

HERITAGE HAPPENINGS



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WEFHS Board 2021-2022

Positions are open on our Board of Directors.

Please contact us if you are interested—or know of someone who is.

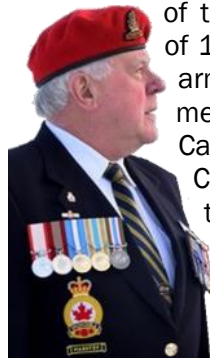
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January Zoom Meeting

A Soldier's Story: Serving during the Cold War and Peacekeeping Missions

Bob Thomas is well known around Waterdown and is pretty much 'the face of the Legion'. At the age of 15 he joined the reserve army and became a member of the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps. At 17 he joined the regular army, serving in the Canadian Provost Corp – the military police - where he was



able to continue his love of motorcycles. He has served in Cyprus, Beirut, Gaza and the Sinai Strip. He will be sharing his experiences during those years.

ZOOM MEETING

Wednesday January 26, 2022

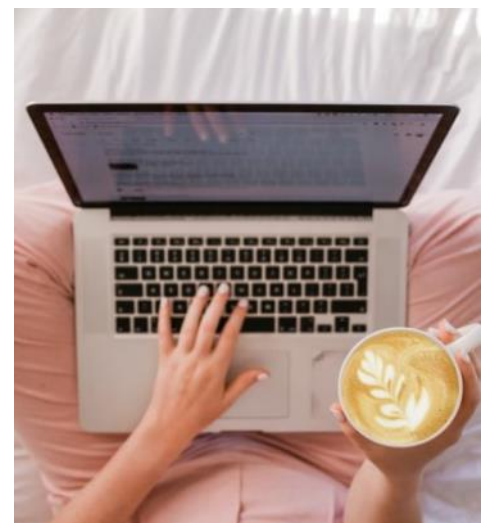
8:00 p.m.

The Zoom link to pre-register has been sent out. Feel free to forward it on to friends. The meeting will start at 8:00 but the waiting room is open from 7:45 PM.

VIRTUAL EXHIBITS

Our next exhibit is currently being planned, but we didn't want anyone to miss out on the ones we've already held.

As of January 1, you can now visit our past and present exhibits virtually through our website. 'Products to Cell', 'Flamborough Remembers', and 'Dressing for the Occasion' are all available online for those that are unable to visit the Waterdown branch of the Hamilton Public Library, or missed our previous displays. The webpages showcase items featured in each display, as well as information, video footage, and photographs from our collection.



More about our current display on Page 9.

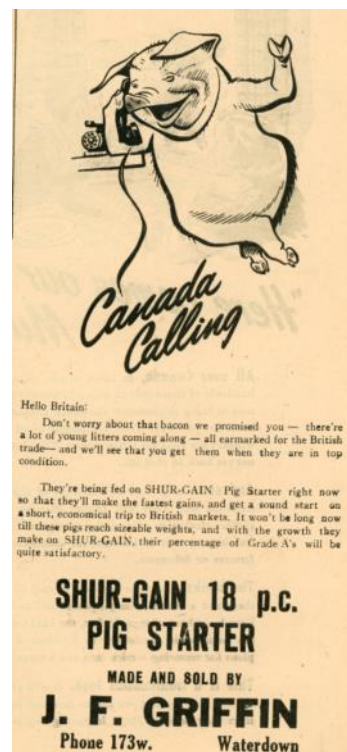
The Canadian Homefront: Waterdown Part 3 — The Food Front: Farming in World War II

Heritage Paper # 300

Essential jobs in the Second World War existed outside of fighting overseas for King and Country. One of the most vital jobs on the Homefront was farming, especially considering the health of the allied soldiers, liberated Europe, and Canada's population. Farming was not without its complications and was subjected to various restrictions and labour shortages; however, through community and provincial aid in the form of organized groups, Flamborough's agriculturists were able to succeed in dealing with all the demands a farm has to offer.

