

# Bruce County Historical Notes



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*The Shipwreck "Africa"*

## Finding Africa in Lake Huron: The Bruce County Historical Society Annual General Meeting

Featuring dinner and a talk by documentary filmmakers Yvonne Drebert and Zach Melnick who will unveil the secrets of their recent discovery of the shipwreck Africa, off the west coast of Lake Huron's Bruce Peninsula, unseen since its disappearance in 1895.

### November 2, 2024

Doors open at 11 a.m., AGM at 12 noon,  
Dinner and speaker to follow.

**The Meeting Place (Warton Propeller Club),**  
575 Edward Street, Warton

- Ticket Cost \$30
- Purchase (and cancellation) deadline: October 25
- Email [bchsregister@gmail.com](mailto:bchsregister@gmail.com) or call 519-368-7186
- Open to all



*Yvonne Drebert and Zach Melnick*



The Bruce County  
Historical Society

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# Finding *Africa* in Lake Huron

By Robin Hilborn

Society members will recall our collaboration with husband-and-wife filmmaking team Yvonne Drebert and Zach Melnick, based at Miller Lake on the Bruce Peninsula—they made the three-hour documentary “The Bruce” in 2018. Now the duo have just released their latest film, “All Too Clear: Beneath the Surface of the Great Lakes”.

In June 2023 Yvonne and Zach discovered a 128-year-old shipwreck off the west coast of the Bruce Peninsula, in 85 meters of water. They consulted marine archeologist Scarlett Janusas and marine historian Patrick Folkes and concluded it’s likely the *Africa*, built in 1873 and lost in 1895.

They found the wreck while filming the changes in the lake wrought by invasive quagga mussels, which now encrust the entire hull of *Africa*.

The quagga mussel and its smaller cousin, the zebra mussel, are native to lakes in southern Russia and Ukraine. They arrived here when ships dumped their ballast water into the lakes and set free the invaders.

One female quagga mussel releases up to a million eggs at spawning time, though most die. Forming vast underwater colonies, the mussels feed by filtering plankton and other nutrients out of the water. This depletes the food of native species, impacting the entire food chain, from plankton to the largest fish.

The mussels have the side effect of removing suspended particles and making lake water clearer than it’s ever been.

As Zach explained, “The film talks about the tremendous ecosystem change that’s happened in the offshore waters of the Great Lakes because of quadrillions of invasive quagga mussels that almost no one sees, and which have fundamentally changed how these lakes work, resulting in huge declines in fish species.”

The two filmmakers spent over 150 days filming different freshwater locations using a cinematic remotely operated vehicle made by New Zealand’s Boxfish Robotics. Their vast archive of footage has captured the spawning, feeding, and schooling behaviours of fish in the Great Lakes, including the first known recording of

lake whitefish spawning in the wild. Yvonne and Zach partnered with Georgian Bay Mnidoo Gamii Biosphere and received funding from Georgian Bay Forever and other funders.


In June 2023, during the filming of “All Too Clear”, their underwater drone turned up a surprise. Zach explains, “We actually found quite a significant shipwreck in Lake Huron, which was a ship called the *Africa*, and it went down in 1895. Eleven people died when it went down, and it was through the process of making this movie that we found this thing — 80 to 85 metres down in the middle of Lake Huron — that really ignited a huge amount of interest in this production,” said Melnick.

How did they find the shipwreck? While working on the quagga mussel film a source at the United States Geological Survey had told them of a sighting of a mound on the otherwise flat bottom of Lake Huron, possibly a rock formation. They steered their boat to the location and pushed the camera drone into the water.

Zach piloted the drone through an attached fibre-optic cable until finally the mound came into view. His screen displayed a large wooden ship, almost perfectly intact in the crystal-clear water. Every surface of the wreck was covered in the shells of quagga mussels.

The story of the *Africa* is well told in the 1997 booklet, *Shipwrecked on the Bruce Coast: Eleven lives lost in tragic Lake Huron disaster*, by Capt. Gerry Ouder Kirk.

In October 1895 *Africa* was carrying a load of coal from Ashtabula, Ohio to Owen Sound when she encountered a gale and disappeared beneath the waves. Eleven people perished when she sank, including Capt. Hans Larsen. Nearby Larsen’s Cove was named after him and is coincidentally where Yvonne and Zach live.



**CBS News**  
Filmmakers expecting “to find a pile of rocks” in Lake Huron discover ship that vanished with its entire crew in 1895  
21 hours ago

**Owen Sound Sun Times**  
Local filmmakers discover 128-year-old shipwreck while filming documentary on invasive mussels  
3 days ago

**CBC.ca**  
Lake Huron shipwreck discovery takes documentary makers by surprise  
Yesterday

**CBC NEWS**  
A ship that sank on Lake Huron 128 years ago is found nearly intact off Ontario's Bruce...

Google News on Oct. 11, 2023.



