

Vol. 3– March 2017

HEIRS

Harrow Early Immigrant Research Society

newsletter



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Harrow & Colchester South
Community Centre (Arena Bldg.)



Next meeting...

***Historic Plaques
- celebrating important local history***

Newsletter News!

Welcome to the March newsletter

The shortest month of the year lived up to its name, as February seemed to blow by fast this year. And with the mid-month warm up around Family Day long weekend, it seemed we turned a corner - ground hog prediction or not.

But being Canadians, we know this improved weather is usually short lived (if ever seen in the Maritimes) and we brace ourselves against a return of the white stuff in earnest before we can put away our winter boots. Winter will pass by even faster if you can attend some of the local events listed in our upcoming events section, a lot of them indoors still of course, including our monthly meeting.

See you there this month?

Next Meeting

When: Thursday, March 23rd, 1:30 PM

Where: Harrow-Colchester Arena Community Centre

HEIRS will meet in the Harrow Arena meeting room to hear Rita Jabbour, Assistant Planner for the Town of Essex, speak on the Social and Economic Importance of Heritage Preservation for the Harrow-Colchester area and new proposed heritage programs for 2017.

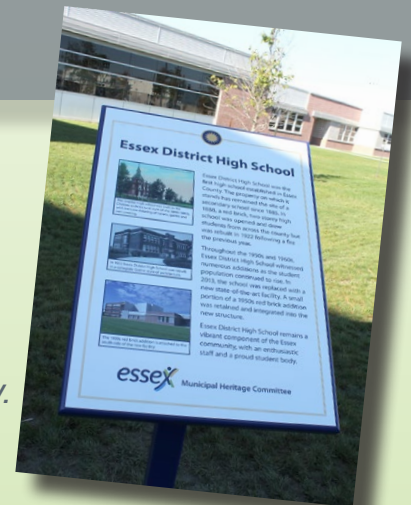
As Secretary-Treasurer for the Essex Municipal Heritage Committee, Rita was part of the team that developed the Essex Heritage Plaque Program in 2016. The Program is designed to create pride of place and communicate the importance of our heritage places. The first plaque administered under the program was placed at the Tofflemire-Snyder Cemetery along County Road 50, just east of the John R. Park Homestead and Conservation Area.

Heritage plaques have also been placed at the Essex District High School and Essex Train Station.

In 2017, plaques are proposed for both Colchester & Harrow. Historic plaques can be found throughout Windsor-Essex County.

The waterfront along the Detroit River leading to Amherstburg, for example, features several historic plaques which tell the story of important events that have happened here close to home, such as the "Capture of the Schooner Anne".

Interested persons are invited to hear Rita speak about the historic places that help define Harrow and Colchester's identity and explain how residents can assist in preserving these buildings, structures and landscapes .



On Thursday, Feb. 23, a good number of our members met to observe Black History Month with speaker Milo Johnson.

We heard background on the slave trade itself, including the parts of Africa where most blacks were captured, and how a large percentage of them did not survive the “Middle Passage”; some died of disease and others chose to die rather than be enslaved.

Surprisingly, other countries in our western hemisphere had even more slaves than did North America. He told us of the dependence of the southern states on black labour for their cotton fields work force, and how this was an important factor in the “war between the states”. We learned of the various pathways of escape used by the slaves to get to freedom in Canada, and how they were aided by many individuals, Quakers and abolitionists, who saw the moral wrongs involved.

It was pointed out that here in Canada such men as Matthew Elliott and Simon Girty brought slaves with them after the American Revolution, and retained them until at least 1830. He also informed us of the difficulties faced in Canada once blacks arrived. There was still segregation, and a distance between whites and blacks which may not have been illegal but was definitely unfair; refusal to allow blacks to own land in certain places, laws limiting their access to town services and, sad to say, occasions where their lack of learning was taken advantage of in legal and property matters.

We came away with an understanding of the fight for equal rights that we have all seen in our own lifetimes, and why it has been so necessary. When any group has its rights threatened, we are all at risk of losing ours as well.



Milo Johnson

February' NL's cover art...

The cover of “New Canaan: Freedom-land, The Blacks of Colchester Township,” was a photo acrylic painting completed by Dennis K. Smith. It depicts a farmer of color praying in his field. The farmer depicted is Fred Johnson of Colchester, Colchester South Ontario.

Dennis K. Smith is a well-known artist of color, born & still living in Windsor, Ontario, Canada. His family moved to Harrow, Colchester South when he was four years old.; attended Harrow Public School, Essex District High & W.D. Lowe High Schools, & the Ontario College of Arts. He presently teaches art classes at his studio, dK's.

