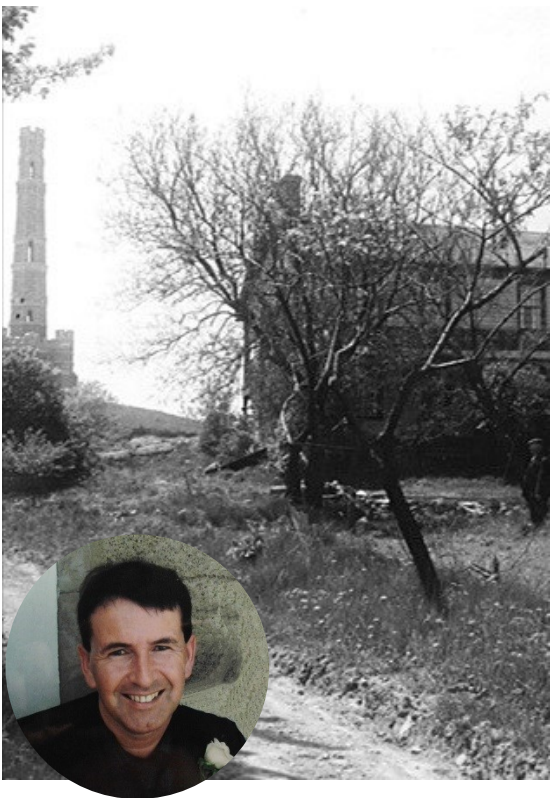




Heritage Happenings

02	06	08	10	12
Heritage Paper	Volunteer	Treasures	Threads through	Message from
<i>Prosperity after</i>	Spotlight	<i>Both online</i>	the Past	the President
<i>Devastation: Dutch</i>	<i>Current projects</i>	<i>and in person</i>	<i>R. M. Swanson and</i>	<i>Plus other local</i>
<i>Post-War</i>	<i>and more!</i>		<i>the Waterdown</i>	<i>society websites &</i>
<i>Immigration</i>			<i>Golf Course</i>	<i>our contact info</i>



Gage homestead and monument - HPL Special Collections

April Meeting

The Waterdown-East Flamborough Heritage Society will hold their Annual General Meeting followed by a presentation entitled 'And Now the Field of Battle Was My Home,' by Daryl Mactavish, Thursday April 24 2025, 8:00 pm Grace Anglican Church, Waterdown

Daryl Mactavish has worked for the city of Hamilton's Historic House Museums for the past 39 years. He enjoys bringing history alive to the visitors by trying to make the lifestyle and choice made by people back then, understandable to people today.

Daryl will share with us the events that led up to the June 6th 1813 Battle of Stoney Creek and some of

the key figures from both British and American troops, as well as the Gage family. He will also focus on the family's War Loss Claims and how one of granddaughters succeeded in having a monument built 100 years after the battle.

We will try to hold this as a hybrid meeting, the Zoom link will be added closer to the event.

Heritage Paper #326

This year we explore the various origins of Flamborough inhabitants. This month's Heritage Paper explores Prosperity after Devastation: Dutch Post-War Immigration to Flamborough.

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?

Treasures from the Archives

Various items were uncovered at the high school, hidden away years ago. Discovered by Mr. Tidridge while researching for his upcoming book, they've now been generously donated to the Flamborough Archives.

HERITAGE PAPER

Prosperity after Devastation: Dutch Post-War Immigration to Flamborough

Tess Moffat, Archives Summer Student

Fifth in the series under the theme “Ethnic backgrounds of Flamborough.”

While the British and the French seem to be everyone's favourite duo to discuss when the topic of colonialism is brought up, they were hardly the first nor the only to make their way into North America; for example, the Dutch were also an active group within the colonies. They formed settlements like New Amsterdam, better known today as New York, and partook in the fur trade, aligning themselves with the Haudenosaunee through the Silver Covenant Chain of Friendship in the early seventeenth century, an alliance that would later lead to the Dutch backing the Haudenosaunee in the mid-seventeenth-century Beaver Wars. However, it was only after the American Revolution in the late eighteenth century that the Dutch made their way into Canada. While there were several waves of immigration from the Netherlands, the largest was after the World Wars.

