

# **BHS Quarterly**

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**Summer**, 2004

# Peter and Eliza Jones in their later years

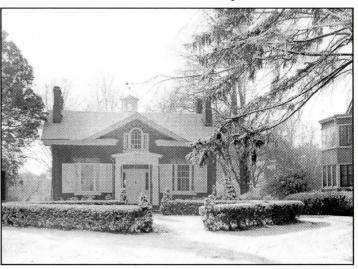
This is Part 3 of a three-part series compiled by Robert L. Deboer from *Brant County: The Story of its People, Volume I*, by Jean Waldie and "The Beaver: Magazine Of The North," Summer 1977, by Donald B. Smith.

In many ways, Rev. Peter Jones, son of Welsh surveyor Augustus Jones and a Mississauga Indian woman, and his English wife Eliza Field were the ideal complement of each other. Before meeting Peter, Eliza's life had been romantically barren. As his letters to her show, he gave her affection and tenderness that did much to warm her memories of the emotional void of her early years. The refined and cultured woman quietly returned his love, and gently supported him in his Christian work among his mother's people.

The bond between them ran deep. Even when separated for only a few weeks they faithfully wrote to each other. They had married late in life: Elizabeth was 29 and Peter 31 on the day of their marriage in September 1833. The union was an unqualified success. Eliza's greatest gift to Peter was a family of four boys born in quick succession between 1839 and 1847. How he loved to be with them, to play with them and tell them Indian stories and legends.

Eliza did a great deal to help her husband adjust to the culture and ways of the white world. Together they had worked to improve his English, and discussed his translation of hymns and scripture from English to Ojibway. When Peter met Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle in September 1838, the queen commented in her diary, "he speaks English very well, and expressed himself very well."

But at the same time that Eliza strengthened Peter, she weakened him — as a prisoner of her own background, she would never really understand the Mississauga Indians. While greatly sympathizing with them on account of injustices at the hands of the white settlers in the past, she could not understand why they might wish to remain different from Europeans. She would always believe that the Christian Indians must abandon their "old ways" for "civilization." For although she had left her upper-



Peter Jones built Echo Villa in 1857. He and Eliza and their four sons spent their last five years together in the red brick home.

Photo courtesy of the Brant Museum & Archives middle-class surroundings behind her in England, she carried these same English upper-middle-class ideals with her to Canada. This would cause problems on the Credit River reserve, particularly after Peter's mission to England in 1838 to secure a title deed to the Mississauga reserve on the Credit River.

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Celebrating 96 years of preserving local history

# President's Reflections

necessary by the sale and future development of the former we were not aware. It is important that all of us show Eaton Market Square Mall, and its impact upon our second | patience and a determination that together we reach the location there and the main museum itself also. Our best possible solution for our museum. Museum and Building Committee members have spent countless hours in meetings seeking answers and exploring | tive effects as they bring to the attention of the public the possibilities for the future. When it seems one set of pro- needs of our museum. They are also becoming aware of the posals and possibilities has been further explored, another vital role we have to play in the preservation of the history set presents itself.

The future development of the mall requires us to try to that the museum exists and for that we are grateful. solve the need for museum space and our future developbe made that will affect the direction that the museum will | deficit at the end of the first quarter was not as great as pretake in the future, time has a way of quickly passing and | dicted. Good news, but not the annual solution. While some what looks like sufficient time becomes the immediate have repeatedly reminded the board of our pending deficit, future. It is our hope that by using our time wisely we will our plea for suggestions and possibilities for additional avoid facing a future emergency.

um board of directors is not doing its planning through the receptive to new funding possibilities, and hopeful the good public media. Much has been written; however, when we news of the treasurer will repeat itself throughout the year. have a concrete plan to present, the members will first be informed and asked for their approval. Trial balloons seem

uring the past months a great deal of time has to have been published by various sources; and, while some been devoted to the future development of the may seem positive, more are merely speculation. In fact, we Brant Museum & Archives. This has been made are surprised to read of situations and possibilities of which

> All of these speculations and proposals have very posiof our communities and their people. Many have discovered

Another bit of positive news comes from our treasurer. ment. While we do have some time before a decision must He was extremely happy to report that our forecasted funding sources has brought no response from the mem-It is important that our members realize that your muse-bership. We continue to be prudent in our expenditures,

Calvin G. Diegel

#### **Brant Historical Society Board of Directors**

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John Bonfield, Margaret Glass, Gloria Neamtu, Peter Oakes, Michael O'Byrne, David Partridge, Anne Westaway

#### **Brant Museum & Archives**

57 Charlotte St., Brantford, Ontario N3T 2W6 519-752-2483

Admission: Adults \$2.00 Seniors/Students \$1.50 Children \$1.25 Under 6 free B.H.S. members free Hours: Wednesday to Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m Saturday 1 to 4 p.m.

