



BHS Quarterly

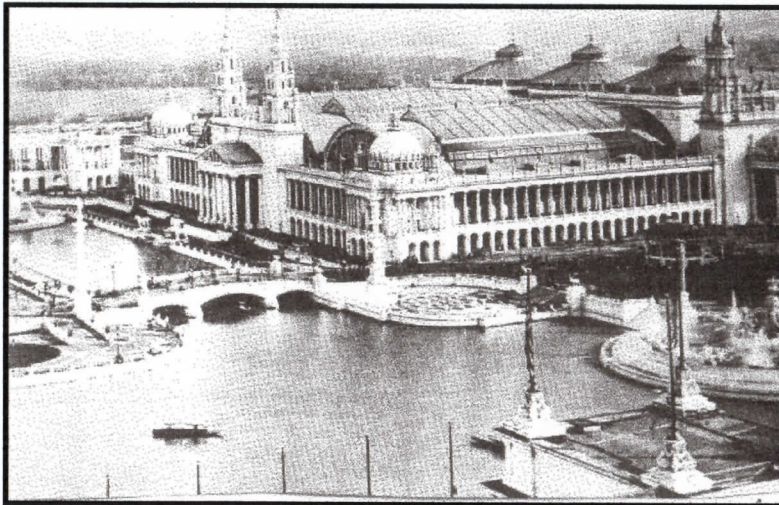


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Celebrating Ninety - One Years of Preserving Local History

Links of Past Days - Between Brantford and Chicago

By Angela Files



White City of Jackson Park. The architecture of the Chicago Fair went back to the classical and European models rather than the modern styles.

Chicago, Ojibowa "She-Kag-Ong" wild onion place, "White City" fair buildings of staff with a plaster and fibre face.

"Windy City", movement of air in an environmental race.

Immigration From Brantford To Chicago

From the 1870's to the turn of the nineteenth century there was a link between the small city of Brantford and the large city of Chicago, the original site of a field of wild onions.

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President's Reflections

It's the first newsletter of 1999 and our first chance to share some exciting developments at the Brant County Museum and Archives.

The BCMA is beginning 1999 on an expansionist note. We are strengthening our archival collections and consequently our historical research capacity.

Many of you will have read that the Museum is in the process of assuming responsibility for the Ontario Land Registry records for Brant County. The registry records were saved from destruction as a result of the persistent efforts of a group of volunteers from the local his-

torical and genealogical societies. Allan Farquarson headed the local chapter of Apolrod - a committee whose goal was to ensure the written registry records weren't consigned to the local landfill site. Angela Files and Ruth Lefler represented the museum on the committee. We owe all the people our thanks for a job well done.

A second addition to the archives is the Audrey Scott collection. Audrey has had a long association with our Museum and had graciously allowed us to accession and make available her collection of historical and architectural works of Brantford and sur-

rounding areas.

The registry archive will be located at the Museum In The Square. Once organized, it will allow us to better display a third piece of our archival collection. The Harrison M. Scheak collection includes a fine library of rare art literature. The collection is currently housed at Charlotte St., but moving it to the Museum in the Square makes it available to people who are also using the main municipal library and possibly to Brantford's future university students.

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A Letter From the Friends of World Heritage Grassroots

Friends of World Heritage Grassroots
6A Newcastle St.,
BRANTFORD ON N3R 1S6
519- 756-1799

Dear Readers:

When the Alan Scotts arrived in Brantford in 1976 they had already collected surveys, maps, photos and slides of the architectural portions of two areas of Hamilton, Durand and Corktown. As many of the Corktown buildings have been demolished, the value of this collection can be readily understood.

Continuing the work in Brantford through the auspices of three heritage organizations, Audrey Scott is now presenting a large part of her collection to the Brant County Museum and Archives. (The organizations

are the Brant County Branch of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, Artifactual Services which has a similar constitution, and Friends of World Heritage Grassroots which is a more general group with a broad membership.)

