

Cemetery News

Marjorie Stuart, Editor
marjstuart@sympatico.ca

Our readers and the general public have overwhelmingly responded to our request to sign the petition in support of Bill 149, *The Inactive Cemeteries Protection Act, 2009*. An OHS demographic survey indicates that petitions have been received from citizens residing in 231 cities, towns, villages and rural communities across Ontario. There is still a need for names on the petitions and for letters to MPPs. The petition can be downloaded and printed at www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca. Letters should also be addressed to local MPPs with copies to the Premier and Jim Brownell, sponsor of Bill 149. Summer is traditionally a time for family reunions and visiting; this is a good time to tell your family and friends about Bill 149.

Doors Open Toronto was a great success. At the John Mckenzie House we had over 910 visitors on May 23-24 many of whom viewed the OHS Cemetery Defence display and lined up to sign the petition for Bill 149.

We have good news from Peterborough! All parties have agreed to a settlement that it is not in the *public interest* to relocate part of Confederation Square Cemetery. The City of Peterborough has accepted a location and design for a memorial that will not disturb any burials and subsequently withdrew its appeal to the Licence Appeal Tribunal, avoiding expensive public hearings.

St. John's Cemetery, Port Dalhousie, celebrated its 175th anniversary in June. A piper and town crier, clergy and dignitaries in a horse drawn coach, and a parade of parishioners and well-wishers marched through the

community. Butterflies were released during the festivities.

This year, as Toronto celebrates its 175th birthday, many recall the days of the cholera epidemic. The burial location of the thousands who died of cholera in Toronto's early days still lies unmarked in the burial ground which surrounds St. James Cathedral and under the school yard adjacent to St. Paul's Church. The location of a third cemetery is unclear but is believed to have been in the area of St. Mary's Church and Portugal Square and Bathurst Street.

Congratulations are due to Everett Collrin who has worked at St. James Cemetery in Toronto as a volunteer for five years locating hidden gravestones. He estimates he has restored several thousand tombstones. He has also photographed about 6000 stones. This is an amazing labour of love.

Workers at McBurney Park in downtown Kingston, or Skeleton Park as it is known, discovered more bodies while revamping tennis courts. The cemetery was established in 1814 as a Garrison Burying Ground for soldiers but became the final resting place of an estimated 10,000 residents. Many burials lie just below the surface.

Surveys will be taken to determine the location of burials at the site of the former Infirmary in Norfolk. This burial ground was "rescued" by The Norfolk County Branch, Ontario Genealogical Society when the property was sold for redevelopment. Officials thought the burial ground was where the monuments had been reassembled in a small area. Research by the group provided many more names and burial dates which finally convinced the municipality to order a survey.

We receive many requests for assistance. Recently we had requests to locate burial grounds in Lanark, Simcoe, Leeds & Grenville, Hastings and Halton.

The Friends of Brick Street Cemetery in London are requesting information about those buried in the cemetery. The plan is to document the cemetery's history to help raise funds. A list of known burials can be found at <http://cemetery.canadagenweb.org/ON/ONB12688>. Please contact Marjorie Munroe at maplenation@sympatico.ca if you can supply information.

Our readers are reminded to watch for notices of road work. These are usually in local news-

papers and often have a proposed route and a public information centre. Please let us know if these involve known burial grounds.

Warner Cemetery held its annual meeting recently. This cemetery established in the late 1700s is still open for burials. It is managed by a volunteer board and does not receive government funding. They have a perpetual care fund but the interest does not cover the cost of cutting the grass. They sent a plea for donations with their annual report. There are many small cemeteries in the same plight. Families who gather to honour their ancestors at special reunions as well as summer visitors are reminded to make a donation to help with maintenance costs.

The Ontario Association of Cemetery Funeral Professionals held its annual charity golf day in June in support of The Unforgettables Fund. The fund was established at Sick Children's Hospital in Toronto to assist families with limited resources to provide a dignified funeral and burial for their child. In 2008, there were

117 requests for this assistance.

The Church of Our Lady Immaculate in Guelph has been undergoing extensive repairs, during which burials were discovered. These are believed to have taken place between 1832 and 1845 at St. Patrick's, the first cemetery on this site. The bodies have been re-interred at St. Joseph's Cemetery.

St. Gregory's Cemetery in Oshawa was vandalized recently. Police arrested a 12 year old and two teenagers at 3:30 a.m. in the cemetery! Damage was estimated at over \$15,000.

Mattice family descendants are searching for information relating to the family burial ground in Etobicoke. This small farm burial ground was established about 1850 in the area north of Dixon Road between Islington Avenue and Royal York Road. Records indicate it was moved circa 1953, but their final resting place is still unknown.

Please join us when I will speak at The Toll Keeper's Cottage Museum in Toronto on October 7. For more information please e-mail marjstuart@sympatico.ca

Doors Open Ontario - Cemeteries to Visit!

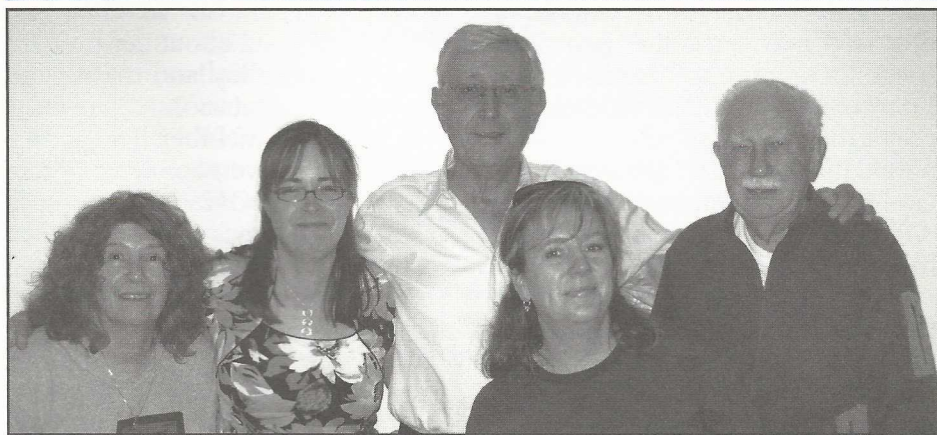
Sept 19-20 1-4 pm	Salem United Church Cemetery 19041 County Road 2, Summerstown
Sept 19-20 10 am-4 pm	Brick Street Cemetery 370 Commissioners Road West, London
Sept 19-20 10 am-4 pm	Streetsville Public Cemetery Southside Bristol Rd/Main St. between Mississauga Rd. and Queen St. S. and Creditview Rd., Mississauga
Sept 19 10 am-4pm	Friends (Quaker) Meeting House and Cemetery 17030 Yonge Street, Newmarket
Sept 19 10 am-4pm	Luesby Memorial Company Ltd 93 Main Street South, Newmarket
Sept 26 10 am-4 pm	Lloydtown Pioneer Cemetery 6600 19th Sideroad, Lloydtown
Sept 26 10 am-4 pm	Nassagaweya Presbyterian Church and Cemetery 3097 15th Side Road, RR 1, Campbellville (north of Highway 401, just east of Guelph Line)
Sept 26 10 am-4 pm	St. John's Anglican Church and Cemetery 10009 Guelph Line, RR 1, Campbellville
Oct 17-18 Sat 10-4 pm	Holy Trinity Anglican Church & Burial Ground, Chippawa 7820 Portage Road, Niagara Falls. Sun. Service 10 a.m.
Oct 17-18 Sat 10-4 pm	Old St. Thomas' Church & Churchyard 55 Walnut Street, St. Thomas

Northern Ontario Railroad Museum and Heritage Centre



The Northern Ontario Railroad Museum and Heritage Centre in Capreol proudly unveiled its newly refurbished Boxcar Home on June 16, 2009. The Museum's newest exhibit may be the only one of its type in existence today. A hardworking group of volunteers transformed an old boxcar into a replica of the many boxcar houses that still exist in Capreol and probably in many other railroad communities in Northern Ontario. Boxcars were converted into homes in Capreol to house CNR employees and their families during the earlier days of the town's development. With its period furniture and its gardens framed by railroad ties, it is a piece of history recreated and it complements the museum's rolling stock display which includes a railway school car on wheels. Please contact the Museum for more information at 705.858.5050 or normhc@vianet.ca

Photo Art Taylor



The OHS was honoured to attend and be the guest speaker at the AGM of the Unionville Historical Society in April. Congratulations to the new Board of Directors (pictured above), we look forward to working with you to help preserve Historic Unionville.

Photo Rob Levery