After the First World War in the 1920s, the cheap and arable land that had brought in immigrants the century before was



Postcard of SS Groote Beer, one of three Victory ships purchased by the Dutch government and used as emigrant ships - ssmaritime.com

no longer available; however, the demand for agricultural and industrial labour was at a high. Many from Europe chose to leave their homes, especially as the economy had been devastated by the various calamities that the war had brought. Significant concentrations of Dutch immigrants settled in southern and southwestern Ontario, especially in the Toronto area; between 1890 and 1930, it is estimated that approximately 25,000 Dutch immigrants made their way into

Canada. This wave was eventually curtailed by the Great Depression and the Second World War. However, it was after the Second World War that immigration hit an all-time high.

Hundreds of thousands fled the Netherlands, attempting to avoid the devastation brought on by the war, especially regarding the economy. Between 1940 and 1970, a total of around 500,000 left the Netherlands with about 185,000 choosing to settle in Canada. This decision

was most likely motivated by the promising Canadian post-war economy and the established relationship between Canada and the Netherlands, especially as the former had liberated several cities and had provided refuge to the Dutch royal family. Canada was a popular choice for Dutch immigrants, who desired a strong sense of community. Another factor one should take into consideration was the sheer amount of people that were heading over; this fact would have provided a feeling of security, especially if friends were also making the journey with you. For example, Pieter and Catrien Slagter were inspired to move to the Burlington area after their family friends, the Huismans, discussed how they had applied for immigration to Canada and were planning on settling in the Burlington area. These immigrants were seeking stability, settling near areas that already had a strong Dutch presence, not to mention job opportunities.

Considering the already established Dutch community, especially after the First World War, Flamborough became a hotspot for Dutch settlement. Flamborough had been built up by a plethora of groups, but Dutch immigrants after the Second World War are directly tied to two notable businesses within Flamborough: Connon Nurseries and the Dutch Mill Country Mar-



In 1955 Jan Gelderman, a Dutch immigrant, founded Jan Gelderman Garden Service with just \$7.14 worth of tools and a 1948 Willys Jeep. Gelderman Landscape Services has now been in business for over 60 years.

Sourced from Gelderman's website

ket. Both businesses demonstrate how Dutch immigrants contributed to and shaped the cultural atmosphere within the townships.

Connon Nurseries was founded in 1906 and was owned by John Connon of Aberdeen, Scotland and his family. Initially based in Hamilton, Connon Nurseries moved to Waterdown during the Great Depression. Connon Nurseries and Connon himself quickly became integral parts of the Waterdown community.

Cornelius Vanderkruk of Loosduinen immigrated to Canada in 1952 with his wife and seven children. During the Second World War, Vanderkruk was called into active duty, later working with the underground

and then was a tank-driving instructor in England. Outside of his military exploits, Vanderkruk was a gardener with a successful landscape maintenance business and small nursery, growing annuals and perennials on rented land. However, as previously established, the post-war economy in the Netherlands was one of the main reasons why people chose to leave, selecting areas that had ample opportunity. For the Vanderkruk Family, Canada appeared to be a prosperous place, especially to raise such a large family.

Initially taking a position in Windsor, Vanderkruk and his family set out in March 1952; however, several storms caused the journey to be hindered, even resulting in significant injuries



The Vanderkruks, c. 1952-53. From our collection, BW1775

to a few members of the Vanderkruk Family that required hospitalization. Considering the delay caused by the storm and the time needed for recuperation, the job in Windsor fell through. The family then went into Hamilton where they were met with open arms by the local church and several of their countrymen. Not only did the Vanderkruk Family find support in an established Dutch community but they also received assistance in searching for a place to live and a job for the patriarch of the family.

During this hunt, the minister of the church took Cornelius to Waterdown to meet with the owner of a flourishing nursery: John Connon. After being hired on the spot, four years later, Connon and Vanderkruk were business partners with the latter taking over the company in the 1960s, culminating in the Dutch

ownership and operation of Connon Nurseries. With the Vanderkruk Family at the helm, Connon Nurseries expanded into the industry it is today and continues to be a staple of the Flamborough landscape.

The story of the Vanderkruks demonstrate what families saw in Canada: opportunity, stability, and community. The wave of immigration in the Second World War was massive, but it was focused on specific areas where there was already a Dutch presence and where jobs could be found. The Vanderkruk story also demonstrates another pattern of Dutch settlement. As many Dutch families began to branch out from the cities and go deeper into the countryside, Flamborough, as well as many townships, began to have a stronger Dutch presence.

This trend led to the establishment of Dutch-owned busi-

nesses like the Dutch Mill Country Market located in Millgrove; initially operating as the Dutch Mill Gardens, Ed and Elaine Scharringa started the company in 1985. Ed Scharringa was directly tied to the aforementioned wave; Ed's father, Peter, had initially come over from Friesland after the war. The Dutch Mill was originally focused on garden supply and floral bouquets, even providing fresh-cut flowers and plants to chain stores later in 1990. As the business continued to grow and prosper, Dutch Mill Gardens expanded its scope, opening its country market in 1997, which sold local produce as well as international goods, especially from Holland.

Another family having a large impact in Flamborough is the DeVries family. Ulbe and Tjitske DeVries moved from Friesland, Netherlands to Canada in 1953 with their children. Part of the transition into life in Canada included anglicizing their names - Ulbe became John and Tjitske became Jessie. Their three sons did the same. Two of the sons, Fred and Peter, were very involved with real estate and property management. The buildings they constructed, both commercial and residential, are familiar to everyone in Waterdown, though they may not know the history. The Harper Building, Hawksview Square, and the medical centre across from Hawksview housing the St.

George Medical Centre are a few of their holdings. Many of the younger generation of DeVries are very involved in the Flamborough community. Amanda DeVries is executive director of Eagles Nest, a local charitable organization that provides a supportive environment where people are equipped to achieve positive change and build healthy communities. Meghan Martin, nee DeVries, is our vice president and a very active member of the heritage society. She also continues work with the family business, Flamboro Center Properties Limited, ensuring that though the corporation was founded in 1968 it remains up to date and allows tenant's success as small businesses as well as its own.



*Ribbon cutting ceremony for The Kenneth Harper Building. From left to right: Ulbe (John) DeVries, Ken Harper, Tjitske (Jessie) DeVries, Peter DeVries, Fred DeVries. **Waterdown Review** photo*

The Dutch community within Flamborough prospered, culminating in a strong presence that can still be seen and felt today.

There remains a lot of pride in their Dutch heritage, even generations later.

FOUND IN THE FONDS

Research can be daunting sometimes, but it's a part of reaching the end goal of answering a question or solving a local history mystery. Often while searching through the fonds we find some wacky stuff if we're paying close attention. Our archivist discovered this strange article while looking for something else in the papers. The article from 1912 outlined a contest for kids to kill as many flies as possible

and submit them to the Board of Health office. We're a bit flummoxed as to why the flies were sentenced to death - there were no pandemics at the time but there must have been good reason if The Spectator was willing to shell out 174 prizes worth \$400 total.

From the article:

"Traps, pads, swatters or any other device [...] may be used.



Everything except sticky fly-paper, [...] it is impossible to get the flies off of it."

"The Spectator is offering \$22 in prizes to the children who send in the best essays on the subject of The House Fly, Its History and Its Extermination."

Current Projects

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

We've been a part of this community for over 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. You'd be surprised with how a commitment of a small part of your time can help our society in a big way.

We are always applying for grants for our projects, but not all of the applications are successful. The application process is also a large investment of time and effort. Should you have ideas for fundraising or a way to help, we'd love to hear from you.



Volunteer Emelia has finished her time with us and now has a job in Kitchener. Many thanks to Emelia for all her work, especially with the photography exhibit.

Research was done for the Masonic Hall on Hwy 8, Westover General Store, the Simons/Tunis families, the Slater Family, the Black Family,

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.



'Springdale', the Troy Women's Institute building, houses on Hwy 6 just below Concession 4, a Great War medal, Waterdown Rod & Gun Club.

While our physical computer issues seem to be resolved, we're currently solving some issues after an update of our website. The payment portion of the site needed

some changes, which resulted in emails sent out for orders months if not years old. Despite the confusion created, our page should be back to normal very soon.

Our volunteer hours are up as Bob Thomas and Bob Lalonde have been continuing their work on WWI veterans files. They are ensuring that we have files on all veterans by cross-checking various memorials in the area.



"Great opportunities to help others seldom come, but small ones surround us every day."

- Sally Koch

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!

- 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

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 enjoying our monthly meetings on numerous different subjects.

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.



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 wish or copied and returned to you.

We are always in need of funds. While memberships, book sales and grants help us with our day-to-day expendi-

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

We've 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.

DONATIONS

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



3,915



630



65



42

We're always online - tap follow and drop a comment to say hi!



Our biweekly blog posts continue with articles "From the Vault".

E-Commerce

Check out our wares online —we've got something for everyone. Be it a book or a membership, purchasing from our online store supports us as a society and ensures we can preserve local history.

Once again, and as always:

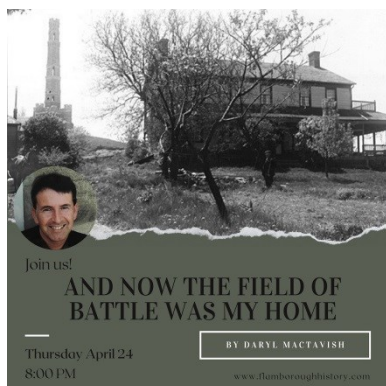
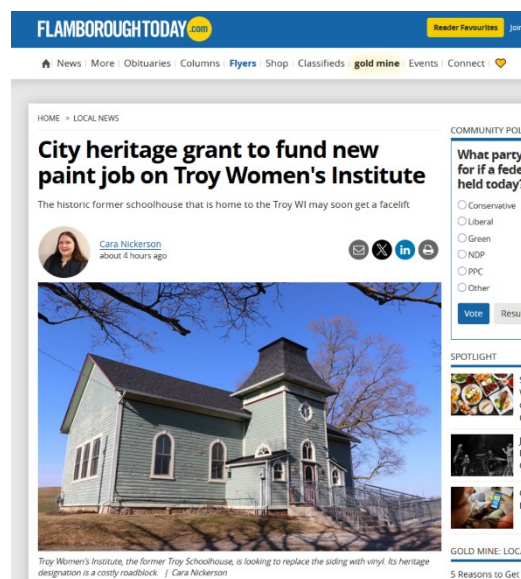
Thanks to all for your support!

There's been a lot of heritage news in Flamborough Today, and our workaround of taking a screen shot of the article and sharing that instead of a direct link has been quite successful. It goes to show that in the face of limitations due to social media rules, there can always be a workaround.

We reached out to our followers and local community groups to

see how many people would be interested in a recreation of the vintage tee from the 1979 Centennial. There's the potential to sell approximately 60 shirts, so as soon as we sort out some back end issues with our website checkout they'll be available.

Our photography contest starts May 1st - we're hoping to see quite the range of submissions of "Heritage in Focus."



Treasures from the Archives



Although we like to think that everything we have in the Archives is a ‘treasure’, sometimes a donation is truly a wonderful gift and a treasure that will be enjoyed by young and old. In his search for information about the history of the Waterdown High School for his new book, history teacher and author Nathan Tidridge was able to unearth items that had been hidden away in various places in the school. These have now been donated to the Archives. Included in the 6 boxes are plaques, ledgers, yearbooks and much more that we have still to discover. These few items caught our eye – rolled photographs of the student body from 1928 – 1954; a sweatshirt for ‘Ramshackle High’, a very long banner for ‘Our School – more than just a classroom’, and a key chain.

Having hired one of the co-op students who worked on the book project with Mr. Tidridge, we hope to have this collection catalogued over the summer.



ARCHIVES ACTIVITY - MARCH

	VISITORS	36
	CALLS	6
	E-MESSAGES	165
	ITEMS CATALOGUED	69
	ACQUISITIONS	5
	VOLUNTEER HOURS	245

THREADS THROUGH THE PAST

Ralph Swann Mason and the Waterdown Golf Course

Lyn Lunsted, Archivist

'Coolest place in the district'

'600 feet above the lake'

'Cooling breezes'

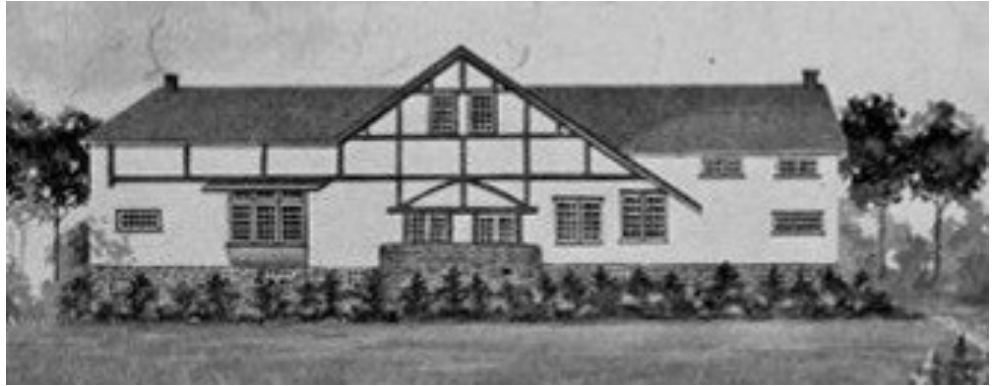
'Scenery unsurpassed'

These enticing words were used in ads for the Waterdown Golf Club, which seems to have been a beautiful golf course, built at the wrong time – but who could have predicted the future.

Ralph Swann Mason was a prominent Hamilton builder. Born March 27, 1879 in Leicestershire England he married Ada Taylor in 1899 and they came to Canada in 1911 with their children Mary, Richard and Gladys, settling in Hamilton. Over the next 35 years, Swann Mason became well known as a builder, starting with single houses on Hilda Street, Grosvenor Ave, Gage Avenue



Topographic map excerpt showing location of the golf course, 1938



Waterdown Club House - Canadian Golfer, January 1932.

and Manchester Street, before moving on to apartment buildings. In 1925 he built a small apartment building on Queen Street South at Canada Street. With his son Richard, Swann Mason & Son built the *Lincoln Apartments* at 115-117 Main Street West, a building at Main and Bay Street in 1926, and a 36 unit building *King's Court Apartments* at King and Steven Streets, in 1927.

He was active in the community, serving as an Alderman in Ward 8, and was chairman of the Building Committee of the Board of Education. He was a member of The Barton Lodge, A.F. & A.M., and Christ's Church Cathedral.

In November 1927, he set his sights outside of the City of Hamilton. He purchased 263 acres of land from John Montgomery, known as the Husband Farm, on lot 9, Concession 4 in East Flamborough near Wa-

terdown. Up to that point, most golf courses were private. The golf course envisioned by Swann Mason would be open to the public. The membership would be limited, to avoid crowding on the course, and the public could use the course at any time for a small fee.

The site was ideal for a golf course, with the architect Nicol Thompson stating that the sod was perfect - 'the course was made by nature'. Trans-Canada Construction built the hazards and scenic effects. Five springs fed numerous streams which ended up in a small lake, and bathing houses were erected for swimmers. Three weeks after work started on the site, the greens were set, tees constructed, the ground seeded, the fairways and rough cleared and work had started on converting the barn to the clubhouse.

In January 1930, R. Swann Mason sold 263 acres of lot 9, con-



Golf club tags -

Flamborough Archives

cession 4 (Parkside Drive) to Waterdown Golf Course Ltd., principals listed as Henry Champ, Wm. B. Powell, Ralph R. Bruce, Ralph Swan Mason, Lilian Archibald, A. Boyle. This is pretty much where the current Waterdown High School is today.

Nicol Thompson, brother of famed golf course architect Stanley Thompson, designed the new course which had 18 holes for a total of 6,445 yards, par 71. Mr. Mason was the first president and general manager of the club.

Formerly a dairy farm, the barn was converted to a spacious and artistic club house. There was a large lounge and dining room seating 200, two snack rooms, kitchen, locker room and showers. When the course opened on May 24, 1930, twelve of the permanent greens were ready, with the remaining six holes having temporary greens for a couple of weeks. Fees were \$1.00 per day or \$25.00 for the season. The first club pro was R. McNulty followed by Jack Armitage in 1931, John B. Galloway in 1932, Arthur Dorman in 1939 and Tom Williams in 1942.

Over the next 14 years, there

were several changes made which enhanced the course – the creek was diverted and filled in, brush was cleared, the driveway was paved and in 1936 Parkside Drive from Highway 6 to Waterdown Road was constructed as ‘a perfect surface and a credit to the engineers’. A swarm of bees on one of the bunkers in 1935 caused some excitement until a local bee keeper removed them.

By 1933 the depression was having an effect. Although there were numerous tournaments and events, times were hard and the seasonal fee had been reduced to \$15.00. The parcel of land included enough to add another 18 hole course, planned for women, but that didn’t happen. In 1940, William (Bill) Bradford was appointed as secretary – manager of the club and he had complete charge of the club under a revised policy, and there was new management of the dining room and kitchen. But World War II took its toll.

The club was leased to the Ontario Government in 1943 for a boys’ camp to be run by the



Langford Pharmacy with Golf Club Sign - our collection



Ralph Swann Mason, 1924

Y.M.C.A. Housing 40 youths recruited by the Ontario Farm Service Force to assist farmers of the district until the end of the harvest, they took possession of the clubhouse and grounds in June 1943. They apparently had the use of a swimming pool, which was probably what is now known as Black’s Pond. Of the 60 camps scattered throughout Ontario, this was the only one in this area.

In September 1940, 80 acres were sold to William D. Black, to expand his adjoining dairy farm. In 1943 the remaining land was sold to Mr. Black to add to Braeheid Farm, with the provision that the ‘Farm boys’ could be housed there in 1944 if necessary. (It was not – they were housed in Memorial Hall in 1944)

On May 1, 1945, the Waterdown Golf Club Limited applied to surrender its charter. Ralph Swann Mason died on March 8, 1946 and is buried in the Hamilton Cemetery on York Boulevard.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT...

It's that time of year again - our Annual General Meeting and the last public meeting before the summer break. This one promises to be a good one, and we look forward to Daryl's presentation.

Our heritage paper for this edition is appropriate as we approach Dutch Heritage Day, May 4th. Flamborough is a host of people from different ethnic backgrounds, and we welcome all of their stories. Should you or someone you know be interested in telling us their own history and how they made an impact on our community, no matter how big or small, get in contact with us so we can preserve it for future generations.

We will soon have available to purchase replicas of t-shirts from Waterdown's Centennial celebrations in 1979. There's been a lot of interest in the shirt on display in the Archives, and we hope that the interest shown on socials translates to sales. Every t-shirt sold gives a little back to us to help support our mandate of protecting and preserving local history. Tell your friends - just in time for summer weather!

Chris Rivait, President



AREA HERITAGE 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).

The Hamilton Mountain Heritage Society- www.hamiltonheritage.ca

The Head-of-the-Lake Historical Society -

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

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

The West Lincoln Historical Society - www.wlhs.info

Waterdown Mill Street Heritage -

www.waterdownmillstreetheritage.ca

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