



Vol. 1 – January 2020

HEIRS

Harrow Early Immigrant Research Society

n e w s l e t t e r



Next meeting...

'Moses' - the story of Harriet Tubman

Welcome to the January 2020 newsletter.

And happy Y2K20 – we made it!

We are now living in a world where “experts” predicted on New Year’s Day in 2000, that there would be hotels in space by 2017, that we would take vacation trips to the bottom of the ocean and according to Arthur C. Clarke, author of *2001: A Space Odyssey*, that we would be walking on Mars in 2021 (we still have time).

But I like some other predictions made on that day – ones that indicated Canadians would be even more diverse as a country, would continue to fight for human rights, be welcoming to all people and would take these messages of tolerance & understanding to other countries.

All these serious predictions when *Stuart Little* and *A Bug’s Life* ruled the cinemas, becoming the highest selling... wait for it, VCR tapes of the year.

So I say... haven’t we had enough with predictions and even New Year’s resolutions for that matter (how many have you broken already)?

One habit you shouldn’t try to break though?

Attending our local meetings... a great source of informative entertainment to help fertilize those changes you’ve planned for this decade. **See you there?**

-Rick McCormick

Next Meeting

Thursday, January 23rd 1:30 PM

Harrow-Colchester Arena Community Meeting Room

HEIRS will present their Black History Month commemoration, as we meet to hear the story of Harriet Tubman, a woman born into slavery, and who eventually was able to escape northward to freedom.

Knowing that she may be recaptured and returned to her slave master (or perhaps even worse) she accepted the great risk of returning to the south to lead others away via the Underground Railroad to Canada... and did this many times. She became known as the

Moses of her people, and a high price was offered for her capture. The book shown on this newsletter’s cover is part of a statue of her located at an elementary school named in her honour in St Catharines. She always carried a book, although she could not read.

She knew slave-catchers would be on the lookout for a black woman unable to read, & would not pay any notice to one carrying one.

Join us to hear of this courageous woman - a true leader in the struggle for freedom.

HEIRS met for the final time in 2019, November 28th to hear HEIRS director Ted Steele speak about... Christmas as it was.

Memories of snowball fights, soggy mittens and wet socks, skating outside until dark, all were brought back to mind. Ted recounted waiting impatiently with his brothers to be called downstairs to the tree and gifts.

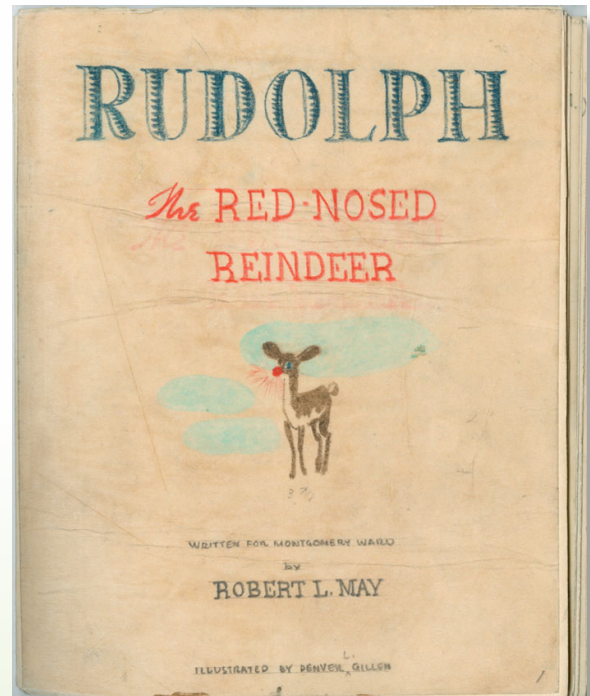
We heard that snowmen were originally effigies of unpopular local people, often pelted with snowballs to express anger or disgust. Of special interest was the real story of Rudolph the Red-Nose Reindeer, a poem story written by Bob May as a giveaway by Montgomery Ward to children visiting Santa in their store.

