

Historically Speaking

The Newsletter of the Cobourg and District

Historical Society

February 2022 — Issue 329

The Cobourg Conspiracy of 1839

After the Rebellion in Upper Canada in 1837, unrest continued for some time in the “colonies.” Cobourg had its own bit of excitement with what has become known as The Cobourg Conspiracy.

The Cobourg Museum Foundation, as part of its theme, “Heinous, Heroic, and High Flyers” has prepared a video of the historic Cobourg Conspiracy. At our meeting on February 22, 2022 via Zoom, we will see the video and be introduced to the panel that was inspired by the story and did the research and production of this video. We will learn about the creative elements that go into making such stories come to life.



The panelists are well known Cobourg residents many of whom have lived in this area for decades: Anne Burnham, Allan Seymour, Jenny Duda, Mark Edwardson, and Bill Hunt.



Join us on-line via **Zoom, Tuesday evening, February 22, 2022 at 7:30 p.m.**, and learn about the Cobourg Conspiracy. Please register in advance for this webinar:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8OR2uE2MRDuX24geO6TpkQ

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Our Previous Meeting

During the lull in COVID cases we had hoped that an in-person trivia night would be possible. Sadly, increased cases of the Omicron variant forced cancellation. Instead, we had a Trivia Night Lite via Zoom – which lacked the intense competition and camaraderie of our usual trivia nights but was still fun for all. Questions covered general knowledge, sports, Canadian history and Cobourg history. Even if you missed our event, you can still try to answer some of the trivia questions posed by Quiz Mistress Carla:

1. Jeopardy, a well-known quiz/trivia program was created by Merv Griffin who credits his wife for the idea. Who wrote the song that is used in the final Jeopardy question?
(A) Burt Bacharach (C) Joni Mitchell
(B) Merv Griffin (D) Neil Diamond
2. Which author penned a book that was made into an Oscar-winning movie?
(A) Michael Ondaatje (C) Northrop Frye
(B) Robert Munsch (D) Margaret Atwood
3. Which prolific Canadian author penned the best selling *Jalna* novel in 1927?
(A) Mazo de la Roche (C) Virginia Woolf
(B) Robert W. Service (D) Pierre Berton
4. The *Heritage Minutes* collection is a bilingual Canadian legacy project comprised of 60-second short films, each depicting a significant person, event or story in Canadian history. First produced in 1991, they have been shown on television and in cinemas. In what Heritage Minute does this quote appear: “Both of ye know I canna read a word”.
(A) Midwife (C) Soddie
(B) Frontier College (D) Rural Teacher
5. The Canada / U.S. border is the longest unprotected border in the world. How long is the border?
(A) 5525 Kilometres (C) 9002 kilometres
(B) 8891 Kilometres (D) 6500 Kilometres

