

Oakville Historical
Society
since 1953

Historical Society News

www.oakvillehistory.org



Foreign Trade—Oakville to Cuba

Volume 55 Number 1

March 2021

Zooming into 2021

Steve Bysouth

With the COVID-19 pandemic continuing into 2021, no immediate end in sight and winter upon us, it made sense to continue to have virtual Zoom Speakers' Nights for the foreseeable future.

We decided to try and find ways to increase the number of speakers and interesting topics to share with our membership so we arranged for an extra January event.

Our November meeting had around 25 connections (about 30 people). Our Zoom calls can have up to 100 connections so it was suggested we reach out to other local historical societies and invite their members to attend our Speakers' Nights if they wished to do so. It seemed like a good neighbourly thing to do in these challenging times.

So in January we held our first extra speaker's night during which Meredith and Claire from Halton Regional Heritage Services presented the interesting short film called "The Man and the Boy" and we are very pleased to say that we had a few members from other historical societies join us for the event.

In February we had two events. In a reciprocal arrangement, Burlington Historical Society invited OHS members to join their virtual Speakers' Night event on Feb 8th and of course

we had our own on February 17th to which other Historical Society members were invited. The 30-35 attendees at the event were fortunate to hear about the history of Canadian Peacekeeping by Michael Johnson. Micheal had invited two former Canadian Peacekeepers to the meeting who were kind enough to share some of their personal experiences and stories from peacekeeping missions they had participated in and some of the challenges faced by soldiers when they return home. One fact that Michael shared with us is that many former peacekeepers (or their next of kin) are entitled to medals that they may not be aware of. Additional details can be found on the Canadian Government - National Defence website: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/medals/medals-former-members.html>



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A Note from the Society President

George Chisholm

At our February Board Meeting, held online through Zoom, the Board appointed Steve Bysouth as a Member of the Board. Steve and his wife Judy, have been members for about 3 years and Steve is well-known to many Society members. Steve contributes regularly to our Facebook page and looks after our Speakers' Nights, now online as well. Working with a group of volunteers he is also the videographer behind our very popular video vignettes. We're looking forward to his contributions at the Board table.

The Society continues to tick along with several initiatives keeping volunteers busy. We're now planning for our next Annual General Meeting which will be held online.

You'll see more about membership elsewhere in the newsletter but we're very pleased to see so many new members joining.

Last year we completed 30 plaque requests and have six of them on the go so far this year. We've recently created a plaques brochure which outlines the process. It's available on our website but if you'd like some hard copies, please let us know. Our plaques have been an ongoing project of the Society since the 1950s.

Our annual operating grant from the Town of Oakville arrived recently. We'd like to thank the Town for their ongoing support of the Society.

We're hoping that things will return to more or less normal in the coming months so that we'll be able to open the Thomas House for the summer and the office for regular business.

Hope to see you then.



Become a Member

Join or re-new by mailing this form or go to www.oakvillehistory.org and pay via PayPal or credit card.

Name

Address

Email

Phone

I authorize the Society to contact me by email

I would like to receive my newsletter by email

Please contact me about becoming a volunteer

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L6J 1B1**

Membership Form

Please Check Category

Individual	\$30	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senior (over 65)	\$25	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student (full-time)	Free	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family	\$40	<input type="checkbox"/>
No. of Adults		
No. of Children		
Senior Family	\$30	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional	\$40	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corporate	\$100	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting*	\$60	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Become a supporting member and receive a tax receipt for the excess over your regular fee.

Volunteering

The Society needs volunteers. These are examples of how you could help: Thomas House interpreter; walking tours; garden care; research; archives cataloguing; membership development; data entry; computer maintenance; facilities maintenance. Please check the box overleaf if you're interested.

Membership

Andrea Stewart, Marie Descent and Susan Bowen

As of February 4, we reported a total of 229 members, sixty of whom were still to renew. I'm happy to say that renewals continue to come in and we have been thanking each person with a gift copy of the book *Oakville Streets and Landmarks*. If you haven't renewed for 2021 You may renew any time now, either online at www.oakvillehistory.org or by sending your cheque with the attached membership renewal form. We are pleased to welcome the following new members since January 1: John and Jennifer Contini, Mr. and Mrs. David Cornell, Mr. Terry Debono, Ms. Dana Harvey, Mr. Duncan Harvey, Ms. Phyllis Kingsley and Mr. Andrew Kucey.