Farmers and those who sold farm goods were subjected to various restrictions whilst also being pushed to grow and develop more products. Permits were often issued as a result of demand for a certain product. For example, those who had not been properly licensed as of March 1, 1943, underneath the Bacon Board were subjected to various restrictions on how much pork product they could sell within Canada to meet United Kingdom war requirements and curtail domestic use in Canada. For those who sold these commodities, especially those who would buy products for resale, licenses were a must for The Wartime Prices and Trade Board to advise a business about price ceiling regulations as well as legal obligations. The economy and food production rapidly changed as a result of the war and grew to be far more complex. As well, the government encouraged the development and

growth of crops and products. In the February 29, 1940 edition of The Waterdown Review, two ads promoting the purchase of government certified potatoes and seeds state that "food supplies are important in wartime" therefore one should choose seeds that are hardy and produce a great yield. These ads indicate the government's desire for a large-scale, efficient mobilization of its population on the 'food front' to combat the long haul the war could potentially be. A 1941 government -issued ad encouraged farmers to keep their cows milking to feed Britain. While also wanting complete and efficient mobilization, the government also had a duty to the motherland. Local businesses took part in encouragement of greater production, such as JF Griffin's animal feed.



JF Griffin's pig starter ad was featured within the September 6, 1945 edition of The Waterdown Review. Considering the extent of the war, advertising for 'feeding Britain' extended well

beyond Victory Over Japan Day on August 15, 1945, with rationing in Britain ending years after the war. This placed enormous pressure on farmers who were struggling with labour shortages and a wartime economy. To combat changes in labour, both the community and the provincial government stepped in.

In the August 15, 1940 edition of *The Waterdown Review*, the editorial claimed farming was a vital industry to Canada's war effort and required cooperation from the community and others for the Homefront to stay united. While farmers whose work had slackened in the winter were encouraged to find essential work, such as maintaining railways, elsewhere to fill in the gaps left by soldiers heading overseas, they had plenty to worry about at home with the greater demands and less assistance. Within the farming community, solutions were quickly proposed. Farmers organized themselves into federations and groups such as the Food Production Army, which was different localities that help other members through assistance during harvesting or



A group of Farmerettes having fun on a farm in Ontario. From "Onion Skins and Peach Fuzz", submitted by Terrence Flanigan.

other farm jobs. These issues were not solely solved by the hurting communities.

Through the government, many willing workers in 1940 with various farm experiences expressed their desire to help. These young men were available to work for two to three

months. Farmers who needed assistance were encouraged to register with the nearest Ontario Employment office or write to A. McLaren, the director of Farm Training in the Department of Labour. Government assistance with farm labour rarely slowed with yearly advertisements about



The Canada Food Board created this lapel badge to recognize the "Soldiers of the Soil." Recruitment for the program emphasized its similarity to some aspects of military service, including its patriotic importance and the award of a service medal at the end of one's term. Canadian War Museum.

the need for pickers or labourers. The government called on everyone from all walks of life to assist their local farmers. Businesses were even encouraged to release workers with farm experience for a couple of days.



Continued next page

After the end of the war, those still in the armed forces could apply to be sent home to aid with farm work. Groups were quick to sprout up around farming communities and rural areas.



**Join the
FARM COMMANDOS
AND HELP HARVEST
FOOD for VICTORY**

SPEND a day or two each week on the farm during harvesting. Join the thousands of Farm Commandos who are prepared to "close up shop" or lay down their tools for a time, if necessary, to "raid" the harvest fields and help ensure the safe harvest of millions of dollars worth of precious food.

Farm Commando Brigades are springing up in Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Trade, Service Clubs and Churches all over Ontario—bringing together townsmen who are willing to make a direct, patriotic contribution to the War Effort and gain the good-will of neighboring farmers at the same time.

If there is no Farm Commando Brigade forming in your locality, take it up with your Service Club, Board of Trade, Chamber of Commerce or Church Executive and get your local Brigade started at once.

The need for a great emergency reserve of Farm Commandos is urgent. The "stake" is tremendous. Ontario farmers must have every possible man-hour of labour during harvesting to prevent irreplaceable loss of foods to the Allied War Effort and to Canada herself.

