborough and Falgarwood Drive. Grange Road ran from the school yard to Langdale Crescent and there it stopped. Abandoned farm land and orchards covered the entire area behind our house on Grange Road. Across the street was a large vacant lot with a big hill of red soil, left there from construction of homes. The lot was designated for a United

Church to be built there, but the property was eventually sold to a developer. That vacant lot was a place of enjoyment for all the neighbourhood kids for the next 10 or 12 years. That hill of red dirt was a great bike-racing challenge in summer and a toboggan slide in winter. And the lot was a place to dump all the garden clippings of the neighbours. It wasn't until about 1981 that large two-storey homes were built on that lot. They seemed out of place alongside the existing bungalows, split levels and duplex homes on the street.

Falgarwood School was a small two-storey structure when we arrived in 1967, but about five years later, a large addition was built which included a large gym and several classrooms. The construction proved to be dangerous and deadly that summer. There was a very large beam raised near the beginning, before walls were started. It was a magnet for neighbourhood children who wanted to climb around the construction site. One of the boys next door to us was one of those climbers. He was successful in climbing up to that beam and crawling along it. But it had been raining and the beam was slippery and he fell to the ground. He did not survive. His name was Robert.

The community was a good place to bring up children. With all the vacant land around us, there was plenty of room for play. The abandoned apple orchard behind us was a wonderful playground with trees to climb and grass to sit on

for a picnic lunch. There were no worries about letting our children do just that with their friends. There were lots of playmates down Kingsmead Crescent who were always ready for road hockey games, bike rides, ball games, and snow sliding in winter. Many a large snowman was built on our front yard over the years when we really did have a lot of snow.

Shopping was a challenge for Falgarwood residents. There was no Upper Middle Mall for for a long time. There was really no store above the Q.E.W. for many years, so we had to drive down to the Oak Queen Mall not far from the train station, the mall that became Trafalgar Village. There was a large Dominion store there and a few other small stores. Then we finally got a big box store called Towers and Food City located just north of the Q.E.W. at Trafalgar Road, where our Oakville Mall is now located. It was such a treat to have these two stores on our side of the Q.E.W. at last! But it wasn't long before they were demolished and the new Oakville Mall was built, early in the 1980s.

By the time our children were in high school, they had to take a school bus to White Oaks Secondary School, travelling from Falgarwood School along the narrow Upper Middle Road to the Sixth Line and down to McCraney.

Little by little the whole area that had been vacant farm land and orchards was built up, and it was no longer a tiny community.

Photo provided by Joyce Stephenson



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Fall Fair

Fall Fairs were a very important part of life in Oakville and Trafalgar Township. Competitions included Ladies' Work, Collection of Writing, Collection of Weeds, Cattle and Horses to name a few. Below is from Oakville Fall Fair, 1921.

**Collection of Writing—
Class**

19 Best Five Specimens of Handwriting, each covering a page of foolscap, written by five pupils of any Public or Separate School in Trafalgar, Nelson or Toronto Townships. The teacher will be required to certify that each specimen is the writing of the pupil named.....

Map of Halton—

20 Best plain Pencil Map of Halton drawn by a pupil of any Public or Separate School in Halton, on a sheet of foolscap. Pupils of continuation classes barred....

Map of Canada—

21 Best Map by any Public or Separate School Pupil of Halton or Peel Counties, of the Dominion of Canada, showing provinces provincial capitals, chief rivers, and cities over 50,000. Map to be drawn on card or paper, 12x15 ins. No coloring

22 Best Collection of Mounted Weeds (on card-board) by a Pupil of any Public or Separate School. The weeds to be gathered by the pupil, and name of each specimen to be written correctly in the pupil's own handwriting

We apologize for an error in the Scone Recipe reproduced in our June 2020 issue. **3 *tbsp* baking powder** should read **3 *teaspoons* baking powder.**

Cover - From 1919. The Radial Railway ran from Thomas and Randall Sts., along Rebecca St. The fair grounds at that time were at Kerr and Rebecca Sts. (Trafalgar Park). Trafalgar Rd. in 1919 is today's Bronte Rd. 'The Highway' is now called Lakeshore Rd.