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Recycling—World War Two Style

Today's recycling programme in which we are asked to participate indicates that somewhat of a crisis exists: those who encouraged our gross overpopulation clearly failed to reckon on the relative excess of garbage that would result from it. Recycling brings to mind a different crisis we were faced with over forty years ago: World War Two.

The collection of salvaged materials vitally needed to carry on the war effort, was undertaken in Oakville by the Angela Bruce Chapter I.O.D.E. this Chapter received its charter in 1933 thanks to the foresight and action of Mrs. Ryland New, Regent of the already established White Oak Chapter, who recognized the potential for useful public service amongst her members' daughters and their young friends. Named for the wife of a former Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, this younger group more than justified Mrs. New's expectations. By the outbreak of World War Two, their original 24 members had tripled in number and they plunged into the War effort with enthusiasm.

With the Government's wartime appeal for materials for recycling, which were then in dangerously short supply, the Angela Bruce girls speedily organised their 'Salvage Collection'; their slogan, "SAVE SCRAP to WIN the SCRAP". A large "VICTORY BAG" was distributed to every household and business in the town and nearby countryside, listing the desperately-needed materials, with careful instructions for tying and separating articles for quick pick-up and later sorting.

A panel truck for pick-ups was a need first filled by generous citizens; the Chapter however soon acquired its own second-hand truck, with guidance from the revered master-mechanic and

garage owner, Vern Dynes. Winter and summer, citizens greeted the familiar navy-blue I.O.D.E. truck as it followed the routes laid down for daily collections.

Willing workers with strong backs volunteered as driver and/or pick-up crew, while we heaved onto the truck such items as PAPER: weighty bundles of newspaper, magazines, cardboard, flattened cartons and boxes etc.; METALS: heavy items of scrap-iron and other metals, later tin and aluminum, sometimes a bedspring, the odd iron gate or a roll of fence-wire; RUBBER (non-synthetic): all LEATHERS, large and small; GLASSWARE; RAGS ('clean' specified!); USED CLOTHING and much more, with "VICTORY BAGS" filled to over-flowing. FAT and BONES were in demand for their by-products—glycerine and nitroglycerine.

A large warehouse, part of the former Marlatt Tannery [on Forsyth Street], was the repository for load after load of this material. Here the SORTERS took over their strenuous job. The Salvage committee had luckily acquired the valuable services of Ollie McCraney who, unable to serve overseas, was a lifesaver to us as caretaker, general helper, and in preparing



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the tons of sorted material for pick-up by the dealers' trucks.

Success of the salvage operation demanded an exacting schedule of routes and daily shifts of workers. This was accomplished by one faithful member, Dorothy McBain who, confined to her home, carried out this arduous task day after day at her telephone. Recognition of Dorothy's contribution to "Salvage Collection" should never be forgotten.

Before long it became evident that much of the used clothing and many other articles were in too good a condition to be recycled, and thus began

in 1943 the OPPORTUNITY SHOP, still well-known today. Revenue from their shop, and from many other fund-raising events, enabled the Angela Bruce Chapter I.O.D.E. to lend valuable support to a great many worthwhile wartime causes, as well as to the extremely difficult post-war period. A good job well done!

From *Sketches of Oakville, A Small Town* by Frances Ahern, an undated collection of short written sketches about the history of Oakville.

The IODE Angela Bruce Chapter Opportunity Shop still benefits Oakville and beyond at 432 Kerr Street, Oakville.

Foreign Trade—Oakville to Cuba

Rory McAlpine

You might wonder what this has to do with Oakville but a photo on the cover of the federal government's September 17, 1949 "*Foreign Trade*" magazine) showed my father, Donald McAlpine, helping to transport a prized Holstein-Freisian heifer to Cuba in 1949.

The significance of this shipment was explained on the index page of the magazine:

"Cows from Oakville played a role in building diplomatic and trade relations between Canada and Cuba, first established in 1945, prior to the Cuban Revolution. The heifer pictured is the grand-daughter of the famous bull "Marksman" and was one of 6 heifers shipped to the President of Cuba. The cattle were selected by the Minister of Agriculture for Cuba during his visit to this country for the Canadian International Trade Fair."

The heifers were from Hays Farms International. Established by brothers Tom and Harry Hays on Dundas at Trafalgar, it had gained a worldwide reputation as dealers and exporters of Canadian purebred livestock to over twenty countries in the post-war period.

