

# Bruce County Historical Notes



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160th Battalion in Chesley



## 160th Bruce Battalion: The Bruce County Historical Society Annual General Meeting

Featuring dinner and a talk by Kent Kraemer about the 160th Bruce Battalion during the First World War. Kent Kraemer is founder of the 160th Bruce Battalion Facebook page and *Marathon of History* magazine's 160th Dispatches column author.

### October 25, 2025

Doors open at 11 a.m., AGM at 12 noon,  
Dinner and speaker to follow.

Lucknow Legion  
477 Inglis St., Lucknow

- Ticket Cost \$30
- Purchase (and cancellation) deadline: October 9
- Email [bchsregister@gmail.com](mailto:bchsregister@gmail.com)
- Open to all



Kent Kraemer

# Route march toughens the men of the 160<sup>th</sup> Battalion

By Bill Streeter

In World War I, when the Canadian Expeditionary Force needed to bolster the force of over 300,000 Canadians already serving, Ottawa called on rural militias across Canada to find another 100,000 volunteers to form battalions.



Marching past Chesley, June 3, 1916 [Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre, A2014.003.K-59-13-04]

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Bruce Militia in Walkerton set out to organize a battalion of 1,000 men, plus a non-combat support team of about 150. In a surge of patriotism, 1,156 men signed up by March 1916 and the 160<sup>th</sup> Bruce Battalion was born. They all arrived in Walkerton on May 4 to start training. Here they were billeted with families, used public buildings and rented the old station building. This put an enormous strain on the community of less than 3,000.

A month of serious training followed. A saw-tooth trench was dug that zigzagged through the park by the Saugeen River. One dispatch recorded that “not one regimental entry of drunkenness was made, and crime was unknown during the time the men spent in their

home communities and in Walkerton”.

A long-distance route march was planned which would show off the men’s fitness. On June 3, 1916 the entire battalion, some 1,260 men, marched the 16 miles from Walkerton to Chesley along Bruce Road 19.

There the Premier of Ontario, William Hearst, a Tara boy, presented the 160<sup>th</sup> with the Battalion Banner that would stay with them during the war.

They marched back to Walkerton on June 5—and they would march again, this time 100 miles, during training at Witley, England in 1917.

After three months’ training in London, Ont. the 160<sup>th</sup> took a

troop train to Halifax and sailed for Britain, arriving at Liverpool on Oct. 27. After training in England, in February 1918 the men of the 160<sup>th</sup> were broken up and sent to France to replace the killed and wounded of four different battalions.

Today, the names of about 130 of the 160<sup>th</sup> Bruce Battalion men who died are inscribed on 20 cenotaphs of remembrance throughout the county. Over 300 of these brave men were wounded.

To honour the road march of the 160<sup>th</sup> Battalion I asked Bruce County Council to rename Bruce Road 19 (Walkerton to Chesley) as the “Highway of Peace”. Council agreed on Oct. 3, 2024 and the sign-unveiling ceremony took place on Nov. 8.

## 160<sup>th</sup> soldiers march 100 miles, packing 65 lbs.

By Deb Sturdevant, Archivist, BCM&CC

Over 1,300 men were recruited from Bruce County between December 1915 and May 1916 to form the 160<sup>th</sup> Battalion. After training in Walkerton and London, Ont., over 1,200 left for England in October 1916

While training in England, the 160<sup>th</sup> distinguished itself on an eight-day march which every man

completed. During the First World War marching was a necessary means of moving troops.

On Sept. 21, 1917 the 160<sup>th</sup> left their camp at Witley (north of Portsmouth) on a circular route of 100 miles. They were burdened with “full marching order.” In a letter to his brother Ross, soldier Andy Robinson described heavy or full marching order as including



Andy Robinson, No. 13 Platoon, D Company, 160th  
[BCM&CC, A2015.022.002]

“everything we possess nearly, and when you get it all on it weighs about 65 lbs.”

Writing to his mother, Capt. Arthur McNally described “full marching order” in more detail. “The full marching order is a little cumbersome at first, but I have got used to it. It consists of a Sam Browne belt with two shoulder straps, carrying a sword, revolver and ammunition pouch. Slung over the right shoulder is the haversack containing shaving kit, towel, soap in one pocket and rations in the other, with a pocket on the outside for a Field Service Pocket book. Over the left shoulder is a water bottle, field glasses in case, a compass and a range-taking instrument also in a leather case. Then my heavy overcoat is rolled and slung across my back by a wide canvas strap that passes over the left shoulder. So far as the sword is concerned, I think that when we get to the firing line, we will leave them behind and carry a rifle or light carbine.” This was not what you would call ultra-light backpacking.

