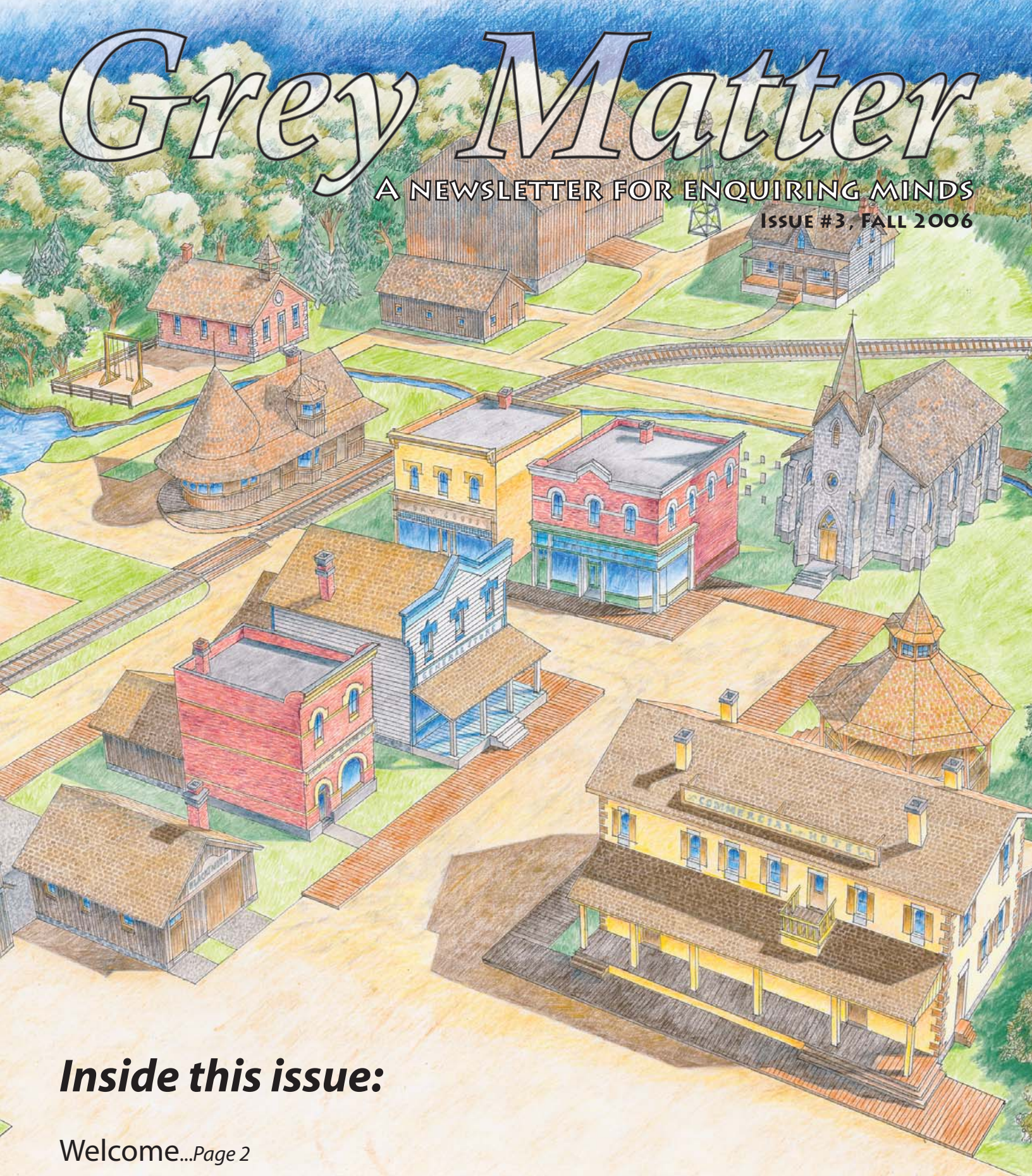


# Grey Matter

A NEWSLETTER FOR ENQUIRING MINDS

ISSUE #3, FALL 2006



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**GREY ROOTS**  
MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

# WELCOME to FALL 2006



Submitted by Brian Manser, Manager of Grey Root Museum and Archives

**A**las, summer has come and gone, and what a beautiful summer it was. This has been an exciting year at Grey Roots. We have experienced growth in all areas: visitation, program participation, memberships, and volunteer hours! Thanks to everyone for the great support!