At the time of the photo my father, from Dutton Ontario (and still living at age 93) was a student at the Ontario Agriculture College in Guelph and had summer jobs at Hays. In fact he met my mother there—Donna Hopper from Oakville who worked as the office secretary—and they wed at Knox Sixteen Church in 1953 (mom was part of the King family associated with the Kaitting house/farm on Dundas). My father now has dementia but he has certainly not forgotten about flying cattle to Cuba by prop plane, with many mishaps in the air!

Cover photo of Donald McAlpine by James E. Rose

Trafalgar: What is in a name?

By Elaine Eigl

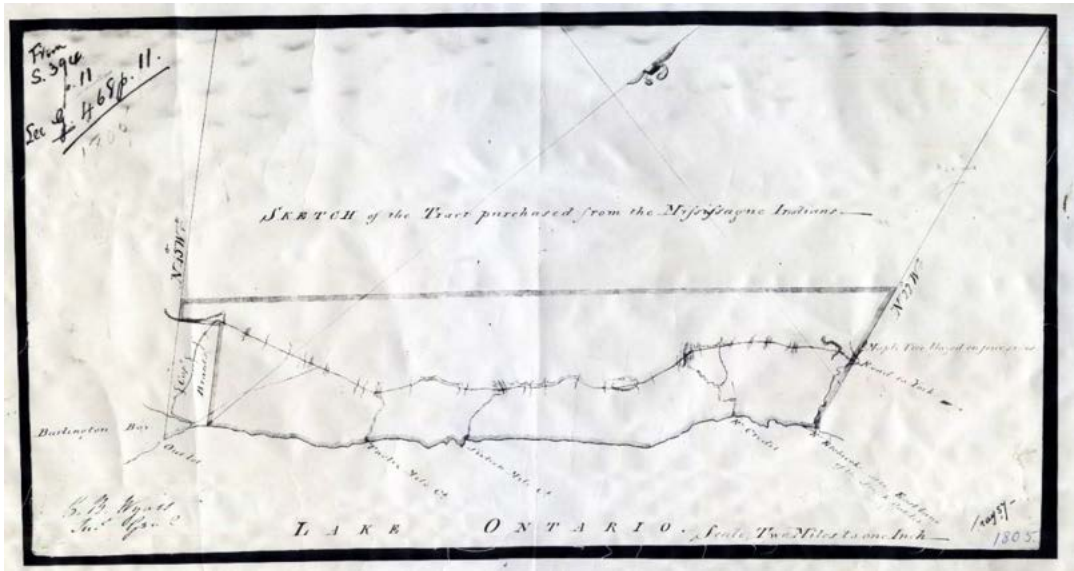


Figure 9: "Sketch of the Tract purchased from the Mississaugne [sic] Indians," 1805. Oakville Public Library, OPLOIMI0001.

Last summer, during a physically-distanced visit to the Oakville Historical Society office, I took part in an interesting discussion about place names, their impact, and their importance. I mentioned that while researching another property, I learned that Oakville is part of an area that was briefly called Alexander Township before it was renamed Trafalgar Township.

Being curious, I did some digging and learned that the area was named after Alexander Grant, who became Administer of Upper Canada in 1805 upon the death of Peter Hunter the 2nd Lieutenant Governor General of Upper Canada.

Recognizing that there were people living in this area long before European settlers showed up, I wondered what they called the area. Indigenous

evidence indicate the Mississaugas settled permanently in Southern Ontario sometime in the late 17th or early 18th century.[1,2] According to *The Mississaugas of the Credit: Historical Territory, Resource and Land Use*, prior to European arrival, the area around Sixteen Mile Creek in Oakville was known as Nanzuhzaugewazog, which translates to "Having Two Outlets." [3]

1 *The Mississaugas of the Credit: Historical Territory, Resource and Land Use - Movement and Settlement into Southern Ontario*, circa 2018 update. Department of Consultation & Accommodation (DOCA), Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation. Page 6.

2 *The Oakville Museum at Erchless Estate Comprehensive Site Plan Report*, Wendy Shearer Landscape Architect. October 2007. Page 5.

3 *The Mississaugas of the Credit: Historical Territory, Resource and Land Use - Introduction*, circa 2018 update. Department of Consultation & Accommodation (DOCA), Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation. Page 3.

Around this same time, Europeans began arriving and establishing colonies in New France, the name given to the area by the French, which included modern Southern Ontario.

