



# Heritage Happenings

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## March's Monthly Meeting

*The Flamborough Heritage Society will feature a presentation on Labour, Unions and Hamilton by Bill Freeman., Mar. 29th at 8:00PM via Zoom.*

A presentation by Bill last year was so popular that he is back for 'Part 2' – he ran out of time before he could finish his presentation. Bill is an award-winning historian, author and screen writer. He first began writing a series of books for youth while living in Hamilton. Each book focuses on a different industry setting in the 1870s. He then went on to writing books for adults, working in the film industry and writing two plays. For this session, Bill will go into depth about the steel industry, the conflict between management and the workers' union and how it changed the history of the trade union movement.



### Heritage Paper #310

Fifth in the series of "Conspiracy, Controversy, and Celebrity: A Rich History of Flamborough". Explore the impact of quarries with 'East Flamborough Quarries: Waterdown History and Carlisle Controversy.'

### Found in the Fonds

Some pretty amazing stuff is unearthed in the Archives during research projects or when cataloguing items.

What's in the spotlight this month?

### A History of Business Cards

We love to highlight our "Treasures from the Archives". This month, we've explored our collection of business cards. What caught our eye?

# HERITAGE PAPER

## East Flamborough Quarries: Waterdown History and Carlisle Controversy

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*Tess Moffat, Archives Summer Student*

*Over the next several issues we will be publishing papers under the theme “Conspiracy, Controversy, and Celebrity: A Rich History of Flamborough”*

**E**ast Flamborough is well known for its industrial beginnings and development, especially concerning the mills of Smokey Hollow. However, there is another vital business that had formed the basis of East Flamborough's economy and later became a major local and ecological concern: quarries. While quarries aided in constructing what Flamborough, especially Waterdown, is today, they were also a uniting force for Flamborough in the early 2000s during a Carlisle quarry dispute.

One of the most influential types of product produced from quarries within East Flamborough was limestone as it supplied a vast area within Ontario and aided in the growth of Waterdown. Evidence of quarrying in Smokey Hollow can still be seen today along the Niagara Escarpment. The 725-kilometre-long Niagara Escarpment formed over 450 million years ago, and it runs right through Flamborough and contributes to



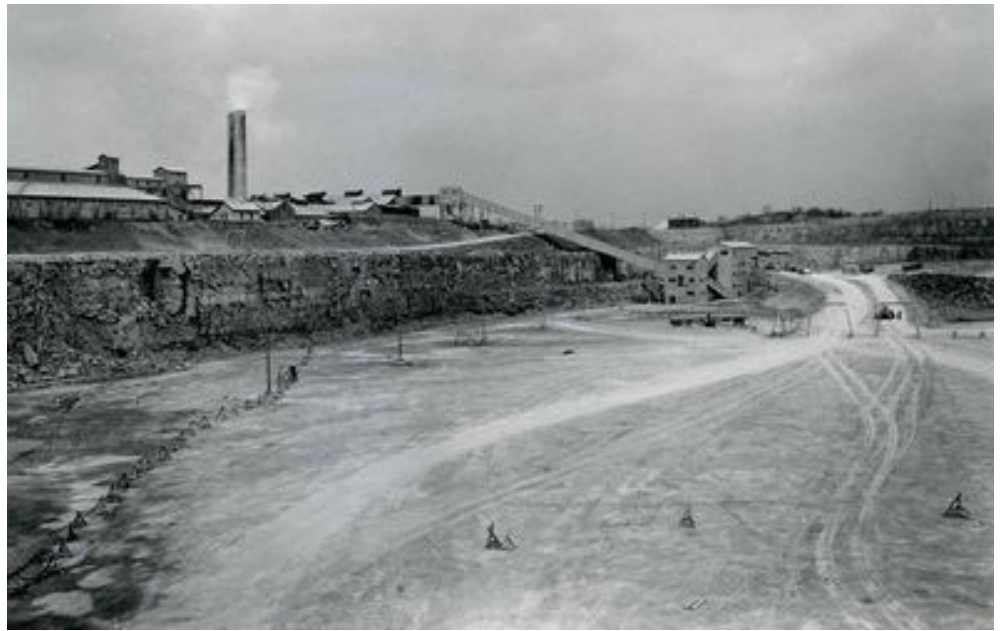
*1960 aerial photograph of a quarry near Clappison's Corners. Hwy. 6 can be seen at the top of the image. McMaster University.*