Your help is needed—NOW. Volunteer in The Farm Commando Brigade and be ready to help if harvest emergencies arise.



**ONTARIO INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE — AGRICULTURE —
LABOUR — EDUCATION — AND DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR, OTTAWA**

The Farm Commandos, a wartime agriculture group that mainly sacrificed their evenings and the odd day to help local farmers, encouraged the full participation of Waterdown within a 1944 ad stating that everyone from the local council to the clergy can do their part. Other than the Farm Commandos, there were also the Holiday Service Brigades, the Farm Cadets, the Farmerettes, the Women's Land Brigade, and many other groups. With increasing demands for production by the

government, the farmers of Ontario were not alone in their struggle to meet them.

While there was an abundance of organizations dedicated to assisting the farmers of Ontario, another group that came to lend a hand was the youths. Due to a plan by the Provincial Department of Labour, both high school and elementary school students were released from their studies and given an extended summer break until October 2nd for the high school children and September 16th for primary schools in 1940 with only slightly different dates each year after. While many were able to juggle these responsibilities, others saw their grades slip and were encouraged to put their education first.

Calling Soldiers of the Soil!!!

Make Our Store Your Headquarters for All Your Needs

We Have....

**Gloves, Overalls, Work Shirts
And all Accessories for Harvest Workers**

Geo. A. Weeks, General Merchant

'Soldiers of the Soil' committees registered thousands of students each year to the Farmerettes, the Farm Cadets, or another organization. Committees and even government-organized groups interviewed candidates to find the best fit for both the farmer and the teenager. Normally through government work programs, workers could make anywhere from ten to fifteen dollars a month with room and board.

Farm Service Camp Now Established Here

Youth Enlist to Harvest Crops—Are Under Experienced Leadership

The Farm Service Camp located in Memorial Hall is a war industry with Ontario youth pledged to harvest crops being the Plant instead of steel and power machines. The Editor was amazed, when he visited the camp Tuesday, at the transformation which has been made in the Hall and also the system adopted by the experienced officers in charge.

There is a local Board composed of farmers of which Gordon Crooker is chairman and Norman Nicholson is secretary, which acts in an advisory capacity.

G. T. Williams is the director of camp and his past experience and his efficient organization of this camp is assurance that the whole set up is going to be on a high plane. Nothing is being overlooked to make the recreational, rest and work periods count. Mr Williams is an Anglican and was given a public welcome by Rev E E Lake last Sunday.

Rev Dr Bishop of United Church Niagara Falls is spending his vacation by acting as Labour secretary.

There are many others on the staff all of whom have important duties but to Miss Mulholland the camp mother goes all the responsibility of seeing that the boys get nothing but the best in food and other material requirements. The task of cooking for the these boys is no small undertaking but she has a group of willing workers.

There were 27 boys on Tuesday morn and more were expected and under supervision of Mr Williams will prove model guests in Water-down.

Much can be accomplished by this efficient staff but the achievement will be much greater through public co-operation.

While the farmers of Ontario had a tremendous burden to carry, the people of both Flamborough and Ontario were more than willing to take some of the weight and help.

Success in war is determined by many aspects, especially the Homefront and food production. Without food, the war effort comes to a screeching halt on multiple fronts. Helping at the farms was an excellent way for those who could not go fight or those who had loved ones abroad to aid their country and those on the warfront. While the provincial government was able to organize many of the service groups, the people of Flamborough's desire to help demonstrates that a community is not just a place and followed all of those men and women who went overseas. Farmers throughout Canada were faced with a difficult task, but through their and their community's willingness to adapt and push forward, the Homefront remained strong.

In 1944, the youth-filled Farm Service Camp was established in Memorial Hall with GT Williams as the director of the camp and an advisory local board of farmers with Gordon Crooker as chairman and Norman Nicholson as secretary. By the time the article was written, in July 1944, twenty-seven boys had arrived at the camp with more to follow later.

Tess Moffat
Archives Summer Student, 2021



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

As one of the most active Heritage Societies in Ontario, all of our work is accomplished through our volunteers and their dedication of time toward preserving history. You may wonder what exactly volunteers are doing – we're glad you asked!