In 1788, when the area was under British rule, a Royal Proclamation was issued renaming the area Nassau District, Upper Canada, Province of Quebec. Yes, we are living in an area that was briefly named Quebec! But not for long. By 1791, the Province of Quebec was divided into Upper and Lower Canada, and a year later Nassau District was renamed Home District.

During this period, the Crown and the Mississaugas of the Credit entered into two separate treaties. Treaty 14 was signed in September 1806 when the Mississaugas ceded almost 71,000 acres (28,732 hectares) of land.[4] This was followed by Treaty 22 which was signed in February 1820 and saw the Mississaugas surrender their claim to the Reserves at both Twelve and Sixteen Mile Creeks to the Crown.[5]

After Treaty 14 was signed, Deputy Provincial Surveyor Samuel Street Wilmot was commissioned to survey the ceded lands in order to facilitate European settlement. This map, which came to be known as the Wilmot Map, used Dundas Street as the baseline, as it had already been surveyed as a military road. Under Wilmot's survey the area was divided into three townships, the aforementioned Townships No. 2 (Alexander), No. 3 (Grant), and Township No. 1 which was "given the Indian name of Toronto." [6]

Unfortunately for Grant, before the ink had dried on Wilmot's survey, the decision was made to recognize "Britain's greatest naval victory", and the ultimate sacrifice of Vice Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson, who was fatally wounded during the Battle of Trafalgar on 21 October 1805.[7]

The victory and Nelson's death overshadowed Grant's accomplishments and his namesake townships were renamed Trafalgar and Nelson, respectively.

Over the course of the next several years, the Home District was reduced a number of times, including in 1816, when the Township of Trafalgar was detached and became part of the newly formed Gore District.[9] The County of Halton, which was part of the Gore District, consisted of the Townships of Esquesing, Trafalgar, Nelson and Nassagaweya. In 1857, the municipality of the Town of Oakville was added to the County of Halton, and five years later part of Trafalgar township was amalgamated into Oakville.[9,10]

As a researcher and an amateur genealogist I study the meaning of place names. However, before undertaking this exercise, I didn't fully appreciate how frequently place names are changed, and how these seemingly random changes are usually anything but. I've also learned that serving your country and winning a battle that saved your empire is no guarantee of long-term commemoration!

Elaine Eigl is a Heritage Planner, Planning Services, Town of Oakville

4 Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, *Head of the Lake, Treaty No. 14 (1806)*, <http://mncfn.ca/head-of-the-lake-purchase-treaty-14/> - accessed 21 January 2021

5 *Mississaugas of the Credit Timeline*, Treaty No. 22 department of Consultation & Accommodation (DOCA), Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation

6 Hazel C. Mathews, *Oakville and the Sixteen: The History of an Ontario Port* (University of Toronto Press Incorporated, 1953), Page 6.

7 *Horatio Nelson, 1st Viscount Nelson*, Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horatio_Nelson,_1st_Viscount_Nelson - accessed 22 August 2018.

8 *Home District*, Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Home_District - accessed 13 November 2020.

9 *The County of Halton*, The Historical Atlas of Halton County, Ontario, Illustrated, Walker & Miles, 1877. Page 54.

10 Wikipedia, *Trafalgar Township*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trafalgar_Township#:~:text=Trafalgar%20Township%20was%20a%20township,the%20Regional%20Municipality%20of%20Halton.&text=In%201962%2C%20the%20township%20was%20amalgamated%20into%20Oakville - 22 January 2021.

"A.22"

