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Ahrens Pottery, Paris, Ontario

Photo courtesy of the Brant Museum & Archives

Potteries and Potters of Brant County

By Robert L. Deboer

The County of Brant spans a century of pottery manufacturing history, commencing in 1803 and continuing until 1905. The county was well endowed with natural features that encouraged the development of the industry. It had two navigable rivers, the Grand and the Nith, where boats could ship raw materials from the Great Lakes to the factories in Brantford and Paris. By the mid-19th century, Brantford had become a railway terminus, thereby guaranteeing the uninterrupted development of the industry. Among the early entrepreneurs in the county were pottery manufacturers, specializing in the production of both earthenware and stoneware containers. Potteries were established in four Brant County communities: Burford, Scotland, Paris and Brantford.

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Celebrating 94 years of preserving local history

Potteries and Potters of Brant County: Burford, Scotland, Paris

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The following is an overview of pottery manufacturing in Brant County during the period from 1803 to 1905:

BURFORD

Yeigh Pottery – The first pottery established in what would become Brant County was that of John Yeigh in Burford. Yeigh's name first appears in the land registry records of Burford Township on July 11, 1803, when he purchased a tract of land. Yeigh learned the pottery trade in Pennsylvania before emigrating to Upper Canada. He operated a small earthenware pottery until the beginning of the War of 1812, when he left the business to join the militia to fight against the American invaders. After the war ended, he returned to the potter's wheel, but did not continue beyond the late 1820s.

A simple, unmarked earthenware crock with a clear lead glaze and kiln furniture used in the manufacture of pottery was found on the site of Yeigh's Pottery, approximately one mile west of Burford on Highway 53.

SCOTLAND

Marlatt Pottery – A small earthenware pottery was operated by John Mills Marlatt in the village of Scotland in Oakland Township from 1857 to 1859, with frontage on Simcoe, Oakland and Elgin Streets. His business was considered to be of considerable size as he employed three men.

Marlatt moved his pottery to Paris in 1859, perhaps to be closer to railways and the navigable waters of the Grand River.

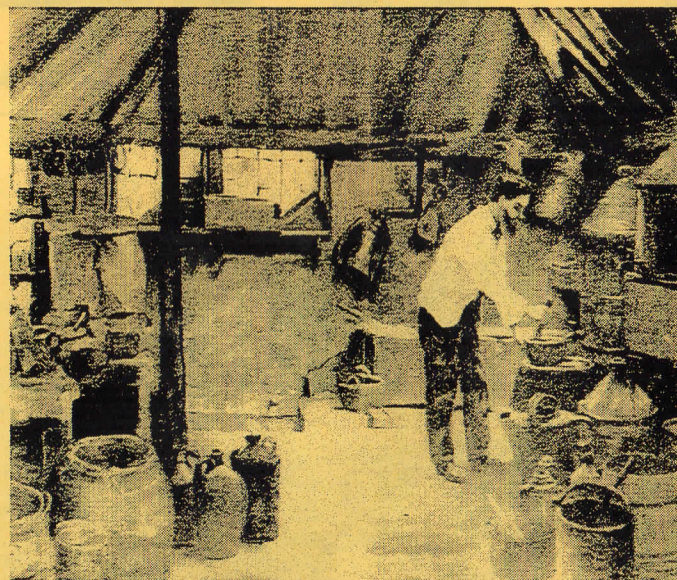
PARIS

Gleason Pottery – The first pottery in the village of Paris was established by Lyman Gleason in the late 1840s. He had emigrated from Genesee County in New York State and had learned pottery making at the Charles Gleason Pottery in Morganville, New York.

The pottery was located on the west side of Broadway Street, but little is known about the pottery business due to the loss of important Paris records in a 1900 fire. Some information on the pottery was available from the 1851-52 census returns. They report that the works is "new in the place" and employs five persons. The census taker was interested in the pottery wares, as a comment on the return reads, "what the cause (is) I do not know, but the ware has not the finish on it that imported goods have." He continued to operate the pottery until 1857, when a directory lists him as "innkeeper" at Paris Junction.

