

Vol. 7- September 2014

# H.E.I.R.S. newsletter

Harrow Early Immigrant Research Society



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## Inside this Issue...

September Meeting:  
The Spitfire: Local Ace... Jerry Billing

## **Newsletter News!**

**Welcome to the September issue of the HEIRS newsletter.**

*Okay... is it just me or did summer come late & leave early?  
At least our gardens stayed mostly green through the peak summer calendar days,  
and I know less watering was required - (maybe we needed less rain though).*

**But, we are heading into Fall, one of the most picturesque times of the year.  
And HEIRS directors have a number of interesting speakers and events lined up to keep  
you informed, entertained and busy. Keep your inquiries about your ancestors coming in,  
and share anything for our collection at our Resource Centre too.**

**Hope even more of our members can take advantage  
of our events during the rest of 2014.... see you there?**

### **September Meeting**

#### **Bob Swaddling - the Spitfire**

**As we kick off another year of interesting meetings,  
our speaker will be Bob Swaddling, a Kingsville  
resident and well-known expert on the Spitfire  
airplane of World War 2 fame.**

**Not only is Bob knowledgeable on the Spitfire, he  
is also co-chairman of the committee which has  
been working to bring a life-size recreation of the  
Spitfire plane to the Essex area.**



**This will be a memorial to all  
Spitfire pilots, but especially  
Jerry Billing, local Essex area  
flier, who gained fame as a  
decorated ace during WW2.**

**Bob will educate us on a  
fascinating part of our military  
past, and bring us up-to-date on  
the committee's progress on this  
very important endeavour.**





As you no doubt recall, HEIRS met at the Oxley Estates Winery near Colchester in May for our last meeting of the spring. In a beautiful setting, members enjoyed nibbles and desserts, and a beverage, if they so wished, while the business of electing a Director was conducted.

Long-time HEIRS Director Les Hodgkins has stepped down, & Esther Meerschaut was acclaimed as a new Director. The other 8 Directors will continue in their present roles for the coming year.



## ***What has HEIRS been doing this past summer?***

Mostly due to the efforts of Director Chris Carter, HEIRS was represented at many events around Essex County. Chris took a canoe trip up Cedar Creek, where he explored the ruins of a circa 1813 Shawnee fort.

He was part of the dedication of the cabin



honouring Ester Fields, daughter of General Brock, at the Southwestern Ontario Heritage Village on the Arner Town Line.

At the Sinasac family reunion in Colchester, Chris represented HEIRS, and spoke to those



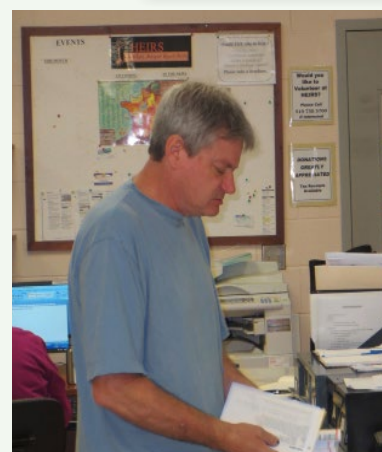
gathered about their roots. When the Hamilton branch of the United Empire Loyalists visited Essex County on a weekend tour, Chris guided the Loyalists through the Heritage Village

and helped with their tour of historic sites in Colchester South Township. The group marked their 100th anniversary by seeing what this region has to offer.

During the annual *Explore The Shore* event, HEIRS supplied pictures and posters of times gone by, and information books, as part of a display for visitors at the Oxley Estate Winery, which had also been our gathering place for the HEIRS May meeting.



In addition, Chris researched the Battle of Point Pelee, also known as the Point Pelee Skirmish, which occurred in July of 1814, near Sturgeon Creek. As a result of his efforts, a plaque was dedicated & installed at the site to commemorate this important event.



*HEIRS is fortunate to have Chris as a Director.*

*His drive and high energy keeps HEIRS involved in the community.*



*HEIRS has been very fortunate again this past summer, as Andrea Leslie returned as our summer student employee. She greets visitors with a smile, answers phone requests and does research when members have a specific question and don't know where to look.*

*As well, she tackled a myriad of office and clerical duties to keep our research centre well organized. Being open daily through the summer is a huge plus for the group, and she has been a valued member of the HEIRS staff.*



*Thanks for all that you have done, Andrea - it is appreciated!*

*HEIRS wishes to thank Mr. Greg Harrison and his Computer Center staff for their work in upgrading our computer systems from XP to Windows 7, a much better operating system.*

*We truly appreciate the extra effort and consideration shown to our group's needs, as he and his staff went above and beyond normal service to make sure HEIRS was accommodated.*

*On many occasions through the year, we have depended upon his expertise to keep us "up and running", and he is always most supportive.*



## 6 Upcoming Events

# 2<sup>nd</sup> HEIRS ANNUAL BBQ FUNDRAISER

**THANKS!** On July 5th, HEIRS held its 2nd Summer BBQ in front of Sanford's store. The Directors sold hot dogs, burgers, sausages & drinks raising \$400 towards summer hours support for the HEIRS resource centre.

*There are two upcoming Fall workshops offered through the J. R. Park Homestead.*

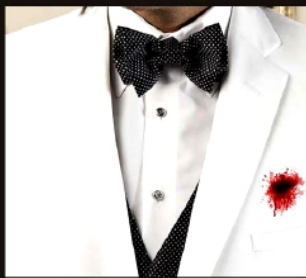
**On Saturday, October 4**, from 9 AM to 4 PM, there is a "Connie's Classic Carrier" workshop, at which the class will make a rectangular basket with a large wooden handle, perfect for those trips to the market or store. Cost, including materials, is \$60 per person.

**On Saturday, November 8**, from 9 AM to 2 PM, you can learn to make a "Pine Needle Basket", a small round basket of natural pine needles using the "coil" method of basket weaving. Cost here is \$40 per person. To register, contact Kris at [kives@erca.org](mailto:kives@erca.org) or call the Homestead itself. Learn an almost forgotten skill and design your own one-of-a-kind basket too!

*The Park House Museum in Amherstburg has extended the World War 1 exhibit it offers until Remembrance Day.*

It features an entire upper floor set up to feature what life was like for soldiers in 1914. There are weapons of the era, uniforms, maps, a large mock-up of the "trenches" used for protected troop movement, and much more. The role of local servicemen is emphasized, their regiments and battles, and also the role of the women of the war. Part of the exhibit also shows items of interest depicting the German war experience- both sides lost many young men. The museum is open 7 days a week, from 10 AM to 4 PM, and cost is very reasonable- \$4 for adults, \$3 for seniors, \$2.50 for kids 12 years and up.

## The Groom Wore Red



The  
"I Do"  
Murder  
Mystery

**Saturday, September 13, 2014**

Park House Museum • 6:30 - 9:00 pm

Script by John Schlarbaum

Author of *A Memorable Murder* and *Off The Beaten Path*

**Advance tickets \$10**

Available at Gibson Gallery,  
North American Black Museum, Park House Museum  
\$12 at the door

For information 519-736-2826 or [office@gibsongallery.com](mailto:office@gibsongallery.com)

*The North American Black History Museum in Amherstburg is hosting an art display featuring the topic of the Tuskegee Airmen; there is no charge for this, other than the museum's basic entry fee.*

*The museum is also partnering with the Park House Museum and the Gibson Gallery to present a new murder mystery, "The Groom Wore Red", Saturday, September 13th, 6:30 - 9:00 PM.*

*Advance tickets \$10, available at Gibson Gallery, North American Black Museum & Park House Museum. \$12 at the door. More info at 519 736-2826 or [office@gibsongallery.com](mailto:office@gibsongallery.com)*



This interactive event involves walking  
throughout downtown Amherstburg  
Rain or shine

Recommended for ages 14+





**August 7**

Trustees got into high gear, and ordered another sprinkler, through F. E. Richardson with Heaman Co. Of London for immediate delivery of a 400 Gallon modern street sprinkler, mounted on spring trucks designed for the purpose, and also took steps to complete the installation of the big tank, with electric motor pump attachment, which ought to be working before the week is out.