The donation means that photographs, self-directed walking tours, architectural descriptions, clippings about areas and buildings, evaluations and surveys done over the years will be more readily available to the general public at the Museum.

Audrey welcomes directed volunteer assistance in preparing this material for its presentation to the Brant Historical Society, keeper of the collection in the Museum. Rev Alan Scott died Nov. 7, 1997 so that Audrey has

dedicated the collection to his memory. Alan supported Audrey in this important work of a lifetime throughout the years.

Audrey Scott, 117 Dufferin Ave., Brantford, Ont., N3T 4P9., 756-1799.

P.S. The Brant Historical Society and Museum staff wish to thank Audrey Scott, the Brant County Architectural Conservancy and Friends of World Heritage Grassroots for giving us this wonderful gift of geographical sites, homes and places.

BRANT COUNTY MUSEUM & ARCHIVES
57 Charlotte Street, Brantford, Ontario
(519) 752-2483

Admission:

Adults - \$2.00 Seniors/Students - \$1.50
Children - \$1.25 Under 6 - Free

BHS members - Free

**Hours: Wednesday to Friday 10 am to 4 pm,
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THE MUSEUM IN THE SQUARE
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Hours: Monday to Friday 10 am to 6:00 pm,
Saturday 10 am to 5:30 pm**

The 1833 Brantford Covered Toll Bridge

By Roger Sharpe

The history of the bridges that spanned across the Grand River at Brantford is sadly incomplete. The earliest bridges were wooden and of poor quality. The swollen river during the spring thaws would often carry them away year after year. But some of the history of the covered toll bridge built in 1833 at the foot of Colborne Street has survived in government documents because it was partly financed by a government loan.

For several years prior to 1833, the wooden bridge at Brantford was maintained for about 100 pounds a year by a combination of funds from the Gore District and contributions from local inhabitants. By 1833 the bridge was in a poor condition and it was believed it would be carried away with the spring ice.

Attempts to replace the bridge had begun several years earlier when, in 1831, Brantford merchant and first post master, William Richardson and others petitioned the government for a loan to build a new bridge. A commission headed by the Hon. Charles Duncombe reviewed the petition and recommended, in December, a loan to build the bridge. At that time Duncombe was the Member of Oxford

County and the bridge would have been very important to his constituents so it's easy to see why he would be a supporter of this project.

In 1832 another petition put forward by Brantford miller Jedediah Jackson and others was again reviewed by a commission headed by Duncombe who recommended a loan for the petitioners a second time. Not only was there a local need but the bridge would be a major roadway through the province to carry the mail coaches and travellers south and westward.

At that time the bridge was in a condemned state and the petitioners were unable to raise among themselves the money needed to rebuild the structure. One of the problems was that the area was in the middle of the land granted to the Six Nations. This meant that, although the petitioners could use their Statute Labour tax towards financing the bridge, they could not use moneys from the Wild Land Assessment law as the Indian Lands were not subject to it. The land was in possession of the Six Nations and the area was thinly populated by settlers.

It was envisioned that this new bridge would be a more

permanent structure built upon stone piers and abutments. The bridge would then be able to resist the spring freshets. If the wooden portion of the bridge was swept away it could be rebuilt on the stone abutments and piers at a cost that settlers might be able to afford. The sum of 1,500 pounds was eventually loaned to the bridge committee. The first committee members were: Acting Commissioner, Jedediah Jackson; Acting Secretary, F. Yeoward and Acting Treasurer, John Westbrook.

In early May 1833 a contract was entered into with Hammill and Moe to build a bridge. Despite some early problems the bridge was complete enough in December to safely allow teams across. A subsequent agreement resulted in the structure being fully completed in June 1834.