At the time, May's wife was stricken with cancer, but she & his young daughter were the first to hear the story of Rudolph, to ensure it would be welcomed by young kids. Between 1939 & 1946, 6 million copies were given away free.

The rights were returned to it's creator in a wonderful gesture by the store. May sold the next printing and later song rights which

raised him out of poverty. His brother-in-law, songwriter Johnny Marks, set Bob's poem to music, famously recorded later by Gene Autry.

Interesting enough, Johnny Marks was Jewish. Even so, he also wrote 'Rocking Around The Christmas Tree', a smash hit for Brenda Lee and now a Christmas staple.



Original Bob May manuscript cover



We're humbled...

Once again, our work as a local heritage organization was recently acknowledged.

We do what we do, because we believe in promoting the history, stories & memories of our past citizens.

For the pioneers who helped to establish this town & the surrounding area, those pioneers who created the foundation for our town's culture today, we are pleased to shine the light on their early efforts.

Thank you for this recognition of our collective efforts.

The Amherstburg Echo.

THE OFFICIAL PAPER OF THE COUNTY

Vol. XXX No. 15.

AMHERSTBURG, ONTARIO, FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 1904.

Whole No. 2,474

100 ACRES FOR SALE.

In 2nd concession, Anderton Township, about 4 miles from Amherstburg, 20 acres of bush, some small buildings. For further particulars and price, see

FALLS BROS., Agts.,
Amherstburg.

THE SOVEREIGN BANK OF CANADA.

HEAD OFFICE, TORONTO, ONT.

CAPITAL PAID UP \$3,000,000
SURPLUS AND UNDIVIDED PROFITS, 350,000
ASSETS 50,000

H. S. HOLT, ESQ., President. D. M. STEWART, General Manager.

SAVINGS BANK DEPARTMENT.

Interest allowed on Deposits of \$1.00 and upwards at highest current rate. Farmers' Notes Discounted at lowest possible rates.

HARROW BRANCH.

C. A. MacMAHON,
Manager.

AMHERSTBURG BRANCH.

M. I. LANE,
Manager.

LOST.

LOST—Strayed from my place, Vereker, on Sunday, Feb. 28th, a black white and tan English setter bitch, answering to the name "Lady". Finder will receive liberal reward by returning to me or on being notified I will go after her. A. F. HILLIS, Vereker.

ADDITIONAL LOCAL.

Miss Wm. Hancock's condition kept about the same. Dr. McLaughlin says she may improve, but it is uncertain.

MALDEN.

Ernest McGee, of Flint, Mich. spent Sunday at home. Mrs. Frank Hunt has been suffering from an attack of la grippe.

Wm. Golden suffering from severe attack of inflammatory rheumatism. Mr. Alice McLean, of Windsor, is on his feet after being confined to bed for several weeks.

BROOKER vs. AMHERSTBURG.

Judge McHugh Refuses to Grant New Trial.

At the recent sittings of the Division Court in Amherstburg, Mrs. James Brooker sued the corporation of Amherstburg, for injuries sustained, alleged to have been due to a fall on a defective sidewalk. She was awarded \$20 and costs. The town, through their solicitor, Davis & Davis, applied for a new trial on the ground, of the plaintiff's alleged carelessness. The learned Judge refused to grant the appeal and the text of his decision is as below:

