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*Preserving Oakville's  
Historical Heritage  
Since 1953*  
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## THE OAKVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

**JUNE 2011**



**Volume 45: Number 2**

## SPECIAL EVENTS

June 12<sup>th</sup>

The Mayor's Historical Picnic in the Park & Oakville Historical Society Band Concert on Sunday from 12 – 4:30 PM – Lakeside Park, foot of Navy Street.

## PUBLIC SPEAKERS & PRESENTATIONS

**2011**

October 19<sup>th</sup>

Adaptive Neighbourhoods

Speaker Claire Loughheed, Senior Manager of Cultural Services, Oakville

November 16<sup>th</sup>

Halton County and the 1918 Influenza Epidemic

Speaker John McDonald, Historian and Author

**Whaaat!!!!**

Wondering what the funny looking square on the front page is? Called a QR Code, it was originally developed to track automobile parts but, it now allows people with a camera phone to connect to a webpage. Look for them in magazines and on billboards. This particular QR Code will link you to the Oakville Historical Society Webpage.

Try it!!!

\*\*

In your travels, please stop by our advertisers and check them out. Their patronage helps to produce the December edition in colour.

\*\*

**COVER PICTURE:** Postcard of the Savoy Café, O/O by Joe Ming on Lakeshore Rd.

Advertising insert artwork and compilation by Carolyn Naismith.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the summer edition of our newsletter. This summer promises to be busy for your Society with all the usual activities but with some changes.

The Thomas House will be open as usual this summer. If you haven't visited it in a while, drop by and bring your friends and/or visitors. Lakeside Park is beautiful in the summer and the Thomas House is open afternoons Tuesday through Wednesday and both Saturday and Sunday. If you would like to volunteer, please contact the office.

Our "Bands in the Park" started many years ago as "Picnic in the Park". This year, it is changing again to be, "The Mayor's Picnic" on 12 June. It will feature the usual bands but, will also include demonstrations by the Oakville Scottish Country Dance Group and Oakville Ale and Sword. The Scottish Country Dancers will also be dancing on the museum grounds on Sunday evenings in August. If you would like to give it a try or just watch, drop by. Apparently the Pipes and Drums of the Halton Regional Police will be performing on the museum grounds this summer as well. Further information will be on our website as it becomes available.

Our historical walks will also be on again. There are three different walks: Heritage Houses south of Lakeshore Road; Main Street and, Trafalgar Road. Please encourage your friends, relatives, neighbours, acquaintances etc to go on one. Further information is available on our website.

Doors Open is set for 24-25 September. Andrea Stewart has taken over from Barb Savage as our representative on the committee. If you haven't been involved before, now's your chance.

Hope to see you at one of our events this summer.

Oakville Historical Society E-mail  
[info@oakvillehistory.org](mailto:info@oakvillehistory.org)

Archive Hours \* Tues & Thurs –  
1PM to 4:30PM at 110 King Street.

George Chisholm  
905-842-5385  
georgechisholm@sympatico.ca

## *Oakville Postcards: Windows On Our Past*

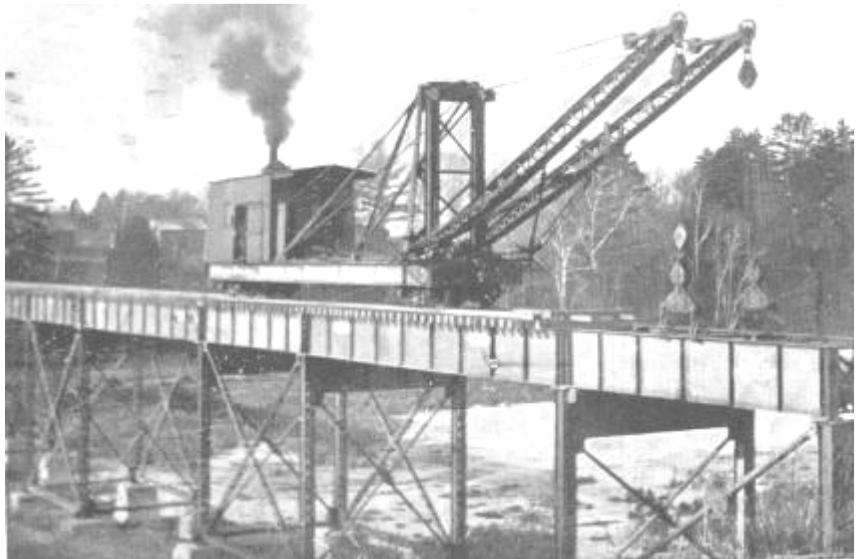
The early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was the golden age of postcards. There were postcards for every holiday – New Years, Valentine’s Day, St. Patrick’s Day, Easter, Thanksgiving, Halloween, and Christmas. We have many of these in our collection, but we now concentrate on cards of Oakville and Bronte. The majority date from 1900 to 1930.