John Hammill also agreed to collect the tolls from December to June 1834 while completing the bridge, eventually collecting 68 pounds 19 shillings. As agreed by the bridge committee and authorized by the Legislative Assembly through the Act 3 Will. IV, Ch.30 the tolls for using the bridge were as follows:

Bridge"

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Links of Past Days

continued from cover

Early community newspapers list the names of local Brant people who moved to the windy city of America, Chicago. Many were seeking well-paying business and industrial jobs or joining relatives who were already living in the metropolis. By 1890, Chicago became the second largest city in the United States with forty per cent of its population being foreign born.

The Great Chicago Fire Of 1871

On October 8, 1871, a twenty-seven hour fire swept the greater part of Chicago from the earth. An area of 2,020 acres was burned with destruction of property value at \$196,000,000. About 300 people lost their lives in the disaster.

Brantford business men and travellers also lost as others did in the fire.

"Mr. R. B. Donnelly, son-in-law of T. S. Shenstone lost \$50.00 in the Chicago fire." 1

"Businessman R. Henry, one of the few Brantford rite who was in Chicago at the time of fire, had his coat and satchel consumed in the hotel where he was lodged." 2

"By December 1871 the Brantford Relief Aid sent money for victims of the fire." 3

Many countries in the world

contributed aid to rebuild the charred city.

In a little over two years the burned area was covered with sturdy brick and stone buildings rather than wooden ones. It marked a new and more prosperous Chicago!

The World's Fair In Chicago - (May 1, 1893 - Oct. 30, 1893)

On May 1, 1893 the Chicago World Fair and the World's Columbian Exposition to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of America opened with fanfare. The Fair had an area of 666 acres in Jackson Park with a frontage of two miles along Lake Michigan being laid aside for that purpose. The entire cost of the fair was estimated upward of \$43,000,000 and the whole number of admissions during its progress was 27,529,401.

The exposition was really two fairs in one: the official white city with its staff covered neo classical edifices filled with exhibits; outside the gates, visitors could ride the World's first Ferris Wheel or watch dancers.

The Canadian Pavilion

There were thousands of agricultural, forestry,

machinery and mining products in the Canadian Pavilion. Massey Harris of Brantford had an extensive display on their farm implements.

The Exhibits Of Six Nations

As early as January 1893 Supt. of the Six Nations, E. D. Cameron, sent the following native exhibits for the Chicago Fair.

Persons and Exhibits

"Barefoot, Mrs. E., knitted quilt Barefoot, Mrs. Isaac, beaded skirt.

Beaver, Mr. James, several oil paintings.

Carpenter, Mr. Benjamin, manuscript.

Henry, Mrs. Joseph, bead work. Jamieson, Esther, deer skin moccasins.

Jonathan, Mrs. Levi, canned preservatives.

Jones, Mr. James S., a bottle puzzle, carved wood.

Powless, Mrs. Elizabeth, quilt containing 7,978 pieces.

Russell, Miss Sarah, painter of roses on velvet." 4

Railways, The Mode Of Travel To The Chicago Fair

By using the countless railway lines of North America, people were able to travel to the Chicago Fair. Overseas, people and exhibits travelled by ships across the oceans.

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Fiddling at Fiddler Anne's Corners

By Ruth Lefler

Congratulations to the residents of the village of Mount Pleasant who, this year, are celebrating the 200th anniversary of the coming of the first white settlers. The Ellis and Sturgis families arrived from Pennsylvania and began farming here in 1799.

The following excerpt about a hamlet close to Mount Pleasant was written by Alex B. McEwan whose family were early settlers in this area.

"At the request of your Honour Judge Hardy, I have jotted down a few facts and stories concerning the hamlet known as "Fiddler Anne's Corners". These Corners were situated six miles from Brantford, one mile from Mount Pleasant on what is known as the Indian Line, once the boundary line for the Six Nations. The name originated because one of the Phillips family, who owned the old tavern, played the violin. She was an expert horsewoman who was known all over the locality to be as good as any man and better than most. She drove a team of grey horses.