BROOKER vs. AMHERSTBURG.—Mr. Rough for Plaintiff, D. B. Davis for defendant. This action was tried before me at the last sitting of the Division Court at Amherstburg. It is brought by the plaintiff to recover damages for personal injuries sustained by the female plaintiff by falling on a sidewalk on Fort St. where the plaintiff alleges was a dangerous state of disrepair. It is opposed by counsel for the defendant that if the plaintiff has a good cause of action the damages claimed are less than they would be entitled to recover. The law requires a municipal corporation to keep its streets and highways in such a state of repair and if it neglects to perform that duty the law provides that it shall be civilly responsible for all damages sustained by any person by reason of such default. The defendant corporation applies to set aside the judgment entered hereon, the ground that there is no evidence that the sidewalk in question was not repaired. The law provides that the burden of proof is on the plaintiff to show that the sidewalk was in a dangerous state of disrepair at the time of the accident. The law also provides that the plaintiff must show that she was not contributorily negligent. The learned Judge found in favor of the plaintiff and awarded her the sum of \$20 and costs. The defendant appeals from this judgment and asks that it be set aside and a new trial granted. The learned Judge has refused to grant the appeal and the text of his decision is as follows:

ANDERDON COUNCIL.

Saturday, Feb. 27th.

Council met in regular session with all members present. Moved by Messrs. Grodzin and Cote, that the minutes just read be adopted.—Carried. Moved by Messrs. Volians and Cote, that Fred Pagau get a warrant for \$4 groceries furnished to the Veronesi.—Carried. Moved by Messrs. Cote and Volians, that Isaac Lenoir get a clearing ice from 60 and Wilbert Sutte bridge on south side. Moved by Messrs. Grodzin and Cote, that Isaac Lenoir get a refund of dog tax.—Carried. Moved by Messrs. Cote and Volians, that Harold W. W. be appointed for a side line in or for the water property. Moved by Messrs. Cote and Volians, that Isaac Lenoir get a refund of dog tax.—Carried.

BURK BROS.



LIME FOR SALE
IN
CARLOAD LOTS.

January 2

Opening of the Salvation Army new general hospital at Crawford and London Streets was deferred until the second week of 1921, when Commissioner William Richards of Toronto, head of the Salvation Army in Canada, is expected to officiate at dedication services. The original plan of the Army was to remodel the old Ellis Homestead into a maternity hospital, but growing needs caused officials to meet the wishes of citizens who assisted in raising funds for the project for a general hospital. Dr. James Gow of Windsor will be chief of medical staff.

January 9

Gore Pastorius and Albert Tofflemire are busy cutting ice. Ice harvest this season is very bountiful. Local ice houses are filled with 16 inch ice so clear that one could read a newspaper through it.

January 16

The IODE gave a \$50 grant to the library for memorial reference books. Also gave \$25 for keeping a cot at the tuberculosis sanitarium at Union-On-The-Lake.

The council appointed township officers J H Madill, clerk at salary of \$540; Frank Walton, Treasurer, at \$250; P T Clark and R I Ferriss auditors, W L Hughson janitor at \$60; John Readman, sanitary inspector; J D Collins medical officer of health at \$75; Fence viewers M J Mathews, Fred W Wright, Russell Quick, John I McLean, Alanson Iler, Roy Richardson, L Floyd. Pound keepers H J Bell, T Lypps, C McLean, G Little, F J Martin, Thomas Woodiwiss, J Shay, Pollard, T R Quick, James Brimmer, G B Quick, Wm Thorton, Sheep valuers George Birch, Adolphous Deslippe, John Arner, Chas Ford, Perry Lypps, Chas Fawdry, Andrew Wright, Truant officer; F E Richardson member of the Board of Health.

Miss Delilah Wright, better known as "Aunt Delilah", passed away Sunday at the home of Wm. Wride at Kingsville-on-the-lake in her 80th year. She had a long and busy life, and her last illness was practically her only sickness. Death came as a natural course following a stroke of paralysis while visiting at Mr. Wride's. The funeral took place at the Tofflemire Cemetery, conducted by Rev. R E Russ, a lifelong friend of the family. Miss

Wright was born in the Iler Settlement on the farm now occupied by Wm Klie. A daughter of the late Peter Wright, she had as family Peter Wright, deceased, former well-known reeve of the township; Philip, deceased; William, with whom she had made her home nearly all her life; Mrs. Leonard Wigle, of Gosfield South, Elizabeth, Mrs. Henry Wigle, deceased; Annie, deceased; and Hannah, Mrs. Philip Wigle of Gosfield South.

She was known through South Essex as a kindly, capable nurse, of large frame, strong vitality and good judgement.

January 23

There are evidently a number of citizens in South Essex who are under the impression that since the ban has been lifted off liquor, the penalties for drunkenness do not hold. It is a decided error.

The same penalties are in operation now as when prohibition was in force, and far from any leniency being shown, it is the intention of the chiefs of police to prosecute all offenders whoever they may be. Government Liquor Dispensaries in Ontario are doing a normal business of \$8,000 to \$9,000 a day according to a statement by Chairman Flavell of the Provincial License Board.

January 30

The first monthly meeting of the Veribest Club was largely attended. Want to stage a large community celebration for either May 24 or July 1.

The hall which was formerly opened by the Woodmen of the World and afterwards by A. B. Herring which stands in the village of Colchester has been purchased from Mr. Herring by an organization known as the 'Goodfellows Club'. A subscription list has been circulating on the

Lakefront and Potlake Roads and there has been a magnificent response. The purchase price, being \$1700 to include the hall, site and furniture, passed the \$1200 mark and it is hoped that the hall will be paid for in less than a year.

Much credit is due to the committee that sponsored the idea. On Wednesday evening the members of the committee were elected as trustee board. The committee consists of Ernest Byron, Robert Klie, Warden McCormick, Percy McCallum and Lloyd Wright.

There is great interest throughout the province in consolidated schools made possible by an Act introduced at last session of the Legislature. Four or five letters a day are being received by the dep't.

One provision of the Act makes it necessary that the district desiring consolidation be surveyed by the department before the plan can be effected.

So great has been the demand that the department has not had sufficient staff to meet the need. Honourable Mr. Grant, Minister of Education, intimates that it will probably be necessary to secure more officials if it is decided to carry out the plan of the former government of having surveys made.

This is what one may expect to hear in Colchester South when the electric Railway is extended through here from Amherstburg. James A Bailey's nephew, Milton Bailey, fruit farmer of St Thomas last spring bought 24 acres this side of Leamington for \$15000.

He received \$10,000 for the crop of tobacco he grew in 1919, and has now been offered 424,000 for the farm. He figures his net profits for the year including the increase in land value at about \$19,000.

HEIRS Plans & Events - 2020

- by Ted Steele, Director

We are getting things in place for another terrific year of interesting stories about Canada's history and its people.

Our first meeting topic in January will be our lead-in to commemorate February's Black History Month, with the amazing story of Harriet Tubman. She was a woman who showed unbelievable courage. We all know a small part of her story, but there is so much more to be told!



February's topic will be an unique one entitled "Vikings on the Great Lakes". Who knew?

**I am often asked,
"Aren't you running out of ideas & stories
for our meetings and the newsletters?"**

My answer is always, "No, there are so many stories that need telling." As long as our members like the choices being made, new topics will not be a problem.

Every month I glance at a magazine we subscribe to, "Canada's History" & almost always come across 2 or 3 great topics.

The October / November 2019 issue is a prime example. In its pages (the same issue), I learned that this year is the 60th anniversary of a Canadian legend, Bob Hayward and his hydroplane Miss Supertest.

It beat every other hydroplane in the world during 1959, 1960 and 1961. **Wow, I have to enlarge and share that one!**



This year also marks the 150th anniversary of the Northwest Resistance (often called the Northwest Rebellion), in which the Métis and First Nations led by Louis Riel stood up to the Canadian Northwest Mounted Police and the Canadian military. **Again, this story has to be told.**

We are also marking the 90th anniversary of the "Women as Persons" Act which finally gave women equal status (and voting rights) in Canada.



Another very good magazine for ideas is “The Legion”. The Fall 2019 issue has me interested in sharing the stories it offers - the inventor of the gas mask, a true Canadian hero (that means uncelebrated); and ‘Smokey’ Smith.

