

Vol. 3– March 2018

HEIRS

Harrow Early Immigrant Research Society

newsletter



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Harrow & Colchester South
Community Centre (Arena Bldg.)



Next meeting...

Maple Syrup Making in the Past

Newsletter News!

Welcome to the March newsletter.

HEIRS continues to provide specific monthly meeting subjects that reflect the ongoing events of the season - this month is no exception.

Once again, we request member feedback on topics of interest to you, questions regarding genealogy resources available through HEIRS, specific help in your search for info on relatives via our inbox, and of course any kudos we may have earned in your eyes.

Our next meeting is scheduled two days after the beginning of Spring in the Northern Hemisphere (officially) ... **See you there?**

Next Meeting

When: Thursday, March 22, 1:30 PM

Where: Harrow-Colchester Arena Community Meeting Room

The Business of Maple Syrup

HEIRS will next gather to hear Ken Hunter tell us about the business of maple syrup making.

The Hunter family began the operation on the Arner Town Line in 1910, with an evaporator and over 1000 pails for sap collection.

Ken's father was involved then, and Ken himself remembers at 10 years of age, being shown how it was all done. We will learn when & how to tap the trees, the steps involved, and the various levels of syrup quality.

Ken and his family continued the Hunter tradition from 1982 to 2002, at which time the government taxes made the business too difficult to maintain.



Apparently there is still local production of maple products in the the Blenheim area, but no Essex County suppliers remain.

Please join us for this informative meeting.

On Thursday evening, February 22nd, HEIRS met to hear guest speaker Doug Robinson (aka Seamus Gunn) tell of the early years of Canada as a nation.

As HEIRS president, Richard Herniman was a bit under the weather, Director Kathy Langlois filled in admirably while HEIRS took care of some business issues, and Rita Jabbour from the Essex Heritage Committee introduced our speaker.

Seamus told of the problems involved in getting a new government in place quickly, and the variety of demanding issues before them. As well as being most entertaining, Seamus clarified a number of issues in our history that were not clearly understood.



This included the assassination of D'Arcy McGee, the link between the U.S. buying Alaska from the Russians, and our coast-to-coast railway system, and why this same railway system triggered war with the Métis and First Nations.

Seamus was careful to point out that our government was at times less than compromising on some of these issues, but he also did not place blame for events that could probably have been avoided, if handled differently.

Characters, especially Sir John A. MacDonald, came to life as we heard what they did and said, and their reasons for their actions.

Our national police force, the Hudson's Bay Company, & Fort Whoop-up were all part of the story & our history, presented as it should be... anything but dull and boring.

After the meeting adjourned, we enjoyed coffee and tea, a fruit tray, vegetable tray, lots of desserts and time to circulate among friends in the crowd.

IMPORTANT:

HEIRS members are reminded that yearly dues time is here again.

As of April 30, your dues are requested for another year. Prompt payment is greatly appreciated, as this helps us hire our summer students for July & August, while we wait for the various grants to arrive to cover this considerable expense.

See last page of this Newsletter for details. Thank you.

"I plan to pay for 2 years myself, to help swell the coffers & keep HEIRS moving forward smoothly." - Ted Steele