the base of Smokey Hollow. The escarpment is mainly composed of magnesium-rich limestone or dolostone. Smokey Hollow was appealing to settlers as they recognized the potential of the Grindstone Creek's power for millwork and the Escarpment's resources. The rocks pulled from the area were valued for their attributes as they were easy to

dress, not susceptible to iron rust, and had no flaws. This economic opportunity attracted some of the earliest settlers within Waterdown. Alexander Brown was the first permanent European settler in the area after purchasing land from Colonel Alexander MacDonell of the Butler's Rangers in 1805. In the 1820s, Brown sold off a western

portion of his land, which contained quarries, to his brother-in-law James Grierson. Quarrying in Smokey Hollow continued to expand and proved to be a successful business that contributed to the development of Waterdown and other Ontario cities and towns. In the early 1800s, Waterdown limestone was mainly shipped from Brown's Wharf in Hamilton to different locations within Canada, such as Toronto. In Toronto, the stone was used to construct King's College and the post office. The

quarries contributed to far more than the economy of Flamborough and were essential to village life and establishments. It was not until the mid-1800s that stone buildings in Waterdown took off; the 1847 construction of the Maplebank home on Mill Street South started the trend. Locally quarried rocks were used to create structures that continue to stand today, such as the township hall. Considering the success of the business and its increasing influence within Ontario and Waterdown, the rights to quarry in Smokey Hollow were desired by many. The two-acre parcel of land in Smokey Hollow known as 'rocks and spring' was used for quarrying and frequently changed owners. It was owned by John Heywood, Ebenezer Griffin, and



*This photograph shows the St. Marys Cement plant and quarry. The plant opened in 1912. Sourced from OurOntario.*

John Cummer, who were all prominent millers and businessmen within the area. Quarrying helped with the construction of Waterdown village and established a lucrative and profitable business that contributed to the local economy. Its success also encouraged people to come to the area as seen with Walter Grieve, a stonemason from England. While looking at the industrial origins of Waterdown, focus tends to be on millwork; however, quarries also played an essential role in uniting and establishing the community, forming the base of its economy, architecture, and encouraging more settlers to come to Flamborough.

Quarries helped build Flamborough into what it is today, but a recent dispute over a Car-

lisle quarry in the 2000s demonstrates a change in how they are viewed. In 2004, Lowndes Holding Corp. planned to construct a 158-hectare quarry on the 11th Concession Road East and Milborough Line. The plan was to stay there for twenty-five or more years. Later in 2006, St. Mary's Cement, a mortar company with locations spread throughout North America, purchased Lowndes and proceeded with the quarry application despite protests from Carlisle residents. The site would have invaded the Ontario greenbelt, destroyed the present ecological systems, and severely affected the water supply. Residents feared contamination and 'starvation' of local wells. As well as ecological concerns regarding groundwater and con-



**Graham Flint**, spokesperson for Friends of Rural Communities  
shown at the proposed quarry site in 2010.  
*Spectator File Photo.*

servation, the public was also worried about road safety, dust, noise, and vibrations. On the Victoria Day long weekend in 2004, the neighbours of the proposed site met to discuss what to do. Despite the Brazilian-owned company's attempts to appear like a 'good neighbour', the people of Flamborough did not want the company anywhere near the community. Friends of Rural Communities and the Environment (FORCE), led by chairperson Graham Flint and vice-chairperson Mark Rudolph, was created in response to the proposal. The advocacy group urged the city to take into consideration the potential ecological and health effects on the community. They also hired legal and scientific specialists to counter St. Mary's claims. With every step

the company made to secure its license, the people of Flamborough were two steps ahead of them. However, it was not just the people against the company as the movement found support within the liberal government. Former MPP Ted McMeekin worked exceptionally hard to fight for his district's rights. Government ministries also took into careful consideration of the potential hazards of the quarry. In 2009, St. Mary's refused to redo a water-pumping test that was rejected by the Ministry of Environment. The company even resorted to writing a Hamilton Spectator article in 2010, emphasizing the positives of the project and calling the actions of the government, which had issued a zoning order, "a grave error." However, the company's

attempt at making its side heard was met with skepticism. Helen Howell responded with an article the following month that poked holes in their argument and explained the potential issues that could arise if St. Mary's succeeded, such as the projected 1400 truck trips a day that would involve a truck passing every nineteen seconds. This back and forth would come to an end in 2013. This was a nine-year struggle that concluded with the collapse of the project as a result of a \$15-million deal between the provincial government and the landowner in return for the company's withdrawal from legal challenges. This was a massive success, but the battle rages on for the leaders of FORCE as they continue to fight for the environment as well as local communities elsewhere.