Also, the first ship sunk by German U-boats; and the story of native chief Poundmaker who was jailed for treason but has been since exonerated, and is now considered (and rightfully so) a Canadian hero & great leader of his Cree people.

These are SOME of the stories on the back burner being developed. Some of these ideas will appear in the HEIRS newsletters as single page stories, and others will be developed into full meetings.

Our history is truly fascinating, and I love being able to help tell the stories and share such intriguing tales.



This magazine also reminded me about the story of the legendary sailing ship, the schooner “Bluenose”, featured on our ten cent coin.

Next year marks the 100th anniversary of defeating the American challengers in the annual world championship race - every year for almost two decades.

It was a trophy the Americans had never before lost.



Looking down the road a bit further, we are beginning to plan a very special occasion...

HEIRS marking its own 50th anniversary in 2021, truly an event to be celebrated.

Long-time director, HEIRS member & one of its founders back in 1971

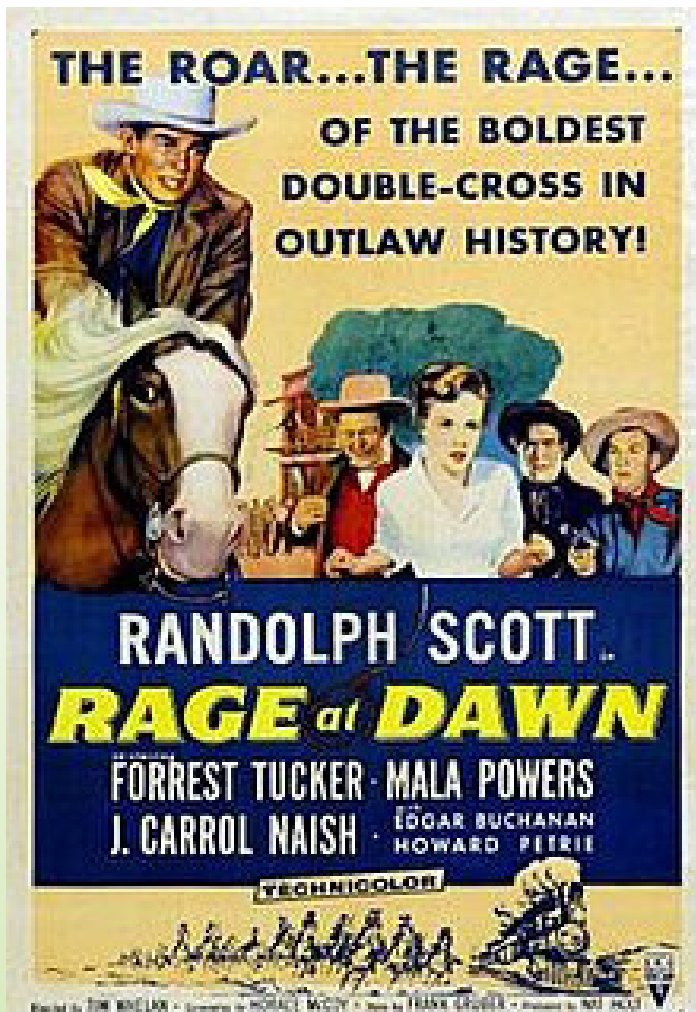
Edith Woodbridge

should be very proud of the organization whose roots she planted so well!

History As It Used to Was...