CURRENT PROJECTS



Photo: Garth Wetherall

As the display case in the library receives direct sunlight during the day, protective film was purchased to protect the delicate artifacts from harmful UV rays. Installation was somewhat awkward, as shown in the photo of our volunteers Kim Hirst and Meghan Martin.

Bob LaLonde has been creating an East Flamborough 1851 personal census by compiling information from tax returns, business directories, and agricultural censuses. As the 1851 personal census is missing from the Library and Archives Canada, his work helps us evaluate the social, demographic and economic data for the area at that time.

While we're grateful to those that volunteer their time, we need more help. Despite being closed for the month of January, we do have tasks that can be completed from the comfort of your home. Consider volunteering with the Society—not only do you help us fulfill our mandate, it can be a lot of fun! No matter how much or how little time you can commit, we'd love to hear from you.

ARCHIVES

We are forever thankful for our volunteer archivist, Lyn Lunsted.



Lyn was recently featured in the December edition of the community magazine, "Neighbours of Waterdown". The publication features local people and families, and also highlights neighbourhood news. What a wonderful opportunity to learn more about our archivist, and bring attention to the Flamborough Archives in a different format.

MEMBERSHIP



If you're reading Heritage Happenings, you're probably already a member. Your membership helps support us by funding our operating costs, and members receive this newsletter as well as priority at our monthly meetings, currently held by Zoom.

We encourage members to recruit more people to the Society — friends, family, colleagues.

Membership runs from September to August annually. Is your membership up to date? More info on our website.

DONATE

It takes a lot to preserve history. While memberships, book sales, and grants help us with our day-to-day expenditures, we have projects and unexpected expenses that would be greatly supported by monetary donations. Whatever amount you are able to give, we appreciate and make sure that it is put towards our mission.

We appreciate all those who have donated materials to the Archives, including photographs, artifacts, books, family histories, and so much more.

We're currently raising funds for a catalogue database update, the Review microfilm project, and our shelf system update. More about these projects can be found on our website.



Please help us preserve our local history by donating today. Tax receipts are issued for donations \$25 and up. Thank you so much for your support.

FOUND IN THE FONDS

When researchers peruse material at the Archives, they sometimes stumble across un-catalogued or unpublished information of interest. A genealogical summary from 1977 of the Slater family (originally Schlüter) highlights the difficulties some families faced trying to settle in North America. The Slaters were originally attempting to meet up with family in Watertown, Wisconsin.

"We do not know the name of this son, but do know that he was born in Germany and came to America as a young man. When landing on our shores, he was asked what his destination was, and he replied "Watertown", meaning Watertown, WI. But, the authority, not understanding, sent him to Watertown, New York. From there, he went to Waterdown, Ontario, a short distance east of Waterloo. [His original destination of Watertown, WI was also a short distance east of a town called Waterloo].

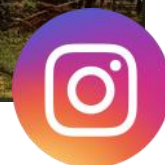
We imagine that by now, in his confusion, or perhaps finding Waterdown to his liking, he gave up on finding Watertown, WI, and decided to stay at Waterdown. Here, he founded a vast lumber industry, raised his family, whose descendants still live there. The lumber company [became] a flourishing enterprise."

The Slater Brothers sawmill once stood on Mill Street, just northeast of the old Nicholson & Stetler Jam Factory (the stone building that now houses multiple businesses including Dancers Inc.). The sawmill site is now the location of townhouses.



OUR PRESENCE ONLINE

We continue to grow our following on our Instagram account. What was recently popular? This image of "The Wigwam", Rushdale Farm, Rockton reached 259 people. Robert Kirkland Kernighan was a Canadian poet, journalist and farmer. He wrote his literary work in this cabin.



Our most popular Facebook post over the past couple months was associated with our holiday gift campaigns, which was able to bring in \$1,200 in funds for the society. This post for our 'Pictures from the Past' fundraiser reached over 9,500 people, being shared 19 times.