““Planting a Harvest depicts a farmer planting his first seed, the seed of faith. Before the natural seed is placed into the ground, he stands upon his land and asks God to grant him strength to sow & reap a bountiful harvest. My model for “Planting a Harvest” was Fred Johnson of Colchester South, a good & respected friend. Fred is one of those hard-working kind-hearted farmers who no doubt gave away more food than he sold to countless families who didn't have the means to pay the full prices.

He was the employer to many young teens who needed jobs for the summer, myself included.

Fred was still farming when he posed for this painting in 2009.”



From the HEIRS mailbag....



Belle Vue House - Update

Amherstburg's Belle Vue Conservancy is working to restore this national heritage site, now owned by the town of Amherstburg.

It was once the location of a Veterans Home for WW 1 veterans from 1947- 1954. Little is known about it during these years, and even less about its patients and their life stories.

If you have any ideas, contacts, resources or suggestions which could help this research, please contact Paul Hertel, 555 Dalhousie Street, Amherstburg, Ontario, N9V 2M2



Reach Paul by phone at 1-519-736-5022 or email phertel@mdirect.net

A special Essex council meeting on social & economic importance of heritage preservation. Monday March 6, 5PM in council chambers, Civic Centre, 360 Fairview Ave.

All are invited to attend or view report at http://www.essex.ca/en/townhall/agendasandminutes.asp?_mid_=4193 shortly after the meeting.



Essex Region Conservation
the place for life



Enjoy the sweet taste of spring at the John R. Park Homestead

Maple Syrup Festival
Sunday, March 5, 11am to 4pm
\$4/child, \$6/adult, \$20 family maximum

Maple March Break
March 14 & March 17, 1:30pm sharp
\$4/child, \$6/adult, \$20 family maximum

Maple Moon
Tuesday, March 14, 7pm
\$15. Pre-registration required.

For more info:
519-738-2029 or jrph@erca.org
erca.org/maple

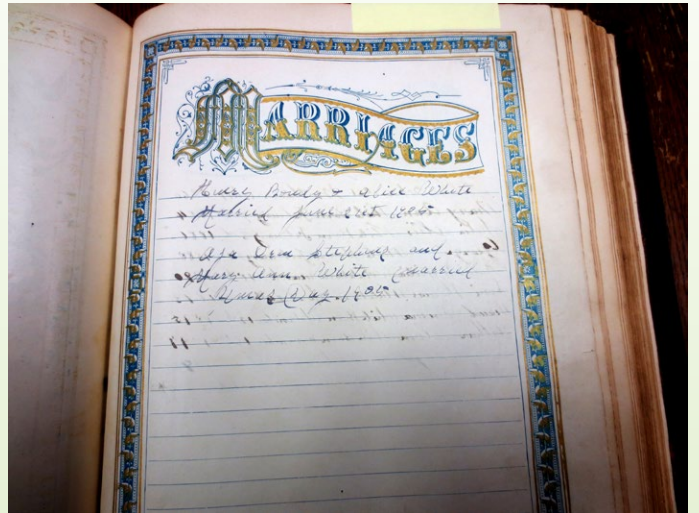
"I was very happy to see the article on the George Ward and sons plaquing in the most recent HEIRS newsletter. Great to see the Isaac Ferriss and Wm Hutchins stones again and a close-up of the veterans plaque. I always enjoy the HEIRS newsletter - full of information and with great pictures. **Thank-you for all your work in getting the community heritage news out and about!**" - Ruth Nicholson

HEIRS has been asked to find a good home for an old Bible with entries in it from the very early 1900s.

It is our hope that some member of the family will recognize the names and wish to keep the Bible in the family files. It is a large volume, in fair condition, and, for the right person, would be a family heirloom.

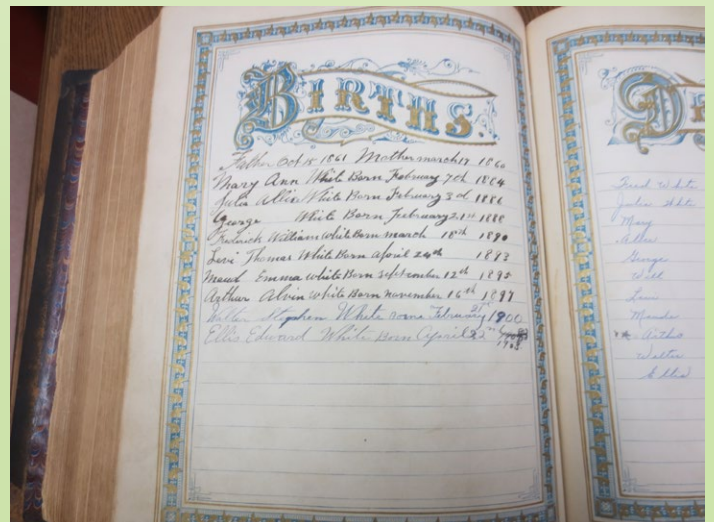


The names written in circa 1905 include Fred and Julia White, their presumed children Mary, Alice, George, Will, Maude, Arthur, Walter and Ellis.