The first postcard was issued in Canada in 1871. It was a prestamped, pictureless card with a face value of one cent. The postcard could be delivered to any address within Canada. One side was for the address, the other for a brief note from the sender.

About 1897, private mailing cards contained an image on the back while the front was divided by a vertical line. On the left was a message and on the right a place for a stamp with a space below for an address. It wasn’t long before almost every hamlet, village, town and city had postcards showing images of rivers, bridges, railways, harbours, schools, parks, churches and streetscapes.

The cards illustrating this article show scenes of Oakville as they were, with brief notes as to what the area looks like today.

The Hamilton Radial Electric Railway Company laid tracks from Hamilton to Oakville in 1905. A combined passenger and substation was built at Randall and Thomas Streets where the track ended. The building is still there today. Passenger volume on this line peaked in 1913, declining steadily until 1925 when the Port



Building the New Electric Railway Bridge c. 1903

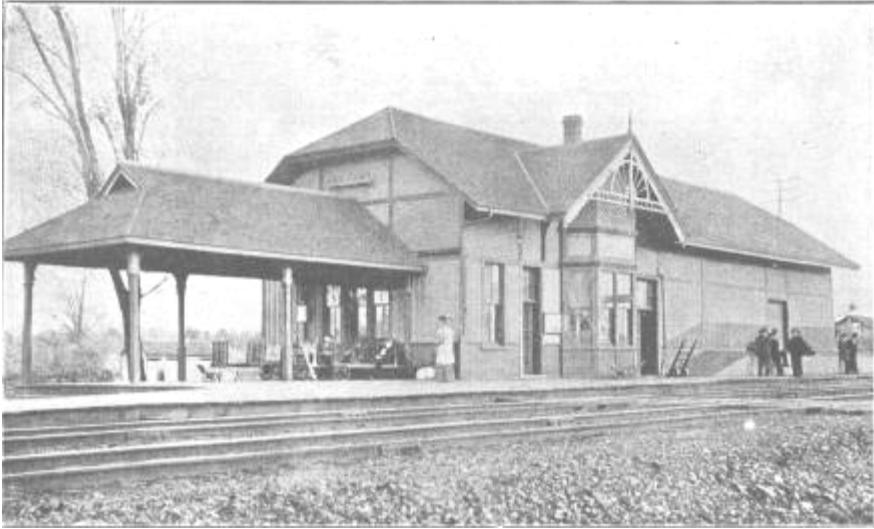
Nelson to Oakville Line was abandoned. The Sixteen Mile Creek foot bridge was used by many students to get to Central School until 1960. Today, the William Anderson Bridge connects Randall and Rebecca Streets, bringing eastbound traffic into downtown Oakville.

This view of Colborne Street (now Lakeshore Road) leads our eyes into Oakville's only shopping district. Note the vintage automobiles and the spire of Knox Presbyterian Church. Many of the buildings shown still exist today. Several have been converted into upscale restaurants. In all seasons of the year, Lakeshore Road is a hive of activity. The photographer likely stood in the middle of the road, between Navy and Thomas Streets. Can you date this image by close examination of the vehicles?



Colborne Street c. 1930???

The Grand Trunk Railway was important to Oakville's development as it was a major transportation link to Toronto and Hamilton. The depot (station) was situated where the GO Station and VIA Rail Station are today. Similar postcards show horses and buggies dropping off and picking up passengers from Trafalgar Township and downtown Oakville. Stand anywhere in the GO parking lot today, and imagine this scene c. 1910. Just north of this site ran the Middle Road, known today as the Q.E.W. (Queen Elizabeth Way)



Grand Trunk Depot c. 1920

One of my favourite images of Oakville is this one looking east from Forsythe Street.