We continue to upload our monthly meetings to our YouTube channel. Our November monthly meeting had a good showing of participants for Anna Lewis' presentation on the history of the Around the Bay road race. Our video about the Courtcliffe Park bluegrass festivals gained attention after being shared by one of our followers recently. Have you subscribed to see our latest content?



Our website continues it's role as our "home base" for history. Sales were helped along with local pick-up added as an option in the shop, as well as the gift campaigns shared on our social accounts.

You may have already noticed, but we've been publishing Heritage Papers from their beginning on our website. Should you be looking for a specific topic or paper, there is an inventory on our site that is consistently updated. Progreston was in the spotlight for the past couple months, with the 1989 papers gaining over 400 views.

We encourage all of our members to follow, subscribe, share and overall enjoy our online activities. Many of these posts require countless volunteer hours to research and create. See you all online!

TREASURES FROM THE ARCHIVES

When a finished display is revealed, the effort of research and collecting appropriate items is well worth it. Our current exhibit, in the works since October, covers the role of textiles and accessories in history through a small sample of items of historical significance, on loan for a limited time. While the display could not represent the vast history of fashion, including rural and men's fashion, we hope that it encouraged viewers to explore and examine trends, fashion history, and the roles fashion plays even in the modern era.

The case has been updated with UV protective film in order to protect artifacts that are loaned to us. Our displays are also now available to view virtually through our website.



A mourning mantle featured in the display.

Should you have ideas for display themes or artifacts you'd like to loan for our cases, we'd love to hear from you!

We are thankful that we continue to receive donations from the public of material that are added to the Flamborough Archives as important pieces of local history.

Recently, we were the recipients of two early censuses, dating from 1816 and 1819. A part of a larger donation of multiple items of interest, we'll be further researching the documents that contain the names and records of early settlers of the area.



THREADS THROUGH THE PAST

By Lyn Lunsted

Memorial Hall, Waterdown

Memorial Hall is one of the most recognizable buildings in the core of Waterdown and much has been written about it over the years. However there are snippets of fun facts that emerge now and then, and the history of the building becomes more interesting than it already is.

The construction of the building is generally attributed to the efforts of the Waterdown Women's Institute, along with other local community groups. Although it was first proposed in 1918, the project had some resistance and it took four more years to come to fruition. On December 5, 1918, the Waterdown Review contained a notice that 'A meeting will be called in the near future to consider the erection of a soldiers' memorial. An organization will be formed and a fund started to be known as the Soldiers' memorial Fund. It is the intention to place in Waterdown something which will be a lasting memory to the Waterdown boys who fought in the great war of liberty'.

In January 1919 the ladies of the Patriotic League decided to consult with the men's committee of the Soldiers' Memorial to further arrangements for the building of the memorial. Local councillors however, must have been hearing some dissention since they decided to look into the best way to ascertain the feelings of the residents and ratepayers about this undertaking. There was support for building a Memorial School instead of a hall which was understandable given the poor state of the existing school on Main Street.

In the election of January 1920 voters were asked to vote on the Memorial Hall By-law which proposed to issue debentures for \$20,000 to erect and equip the hall. It was speculated that the mill rate would greatly increase, and people wanted to know who would own it—the village or the Community League. The paper attempted to

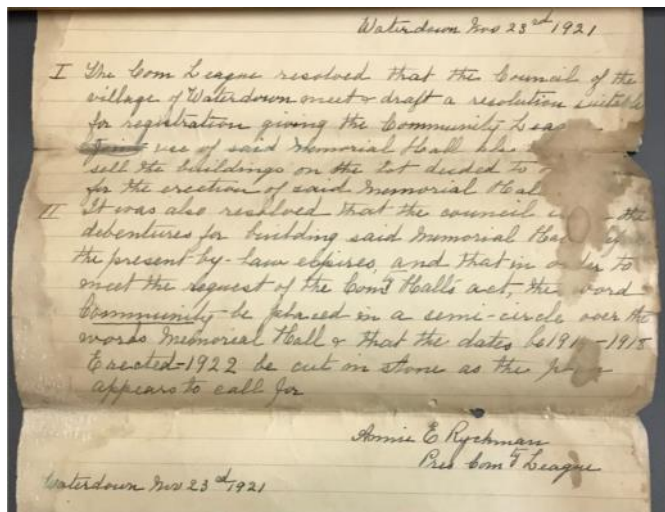
address the concerns by laying out some answers: The hall would be erected on land purchased by the 'ladies'; the site would be deeded to the village; the hall would be self-sustaining and would contain the Post Office, one or two stores, the Council Chambers, a public hall and the village fire apparatus; it would improve the appearance of the main street by 100%. The By-law passed in a vote of 98 to 67, much to the surprise of some people.