> For July and August: Sunday 1 to 4 p.m. Web site: www.brantmuseum.ca

### The Museum in the Square A Satellite of the **Brant Museum & Archives**

Main Level, Market Square Mall, 1 Market St., Brantford, Ontario 519-752-8578

Admission by voluntary donation Hours: Monday to Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For July, August and December: Open Saturday

# Curator's Corner

■ We will be hiring a summer camp co-ordinator and a summer camp assistant, thanks to HRDC's be planning and and carrying out our summer camps — Warrior, Girl Power and G'Day Mate. The camps are designed for children aged six to 12 and promise to be Myrtleville. We raised \$250 at this event. A big thanklots of fun. I just received word that the Canadian Museum Association through its Young Canada Works grant has given us a collections assistant and a research assistant. These students will be working with our artifact and archival collections over the summer and will provide research assistance for staff and visitors alike.

I would also like to take this opportunity to announce a grant from the Brantford Community Foundation City of Brantford. We have been given

t's that time of the year again: time for summer \$4,300 for our Seniors' Outreach program. The funds students. We have been very fortunate this year. will be used to hire a staff person to create and deliver unique outreach programs to residents at our local seniors' homes and to community and service groups. We Summer Career Placement grant. These students will hope to provoke memories with our kits and gather some of the stories that make our community so rich.

We recently had our second vintage yard sale at you to all who donated material, and especially to those who donated their time to organize, price and sell our treasures.

This summer promises to be another busy one. Stop by and meet our new staff, watch one of the programs or just come in to chat.

Stacey McKellar

# Meet the staff... Assistant Curator Carrie Sorensen

met many of the museum and society members since my arrival. Now to tell you a little about myself. I attended the University of Guelph, where I received my BA in history. During this time, I volunteered with Guelph Museums, conducting an inventory of its collection, as well as working as a weekend attendant for the Guelph Civic Museum and John McCrae House. I have spent several summers with Heritage Centre Wellington — a heritage group in the Elora/Fergus area focused on preserving heritage homes in the town and in rural areas.

Last Year I graduated from Sir Sandford Fleming sure my talents will be tested! College with a Certificate in Museum Management and

y name is Carrie Sorensen and I am the new assistant curator of the Brant Museum & Archives and Myrtleville House. I have Curatorship, and interned with Guelph Museums (I am a Guelphite, if you couldn't already tell!) After my internship, I was offered a contract placement working been employed with the museum since March and have with the John McCrae collection, which was entered into a database for the McCord Museum's "Keys to History" Web site.

> Following my contract, I was offered the position of Assistant Curator with Brant Museum and jumped at the opportunity. I have recently finished "Hand-woven Heritage: Coverlets from the Harrison M. Scheak Collection" for Myrtleville House Museum and will soon be finished the Grand River exhibit at the Museum in the Square.

> I look forward to the many new experiences that await me at the Brant Museum & Archives, where I am

> > Carrie Sorensen

# Peter and Eliza Jones in their later years

#### Continued from Page 1

Since his own conversion to the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1823, Peter had struggled to help his mother's people to the "white man's way." His goal, and Eliza's as well, was to teach the Indians the skills by which they could compete as equals with Europeans. Having gathered the Mississauga converts at a village on the Credit River, he and his fellow Methodist preachers instructed them in how to clear and plant their fields, to build cabins, and to adapt to a settled way of life. With the forest on the north shore of Lake Ontario destroyed, the fish and game population sharply reduced and white farmers everywhere in the ancestral hunting grounds, the Mississauga knew they had to change. And by 1836 they had.