There are no known pieces that can be attributed to the Gleason Pottery as he did not mark his wares.

Marlatt Pottery – The next pottery to be established in Paris was begun by John Mills Marlatt in 1859, when he moved his



Interior of Ahrens Pottery, Paris, Ontario

Sketch courtesy of the Brant Museum & Archives

operation from the village of Scotland. The pottery was located on the east side of West River Street. He produced both earthenware and stoneware until his death in 1868.

Marlatt produced wares including jugs, butter crocks and bottles, either undecorated or decorated with a very simple cobalt blue painted design of flowers. His pottery was marked with an impressed stamp of "J. M. MARLATT/PARIS, C.W." or "J. M. MARLATT & CO./PARIS, C.W."

The 1860-61 census states that Marlatt produced goods valued at \$800 a year, using 48 tons of clay. Nine part-time persons were employed at an annual average cost of \$26 a labourer.

Marlatt entered his pottery in the Provincial Exhibition of 1868 and won three prizes: a first prize for the best assortment of pottery; a second prize for the best assortment of stoneware; an extra prize for a display of earthenware, with prize money totalling \$17.

Schuler & McGlade Pottery – After the death of John Marlatt in 1868, Henry Schuler and Peter McGlade formed a partnership known as Schuler & McGlade (sometimes known as McGlade & Schuler) and rented the pottery works from Marlatt's widow. Initially, the new firm restricted its production to earthenware, but later it concentrated exclusively on manufacturing stoneware containers.

Henry Schuler was apprenticed and learned the rudiments of the pottery business at the pottery of Xavier Boehler of New Hamburg, beginning his long career as an Ontario potter of distinction. The partnership employed six hands in the business under the name Paris Pottery.

Continued on Page 3

President's Reflections

Because some of the floors in the museum were being refinished during the week of May 13, the board attended the Arts & Culture public consultation session at Laurier. This new proposed committee is based on the successful Tournament Capital Committee model. The committee, which would co-ordinate and promote arts, culture and heritage in the community, is not responsible for funding. This was made clear at the outset of the meeting. However, in the question session after the presentation many comments were made about the lack of adequate funding for arts, culture and heritage, and I believe the two city councilors in attendance got a very clear message. As the city heads into its budget process for the year 2003, no mechanism has been established to replace BRAC with respect to grants. For whatever it is worth, the report to council that contained the recommendation to establish the Arts & Culture Committee acknowledged that organizations with fixed facilities and staffing costs should be treated in a different manner from those whose costs fluctuate.

At the last two monthly meetings ballots were distributed offering three choices for the time of the monthly meeting, 7 p.m., 7:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. The result

of the balloting showed an overwhelming preference for 7:30 p.m. Subject to board approval in June, we will give this time a trial in the fall and see how things work out.

This year the city of Brantford police department is celebrating its 125th anniversary and the county of Brant is celebrating 150 years. We partnered with both of them for Trillium grants so that they could produce books to honour their anniversaries. This association has been successful and has raised our profile in the community. As well, the museum sponsored a show, "Brant County: Celebrating 150 Years, 'Preserving the Past – Embracing the Future,'" at the Museum in the Square. The former municipalities of the county put together displays and both mayors and MPP Dave Levac attended the opening. Not only was the show very well received, it was an excellent outreach to the smaller museums in the area.

I am writing this article over the holiday weekend on the deck of my cottage. As the flakes of snow drift down, it is hard to believe that summer is supposed to be here. I wish all of you the best over the summer months.

John Wyatt

Potteries and Potters of Brant County: Burford, Scotland, Paris

Continued from Page 2

Peter McGlade was a potter who initially resided in Brantford and was likely an employee of F. P. Goold at the Brantford Pottery.