At night, the Battalion camped with little or no shelter. Bivouacs generally consisted of one rubber sheet and one blanket per man, carried in his pack.

Sergeant Andy Robinson described the march in a letter to his sister Mabel: “It was just Jake [OK or fine] for our eight days march. We marched one hundred miles in that time, with heavy marching order. That is besides the running around on the day and a half holiday we had, and at nights, when we would go exploring and sightseeing.”

The men marched between 9.5 and 15.5 miles a day, with one rest day at Dogmersfield Park when they were given time to explore their surroundings. In the 160th Battalion War Diary we learn that twice, after arriving in camp, they “were paraded for bathing to pond” or other water source. The soldiers reported that local people helped keep their spirits up through kind

gestures such as offering fruit and cigarettes.

The 160th Battalion War Diary noted in its Sept. 28, 1917 entry, “During the march the men kept in high spirits throughout. Not one man fell out during the whole march and, with the exception of two men injured by car and two others sent to hospital for tonsillitis, every officer and man taken out returned with the Battalion to camp. The stretcher bearers did good work at each halt attending to the feet of the men in which were inspected at each noon and evening halt by the officers. The marching of the 160th Battalion received praise in all quarters.”

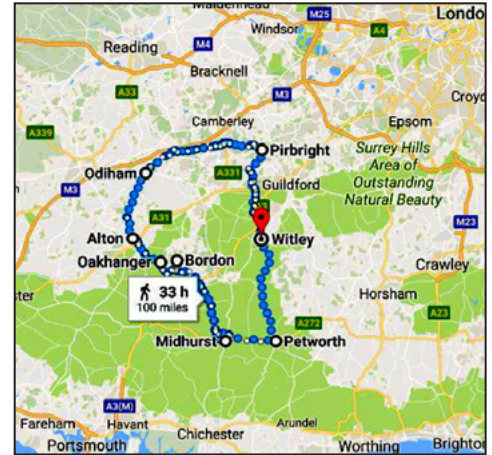
The training march was a serious test of endurance. The soldier’s performance became a source of both personal and Battalion pride. Five months later, the 160th Battalion was disbanded and

the soldiers were sent to France to reinforce various battalions at the front.

For more, see the **Bruce Remembers** web site ([bruceremembers.org](http://bruceremembers.org)) by the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre. It includes names of over 7,850 men and women connected to Bruce County and First Nation communities who served in a military capacity during wartime or peace.

#### Sources

- Bartley**, Allan. “Heroes in Waiting: The 160th Bruce Battalion in the Great War.” Port Elgin: The Brucedale Press, 1996. Print.
- Canada**. War Diary of the 160th (Bruce) Canadian Infantry Battalion. RG9-III-D-3, Volume number: 4946. Library and Archives Canada. <https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/Home/Record?app=fonandcol&IdNumber=1883289&q=WAR%20DIARIES%20160TH%20BATTALION&ecopy=e001123709>. Accessed Jan. 9, 2024. (See Image 51, also identified as Sept. 1917, p. 8 for a typed “Itinerary: Brigade Route March.”)
- James**, F. Treve and Thomas Johnston, eds. “Bruce in Khaki containing a History of the 160<sup>th</sup> Overseas Bruce Battalion and Complete Nominal Roll of all Men who were at any Time on the Strength of the Battalion.” Chesley: F. Treve James and Thomas Johnston, 1934. Print.
- Steele**, Mrs. William. “History of 160<sup>th</sup> Battalion: 100 Mile Hike Continued” clipping; BCM&CC Reference Collection.



Circular route of the 100-mile march

# Bruce County women go to war

By Robin Hilborn

Few realize that Bruce County women served in key roles during wartime. You could find them working as nurse, radar operator, ambulance driver, cook, clerk, telephone operator, messenger, quartermaster, truck driver and mechanic.

Take for example Helen Margaret Root, born in Saugeen First Nation in 1920. Her father Joseph had served in World War I and in 1941 she enlisted in the Canadian Women's Army Corps. Sent to England, she served as a signaller relaying coded messages. She was known for her smile and family lore is that, since women had to be five feet to enlist, the only reason Helen was accepted was "because she charmed the enlisting officer with her smile". She worked in a building in Trafalgar Square, which was bombed regularly. After the war, she married and raised a family, returning to Saugeen First Nation where she stayed in the Elder Lodge. She died at 98 in March 2019.

Local historian Bill Streeter, a member of the Municipal Heritage Committee of Saugeen Shores, has identified 17 women who served from Saugeen Shores and area—two in WWI and 15 in WWII. Besides Helen Root there were sisters Vivian and Kathleen Sees (Port Elgin), Elaine Matheson (Southampton), Vera Eidt (Port Elgin), Dorothy May Longe (of the Longe Métis in Southampton), Doreen Sampson (Southampton), Mable Stowe and Felicia Colbean (Saugeen Township), and eight others.

