



~~~~~  
**Preserving Oakville's  
 Historical Heritage  
 Since 1953**  
 ~~~~~

OAKVILLE

Historical and Progressive!

**Where 'Old Oakville' lives
 gracefully...with the new!**

IN THE HEART OF ONTARIO

Administered by The Oakville Historical Society

THE
 OLD POST OFFICE
 &
 THOMAS HOUSE
 MUSEUM

The area known as Old Oakville, with its quiet charm and interestingly varied architecture is still mainly intact. Many buildings and homes carry the Historical Society's plaque as proof of history. The Oakville Historical Society, an organization of volunteers, combines the administration of the Museum with active preservation of Old Oakville . . . and invites you to join with them in this work of preserving history!

service clubs . . .

Most major service clubs are represented in Oakville and contribute actively to the Community. Visiting members are welcomed.

churches . . .

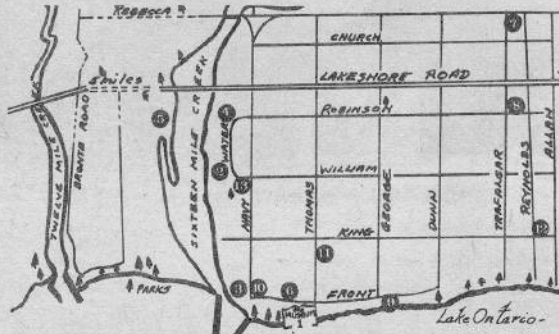
of all faiths welcome visitors to Oakville.



OPEN—MID-MAY TO MID-OCTOBER
 Tuesday to Friday 2.00-5.00 p.m.
 Saturday, Sundays and Holidays
 1.30-5.00 p.m.

ADMISSION—

Adults 25c, Children 10c (free if accompanied by parents)
 Classes and Groups by appointment
 (416) 845-3952 or 845-4133



POINTS OF HISTORICAL INTEREST,

1. MUSEUM
 - Old Post Office . . . 1835
 - Thomas House . . . 1829
2. The Oakville Club 1878
3. Customs House . . . 1855
4. Old Stone Granary 1850
5. Old Lighthouse . . . 1889
6. Peter McCorquodale House 1837
7. Temperance Hall 1843
8. Leach House 1837
9. Worn Doorstep unknown
10. David Patterson House 1830
11. Glenorchy 1839
12. St. Andrew's Church 1840
13. Market Hall (Navy Park) 1862

Plaques on old buildings are authorized by the Oakville Historical Society

THE OAKVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2014

Volume 48 Number 1

PUBLIC SPEAKERS & PRESENTATIONS

Wednesday March 19th Oakville Historical Society Annual General Meeting

All members are invited to enjoy a pot luck supper at 6:30 pm and make your voice heard at the General Meeting at 7:30 pm. St. John's United Church.

Wednesday
April 16 **Mr. Terry Reardon**, author, will speak about his latest book, *Winston Churchill and MacKenzie King So Similar-So Different*

Wednesday
May 21 **Ms Ann Birch** is the author of *Settlement*, a story of romance and adventure set in Upper Canada in 1836-37. Ms Birch has worked for a decade in Toronto's finest old houses as a historical interpreter.

Wednesday
Oct 15 **Ms Kealy Wilkinson**, Executive Director of the Canadian Broadcast Museum Foundation will talk on the history of the Canadian Broadcasting system

Wednesday
Nov 19 **Ms Bev Dietrich**, Curator of Guelph Museums. Her talk will be, "In Flanders Fields: John McCrae's Story".

Above presentations are held at St. John's United Church at Randall and Dunn Streets and begin at 7:30 pm.

Saturday
May 10 **Annual Yard Sale** at OHS Offices 110 King St.
Please think of donating to the sale when you are culling your treasures.
Call us if you would like us to pick up donations.

Sunday
June 8 **Annual Mayor's Picnic and Band Concert** hosted by the Oakville Historical Society. Noon to 4:30 at Lakeside Park



Proudly putting quality images on paper!
2070 Speers Road #1 Oakville, On 905-465-3220
<http://atexdigitalprint.com/>

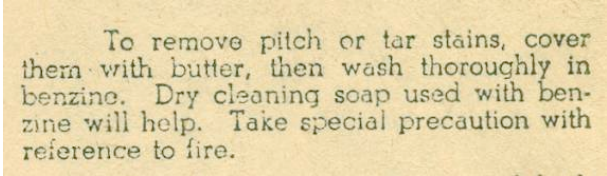
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Will this weather ever change for the better! It's been a fairly quiet few months at the office partly because volunteers and visitors have difficulty parking (because of the snowbanks) and then getting into the building because we were caught by a January thaw/freeze which left the walks with 2" of frozen slush.