October is gearing up to be a busy month, not only do we have our annual Haunted Heritage Walk, we are also one of the hosts of the annual Ontario Museum Association conference. The conference is being held in Owen Sound with the opening reception here at Grey Roots. Employees, students, and volunteers flock in droves to the conference which is held in a different locale every year. It is a great opportunity for museums across Ontario to get together, network, and share exciting new ideas. This year's theme is Engagement & Advocacy – Connect, Communicate, and Collaborate.

As you can see by our front cover we are very happy to display the new artistic rendering of our Period Village by Bob Greenburg. With this edition of the newsletter we are extremely pleased to announce that all of the period buildings now call Grey Roots home. In less than one year we have seen all seven buildings moved to their final location. The Bluewater Garage was moved in November. The Log cabin and the Log House followed in March. The Farmhouse and Sawmill were close behind in June. And the final piece, the Barn, was raised on site by a group of Mennonites from the Mount Forest area in August. The next activ-

ity, after the foundations are complete, is to have the utilities installed and the top soil dispersed and seeded before year end. The Grey Unit of the Retired Teachers of Ontario is also continuing their diligent fundraising to have a Schoolhouse built on site.

This fall we are excited about our new exhibits: Going Out in Style, Home on the Range: The Story of the Meaford Tank Range, L'Chaim – To Life: The Story of the Beth Ezekiel Synagogue, a Grey Roots Christmas and Sitting Pretty: A History of the Toilet. Since our official opening in June 2004, we have created 15 in-house exhibits, and hosted 13 travelling exhibits from all over Canada. Wow! That's a lot of work by staff and volunteers; great job!

I would also like to take this opportunity to announce Lara Javalyn as our new Community Relations Coordinator at Grey Roots Museum & Archives. Lara joins us with over 10 years experience in marketing communications with a focus on graphic and web design, brand management, and coordinating large scale marketing projects. Lara has lived in the Toronto area for the last number of years and now resides in Owen Sound. Please join me in welcoming Lara to the County!

Thank you to all of our volunteers and members; you are what make Grey Roots a true community Museum & Archives!

## EXHIBITS

### **Going Out in Style**

Until November 13, 2006

### **Home on the Range: The Story of the Meaford Tank Range**

November 4, 2006 to May 20, 2007

### **From Slavery to Freedom: African Canadians in Grey County**

Until November 19, 2006

### **L'Chaim - To Life: The Story of the Beth Ezekiel Synagogue**

November 26, 2006 to February 4, 2008

### **A Grey Roots Christmas**

November 18, 2006 to January 14, 2007

## EVENTS

### **A Shot in the Dark – Our annual Ghost Walk**

October 27 and 28, 2006

### **A Grey Roots Christmas**

December 9, 2006

### **Teacher Workshops: Mining Matters**

November 21, 2006 Deeper and Deeper, Grade 4 level

November 22, 2006 Mining Matters II: The Earth's Crust

November 23, 2006 Discovering Diamonds

### **PD Day Adventures**

December 1, 2006

# THANK YOU!

Submitted by Lisa Plante, Heritage Interpreter



Who says youth aren't engaged in the museum community? Here at Grey Roots we have been incredibly fortunate to have a strong, committed core of Junior Interpreters which is growing all of the time! With their help our children's programs have been able to grow. They have succeeded as we all dreamed they would. Case in point is our Grey Roots Summer KidsCamp program. Our compliment of Junior Interpreters rose to above thirty by the end of this summer season. Most of these students were an integral part of running our KidsCamp program. In total they gave us over 1700 hours of their vacations; some gave a single day while others gave entire weeks and more! Their tasks began the week before camp started and ended with the close of the camp seven weeks later.

To all of you wonderful Junior Interpreters – "THANK YOU A THOUSAND TIMES – WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU!!!"

Our adult volunteers have been working incredibly hard all summer. We have relied



heavily on them to help us with many aspects of our upcoming exhibit, "Home on the Range: The Meaford Tank Range Story". A small group have dedicated so much of their valuable time to ensure that the story we tell in this

exhibit is thoroughly researched and gives a balanced view of the events and arguments that occurred in St. Vincent Township in 1942. They have done personal interviews, collected oral histories, facilitated the borrowing of family and military artifacts, researched print and pictorial information and done transcriptions for us.

To all of you who have participated in this important project – WE ARE IN AWE OF YOUR COMMITMENT AND DEDICATION – THANK YOU!!!

Many others of our adult volunteers have helped out in their own way on smaller projects and day to day tasks. Your help makes things run more smoothly every day at Grey Roots. THANK YOU!