Pottery made by the partnership was rare and few marked pieces are known. Marked pieces have an impressed stamp, "SCHULER & McGLADE, PARIS, ONT." or "McGLADE SCHULER, PARIS, ONT."

The partnership lasted until 1873 when Peter McGlade moved to St. Catharines where he operated a furniture business. He eventually formed a pottery business in partnership with Bernard Fitzmaurice.

Schuler Pottery – After the departure of Peter McGlade from Paris in 1873, Henry Schuler continued in the pottery business in Paris until 1884, after which time he and his brother Wendlin moved to Brantford to work at the Brantford Pottery Works. The wares produced by Schuler were impressed with the mark, "H. SCHULER, PARIS, ONT."

Schuler exhibited his wares as part of the Canadian Exhibition at the Paris (France) Universal Exhibition of 1878. His displays included butter pots, preserve jars, cream pots, jugs, tomato jars, churns, common pitchers, spittoons,

molasses jugs and flower pots.

Ahrens Pottery – Jacob Henry Ahrens established the third pottery in Paris on the west side of West River Street, commencing operations in 1860 and continuing until the disastrous flood of August of 1883. After the flood Ahrens continued to sell pottery and operated a wine and spirit business as well, until shortly before his death in 1905.

Reports indicate that during the period 1869-70, Ahrens had six employees and produced goods to the value of \$6,000 per annum, consisting of flint, enamelled and common earthenware. The most frequent mark on his wares was an impressed stamp, "J. H. AHRENS." His red earthenware products had either a chocolate-brown coloured glaze, a Rockingham glaze or a deep-brown mottled glaze.

Ahrens was a frequent competitor at international and provincial exhibitions. He displayed his pottery at the American Centennial Exhibition of 1876 and the Paris (France) Universal Exhibition of 1878. At the Provincial Exhibition of 1864 Ahrens won first prize for the best water filter and second prize for the best assortment of pottery. He won second prize in both categories in the 1865 exhibition.

Read about Brantford pottery in the Autumn newsletter

Augusta Isabella Grant Gilkison

By Robert L. Deboer

Augusta Isabella Grant Gilkison was the driving force behind the formation of the Brant Historical Society. Although the society was officially inaugurated on May 11, 1908, it appears that the basic formation of the organization actually took place well in advance of May 11 and at the instigation of Miss Gilkison. This is made evident by a letter dated April 5, 1908, written to Miss Gilkison by the President of the Ontario Historical Society, Mr. Barlow Cumberland, which stated in part, as follows: "I am very glad that you have started an Historical Society in your City, it is one of the most historical parts of the Country."

In Miss Gilkison's writings, she states that the inaugural meeting of the Brant Historical Society was called by her at the request of the Ontario Historical Society. As she describes it, "I drew up the plans and they were adopted."

It seems probable that Miss Gilkison had a personal affiliation with the Ontario Historical Society, likely retaining a personal membership and attending meetings of that body and through this affiliation was obviously encouraged to promote the formation of the Brant Historical Society, which she did, most successfully. Miss Gilkison was obviously very dedicated and determined in her efforts to forge a historical society to preserve and promote the history and heritage of Brantford and Brant County and did so until 1929, when she moved to the City of Toronto.

At the inaugural meeting of the Brant Historical Society, Miss Gilkison read a lengthy historical paper which she had written and which had obviously taken considerable research and left little doubt of her commitment to history. Miss Gilkison had a tendency to write in a very simple and at times, disjointed manner. She was inclined to write things down as they popped into her mind without consideration for continuity or for maintaining a train of thought.

A society constitution was drafted by a committee shortly after the inaugural meeting and the resultant document likely had considerable input from Miss Gilkison. The society constitution approved in 1908 remained in effect until the 1960s, when it was revised. The current society constitution retains only one holdover from the original constitution and that is the reference to the society's anniversary, which states

that the anniversary of the society shall be Brant's Day, November 24th, commemorating Joseph Brant's death in 1807.