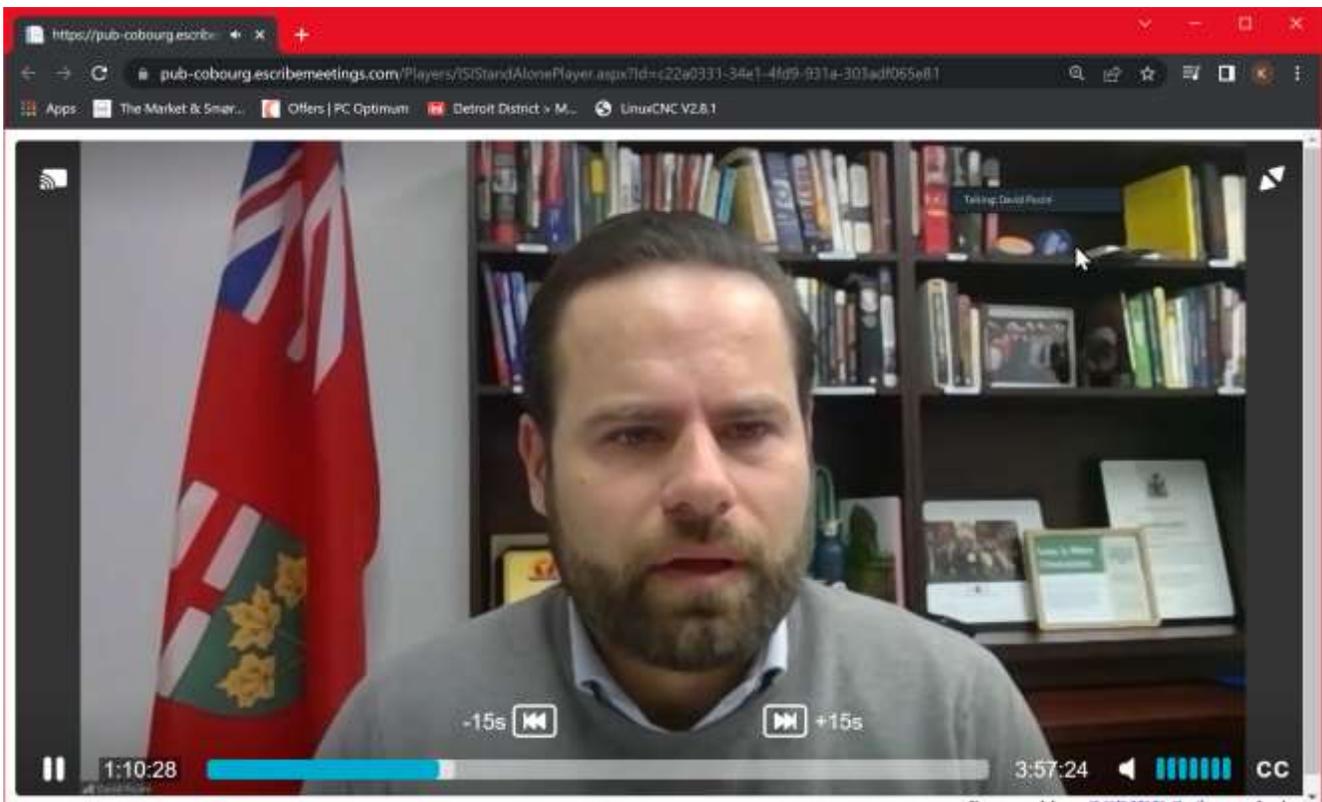
6. Who is depicted on the Canadian \$100 bill?
- (A) Sir Robert Borden
(B) William Lyon Mackenzie King
(C) Sir John A. Macdonald
(D) Queen Elizabeth II
7. Who is the leading hockey scorer in All-Star game competition?
- (A) Wayne Gretzky
(B) Gordie Howe
(C) Mario Lemieux
(D) Joe Sakic
8. This hockey Hall of Famer represented Canada at the Winter Olympics five times, captured four gold medals in women's ice hockey and even played for Team Canada once at the Summer Olympics in softball.
- (A) Cammi Graato
(B) Jayna Hefford
(C) Jennifer Botterill
(D) Hayley Wickenheiser
9. Even smaller than New York City, what is the smallest country in the world?
- (A) Vatican City
(B) Monaco
(C) Nauru
(D) Lichtenstein
10. What is the term used for a group of flamingos?
- (A) Troop
(B) Gaggle
(C) Flamboyance
(D) Muster
11. Which was the first country in the world to use satellites for domestic telecommunications?
- (A) Russia
(B) Britain
(C) Canada
(D) U.S.A.
12. When was Victoria Park established?
- (A) 1898
(B) 1918
(C) 1847
(D) 1905

Answers are hidden elsewhere in this newsletter.

Strathmore House Update

Many CDHS members are very interested in the future of the now closed Brookside Youth Centre and the associated Strathmore House on King Street East. Our October meeting featuring a presentation by Robert Mikel on Strathmore House was one of our most popular meetings of 2021.

At a recent Cobourg Council meeting our MPP David Piccini provided an update on the future of the facility. You can view the entire Council meeting on eScribe at <https://pub-cobourg.escribemeetings.com/Players/ISISStandAlonePlayer.aspx?Id=c22a0331-34e1-4fd9-931a-303adf065e81>. His presentation begins at about 01:09:50 in the video. Unlike Cobourg's former system using YouTube there is no way to provide a link to the appropriate starting point so you will have to use your mouse to move the slider at the bottom of the video.



John Draper's blog has a summary of the current Brookside situation and the recent discussion at Council. Go to <https://www.cobourgblog.com/news-2022/update-on-brookside>

if you missed Mikel's presentation there is a very brief summary of the history of Strathmore at <https://images.ourontario.ca/Cobourg/details.asp?ID=19059>. For a somewhat longer article see <https://2oldguyswalking.wordpress.com/2021/02/28/strathmore-house-to-brookside-youth-centre/>.