Ten years after the establishment of the Credit Indians' village in 1826, it was flourishing. The band members, who numbered approximately 200, lived in 40 comfortable houses. A few had planted cherry, apple or pear trees in their gardens. The band had its own oxen, cows, pigs, horses and poultry. For pasturage and cultivation they had enclosed nearly 1,000 acres (one-third of the reserve). With their own labour they had built and communally owned a sawmill, workshop, a blacksmith shop and a warehouse. But what they did not have — the most important item of all — was a title deed to the reserve.

The new Governor of Upper Canada, Sir Francis Bond Head, refused to give them a title deed, believing that if he did they would immediately dispose of their birthrights to designing people for the merest trifle that might be offered to them. He also was of the belief that the attempts to make farmers out of native converts had been a complete failure. Bond Head proposed on Nov. 20, 1836 that "the few remaining Indians who are lingering in Upper Canada" be sent to 'The Manitoulin and other islands in Lake Huron or elsewhere towards the North West."

Bond Head's new policy caused a panic at the Credit. Already Peter and Eliza were concerned by the "removal policy" the American government used to move all American Indians in the eastern United States west of the Mississippi. The tribe's concern was that if it was moved to Manitoulan Island, they could not live — would soon be extinct as a people, could not raise livestock or crops, as nothing would grow by putting the seed on the smooth rock.

Peter was selected in October 1837 by the tribe to carry a petition directly to Lord Glenelg, the Colonial Secretary and addressed the petition to the new Queen. The petitioners explained they needed a firm title to their lands because they were told by evil-minded persons that their farms could be taken from them at any time. Peter left in mid-October in 1837 and joined Eliza, who had left Canada earlier to visit her parents, at their home in Lambeth, England.

Shortly after Peter had left Canada, a rebellion precipitated by Bond Head's incompetence had broken out in Upper Canada. The aftermath of this conflict with the white settlers and a similar rebellion led by Louis Joseph Papineau in Lower Canada had made it extremely difficult to secure an interview with Lord Glenelg, who had 30 colonies, in addition to the troublesome Canada, to administer. The meeting finally took place in March 1838, after the rebellion in Upper Canada had been suppressed.

Peter was impressed with Glenelg because he listened with attention to the statements made to him. Peter did not know that Glenelg, a vice-president of the powerful Church Missionary Society, was already predisposed to help. Glenelg's concern for the spread of Christianity and the welfare of native converts instantly drew him to Peter. Glenelg had always believed the North American Indian could be converted and civilized. Glenelg wanted to help and promised to work to secure title deeds for the Christian Indian settlements in North America.

Eliza and Peter rejoiced. Peter spent his last months in Britain undertaking a lengthy speaking tour to raise money for the Canadian mission work, attracting large crowds. From England, Peter went to Ireland and then passed through Scotland. The novelty of the Indian preacher brought out huge congregations.

The crowning point of Peter's visit was his interview with Queen Victoria, which Glenelg had initially scheduled for late July, but which was postponed until Sept. 14. Lord Melbourne, the Prime Minister, frowned on Peter wearing his Indian costume, fearing impropriety, and advised a cautious policy — that Peter appear in his English dress. Glenelg was curious and asked to see Peter's Indian costume. Feeling that it was "perfect covering," he counselled Peter to wear it. Peter was then escorted to the antechamber of the white drawing room at Windsor Castle where, when the doors were thrown open, Peter saw Her Majesty standing in the centre of the drawing room with two ladies and four or five lords.

The interview with Peter would have provided the 19-year-old Queen with a welcome break from the tedious scanning of the lengthy letters and dispatches from Constantinople regarding England's new commercial treaty with Turkey. The Queen, who was only five foot two in height, wrote that her visitor, who came with a petition, was a tall, youngish man wearing his national dress made entirely of leather. When they first met, Victoria noted, "He kissed my hand."

Although the interview lasted only a few minutes, Peter would never forget it and, upon returning to Eliza's parents home, he told Eliza all the details. He explained that he had placed the petition in the sovereign's hand, whereto was attached the Wampum chain with white symbolizing their

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# Peter and Eliza Jones in their later years

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"loyal and good feeling" toward Her Majesty, but that the black Wampum "was designed to tell Her Majesty that their hearts were troubled on account of their having no title deeds to their lands." The Queen smiled, he added, and appeared pleased to hear that Lord Glenelg had already granted "the prayer of petition."