- by Ted Steele, HEIRS Director

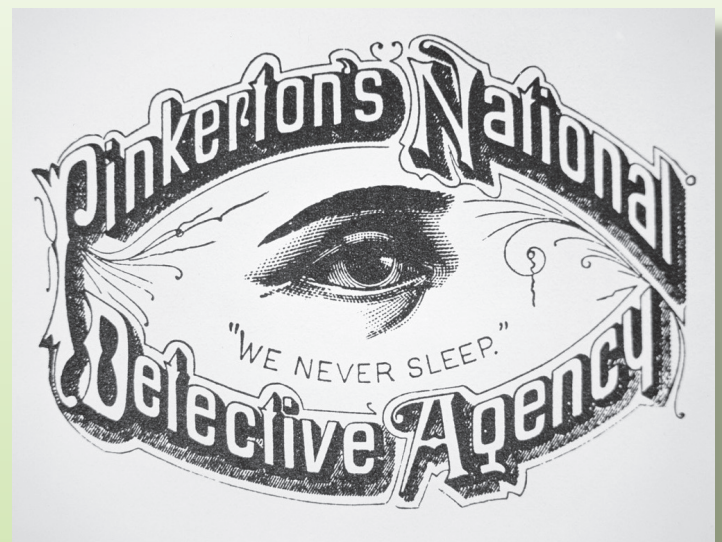
I came across this story in several small pieces... a small reference to the Reno family in an old Windsor newspaper, & then a magazine article about their dealings with the railroad. Finally some connections to at least 2 Hollywood movies. This is how they came together for me. I suspect the original name may have been Renaud, but this area's history does feature Reno as well.



J. W. Reno moved from Kentucky to Indiana circa 1813. He married in 1835 & produced (with the aid of his wife) Frank, John, Simeon, William, Clint, as well as one daughter, Laura. Clint and Laura were not involved with the

gang's criminal activities. The elder 4 brothers got into trouble young, involved with crooked card games, suspicious arsons, horse thefts and more. To escape angry neighbours, the family moved to a spot near St. Louis, Missouri. The brothers became 'bounty jumpers' during the Civil War- enlisting for a bounty, deserting, and re-enlisting somewhere else under a different name and collecting money again. Frank, John and Sim deserted, but William did serve his term and was honourably discharged. He may not have been involved in their activities, but that is still unclear.

In 1864, back in Indiana, the gang added new members & began robbing businesses. In 1866, they decided to make history - the Reno Gang became the 1st gang to rob a train. They got \$16,000, but a posse soon arrived & they fled. Later, they were caught & charged, but a passenger on the train who agreed to testify against the Renos was found shot dead. Charges were dismissed.



The railroad hired the Pinkerton Detectives to track the Reno brothers. John was caught and charged with robbing a courthouse; he was sentenced to 25 years. Following this

sentence, he was again caught, this time for counterfeiting & served another 3 years. After 3 more robberies in a short time span, Frank Reno was caught & sentenced... but escaped.

Several members of the gang were shot or captured, so the Renos again returned to Iowa; multiple robberies eventually led to their capture. However, they were again able to escape & returned to Indiana. More train robberies, much money stolen & a few railroad employees killed in the process. Finally the Pinkertons with a tip, waited for them fully armed in one of the train cars to be robbed.

Two gang members were shot & captured but most got away. One wounded robber agreed to identify the rest, in exchange for leniency. Three of the gang were quickly rounded & jailed. During the night they were lynched by hooded citizens. A few weeks later, another 3 gang members were similarly lynched. Frank Reno & gang member Charlie Anderson were arrested in Canada, extradited to the US & eventually also lynched (apparently afraid they

would escape again otherwise). The original clipping that started my Interest is shown below... the Reno brothers & Windsor, Ontario!
Who would have imagined?

An old favourite actor of mine, Randolph Scott, starred in a movie telling the Reno Gang's story called 'Rage At Dawn'. Imagine my surprise when I learned that Elvis Presley's first movie role was as Clint Reno, the good Reno brother, & that 'Love Me Tender', was at least in part, the real story of the gang's lawlessness.

If anyone has information on the Reno/Renaud family lines of Essex County, that might connect with the outlaw gang, I'd love to hear it.

The Steele family has one traitor hung after the 1837 Rebellions, and a major outlaw gang of the American Revolution. Family history is a lot more interesting if you celebrate the rascals, as well as the heroes in your background.