2022 Cobourg and District Historical Society Programme

All meetings start at 7:30 p.m. on the 4th Tuesday of each month except as noted below.

February 22, 2022 (Via Zoom)

The Cobourg Conspiracy: Mackenzie's Rebellion of 1837 was quickly quashed and the involvement of soldiers from Cobourg was chiefly in the mopping-up operation which followed. But unrest continued for some time and the next year Cobourg had its own bit of excitement with what has become known as "The Cobourg Conspiracy of 1839". The meeting will include a 15-minute video followed by a panel discussion. With thanks to the Cobourg Museum Foundation, www.cobourgmuseum.ca, for this presentation and their participation on this evening.

March 22, 2022 (Expected to be an "in person" event)

Maureen Jennings - The Murdoch Mysteries Award Winning Author: Ms. Jennings will speak about her inspiration for the Murdoch mystery stories, her attention to historic detail and accuracy, and her role as creative consultant on the series. She would like to share her love of history and her 'treasures' which she hopes will enthrall others as well.

April 26, 2022 (Expected to be an "in person" event)

Rum Runners - The story of Ben Kerr and Prohibition: An exciting story of the roaring twenties in Ontario where rum runners challenged the storms of Lake Ontario to smuggle booze to the American side. Dan Buchanan will present the story of Ben Kerr, the most notorious of the bunch, who ran his last load of booze out of Presqu'île and ended up crushed by February ice near Colborne.

May 24, 2022 (TBA)

An "in-person" social accompanied with an outing or special presentation is planned. Details will be published in a future issue of *Historically Speaking*.

Exploring Abandoned Buildings!

Many are fascinated by the exploration of abandoned buildings. This is a dangerous hobby but fortunately many intrepid explorers have documented their adventures with online videos. We can be comfortable at home without risk to ourselves but still get the vicarious pleasure from the exploration.

There is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WI75N2iC6zc> exploring the old file factory in Port Hope. Around 1853 the Globe Manufacturing Company built the first parts of the current factory building on Cavan Street in Port Hope. The original building included a mill powered by the Ganaraska River to run the factory and there is still evidence on the riverside of the early mill.

In 1901 the Globe factory was sold to the Nicholson File Company of the United States. A new File Factory building was opened on Peter Street in 1955. Nicholson File was taken over by Cooper Industries in 1972 but remained in Port Hope until NAFTA led to operations being moved to Mexico.

If the video makes you want more information, its creator has a blog with further details of his adventures. See <https://riddimryder.com/abandoned-globe-file-manufacturing-company/>

The Cooley rifle factory (later the home of the *Cobourg Star*) on Tremaine Street in Cobourg was a derelict building for many years. The video is not nearly as well done as the Globe Factory one but still may be interesting to some.

See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oau-ANWsmMU>

There are a number of videos exploring Sidbrook, former grand house and later a private hospital in Cobourg. These include:

<https://www.freaktography.net/abandoned-sidbrook-private-hospital>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRX03TSQtT0>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0R5x_sZEUEk

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pi91XdnRzfU>

If your interests are in the paranormal two local women have produced a variety of abandoned building videos including

Sidbrook <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1i5i0DUmL0w>

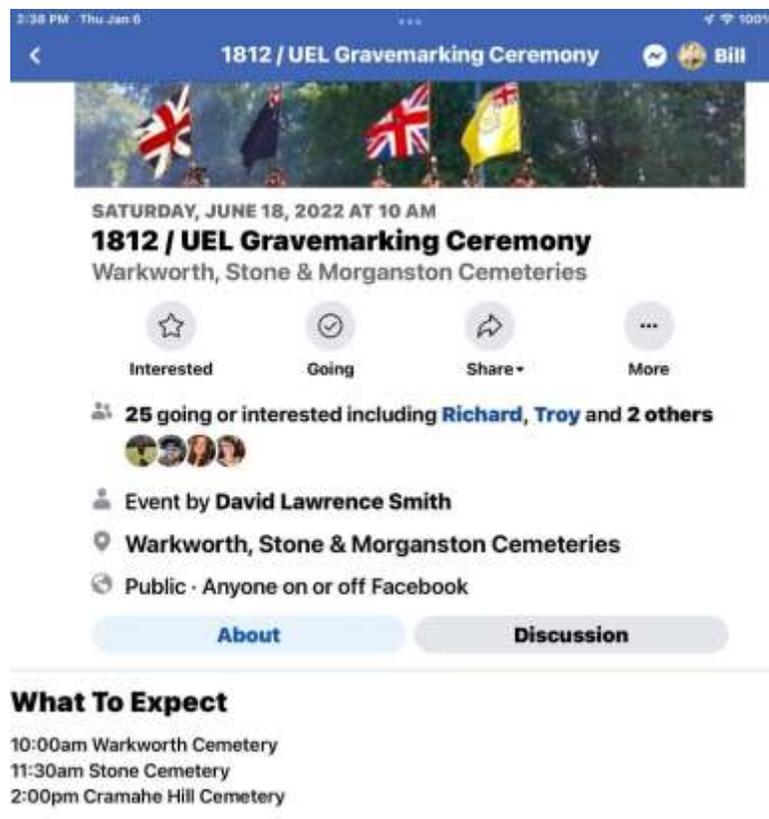
Port Hope farmhouse <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3sbZKO9Q-o>