Peter and Eliza's conflict with the Credit Indians really began after their return to Canada in 1836. Although their domestic happiness would be strengthened by the healthy birth of their first four sons in 1837, troubles surfaced in other areas. In February 1838 Lord Glenelg was forced to resign as Colonial Secretary before his promise of securing title deeds was fulfilled. The Credit Indians' title to the land remained unrecorded, and thus uncertain. By the mid-1840s it was clear that many Indians at the Credit Mission objected to being made over into "brown Englishmen" — Peter and Eliza's shared objective.

Although all the 200 Credit Indians had been nominal Christians since 1826, by the 1830s about one-third had left the church. This group might best be described as the traditionalists – those who opposed Peter Jones' attempts to Europeanize them. By the early 1840s another group arose and their opposition took Peter and Eliza by surprise. The new party, consisting of perhaps half of the Christian Indians at the Credit, remained in the church but challenged Peter and Eliza's efforts to eradicate all the Indians' characteristics of mission, and introduce more and more white codes of behaviour. Peter and his supporters were now in a minority outnumbered by the traditionalists and the hostile Christian faction.

A decade of Christianity and Methodist guidance had not effaced the Indian character of the Credit Band. At the native school the native and white teachers had tried to undermine many traditional beliefs of the Indian children but, after 15 years, even Peter conceded they had achieved very little.

Regardless of their own individual feelings toward Peter and Eliza, about one-half of the Indian Christians prepared to resist their directives. This party was centered around William Herkimer, who, like Peter, was the son of a white man and a Mississauga woman, but who, unlike Peter, had lived all his life with his mother's people and had married a Mississauga woman.

The root of the conflict between Herkimer and Peter and Eliza was land. A quarter of a century earlier, Peter's father, Augustus Jones, had secured the grant of land for his son and Peter still claimed it. In 1835 the band council recognized his claim and gave him sole possession of 100 acres on the basis of the original grant to Augustus Jones. But William Herkimer objected to this decision. Like his Indian forefathers, Herkimer believed that the chiefs and warriors all must stand on an equal footing and said so. All the land must ultimately belong to the band. Peter told

Herkimer and his group that they had "no right to meddle" as he had been granted the land by council.

William Herkimer had other grievances with Peter. Earlier in 1836 the council under Peter's direction had decided to discipline all children who "ill behaved" in the mission. Herkimer's party refused to serve on the committee "to look after the conduct of the children and to punish them whenever they deserve it by whipping them." The Herkimer group also opposed a second resolution that William Herkimer's nephew "be required to put away his fiddle."

The attempt to enforce the totally "unIndian" controls at the mission encouraged a number of Credit Indians to leave. In 1829 Samuel Wahbuneeb had defended before the Indian Agent the band's selection of Peter Jones as one of their chiefs. Seven years later Wahbuneeb himself left the reserve. He had been appointed a chief the previous January but he gave up his chief's medal and flag and went to Muncey, an Ojibway Reserve south of London, Ont. By 1840 the problem of departures had become so serious that Peter and his uncle and fellow chief Joseph Walker convened a special meeting to consider the problem, but it was not resolved. In 1844, Peter's cousin George Henry joined a Wild West Show and left for Europe.

Peter's inability to receive a title deed for the reserve greatly aggravated the problem. Lord Glenelg's promise in 1838 that a deed would be granted had not been fulfilled because of his resignation as Colonial Secretary in February 1839 and the deeds still had not been granted by the mid-1840s. The band lived through a period of terrible anxiety. Fortunately, the Six Nations at Brantford later offered the Mississauga firm title to a corner of their reserve on the Grand River. That same year Peter led his people to the tract, which they renamed New Credit and where the band still resides today.

The 1840s were a difficult decade for Peter and Eliza. Peter's health began to deteriorate and he gained considerable weight. Peter and Eliza visited Britain again in 1845. Peter's third tour to raise money in England for the mission work initially revived him. He drew large audiences, but the constant travelling soon began to exact its toll on his spirits.