The society's original constitution included a reference to the annual meeting being held on the March 13, on which day in 1830, Brantford was laid out by the Crown. This reference was removed from the constitution in more recent years. The reference to March 13, 1830, as the day when Brantford was laid out by the Crown created some controversy within the society from its early days up until the 1950s. March 13th, in fact, is incorrect, as all available research, including Warner, Beers *History of the County of Brant, Ontario*, and *The History of the County of Brant*, by F. Douglas Reville, and *The Expositor* and *The Courier*, clearly indicate that the date when Brantford was laid out as a town by the Crown is April 19, 1830. The City of Brantford planning department uses April 19, 1830, for planning purposes in land development.

The date of March 13, 1830, as being the date when Brantford was laid out by the Crown was apparently arrived at through the efforts of Miss Gilkison. In her paper which she read at the inaugural meeting of the Brant Historical Society, on May 11, 1908, she stated:

In a letter from Wm. Richardson to my grandfather, Captain Wm. Gilkison, dated March 13th in the year 1830, he stated that Brantford is immediately to be laid out in the form of a town.

The only reference to Brantford being laid out as a town on March 13, 1830, is found in society records and is obviously derived from William Richardson's letter to Miss Gilkison's grandfather. It is nothing more than a date on a letter, not a date stipulating when the actual process of laying out the town was to commence. Miss Gilkison made an erroneous assumption which was incorrectly incorporated in the society's original constitution.

Miss Gilkison was a very simple, hardworking individual who may have made some mistakes in her historical research, but all things considered was dedicated. We truly have a lot to thank her for.

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Phone: (519) 752-2483 E-Mail: bcma@bfree.on.ca

The Motherly Touch

The following is an excerpt from *Peacemakers & Lawbreakers: A 125-Year History of the Brantford Police Service*, available at the Brant Museum and the Elgin Street police station for \$29.99.

By Heather Ibbotson

In late December 1926, Police Matron Mae Bridge resigned her position after five years of service and the police board of commissioners discussed the appointment of a replacement. Nothing was done, however, as Chief Donnelly told the board he believed there was no great need to fill the position right away.

On Feb. 1, 1927, a delegation of women representing various ladies' organizations, including the Local Council of Women and two home and school councils, appeared before the board and voiced their fervent wish that a new police matron be appointed quickly so the splendid work of former matron Bridge in counselling troubled young women would not be undone. The board agreed to make an appointment provided "a suitable woman could be secured." Nothing was done about it for more than two years.

Women's organizations approached the board with the same request in February 1929. Mayor Ross Beckett suggested that local health nurse, Miss Maude Campion, would be a suitable candidate. Board members Beckett, Judge Alexander Hardy and Police Magistrate S. Alfred Jones discussed the matter but decided a full-time police matron was not a necessity.

The matter was deferred to April 26, 1929, when Campion was appointed part-time police matron, in addition to her job as local health nurse. Her salary was set at \$200 per year.

Campion was interviewed by The Expositor in 1930 and spoke of her work among women and girls who found themselves afoul of the law. She said that the girls she tended were a small group, but its members were frequently in trouble. She spoke of the difficulty of dealing with

wayward girls between the ages of 16 and 18. They were too old to be dealt with in Juvenile Court or by the Children's Aid Society, and yet girls that age living on their own without any parental control often found themselves in difficult straits. Sixteen to 18 years of age was the "danger area" for girls, although sometimes even younger ones strayed, Campion said.

Girls who found themselves in trouble with the law often had backgrounds that included "something spotty" in their homes or early associations. These negative influences could be seen in the girls' "careless speech, questionable jokes, covert actions, mysterious hints and semi-revelations," Campion said.

The "average young girl would not, as a rule, be better than her surroundings" and that was especially true of those who, by some hereditary trend, instinctively followed the easier way. She said that the popularity of the automobile made vice easy, but reflected that the roots of the problem with the girls she dealt with were their home conditions and early associations.