As well we find a notation on the marriage of Henry Bondy and Alice White in 1905.

The Bible will be on display at the next few HEIRS meetings unless claimed earlier. If there might be a connection with your family, please look it over carefully. A special item like this deserves to be re-united with its own family members.



6 Upcoming Events

March 28

At the Harrow Research Centre on County Road 20, you can be part of “Harrow Research Centre: 100 Years of Agricultural Research”, from 1 To 3 PM. Learn what goes on here on a daily basis and enjoy a tour of this most interesting facility. **Cost is \$28.50 all inclusive, and will be led by Dr. Della Johnson, director of Research and Development and Technology at the Harrow Centre.**

April 3 & 10

Elise Harding-Davis will present “100 Years of Regional Black History” from 10 AM to 12 PM at the Harrow Health Centre, 1480 Erie Road in Harrow. Learn of our area’s involvement in this story over 150 years, and its contributions to Canadian History. This is a part of Eldercollege offerings, and the Community Fund For Canada’s 150th has waived all fees. A great chance to learn more about our story! **See the poster on page 8 of this newsletter.**

April 5 & 12

Also from Eldercollege, and also free, will be “Canada 150: an Intro to Constitution and Federal System”. Learn about our system of government, how things work and how we evolved from colony to nation. **Held at the Harrow Health Centre on Erie Street, from 2 to 4 PM on March 29, April 5 and April 12, with Dr. Lloyd Brown-John as instructor. He is a retired Professor of Political Science U of W, and an entertaining speaker.**

April 9

We in Essex County have much to enjoy, and an under appreciated jewel is the Museum of Windsor: the Chimczuk Museum, Francois Baby House and the Duff-Baby Centre. These places offer many outstanding programs throughout the year, and now is no exception.

On Sunday, April 9, there will be a discussion and walking tour of the Memorial Park area of South Walkerville, part of commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Vimy Ridge battle of 1917.

Learn why streets are named Verdun, Vimy, Ypres, Lens, Somme & more, & why the street signs are adorned with poppies.

Call the Museum to register (519-253-1812) as capacity is limited. Cost is only \$5; those going will gather in the parking lot of the Optimist Community Centre on Ypres Boulevard at 2 PM. Tour will end at 4 PM.

April 19

On Wednesday, April 19, the Kingsville Gosfield Heritage Society hosts a bus trip to the Buxton National Historic Site and Museum.

From Buxton, the bus travels to Chatham to the Retro Suites Hotel for a “Soul Food Lunch”, and then to Dresden to Uncle Tom’s Cabin Historic Site.

Cost is \$65 per person for members and \$70 for non-members, covering food and bus costs. Individual tour sites also charge an entry fee. You must register by March 31.

For more details, call Pat at the Kingsville Archives (226-348-6377) on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10-12 and 1-3.

April 20

Free lecture series continues by heirs director, and author Chris Carter at the Canadian Transportation Museum & Heritage Village from 1 to 1:46 PM and 2-3PM.

Call 519 776-6909 to register for this lecture entitled “Designated Historic Sites in Essex County”.



March 2

There will be a rigid inspection of all premises this spring. Up to the present, the Provincial law regarding spring cleanings has not been put into force in Harrow. Dr. Collins, M.O.H., will insist, to prevent the spread of contagion and epidemics.

Some fancy prices for hogs, due to scarcity. Dealers are offering \$14 cwt.

Evidently Ernest Pastorius died of his illness, but not sure when. They had moved to Windsor, leaving Harrow because he needed treatment for a kidney disease. This tragedy is the death of their 14 year old daughter Mabel, who was severely burned in a household accident. Her brother Walter was burned in assisting her. Ernest was a member of the Township Council when he left Harrow.

The Clark Co. intimate that they will make extensive additions to their present big factory, involving nearly \$40 000 expenditure.

F. H. Ferriss, agent for the Chevrolet car, opened the season by selling a beautiful 1917 model to S. Hood—the first Chevrolet in the district.

William Walls, manager of the Quality Cannery, with factories at McGregor and Cottam, has been

in touch with Reeve Clark and the council, and has made arrangements for a meeting with the council next Monday, to secure the old canning factory for the coming season, to put up a big pack of corn and peas. This has been received with enthusiasm.