Please note the date for our upcoming Annual General Meeting. As usual, there will be a pot-luck dinner before the meeting.

For several years now, the attendance on our historical walks (not including the Ghost Walks, fortunately) has been declining. There has, however, been an increase in the number of groups that have contacted us to book a walk. We're hoping this trend will continue. If you're a member of another organization and think their members might be interested in a walk, please suggest it. We also have our new walking tour of Oakville and St Mary's Cemetery. Custom walks can be arranged.

There have been some improvements recently to our facilities. Thanks to Jamie Macrae, the Thomas House got a much-needed coat of paint in the fall. Thanks to the Town, leaks around the chimney at 110 King have been repaired (we hope), the bank behind the building has been stabilized and we have a new fence. We'll be making some more repairs to the buildings this summer.



Doors Open will run again this year but as a Halton-wide initiative. Stay tuned.

This just in – 2014 marks the 700th anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn – a decisive Scottish victory in the First War of Scottish Independence. There is, apparently, some debate as to the actual site of the battle but it is generally agreed that it wasn't where the modern visitor centre is located. The Carse of Balquhiderock (pronounce that!) is the most likely place according to the National Trust for Scotland – about 1.5 miles northeast of the traditional site.

George Chisholm, President

Cover illustration and Handy Hints for Ladies taken from 1968 Oakville Directory

OAKVILLE REAL ESTATE

...a journey back in time

Anyone who has had experience with buying or selling Real Estate will tell you that the three most important factors are location, location, and location. For all of us now living in this community we obviously understand how important these factors are but has this historically, always been the case in Oakville. Delving into the topic I start to realize that the wants and needs of homebuyers when looking to purchase a home have basically stayed the same over the generations.

Let's go back to the year 1913...

The Oakville Historical Society has a copy of a booklet introducing a new development called Brantwood. This new development was situated between Allan St. and Gloucester from Spruce Ave. to Colborne St. (#2 Hwy now known as Lakeshore Rd E.).

“Healthy lifestyle-living near water” “City conveniences with quick commute” “The most desirable locality in Oakville, which is rapidly becoming an exclusive suburb of the sister cities of Toronto and Hamilton”

These were a few tag lines used by the developer to draw in prospective buyers to look at home specifications and maps for house locations. It's surprising to see that some of the same reasons why we choose to call Oakville a home today are the same reason families selected Oakville 100 years ago.



Some of the original Brantwood Residence of Professor G.A.Guess, Brantwood homes are still standing today. Take a drive around the neighbourhood and see if you can spot some from the old development.

By the way, you could take the Grand Trunk Railway and get to Toronto in 36 minutes. Sound familiar?

Let's jump ahead to the 1950s...

Oakville was a different place when compared to today. Lakeshore Road was called Colborne Street and the town limits were from Maurice Dr. to Allan St.

The Ford Motor Company opened its doors and the first car rolled off the lot May 11th, 1953; employees needed a place to live. Other businesses needed a place to operate from and for their employees to live as well. Trafalgar Township was in the process of being developed from Third Line to Ninth line.

In June 1954, the Oakville Trafalgar Real Estate Board was formed with 41 members. Based on research I found, there were only 3 real estate brokerages in town: W.S David and Sons, T.S.H Giles and Ryrice & Carter. In the 40s and start of the 50s however, with Oakville growing at a rapid pace, the need for a Board was apparent. The newly created board was to help increase the realtors' image and to set guidelines around buying and selling in the Oakville area which was now on the map and growing.

Bungalows were being built on large lots. Depending on zoning you could get a 1,350, 1,150 or 950 square foot home built with no garage, a single or a double car garage. These modern homes offered town sewers and were heated with oil. The odd home even had air conditioning.

To remove the water mark which forms on the bathroom tumbler, fill it with sour milk or buttermilk and let stand over night.

To clean chimneys and stovepipes, put a piece of zinc on the live coals in the stove.

Save tobacco ashes and use them for cleansing silver or silver plate. Apply with a damp cloth, and finish with a soft dry one.

