

HERITAGE HAPPENINGS



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WEFHS Board 2020-2021

The position of Treasurer remains open. Please contact us if you are interested—or know of someone who is.

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Keeping heritage alive during COVID

The Big Move

Looking for last-minute Christmas gift ideas? You can find a variety of publications available for purchase on our website, including *The Big Move*, a children's book featuring historic photographs of the area paired with original illustrations. Explore Flamborough's history as you follow a 19th-century family's journey from Dundas to Waterdown. Hidden Easter eggs on each page teach about historic items such as whipple trees and darning eggs. Published earlier this year, our first illustrated story makes a wonderful Christmas present for history lovers young and old.



You can save the postage and pick up books at the Archives. Please call (905)540-5161 or email archives@flamboroughHistory.com to arrange a pickup date and time.

Social Media

Our ever-expanding social media platforms help make Flamborough history accessible to a wider community! This month on Instagram, we featured building snapshots, some local music history, and candid shots of daily life in the community. Don't have an Instagram account? Follow "Waterdown Memories" on Facebook, where community members share memories, admire photos, pose questions, and connect with each other through an interest in the village's past.

YouTube

Make sure to catch up on our latest YouTube videos! During November, we highlighted a couple of local landmarks: the Eager-Weeks block at Mill and Dundas Streets and the Rockton General Store. Don't miss "Canada's Role During D-Day: In Remembrance", which features historic voice recordings of Matthew Halton. Subscribe to the Flamborough Archives & Heritage Society Channel to be notified when we post new content!