4 Upcoming Events

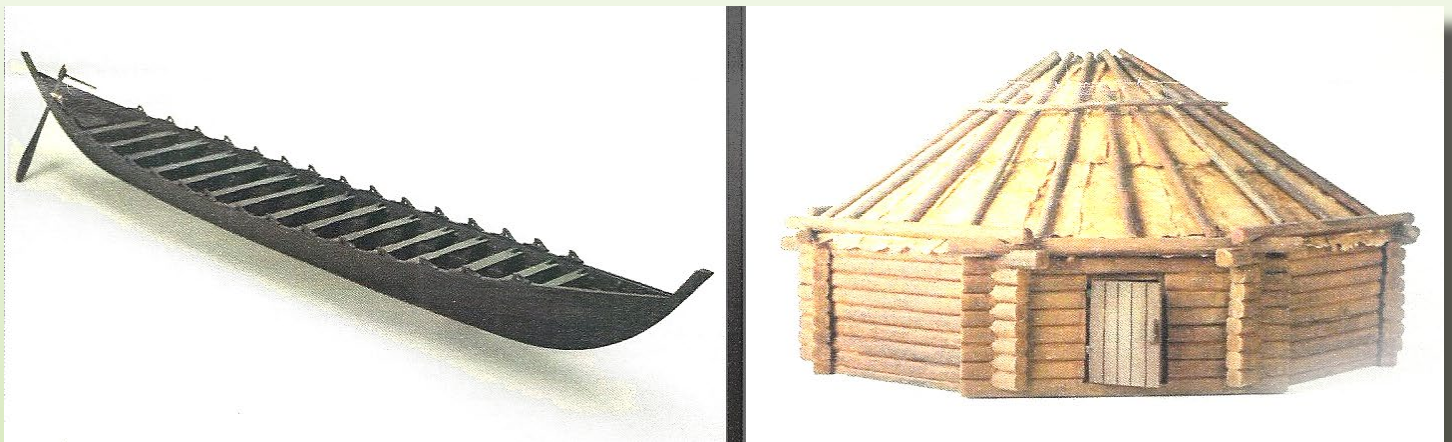
Chimczuk Museum

Spring is on the horizon and great events are popping up around our area. One of our local jewels, the Chimczuk Museum, continues its tradition of offering fascinating displays & presentations on a variety of topics.

*Tues. - Sat. 10AM to 5PM. Sundays 11AM to 5PM. Admission fees apply.
FOR MORE INFO: 519-253-1812 or visit windsormuseum.ca*

Material Culture: Things We Make to Live

Running until September 9th, 2018, the exhibit focusses on a variety of cultures around the world, and the dependence of each on the natural materials available to them. Housing, tools, transportation and more come from the natural resources of the regions and dictate how the indigenous people adapt to survive.



Die Cast From the Past: A History of Autos

Running until June 30th, this unique display offers a large collection of “Hot Wheels” type cars, also referred to as Matchbox, or other names. Beginning as toys, these now show the history and evolution of the automobile, and reflect the dreams and imaginings of a generation who grew up playing for hours on the floor with these car replicas. They show an important part of our culture, as well as helping us feel like a kid again.