Let's talk about a man by the name of Thomas A. Blakelock – sound familiar? It is the name of the second-oldest high school in Oakville, located on Rebecca Street just west of Fourth Line, built in 1957 and named for him in recognition of his many years of service to the province and community. The school is still in use today. Thomas was one half of the general contracting company known as the Blakelock Brothers Lumber Company which he established with his brother James in 1912, building homes and providing supplies to the general public. In 1949, the brothers were advertising their abilities to build homes as “the Home Builders”. One such home was constructed in 1947/8 at Reynolds and William Street. It is understood that the home was built for a pastor, by the name of Robert W. Allen and with much help from the community to accomplish it. If anyone knows more about this we would love to hear from you.

Today this home is still standing and located in the Heritage district south of Lakeshore Road in Olde Oakville on William Street. As you will see from the picture the home looks relatively the same. The original cedar shake siding (as told to me by the current owner) has been changed to horizontal siding and is now white. I look forward to seeing the home in the springtime as the gardens grow to showcase its beautifully landscaped yard.



1948



2014

T.A. Blakelock went on to enter public life as a councillor for the Town of Oakville and later successively served in multiple roles within the county of Halton as Warden, Mayor and member of the Ontario Legislative Assembly for 18 years. He then served on the Oakville-Trafalgar District High School Board for ten years as both member and chair. He also had time to be on the local parks management board.

To soften butter, fill a small china bowl, one just sufficiently large to cover the butter, with boiling water; let stand a minute or two or until thoroughly heated, then empty the water and immediately turn the hot bowl upside down over the butter. In a few minutes, the butter will be softened so it is just right.

Fast forward 10 years to the 60's...

**REAL ESTATE
FOR SALE**

Ryrie & Turnbull
REALTORS
PHONE Victor 5-1679
Evenings Victor 4-9495

**BUILDING LOTS
AVAILABLE**

We have choice 75' lots (some heavily treed) available on builders' terms. Roads, water and sewers installed. Permits-obtainable. **ACT FAST**—they're selling quickly. Enquire at office in person.

**A NICE PLACE TO LIVE!
WILLIS DRIVE**

2 Minutes from Blakelock High School

- Solid brick bungalow—3 large bedrooms.
- Large kitchen with breakfast area.
- 4-piece colored tile bathroom.
- 35-ft. recreation room — divided basement.
- High, sandy lot measuring 60' x 150'.
- Sanitary sewers, 100 amp. wiring, oil heat.
- Completely decorated and ready for occupancy.
- N.H.A. mortgage carries for \$80 monthly.

This home represents top value in an R-2 area, and we are instructed to present all offers. Asking price \$15,150. Co-op list.

Oakville amalgamated with Trafalgar Township and Bronte. Oakville Trafalgar Real Estate Board had been established for several years and the local paper, The Oakville Record-Star, had established a Real Estate section where buyers could expect to find all the listings for both new builds and re-sales in one place. One ad shows a solid brick bungalow minutes from T.A. Blakelock high school for \$15,150. The realtors were instructed to bring all offers. Another offers 70 different models and based on price you could have a “True Hollywood kitchen, 2-car garage, treed lots, or executive home with fireplace” encouraging buyers to “visit the heated, furnished showroom at Bridge Road and Third Line”.

Oakville continued to grow through the 60's and 70's and develop lands east over to Winston Churchill, west to Burloak Road and north to Upper Middle Rd.

Developers were offering features not unlike what families are looking for today such as 3 bedrooms, L-shaped living room, fireplace, and open kitchens to dining rooms. Today we see advertisements such as exclusive neighbourhood, updated bungalow with granite counters and stainless steel appliances, and double garage with

inside entry.

The town of Oakville has added more than 100,000 residents to its neighbourhoods and with it has grown a very active Real Estate industry. Through all of Oakville's growth, it has managed to maintain its small town feel, which is only one of the many reasons we all choose to live here.

When it comes to location, location, location you will find after looking at all of the neighbourhoods that there is no bad location in Oakville.

If you have time, stop by the Historical Society for a chance to take a look at the beautiful Brantwood development book with maps and photos of how they creatively advertised and built homes in the early 1900s. *Dawn McWhirter, Sales Representative with RE/MAX Aboutowne Realty, also provided additional photos and images.*



"IN THE LAND OF THE WHITE OAKS"

\$500

FULL DOWN PAYMENT

It's here all homes to offer you in the Oakville area. Look for the building near the Market Street intersection — from 75 to 100 feet high in white oak style from \$13,900 to \$19,900. With down payment as low as \$500.

JUST A SAMPLE

SLIM FULL PRICE — 8 rooms, fully decorated. Low salary. Two-car garage. Low down payment.

SLIM FULL PRICE — Three bedrooms, wood lot, with fullwood kitchen. BEAR and deer pasture in back. Double garage. Two-car garage.

SLIM — Three bedrooms with full wood. Two-car garage. Wood lot. Fullwood kitchen. BEAR and deer pasture in back. Double garage. Two-car garage.

SLIM — Executive home with granite and stainless steel. Updated wood-paneled kitchen. No salary requirement.

Visit Our Model, Furnished Model Homes
VALLEY 7-1125

C. A.
STANLEY
REAL ESTATE
BRIDGE ROAD AT THIRD LINE

AROUND OAKVILLE

The Webbs of Kerr Street

The article on Kerr Street in our September newsletter elicited many comments and memories from members. Member Wendy Janisse called with regard to the article, suggesting that her Mother, Audrey Turner, aged 102, would like to add her memories of early Kerr Street, so I set out to speak with Audrey, so articulate and bright that one would assume her age to be much younger.

Audrey's husband and Wendy's Father, George Herbert (Bert) Webb was born in 1908 in a dark brown house on Brock Street and Bond, near Ortona Barracks. The family later moved to a stone house built with stones from their fruit farm which was located on Kerr St. on the west side of Oakwood between Prince Charles and Stewart Streets. (The house later became a motor vehicle licensing office.) While gathering the stone for the building of the house, the family found a musket and arrowheads. This collection is still in the family's possession.



Mrs. Audrey Turner
photo A. Stewart

Bert's father's name was George William Webb. His mother, Mary Kate Webb, was a great friend of Mrs. Stansbury whose family owned a large strawberry farm up on Speers Road. Bert went to grade school with the Smith girls who lived in the old stone houses, now on the Rain development condo site awaiting redevelopment. Audrey and Bert went to Oakville Trafalgar High School with the eldest girl, Elsie Smith, and Audrey recalls a Good Friday hike along Highway 2 with the Smith girls.

Bert's sister Connie went to secretarial school and his brother Maurice joined the air force. The day before he was posted to go overseas, he died. His name is engraved on a plaque at St. Jude's Church and at the cenotaph.

Bert and Audrey, nee Leaver, were married in 1934 and had 4 children, Keith, John, Wendy and Susan. The Webbs lived initially in an old house on Reynolds Street, still standing, and later moved to Park Avenue, where they built a house that cost \$4000 on a \$100 lot. The basement was being dug on the day that the Second World War was declared and they moved in during February, 1940.

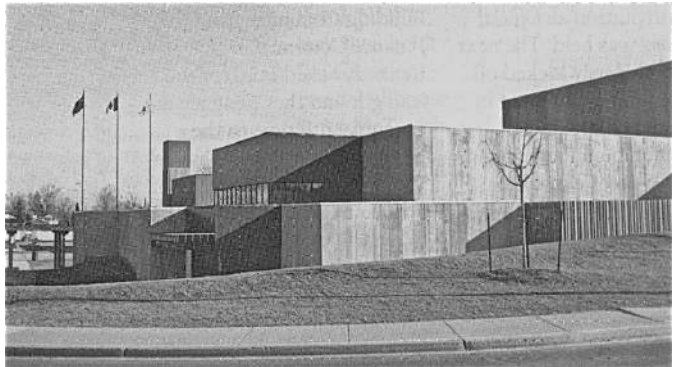
Bert became head mechanic at Whittaker`s garage where he worked for many years with Ethel Winzer, mentioned in our article on Kerr Street. Bert played trombone in The Oakville Band.

Wendy`s sister was born in Mrs. Taylor`s Nursing Home , housed in the old house just north of the tracks on the east side of Kerr. Wendy was born in a nursing home located south of Bamber`s store.

Audrey`s family background is also of interest. Her mother lived on Royal Windsor Drive in a house built by her Grandfather William Winter, stonemason. (The house is still standing, east of Ford Drive just past Rona on the north side of Royal Windsor Drive.) William Winter built the foundation for Knox Presbyterian Church. The Winters came from England and the children went to Maple Grove School. Audrey grew up in a house on Winston Churchill Blvd. and recalls the long walk from there to the school. Grandfather William Winter raised four girls and two boys after his wife died. There is a cairn, located on Winston Churchill Blvd. and the QEW, dedicated to the Winter family, as well as the few families who lived in the little hamlet of Sheridan.

Andrea Stewart

The Oakville Centre For The Performing Arts, shown right, designed by Ron Thom, opened in 1977 as part of Centennial Square. The town of Oakville is now seeking citizens` opinions on what the Square should look like in the future.



An exhibit of the architect`s work, *Ron Thom and the Allied Arts* is at the Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Arts, Toronto, until April 27.

AROUND THE SOCIETY

On 18 February, four members of the Society received Ontario Heritage Trust Awards in a ceremony at Town Hall. Clare Fiala and Brayden Ross were presented with Young Heritage Leaders Awards in the Built Heritage category for their work at the Thomas House. Andrea Stewart and George Chisholm received Heritage Community Recognition Awards. Andrea's was in the Built Heritage category, partly for her work on Doors Open. George's was in the Cultural Heritage category.



G. Chisholm, C. Fiala, Mayor R. Burton,
B. Ross, A Stewart
photo V. Segreto



Hon. Col. Haddon (l) with an
interested audience member.

photo S. Wells

Honorary Colonel Haddon spoke at our recent Speakers event with passion and personal anecdotes about his grandfather, J.A.D McCurdy, the first British subject to fly a heavier-than-air machine in the British Empire. The flight took place February 23, 1909 on Bras d'Or Lake, Baddeck, Nova Scotia in an aeroplane called the Silver Dart. There were so many facets to his recollections (Mrs. Mabel Bell's financial contribution, Mr. McCurdy's meeting with the Wright brothers) that the audience had many questions which were all thoughtfully answered.

AROUND THE SOCIETY



Photo above shows the process of constructing a plaque - all for a donation of \$150.

Having a plaque made for your building – be it a store, house or other structure – is easy. Simply contact the Society and give us the address of the building. We have information and the date of construction on many of the buildings in town. P. Brimacombe, G. Chisholm, M. Davidson, J. Hitchcox, R. Peacock and J. Young, the plaque committee, welcome your requests.

When hanging out clothes, put your basket on the children's wagon. If a child is handy to pull it for you, so much the better. It saves stooping and keeps the basket clean on muddy days.

To prevent clothes from freezing to the clothesline rope boil it for half an hour or so in salt water. This will also prevent the line from tangling. The clothespins should be boiled in salt water, too.

To clean and keep the clothes from sticking to the line in winter time, rub the wire clothesline with a cloth soaked in coal oil.

If knives are to be stored for a time, clean them, rub them with a little sweet oil, and fold them one by one in flannel, baize or chamois leather.

To clean white kid gloves, pull them on the hands, and rub firmly with a piece of flannel dampened with a soapy solution to which a little milk has been added. Care should be taken to wet the gloves as little as possible. Afterwards place in the open air to dry.

The Thomas House will be open Monday May 19th and our summer schedule begins in June. If you enjoy meeting the public and would like to volunteer a few hours in our c1850 museum, we want to hear from you
~ Complete list of Handy Hints for Ladies - and Gentlemen! will be supplied ~
Call and ask for Mary Davidson or Susan Wells

THE WAY THINGS WERE



Where is this wonderful place?

HOW different the picture of a home in Brantwood! Here one may enjoy immunity from the gaze of the curious passer-by—from the pranks of the mischievous small boy—from the irritating buzz and grind of the city's turmoil, with its accompaniment of soot and smoke. ¶ In Brantwood one may keep a horse, a cow and some chickens, and the rich, loamy soil is particularly adapted to the cultivation of flowers, vegetables and fruits. The first strawberries raised in Canada are said to have been grown in Oakville, and to-day Oakville strawberries are famous for their size and flavor. ¶ Moreover, in Brantwood it is not necessary to wait a lifetime to enjoy the pride and comfort of arching shade trees. Maples, elms and oaks of nearly a century's growth are here in abundance, and majestic pine groves furnish shade and color-contrast sufficient to satiate the soul of the landscape painter or the lover of nature. To acquire such trees is a long and tedious process—to select a homesite and decide as to which trees shall be preserved is a delightful pastime.



Oakville Historical Society

NEW!! Send all mail to:

110 King Street

Oakville, On L6J 1B1

Our office address is now
our postal address



Archive Hours:

Tuesday and Thursday 1:00 to 4:30 pm

Third Sun. of the month 12:30 to 4:00 pm

(905) 844-2695 www.oakvillehistory.org