Notre Dame Convent & Boarding School

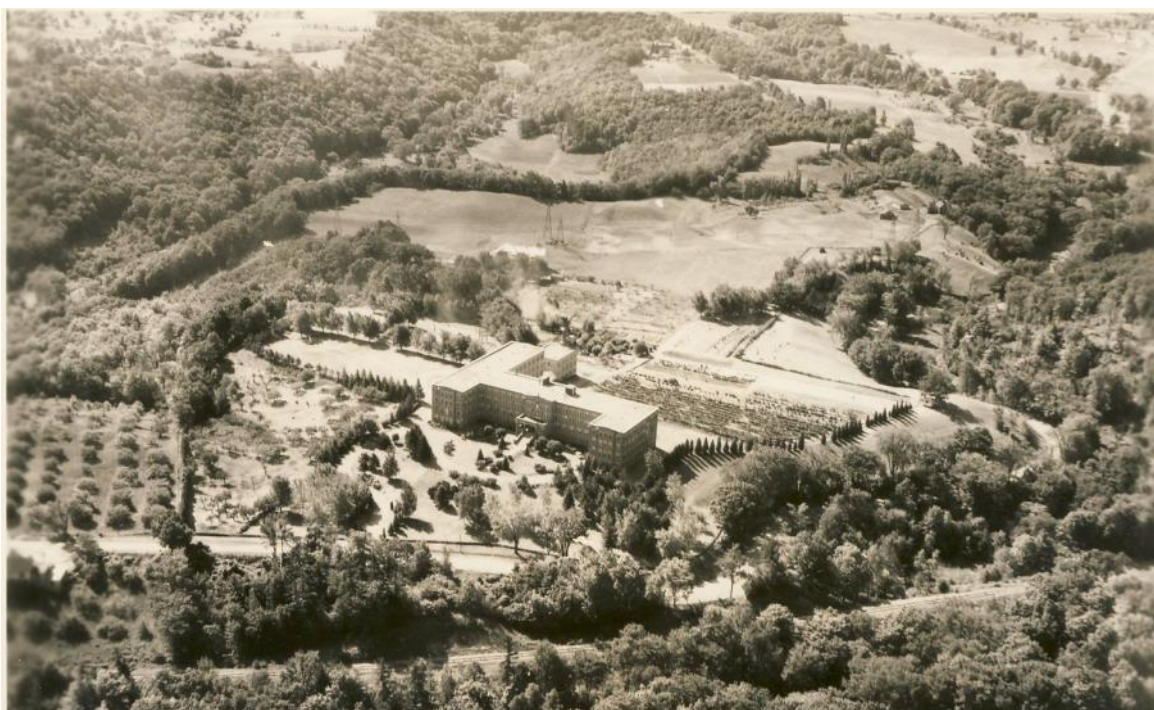
HERITAGE PAPER #292

The centuries-old Congregation of Notre Dame took on a new life after its re-establishment in 1833 encouraged the spread of the Congregation across Europe and America. School sisters seeking to teach in Canada prior to 1907 were Americans who had received their teacher training in Milwaukee and other schools in the United States; thus, when the Ontario government passed legislation in 1907 to ensure that all teachers—including those at Separate schools—held an Ontario Teacher's Certificate, it became evident that the Congregation needed to make training available in Canada. Sister Lioba Dietrich quickly established St. Anne's in Kitchener for high school girls entering the School Sisters of Notre Dame and nine other convents opened in Canada by 1926.

It was not until 1927, however, that Canada opened its own Provincial Motherhouse and Novitiate located in Waterdown. Here, candidates preparing to become members of the Congregation would be able to complete their studies.

A few locations were considered for the new Motherhouse—including the land on which Joseph Brant Hospital was later built in Burlington—but the farmland belonging to Charles Hunter seemed most suitable and was purchased in 1925. A fifty-six acre farm site on which the four-storey building now stands was selected due to its proximity to the Notre Dame schools in the Hamilton Diocese, and also for its magnificent views of Hamilton, the Burlington Bay, and the Niagara Escarpment. The property backs on to the beautiful woodland area now part of the Bruce Trail.

The cornerstone was laid on May 24, 1926 and the building was constructed by Piggott Construction. On February 14th, 1927, the convent officially opened to Sisters, candidates, Aspirants, and boarders transferring from St. Anne's following the latter's closure. Due to the lack of a separate school in Waterdown, Notre Dame's first floor was reserved for elementary-level education; it was here that local children received a Catholic education until St. Thomas School opened in 1951.



Notre Dame and its eventual 196-acre site

After this, Notre Dame became a private high school for girls, serving as both a boarding and a day school—about 50 students boarded each year, with a total enrolment of 150-170. Students travelled from as far as Hong Kong, the Caribbean, and Mexico to attend Notre Dame. During World War II, the Academy briefly took in elementary-grade pupils as boarders while mothers became busy with wartime work.

The Academy closed its doors officially in 1983 due to financial and technological constraints—not to mention many sisters had retired from teaching by this point in time.

The SSND listed the Waterdown convent for sale in 2019 at which time 90 nuns reportedly still lived in the building. The remains of 300 sisters were exhumed and relocated to the Gate of Heaven Catholic Cemetery on Old York Road, although the building has yet to sell.

By Lisa Jefferies



Exterior. C. 1927

While based in religious teachings, the Academy accepted non-Catholic students and offered a “well-rounded” education, according to its former students. Music, art, drama, science, and athletics were all central to the educational experience at Notre Dame. Even in the convent’s earlier years, sisters were encouraged to take university-level courses to further their teaching qualifications and many held B.A. and M.A. degrees. They took pride in the success of their students as some went on to become doctors, teachers, microbiologists, and even prominent opera singers.



Visitors' parlour, c. 1927.

FLAMBOROUGH HEADLINES—50 YEARS AGO IN NOVEMBER

To The Editor:

SAVE OUR PARK!!

In the November 4th issue of the Waterdown Review and the city paper, I read with concern and alarm the report that the Recreation Committee want the council to sell the Memorial Park for real estate development purposes. To replace the present park they suggest buying 67 acres opposite the park on Hamilton Street in East Flamboro. Who would have jurisdiction over the park, Waterdown or East Flamboro? Why should we, the Waterdown taxpayers, buy swampy property in East Flamboro to develop a park when we already have a good park.

Headlines from *the Flamborough Review*, November 1970

WATERDOWN PREPARES FOR ELECTION BATTLE
EAST FLAMBORO ACCLAIMS ALL CANDIDATES
As Waterdown prepares for election for Waterdown and East Flamboro

**BP OIL OPENS NEW DISTRIBUTION CENTRE
 ON HAMILTON STREET NORTH**

Long Hair and Jobs

Some newly minted college graduates — male — who wear their hair long are experiencing difficulty getting good jobs. The young men are discovering that the style so fashionable on campus often produces negative reaction elsewhere.