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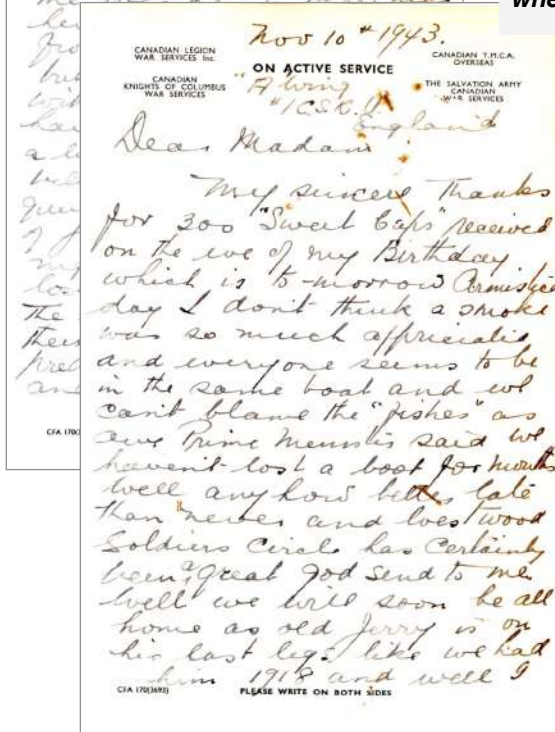
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Westwood Soldiers Circle

We are fortunate that people remember us when they come into the possession of letters, cards and records. One such woman was Marilyn Ortwein. She donated her mother's collection and wrote to us in 2004:

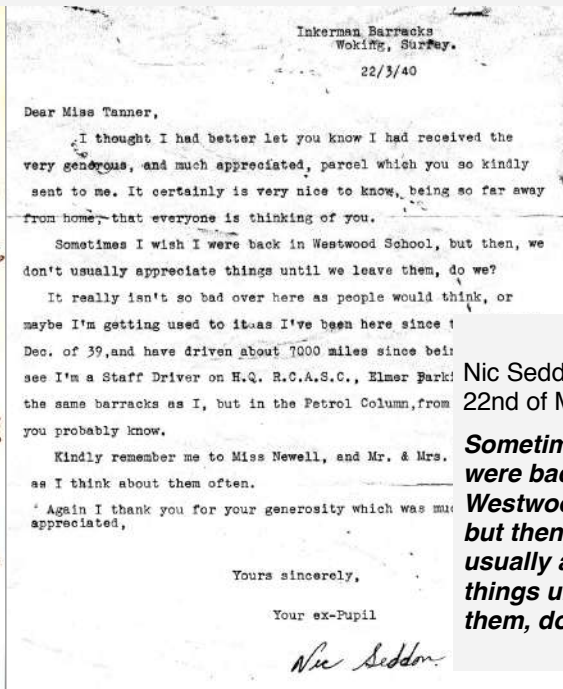
When my mother, Emily Elizabeth Turner died in 1982, she left this collection of letters and cards to me. My brother Lloyd Turner, was a student at Westwood Public School on Wilson Street in Oakville when the Second World War started. The principal was Charlotte Turner. She, the teachers and parents started an organization named the Westwood Soldiers Circle. Their mandate was to communicate and provide candies and cigarettes for the servicemen from Oakville who were overseas. These men were very grateful to the women and often sent letters and cards of thanks to them. As my mother was the secretary, she received the mail. She had the foresight to save this communication. The collection itself contains approximately 180 letters and 240 postcards dating from 1940 to 1947.

Here are a few letters and cards from that collection.



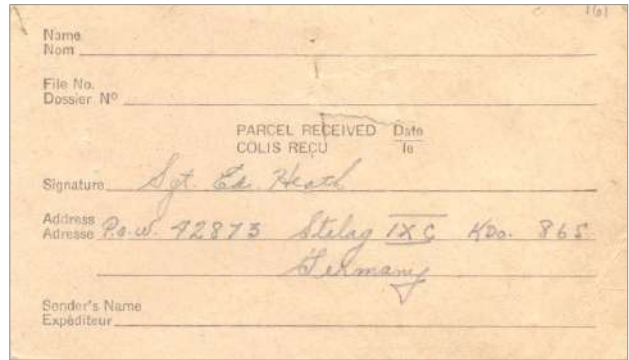
S.E. White wrote on 10th of Nov. 1943 -

"My sincere Thanks for 300 "Sweet Caps" received on the eve of my birthday which is to-morrow Armistice day... Well we will soon be all home as old Jerry is on his last leg like we had him in 1918 and well I remember I was in Belgium then when it was a very Happy Birthday to hear the good news"