Vivian Winifred Sees was born in Port Elgin in 1923 and enlisted in 1943 in the Royal Canadian Air Force. She was assigned to a radar station in Victoria, one of 11 which monitored west coast air traffic. There they plotted aircraft movements on a large tabletop

map. The work was highly secret and Vivian is still reticent to talk about it.

Another of the Ladies in Uniform is Elaine Matheson, who enlisted in 1941 as a nurse in the RCAF and went overseas to join a bomber squadron for a year before being posted to the Canadian wing of the Queen Victoria Hospital. It was in this hospital that the Canadian Air Force opened a burn unit for injured pilots. Author Rita Donovan told her story in *As for the Canadians: The Remarkable Story of the RCAF's "Guinea Pigs" of World War II* (2000). After the war Elaine started work at the new Southampton Hospital in 1947 and then at Women's College Hospital in Toronto. She returned home to her local hospital and rose to be Director of Nursing until retiring in 1977. She died in 1999.

Vera Eidt was born in Port Elgin in 1901 and chose a career in nursing that took her to Cleveland, Ohio and then to Nelson, B.C. where she was Director of Nursing. In 1942 she joined the Canadian Army Medical Corps with the rank of Lieutenant. She served as a nursing administrator in Canada, France, Germany and the Mediterranean aboard the hospital ship *Letitia*. In 1960, she was made a Fellow of the American Hospital College of Hospital Administrators. She retired in 1968, died that year and is buried in Port Elgin cemetery.

In 1922 Dorothy May Longe was born into the large Longe Métis family of Southampton. She enlisted in the Canadian Women's Army Corps and rose to the rank of Regimental Sgt. Major, serving in England, France, Belgium and Holland. She was part of the group of women who, in 1946, arranged for the return home of Canadian soldiers. She married Bertram C. Smith and lived on the Smith farm until 1956 when they moved to Southampton. After her husband's death, she moved to Port Elgin and died in 1991.



Helen Root



Vivian Sees



Elaine Matheson



Vera Eidt



Dorothy Longe

# Port Elgin WWII airmen remembered at Runnymede Memorial

By Bill Streeter

The Runnymede Memorial in Surrey, England is dedicated to 20,456 airmen and women from the Commonwealth Air Force killed in World War II. They have no known grave anywhere in the world.

Among the names inscribed at Runnymede are 3,031 Canadians. There visitors can find the names of three airmen from Port Elgin.

On Panel 60 is the name of Norman Frederick Hettrick of Port Elgin. He was co-pilot of a Wellington Bomber shot down while on a bombing mission on Nov. 26, 1941. The bodies of him and his five fellow crew members were never found.

Panel 103 lists Lloyd Sylvester Ernst, who came to Port Elgin as a young boy. His father was an Evangelical minister. Lloyd was only 20 when on Sept. 25, 1942 his four-engined Handley Page Halifax bomber did not return from its mission.

On Panel 175 is Frederick Leroy Vaupel. His family arrived in Port Elgin in 1932 when he was 20 years old. He enlisted in the RCAF in 1940 and was selected to train as a single-engine fighter pilot. The Mustang was the most popular one-man plane for Commonwealth pilots. On June 17, 1943 he was on patrol in the Bay of Biscay, off Spain, when he did not return.

One other airman from Port Elgin died without a known grave. Most unfortunately, he was the younger brother of Fred Vaupel. Raymond Ernest Vaupel arrived in Port Elgin in 1932 at age 15. He joined the RCAF in 1941 and trained as a bomber pilot. Upon arrival in England, he was assigned to North Africa where he was the only Canadian in the bomber crew. Flying out of Egypt, they were on a night bombing mission to Tobruk, Libya. There were two reports of the crew



*The gates to Runnymede Memorial*

being killed when downed in the Mediterranean. The first report was that all five had died. The second had only Ray and one other dying. Ray is named on the Alamein Memorial, Egypt, on Panel 283.

*From the April 2025 newsletter of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 340, Port Elgin*



*The panels at the Memorial*

## Donate your military items to BCM&CC

By Deb Sturdevant, Archivist

The Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre has preserved a wealth of resources which bring personal military experiences to life. Community members have generously donated their relatives' military diaries, letters, photographs, interviews, certificates, medals, uniforms and more.

The Bruce County Archives provides a permanent home for military items, arranging, describing and digitizing them to make them accessible to the public.

You can access these resources, online and on-

site, to learn more about soldiers' experiences and the experiences of Bruce County communities during times of international conflict.