Throughout his last years, on account of his weakening condition, Peter was forced to take a less active role in mission work. In 1850 his physician ordered him to retire, forbidding him from clerical work or travel. Later that year, his doctor told Eliza that Peter might die any minute, but fortunately he recovered. In 1857 they built a red brick home they called Echo Villa on a 30-acre lot near Brantford on what is now Colborne Street East, financed, no doubt, by a generous donation from Eliza's father. In

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# Peter and Eliza Jones in their later years

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her new home Eliza returned to the comfortable surroundings of her childhood. There she and Peter and their four sons spent their last five years together.

During the last decade of his life, the native missionary laboured under considerable hardships, yet despite his poor health, he struggled to the best of his ability. His final illness in December 1855 was caused by one of his frequent visits to New Credit over the rough, 20-mile road. That December afternoon, after completing the tiring journey on a lumber wagon, Peter felt "very unwell," but he was determined to attend the band council meeting the following day and refused to return to Brantford. When the meeting was over, he rode home through a drizzling rain. He was obliged to lie down as soon as he reached Echo Villa and his condition progressively declined. Several months later it was apparent that he would not recover, and on June 29, 1856, after a long illness, he died.

In his lifetime Peter Jones accomplished much for his people. Before his conversion to Christianity at the age of 21 and his subsequent return to the band, the Mississauga appeared to be on the verge of complete extinction. The sizeable white immigration into southern Ontario had pushed the Mississauga's world out of its equilibrium. The intervention of Peter Jones in the late 1820s and early 1830s helped the Credit Indians to successfully adjust to the European presence. More than any other single individual, he was responsible for their transformation. Ironically enough, it was due to his efforts that by the late 1830s and '40s the band was strong enough to resist his pressure for further Europeanization.

When Peter died, he was beloved by many of his own people. When the Mississauga were informed in late June 1856 of their chief's rapidly deteriorating condition, a number came immediately from New Credit to his home in Brantford. There over two dozen members of the band assembled several times a day in an adjoining room, where they prayed, and sang and wept aloud.

The behaviour of the New Credit Christians during this crisis betrays the successful blend of their new and their traditional beliefs. They had indeed come to sing and pray for Peter's recovery, but at the same time to secure for him adequate medical attention. They dispatched a runner to obtain at their own expense "a noted Indian doctor" who lived at Rice Lake. In spite of their acceptance of many of the white man's ways, the Indian Christians had maintained their faith in the superiority of their own cures over those of the Europeans. Even the most loyal Indian converts were not just carbon copies of the Englishman, but remained both natives and Christians.

The attendance at Peter's funeral illustrates the respect in which he was held in both communities. *The Toronto Globe* noted that the funeral procession was the largest ever witnessed in Brantford and included "upwards of eighty carriages besides a good number of white people and Indians on foot." Egerton Ryerson, Peter's close friend for nearly 30 years, stated in his funeral sermon, "the native missionary had enjoyed the esteem of, and had access to, every class of Canadian society."

Although Eliza remarried, she never again found the happiness that she enjoyed with Peter. After Peter's death, his mission fell to his sons, particularly the third, his namesake, Peter Edmund, who alone attended university, and eventually became the head chief of the Mississauga.

Eliza, who died in 1890, lived to see Peter's work continued by Peter Edmund. When he became head chief in the late 1870s, he led the campaign, fully supported by the band council and the community for a new council house, an addition to the church and a modern schoolhouse. The young man, who had trained in the 1860s as a doctor at Queen's University, also served as the community's health officer. By the late 1880s the band population had risen to over 250, the highest figure in the previous half century. The reserve also continued its agricultural success.

Eliza also lived to see the federal franchise given to the Mississauga and Six Nations. When Sir John A. Macdonald accorded them the vote in 1885, Peter Edmund Jones wrote the prime minister: "I thank you on the part of my father and on part of myself, as for many years we advocated and urged this step as the most likely to elevate the aborigines to a position more approaching the status of whites." This is what Peter and Eliza struggled for — the raising up of the Indian "to a position approaching the independence of the whites."

How this must have pleased her! In her own way, she had made herself "useful" by coming to Canada over 50 years earlier, and marrying the man she truly loved.

## Land registry records

Land registry records are now available for searching at the Museum in the Square, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Please call 752-8578 for details.