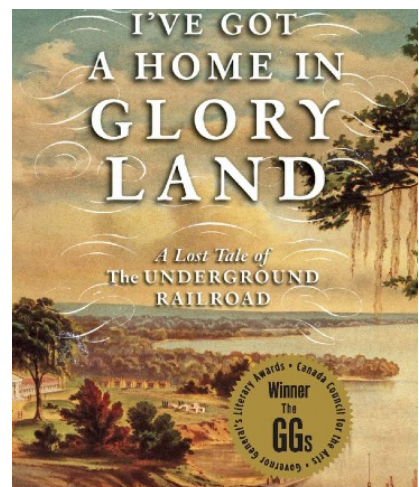
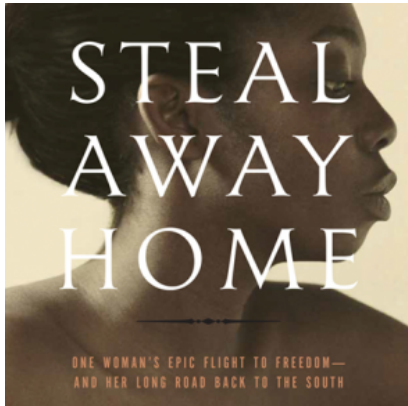
March 16

If the Quality Cannery fulfill the agreement the former owners had with the council, the factory is theirs to rebuild as they see fit, and go into business here. Action is suspended until they are able to secure at least 500 acres of corn this year, paying \$8 a ton.

A safe entrance has been planned over the railway track to the canning factory. By extending the street right through from King Street to the Forsythe Road, that the Railway Commissioners would sanction this crossing. This is a splendid entrance to the factory, and less risk of accidents at the crossing.

March 23

Dr. Maxwell will hold a meeting in Harrow sometime soon to discuss consolidation. The idea would be to have the central school in Harrow, and have the children conveyed to the school in vans.



“Digging for the ‘Promised Land”

A Talk by Dr Karolyn Smardz Frost



March 16, 2017, 7 PM
Free, everyone welcome
Katzman Lounge, Vanier Hall
University of Windsor

This talk is co-organized by the Essex County Black Historical Research Society, the University of Windsor’s Department of History and Leddy Library. It is made possible through funding from the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences



“History As It Used to Was”

- by Ted Steele, HEIRS Director

We live in violent times, with terrible things happening every day. We can try to make our little corner of the world more humane, but history teaches us that cruelty & inhumane actions are not a recent development.

If we look back to Plymouth Colony and the Puritans, the Bible with its “eye for an eye” philosophy was the basis for much punishment handed out, and of course, “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live”, was taken literally. The Salem Witchcraft Trials led to the deaths of about a dozen accused, some for not confessing when tortured. None of the Salem accused were burned by the way; witches were normally hanged and on occasion, were “pressed by stones” until they were crushed to death.

Pick-pockets might have a hand removed to stop their criminal behaviour, and also to announce to the world of what they had been accused.. Executions were carried out in public as a warning to others to behave, and at times were almost a social occasion. Then the head, or more usually the entire corpse, was displayed in public, often for weeks. The more hated the individual or the more heinous the crimes, the more unpleasant was the treatment of the criminal’s body.

During the American Revolution, particularly hated Pine Tree Gang member Fagan specialized in robbery and murder against local rebels. Eventually he was killed, his body wrapped in tar cloth and chains, and hung from a tree. Over time, birds reduced it to a skeleton, and his bones fell to the ground to be scattered. (Info from the New Jersey Archives.)

As the American Revolution progressed, jails filled up with suspected Loyalists. Someone got the idea of using an abandoned copper mine in Connecticut as a prison. It was named Newgate after an infamous British prison, and is a tourist attraction today, though nobody is allowed inside as it is unsafe.



Courtyard, NewGate Prison

Captives were locked deep underground except for work time for a few hours daily. This was considered to be hell; interestingly, one of its first inmates was a highwayman named Robert Steele. Though it is still touted as escape-proof, I have read that several escaped, since bribing a guard was apparently not too difficult.

*In fairness, the British chained rebel prisoners in the holds of rotten old ships anchored in harbours controlled by the British Navy. Many were merely suspected of anti-British actions & jailed. Conditions were abysmal, unhealthy in the extreme, & treatment of prisoners was really no better than that given to Loyalist prisoners. Most of those incarcerated on these prison ships did not survive, and bodies were simply dumped overboard. So much for the “we were the good guys in the war” argument! ***In wartime, terrible things are too often done by both sides, and it is wise to remember that it is the victors who write the history of the war.****

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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