Campion, later Mrs. Unger, resigned on Jan. 17, 1935, and the board of police commissioners heard that her services had been valuable, especially in straightening out the marital problems of the women she counselled. The board, by this time, realized the need for the services of a police matron and they appointed a replacement within a month.

Mrs. C. Kenyon also proved a valuable addition to the force and in 1936 her salary was increased to \$500 per year. Two years later, she left the position and Mrs. Norton took over duties as police matron on June 1, 1938.



Police Matron

Maude Campion

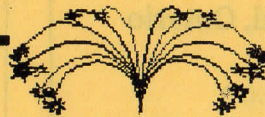
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Brant Historical Society gratefully acknowledges support from:

The County of Brant

The City of Brantford

The Ontario Ministry of Citizenship,
Culture and Recreation



Thank-you, Volunteers!

The next Brant Historical Society Lecture Series meeting – to be held June 19 at Myrtleville House Museum – will celebrate the contributions of our volunteers.

If you would like more information on the meeting, contact the museum at 752-2483.

We are always looking for volunteers to do general tasks around the museum. If you are interested or would like to volunteer some of your time, contact the museum at (519) 752-2483 or (519) 752-8578. Your help will be appreciated!

Brant County: Celebrating 150 Years

“Preserving the Past – Embracing the Future”

By Shanna Dunlop, Assistant Curator

As many of you know, we are currently featuring a special co-operative exhibit at our Museum in the Square commemorating the 150th anniversary of the County of Brant. This display has been exceptionally well received by the community, and has been covered by the Expositor, CKPC Radio, and Rogers Cable. As a result, we have received many visitors, and expect many more over the next few weeks. If you have not viewed the display as of yet, be sure to catch it before July 5!

This exhibit also provided the Brant Museum & Archives with an important opportunity to foster links and relationships with other county museums, historical societies, heritage groups, and tourism organizations. I would like to sincerely thank all of the groups and individuals that enthusiastically participated in the exhibit, including: the Brant Historical Society, Brant County Tourism, the Brantford Heritage Committee, Burford Township Historical Society,

Chiefswood National Historic Site, County of Brant LACAC, Heritage Mount Pleasant, Heritage and Tourism Burford Township, Kanata 17th-Century Iroquois Village, the Paris Museum & Historical Society, St. George/South Dumfries Museum & Archives, Six Nations Tourism, Tourism Brantford, and the Woodland Cultural Centre.

I would also like to thank Professor Peter Farrugia and the students of CT232, Wilfrid Laurier Brantford Campus, for permitting their class project on Brantford to be included in this exhibit. Finally, I would like to recognize the contributions of Alvin Marr, Enid Horning and Rick Shaver to the Oakland Township display, and thank Ruth Lefler for her help with research on the symbolism of the county and township flags.

Once again, I encourage you to discover the rich history and heritage of Brant County, its places and people, through this unique co-operative exhibit!

Brant Historical Society Board of Directors

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Brant 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 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday 1 to 4 p.m.

For July and August only: Sunday 1 to 4 p.m.

Web site:

<http://www.bfree.on.ca/comdir/musgal/bcma>

The Museum in the Square (A Satellite of the B.M. & A.)

Main Level, Market Square Mall
1 Market Street, 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 only:

Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

MEMBERSHIPS

Welcome to our new members

Sonoco Canada Corporation, Corporate
Alex Bomberry, Individual
Michael J. Carbone, Individual
Prof. Dean G. Taylor, Individual

Corporate sponsors

Brant Flour Mills Ltd.
EXTEND Communications Inc.
Hooton's Security Systems
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John Waterous
Mabel Wyatt

Categories and fees (as of April 1, 2002)

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

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 \$10

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 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Endowment Fund

In Memory of Cecelia Macyszyn
Terry and Linda Smith and Family
In Memory of Ernest Swanson
Cyril Walter
In Memory of Eva Offord
William Fuller
In Memory of Connie Dodgson
William Fuller

In Memory of James Harold Field
William Fuller
In Memory of Joan Bonfield
William Fuller
In Memory of Joan Bonfield
Brant Historical Society
In Memory of Joan Bonfield
Robert and Anne Deboer

Museum Operations Fund
Elizabeth Szicsak

Special Projects Fund: Settlement Gallery Project

Brantford Community Foundation
Margaret Lorenz
In Memory of Joan Bonfield
Rev. Calvin Diegel
and Elizabeth Hartman-Diegel
In Memory of Joan Bonfield
The Staff of the Brant Museum
& Archives

Happenings

Brant Museum & Archives

Exhibits

"Brant County's 150th," April 15 to July 5, 2002.

"Brantford Police Service: 125th Anniversary," July 22 to Oct. 11 (Gala Opening July 27, 2 p.m.)

Volunteers

We are always looking for volunteers to do general tasks around the museum. If you would like to volunteer some of your time, contact the museum at (519) 752-2483 or (519) 752-8578, and it would be appreciated.

Curator's Corner

Well, we're getting back into the swing of things after being closed for a week due to renovations. I would like to thank Bill Leask and the County of Brant for completing some much needed repairs around the museum. The flat roofs at the front and back of the museum have been fixed. We have also had our floors refinished by Pike & Son. The inlay pattern has really been accentuated and it looks great! You'll have to come in and check it out.

I would like to thank two foundations for supporting the society and the museum in some of their recent projects. Last year the Brant Community Foundation gave the museum \$5,000 for the Settlement Gallery. We are planning to reorganize the First Nations Gallery into a display that tells the settlement story of Brantford and Brant County from approximately 1650 to 1850. The first phase has been completed and we are now looking for funds to complete the interactive components. This exhibit space promises to be a fun and exciting addition to the museum.

In the past year we have partnered with both the Brantford Police Service and the County of Brant in order to obtain Ontario Trillium Foundation funds for the publication of two history books. The Police book is now available at the gift shop and we are expecting the County book in time for Christmas.

Now that it is almost summer, I invite you to come in to the museum, meet our new students, and see our new look.

Stacey McKellar



Brant Historical Society

Brantford Film Group

June 10

Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner
Cineplex Odeon Brantford Mall Cinemas
6:30 p.m.

General Meeting Speakers

June 19

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner
Myrtleville House Museum
6 p.m. (volunteers), 7 p.m. (meeting)



Brantford Film Group

Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner (June 10, Cineplex Odeon Brantford Mall Cinemas, 6:30 p.m.) The Brantford Film Group is very pleased to be able to present the internationally award-winning film *Atanarjuat (The Fast Runner)*. Rick Groen observes in his review in the *Globe and Mail*:

"There are only three things you need to know about **ATANARJUAT: THE FAST RUNNER**: (1) It is a superb film; (2) It is both intriguingly exotic and uniquely Canadian; (3) Although based on an ancient myth and set on a distant shore a thousand years ago, it speaks eloquent volumes about the way we live now.

The abiding myths are like that, of course, but few movies have managed to harness their timeless power – this movie does."

Set in the Eastern Arctic in the distant past of the first millennium, and based on a legend that is part of the Inuit oral tradition, it blends the realistic look of a documentary with the dream-like feel of a fable.

The themes that unfold will be overwhelmingly familiar to the audience: patricide, brotherly enmity, scarlet women and jealous wives, murderous villains and sacred animals and the wounded hero who is exiled on a long journey, yet fated to return to cleanse the kingdom of its hatred and restore the souls of its sinners.

The film was shot on location with an Inuit cast and crew and is subtitled.

Also, please watch for information on our next season to be available by Sept. 1 and don't forget to mark your calendar for our first screening on Sept. 19.