

Vol. 2– February 2014

H.E.I.R.S. newsletter

Harrow Early Immigrant Research Society



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Harrow & Colchester South
Community Centre (Arena Bldg.)



Inside this Issue...

**February Meeting:
Black History Month**

Newsletter News!

Welcome to the February issue of the HEIRS newsletter.

Our January issue was delivered in spite of high water, freezing rain, heavy snow and power outages - just in other words, just a typical winter's day in Ontario.

The year is shaping up to be another good one at HEIRS, with even more members finding out Harrow's little secret (gem) - our meetings.

Take a few hours out of your day, once a month, to learn a bit more about your past from our present day speakers. Inside this issue you will be reminded that our stock of resource 'books for sale' is getting low, so don't wait much longer to add that special book to your family library.

And now's the time to sort through that stack of old photos, and bring them along to HEIRS to get them digitized for safe keeping, easier sharing with younger family members or even as special gifts for family members - they don't often have the same images that you do.

What a thoughtful way of sharing your mutual experiences.

February Meeting

When: Thursday, February 27th, 1:30 PM

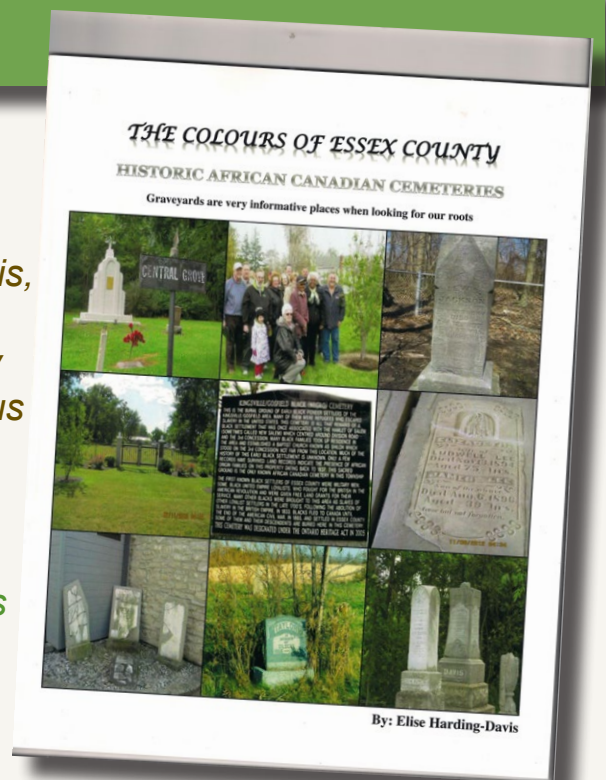
Where: Harrow-Colchester Arena Community Centre

Welcome back Elise!

HEIRS meeting for February will celebrate Black History month. Our speaker will be Elise Harding-Davis, well-known local historian and expert on black history in particular. She is a past curator at the Black History Museum in Amherstburg, and has served on numerous committees and councils to raise awareness of the contributions of the African- Canadian community to our national identity.

She is herself a descendent of slaves, and researches constantly to find and preserve information on black history in all its aspects.

Elise lectures often, and has been honoured with several awards for her dedication and desire to share these often-untold stories with everyone. Her passion for the subject and her innate sense of humour make her a speaker not to be missed.



Elise's latest project "The Colours of Essex County", is a book on historic African-Canadian cemeteries & their associated early communities.

HEIRS met on Thursday, January 23rd, to hear one of the HEIRS directors speak on a Valentine's Day theme. Ted Steele told what it was like to grow up in pioneer times, and the chores assigned to the children as they grew.

The girls had a myriad of tasks to help run the household, as everyone had to pitch in to provide the daily food, and to ensure survival. They learned to tend the vegetable garden and livestock, gather edible plants and prepare food, look after younger siblings, and spin wool for clothing and blankets.

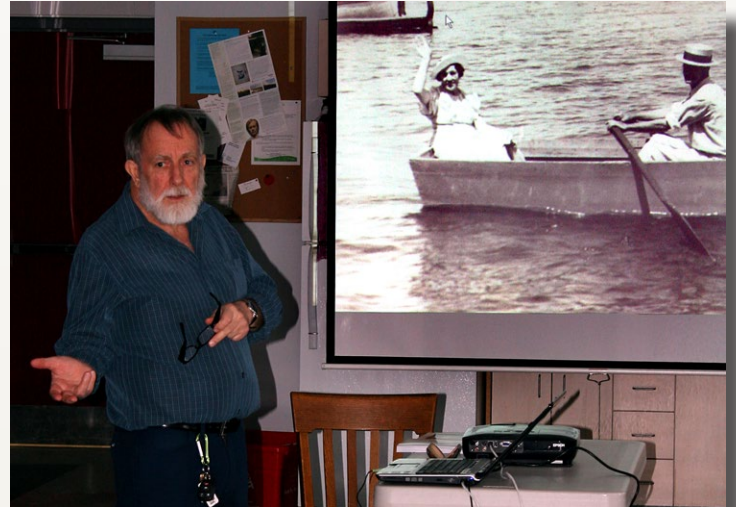
The boys were learning to control livestock, to plant and tend various food crops, to haul the daily water supply, and to make and repair items both of wood and of metal, the latter requiring blacksmith skills. The day was full of jobs demanding time and energy.

How did the families put some fun into their lives?

Neighbours gathered whenever possible; a large job such as barn-building required a large workforce. While the men tackled this job, the women held quilting bees, and could produce quilts more quickly and enjoyably by sharing the work and enjoying the time to socialize as well.



Children met others and also learned by watching their elders. 'Bees' normally ended with a huge meal and a dance for all guests. The children met others at school, & would strike up friendships which might bloom in time. Minnie Near had classmates and friends sign her autograph book (pg. 4), & much later married one of them (Humdrum or Roland Steele).



Harvest parties, maple sugaring parties, berry-picking picnics, all offered chances to flirt & connect with the opposite sex. Couples becoming serious about one another might use 'bundling' to strengthen the growing affections. The young man might be allowed to stay overnight with the young lady, to see if they were ready to make the match permanent. They slept together in a bed divided length-wise by a "bundling board" & each was expected to stay on their own side. Some regions used a "bundling bag", a sleeping bag divided down the middle to separate the occupants. It was understood that any "unexpected surprises" would mean a quick marriage, on pain of social & religious excommunication. The family honour on both sides was an important consideration!

The 'chivaree' or wedding night interruptions, were also touched upon during the presentation, and a few passages from diaries of the time revealed passion between the young people, not really so different from our own, when we were young.

From the diary of John G. Buchanan

1840 (December 18)

Very cold and no snow... Ben Halstead and Jonathon Griffins gone to Detroit to get married to Miss Baldwin and Miss Aikinson. They have a cold time of it, I think. The girls want bed fellows bad this winter. I wish them joy and many happy days and nights. Lots of weddings this winter.

Sherkston Jan. 4th 1903

Dear Friend:
Remember me long
Remember me late
Remember the time
We kissed at the gate
your loving friend.

Sherkston Feb. 24th 1907

Dear Friend:

I love coffee
I love tea
I love you
If you love me

Jerome Handman
R. G. S.



Pages & album of Miss Minnie Near.

Miss Minnie Near





From the HEIRS mailbag...

Have you ever considered being an HEIRS volunteer?

There is a myriad of jobs waiting to be done, from scanning photos into our computers, to filing papers and photos into file drawers, to cutting and filing obituary notices, or even basic housecleaning duties, and more. We would love to have more members involved in keeping our group active and growing. (Besides, we do have fun too!)

Bring 'em on !

*HEIRS encourages everyone to bring in your photos, home movies, slides, and have us make duplicate copies for you. Your precious items can be put into digital form on CDs or DVDs, so that one of a kind, irreplaceable items are not at risk. Your own original items will be returned to you and not retained by HEIRS. We only ask to have one of the digital copies for our files. **Don't let time degrade and spoil special family items.***

Now hear this!

*HEIRS is now the proud owner of a public address system, (amplifier and microphone), which will ensure that everyone attending our meetings will be able to hear all presenters clearly and easily. **No more need to sit in the front seats to hear what's being presented!***

NOTICE:

Due to rising costs of operation, HEIRS finds it necessary to increase the annual membership fee from \$20 to \$25 per person or couple. This increase will come into effect as of the new billing period which begins on May 1st, covering the period from May 2014 to April 2015. *We suggest that members renew early and save.*

UPCOMING EVENT:

Mamma mia...

why not bringa da whole family?

Mark your calendars! The annual HEIRS Pasta Dinner fundraising event will be held on Saturday, March 8, at the Harrow K of C from 5 to 7 PM.

Tickets are available at HEIRS or from any of the directors for just \$10.

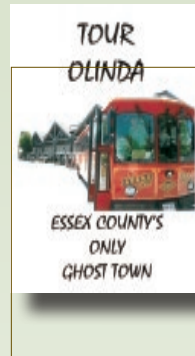
This provides HEIRS with funds to hire a summer student, who keeps the HEIRS centre open every weekday through the summer.