For those of you looking for more opportunities to help us at Grey Roots there is always something we could use help with. Some of these activities include:

- Sewing children's costumes so that our upcoming Pioneer program will allow school children to dress in period costume before they visit the Log Cabin.
- Preparing mail outs of invitations to events and newsletters
- Helping with School Programming, especially for our Christmas Storybook program from November 27 to December 23

If you are interested in these or any other volunteer opportunities please contact Lisa at 376-3690, ext. 128



# Membership has its Rewards!

Submitted by Lisa Plante, Heritage Interpreter

Those of you who attended our Mardi Gras Event to honour our Members and Volunteers know what a great evening it was! For those of you who were unable to make it – “Oh what a night it really was!” The stage was set, the lights were dimmed and the party was on. Grey Roots’ Foyer Gallery was transformed into a New Orleans street scene. The lobby, too, gained an air of the street with lamps lighting the dance floor. The jazz sounds of the local band “Razzmatazz” added to the feeling of the “Old Quarter”. Cajun style foods such as corn bread, crab cakes, and shrimp roumalade sated the appetite while the cool fruity tastes from the blender bar cooled the fire. It was the little touches added by event planner Rebekkah

Adams of CML that really added to the fun. How often does one get to walk the red carpet while being entertained by jugglers and mimes? Boas and beads maybe should become part of our everyday wear?! And flower tattoos really do go with anything!

We have been fortunate to have our Membership list grow significantly over the past year. Thank you to all of you who believe in us and the service we are providing to the community. Your ongoing support through membership and attendance at special events is wonderful. We hope to see you often; our doors are always open to you!

## THE Tourism REPORT

Submitted by Bryan Plumsted, Tourism

The autumn season is a busy one for Tourism. Laura Thompson has joined the Tourism Team on a co-op from Westhill Secondary School and is helping with media relations. Heather Molnar will be staying with us attending fall festivals and events in the Tourism Vehicle, assisting at trade shows and adding to our website.

The Grey’t Experience Contest is drawing to a close on October 31, 2006. The final draw will be made November 7, 2006 by County Council and broadcast live from the Theatre at Grey Roots on [www.visitgrey.ca](http://www.visitgrey.ca). The Lucky Winners will also be announced LIVE on the Mix 106.5.

Be sure to check out [www.visitgrey.ca](http://www.visitgrey.ca), for the NEW Fall Look and Feel. Send an electronic post card to your friends and relatives so they may share in our area’s autumn splendor.

Motorcycle touring is a growing phenomenon for both Grey Bruce riders as well as visitors to our area and is the focus of a “ride grey bruce” marketing campaign. Targeting the 50-somethings, who are turning to 2 wheeled cruisers in droves



and love the scenic and twisty backroads of Grey Bruce, the campaign involved consumer trade shows, feature magazine articles, a touring map and a website. The campaign was nominated for the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation’s Tourism Awards, and has been short-listed. The award winners will be announced during the OTMPC Marketing Summit at Blue Mountain, Oct. 18.

This years Annual Fall Tourism Conference is being held on October 25, 2006 at the Bayshore in Owen Sound, “Rural and Relevant, Growing the Tourism Economy” is the event title, with a focus on agriculture and culinary tourism and economic development. This years Keynote Speaker joins us from Nova Scotia and comes highly recommended.

As this issue goes to press, Jay & Amanda are off on an Adriatic Honeymoon. Sretan put! (Happy Journey)

Enjoy the Harvest FUN this season, Experience Grey County! Come visit us at Grey Roots and pick up your FREE copy of the Grey Bruce Map.



# GREY ROOTS KIDSCAMP 2006

Submitted by Lisa Plante, Heritage Interpreter

## Fun, Fabulous and FULL!

That's right, FULL! Grey Roots KidsCamp was a resounding success this summer. For six weeks the sounds of children playing and learning filled our building. We sold out and had others waiting in line. What a wonderful endorsement for the program and the staff that run it! Summer KidsCamp Coordinator Sarah Clark had her hands full and I think she was really looking forward to returning to University to have a well deserved rest. Great work Sarah! With the assistance of a grant we were able to hire Christine Bouffard, a French student from Quebec, learning English, to assist Sarah. Christine – merci beaucoup pour tous! With an average of

20 children per day, many of them under the age of eight, we had a busy summer. Having the aid of all of our Junior Volunteers made the program possible. Dinosaurs have such a fascination for the children and our visiting exhibit "Dinosaurs & Company" was a huge draw. We learned as much from the children about dinosaurs as they learned from us I'm sure!