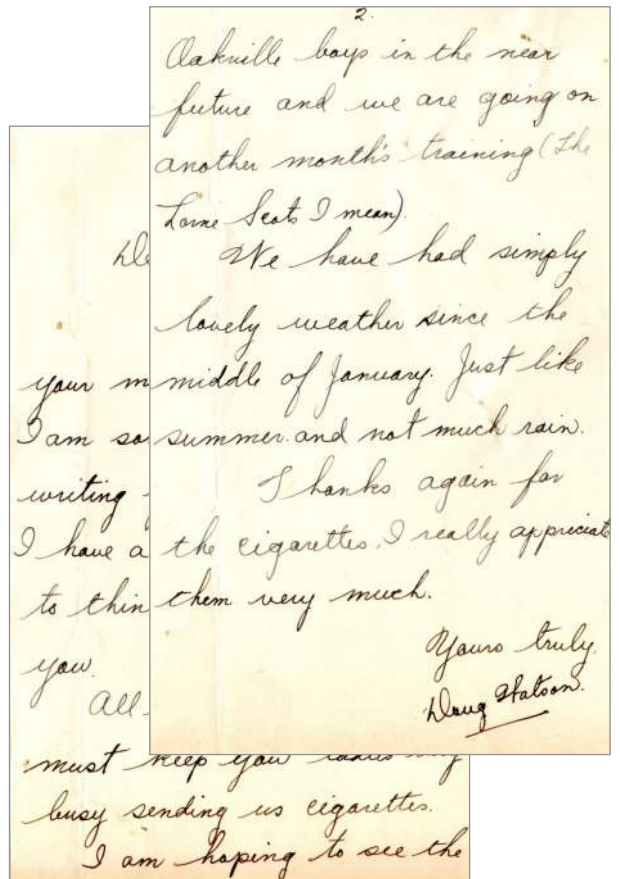
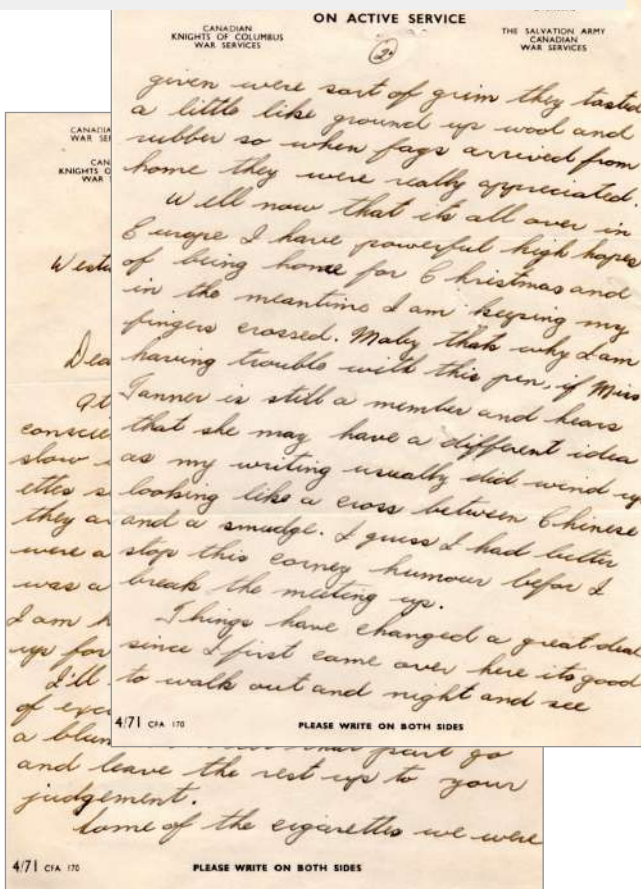
Nic Seddon wrote on 22nd of March 1940 -

Sometimes I wish I were back in Westwood School but then, we don't usually appreciate things until we leave them, do we?



Don Cherrington wrote on 26th of June 1945 -

“Some of the cigarettes we were given were sort of grim they tasted a little like ground up wool and rubber...”



Doug Watson wrote on 10th of April 1943 -

“I am hoping to see the Oakville boys in the near future and we are going on another month's training (The Lorne Scots I mean).”

Tea and Gossip



Steve Bysouth (left) encourages (from left) Wendy Belcher (as Esther Thomas), Trish Sinclair (Rebecca Chisholm), Carol Gall (Tilly Chisholm) and Susan Bowen (Mary Jane Chisholm McDougald) to discuss events of the day on the porch of the Chisholm home, Erchless.

With the COVID lockdown in full swing the OHS board decided to try and expand its digital presence. One of the ways is to create some video clips and post them on social media and other sites.