Why should this be? Of what importance is a cosmetic affectation? The answers probably often escape the very people who feel a quickening rage when they observe what is, after all, only a hair style.

Or is it only a hair style? The truth is — and we have the young people's word for it — that long hair is very often a symbol of contempt for the values of conventional citizens. What provokes a hostile reaction then, is not the fact of long hair, but the obvious desire to provoke a hostile reaction.

Nothing is so sure to arouse antipathy as an overt attempt to do exactly that.

It's just not in human nature to welcome antagonism. Or to hire it. —National Observer.

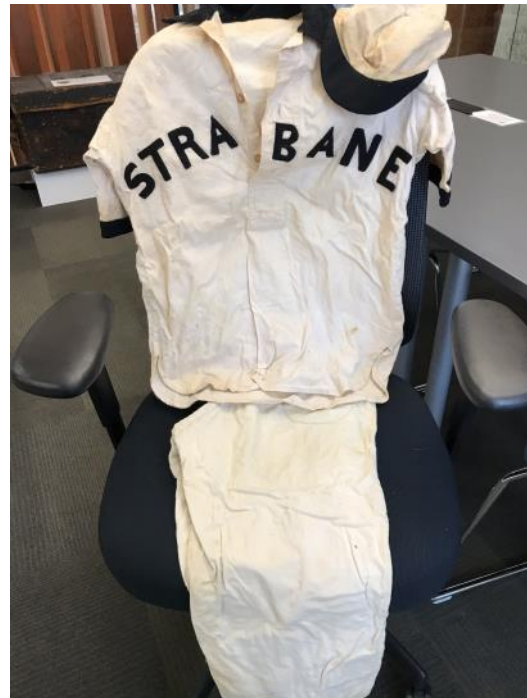
Lady Bowler To Receive Bucket of Chicken Each Week

Each week a lady bowler wins a bucket of Col. Saunders chicken. Last week's winner was: Gail O'Brien with a 277 score. Gail bowled in the Legion Ladies League.

Watch for the Chicken Bucket winner each week. The lady with the highest single score in league bowling at the Village Lanes wins (eligible to win once only). Previous winners were: Orma Gilbert and Sue Szandy.

TREASURES FROM THE ARCHIVES

We recently received a donation of 2 baseball uniforms, from Irene Thurston. They belonged to her father, Neil Robertson Shaver, who was raised on the family farm near Westover. He also maintained strong ties to Strabane, where his mother's family—Robertson and Telford families—were early pioneers. Neil's children were the sixth generation of Shavers to live on the property known as "Braeside Farms", at 1151 Concession Road 6 West.



We also have a small collection of buttons and pins. These are a few of them:



Cuff links and tie tack with Waterdown Crest



Waterdown Lions Club



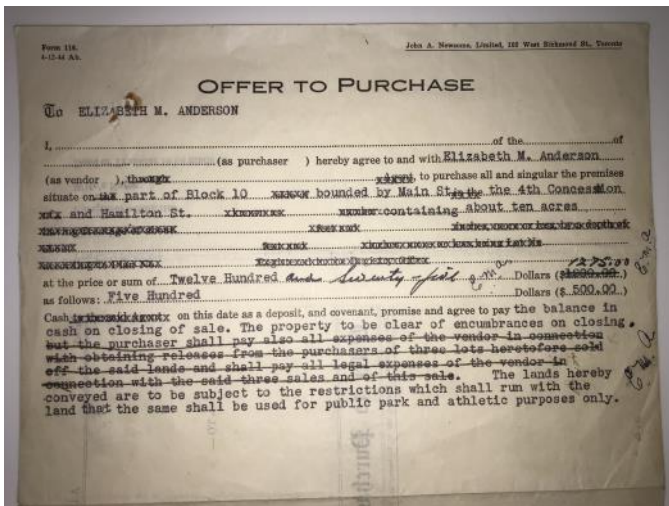
Legion pins, courtesy of Bob Thomas

THREADS THROUGH THE PAST

By Lyn Lunsted

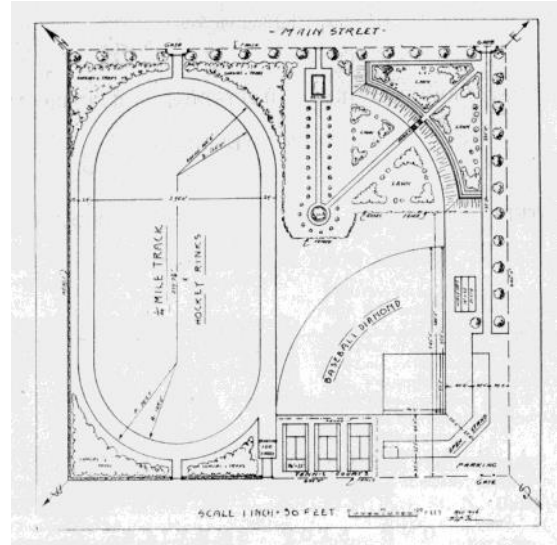
Waterdown Memorial Park

Much has been written about the Memorial Hall in Waterdown and its unique status as a purpose built memorial building to honour the veterans of World War I. Somewhat less is known about the origins of the Memorial Park in Waterdown which has led to various attempts over the years to use the park space for other purposes. This is unfortunate as the park is just as much a memorial to war veterans as is Memorial Hall.



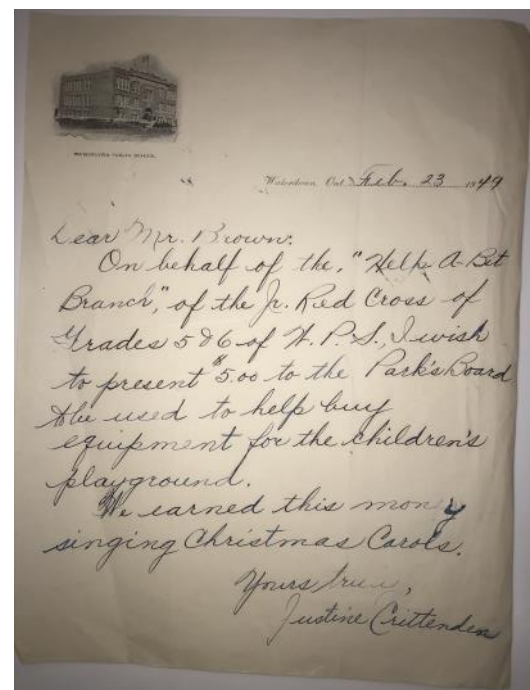
In 1946 a group of community minded citizens got together to develop a memorial park. This group used their own money to purchase 10 acres at the north end of the existing park, bordering Parkside Drive, for \$1,275. The property was owned by Mrs. Elizabeth Anderson and was a sand pit but as Mrs. Anderson was in favour of the development of the park, she sold the land at less than the appraised value.

The group then formed the Waterdown and Community Memorial Park Committee which was comprised of representatives of the Waterdown Women's Institute, the Waterdown Board of Trade, and the Waterdown Amateur Athletic Association, all of which had substantial influence.

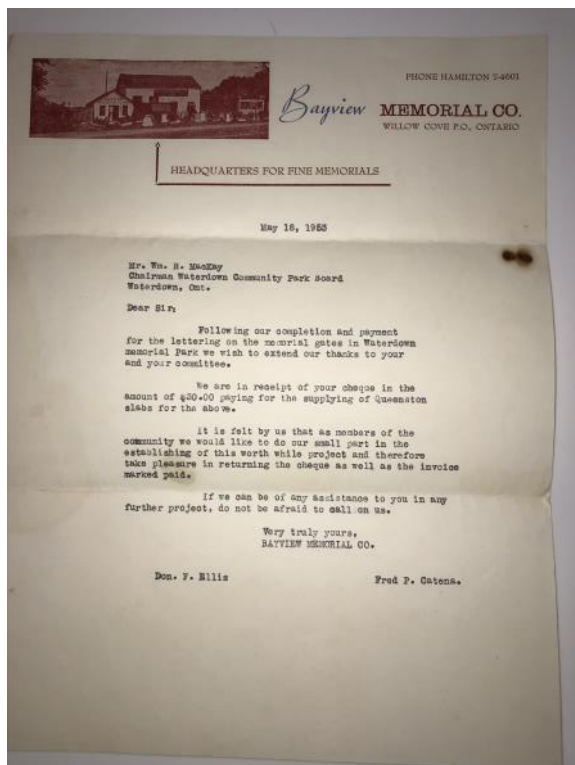


Proposed park plan.
Waterdown Board of Trade Annual Report 1947

A financial campaign was launched and funds were raised from a variety of special events – an auction, donkey baseball, a carnival, bingo etc., as well as from many individual donors. The mailing list to solicit funds held over 550 names. Even school children joined in the fund raising efforts.