Already we're planning for next year – but wait – doesn't March Break come first? Let's plan for great things then too! It's never too early to sign up for these programs to ensure they continue to thrive and succeed!





# Don't Heckle Me!

Submitted by Joan Hyslop, Museum Registrar

The amount of work involved historically in the preparation of natural fibers for hand spinning is amazing. One of the traditional tools involved in processing flax is a sharply-spiked item called a “heckle” (also known as a hackle or hetchel).

Flax plants have tough, thin “bast fibers”. These, with a lot of work and perseverance, can be separated from the “hurds” (tough woody cores) of the flax stems and provide fibers to spin and later weave into linen. Flax culture is ancient, and before paper was invented, manuscripts were often written on linen fabric. In the 19th-century, after flax crops were harvested,

on it. The coarse heckle would be used first. A bundle of bast fibers would be pulled through the spikes, starting at the top of the spikes first. Coarse short fibers, called “tow”, would come off first and were useful to spin into coarse yarns (i.e. twine or rope or for oakum). The longer fibers were the most desirable. These soft and fine fibers were spun into linen threads, that could be later woven into fine linen cloth.

Interestingly, “heckling” became a term used to describe someone’s verbal harassment of someone else during a speech or performance. This meaning apparently evolved in Dundee, Scotland in the early 19th-century.



the seed bolls were removed from the flax straw using a coarse sharp-spiked comb called a “flax ripple”. The un-needed hurds also had to be rotted to aid the separation from the “bast fibers”. This process, called “retting”, involved leaving flax bundles weighted down in a pond or on a damp field until the woody cores naturally began to break down. The flax straw then was dried and manually worked with a “flax brake” (a wooden device with a hinged arm that used pressure and vigorous pulling by the worker to further break the woody parts away from the bast fibers. The bast fibers would still have woody bits sticking to them, so the next step was to scutch (beat) the flax with a short wooden knife against a scutching board or chair back. Then the bast fibers were ready to be heckled.

There were 3 heckles used—coarse, medium and fine. Each one is basically a board that has a certain density of sharp-pointed iron spikes driven through it or mounted

on it. This town’s heckler work force had quite a reputation for being radical, and for interrupting people when they were talking.

This heckle was donated in 1962 by Mr. Justus Dierlamm, who had lived in the Neustadt area of Grey County. We do not know who owned it in the 19th-century, but assume that it may be from the 1850s (or earlier). Starting in 1864, Neustadt had a flax mill that had machinery to break and scutch, and 13 flax workers employed. This mill only broke and scutched the fibers, and sent them onwards to a mill at Conestoga. The fibers went on from there to Doon (Waterloo County), to be spun, woven and bleached. There must have been quite a demand for flax, as the Neustadt flax mill proprietors, Messrs. Perine & Hendry, were willing to give away seed to any farmers willing to grow it.



# Frost Family Story - Part 2

Submitted by Karin Foster, Archivist

John Frost had a feeling for the needs of the community and endeavoured to supply such needs. Store, stone quarry and a brick kiln in the beginning, and later he established a dairy because he thought the milk supply was not quite right!

Owen Sound grew rapidly, and in 1868, John Frost became mayor. In this capacity, he was also to perform the duties of magistrate. There was a predominance of Methodists within the new community with the inherent puritanical dictates. This gave rise to a famous trial. As a member of the Methodist Church, it was with great dismay that his cart and horse were seen drawing wood to the brick kiln on a Sunday. "John was fired out of the church forthwith and some of these zealots who were jealous of his success, laid an information" against him, and he was brought to trial."

"The court room....was crowded with local yokels. As grandfather was the magistrate, help was brought in and grandfather from the prisoner's box, indicated how to proceed. The civil case was dismissed but he was out of the church and not a Methodist anymore." Learning of this old case, the Rev. Wm. Hincks called the session together and John was reinstated.... thirty years after his death.

When John Frost decided that he wanted to build a house, he trudged from Brooke, through the forest, almost to Inglis Falls. Going to Ottawa, he bought a team of horses, and brought them to Owen Sound, by land, by water, any way he could. The stone was quarried and brought in. It took four years to build what is known as "Sheldon Place", located at 333 - 4th Avenue West, and this is a show-place, even today.

Stanley Richard Frost's uncle, John William Frost, born in 1838, was the eldest of the second generation of Frosts. He was the town solicitor, a school trustee, served on County Council, and twice mayor of Owen Sound.

