



# Historically Speaking

The Newsletter of the Cobourg and  
District Historical Society

November 2011 — Issue 247

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## ***Pratt's Mill (now The Mill Restaurant)***

The Cobourg and District Historical Society invites you to join us for a presentation by Sandy Pratt, the great grandson of Alexander Pratt. Alexander was a principal in the Cobourg Flour Milling Company which bought the mill property in 1883.

Sandy's talk will begin with the flood of 1864 and take us through the years of the Pratt family's involvement with the mill until they sold it in 1986. Topics will include flour and grist mill machinery, the 1942 fire, some comments about work during the horse and buggy days and anecdotes about neighbours, mill workers and those who bought feed from the mill.

Don't miss this most interesting presentation on Tuesday, November 22. Doors open at 7:30 and the presentation begins at 8:00.

All are welcome so bring a friend!

## Our next two meetings:

January 24, 2012	Doreen West	Not the Bayeux Tapestry but the Baltimore Tableaux
February 28, 2012	Jane Kelly	The Scoop on Watershed's First Ten Years

## Submissions

The CDHS Newsletter welcomes submissions – short articles, announcements, book reviews, letters to the editor, etc. – that will be of interest to our members. Articles should generally be limited to 300 words although exceptions can be made. Submissions should be sent to the editor at 24 Pebble Beach Drive, Cobourg, ON, K9A 2C5 or by email to [ken.strauss@sympatico.ca](mailto:ken.strauss@sympatico.ca).

## David Gregory



We are sorry to announce that David and Ruth Gregory will soon be leaving our community and CDHS to live in Toronto. David has been an active member of our Society for 11 years. During much of that time he held offices in CDHS. He first served as Vice President followed by two terms as President and then a subsequent term as Past President. He is every organization's dream. Not only does he have abundant leadership skills but he is dedicated, sincere, and thoughtful with a great sense of humour. David has also been an active member of St. Peter's Anglican Church.

The Gregorlys are known for their appreciation of music and theatre and undoubtedly will continue to enjoy many cultural activities in Toronto.

At a recent Society Executive meeting, President Ken Strauss presented David with a gift to signify our appreciation: a book entitled *We Live Here* which is a collection of stunning photographs of Northumberland County.

David and Ruth, we wish you all the best of everything in your new home. You will surely be missed by those in this community whose lives you have touched.

Cobourg's loss is Toronto's gain.

Dorothy De Lisle summed it up when she said that “The Gregorys are the kind of folks you like to have as your friends.”

## **Cobourg Reminisces**

### **The Great Escape**

*by Don Houston*

I grew up on Burnham St North, just south of “the old tracks” (the abandoned rail-bed of the defunct Grand Trunk Railway). There were only a handful of houses on Burnham North then: Davis’ at the end of a long lane off Burnham, then the Doyles, then Vince Massey on the East side and the Henderson home and Mrs. Simpson on the west side just north of the CN tracks. The Davis, Henderson & Simpson homes are gone now. There was a cluster of homes on Burnham south of Monk and Stuart streets but it was a lot of walking for a few cups of candy on Halloween.

This particular Halloween in 1950 I was 9 and my brother Jim would have been 12. We were accompanied by Red Davis and the Copeland brothers although the Copelands avoided the big adventure. Having walked Burnham, Monk and Stuart streets collecting candy, we were ready for the big deal on Halloween—getting downtown to soap windows on the main street. We had just got nicely started at about where the Health Food Shop is now when the cops arrived and collared Red, Jim and myself. The Copelands had been lagging behind and missed getting caught.

The officers, Homer Seale and Eugene Butler, loaded us into the back of the cruiser. Homer was driving and Eugene was in the passenger seat. Eugene turned in his seat and asked our names. My quick thinking brother said he was Joe Doyle. With that, Red and I claimed to be Dave and Danny Doyle. The Doyles were R.C.'s as were the Butlers so perhaps that affected Eugene's response. I can remember his exact words as if it were a few moments ago. He looked us over and said, "I don't know what you Doyle boys are coming to."