Zach Melnick and Yvonne Drebert, co-owners of Inspired Planet Productions, directed the film “All Too Clear” and used a Boxfish underwater drone.

While the fate of the *Africa* is now known, the shipwreck discovery also meant a lot of free publicity for “All Too Clear”. It made the headlines at CBC News, CBS News and CNN.

Yvonne said, “Finding the *Africa* really helped further our main goal as filmmakers—to bring freshwater species and ecosystems into the spotlight usually reserved for ocean environments. If we want people to care about the future of the lakes, we need to show them what’s down there.”

The wreck’s location has not been revealed, to foil potential bounty hunters, but is some miles north of Lyal Island. It’s a registered marine archeological site under the *Ontario Heritage Act* and therefore protected from scavenging or looting. Anyone tampering with the site could face a fine of up to \$1 million or prison for up to a year.

Yvonne and Zach gave a talk at Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre on April 27, 2024, and shared scenes from “All Too Clear”, including underwater drone footage of the long-lost *Africa*.

The world premiere of the 90-minute theatrical version of “All Too Clear” happened Aug. 10, at the Stockey Centre in Parry Sound; it was sold out. A second showing will take place in Collingwood on Sept. 26.

The documentary will be broadcast in three parts on TVOntario starting Saturday, Oct. 26 at 7 p.m. It will also be available on TVO.org and TVO YouTube.

At our annual general meeting on Nov. 2 Yvonne and Zach will tell the whole story of their documentary and the discovery of *Africa*. (See the poster on page 1.) For details of the AGM, follow the BCHS website, [www.brucecountyhistory.on.ca](http://www.brucecountyhistory.on.ca), and Facebook page.

## Exploring the shipwreck *Arabia*

By Dani Walls, BCM&CC

Each year countless people take the *Chi-Cheemaun* across the picturesque waters where Lake Huron and Georgian Bay meet. As they take in the spectacular greenery sprinkled amongst the islands, they scarcely realize the history submerged just below them.

Just off the coast of Echo Island (located between Cove Island and Flowerpot Island) is the final resting place of the barque *Arabia*, which sank on Oct. 5, 1884. It currently boasts the title of being the Tobermory area's most intact shipwreck.

*Arabia* was launched as a three-masted barque at the shipyard of the Kingston Marine Railway Company on Apr. 26, 1853. The vessel was meant for ocean voyages but was used on Lake Ontario for the 1853 season due to local freight rates being more profitable.

Around a year later, on May 22, 1854, *Arabia* was registered at Montreal and set sail for Glasgow under the command of Captain John Godfrey. *Arabia* continued Atlantic crossings until 1855 when it began shipping mostly cereal products between Chicago and Kingston.

In 1866 *Arabia* faced her first trouble—stranded on Spectacle Reef in Lake Huron. Two years later, she was blown ashore by a gale at Port Colborne and lost her entire cargo. In 1871 *Arabia* ran aground again in Lake

Huron, causing the crew to throw the cargo overboard.

Misadventure continued to plague *Arabia*. In November 1881 the vessel had just entered trade in Georgian Bay when she ran aground at Hay Island in Colpoys Bay. The second incident occurred just a year later—*Arabia* ran aground at Flowerpot Island. Fortunately, there was minimal damage in both incidents. However fate would eventually catch up to the vessel in 1884.

On Oct. 1 *Arabia* loaded a cargo of corn in Chicago and headed for Midland, Georgian Bay. A gale struck just off the coast of the Duck Islands which ripped open her seams and water poured in. The crew managed to pump out the gradually sinking vessel for about a day while also sending distress signals.

Finally, on Oct. 5 Captain Henry Douville deemed *Arabia* too far gone and ordered the crew to board the yawl boat. After several hours adrift the crew was rescued by the steam tug *Clark*, but *Arabia* slipped beneath the waves beside Echo Island, with her cargo of 20,000 bushels of corn.

*Arabia* would sit on the bottom undisturbed for the next 87 years, with rumours of the “corn wreck” off Echo Island keeping its memory alive—fish caught in the area were found to contain corn. Then, in 1971, Captain Albert Smith of Tobermory found the wreck, with corn still in her hold, leading to a formal investigation and identification a year later.

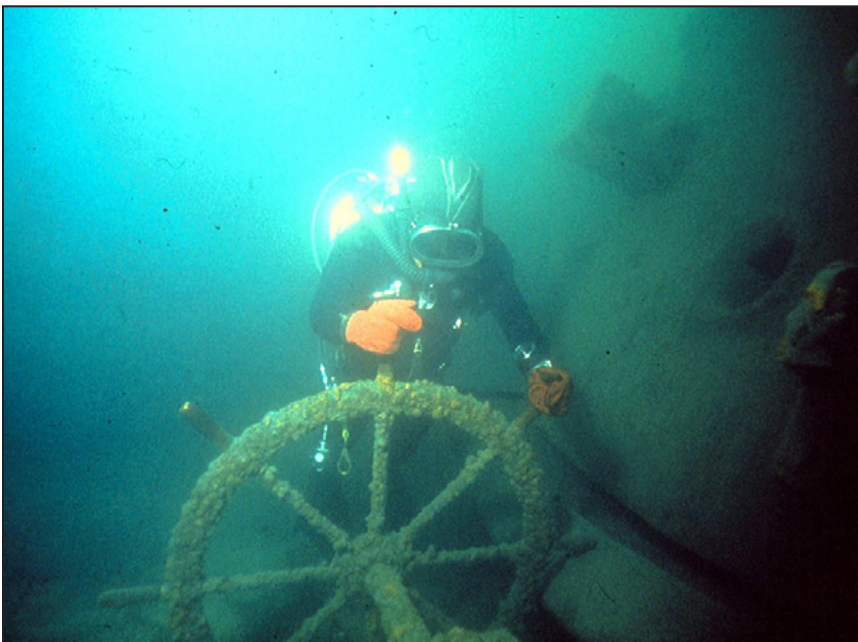
Today, *Arabia* lies within Fathom Five National Marine Park and draws divers from around the world. The shipwreck is known as one of the most difficult dive sites due to the hull sitting in 108 feet (35 metres) of cold, dark water beset with strong currents. 13 divers have died exploring *Arabia*, making it one of the most dangerous shipwrecks on the Great Lakes.

### References

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Diver at the wheel of *Arabia*. [A2021.024.405-008, Arthur Amos Collection, BCM&CC]

# Preserving the special places on the Bruce Peninsula

By Bill Stewart

Ontario's rugged Bruce Peninsula places a physical exclamation mark upon some of Canada's most spectacular and well-loved scenery. It has flora, fauna and features considered worthy of special designation.

In 1990 the Niagara Escarpment was designated a Biosphere Reserve by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Today it is one of 19 biosphere reserves in Canada and one of about 700 in the world.

Bruce Peninsula National Park and Fathom Five Marine Park comprise one of the largest protected areas in southern Ontario—156 square kilometres—and form the core of the Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve.

Over the years more and more lands on the peninsula have been recognized as special. Just recently, in April 2023, the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) announced that it had purchased the 59-acre Baptist Harbour Alvar Property on Lake Huron at the tip of the Bruce Peninsula. The Conservancy already managed 5,000 acres of land on the peninsula.

Again, in late 2023, the federal government and the NCC announced that more land would be purchased and preserved close to Bruce Peninsula National Park.

In May 2024 the Owen Sound *Sun Times* reported that the NCC had protected a 160-acre parcel of land known as Sturgeon Bay Forest, north of Wiarton.

The province of Ontario also has designated a number of areas of interest, variously called Provincial Parks, Provincial Nature Reserves or Provincial Wildlife Areas. On the east side of the peninsula you can find Cabot Head Provincial Nature Reserve, Lion's Head Nature Reserve, Hope Bay Forest Provincial Nature Reserve and the Smokey Head–White Bluff Provincial Nature Reserve. The Bruce Trail goes through each of these.

Three others are Black Creek Provincial Park on Lake Huron, Ira Lake Provincial Nature Reserve and Isaac Lake Provincial Wildlife Area.

The Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC) also continues to acquire Bruce Peninsula lands. In August 2021 it obtained the MapleCross Nature Reserve at Cape Chin, the largest single acquisition of land in BTC history,



Sign at Isaac Lake.

over 500 acres.

Again, on March 14, 2024 the BTC announced the preservation of 463 acres on the peninsula with the creation of MapleCross Nature Reserve at Hope Bay. The new reserve was thanks to a gift from the MapleCross Fund, which has supported the creation of seven BTC nature reserves.

Finally, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority has two Bruce Peninsula properties: the Spirit Rock & McNeill Estate property just north of Wiarton and the Sawmill Nordic Centre at Hepworth.

# In WWI a soldier's thoughts turned to hockey

By Deb Sturdevant, Archivist, BCM&CC

They may have been an ocean away from home, training to fight in WWI, but one sport occupied the minds of Bruce County soldiers. Hockey was what Bruce County boys, like Port Elgin's Mike Black and Bobby Stephenson, dreamt of.

The boys had joined the 160th Bruce Battalion, formed in 1915. After three months' training in London, Ont. the 160th took a troop train to Halifax and sailed for England, arriving at Liverpool on Oct. 27, 1916.

The 160th Battalion trained hard and filled leisure hours with sports ranging from informal pickup games of hockey and baseball to formal field days when Battalion teams from across the Fifth Division faced each other.

Writing in *Heroes in Waiting*, Allan Bartley told how hockey was recreated in England. "The 160th's first winter in England was a cold, miserable season when frost got in the ground and the ponds froze over. Skates had been left behind in Canada and there were no hockey sticks or pucks. With a panache born of boredom, the Canadians used tree limbs for sticks, lumps of ice for pucks, turned their hats front to back to designate competing teams and ran back and forth across the local sheets of ice playing a game as close to hockey as they could manage."

Elwood Robert "Bobby" Stephenson signed up with the 34th Battery Canadian Field Artillery in August 1915. In his Jan. 27, 1916 letter in the *Port Elgin Times*, he says he saw in the paper that hockey player Mike Black had enlisted for military service, just after his Port Elgin team won the Bowman Trophy. Bobby writes, "I wouldn't mind being in Port for a game of hockey but it's funny I hardly ever think of it. I wish I had some of the boys from old Port Elgin with me. We have all kinds of fun. I wish I had Mike Black on one of these horses. Well Mr. Sayles I think I will ring off for this time. Best regards to all the boys and good luck to them in hockey."

Melville "Mike" Gourlay Black enlisted with the 160th Battalion on Jan. 1, 1916

and was still writing of hockey over two years later, after a transfer to the 78th Battalion and the front lines. In his May 9, 1918 letter in the *Port Elgin Times* he says, "I never had a chance to play any hockey this last winter, and the hockey they play up in the front line is a lot different than what I have been used to."

The *Port Elgin Times* reported on Mike's return home in its Dec. 25, 1918 issue. "Pte. Gourlay Black, well-known as our own 'Mike' of hockey and other fames, is back from the old war, arriving home quite unawares on Tuesday night. Mike was badly squeezed in one of the Arras battles. It was this way: He and a friend were prowling around no man's land when Fritz dropped a big shell near the boys, which nearly buried the Port Elgin lad. A badly wrenched side has given Mike a long holiday and likely to give him some more. 'Things look good to me here,' said Mike to the *Times*, 'and while I would not have missed the experience for the world, I am glad to be back.'"

For more on the connection between sport and military service, see the exhibit "Play Hard, Fight Hard: Sport in the Canadian military" at the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre, Sept. 16–Nov. 30, 2024.



Port Elgin hockey team with Bowman Trophy. Top, l-r, Dr. Powers, A.E. Nelson, R. Stephenson, J. Morton, B. Munro; middle, R. Thompson, J. Stanton, C. Currier, F. Howe; front, Mike Black, Shee Lee, P. Hendry. [A2008.004.005, Samuel H. Langford, BCM&CC]

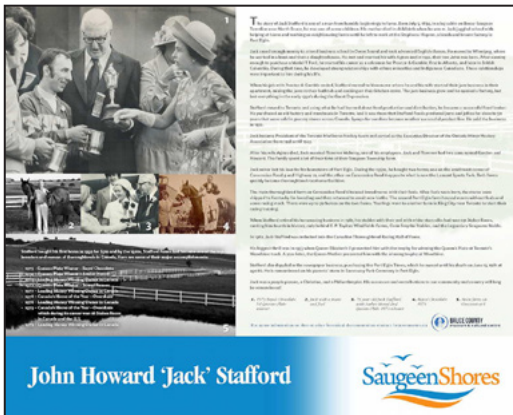
# Plaque recalls Jack Stafford of Stafford Farms

By Bill Streeter

The late Jack Stafford's thoroughbred horse farm produced three Queen's Plate champions. Stafford was also known for producing famous jams and jellies.

Now Jack has his own interpretive plaque, "John Howard 'Jack' Stafford", the first one in Saugeen Shores dedicated to an individual.

The latest addition to the roster of historical plaques was unveiled Aug. 11, 2024 at Lakeview Park in Port Elgin. Present were Jack Stafford's favourite jockey, Robin Platts, and Stafford Farm manager Jim Thompson.



Jack Stafford was born July 5, 1906 in a log cabin on Saugeen-Bruce Township Line near North Bruce. He had to leave school early as his mother died in childbirth, leaving seven children, he

being the oldest at 12. He worked for farm neighbours and as a teenager went to work at the Stevens-Hepner brush factory in Port Elgin.

Jack moved to Winnipeg, where he worked in a bank and then a slaughterhouse. Earning enough to buy a Model T Ford, he started his career as a salesman for Proctor & Gamble, first in Alberta, then in British Columbia.

In Vancouver he met and married his wife Agnes. He left P&G and got into the jam business—he and Agnes started mixing jam in their apartment bathtub and cooking it on the stove.

Stafford then moved to Toronto, where an old factory became home to Stafford Foods, maker of jams and jellies that were sold in grocery stores across Canada for close to 50 years.

His food products empire allowed him to launch into thoroughbred horse racing. In 1950 he established a thoroughbred racehorse facility near his hometown, Port Elgin.

He bought two farms, one on the southwest corner of Saugeen Concession Road 4 and Highway 21 and the other on Concession Road 6 opposite what is now the Lamont Sports Park.

The main thoroughbred farm on Concession

Road 6 housed broodmares with their foals. After foals were born the mares were shipped to Kentucky for breeding and then returned to await new births.

The second Port Elgin farm housed mares without foals, and some racing stock. There were up to 70 horses on the two farms. Yearlings started their racing training at another farm in King Township north of Toronto.

Jack Stafford bought his first horse in 1950 for \$310 and by the 1970s had become one of the top breeders and owners of thoroughbreds in Canada. He sold Stafford Foods in 1972 and spent the rest of his life racing horses.

His biggest thrill was in 1973 when Queen Elizabeth presented him at Toronto's Woodbine Racetrack with the trophy for winning the Queen's Plate, Canada's oldest thoroughbred horse race. A year later, the Queen Mother presented him with the winning trophy at Woodbine.

Stafford Farms won the Queen's Plate three times, with Royal Chocolate (1973), Amber Herod (1974) and Sound Reason (1977).

When Stafford retired from racing in 1981 horses from his stable, with the red and white silks with red stars, had won 131 stakes races, ranking him fourth in history, behind E.P. Taylor's Windfields Farm, Conn Smythe Stables and Seagram Stables.

Stafford also dabbled in the newspaper business. He owned the *Port Elgin Times* until his death on June 15, 1981. He is remembered on his parents' stone in Sanctuary Park Cemetery in Port Elgin.

In 1982 Stafford was inducted into the Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame; jockey Robin Platts joined him there in 1997.



1973 Queen's Plate: Queen Elizabeth with Jack Stafford and jockey Ted Colangelo.

# The story of Indian day schools

More than 699 Indian Day Schools were established and operated by the Canadian government since the 1920s, with an estimated over 200,000 Indigenous children attending these federally operated institutions. Seven of these schools were located in Bruce County: four at Cape Croker (Sydney Bay, Little Port Elgin, St. Mary's Junior and St. Mary's Senior School) and three in Saugeen (French Bay, Saugeen Village and Scotch Settlement).

Indian Day Schools is a lesser-known subject among everyday Canadians who may be familiar with the Residential Schools System. What is certain and can be attested to by many Survivors of Indian Day Schools is that the trauma experienced was just as severe as what has been reported in Residential Schools, with the only

difference being that the Day School students went home at night.

Many of the Day School administrators, priests and nuns continued to run the Day Schools as soon as they transferred from their positions at Residential Schools, so it was extremely painful and triggering to find out that they would continue to experience abuse even if the parent saw the children at night.

BCM&CC in partnership with the Legacy of Hope Foundation, Saugeen First Nation and Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation are pleased to bring this exhibition and local perspective to the region.

For more, see the "Indian Day Schools: The National and Local Story" exhibit at the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre, Sept. 16–Nov. 30, 2024.



*Marching into Chesley, June 3, 1916 [A2009.202.024, BCM&CC]*

## “Name a highway to honour a 16-mile march”

*By Robin Hilborn*

On May 16, 2024 local historian Bill Streeter asked Bruce County Council to recognize Bruce Road 19 as the “Highway of Peace”, in memory of those in the 160th Battalion who marched the 16 miles between Walkerton and Chesley, and back, 108 years ago. The Executive of BCHS has endorsed this initiative.

The 160th Bruce Battalion was formed in late 1915. On June 3, 1916 the entire battalion, some 1,260 men, marched from Walkerton to Chesley along Bruce Road 19 to receive its regimental colours from Ontario Premier William Hurst, who was born in Tara. They marched back to Walkerton on June 5.

After three months’ training in London, Ont. the

160th took a troop train to Halifax and sailed for Britain, arriving at Liverpool on Oct. 27. It was still training in England when in February 1918 the men were dispersed into four different battalions and no longer existed as a separate Bruce County unit.

Bill concluded his presentation to council: “County Road 19 is a perfect spot to recognize the role of these men who brought the county together like nothing else before or since. It was on that road where they all marched together in 1916. I suggest that the county recognize Bruce Road 19 as our ‘Highway of Peace.’”



*BCHS President Dorne Fitzsimmons with a button made by a visitor to the Society’s exhibit at the Bruce County Heritage Farm and Steam Show, Aug. 17, 2024, at Paisley. [Robin Hilborn]*



# Wireless station in danger of defacement

By Robin Hilborn

At Local Authors Night on Aug. 12, 2024 we learned of a recent development at Trails End Lodge in Tobermory.

Talking about her book *The Tobermory Wireless Station*, archaeologist **Scarlett Janusas** mentioned that Sharon and Scott Amos sold the lodge in 2023 and the new owner plans to modify the exterior and interior.

The former wireless station has no historical designation, Scarlett said, so new owner Brent Robins of Tobermory is free to implement his renovation plan. She said he will keep the bones of the place but put in 12 rooms with bathrooms. This will substantially change the interior of what used to be a semi-detached building shared by the two wireless operators and their families.

Mr. Robins would keep three sides of the building, though with new composite siding to look like the original wood. However the most architecturally significant side, that facing the water, would be replaced with a wall of windows.

This is Tobermory's and Ontario's last wireless station which retains most of its original interior and exterior features. The proposed changes would be a real loss of historic architecture.

For more about the Tobermory wireless station, see the April 2024 issue of *Bruce County Historical Notes*.

You can buy Scarlett's book at Readers Haven ([readershaven.ca](http://readershaven.ca)) in Tobermory. Proceeds go to the Marine Heritage Trust Fund of the Ontario Marine Heritage Committee.

A second local author, **David Pyper**, introduced his book, *Sun, Sand and Surf: A history of Sauble Beach*, to a rapt audience in the theatre at the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre.

Sauble Beach is one of Ontario's most loved summer destinations, with a unique and fascinating history. David covered it all, from its origin after the last ice age, growth as a popular beach resort, up to recent land claims settlements in the courts.

David has included the voices of years of cottagers, because he got personal stories of life at the beach from dozens of local residents, running from 1900 right up to

the 21st century. Each chapter of recollections covers a decade and includes much information on the south end of Sauble Beach not published elsewhere.

Among the resources which David used is the *Sauble Signpost*, a newspaper started by Anne Rolfe and published weekly, but only in July and August, from 1958 to 1978. It was followed by the *Sauble Bulletin*, a weekly from December 1980 to about 2004.

David Pyper also mentioned author and Saugeen First Nation member Bimadoshka Pucan. In 2011 she discovered old audio recordings of SFN people at Museum London, on 19 wax cylinders and aluminum discs. In 1938 Londoner Dr. Edwin Seaborn recorded Anishinaabeg stories and songs by Anishinaabe elders Robert and Elizabeth Thompson, of Chief's Point Reserve #28. They're the oldest known audio recordings of the Anishinaabeg in Ontario. The exhibit "Voices of Chief's Point", by Pucan and Museum London, was presented at the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre from September to December 2019.

*Sun, Sand and Surf* is available at Berford Street Bookstore in Wiarton or from the author, [sandyshore@saublehistory.ca](mailto:sandyshore@saublehistory.ca).

Also speaking was **Dr. John Carter**, who related his experience as guest editor of the Autumn 2023 *Ontario History*, about the Upper Canada Rebellion of 1838. For more, see the April 2024 issue of *Bruce County Historical Notes*.



David Pyper, Scarlett Janusas, Dr. John Carter. [Robin Hilborn]

# NEWS BRIEFS

**IPM needs volunteers**—The International Plowing Match has put out its first call for volunteers for the Sept. 22–26, 2026 event at Lang Farms in Walkerton. Around 1,500 volunteers are needed for this 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the IPM. It will be the fourth time it has been held in Bruce County.

**Music Hall of Fame finds a home**—After losing everything in a fire at their Hepworth HQ (see *Historical Notes*, April 2024), the Bruce Grey Music Hall of Fame held a grand opening on June 23, 2024 at its new home, the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 6, in Owen Sound.

**OHS executive director**—The executive director of the Ontario Historical Society, **Daniel Dishaw**, joined the May 4, 2024 executive meeting by video link. With BCHS directors he discussed selling BCHS books at the OHS web site and the problem which historical societies have with increasing insurance costs. Since it lacks space to store more physical documents, OHS is digitizing its library.

**All play in Cargill**—A summer exhibit at **Kevin McKague's** Cargill Museum featured the history of that Canadian invention, crokinole, and showed antique crokinole boards. Eckhardt Wettlaufer of Perth County, Ont. made the earliest known board in 1876. Every June, Tavistock, Ont. hosts the World Crokinole Championship.

**No grant for barn museum**—With support from BCHS, **Kevin McKague** of the Friends of Historic Cargill applied for a federal grant for the creation of an Ontario Barn Museum (see *Historical Notes*, April 2024). He did not get the grant.

**A tunnel at Point Clark**—There was supposedly a tunnel between Point Clark Lighthouse and the basement of the lightkeeper's house, where barrels of oil for the light were stored. This unconfirmed tunnel was reported in the Spring/Summer 2024 edition of *The Lightkeeper*, newsletter of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society ([www.nslps.com](http://www.nslps.com)).

**2024 bus trip**—The Society's bus tour set for the Tobermory area on June 5, 2024 was cancelled. Registrations did not reach the minimum of 33 participants needed.

**Rusk video**—**Robin Hilborn** launched his 50-minute video on how Mary MacKay restored Rusk Cemetery near Paisley. The Bruce County Genealogical Society event was held at the Treasure Chest Museum, Paisley on July 27. View the video at [youtu.be/3MrgGwLZmyg](https://youtu.be/3MrgGwLZmyg).

**Historical plaques**—In April 2024 the consultants for the Saugeen Shores Cultural Heritage Master Plan asked for contributions from the Society. **Robin Hilborn** sent a report, "A Survey of Historic Plaques and Sites in Saugeen Shores".

He found that in the town there were 34 free-standing interpretive plaques with photos and text, eight bronze plaques on designated buildings and 115 wood plaques on houses. In July Robin published the second edition of his guide to historic buildings in Southampton (see "Book news") and included photos of all the interpretive plaques in Southampton.

**Time capsule**—A time capsule was sealed at the Saugeen Shores 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration on Aug. 11, 2024 and will be placed in the Aquatic and Wellness Centre when it is built. To be opened in 25 years, it contains digital items (photos, a poem, a song, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary documents) and physical items ranging from a Sloan poster, Cruisers Cruise Nite T-Shirt and Chambettes recipe book, to a CD, a booklet, a newspaper and a town flag. A contents list is available.

## BOOK NEWS

**Ferry book**—The Ginger Press in Owen Sound has just published *The Jewel of Georgian Bay: Celebrating 50 Years of the Chi-Cheemaun*, by Richard J. Thomas. The book chronicles the building and operation of the "Big Canoe", which has sailed between Tobermory and South Baymouth since 1974.

**McKague business histories**—On July 5 **Kevin McKague** launched all 26 of his books on the historical businesses of Bruce County towns (see *Historical Notes*, April 2024)—a great resource for historians and people with family business connections in Bruce County in the late 1800s and early 1900s. His Bruce County Bookstore in Cargill stocks many Bruce County local histories, including books from BCHS. Readers can buy books on [Amazon.ca](http://Amazon.ca) by searching for their town plus the words "business history".

**Southampton guide book**—**Robin Hilborn**, editor of *Historical Notes*, published the second edition of *Hilborn's Guide to Old Southampton* in July, with 180 historic buildings and photos of 32 historical plaques. He donated a copy to the Saugeen Shores 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary time capsule.

**Book price rise**—Some BCHS book prices have risen: *The Queen's Bush*, to \$25 from \$20  
*Experiences of a Backwoods Preacher*, to \$25 from \$20  
*Pioneer Days at Guelph and Bruce*, to \$20 from \$16  
*Plaques and Cairns of Bruce County*, to \$20 from \$16

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**ERRATUM**—The April 2024 edition of *Bruce County Historical Notes* misidentified the Area Director for Southwestern Bruce County (Municipality of Huron-Kinloss). The new director is Grant Collins.

# COMING EVENTS

## Bruce County Historical Society

[brucecountyhistory.on.ca](http://brucecountyhistory.on.ca)

Register for BCHS events at [bchsregister@gmail.com](mailto:bchsregister@gmail.com)

**Nov. 2, 2024. Annual General Meeting.** Noon. The Meeting Place (Warton Propeller Club). "Finding Africa in Lake Huron", with guests **Yvonne Drebert** and **Zach Melnick** speaking on how they found the shipwreck *Africa* intact on the bottom of the lake, the first time it has been seen since 1895. Dinner. Tickets \$30; please buy your tickets by Oct. 25, 2024. Email [bchsregister@gmail.com](mailto:bchsregister@gmail.com) or call 519-368-7186. Open to all. (Details will appear at the BCHS website, [brucecountyhistory.on.ca](http://brucecountyhistory.on.ca), and Facebook page.)

## Bruce County Genealogical Society

[brucecountygenealogicalsociety.ca](http://brucecountygenealogicalsociety.ca),

[bcswebinars@gmail.com](mailto:bcswebinars@gmail.com) and Facebook

**Sept. 17–Oct. 29, 2024. Workshop on Family History.** Seven-week workshop, Tuesdays, from 7-9 pm. Held at Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre. Course fee, \$75 per person. Members of BCGS and special guests will cover: How to start your family history; Where to find records: home, archives, family history centres, online; Organizing your materials; DNA Testing; How to find military and land records; Preserving family records and photos; Publishing your genealogy; Organizing a family reunion

**Oct. 7, 2024. Virtual Record Treasury of Ireland (VRTI).** 7–8 p.m. Webinar via Zoom. Dr. Brian Gurrin, census specialist on the VRTI project, speaks on Irish census records, the destruction of the Public Records Office and how VRTI is trying to reconstruct lost records. Free. To register, email [BCGSWebinars@gmail.com](mailto:BCGSWebinars@gmail.com) or go to [us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_SB45RIULRb-JlK4zu6OC2A](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_SB45RIULRb-JlK4zu6OC2A).

## Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre

[brucemuseum.ca](http://brucemuseum.ca)

**Sept. 16–Nov. 30, 2024. Indian Day Schools:** The National and Local Story. Exhibit presented in partnership with the Legacy of Hope Foundation, Saugeen First Nation and Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation. Visit the Exhibit page at [brucemuseum.ca](http://brucemuseum.ca) to learn about, and register for, free "Community Conversations" sessions within this exhibit.

**Sept. 16–Nov. 30, 2024. Play Hard, Fight Hard:** Sport in the Canadian Military. Exhibit highlighting the relationship between sport and military service dating back to the First World War. Fourteen sports played within the military and by military teams and athletes are represented, including a section on the Soldier On Program, the origins of the Paralympic Games, and the Invictus Games. Other notable features include personal stories from individuals like Mark Fuchko who persevered to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro following an explosion while serving in Afghanistan and losing both legs. Local Bruce County stories focus on the theme of Sports = Survival on the Battlefield and the role sport played while Bruce County soldiers were overseas. Produced by Canada's Sports Hall of Fame and The Military Museum (Calgary). Presented by Veterans Affairs Canada.

**Oct. 24, 2024. An Evening with Dr. Brian Goldman.** 7 p.m. UNIFOR Family Education Centre, Port Elgin. Author and radio personality Dr. Goldman hosts the CBC radio show "White Coat, Black Art". He provides a filter-free look inside the medical world and makes complex issues digestible for audiences. Book signing. Tickets \$75. Proceeds will support the archives expansion project.

**Nov. 2, 2024. Honouring D-Day:** Uniforms, Weapons, and Equipment Show. 11 a.m.–3 p.m. 80th anniversary of D-Day. \$5 members, \$10 non-members.

### Application for BCHS Membership

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Type: Annual - \$20 Life - \$500

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ I would also like to make a donation of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Complete form, select type of membership and make cheque payable to "Bruce County Historical Society".

Mail to: Joyce Osborne, Membership Director, Box 298, Ripley, ON N0G 2R0

As a member, you contribute to the preservation of Bruce County heritage. See [brucecountyhistory.on.ca](http://brucecountyhistory.on.ca) for more information on the Society's goals and mandate, and the benefits of membership.

*Changes to Constitution and Bylaw*  
**Your approval is needed**

Due to changes to the Ontario *Not-For-Profit Corporations Act*, the Society is required to update our Constitution and Bylaw.

These changes will need the approval of the membership. As such the Board of Directors will present these changes to the membership at our AGM on Nov. 2, 2024 in Wiarton ON.

We will ensure that these changes are identified to the membership by posting the new Constitution and Bylaw on our website ([www.brucecountyhistory.on.ca](http://www.brucecountyhistory.on.ca)) and on our Facebook page.

If you will be unable to attend the AGM please submit your concerns to us by email to [bchs1957@gmail.com](mailto:bchs1957@gmail.com) for our consideration.

## Membership renewal

**A friendly reminder to check your membership status on the address label on this newsletter. If you see (2024) on the label, it's time to renew.**

- Annual Memberships: \$20 each
- Life Memberships: \$500 each

Please join or renew by submitting your membership fees or questions to:

• Joyce Osborne, Membership Secretary, Box 298, Ripley ON N0G 2R0

• Email: [janlea@hurontel.on.ca](mailto:janlea@hurontel.on.ca)

• Payment can also be made by e-transfer to [bchs1957@gmail.com](mailto:bchs1957@gmail.com)

For memberships mailed to the U.S., please pay in U.S. funds.

If possible, please submit your renewal by the AGM (Nov. 2, 2024) so that your Yearbook can be mailed early in November.

## Contribute to the BCHS Yearbook

Editor Bill Stewart is accepting articles for publication in our annual BCHS *Yearbook*. Write from your own experience, or rely on research or other sources.

Send your contribution to Bill at [willstew@bmts.com](mailto:willstew@bmts.com). Bill accepts articles year-round.

## Full-colour newsletters available by e-mail

To receive a PDF copy of BCHS newsletters, and enjoy colour images, contact President Dorne Fitzsimmons at [dcf@bmts.com](mailto:dcf@bmts.com)



## Bruce County Historical Society

33A Victoria St. N.

Southampton, ON N0H 2L0

[www.brucecountyhistory.on.ca](http://www.brucecountyhistory.on.ca)



*Annual membership in the Bruce County Historical Society is \$20*