TRAFALGAR

PLAN of the Second TOWNSHIP

In the tract of Land lately Purchased from the Mississauga Indians

2242
OFFICE
REGISTRATION No:

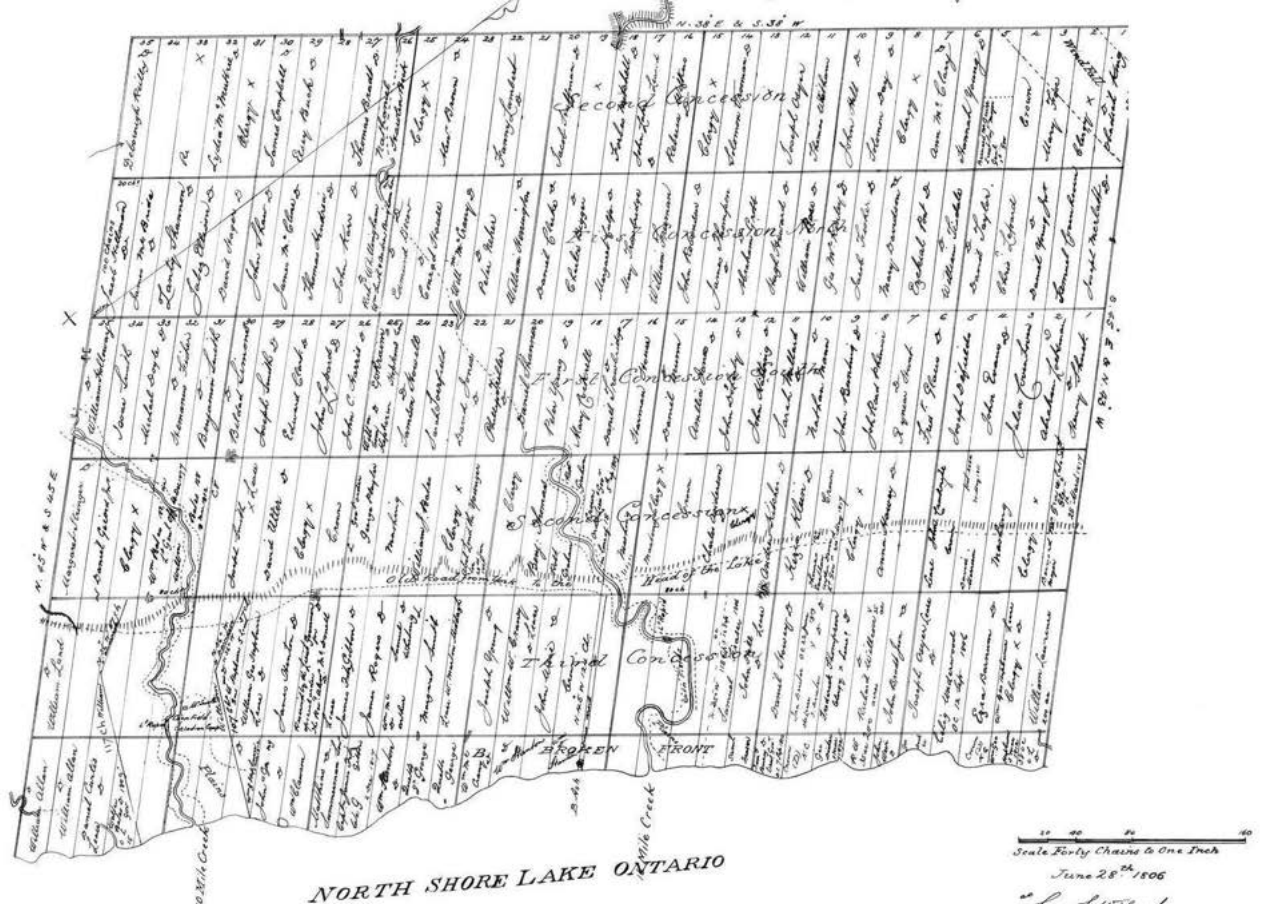


Figure 10: "Trafalgar, Plan of the Second Township, In the Tract of Land lately Purchased from the Mississauga [sic] Indians," by Samuel L. Wilmot, Surveyor. 28 June 1806

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"Oakville stands close upon the lake, at the mouth of a little river called Sixteen Mile Creek; it owes its existence to a gentleman of the name of Chisholm, and, from its situation and other local circumstances, bids fair to become a place of some importance."

Anna Brownell Jameson, "Winter Studies and Summer Rambles In Canada" 1838

William J. Shaw, Builder

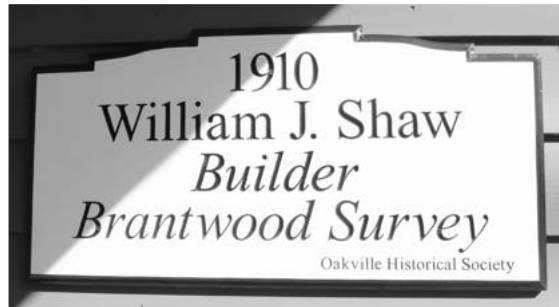
Janet Godber

A plaque recently went up at 175 Allan Street, the Shaw family home.