They took us to the Police Office, which was in the west wing of Victoria Hall. There were benches just outside the Police Office in the foyer of the Hall. They told us to sit there and wait. We waited. It may have been a half-hour or an hour and a half; I don't know. It seemed like an interminable time. There was no one else in the foyer and there was no sound coming from the Police Office so we decided to make a break for it. We tip-toed across the foyer to the East exit door (now closed off) and the escape began. We slid past the fire hall to the south side of the Market building. After close scrutiny we crossed Third Street onto Albert. We kept to the shadows all along Albert, shying every time we thought we saw headlights. At the corner of Forth and Tweed a car did pass but we were kissing the grass in the ditch. From Forth Street we went along King to Sinclair which was open then but little used. We did not want to use Burnham in case Homer and Gene were looking for the "Doyle boys". From Sinclair we scooted across the old tracks to home.

Once home and safe in our beds we etched the Great Escape into our memories. This is the first public viewing and I am sure my mother will be surprised at her boy's behavior. My apologies to the Doyles, Homer Seale and Chief Butler.

## Coburg Fare

Charles Elmé Francatelli worked for many years in Her Majesty's Service as Chief Cook and Maître d'Hôtel to Victoria, Queen of England. For this year's festive season some might like to prepare a traditional recipe of a style attributed to our namesake town.

### *Pudding à la Coburg*

For this purpose it is necessary to have some ready baked brioche. This should be cut in circular slices, about an inch less in diameter than the mould intended to be used for the pudding; the slices of brioches must be placed on a dish, and soaked in maraschino. The side of the mould should be spread with butter, and ornamented with dried cherries and candied citron; and previously to placing the pieces of brioche in the mould, let each of them be spread with apricot jam; the mould must then be filled up with some vanilla-custard prepared for the purpose, part of which must, however, be reserved for the sauce. The pudding should be steamed in the usual way for about an hour and a quarter, and when done, turned out on its dish, and the sauce poured over it.

The above recipe is copied *verbatim* from *Francatelli's Modern Cook: A Practical Guide to the Culinary Art in all its Branches Comprising in Addition to English Cookery, the Most Approved and Recherché Systems of French, Italian, and German Cookery.*

## From the Archives

What and where was this building? For a hint the building is part of the turn of the century industry in Cobourg. See the next issue of *Historically Speaking* for the details.



Photograph courtesy of the Cobourg Public Library.

## Notes and Notices

### ***Tell Me Your Hurricane Hazel Stories***

I am currently researching Hurricane Hazel's impact on Cobourg and Hamilton Township. If you lived in the area in October of 1954 and have stories to tell, I would like to record them. Please contact Judith Goulin at [jgoulin@hotmail.com](mailto:jgoulin@hotmail.com) or 905-372-7684. Thank you in advance.

### ***Port Hope Historical Society***

The November meeting of the Port Hope Historical Society will feature a presentation by Craig Ross on *Cemeteries and their History*. The meeting will be at 7:30pm on November 16 in the Ganaraska Conservation Authority Building Meeting Room, 216 Highway 28 North, Port Hope. Phone 905-885-2981 or see [www.porthopehistorical.ca](http://www.porthopehistorical.ca) for further details.

### ***The Innkeeper's Story***

An unusual telling of the Christmas story, written and performed by Mark Finnan, will be performed at St. George's Anglican Church in Grafton on Friday, November 18, at 7pm.

### ***Websites***

There are many websites with great Cobourg-related historical material.

CDHS Archives: [www.cdhsarchives.org](http://www.cdhsarchives.org)

Cobourg Museum Foundation: [northumberlandheritage.ca](http://northumberlandheritage.ca)

Snippets of Cobourg history and current happenings: [www.hardscrabble.ca](http://www.hardscrabble.ca)

Cobourg History: [www.cobourghistory.ca/](http://www.cobourghistory.ca/)

Ontario Veteran Archive: [www.ontarioveteranarchive.ca/](http://www.ontarioveteranarchive.ca/)

Ontario cemetery records: [ocfa.islandnet.com/](http://ocfa.islandnet.com/)

History of Great Lakes travel: [www.maritimehistoryofthegreatlakes.ca/](http://www.maritimehistoryofthegreatlakes.ca/)

Cobourg and Peterborough Railway: [www.harwoodmuseum.ca](http://www.harwoodmuseum.ca)

## CDHS Executive for 2011 – 2012

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