Colborne Street – looking east

If you continue along the dirt Colborne Street, you will cross the Aberdeen Bridge (c. 1895 – 1920). Note Central School in the upper left corner. On this site today is located Oakville’s 1967 Centennial Project: library, theatre and swimming pool. Today, in the lower left, are highrise condos built in 2007-08. Check out the mode of transportation, hydro lines and the river landscape in general. How times change!

Ross Wark  
Trafalgar Township Historical Society

### MEMORIES PROJECT

If all goes well, we have high hopes of having the first printed version of our **Oakville Memories: Old & New** in the works, (at present available only on the web). Please contact the office if you would be interested in such a book, so that we can order sufficient copies.

June Hitchcox



Departure of Volunteers in the “Edgemere Truck”

## LIBRARY ADDITION

The “Final Report, Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation’s Traditional Territory” – Ontario is available for viewing at the Society. Reference – read in only.

## BURLINGTON CITIZENS FORM GROUP TO SAVE HISTORIC TRAIN STATION

Heritage advocates, train enthusiasts and other concerned citizens of Burlington have incorporated as the **Friends of Freeman Station (FOFS)**.

The group's aim is to raise funds to preserve, re-locate and, restore the 1906 Grand Trunk Railway (GTR) station, formerly located near Brant Street and Plains Road in Burlington, and find a sustainable use for the building.

For more information, please visit [www.freemanstation.ca](http://www.freemanstation.ca) or contact [info@freemanstation.ca](mailto:info@freemanstation.ca).

Jacquie Johnson Gardner

Visit the OHS website at [www.oakvillehistory.org](http://www.oakvillehistory.org) for the enlarged and colour version of this newsletter and, explore the many informative areas of the website for event and tour dates.

### **Advertisers**

We are fortunate to have some sponsors who believe in the work of the Society. Please note them on the last two pages (18-19) of this newsletter (insert on the print copy). Their generosity allows us to print our December edition partially in colour. When you visit them, tell them you saw their ad right here in your newsletter.

# ***AROUND THE SOCIETY***



## **Solution to “The Way Things Were” – March 2011**

- |                                  |                                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1: Oakville House (1827)         | 2: Canadian Hotel (1857)          |
| 3: Hotel Decker (1906)           | 4: Frontier House (1853)          |
| 5: Royal Exchange Hotel (1830’s) | 6: Forman’s Temperance Inn (1833) |
| 7: Queen’s Hotel (1870)          | 8: White Oak Hotel (1870)         |
| 9: Smithwick’s Tavern (1830’s)   | 10: Uptegrave’s Tavern (1830’s)   |

Phillip Brimacombe

## **Answers to March 2011 Crossword Puzzle**

### **Across**

**4.** Mississaga **5.** Jelinek **7.** Kerosene (his house is now Maclachlan College) **8.** Radial  
**10.** Strawberries **11.** Mathews **12.** Underground **13.** Hitchcox **15.** Duncan (Little Mosque on the Prairie) **21.** Sixteen **23.** Colborne **24.** Harper **25.** Lakeside **26.** Logs

### **Down**

**1.** Baskets **2.** Vancoeverden (kayaker) **3.** Sumner **6.** Barrett (Harry) **9.** Stoneboats  
**14.** Chisholm **16.** Memorial **17.** Bailey **18.** Dundas **19.** Erchless **20.** Water **22.** Thomas  
**27.** Oak

Susan Wells

## Mayor's Historical Picnic in the Park & Oakville Historical Society Band Concert

**Date:** Sunday June 12<sup>th</sup> 2011

**Time:** 12 noon to 4:30pm

**Place:** Lakeside Park, bottom of Navy Street

**Featuring:** St. Paul's Dixie Land Band – Noon – 2:00pm  
Oakville Wind Orchestra 2:15 – 4:15pm

**Fun for the family** – Clown with balloon sculptures and pocket magic! Fire engine!  
Police cruiser! Antique Ford!

Bring your own picnic and a lawn chair and enjoy a musical afternoon at the beautiful  
Lakeside Park venue.

**ADMISSION FREE!**

Mary Davidson







## Thomas House

It's that time of year again and with the coming of spring, the Thomas House will have opened the weekend of Sunday May 22<sup>nd</sup> and Victoria Day Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011.