Some of the members were excited to get involved and into character. It was an adjustment at first because the videos were being shot as if they were live in the 1800s. It was also a bit of a challenge to avoid as many modern sounds and images as possible, not to mention the people who wanted to stop and take pictures of the actors dressed up in their great costumes.

There are more than a few “bloopers” like forgetting lines/words, yelling “car” in the middle of a shoot and having camera/microphone issues. But that is all part of the fun of the experience.

While we can’t do many of the activities we would like to do right now, creating these has been a great outlet and a lot of fun for everyone involved.

We have made about ten of these vignettes and a few have been posted. View them at our Oakville Historical Society Facebook page.

Steve Bysouth

June 2020 Puzzle Solution

ACROSS

- 1 Oakville Olympic Gold runner **BAILEY**
- 7 Name frequently heard in this town **OAKVILLE**
- 8 Founder of SpaceX **MUSK**
- 10 Threaded by sewers **NEEDLE**
- 11 Prepares dough **KNEADS**
- 14 Kangaroo **ROO**
- 16 Arm bones **ULNAS**
- 17 A number divisible by 2 is this **EVEN**
- 19 Puts teeth into **BITES**
- 21 Old Chevy models **NOVAS**
- 22 Spirit being or symbol **TOTEM**
- 23 Afterlife location **HELL**
- 26 Son of Jacob **ASHER**
- 28 Thin fish **EEL**
- 29 Person in front **LEADER**
- 30 Canadian grocery store founder **LOBAW**
- 31 Initials found on a headstone **INRE**
- 32 Person from a particular land mass **EURASIAN**
- 33 Oakville historian, actor, street **DUNCAN**

DOWN

- 1 Fishing village, part of Oakville **BRONTE**
- 2 Singer, __ Wainright III **LOUDON**
- 3 Frame that holds oxen together **YOKE**
- 4 Tree-lined streets **AVENUES**
- 5 Oakville name and street **ALLAN**
- 6 Dr __, children's writer **SEUSS**
- 8 Paltry **MERE**
- 9 __ - pitch, form of baseball **SLO**
- 12 Multiple of the letter after K **ELLS**
- 13 Male name **DARYL**
- 15 Generous person **GIVER**
- 18 Section of a song **VERSE**
- 19 It can run your home and life **BOT**
- 20 Scot's hat **TAM**
- 21 Wind direction that sailors fear **NOREAST**
- 22 Short for Edward **TED**
- 23 West Bank city **HEBRON**
- 24 Female name meaning goddess **ELLE**
- 25 Oakville street, park, Ont. Lt.-Gov. **LAWSON**
- 26 Meusli brand **ALPEN**
- 27 Oakville Mayor much admired **HARRY**
- 28 Long time **EON**
- 30 *They Left Us Everything* family **LIND**

Membership

Thank you to all members who, despite the shutdown, have renewed your membership and welcome to all new members who have chosen this time to join us. We appreciate your support and hope that you will have received confirmation of your membership, either by mail or by email. (We are working from home with occasional visits to the office.) We currently have 186 paid-up members and 58 whose memberships are about to expire. If you think you may have overlooked your renewal please enquire at information@oakville.org or phone the office at 905 844-2695 and leave a message. One of us will get back to you.

We welcome the following new members since our June newsletter:

Ms. Eleanor Crisell, Miss Emily Ing, Mrs. Michaela Hutcheson, Mr. and Mrs. Ian and Barbara Lennox, Mr. William Mewes, Ms. Maria Claudia Oliveira, Ms. Sally O'Shea, Miss Ann K. Reynolds, Mr. Geoffery Roy, Mr. Michael Whitcombe and Ms. Diane Lemieux, Mr. and Mrs. Eugene van der Oord

We look forward to the time when we can meet again.

Andrea Stewart, Marie Descent and Susan Bowen, Memberships

Bronte Historical Society

Sovereign House

7 West River Street, Oakville
www.brontehistoricalsociety.ca

Art on the Bluffs throughout the Summer and Fall to 21st Oct.

Trafalgar Day - 18th Oct., 1 pm - 4 pm

Christmas Sale - 21st Nov., 10 am - 2 pm

Open to the Public in the Summer on Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday 1 pm - 4 pm



Do you know?

Where this house is located?

When it was built?

Look for the answers in our next issue!



From June 2020 *The way* things were...

The abutment of the original bridge (bottom left in photo) that spanned Bronte (Fourteen Mile) Creek is now dwarfed by the QEW bridge just north of it.

Archive Hours:

Tuesday & Thursday 1:00 to 4:30 pm
Third Sunday of the month 12:30 to 4:00 pm

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