William John Shaw was born on 24 July 1863 in Liverpool, England, the fourth of nine children of Joseph and Elizabeth Shaw. Joseph was an engineer.

In 1887, William married Rachel Walker and they lived at Walton-on-the-Hill, a village just outside Liverpool. He was a joiner and builder by trade and the family, eventually including five children—Fred, George, Flora, Samuel and Rachel resided in the area until 1908 at which time they decided to emigrate to Canada, settling in Oakville.

The family would have noticed a stark contrast from the overcrowded streets of Liverpool and likely welcomed the pleasant tree-lined streets of Oakville and its proximity to the lake with its beaches, piers and harbour. In 1909, William purchased Lot 14 at the corner of Allan Street and Sumner Avenue in the newly-formed Brantwood Survey for \$300 and built the family home.



The Shaws also owned several other lots along Allan St. It was a happy existence for the family with William and his sons establishing their trade as builders.

In 1915, the two eligible sons, Fred and George, signed up and went off to war, both fighting on the battlefields of France. Fortunately, they would return home. However, tragedy struck the family before their arrival when their father William contracted tuberculosis and succumbed to his illness in July of 1918.


The family continued on, with the 3 sons building houses and buildings in the area, employing many tradesmen and creating business for the planing mills and suppliers. They built the bank at the corner of Lakeshore Road and George Street as well as the cottages that now house the Oakville Historical Society. The three sons remained in town where in later years, in addition to their building trade, they became members of the Oakville Volunteer Fire Department.

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175 Allan Street, c1910



175 Allan Street, 2020

In 1938, William's wife, Rachel died. Frederick, Flora & Rachel continued to live in the family home. In 1938, Rachel married Fred Post, but, unfortunately, passed away five years later due to complications of childbirth. George and his wife Margaret lived a few doors down at 163 Allan, Samuel and his wife Jessie lived on Herald Avenue.

Flora eventually took over the family home after the death of her brother Fred in 1962, and remained there until her own death in 1982. In 1984 the house was sold bringing to a close 74 years of ownership by the Shaw family. Many of the Shaws are buried in St. Jude's Cemetery.

OHS Students and COVID

Mark Verlinden

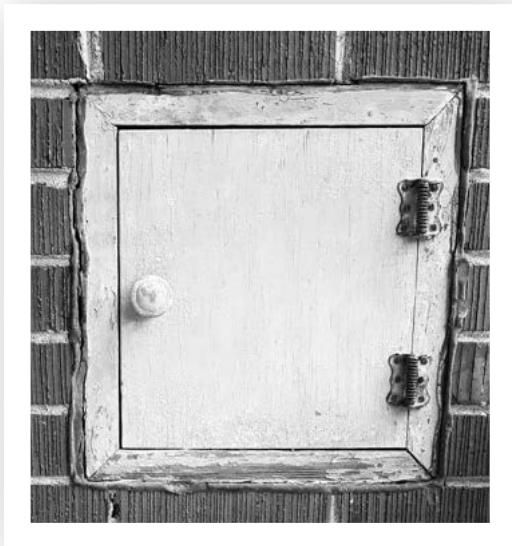
Up to the break before Christmas our three students, Julie Suh, Emily Ing and Madison Carmichael, were able to work in our offices while maintaining good separation. However, with the expanded lockdown we determined that working in our offices was no longer a viable option. Since the beginning of January Emily and Madison have been working part time from home doing research and other work required to prepare for the production of banners commemorating the end of World War Two. Our previous banners for highlighting Canada's, and Oakville's, contribution to the World War One and to International peace keeping have

keeping have been very well received. We are targeting to have this new set available for Remembrance Day 2021.

Meanwhile, Julie has continued to work remotely on our new exhibit for the main exhibit room. The theme of the exhibit will be on education and schools in Oakville, a very timely subject. We are working to have this new exhibit mounted in time for the reopening of our office to the public, which we sincerely hope will be soon.

Time marches quickly on and already we have submitted our application for funding for students in the summer of 2021.

The *way* things were...



Do you know?

Where this door was located?

What it was used for?

Look for the answers in our next issue!

From December 2020 *The way* things were...

This concrete impression is alongside Lakeshore Road just east of Appleby College. The King's Highway is an alternative designation for the primary provincial highway system in Ontario. The Toronto-to-Hamilton highway, which when completed in 1917, was both Ontario's first concrete highway and one of the longest inter-city stretches in the world.



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