### **MEMBERSHIPS**

#### Welcome to our new members

Don and Sharron Bradfield Marion Laidlaw Anne Schubert and Don Jackson Lynn Osborne-Way

#### **Corporate sponsors**

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Donald J. Boyle, June Bragg, Patricia Burgon, Michael J. Carbone, Margaret Carrow, Eleanor Chapin, Jacqueline Evans, Peter Farrugia, William F. Fuller, Bruce E. Hill, Hilda M. Hill, Cliff Jones, Jack W. Lewis, Chris Osborne, Roger Sharpe, June Spence, Ben VanVeldhuizen, Patricia Whetstone

#### **Donors (2004)**

Bob and Tanis Anderson Margaret Carrow Kenneth David Fuller William F. Fuller Clare and Alice Pope

#### **DONATION OPPORTUNITIES**

Endowment Fund: The interest from this fund goes to the operation of the museum.

Acquisition Fund: This fund is used to acquire and conserve artifacts.

Building Fund: This fund will be used for the museum — to renovate the existing building, to buy a new building and to renovate it, or to build a brand new museum.

Operations Fund: This fund is used for the daily operations of the museum, including staffing and programming. Special Projects Fund: This fund will be used to complete special projects — some current projects include the Settlement Gallery, a new reception desk, a new sign for the front lawn and repairs to the glass enclosure.

### DONATION ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

#### **Endowment Fund**

In Memory of Douglas Cross Brant Historical Society In Memory of Audrey Haight
Brant Historical Society
In Memory of Clare Parsons
Brant Historical Society

### A Brant Historical Society membership offers ...

- free admission to the Brant Museum & Archives, Bell Homestead and Myrtleville House Museum (excluding special events)
- exemption from personal 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 \$20

#### **Categories and fees**

Benefactor \$500.00+
Patron \$200.00+
Friend \$100.00+
Supporter \$50.00
Family (2) \$30.00
Individual \$20.00
Student \$15.00





# \* Happenings \* \*







### **Brant Museum & Archives**

#### **Exhibits**

"The Grand River." June 1 to Aug. 21, 2004. Community art show. Sept. 7 to Oct. 1, 2004. Brant Visual Artists Guild show and sale. Oct. 5 to Oct. 29, 2004.

#### New at the gift shop

The Work of Our Hands: Mount Pleasant, Ontario, A History 1799-1899, by Sharon Jaeger, \$30. Sarah's Journey, by David Beasley, \$19.95.

#### In sympathy

Douglas Cross — to Marilyn Cross on the loss of her husband

Audrey Haight — to her family Clare Parsons — to his family

#### Thank-you

Brant Community Foundation for its City of Brantford grant of \$4,300 for our seniors' outreach program.

#### Zehrs tapes

Keep bringing in those Zehrs tapes!

#### Volunteers

We need volunteers to help with our education programs, to work with the collection and especially to participate in our fundraising bingos. Please give us a call: we can find tasks to match your interests and talents. Any spare time you have to offer us will be appreciated.

### **Copyright information**

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### **Brant Historical Society**

#### General meeting speakers

Brant Museum & Archives, 7:30 p.m.

June 16, 2004 Volunteer Appreciation Night. Ruthven Historic Site. Dinner for volunteers is at 6:00 p.m. A tour at 7:00 p.m. is open to everyone.

Directions to Ruthven from Brantford:

Take Hwy. 403 to the Cainsville exit to Hwy. 54 and proceed south through Caledonia and York. Ruthven is on your right-hand side approximately 5 kms from York. If you go



into Cayuga, you have gone too far.

Sept. 15, 2004 "It's Your Turn": members will have the opportunity to discuss the purpose and history of a favourite antique. Please see the enclosed flyer for details. Oct. 20, 2004 We will celebrate this year's Wall of Honour inductees.

#### **Brantford Film Group**

The Brantford Film Group has concluded another successful season and will return the fall with more great films. A schedule will be available in early September. Thanks for your support!

The Brantford Film Group is a fundraiser for the Brant Historical Society. Films are screened on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month from October through May at the Cineplex Odeon Brantford Mall Cinemas at 7 p.m. Advance tickets are \$7 and can be purchased at the museum. Box office tickets are \$8 and are purchased at the door. See you in the fall!

### Acknowledgments

The Brant Historical Society gratefully acknowledges support from:

The County of Brant The City of Brantford The Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation