

Vol. 8– October 2016

HEIRS

Harrow Early Immigrant Research Society

newsletter



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Inside this issue...

***Japanese-Canadians
and their war time stories***

Newsletter News!

Welcome to the October newsletter

Colorful leaves, pumpkins, and apple picking... could there be a better season?

A special time of year for sure, where annual harvests are in full swing for some produce, the end of summer flowers, time for planning next year's gardens and crops and wondering how we will better survive the wrath of winter one more time....

Take a look at our upcoming events pages and make sure one of them is on your "must do" list. Or come out to our October meeting to share a bit of time with fellow members.

See you in the leaf pile?

Next Meeting

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

Where: Harrow-Colchester Arena Community Centre

As always, the October meeting of HEIRS will be on the 4th Thursday of the month with this month's speaker being Matsuye Yako.

She was a young girl of 13 when Pearl Harbour was attacked, and war with Japan was declared. Being Japanese Canadians, and living in British Columbia near the Pacific coast, her family automatically was suspected of being Japanese sympathizers.

Official policy was that all Japanese living in Canada be moved inland away from the coast, and put to work on government projects or used as farm labour. For no reason other than their ethnicity, they lost their land, their livelihood, and often lost the chance to remain together as a family, since the men were often sent to destinations at some distance from their wives.

Matsuye, now in her 80s, remembers these times well, and will tell us her story of her difficult teen years of World War 2.

How she has put the past behind her to have a career as a hospital worker in Chatham, raised a family, and now speaks to various history groups of injustices past will be explored.

We welcome any visitors who would like to attend, as the general public is always invited to join us.

This should be a very interesting meeting, as we learn about an unpleasant time in Canada's past, but also about a story which ought not to be forgotten. We are most fortunate to have Matsuye Yako who has actually lived these events, to join us to bring them to life.



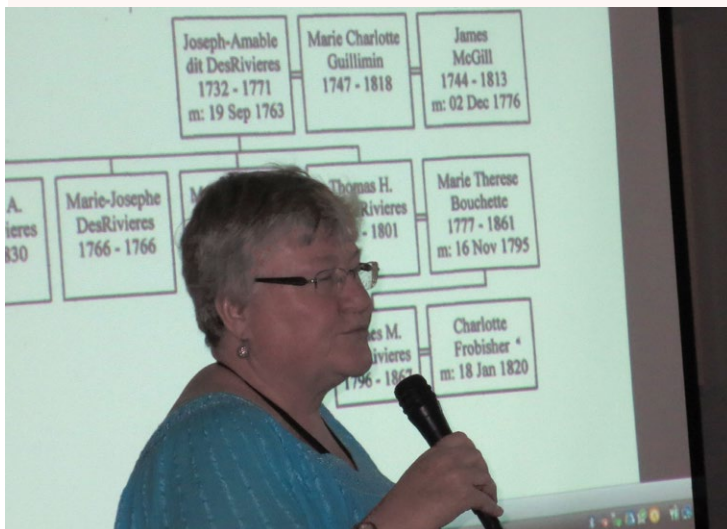
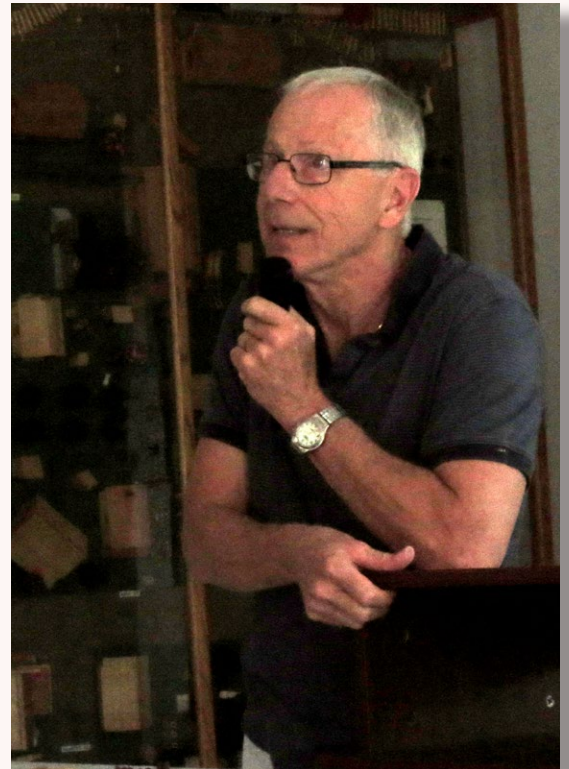
HEIRS met on Thursday, September 22 to learn about the Belle Vue House in Amherstburg, a heritage building in danger of being demolished. Robert & Debra Honor, both well-known local historians, spoke on the house itself, of its owners since its construction about 1817, & the various reasons why it should be preserved.

In an interesting style of presentation, Robert became the expert on the building itself, and Debra talked of the people involved with it through the past 200 years. We learned that Belle Vue is one of only 2 houses in this style of architecture, the other being in Nova Scotia. Designed and built by the Reynolds family, it has been altered into different forms, including serving as a Ukrainian Church in the 1980s. It has now reverted mainly to its original style, though badly in need of restoration. It could easily become a showplace demonstrating the lifestyle of the wealthy family who first owned it.

Situated along the Detroit River, the Belle Vue House with its marble fireplace, low and wide profile, and a two-story central portion, is quite unlike anything else in this part of Canada. It is a rare link with our past and the families who have lived there.

The Honors certainly entertained & made us much more knowledgeable about Belle Vue. Likely most HEIRS members attending are now "Friends of Belle Vue" & agree this important piece of Canadiana should be preserved & restored to its former glory for generations to come.

As President Richard Herniman stated, "There is so much history here in Essex County & we need to preserve it for our region, whether it is in Colchester, or Amherstburg, or another location. Essex County itself is an important historical attraction & ought to be presented as such."





SPECIAL NOTICE

As of January 1, 2017, those members behind in their dues to HEIRS will NOT receive the monthly newsletters.

Unfortunately, a large number of members fall into this category - please ensure you have paid your membership up to date, and don't miss a single issue!

Contact our office if you are in doubt; check the last page of this newsletter for our hours of operation.

The Leamington Mersea Historic Society reports a successful bus trip last July, hosted by Chris Carter. We explored the northern part of the county - Olinda, the Comber Museum (very interesting!), several locations where vanished communities once existed, and the Essex Train Station hosted us for treats and a video on the history of railways in Essex County.

Though costs ran in the red, it was a worthwhile day, and next year's outing is already being planned.

And now for something FREE!

HEIRS has come into possession of 2 brand new, sealed ink cartridges for which we have no use.

They are both XL HP62, one black and one tri-colour cartridges, valued at approximately \$90.

If you can use them, contact HEIRS and the dilemma will be solved.



Special Note:

We are very pleased to report that the Amherstburg town council, in a meeting on Sept. 26, reversed its earlier decision and decided to approve the purchase of the 1817-era Belle Vue House located along the Detroit River in Amherstburg.

The house itself was the topic of our HEIRS meeting in September, and we are most pleased to see that it can now be preserved and hopefully restored to what it once was - one of the most stately and impressive structures of its time.



October 2

Sunday, October 2 sees the return of the very popular Harvest & Horses Festival to the J. R. Park Homestead. Enjoy Fall activities such as making corn husk crafts, cider & sausage making, seed saving, ghost stories in the attic & more. Also meet the horses who were the main means of bringing in the harvest & readying for the winter months. Family fun for all!

October to December 2016

“Ice Age Mammals” is an exciting travelling exhibit from the Canadian Museum of Nature, opening Oct. 20th. Real fossils, casts, specimens, interactive displays and murals bring these creatures to life. Visit www.museumwindsor.ca or call 519 253-1812 for more information.



J. R. Park Homestead 9:30 to 3PM

Felting Class: This process transforms woollen fibres into felt and participants will make a case for an iPod or tablet, or a hand clutch. Instructor will be Edy Marlatt. The workshop fee is \$60 which includes all supplies, instruction and materials to take home.

Register by calling 519-738-2029 or visiting the Homestead, or contact homesteadfriends@hotmail.com. Register by Friday, October 14th as space is limited.

October 23

The Park House Museum in Amherstburg offered a ‘Gatsby Gala’ on October 1st and will host an All Hallows Eve Festival on October 23, to usher in the Halloween season.

October 26

The Kingsville Gosfield Heritage Society and Kingsville Archives have planned a bus trip to Sparta, near St. Thomas, for Wednesday, October 26.

This Quaker village, established in 1813 by Jonathan Doan and his grandson, Jonathan Steele, was involved in the 1837 Rebellion, and today has much of the charm (and buildings) of the 1800s remaining. It offers antique shops, unusual gift items and more.

Included are a “Spirit Walk” tour, lunch at the Sparta Tea House (chicken pot pie, salad, tea and dessert).

The route back will follow the Elgin Barn Quilt Trail.

Register and pay by October 12 at the Kingsville Archives (Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10-12 noon and 1 -3 PM) or at the October KGHS meeting in Kingsville.

Anderdon

-Some Folks Down The Road

- by Mark Warren

This a soft cover, 8-1/2 by 11 inch book is written by Mark Warren who grew up in the Amherstburg/Anderdon area. Mark has created a thorough history of the region from 1812 to the early 1900s.

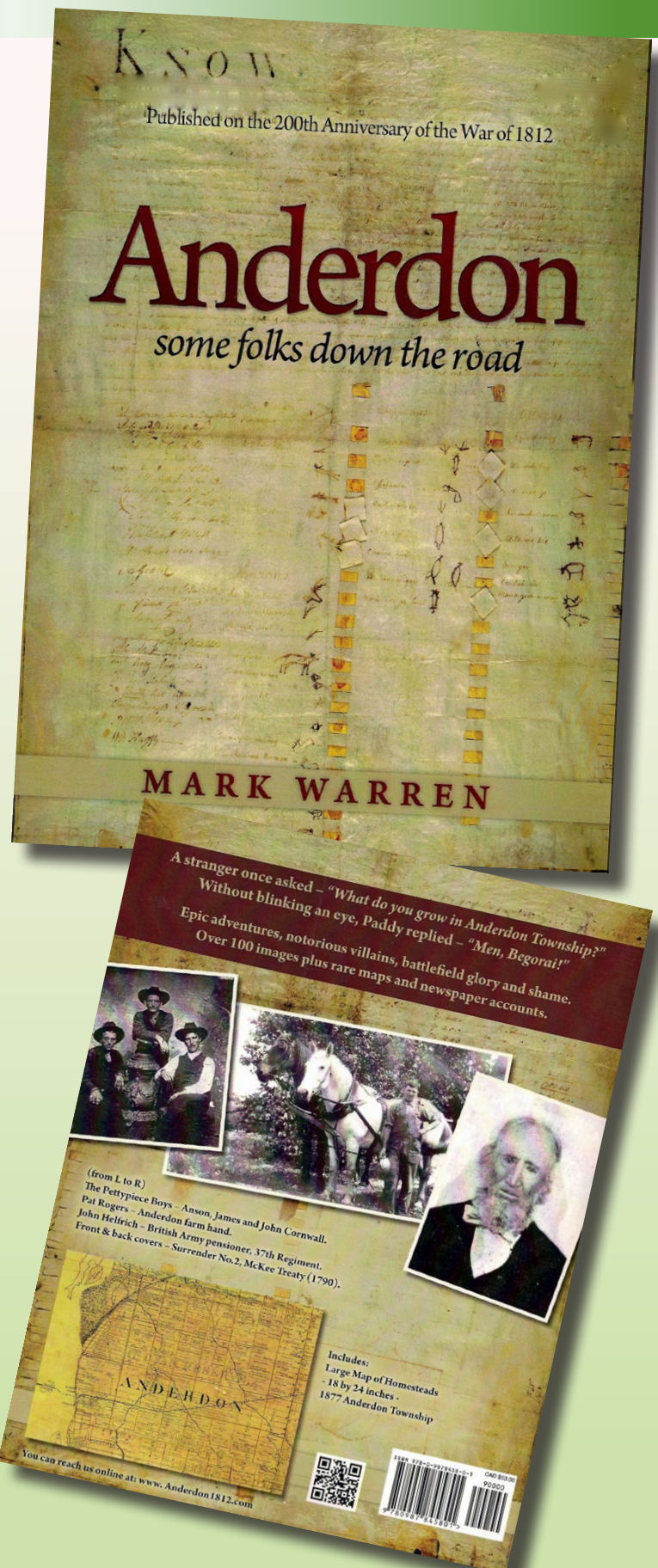
It is well documented with charts, maps & photographs, a fascinating collection of stories of the people & places which made this area such an integral part of the history of the entire county of Essex.

Despite its attention to detail, the book is a compelling read, as every turn of the page brings a new story to light. In a short time, I had discovered Jay Justin "Nig" Clarke, a star baseball player of the '20s from Anderdon.

He is in the Baseball Hall of Fame for hitting an astonishing 8 home runs in one game, as well as being regarded as the best catcher of his time, according to Ty Cobb, himself a baseball legend.

Reputedly, the Cleveland Indians are named Indians in his honour! Other stories tell of antagonism between black and white settlers, the relations with the Wyandot Indians, famous outlaws and crimes, wartime happenings and also includes genealogy information on some of the early families such as Drouillard, Coyle, Delmore, Mailloux and others.

Anyone who has an interest in or family ties to Anderdon would absolutely treasure this book.



Available at HEIRS... \$53, and only a handful of copies (still in cello wrap) are available for sale.

Heritage Designation Plaque Unveiling

Tofflemire-Snider Cemetery

On August, 25, a special ceremony was held at the Snider-Tofflemire cemetery on County Road 50, just west of the J R Park Homestead. This is among the earliest burial grounds in the county, with stones denoting such pioneer families as Brush, Beeman, Buchanan, Snider, Tofflemire and others.

Deputy Mayor Richard Meloche & members of the Essex Municipal Heritage Committee placed the first plaque unveiled for a historic site in the town of Essex. The placing of more plaques is in the planning stages, as other sites deserve to be recognized for their historic, cultural or social significance. The committee is most interested in broadening public knowledge of these sites. **Our area is extremely fortunate to have so much history all around us, and dedicated citizens who work to see it preserved for all.**



Left to right: Deputy Mayor Richard Meloche, Essex Municipal Heritage Committee members Laurie Kowtiuk & Rita Jabbour



October 6

The machinery for the planing mill has arrived, and will be set up soon. J. A. Secord is installing a 25 H.P. Crocker Wheeler motor for driving the machinery.

Thrasher Bros. will serve lunches at their restaurant both days of the Harrow Fair next week.

Oliver Mickle, son of Wheeler Mickle and Mrs. Mickle (daughter of George Hubbell of Oxley), has gone back to Tacoma, Washington.

He went west 39 years ago, and this is their first visit back.

(There is a letter from Wheeler Mickle in the Buchanan collection, talking about the Gold Rush, the Klondike, and Vancouver Island.)

October 13

Guy Munger has been appointed manager of the Harrow telephone office, a position he has been filling since his father's illness.



October 20

Mrs. Chas. Richardson and Maud will live in the apartment over the store, which is being prepared for them. Their residence is being offered for sale.

The Quick House is now owned by William Hawkins.

October 27

Dr. Douglas Quick has passed the Regent and State Board exams of New York, and has been appointed Radiologist of the General Memorial Hospital of New York; also Assistant Professor of Radiology at Cornell University.



“History As It Used to Was”

- by Ted Steele, HEIRS Director

As we begin the Fall season, thoughts (and store shelves) turn to the fun & symbolism of Halloween. It is a strange time of year when you think about it... children in outlandish costumes pounding on doors & begging for treats. **Definitely fun, but also hard to explain to anyone who didn't experience it as a child. Those of us with memories of happy Halloweening are fortunate!**

One of the most enduring symbols is the witch - an ugly old lady with a broom & a cat. Where did this come from? In medieval times, there was no medicine, & belief in magic, both black & white, was common. When a series of bad things happened, someone must have been at fault, & blame needed to be placed.

An epidemic of disease, a poor crop, or bad weather all called for a scapegoat. Who better than some poor old woman who lived alone, wore rags or wore black for a deceased husband (widow's weeds), was destitute, ate whatever she could scavenge, & had nobody for companionship but her cat (which also kept rodents under control).

She would talk to herself because others would not listen to her, & she swept with her broom in order to keep busy and maintain some small measure of neatness in her life. The weeds boiling in her pot gradually morphed into a 'cauldron' full of magic potion. Her cat became her “familiar”, an evil being doing her bidding, & her mutterings were of course placing hexes & curses on the villagers.

The broom, always by her side, became her magic transportation to witch gatherings. She was an even better target because nobody would defend her or protect her from public persecution. Witch-finders were hired to place the blame correctly, & anyone outside the norm in any way was very suspect.

An unusual mole, a physical imperfection, or a charge by one's neighbours was enough to bring the suspect to trial. The witch-finder was paid only if he “found the source of the witchcraft”, so he was determined that blame be placed somewhere.

Ann Boleyn, one of the wives of Henry VIII, had an extra pinky finger, & wore gloves to conceal this anomaly. If it had become public, there would have been much suspicion about her.

Suspected witches were sometimes tied to a chair on a long pole & dunked repeatedly in water, the theory being that a witch could not be drowned. Thus, if she survived the test, she was condemned as a witch. If she drowned, then she could not have been a witch, & the search went on for another. Picking up an iron horseshoe heated to red hot temperatures was another test... if her hand showed burn marks she was not a witch, for fire could not harm a witch. A severe burn then would prove her innocence! At other times, the suspect faced “witnesses” to her evil work, and had no way to explain her actions.

From a modern viewpoint, it seems obvious that many a poor, lonely woman living by herself may gradually develop mental health issues, what we now recognize as dementia or Alzheimer's Disease. Even today, old women sometimes sweep their sidewalks & continue on, sweeping the public sidewalk & beyond their own property. It can be an obsession, perhaps to sweep away her own sins, or to clean away the sins of an evil world beyond her control. **Logic has replaced superstition, yet witches continue to be a scary figure in the Halloween myths.**

HEIRS Resource Centre

September to June (excluding December)

Tuesday & Thursday: 10AM - 3PM

Wednesday or for other appts. Call to confirm.

Memberships

\$25 CDN/US per person or couple: May 2016 to April 2017

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

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

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

HEIRS Newsletter

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).
Receive full colour newsletters by email & save HEIRS the printing & mailing costs of B&W copies by regular post. Simply provide your email address to our office.



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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