



Hamilton Mountain Heritage Society

President's Report to the Annual Meeting of 2014

It is once again time for the President's report on the activities of the Society. It's interesting when putting this report together to go through the agendas and minutes of the meetings, look at the flyers produced to advertise those meetings, review the website and glance through photos. We are a very busy bunch! Sometimes you get so caught up in the doing of the 'small' things, the moving of individual bricks, that you don't notice how many there have been and how big the structure has become. This report should give you some idea of how many bricks were moved.

In 2013 the Hamilton Mountain Heritage Society held five general meetings. We started the year with an homage to the War of 1812 Bicentennial with a trio of talks devoted to that topic. They were: The Untold Story of the War of 1812, Ryan's Ride: The Spy of Beaver Dams, and The Battle of Beaver Dams: Uncommon Bravery. Those were followed by a History of Burkholder Church and The War Years on the Mountain: Memories and Memorabilia. Three of these talks were given by members of the Society. The Executive met six times during 2014: five of those meetings preceded a general meeting and one special meeting was called in June to allow planning of program for the coming year. A concerted effort is being made to have topics about the Mountain presented at general meetings.

The Society took part in Concession Streetfest on the first Saturday in June, for the first time sharing a table with the Friends of Auchmar. Canada Day provided another opportunity for the Society to set up a display and sell publications as we took part in Chris Charlton's Canada Day celebration at Mountain Park Drive. Remembering the high winds of last year elaborate measures were taken to secure our display: however the winds were replaced this year with chilly temperatures.

In 2013 the Bailey's Bulletin was published twice, in January and September. It was mailed to members, when possible, and available at general meetings and events. The HMHS website continues to attract visitors and queries and the Facebook page is becoming more well 'Liked'. We are currently at 52 likes. To bring our meetings into the current century the Society purchased a projector and screen, allowing for better viewing of power-point presentations and DVDs.

In January Robert Williamson, the third president of the HMHS was presented with a Life Membership. For the second year in a row membership dropped and stood at 72 members at year end.

In February the Society nominated Evelyn Haslehurst and Don Babb for Heritage Volunteer Recognition Awards, which were presented during a ceremony at City Hall celebrating Heritage Comes Home.

The June Outing took us to Waterloo to catch a train to St. Jacobs. There we visited the market, which burned down just weeks later (it was a coincidence), and lunched at the Mennonite Church. This was followed by a guided tour of the area, before departing the area. On our way home there was the customary stop for ice-cream.

The highlight of the year was the ceremony held in September at Buchanan Park School to unveil the Society's portrait of Isaac Buchanan. This portrait had hung at the home of Mel Bailey but the executive thought it would be better in a public place, where it could be appreciated by more people. The ceremony began with a colour guard from the RHLI flanking the portrait (and putting a bayonet through the ceiling) and the school choir singing O Canada. The principal welcomed everybody, followed by greetings from the mayor and a school trustee. A short history of the Society, Mel Bailey and the Society was presented and the portrait was unveiled. The choir finished off the event with the singing of the War of 1812 Bicentennial edition of The Maple Leaf Forever. The event got good coverage in the press with photos in the Mountain News and the Spectator as well as a video being posted on the Spectator website.

As I finish my term as president of the Society I wish to thank all of you for your support and encouragement, for your kind comments and for laughing at my lame attempts at humour. I wish Robin and the incoming executive all the best. Again I encourage you to get more involved with your group – bring a friend to the meetings, help out with a committee such as the phone or refreshment committee, volunteer to assist at events such as Concession Streetfest or Heritage Comes Home, submit ideas for talks or trips to the executive, give a talk! Join the executive! Me? For now I'm going to take a bit of a rest – if you're looking for me I'll be sitting in a rocking chair at the back of the room!