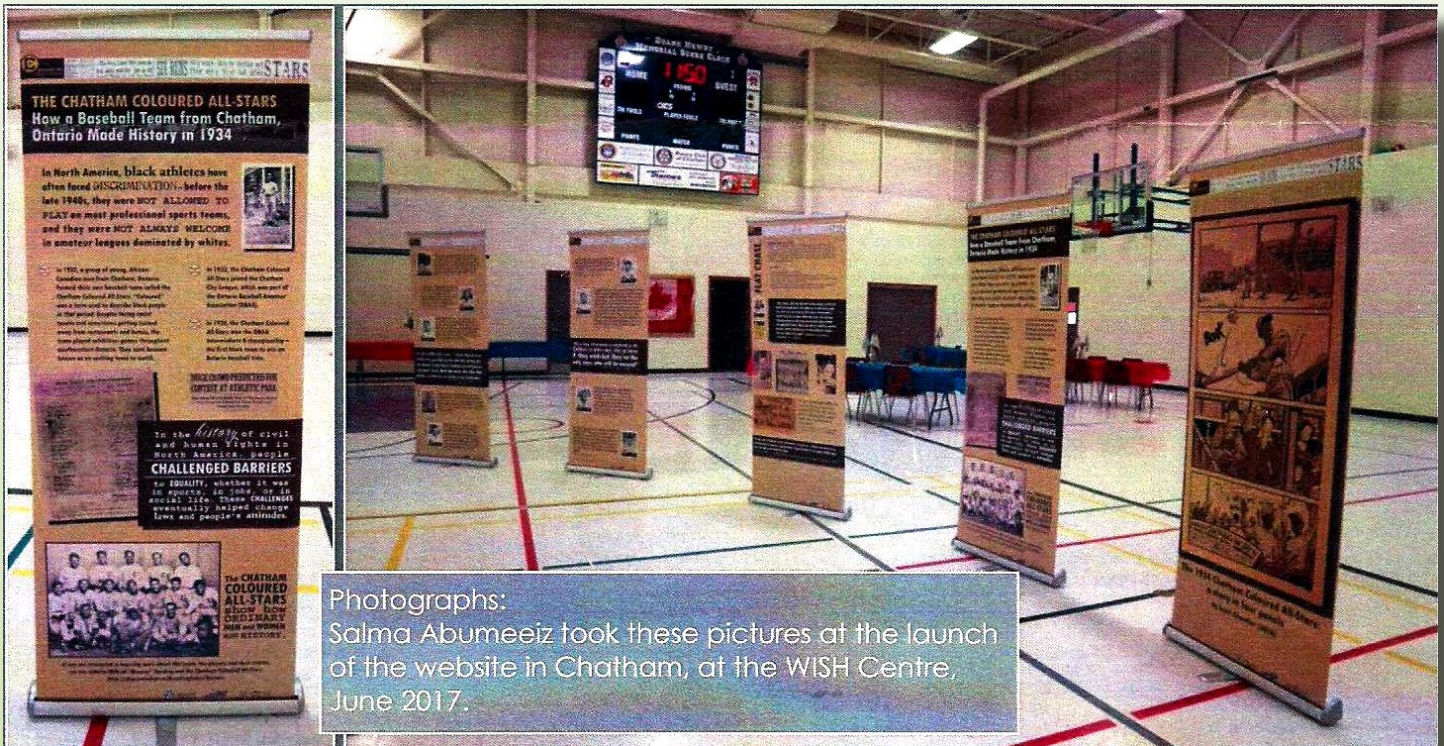


Special thanks to Lawrence Renaud and Charles Fontaine who donated the majority of the collection on display.

Breaking the Colour Barrier: Boomer Harding and the Chatham Coloured All-Stars

A travelling exhibit of much interest, this group was the first African-Canadian baseball team to win an OBA championship, back in 1934.

This exhibit includes documents, scrapbook entries of the time, and much more. Baseball cards featuring these stars have been specially created to sell, and these include Ferguson Jenkins Sr. and Earl "Flat" Chase, both born in Windsor. Sports fans will especially enjoy this, and have until March 31st to take advantage of this special opportunity.



Photographs: Salma Abumeeiz took these pictures at the launch of the website in Chatham, at the WISH Centre, June 2017.

Maple Syrup Festival

Sunday, March 4: 11am to 4pm

Wear your boots to Essex County's premier Maple Syrup Festival. Make maple taffy in the snow, and see syrup being made the pioneer way. Pure maple products for sale.

\$6 / adult, \$4 / child, \$20 family maximum.

Maple March Break for Families

Tuesday, March 13 & Friday, March 16 :
1:30 pm sharp

Arrive early, dress warmly and wear boots. Families tour the site with a costumed guide and discover the sweet process of maple syrup and sugar making in the pioneer method. Help carry the sap using pails and a wooden yoke. Try your hand at the brace and bit drill. See the trees tapped and the sap evaporating. Learn the history of this sweet springtime treat as you help to make and taste maple sugar.

\$6 / adult, \$4 / child, \$20 family maximum.



Maple Moon

Tuesday, March 13: 7 to 8:30pm

Join us for an old-fashioned sugaring off party! Help collect sap and boil it down by moonlight. Make taffy on the snow, join in the barn dance, linger for star gazing and legends.

\$15 / person. Pre-registration required.

Register online at:

<https://maplemoon2018.eventbrite.ca>



Maple Dinner Fundraiser

Saturday, March 24: 6:00 pm.

Join us at Oxley Estate Winery for a maple-themed dinner. Proceeds from this event go towards the Essex Region Conservation Foundation for cultural heritage to protect and restore the John R. Park Homestead.

Enjoy delectable courses with a taste of maple at every step. Homestead interpreters will be on hand to teach about maple history in the region.

Guests can also enjoy maple taffy with an outdoor demonstration by Oxley's culinary staff. 2018 Menu Coming Soon!

To reserve a seat at the event, contact Oxley Estate Winery: 519-738-3264.

The Amherstburg Echo.

Tue. Mar 11

AMHERSTBURG, ONTARIO, FRIDAY, MARCH 1, 1901.

Week No. 2476

100 ACRES FOR SALE.

In full possession, Amherst Township, about 10 miles from Amherstburg, 20 acres of land, with small buildings. For further particulars see page 10.

FALLS BROS., Agts.
Amherstburg.

LIME FOR SALE
IN
CARLOAD LOTS.

THE SOVEREIGN BANK OF CANADA.

HEAD OFFICE, TORONTO, ONT.

SAVINGS BANK DEPARTMENT.

HARROW BRANCH, AMHERSTBURG BRANCH.
C. A. WAGNATION, M. J. LAKE
Managers

PROVED BY SUBSCRIPTION.

As the Echo is published weekly, it is necessary to have a sufficient number of subscribers to enable it to be published at a reasonable price. It is therefore requested that all subscribers who have not paid for their subscription, should do so at once.

INCORPORATED IN CANADA.

The Amherstburg Echo is published weekly, except on public holidays, at the office of the publisher, No. 100 King Street East, Amherstburg, Ontario.

BURK BROS.



March 1

A. B. Herring, lately returned from overseas, spoke at length on his experiences & his vivid description was a splendid contribution to the local history of the Great War.

March 8

Mrs. H. Rotz, formerly of Harrow, and her daughter, Mrs. Courtney, are living in Buffalo.

March 12

Reeve Clark is specializing in Yellow Globe Danvers onions, planting half an acre.

March 22

W. Brookland, merchant tailor, Harrow, announces that he is now open for business at the Herman Klie old stand, King Street east, with a complete stock of blue, black & fancy worsted suitings, trouserings, etc.

March 26

A. A. Wright and son Russell expect to close the Herdman blacksmith shop, and move to

the Pulford shop, Amherstburg.

March 29

Ira Agla is moving into his new store at Arner with a larger and more varied stock than before.

Miss Elizabeth Pollard died at her sister's, Mrs. Frances McLean, Foote's Corners. Colchester South lost its most widely-known newspaper writer. She was a native of London, and educated in Ingersoll, where she obtained a splendid education and developed her talent for writing.

She later came to Walkerville, where she lived for 12 years, and then came to Colchester South a year ago. Her writing was published in many city papers, magazines, agricultural and horticultural publications, throughout the country on all kinds of topics, but chiefly about the farm.

Surviving are 2 sisters and 2 brothers: Mrs. David Todd and William Pollard, Walkerville; Mrs. Frances McLean and John R. Pollard of Colchester South.

The Treasures of HEIRS ...

- by Ted Steele, HEIRS Director

About 18 months ago, we acquired scrapbook pages kept during the years of WW2. Part three that follows, provides an abridged version of their stories.

Toll roads and toll gates were prominent features of the time. There was a toll road from the town of Amherstburg to Sandwich, with a gate at the end. Mr. Fox paid 50 cents a week for the privilege of using this "improved" stretch of roadway.

For years he left Windsor at 9:30, after driving around to the old Windsor Post Office and express office. As regular as clockwork, he would reach Amherstburg at 6 minutes after 1. After a one hour stop-over, the return journey would be started and he would be back in Windsor at 6 PM.

The stage line handled government mail and express. This was before the S. W. and A. Radial line was extended to the Burg and travellers had a choice of going and returning by boat or using the stage. At one time, Mr. Fox recalled that he carried \$10,000 in cash for the Sovereign Bank in Amherstburg.

Stops were made at the intermediate points of Sandwich, River Canard and Gordon Post Office. Alfred Wigle was the Windsor Postmaster, Victor Ouellette was Postmaster at Sandwich, Mr. Perry at River Canard, J. C. Duff at Gordon, E. G. Parks at Amherstburg. Later on, a post office was established at Petite Cote, with J. J. Round as the Postmaster. The name of this community soon afterwards was

changed to Ojibway and Leo Page began his post office experience.

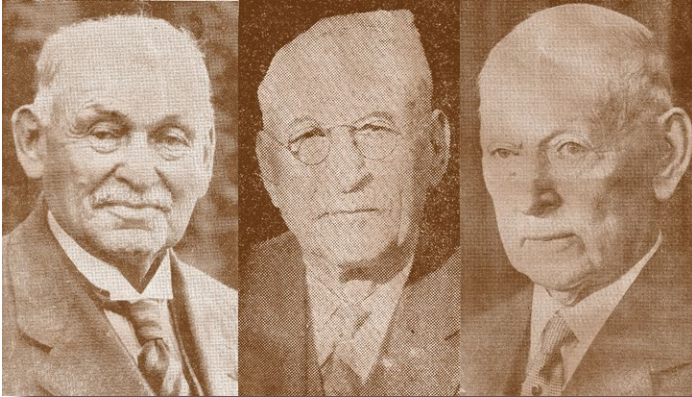


A. Fox Livery & Feed Barn

The worst storm Mr. Fox ever experienced was April 6, 1886, sometimes referred to as "the big snow of 1886". Snow came down steadily for 24 hours, and the coach, equipped with wheels, proved to be a heavy load for a single team of horses. He succeeded in reaching Amherstburg and left the coach there, starting back with a team and cutter. So cold was it, and so blinding the snow, that he was forced to pick up a scarf and a pair of goggles en route. That stop was at the Half Way House in River Canard, and while there he had something warming to drink. People there said he was crazy to try to get through, as all roads were blocked.