The debate carried on and it was not until 1921 that things began to happen. In the meantime, the 'spoils of war' gun which had been requested by Reeve Richard Smith arrived in the village. 'It was intended to go in front of the new Memorial Hall, but the hall seems to be a dead letter at present, so somewhere else will be found' (Council Minutes 10 September 1920). It was towed to the Waterdown Public School and placed by the school flag-pole. It never left and remains in the current Sealey Park.



Meanwhile the ladies continued to fundraise by the end of 1921 the property had been purchased and turned over to the village. The Community League was adamant that the word 'Community' be part of the signage and attached a hand drawn sketch to their letter to council.





The Great War Veterans' Association of Waterdown and East Flamborough put the name question to a vote and they favoured 'Memorial Hall'. The ladies won.

In March 1922, the Bell house had been demolished and the brick for the new hall delivered. On May 23, 1922, a fire destroyed much of the village core but spared the hall which was under construction by Waterdown local Mr. Slater. A few changes were made to the original design— fundraising began for a clock which was to be a four sided illuminated dial clock, electrically controlled with a device for striking the hours and also the fire alarm. The fire alarm was proposed to be operated from the telephone exchange. The clock went up didn't work very well and in September 1934 it was noted that the clock which hadn't been operating for some time was being given an overhaul and it was expected that the clock would soon be working again.

The bell which had been in the Bell House was installed in the clock tower. It was originally owned by the 77th Battalion. The clock tower and bell were removed from the Hall in July 1963 due to weight problems on the roof.



The fountain which had been donated by Mrs. Crooker in 1930 was removed when Dundas Street was widened. It was reinstalled in 1973, and moved to a new location during the latest landscape changes in 2020. Along the way, the top ball on the fountain has been lost.

The Waterdown Athletic Association was not happy that the basement floor was to be concrete as it wasn't suitable for a gym floor. They raised funds to try to cover the costs of a hardwood floor 'and other things necessary to a good Gym'. The building was completed in late 1922 and officially opened on January 14, 1923.



Through the decades, the building has had its ups and downs. At one point there was talk of selling it as it was not bringing in enough revenue to maintain it and council viewed it as a white elephant. A new heating system was put in and by 1971 it was attracting wedding receptions and community groups.

Memorial Hall was designated as property of Cultural Heritage Value in 2007.

In 2010 it was registered on the National Inventory of Canadian Military Memorials.

**The Flamborough
Heritage Society**

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Instagram: @flamborougharchives

Twitter: @FlamboroHistory

YouTube: Flamborough Archives &
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Lyn Lunsted, Archivist



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy New Year!

We are looking forward to a great year this year with lots of exciting events planned. Stay tuned for information on our Virtual Trivia Quiz to be held on February 20th. We are also looking forward to the publication of Nathan Tidridge's revised book 'The Extraordinary History of Flamborough—Platinum Jubilee Edition' which will be published in mid-February.

We are very grateful to Meghan Martin who has been doing a fantastic job of keeping us front and centre through her various Facebook and Instagram posts, and website articles.

The Archives continues to receive several requests for information and research every week which is great as it means people know we are here and ready to help.

Stay warm and safe.

Chris Rivait, President

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** -
[Grimsby Historical Society](http://GrimsbyHistoricalSociety.com)

The **Hamilton Mountain Heritage Society**-
www.hamiltonheritage.ca

The **Head-of-the-Lake Historical Society** -
[Head of the Lake Historical Society](http://HeadoftheLakeHistoricalSociety.com)

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

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

Flamborough Museum - <http://flamboroughmuseum.ca/>