The business part of the community consisted of a tavern

that was reputed to be haunted, a general store kept by my Father, a cooper shop on the opposite corner, a blacksmith shop run by Richard Gammon, a tailor shop owned by William Tennant and a shoemaker and cobbler business owned by Samuel Thompson, brother of Squire Thompson, Reeve of Oakland Township and Justice of the Peace and noted character of those days.

One of the characters in the community ran away to Michigan owing to his misdeeds and infringements of the law. One tale was that he ate a raw black squirrel on a bet at a shooting match below Farringdon Hill. He was just picking the hair out of his teeth when my brother drove past on his way home from Brantford.

On another occasion this character was hauled up before the Judge for some misdemeanour. His sister-in-law told a neighbour that they brought in a verdict two degrees worse than stealing. She couldn't think of the word but thought that it was larceny.

Once, at the tavern, there was a funeral of an old man. The service was conducted by

the Rev. M. Griffin, a celebrated Methodist preacher of the olden days. Rev. Griffin said that in some homes in conducting funeral services it was not the custom of the people to attend church and that he didn't know whether this was the case here or not.

One Sunday, one of the local gentlemen entered the church in a pretty staggering condition. As he walked up the aisle with all eyes upon him, Rev. Griffin stated that his Bible said "Judge not lest you be judged". Rev. Griffin visited the wife of one of the local merchants. She was very ill and expected to die. Griffin told her as her end was approaching "if you are prepared, die when you have a mind to".

Griffin's brother, the squire, had a run away, was thrown out of the buggy and was considerably shaken up. One of the squire's friends approached him and asked if he was hurt to which he replied that he didn't know but that he would give it serious consideration.

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The railway lines of Brant County advertised tickets at lower excursion rates - especially Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The newspapers of the day carried informative articles about the exhibits, important events and visitors. Locally, people were often listed in the paper if they were attending the Fair.

The Brantford Courier, Oct. 6, 1893, edition, page 4 stated the following were visiting the Chicago Fair: Mr. and Mrs. Strathden, five members of the Shannon Family, Mr. W. G. Killmaster, Miss Woodyat, Mr. & Mrs. Walter Roberts, Mr. Fred Ryerson and Mr. and Mrs. Grummett.

It was estimated that about \$51,000. was spent on railway fare by folks of Brant to view the World Fair. Average cost was \$35.00 for the ten-day trip.

The Death Of Mayor Cartier Harrison

A sober mood terminated the Chicago World's Fair. On October 28, 1893, sixty seven year old, Mayor of Chicago, Cartier Harrison died. A period of mourning followed for one of the staunch supporters of this international event!

A Souvenir Reminder Of The

Every time I gaze at the souvenir cranberry glass cream pitcher engraved in gold, World's Fair, 1893, Maggie A. Angus on it, I wonder what tales could Great Aunt Maggie Angus tell me, if she were alive about the greatest experiences of her life - attending the World's Fair.

Endnotes

1. Brantford Daily Expositor, Oct. 20, 1871
2. Brantford Daily Courier, Oct. 12, 1893
3. Brantford Daily Expositor, Dec. 1, 1871
4. Brantford Daily Courier, Jan. 18, 1893

Promoting the History of Brantford and Brant County

Ms. Peggy Lang, a member of our Society, sent copies of our recent publication "The Way We Were" to His Excellency Romeo LeBlanc, Governor General of Canada and to the Honourable Hilary M. Weston, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. Letters were received from both officials who were delighted to learn more about Brantford and Brant County through the stories and photos in this publication and will use it as an excellent resource for their staff.

Thank you, Peggy!

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

This summer the Museum will be curating a show entitled A Child's World. This exhibit will focus on childhood. We would like to have a section on toys and games. While the Museum collection has a number of suitable early toys to display, we really don't have anything from the 1920's - 1980's. If you have any toys or games from this time period that you would be willing to loan the Museum, please call 752 - 2483.

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The Brant Historical Society, 57 Charlotte St., Brantford, Ont. N3T 2W6
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ENDOWMENT FUND

The Brant Historical Endowment Fund is one of the ways in which we can ensure a viable future for the Society and the Museum. The fund currently holds \$81,531 up from \$79,000. We thank the following donors for their generous recent contributions to the Endowment fund:

- In memory of Irene Anderson**
Glenn Kilmer

In memory of Mrs. C.F (Frances) Cockshutt
Mary Stedman
Ruth Stedman

In memory of William Courtnage
Glenn Kilmer

In memory of Jerome Fischer
Glenn Kilmer and Janice Kay

In memory of Mrs. Ruth E. Chapin Gould, U.E.
Margaret R. Lang
Ruth Lefler

In memory of George Stephen Pettit ,U.E.
Marilyn McDonald
- In memory of Molly Henderson**
H.G and Jean Hedges

In Memory of John Arthur Malcolm
Linda and Terry Smith

In memory of Mr. Donald Post
Morley and Ruth Lefler

In memory of John G. Stratford
Members of the Brant Historical Society

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The history of Fiddler Anne’s Corners is the history of hundreds of other villages and hamlets throughout the province. The former owners have long since passed away and their industries with them. Things change and keep changing but these people of a bygone day and age, who were old when I was young, laid the foundation for the comforts and prosperity which we now enjoy.”

Thank you to Pauline Fanning for submitting this information to the Brant County Museum and Archives.

If any readers have more information about “Fiddler Anne’s Corners”, please phone the Brant County Museum and Archives at 752-8578 or 752-2483.

B.H.S. HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS

The Way We Were	\$16.95	Brant County Place Names & List of Professionals and Trades, 1855	\$ 5.95
A History of Brant County & Its People:			
Vol. 1	15.95		
Vol. 2	14.95	Oakland Township	8.00
Set of Vol. 1 & 2	22.50	Lewis Burwell’s Diary of the Indian Surrender	8.00
The Grand River Navigation Co.	21.95	Grand River Tract Assessment Rolls	
St. George Continuation School	7.00	1816, 1818-1822	5.95
Rural Schools of South Dumfries Township	8.00	Grand River Tract Census	
How Brantford Cooked	4.50	1824, 1827, 1829, 1832	5.95
A History of the Brantford Pottery	9.95	Directory of the Townships of Brant, 1880	10.00
Brantford Arts & Entertainment	9.95	City of Brantford Municipal Directory, 1880	10.00
From Automobiles to Washing Machines	9.95	Irwin’s Directory, 1883	10.00
A History of Mohawk Park	2.00	City of Brantford Municipal Directory, 1883-86	8.00
Tuscarora Township	5.95	City of Brantford Directory, 1899-1900	15.00
Brantford City Directory 1910	16.00	Wild Mammals of Southwestern Ontario	8.95

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A Brant Historical Society membership offers:

- ◆ free admission to the Brant County Museum & Archives, Bell Homestead and Myrtleville House Museum (excluding special events)
- ◆ exemption from regular research fees in our Archives
- ◆ bulletins about upcoming Museum activities
- ◆ subscription to the "B.H.S. Quarterly"
- ◆ discounts on Heritage Bus Tours, Children's Museum Club, and other programs
- ◆ 10% discount on Gift Shop purchases over \$10

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Brant Historical Society Membership Registration Form

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Marion Westaway
John and Heather Wyatt

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"Schedule of Tolls to be collected from and after 1st of December, 1833:

A wagon, cart, sleigh, or sled, drawn by two horses, oxen or mule..... 3 Pence

A wagon cart, sleigh, or sled, drawn by one horse, ox or mule..... 2 P.

A single horse, mule, or ox..... 1 P.

For all carriages drawn by two horses, on steel or leather springs..... 6 P.

For all one horse spring ditto..... 4 P.

Horned cattle or horses in drove, per head..... 1 P.

For every hundred of sheep, or in t proportion..... 1 Shilling

Farmers and others can pass and repass the bridge for one year with one team by paying the toll-gatherer in advance.....10 Pounds"

When the bridge was finished it was painted so it would last longer. The toll-keeper purchased at auction the rights to operate the toll bridge from June 9th 1834, to June 30th 1835 for 191 pounds. From June 9th, 1835 to June 9th, 1836 the price of purchasing the rights increased to 227 pounds 15 shillings and was contracted out to John Benjamin a Brantford saddler. One reason given for the increase was that the population of the area had

almost doubled thereby increasing the potential profit for the toll-keeper.

Initially, the toll bridge was, to say the least, very unpopular with local residents. The committee reported a thousand complaints. To escape paying the toll during the first winter many crossed on the river or left their teams on the west side and crossed the bridge on foot. They would then do their business in town and walk back across saving the cost of using the bridge. Others would wait until late at night after the toll keeper had gone to bed and drive horses over without paying.

HAPPENINGS

April

Exhibition

"Images Along the Grand"

April 7, 1999 - May 6, 1999

The Museum in the Square

Don't miss the annual show and sale by the Brant Visual Artists Guild. Using the Grand River for inspiration, the Brant Visual Artists have assembled a stunning exhibition.

May

Exhibition

"Ex Libris - Harrison M. Scheak: An exhibit on the Art of Collecting."

May 22 - July 17, 1999

The Museum in the Square

If you are an avid antique collector or a beginner collector, you'll want to visit the Museum in the Square this Spring. On display will be the wonderful Harrison M. Scheak collection of books on subjects ranging from armour to Wedgewood china, with a sampling of related

objects from his own collection. Identify your own collectibles using books such as, Geoffrey Godden's Encyclopedia of British Pottery and Porcelain marks.

BHS Lecture Series

Wed. May 19th, 8:00 P.M.

57 Charlotte St., Brantford

Clara Terryberry will share her experiences teaching in a one room rural school.

June

BHS Lecture Series

Volunteer Appreciation Night

Wed. June 16th, 7:00 P.M.

Glenn Kilmer, one of the founders of Westfield Pioneer Village, will guide us through the village with special insights into its evolution.

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By 1838 during the Mackenzie Rebellion the toll bridge was being operated by yeoman John Finnesay. In December of that year he was experiencing trouble meeting his payments to the Bridge Commission. Apparently, the traffic across the bridge was heavy because it was mostly British troops or teams of wagons transporting troops or military stores. Finnesay's problem was that he could not collect a toll from the military and was in financial trouble. He wrote to Col. Love, commander of the area, requesting he ask the Lieutenant Governor for compensation of his losses. The documents don't reveal if this problem was resolved.

Local history says this covered bridge built upon a stone foundation lasted twenty one years until it collapsed on July 1st, 1854. There were still bridges at other places like the Free bridge near the Gilkison estate but they all went the way of the earlier wooden bridges. This would be the last of the wooden bridges across the Grand River at the foot of Colborne Street. A new chapter in bridge history began when an iron bridge replaced it in 1857!

Bibliography

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- University of Waterloo, Dana Porter Library, Microfilm CA2 ON WJ2, Upper Canada, House of Assembly, Journal,
 - Appendix no. 149, 1836, "Report of the Brantford Bridge Commissioner"
 - Appendix no. 72, 1835, "Report of the Commissioners of the Brantford Bridge"
 - Appendix 1832/33, pg.206, "Report of the Select Committee on the Petition of Jedediah Jackson and Others"
 - Appendix 1831/32, pg.167, "Report on Petition of William Richardson and others of Brantford".
 - Reville, F.D., History of the County of Brant, Vol.1, Pgs. 137-138, Hurley Printing, Brantford.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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The County of Brant
The City of Brantford and Brantford Regional Arts Council
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