Susan will be calling around to members to confirm dates for volunteer attendance at the House. If you are not on our list of volunteers and would like to consider this an enjoyable way of introducing visitors to pioneer life for a couple of hours, give us a call.

Mary 905-842-6935, e-mail: [charles.davidson2@sympatico.ca](mailto:charles.davidson2@sympatico.ca) OR,  
Susan 905-844-4474, e-mail: [swells@cogeco.ca](mailto:swells@cogeco.ca)).

**Opening Hours** are 1:30pm to 4:00pm Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays, May to September and, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays in July and August only.

The Thomas House closes for the season on Labour Day, Monday September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

Mary Davidson

## [News Around Town](#)

**Y**ou may remember the pictures taken in the Thomas House with Wendy Belcher and Philip Brimacombe in costume, which appeared in our September 2010 issue. Well, our photographer, Yacoub Husseini has won a Town award. The following has been borrowed from the Town of Oakville website:

### *Let's Talk Oakville* Summer 2010 Cover Photo Contest Update

Congratulations to Yacoub Husseini, the winner of the summer 2010 *Let's Talk Oakville* cover photo contest! Yacoub, a Ward 5 resident, beautifully captured downtown Oakville's pier near Lakeside Park which is a popular summertime destination for residents and visitors alike. The runner-up is Raj Vemulapalli, a Ward 1 resident, with his photo of the colourful foliage in Coronation Park in the summer. His photo is on page 11 of the newsletter.

You will see more of Yacoub's photographic skills in an upcoming OHS newsletter.

## [Society Offices](#)

**W**e are continuing to open the offices and museum of the Oakville Historical Society on King Street, from 1:30 to 4:00pm every third Sunday in the month. We would be delighted to welcome you to our beautiful headquarters by the Volunteers' Fountain if you are taking a stroll in the vicinity.

Phil Brimacombe, Mary Noad, Stuart Sherriff





## 2011 HISTORICAL WALKING TOURS

Month	Heritage Houses in Old Oakville	Heritage Main St. Of Old Oakville	Historical Walk of Trafalgar Road
July	Canada Day, 1 <sup>st</sup>	Sunday, 10 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday, 24 <sup>th</sup>
August	Sunday, 7 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday, 14 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday, 21 <sup>st</sup>
September	Sunday, 4 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday, 18 <sup>th</sup>	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup>

Meet Location: Heritage House Tour – O.H.S. at 110 King St; Main Street Tour – O.H.S. at 110 King Street; Trafalgar Tour – St. John’s United Church parking lot.

All walks start at 2:00pm for approximately 2 hours. Tickets are \$10 each, \$5 for children and \$25 per family. Refreshments afterwards.

For more info visit our website, send an email or, phone the Society (info on back page).

**RESERVATIONS REQUESTED.**

### [Back in the Day](#)

Oakville’s first telephone arrived only 30 years after Oakville became a town or, less than 60 after being settled. Set up in Mr. William Busby’s jewelry and watchmaking shop on Colborne Street (Lakeshore Road), the small switchboard gave service from 8am to 8pm weekdays, 2 to 4pm Sundays and 10 to 12noon and 2 to 4pm on holidays. For 1887 there were 8 subscribers, all business premises and a long distance line from Toronto to Hamilton which went through Oakville.

No one had a telephone number until 1899. In 1909 Oakville had its 100<sup>th</sup> telephone. Telephone installations matched Oakville’s growth with 1000 in 1926, 2000 in 1946 and 3000 in 1949, reflecting Oakville’s post WWII expansion.

The “dial system” began at midnight, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 1954, with Mayor Lachlan McArthur placing the first long distance call and Reeve William Anderson the first local call on the new equipment.

Lance Naismith

## **THE WAY THINGS WERE**



1. Name the building in the background with the tall smokestack.
2. What is the pile of stones on the left called?
3. Who put it there?

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**The Oakville Historical Society: 110 King Street, Oakville**

**Archive Hours: Tuesday & Thursday \* 1:00 to 4:30PM**

**Tel: (905) 844-2695 Fax: (905) 844-7380 Website: [www.oakvillehistory.org](http://www.oakvillehistory.org)**

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