Your support is both needed & appreciated!



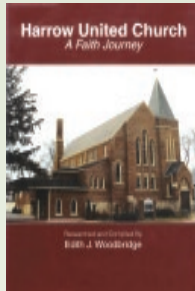
**Tickets
still only
\$10⁰⁰**

Index to
Commemorative
Biographical Record,
Essex County
\$40.00



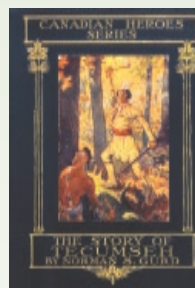
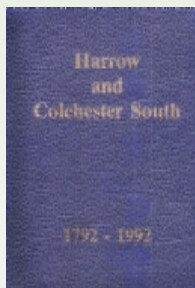
Olinda: Essex County's
Only Ghost Town
\$25.00

Harrow United Church
A Faith Journey
\$30.00



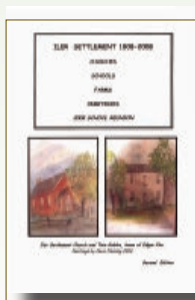
Simon Girty
- Turncoat Hero
(soft cover) \$20.00

Harrow & Colchester South
1792-1992 (2nd edition)
\$30.00



The Story of Tecumseh
- Canadian Heroes Series
\$19.00

Iler Settlement
1808-2008
\$28.00



The Story of Isaac Brock
- Canadian Heroes Series
\$19.00

Are there other books available than the ones shown, here? Yes... let us know what you need... soon!

The HEIRS stock of 'books for sale' is now dwindling, and many will not be available again. If you have your eye on any of our offerings, be aware that some titles are now in short supply.

When they're gone, they are indeed, gone!

Genealogy of the Marentette/Marontate Family

-submitted by Kathy Langlois, HEIRS Director

The first ancestor of the Marentette/Marontate family came to Montreal on May 18, 1642 from France with his wife and four children. He was born in France in 1583 and he was killed, along with his son-in-law, on October 25, 1657 by the Iroquois while working on the roof of his house. His name was Nicolas Godet. Yes, I said Godet NOT Marentette.

Let me explain. On November 4, 1698, Nicolas Godet's grandson, Jacques Godet, married a woman by the name of Marguerite Duguay dit Marentette. The Marentette part of her name must have been important because they retained it and Jacques and Marguerite's 12 children were given the last name of Godet dit Marentette.



Glen Marontate Family (circa 1943)

Back Row: Mary Alice, Agnes, Austin, Gordon, Catherine, Louise

Middle: Glen, Marie

Front: Bernard, Gerald, Elsie, Virginia

Two of Jacques and Marguerite's sons, Jacques and Francois, came to the Detroit River region of Sandwich (now part of West Windsor) before 1743. They both married, and between the two of them, fathered 22 children. Many of these children married and carried on the name and the large family tradition.

Jacques was granted a concession of land, which was located east of the present day Ambassador Bridge between Askin and Curry Avenues. Francois was a lieutenant in the Detroit Militia. He purchased 4 arpents (about 5/6 of an acre) of land. He then added some more land to this over the next few years, as some of the original land was disposed of to support the newly constituted Assumption Parish. Francois was warden of the Assumption Parish and owned lot # 89.

The name, Godet dit Marentette was retained for a few more generations and then, eventually, the Godet part was dropped, leaving only the last name of Marentette.

Francois' grandson, Antoine Marentette, enrolled in the 2nd Essex Militia in Colonel Baby's battalion in Captain Maisonville's company to fight in the war of 1812 on the side of the British. After Antoine was discharged in 1815, the King of England, as was the custom of the time, awarded land to his faithful soldiers. Thus, Antoine was awarded prime land and settled on lot 94 1st Concession of Colchester (South). On June 19, 1817, he married Josette Langlois and they had 9 children

In the 1851 and 1861 censuses of Colchester, the census taker noted that neither Antoine nor Josette could read or write, so he entered their last name as Marontate and that spelling prevailed. Therefore, anyone with the spelling of their last name as Marontate would likely be a descendant of Antoine and Josette.



Murdoch Studio
WINDSOR, ONT.

**Wedding of
Glen Marontate & Marie (Mary Louise) Boussey
February 8th, 1915**

Standing:

Charles Beaudoin (Best Man) & Genevieve Boussey (Maid of Honour)

*Want to share a bit of
your family's history,
and maybe a few of
your favourite photos?*

*Drop us a line and we
can help you or give us
a call during our working
hours. See last page for
our contact information.*

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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