To see some examples of the Archives' resources, visit "Exploring military experiences", [brucemuseum.ca/collection/sharing-military-experiences](http://brucemuseum.ca/collection/sharing-military-experiences).

If would like to donate military-themed items like military information, paper items, photographs and videos, contact [archives@brucecounty.on.ca](mailto:archives@brucecounty.on.ca). To donate three-dimensional artefacts such as medals and uniforms, email [museum@brucecounty.on.ca](mailto:museum@brucecounty.on.ca).

# Farmerettes lend a hand during WWII

By Robin Hilborn

1940 ... a time of national emergency. Hitler's army ruthlessly sweeps western Europe. Britain suffers devastating bombing raids and food shortages due to German blockades.

Canadian farms will have to supply hundreds of thousands of tons of food to feed the troops and the starving people of Europe.

Yet with the men from the farms joining the fight overseas who was going to harvest the crops?

Ontario's solution to the acute labour shortage was to call on teenage girls to join the Farmerette program (officially, the Ontario Farm Service Force).

Advertisements spread the word about how girls 16 years old and up could "lend a hand" in the war effort by spending their summer holidays working on vegetable and fruit farms in southwest Ontario.

And the young women responded enthusiastically—over 40,000 signed on to be a farmerette. (It didn't hurt that they could get out of taking their final exams, and

get paid at the going rate.)

Arriving from different parts of Ontario and Quebec, most of the women came from urban areas. They had no farming experience, but quickly showed they were capable.

They stayed in work camps which Ontario Farm Service Force had set up across southwest Ontario. Each day, farmers would come to recruit workers.

In the *Hamilton Spectator* of June 14, 1941 there are six photos over the caption "Girls to do their bit to win war by aiding Niagara District Farmers". One photo shows a large barn "fixed up to house 60 girls from Hamilton, Wiarton, Owen Sound, Walkerton and Milton". Named from Bruce County are Shirley Fatum and Nadine Yager of Wiarton.

For months the farmerettes worked long days in market gardens, orchards and canneries. They planted, hoed, hand-weeded, thinned, staked, picked fruit and harvested vegetables.

After grueling days in the fields they hitchhiked

**Ontario FARMERS NEED YOUR HELP  
to Produce Food for Victory**

**YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN** from Ontario High Schools and Collegiates are making one of the greatest contributions of all to the Allied War Effort by serving as Farm Cadets and Farmerettes. The production of food is so vital to the success of the campaign against the axis that it's an important job for everyone. By spending your holidays as a Farm Cadet or Farmerette, you'll not only make a valuable and patriotic contribution to the war effort, but you'll do your health a world of good and extend your knowledge. For full information concerning housing, supervision, rates of pay, hours of work, etc., see your principal or write Ontario Farm Service Force, Parliament Buildings, Toronto, NOW.

**FARM SERVICE FORCE ONTARIO WE LEND A HAND**

**DOMINION-PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE ON FARM LABO**

Advertisement from the Farm Service Force

to dances, went on hay rides, roller-skated or swam in the lake. Some ended up meeting their husbands. Others had eye-opening experiences like working in the fields alongside German prisoners of war.

At war's end the Farm Service program had been so successful that it was continued. But by 1952 the arrival of post-war refugees and immigrants, combined with farm mechanization, made the program unnecessary.

In 2019 author and photographer Bonnie Sitter of Exeter, Ont. was going over old family photographs and was intrigued by one of a group of smiling women on the running board of a truck, inscribed "Farmerettes 1946".

The image sparked a desire to know more about "farmerettes". She collaborated with Shirleyan English—herself a postwar-era farmerette—to tell their story, in the book *Onion Skins and Peach Fuzz: Memories of Ontario Farmerettes*.

Filmmaker and musician Colin Field was attending the

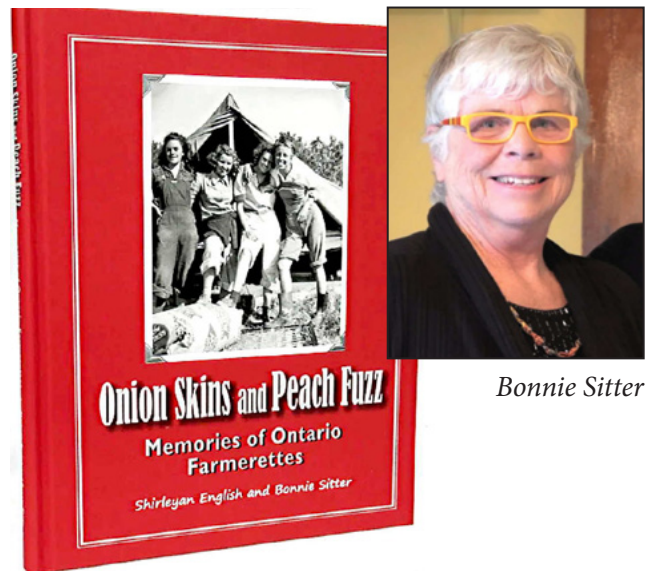


Bonnie Sitter lobbied for a Canada Post stamp, issued in 2024. It is titled "Taking a break from hoeing celery, Thedford, Ont., 1945"

Celtic Roots Festival in Goderich when he met Bonnie and learned about the farmerettes. They resolved to join forces to work on a documentary based on the book.

In an interview with *Legion Magazine* in May 2025, Colin said his goal as director of the 50-minute film, "We Lend a Hand: The Forgotten Story of Ontario Farmerettes", was to tell the story through the surviving farmerettes' own experiences. He interviewed 20 farmerettes who are still alive, some over 100 now.

"We Lend a Hand" premiered in April 2025 at the Junction North International Documentary Film Festival in Sudbury. After showings in Goderich, Lucknow, Stratford and further afield, "We Lend a Hand" came to Southampton



Bonnie Sitter



on August 20. At the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre the Historical Society hosted two sold-out screenings as fund-raisers for the filmmakers. The movie trailer is at [welendahand.ca](http://welendahand.ca).

Bonnie Sitter has donated to the Archives at BCM&CC her collection of newspaper clippings about farmerettes from Bruce County.

# David Pyper pens lively history of Sauble Beach

By John C. Carter

Sauble Beach has recently received much media coverage about current issues, including land claims and the entrance sign change to “Saugeen Beach”. However, precious little has been mentioned about its past. How can we ameliorate this shortfall? Here’s a solution. I’d recommend that you read David Pyper’s book *Sun, Sand and Surf: A History of Sauble Beach*.

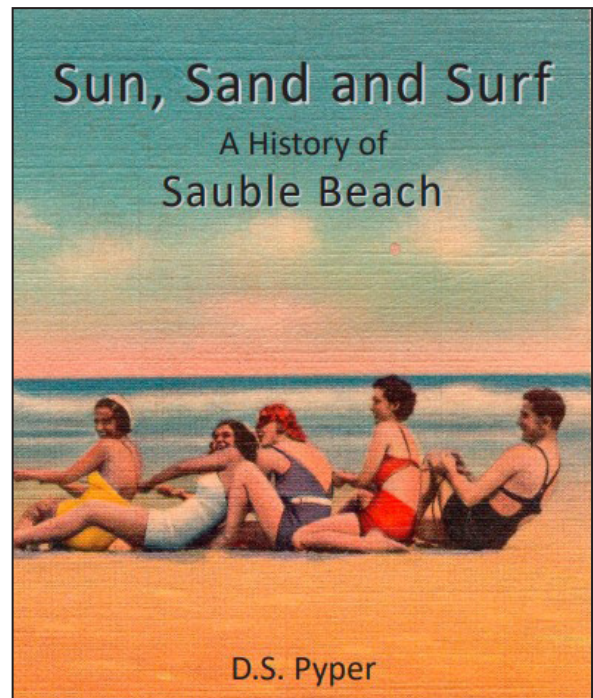
David and his family are long-time seasonal residents at South Sauble Beach, his family having vacationed there beginning in 1940 and David since 1955. He is currently a director for the Bruce County Historical Society. He started researching and writing the book in 2016 and published first and second editions in 2024.

David’s thesis is that Sauble Beach is made up of several important components, all critical to the development and evolution of Sauble Beach as a whole entity. In early chapters, he includes information about First Nations, South Sauble, North Sauble, Chief’s Point and Sauble Falls. Chapter 3 deals with the Ojibway, the first residents at Sauble. This section was reviewed and authenticated by award-winning Ojibway poet and author David Plain, whose grandparents lived at the Saugeen Reserve. Praises must go to author Pyper for including this informative material, something that earlier histories of Sauble Beach have neglected.

Later chapters come from various sources, including issues of the *Sauble Signpost* and the *Sauble Bulletin*. He presents the birth of the Sauble community, the growth of both North and South Sauble, getting to the beach by roads, early cottage life and Sauble’s seasonal activities. This is followed by overviews of beach life, and growth and activities, by decade, from 1910 to 2000, plus a chapter covering 2000 to 2020.

David concludes with a postscript. I feel that he should have included a more substantive conclusion, which would sum up positions taken, information provided and the thesis the author proposes for writing the book. Maybe included in the third edition?

This publication is chock-full of useful facts and informative research. To help navigate the 288 pages, three appendices with chapter notations (end notes), photo credits and a bibliography are included. One



serious shortfall is the lack of an index, which makes it nearly impossible to locate items of interest throughout. I hope this appears in future editions.

In addition the text is augmented by nearly 200 images and photographs from the author’s and other private collections, and archival sources. Many of these have never been seen publically nor previously published, which adds another great bonus to this book.

Finally, the author is donating any proceeds from book sales to the Bruce County Historical Society and to the Bruce County Archives in Southampton. Both these are worthy causes which deserve your support.

*Sun, Sand and Surf* can be purchased at Unique Pieces, Sauble Beach; Phoenix Books, Owen Sound; Warton Book Store, Warton; Bruce County Books, Cargill; and the Bruce County Museum, Southampton. It can also be ordered from Amazon.

So do get a copy, and read, learn and enjoy this literary treasure. Also be sure to make your friends and neighbours aware of the book’s availability so that they can also experience it and add it to their libraries.

*John C. Carter is a long-time seasonal Sauble Beach resident and is the Peninsula Director for the Bruce County Historical Society.*

# Nova Scotia lighthouse seeks twin

By Robin Hilborn

In June the president of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society visited Tobermory. Denyse Contrasty of Dartmouth, N.S. was struck by how similar the Big Tub Lighthouse was to the Gabarus Lighthouse on the eastern side of Cape Breton Island.

Both have six sides. In fact Gabarus is the only hexagonal lighthouse in the Maritimes, built in 1890. Big Tub was built in 1885. Both have fixed red lights and switched from oil to electricity in the early 1950s. They do differ in height: Gabarus stands 9.7 metres, Big Tub is 13 metres.

The two are also subject to storm waves. Gabarus was moved back from an eroding cliff in 2015 while Big Tub had part of its foundation washed away by a winter storm in 1987. Gabarus' light shines year-round while Big Tub is a seasonal light. As for federal protection, neither got Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act designation, despite much community support.

In a Facebook post Denyse asked, "You have heard about twinned cities, but what about twinning lighthouses?" She said she did some Googling and it appears no lighthouses have been "twinned" to date, the way cities have in the past.

What is the advantage of "twinning" lighthouses? Perhaps we could say, "if you liked this lighthouse, here is another to see in another province". The idea of twinning these two lighthouses is just an idea at this point.

Last year Denyse wrote an article about the Kincardine Lighthouse for their magazine, *Lightkeeper*. The year before she wrote about Point Clark Lighthouse. See their website, [www.nslps.com](http://www.nslps.com).



Gabarus Lighthouse (Library and Archives Canada)



Big Tub Lighthouse (officially, Lighthouse Point Lighthouse) (Library and Archives Canada)

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## Plaques of the Bruce County Historical Society

At the Society's July 2025 board meeting past president Dorne Fitzsimmons reported that he had found the Mary Riter Hamilton plaque. It was stored at Jim Whytock's house pending needed repair.

In the past BCHS had a Historic Markers Committee, which commissioned and installed these plaques:

**Duncan Marshall**—Plaque unveiled Sept. 25, 1971, dedicated to agriculture minister Hon. **Duncan Marshall**, at Gillies Hill, Elderslie Township. Erected by the Bruce County Historical Society. Unveiling chaired by BCHS president Mrs. James McClure.

**J.H. Jones**—To the steamer *J.H. Jones*, in Bluewater Park, Wiarton. Unveiled Aug. 6, 1972. This plaque was missing for some time. It was found in Ridgetown College and returned

to Wiarton in 1980.

**Founder of Scone**—To the founder of Scone, Thomas Bearman (1806-1899). Unveiled June 23, 1973.

**Sutton, Walker, Withers**—Three plaques to commemorate early pioneers William Sutton, Paddy Walker and William Withers. Unveiled in 1973 at the Sutton Park Inn near Kincardine. The Inn is built on land Sutton owned. Walker was the first innkeeper in Penetangore. Withers was a founder of Penetangore. The source (*Historical Notes*, July 1973) does not specifically say these are BCHS plaques.

**Kincardine Township Armory**—To Major William Daniel and the Kincardine Township armory, a wooden shed on the Melvin Dahmer farm. Unveiled Aug. 19, 1979. Joyce Osborne reported in August 2025 that trees block the view of the plaque.

*Continued on page 12*

# NEWS BRIEFS



**At Authors Night**, Aug. 11, Paul White appeared by video link in the Bruce County Museum Theatre to discuss his book *Shipwrecks, Parks & Sawmills*. In person were Jennifer Frankum, reading poems from *The Position of My Heart*, and Willy Waterton and Audrey Armstrong, authors of *Orchids of Bruce & Grey*. For videos, see Paul White, [youtu.be/FU7UcsPimk8](https://youtu.be/FU7UcsPimk8); Jennifer Frankum, [youtu.be/ErNGvTp68tE](https://youtu.be/ErNGvTp68tE); Armstrong and Waterton, [youtu.be/tmaOov1vLdU](https://youtu.be/tmaOov1vLdU). (Robin Hilborn photo)



**The Heritage Farm and Steam Show** returned to Paisley, Aug. 15-17, 2025, and at the Munro Barn you could find the Historical Society, along with the Genealogical Society and the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre.

(Anne Goeden photo)

**Plowing match in Bruce County** — The Bruce County Plowmen’s Association has hosted many plowing matches. Initially, some thought that Bruce County was too far removed from big population centres of Ontario to host the International Plowing Match. However, in 1976 the people of Ontario proved them wrong, descending *en masse* on the Walkerton IPM. The county hosted again in 1993 and 2008. Now the IPM returns to Walkerton, Sept. 22-26, 2026, and BCHS will be there selling its publications such as *The Bruce* and *History of the County of Bruce*.



**Huge turnout** for Saugeen Shores Municipal Heritage Committee’s walking tour of downtown Southampton on July 13, 2025. About 70 people enjoyed the historical stories from Southampton’s Sheila Latham, walking from the Flag to Chantry Breezes B&B where Robin Hilborn sold his *Guide to Old Southampton*. During the tour actor/director Stevie Louise Vallance performed as “Eliza Knowles”, recounting her experiences operating her tourist resort and dance pavilion. At the old railway station former Southampton Mayor Art Knechtel serenaded the group with century-old ballads.

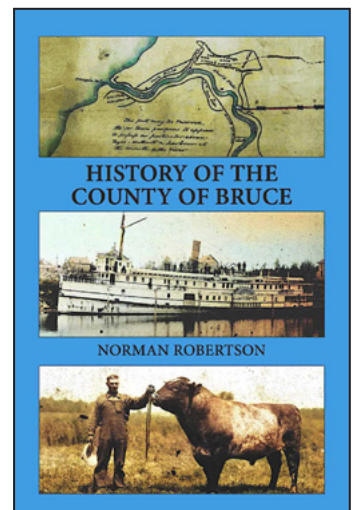
(John Blumenson photo)

**Halton’s history in jeopardy** — On July 9, 2025 Halton Region Council decided to eliminate its Heritage Service department by Christmas. This entails closing the Halton Heritage Centre, formerly the Halton Region Museum, and dispersal or auction of its 30,000-item historical collection. Concerned citizens are advocating for reversal of the decision.

**New newspaper** — Sauble Beach has a new paper, “The Sauble Surf”. The free online paper carries local news, events and business advertising. First edition was June 3, 2025. [thesaublesurf@gmail.com](mailto:thesaublesurf@gmail.com).

**Chantry Island record** — In August, Marilyn Pope of Acton was the 30,000th visitor to tour Chantry Island. Southampton’s Marine Heritage Society volunteers have run tours to the island and the 1859 lighthouse since 2001. [chantryisland.com](http://chantryisland.com)

**Robertson reprint due in September** — At right is Robin Hilborn’s design for the cover of the fifth edition of *History of the County of Bruce*. The Society has approved printing of 100 copies by Tobermory Press. Delivery is expected in September.



# COMING EVENTS

## Bruce County Historical Society

[brucecountyhistory.on.ca](http://brucecountyhistory.on.ca), [facebook.com/BruceCountyHS](https://facebook.com/BruceCountyHS)

### Oct. 25, 2025. Annual General Meeting.

Lucknow Legion, 477 Inglis St.; 11 a.m.–3 p.m. **Kent Kraemer** will speak on the 160<sup>th</sup> Bruce Battalion. Meeting at noon. Tickets, \$30; buy by Oct. 9. Register at [bchsregister@gmail.com](mailto:bchsregister@gmail.com).

## Bruce County Genealogical Society

[brucecountygenealogicalsociety.ca](http://brucecountygenealogicalsociety.ca),  
[bcswebinars@gmail.com](mailto:bcswebinars@gmail.com) and Facebook

**Sept. 29, 2025. George Streeter's story: a Barnardo child in Bruce County.** 7 p.m., Bruce County Museum. **Bill Streeter** speaks about his grandfather George, placed in the Barnardo emigration program in 1887. Free to register; call 519-797-2080 or email: [museum@brucecounty.on.ca](mailto:museum@brucecounty.on.ca)

**Sept. 16–Oct. 28. Family History and Genealogical Workshop.** Every Tuesday, 7-9 p.m., Bruce County Museum. Start your family history; find records; DNA testing; publishing; reunions. \$75. Preregistration required: email [annegoeden.bcs@gmail.com](mailto:annegoeden.bcs@gmail.com) or call the archives, 226-909-2426.