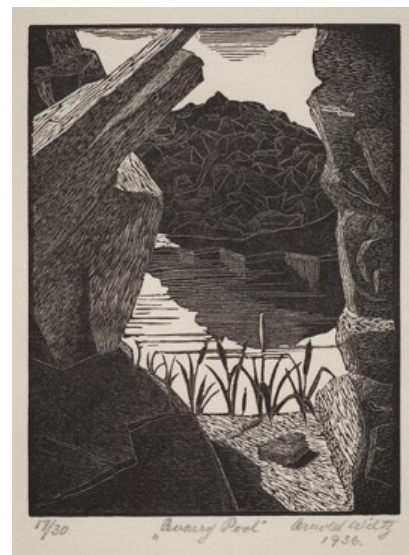
The East Flamborough quarry dispute garnered provincial and national attention. Outside of the local area and the government, academics and scientists examined the issue, writing papers in support of FORCE and explaining the hazards of the proposed quarry. Newspapers painted this dispute as a David and Goliath-like story involving the "little guy" taking down the "entitled and greedy" corporation. The support generated from these publications was sig-

nificant in ending St. Mary's attempts to start a quarry in Flamborough. However, recognition should also be given to the dedication of Flamborough citizens who organized protests and pushed for government support through legal and scientific avenues. At the very beginning of East Flamborough, quarries were what formed Waterdown and surrounding towns and villages into what they are today, but the recent quarry dispute of the early 2000s and 2010s demonstrates what a united Flamborough can accomplish

and the strength of the people. The St. Mary's quarry sets an interesting and inspiring precedent in which big businesses are not destined to succeed and that the will of the public has value in the eyes of the government.

The history of quarries in Flamborough involves a change in perspective; historically, they were used as a rallying point to encourage industrial and municipal growth within the community, but recently, a proposed quarry brought Flamborough together to prevent it from moving in. Quarries are a historical

industry for East Flamborough, but recent concerns about ecological and community impacts represent a change in their importance.



## FOUND IN THE FONDS

With our 50th anniversary this year as the Waterdown-East Flamborough Heritage Society, we'd like to put together a new publication full of memories of Flamborough. There are many social media groups that reminisce and share photos, and we've put out a call to all our followers to share their memories. It may be a place where you hung out with friends, had a good meal, or escaped from your troubles. It might be memories of family, where you lived, or traditions passed from one generation to the next.

Speaking of memories, the editor came across a whole collection of recollections while researching.



Within our archives are 'Gordon R. Jackson's Reminiscences about Bullock's Corners,' a collection of his stories posted in *The Dundas Star* from February 1952 to October of 1956. The pages are filled with his memories, including the following from *The Dundas Star*, 6 July 1955:

"I discussed old pioneers of the settlement and the church with David Dunkin and visited the old cemetery on the 4th concession where pioneer families rest. The air was heavy and the night hot, my reception was Machiavellian

as hordes of mosquito custodians resented my intrusion of their care."

It's not mosquito season yet, but what an eloquent way to put an experience shared throughout different eras.



## Current Projects

All of our work is accomplished through our volunteers. You may wonder what exactly volunteers are doing - we're glad you asked!

February 20th to 26th was Heritage Week - Ontario has more than 700 museums, galleries, and heritage sites - one in every community! Further, two-thirds of Ontario's collections are held in heritage buildings.

Volunteer opportunities combat social isolation and build community wellbeing. Volunteers are helping make communities across Ontario more vibrant places to live.

We've been a part of this community for 50 years now, and our volunteers enable us to remain active and relevant in a changing world.

If you love Flamborough, history or research, there are always volunteer opportunities with the society. Build on an existing personal passion or discover a new one.



Brainstorming continues in earnest for celebrating our golden anniversary. Four nights of trivia will be hosted at the Waterdown Legion. We welcome our member's input and ideas for an event that would pay homage to our past while engaging new community members.

Kim Hirst and Meghan Martin have been exploring the world of

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

*Our volunteers' love of local history, time spent and dedication to helping the Society is always appreciated. Here we highlight just a small sampling of their work.*



geocaching to see if we can incorporate history into the real-world, outdoor adventure.

Geocaching is an outdoor recreational activity using GPS to hide and seek containers called "caches" at specific locations all over the world. A real life treasure hunt - sure to be bettered with historical content!

Our former co-op student Sam Hounscome has returned in a paid position in the Flamborough Archives, and is helping with a

number of projects to bring us into the Summer. Many thanks to Sam for her great work in updating the image catalogue, tri-fold displays and more. The order has been placed for our service club sign that will be mounted at the east entrance of Waterdown. Keep an eye out for it the next time you're driving by!



*"We are all like one-winged angels. It is only when we help each other that we can fly."*

— Luciano De Crescenzo

## CONTRIBUTING TO OUR CAUSE

## MEMBERSHIP

*It takes a lot to preserve history, and your membership is a big part of that. Thanks to all our members!*

Thanks to everyone who renewed their membership with us. Membership runs from September to August annually, and helps support us by funding our operating costs. Members receive this newsletter as well as priority at our monthly meetings, back live in person after being held by Zoom for the last few years.

We think society membership is pretty amazing - we encourage all our current members to recruit more people, whether you gift a membership to someone special or just let your friends, family, and colleagues know about us.

- 1 Members have priority, being sent the latest news first
- 2 Your membership helps support Heritage Society projects
- 3 Be part of one of the most active Heritage Societies in Ontario



Wabasso Park picnic area, 1920s

## DONATIONS

We receive a lot of donations of heritage documents, photographs, and items throughout the year. If you have something you think we may like, please let us know! You don't have to permanently donate an item - pieces can be on loan to the Archives for as long as you feel comfortable or copied and returned to you.

We're still raising funds for our shelf system update - space is currently at a premium in the Archives. While memberships, book sales and grants help us with our day-to-day

expenditures, donations from both members like you as well as non-members greatly support our mission.

We've recently updated our website to make it even easier to donate and see what we're raising funds for. We're also exploring other platforms to make donation fast, easy and accessible.

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.



# OUR PRESENCE ONLINE

*We encourage all of our members to follow, subscribe, share and overall enjoy our online activities. See you all online!*

## OUR FOLLOWERS



**3,647**



**555**



**66**



**26**

We're constantly posting new content - tap follow and drop a comment to say hi!



**March's most popular blog posts** included the story of the Darling family, Mountsberg pioneers

## E-Commerce

We continue to sell our latest republications related to West Flamborough and Strabane. Tell your friends, family and neighbours about our selection of books - there's something for everyone!

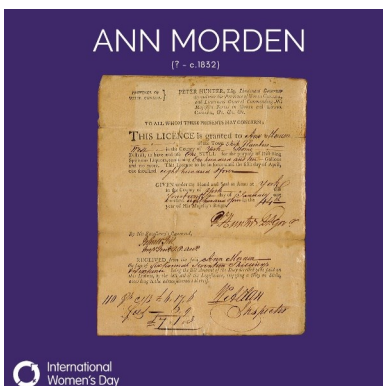
Once again, and as always:

*Thanks to all for your support!*

**W**e've been campaigning for memories of Flamborough to be shared with us, and our online activity often prompts reminiscences. Especially so last month with our share of the story of Mabel Easterbrook, the founder of Easterbrook's hot-dog stand in Aldershot. Some other popular posts included a 1950s aerial shot of Clappison's

Corners, and a 1954 picture of Dundas' Canada Crushed Stone and the nearby railway. The steep grade operated by cable pulling cars up the grade.

Speaking of Dundas, Dundas Museum and Archives had a wonderful share of their own - Ann Morden's 1804 still license. Our blog post for the Morden family is scheduled for October - be sure not to miss it!



# Treasures from the Archives



**Variety of cards** from Flamborough craftsfolk

**Business cards** are often deemed a small inconsequential piece of paper, kept buried in a wallet or a desk drawer. These cards have a long history and an evolution that many don't appreciate.

Calling cards began in the 17th century in Europe, used to announce the pending arrival of prosperous or aristocratic people. They were similar in shape and size to a modern day playing card and became a

staple of the elite by the middle of the century. The cards became more decorated, and houses had ornate card trays where those visiting could leave their card.

Trade cards arrived in the late 17th and early 18th century, when businesses began to use the cards to advertise their locations and services. These trade cards were taken so seriously that a signed card was considered a legally binding contract.

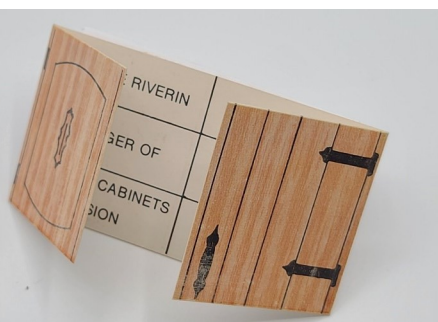
Strict etiquette surrounded both calling and trade cards. During the late 18th and early 19th centuries, etiquette loosened and business cards began to turn into the self-promotional tools we know today. Mass produced cards allowed businesses to give their details out to potential clients and customers.

Our collection of business cards has numerous examples from Flamborough and the surrounding area. Some are still in business today, such as the example seen to the right of Flamboro Centre Properties Limited, in

business for over 50 years. Other businesses are no longer with us, such as Jumbo Video, a card from Pause Awhile's original location on Dundas Street, and more recently, Riverin Kitchens. Riverin's was a particularly interesting interactive example, and advertised that *"The secret of happiness" is not in doing what you like, but in liking what you do.*






Non-traditional cards from artists in Greensville and Lynden eschewed the traditional sizing of business cards, making them pieces of art themselves, including hand-drawn maps on their reverse.

Business cards today come in all shapes and sizes. Though some cultures still have strict etiquette with them, most companies see them as an essential marketing tool.



**Interactive example** - Riverin Kitchens

## ARCHIVES ACTIVITY - FEBRUARY

	<b>VISITORS</b>	<b>25</b>
	<b>CALLS</b>	<b>11</b>
	<b>E-MESSAGES</b>	<b>70</b>
	<b>ITEMS CATALOGUED</b>	<b>58</b>
	<b>ACQUISITIONS</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>VOLUNTEER HOURS</b>	<b>218</b>

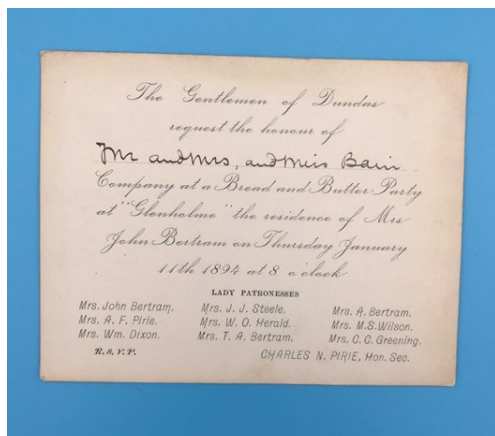
# THREADS THROUGH THE PAST

## The Thomas Bain Collection

Lyn Lusted, Archivist

Material comes into our Archive in many ways. Much of it is donated by family members who don't really know what to do with items from an estate. In the case of our Thomas Bain Collection, the material is what was left over after an auction of house contents, in 1994.

The material consists of photographs, postcards, a few personal papers and letters of the Weir /Bertram/ Bain Families.



They link three prominent West Flamborough / Dundas families who were involved in the development of the Dundas

Community through the John Bertram and Sons Company Ltd., and in political matters at the local and Federal level through Thomas Bain. The Collection reflects the life and times of prominent upper middle class families in Ontario between 1837 and 1958.

John Brown Weir Sr. was born in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1804. In 1837 he married Mary French and they immigrated to Canada, spending some time in Quebec before settling on property in West Flamborough Township, on lots 3,4, and part of 5 on the 1<sup>st</sup> Concession. They were the parents of five daughters and one son. After his death in 1880, his son John Weir Jr. took over the family farm and built a house on the former Crooks' property. His sister Helen married Thomas Bain on June 25, 1874.

Thomas Bain was born in 1834 at Denny, Stirlingshire, Scotland and came to Canada with his parents in 1837. They settled on a farm in the Rock

Chapel area of West Flamborough Township, then moved to Strabane in 1854.

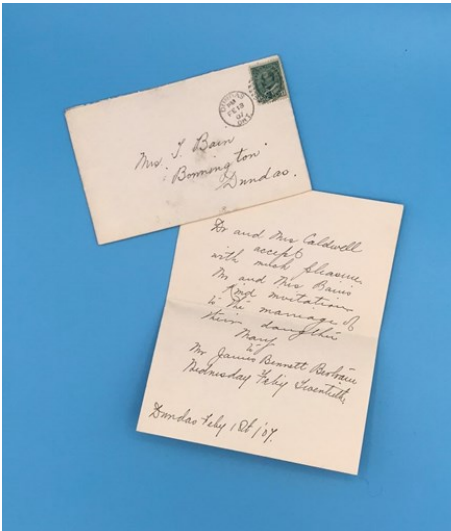
For several years, Thomas Bain served on the West Flamborough Township Council, and in 1870 he became Warden of Wentworth County.



He won his seat of Wentworth North in the 1872 election. In 1896 he represented Wentworth South and was again returned to Parliament where he chaired the Committee on Agriculture. During this session the Speaker of the House died and in August 1899 Thomas Bain was chosen as his replacement. During his long political career

he was well respected by the local community and politicians alike. He remained in office until parliament was prorogued in October 1900 and he retired to the Town of Dundas, building 'Bonnington House' at 182 King Street West.

On June 25, 1874, he married Helen Weir, a woman he had been courting for almost a decade. They had two daughters Helen Dawson (1880 – 1957) and Mary (1875 – 1964) who married James Bennet Bertram.



James was the youngest son of John and Elizabeth Bertram, the founders of 'Canada Tool Works' which later became 'John Bertram and Sons Company Ltd. The company was a major employer in Dundas and also for many in the surrounding area.

James Bertram apprenticed at his father's company for five years and later rose to the position of superintendent for the Foundry and Pattern Shop. He remained employed there for over 60 years. He had an interest in photography and was the president and a long standing member of the Toronto Camera Club, as well as a member of the Hamilton Camera Club. He was also a member of the Dundas School Board, the Old Dundas Choral Society, Dundas Lions Club, and Ancaster Golf and Country Club. He died in June 1947 and is buried at grove Cemetery, Dundas.

There are hundreds of individual items in this collection, spanning the years 1837—1958. The Weir, Bain and Bertram families kept in touch and these letters and cards offer an view into their everyday lives.

Although none of the material is related to his political career, the various postcards, letters, invitations, receipts and newspaper cartoons reveal a snapshot of a way of life that upper middle class families enjoyed at the turn of the century.



The photographs in this article represent a small sample of the items:

- 1) Invitation to Mr., Mrs. And Miss Bain to a Bread and Butter Party January 11, 1894, at the home of Mrs. John Bertram.
- 2) A letter of condolence sent from the Hon. T. Bain, House of Commons to Mrs. McLean, Strabane, wife of the church minister.
- 3) Acceptance letter to the invitation to the wedding of Mary Bain to James Bertram, in 1907.
- 4) A sample of Christmas and New Years cards sent to various Bain family members.

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Our February monthly meeting of Waterdown Memories with Jonathan Vance was a great success, despite having to delay it a week due to inclement weather. We're working hard to ensure our meetings are accessible to those that can't come in person, and continue to improve our audio and video quality with the associated Zoom meetings. Jonathan's talk should be up on our YouTube channel soon, where Nate Brown's from January has become our second most successful monthly meeting video to date.



Kim Hirst has made arrangements with the Waterdown Legion to host four trivia nights this year. We hope these nights will be informative and fun, and help to augment our fundraising efforts. Keep a close eye on our socials and website for further information.

We continue to be thankful for our membership and volunteers, who put in so much of their time and effort and make the society shine.

Chris Rivait, President

### AREA HERITAGE WEBSITES

The Ancaster Township Historical Society - [www.ancasterhistory.ca](http://www.ancasterhistory.ca)

The Burlington Historical Society - [www.burlingtonhistorical.ca](http://www.burlingtonhistorical.ca).

The Dundas Valley Historical Society - [www.dundashistory.ca](http://www.dundashistory.ca)

The Grimsby Historical Society - [Grimsby Historical Society](http://Grimsby Historical Society).

The Hamilton Mountain Heritage Society- [www.hamiltonheritage.ca](http://www.hamiltonheritage.ca)

The Head-of-the-Lake Historical Society -

[Head of the Lake Historical Society](http://Head of the Lake Historical Society)

The United Empire Loyalists' Association of  
Canada, Hamilton Branch - [www.uel.com](http://www.uel.com)

The West Lincoln Historical Society - [www.wlhs.info](http://www.wlhs.info)

Waterdown Mill Street Heritage -

[www.waterdownmillstreetheritage.ca](http://www.waterdownmillstreetheritage.ca)

### THE FLAMBOROUGH HERITAGE SOCIETY

P.O. Box 1044

163 Dundas Street East

Waterdown, ON L0R 2H0

Phone: 905-540-5161

Society E-mail:

[society@FlamboroughHistory.com](mailto:society@FlamboroughHistory.com)

Archives E-mail:

[archives@FlamboroughHistory.com](mailto:archives@FlamboroughHistory.com)

Website: [FlamboroughHistory.com](http://FlamboroughHistory.com)



Facebook: @flamboroughhistory

Instagram: @flamborougharchives

Twitter: @FlamboroHistory

YouTube: Flamborough Archives  
& Heritage Society

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