He switched his route to the back road and stopped again at the Jockey Inn, at the corner of the Huron Line and Malden Road. Several men warming themselves there warned the driver that he had no chance of getting

through, but he had little difficulty until he reached Tecumseh Road & the Huron Line. There he met drifts 3 and 4 feet deep, and it was nip & tuck for a distance, calling for considerable use of the whip. Eventually he reached Windsor, only one half hour behind schedule. The mail he carried was the only mail received at the Windsor Post Office that day.



Lewis (driver), Alfred (former Windsor Post-master) & Gordon Wigle (driver)

Another highlight of Mr. Fox's career was a tornado that swept the River Canard district about 1890. "The big breeze" barely missed the coach. Houses & orchards were damaged and roads were blocked. A large oak tree fell across the route to Amherstburg & the driver was forced to "detour" by opening a fence & driving through a field.

During the winter, the stagecoach was used with runners instead of wheels. Often enough, Mr. Fox was able to get on the river ice near the Indian cemetery, Sandwich, & drive to Ojibway.

Fox remembered his only runaway. Hounds belonging to Henry Chappel, Sandwich Innkeeper had frightened the stage team. Up the road the horses ran at a furious pace, until they came to a telegraph pole. They did not know which was the best side to pass on, so

they compromised, one taking each side, and leaving the stage straddling the pole. An 18-year old youth was the only passenger and he was not seriously hurt.

Stage coaches were supposed to belong to the era of romance, and the Windsor -Amherstburg coach was no exception. Mr. Fox recalled a young couple inquiring the distance to Amherstburg, and asking for information about ministers and churches there. On reaching the downriver terminal of the line, they followed Mr. Fox's directions and were married by the Methodist minister. They stayed at the Lakeview Hotel for lunch, and returned to Windsor on the coach. Flint, Michigan was the starting point of the elopers. At that time, Windsor was known as "Michigan's Gretna Green", but just why this particular couple went all the way to Amherstburg has never been explained. Honeymoon, perhaps?

The first contract for carrying mail between Windsor and the lakeshore country was awarded to Solomon Wigle. One of his sons, Lewis Wigle, ex-MP and Essex County's 'grand old man' made his first trip as stage coach driver and mail carrier on January 1, 1861. He held down this job for 8 months, when he transferred it to his brother, Gordon. On September 1 of that year, Gordon Wigle quit the farm to become a "stage coacher".

The stagecoaches of Essex County ceased to operate in 1907, with Mr. Fox one of the last to drive. The coming of the trains and the electric trolley system made them obsolete.

Editor's note- Since completing this series of adventures, I have located further information on the stage coaches of Essex County, including written interviews with Mr. Fox, & other data. They are available at the HEIRS Library for anyone interested in further reading.

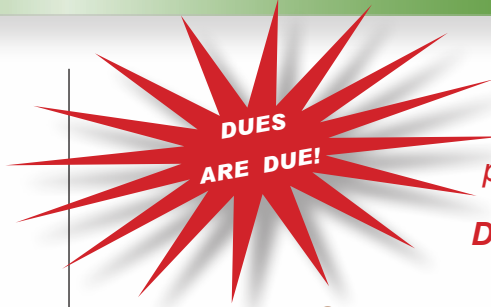
HEIRS Resource Centre

Open Sept. - June (Dec. excepted)
Tuesday & Thursday: 10AM - 3PM
Wednesday & other appts: Call to confirm.

Newsletter

Published 9 times per year, in conjunction with General Meetings held on the 4th Thursday of the month, from 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
Due: April 30th, 2018

Send cheque to:
HEIRS PO Box 53, Harrow ON Canada N0R 1G0

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

Non-member user fee at HEIRS Research Library:
\$5 per visit (+ photocopy costs).

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

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