**August 21**

Slight delay in starting the canning factory due to cans ordered from Germany not being shipped due to the War; had to re-order and change machinery.

**September 4**

The big dredge has crossed the railroad and is steadily working its way westward. Tile drains are now being rushed and nearly all the red piles have disappeared into the ground.

At a largely attended meeting of the ratepayers, a motion was passed to request the council to raise the funds by special debenture, the \$7300 for the new Continuation School (high school). Andrew Brimner is to build it, and he will start at

once and rush the business as expeditiously as possible.

Mac Halstead is building a 6 foot walk on the north side of King Street, from Arner's butcher shop west. It will encourage the building of houses on a couple of vacant lots.

**September 18**

Arthur Agla has bought the Richard Patrick block at Colchester village, from the old church to the dock, running back to Sullivan Street. Many lots have been reserved by local people who look forward to building summer homes. When the radial railway passes through Colchester, this will increase many times in value.

**September 23**

Lloyd Kennedy is getting his twine out and stakes driven for fall fishing. He will be assisted by Forest Tofflemire, Walter Shay and Richard Patrick.





## **In the HEIRS Resource Centre**

***Our first review is the “Centennial of the Essex High School- 1885 to 1985”.***

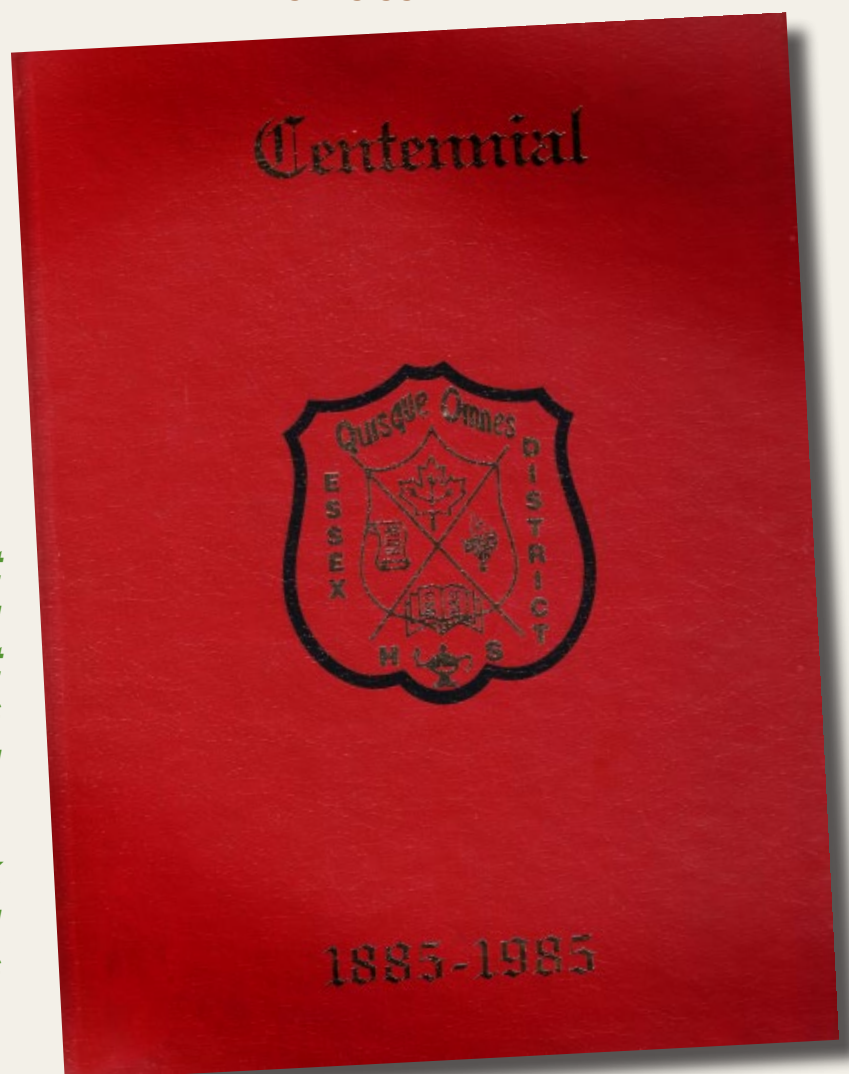
*This is a particularly appropriate time to write this, as construction is progressing well on the new Essex High School as you read this. The old school has served well and created a myriad of memories for those who called it “their high school”. One can turn a page and go through the list of past teachers and principals, and recall that favourite instructor, and perhaps the one you had almost been able to forget too.*

*Some teachers had been students here as well, and were able to “come home again” to do their teaching. Of course there are many photos of classes, school interest group, the various sports teams, and even statistics from the various years, telling the total enrolment, the number of boys and number of girls, etc.*

*You can re-visit the “Snow Flake Folly” dance, and “Cupid’s Capers” of 1959, and more. (“Tickle permits” in 10G? Ask Glenn Adams!) Even the rough times you had at high school can bring a giggle now, as things are seen from a different perspective.*

***If you attended EDHS at some point, I know you will enjoy some pleasant moments browsing this volume from our lending library.***

***The red hard cover book is 200 pages, including names index, & measures 8 1/2 by 11 inches.***





## In the HEIRS Resource Centre

Also from the HEIRS Lending Library is our second title  
**“The Farm and Family Diaries of Alfred L. Arner, 1907, 1908, 1909”.**

*This is a standard white “3 ring” binder of approximately 100 pages, with many photos (taken by Alfred L. Arner himself) included. The Arner family was one of the earliest to settle in Essex County, and Mr. Alfred Arner was a respected citizen and farmer of our area. He wrote daily in his journal of events happening to him and around him, and often made comments as to how he felt about these events unfolding. It tells of the daily family activities that he and his wife had to do, and how they survived and even prospered in difficult times. It is also a valuable tool for those researching the Fox and Arner genealogy (and some others), as it contains photos and family lists as well as diary entries.*

*It begins on Friday, Jan. 11, 1907, with a weather summary and a note on the farm labour done that day. As it moves along, births and deaths among the neighbours are entered, special visitors are received, the occasional criminal charge is recorded among the neighbours, and social events were enjoyed. Each day’s comments are just a few sentences, but let us see what was important to him, and what he felt needed to be recorded. The importance of family shows through prominently, as family members of all kinds are mentioned frequently.*



*The almost daily mentioning of neighbours is also important, as it shows how they interacted and quite often worked together to get large jobs done more quickly. The back of the book included newspaper articles about the Arnerts and their kin, & recollections by various people about “the way it used to be”.*

*HEIRS is fortunate to have had this donated to our collection by Jean Arner Walton, who wished us to preserve her parents’ photos & writings as part of the county’s heritage. As well as being educational, it is a thoroughly enjoyable read. **And Mr. Arner had a sense of humour about his writings too!***

**Hours of Operation: September to June (excluding December)**

Tuesday & Thursday: 10AM - 3PM , Wednesday 9 - Noon. Please call for appointments for other times.

**Memberships Due: May 2014 to April 2015: \$25 per person / couple (CDN / U.S.)**  
**Send cheque to: HEIRS PO Box 53, Harrow ON Canada N0R 1G0**

Please include your phone, fax, email, website & names you are now researching.

Non-member user fee for HEIRS Research Library, as of January 2013: \$5 / visit (+ photocopy costs).

**HEIRS Newsletter**

The HEIRS newsletter is published 9 times per year, in conjunction with General Meetings held on the 4th Thursday of the month, from September through June (with the exception of December).

**Newsletters via Email**

If you currently receive our newsletter by mail and would prefer to receive it by email, simply provide your email address to any one of our newsletter committee members. Not only will you be able to archive the full colour newsletter PDF easily on your computer, it will save HEIRS the extra handling, reproduction and mailing costs.

Special thanks to Greg Harrison at the Computer Centre in Harrow, for his ongoing support of all things technical, setting up our new equipment, and keeping things running smoothly.



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