THE BEEMAN HOUSE, a popular Windsor watering hole-hotel built in 1855 on the northeast corner of Pitt and Ouellette streets, was destroyed by fire in 1887

By Scott Burnside
Star Staff Reporter

WINDSOR OF the 1860s has been likened to a "border Dodge City," attracting some of America's most wanted criminals.

According to James Horan's book recounting the history of the Pinkerton Detective Agency, the first train robbers in the United States, the Reno gang, escaped to Windsor where they were captured by Pinkerton men.

The Renos — Frank, John, Simeon and William — were a product of the turbulent post-Civil War period in the United States. From Seymour Indiana, the gang robbed its first train in 1866 and went on to become one of the most feared groups of outlaws of its time.

In May 1868, the Renos (minus John who had already been arrested by the Pinkertons) stole \$96,000 worth of gold and government bonds from a train they hijacked en route to the United States Treasury. One man was killed and several beaten into unconsciousness in what was the biggest holdup in the country at the time.

Riding with the Renos was one

CITY ONCE A HIDEOUT

Reno gang prominent among U.S. outlaws

Charlie Anderson, a safecracker from Windsor. Following the treasury heist, five of the gang, Frank Reno, Albert Pekins, Michael Rogers, Miles Ogle and Anderson headed for the relative safety of Windsor.

According to Horan, Windsor was a haven for American lawbreakers who had little to fear in the way of extradition. Once here, the Reno gang soon became the leaders of this thriving underworld community.

Some of their more popular haunts included Manning's Saloon and Rockford's bar, both near the river close to The Windsor Star's present location.

Representing the "eye that never sleeps," Pinkerton agent Pat O'Neil discovered the whereabouts of the Reno gang while investigating another bank robbery. He was subsequently beaten with a pool cue while trying to arrest one of the gang in Rockford's.

Finally, with the help of Allan Pinkerton and a posse of local lawmen, the Reno gang was taken into custody at a small frame house at the corner of Windsor Avenue and Brant Street.

While the Pinkertons moved to obtain extradition papers for the gang, outlaws from south of the border met in Windsor to plan the assassination of

Allan Pinkerton. One attempt was made by a man named Dick Barry and another by a bank robber named Johnson.

When the U.S. government learned of these botched attempts on Pinkerton's life, Secretary of State Frederick Seward sent a gunboat to patrol the Detroit River as a show of strength. Canadian protests led to the gunboat's withdrawal after a week.

Finally, the Pinkertons received the necessary papers and after a minor boat mishap on the Detroit River, took the Reno gang back to Indiana.

Ironically, the Renos were hung by vigilantes outside their jail cells in New Albany, Indiana within a month.

The Reno story is not isolated. According to local historian Larry Kulisek, Windsor has always had a reputation of being a rough-and-tumble town catering to American tastes.

"Windsor always had a kind of a loose moral attitude," said Kulisek, who points to the city's controversy over nude dancers as proof.

"The argument is that it was a bad American influence," he said. "I think everyone recognizes that Windsor has a fairly colorful reputation."

HEIRS RESOURCE CENTRE

Open September - June (December excepted)

Tuesday & Thursday: 10AM - 3PM

Call to confirm Wednesday or other appointments.

Newsletter

Published 9 times per year, in conjunction with General Meetings held on the 4th Thursday of the month, September to June, (December excepted).

Receive full colour newsletters by email, or a B&W print version by regular post. Simply provide your email or street address to our office.

Memberships

\$25 CDN / U.S. per person or couple.

Memberships run May 1st - April 30th, annually.

Send membership cheque to:

HEIRS PO Box 53, Harrow
ON, Canada N0R 1G0

Please include phone, postal address, email & family names you are now researching.

Non-member using Research Library

\$10 per visit (+ photocopy costs).

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Harrow & Colchester South
Community Centre (Arena Bldg.)

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Website www.HEIRS.ca

Kudos go to Greg Harrison at The Computer Centre in Harrow, who provides HEIRS support for all things technical to help keep our office running smoothly.

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