**Oct. 13. Webinar with Bonnie Sitter.** 7 p.m. ET. The author of *Onion Skins and Peach Fuzz* talks about the Farmerettes. To register: <https://bit.ly/2025-10-13-BCGS-BonnieSitter>.

**Nov. 10. Webinar with Kent Kraemer.** 7 p.m. ET. Researching the 160<sup>th</sup> Battalion, military records and genealogy. To register: <https://bit.ly/2025-11-10-BCGS-KentKraemer>.

## Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre

[brucemuseum.ca](http://brucemuseum.ca), 519-797-2080

**Sept. 15–Nov. 30, 2025. A National Crime: The Residential School System, Local Saugeen Ojibway Nation Impacts.** From the early 1830s to 1996, over 150,000 First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, some as young as four years, were forced to attend residential schools funded by the Canadian government and administered by the churches. Over 300 children from Saugeen First Nation and Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation were forcibly removed from their homes and communities to attend these schools.

**Sept. 18. “Sugarcane” Documentary Screening.** 7-9 p.m. In 2021 evidence of unmarked graves was discovered on the grounds of an Indian residential school run by the Catholic Church in Canada. After years of silence, the forced separation, assimilation and abuse many children experienced at these segregated boarding schools was brought to light, sparking a national outcry against a system designed to destroy Indigenous communities. Free. Rated R.

**Oct. 23. An Evening with Anna Maria Tremonti.** 7 p.m. UNIFOR Family Education Centre, Port Elgin. \$75.

**Nov. 1. Treaties History Presentation.** 1-3 p.m. Ahead of Treaties Recognition Week (Nov. 2-8), **Trish Nadjiwon Meekins** speaks on our collective treaty rights and obligations, with a focus on Saugeen Ojibway Nation territory. Free. Preregister to save your seats.

**Nov. 22. A Global Photography Story.** Muse Talks Academic Lecture Series. 1 p.m. **Sandy Nelson** on nature photography and her expedition to Antarctica. \$10 members, \$15 non-members.

### Application for BCHS Membership

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Type: Annual - \$20 Life - \$500

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ I would also like to make a donation of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Complete form, select type of membership and make cheque payable to “Bruce County Historical Society”.  
Mail to: Joyce Osborne, Membership Director, Box 298, Ripley, ON N0G 2R0

*As a member, you contribute to the preservation of Bruce County heritage. See [brucecountyhistory.on.ca](http://brucecountyhistory.on.ca) for more information on the Society's goals and mandate, and the benefits of membership.*

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**Lime Kiln, Inverhuron**—To the old lime kiln at Lime Kiln Lodge, Inverhuron. Unveiled Oct. 12, 1980.

**John Spence**—“Southampton’s First Permanent Settler”. Capt. Spence House, 18 Huron N., Southampton. Unveiled by Judge Wishart Spence on June 25, 1983. “Erected by the Bruce County Historical Society with assistance from the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture”. The date in “...made his way back in 1849” should read “1848”.

**Mary Riter Hamilton**—To commemorate WWI battlefield artist Mary Riter Hamilton (1867-1954) of Teeswater. Unveiled in 2007 at the BCHS AGM; installed at Teeswater Town Hall. Removed for repairs and is in safekeeping.



BCCHS plaque to Capt. John Spence.

## Membership renewal

**A friendly reminder to check your membership status on the address label on this newsletter. If you see (2025) on the label, it's time to renew.**

- Annual Memberships: \$20 each
- Life Memberships: \$500 each

Please join or renew by submitting your membership fees or questions to:

• Joyce Osborne, Membership Secretary, Box 298, Ripley ON N0G 2R0

• Email: [janlea@hurontel.on.ca](mailto:janlea@hurontel.on.ca)

• Payment can also be made by e-transfer to [bchs1957@gmail.com](mailto:bchs1957@gmail.com)

For memberships mailed to the U.S., please pay in U.S. funds.

**Contribute to the BCCHS Yearbook**—Don't forget to send Bill Stewart your articles for the 2027 BCCHS Yearbook. Bill accepts email at [willstew@bmts.com](mailto:willstew@bmts.com).

### Full-colour newsletters available by e-mail

To receive a PDF copy of BCCHS newsletters, and enjoy colour images, contact Dorne Fitzsimmons at [dcf@bmts.com](mailto:dcf@bmts.com)



Bruce County Historical Society

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[www.brucecountyhistory.on.ca](http://www.brucecountyhistory.on.ca)



Annual membership in the Bruce County Historical Society is \$20