Gores Landing church <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yywbMAJ0eto>

plus a dozen more.

They are not all in the Cobourg area but there are dozens of abandoned building videos at <https://riddimryder.com/abandoned-classic-victorian-house/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0_UESRP_3SQ



UEL War of 1812 Grave Marker Programme

Bill Russell

The United Empire Loyalists Grave Marker Programme project began in 2014, when the Mount Pleasant Historical Society wanted to recognize the war of 1812 veterans who were interred in the Mount Pleasant Cemetery. It was brought to the attention of the county of Brant Heritage Committee that there were a number of other veterans buried in other cemeteries in the county. The Brant Committee sought the help of the United Empire Loyalist Association of Canada to help

identify the interred veterans. So began the quest that has taken hundreds of hours of research. As to date we have identified and marked over 300 graves of these veterans.

Many of our War of 1812 veterans were members of local militias who came to the defense of this country, to protect their new home. Some had been forced to leave their homes in the United States as loyalists who fought on the side of Great Britain in the War of Independence. Almost 30,000 loyalist families came to Canada, settling in the Maritimes, Quebec and Ontario. Others were new settlers from Ireland, Scotland, Germany, and France seeking free land and a new start.

In June 1812 President Madison had brought his message to Congress that taking Upper Canada would be nothing but a 7-day march through the sparsely populated and weakly defended country. When Madison declared war on Upper Canada, he spoke of liberating the settlers from the British rule and asked them not to take up arms against his army. But he

was wrong! Sir Isaac Brock who was the military and civilian leader of Upper Canada called for all the settlers to take up arms and he asked the indigenous tribes to help repel the American invasion. The settlers were grouped and trained in local militia's and they fought courageously with their native allies led by Chief Tecumseh. Many of them suffered great losses with the American army's tactic of burning crops, homes and mills as they swept through the districts. Members of the militia lost their lives to not only battle but to infections and dysentery. The war raged until December 24, 1814 when the Treaty of Ghent was signed. There were no clear winners with both sides declaring victory but Canada had repelled the aggressors with their first organized army of settlers.

No one knows what the consequences would have been if the United States had won. Would we now be part of the United States? Would we be voting for a President and Congress? The possibilities are endless, but the Americans did not win and we stand here today as proud Canadians honouring the men and women, some of them your ancestors, who fought for your freedom.

If a heritage society knows of any war of 1812 veterans buried in their local cemeteries, please contact me at billrussell10@gmail.com. I will register them and maybe we could hold a ceremony in your municipality.

Member Matters

If you missed it

If you missed our December meeting you can enjoy the recorded version on YouTube. No special sign-in is required and you can view the video at any time on computers, tablets, smartPhones and smartTVs: <https://youtu.be/ceUhZbssXR8>

New Members

Please join me in welcoming our newest members: Bill Zeran and Keith Simpson

Trivia Answers

1B; 2A; 3A; 4D; 5B; 6A; 7A; 8D; 9A; 10C; 11C; 12A

Announcements

Hastings County Historical Society

The Hastings County Historical Society's latest newsletter is available for reading at https://hastingshistory.ca/photos/custom/February_Outlook_2022.pdf Enjoy the usual selection of fascinating material including old fashioned home remedies for delicate people suffering from colds, grippe, pneumonia, the circus in Belleville and vaccinations circa 1908.

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