Between 1946 and 1949 the funds raised were enough to grade the property, seed it, install bleachers and floodlights and develop the original ball diamond, as well as pay back the original investors for the purchase of the property. Use of heavy equipment was donated, the Women's Institute purchased the bleachers, and materials and seed were heavily discounted by the suppliers.



Engravers of the entry gate plaques returned the cheque and donated their work.

In 1949 arrangements were made to purchase the remaining southerly portion of the land from Mrs. Anderson, for \$2,000. The local Agricultural Society (Fall Fair Board) donated \$300 towards this purchase, as well as \$700 for grading and levelling. Mr. John Connon of Connon Nurseries was renting this land from Mrs. Anderson and he agreed to vacate the land and remove all of his shrubs and bulbs before May 1, 1950.

Amendments to the Community Halls Act in 1949 allowed for grants to assist in providing community halls and athletic fields, provided that the property was vested in the municipality.

In order to qualify for these grants, the three original purchasers of the park property passed resolutions to 'relinquish their interest in the Waterdown Community and Memorial Park to the Corporation of the Village of Waterdown upon the understanding that such lands or park property be maintained as a community park for the use of the community, as a whole, as a public park.' Each entity was also granted a seat on the Parks Board.

When the Park was turned over to the Village, it had been fenced on three sides and there were sufficient steel posts available to fence the remaining side. The committee hoped that the Village would complete the fencing and also install a water line, running West from Main Street to Hamilton Street for approximately 250 feet, to have water available as soon as possible.

On 18 August 1949 the Waterdown Review reported that the park was officially dedicated as a memorial to the more than one hundred residents from the village and township who has served in W.W.II and to the "Memory of the Fallen", in particular the eight young men from the area who had died overseas.

Over the years several changes have been suggested – some which happened and some which did not. At one point there were plans to build a swimming pool and a mini golf course. A skatepark completed in 2006 is heavily used. The Waterdown Rotary Memorial Park Ice Skating Loop, opened in 2016, provides skating fun in winter and another paved walking trail in warmer months.

As befitting a Community park, it is or has been home to multiple events – Twilight Farmers Market, Fall Fairs, Antique Car shows, Rotary 'O Canada Ribfest', movies in the park and fireworks on Memorial Day weekend in May.

Waterdown Memorial Park is an integral part of the community and provides a family friendly green space in the heart of the town.

**The Flamborough
Heritage Society**

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NEWS FROM THE SOCIETY

The Society is excited to have been asked by Councillor Judi Partridge to join her and other local groups in the planning and installation of commemorative historical plaques throughout Waterdown and Flamborough. Over the past few years, the Society has been trying to figure out ways of accomplishing this and now we are lucky to partner with the City of Hamilton to see 10 to 12 plaques located throughout our community.

We also working on new ways to bring events and information to our members for the new year, so stay tuned for more.

I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe and healthy New Year. We will see you in 2021!

Chris Rivait, President

IN MEMORIAM

We have lost three very supportive Society members this year.
Our condolences to their families.

Jean Benetti

Lorraine Eastwood

Shirley Fellowes

We are very grateful for the donations made in memory of Shirley Fellowes

AREA SOCIETY WEBSITES

The **Ancaster Township Historical Society** -

www.ancasterhistory.ca

The **Burlington Historical Society** -

www.burlingtonhistorical.ca

The **Dundas Valley Historical Society** -

www.dundashistory.ca

The **Grimsby Historical Society** -

GrimsbyHistoricalSociety

The **Hamilton Mountain Heritage Society**-

www.hamiltonheritage.ca

The **Head-of-the-Lake Historical Society** -

HeadoftheLakeHistoricalSociety

The **United Empire Loyalists' Association of
Canada, Hamilton Branch** - www.uel.com

The **West Lincoln Historical Society** - www.wlhs.info