John William authored "Broken Shackles - Old Man Henson from slavery to Freedom", originally published under the title "Glenelg". It is likely that young Frost listened to stories of the Black residents of the town, and it is known that the grandfather sheltered runaway Blacks on his property.

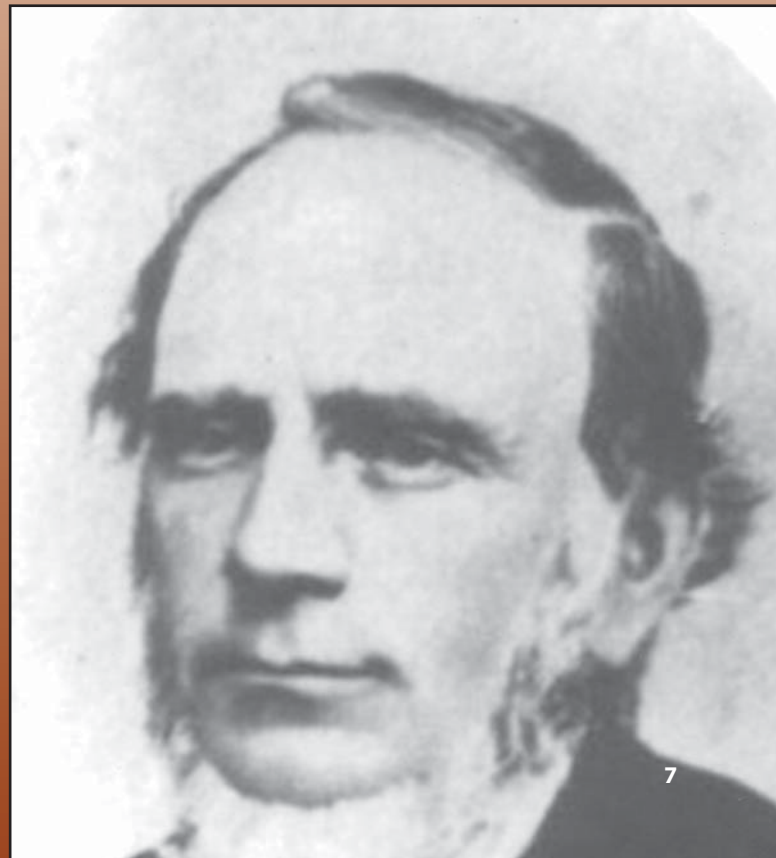
Third son of John Frost, Alfred John, father of Stanley Richard, was Crown Attorney and Local Master of the Supreme Court, as well had a family of ten children. In approximately 1890 he had constructed a large home at 313 - 2nd Avenue East, which ultimately became the Children's Aid residence.

So far as is known, Alfred John Frost built the first gasoline propelled vehicle ever in Canada. This was about 1900. The body was composed of a fancy surrey (built by Mr. Rutherford, a carriage builder), and Alfred (Fred) installed the two cylinder engine, drive, steering apparatus, etc.

In the second generation, from Stanley Richard's memoir, Mother, Jane Greene deserves a whole paragraph. Father died .... 51 years old, and mother was faced with the job of raising a large family. All through she radiated sunshine and liked to sing. Singing on Sunday mornings as she prepared breakfast in the kitchen, "Safely Through Another Week" and "He Leadeth Me. All were educated and well fed."

In the third generation of Frosts, some of the women became nurses (Minnie) and teachers (Mary, Ethel, Helen, Alberta) and librarians (Jennie, Bertha). The family became scattered - Toronto, Kingston, Claresholm, Fort William, Winnipeg, Portage La Prairie, Calgary, Plumas, Indian Head and Grand Prairie in Canada.

In the days of the first settlers in this region, opportunities were limitless in a way which is difficult to grasp today. John and Mary Frost, then their children and grandchildren, expressed their humanity and their talents freely and vigorously. They were leaders who sought the good for their town/city. They were abolitionists (of slavery) who acted on their convictions. They responded viscerally to the beautiful world of Georgian Bay. They valued education for their children and sent them out into the world as contributors. Lastly, they left us a beautiful stone house on a hill (Sheldon House) - a permanent legacy to the people of Ontario and indeed, the people of Canada.



# OUT OF THE ARCHIVES

Submitted by Amelia Ferguson, Assitant Archivist



Fall has arrived and sadly summer has ended. A huge thank you is extended to all of our faithful volunteers who have helped us by fulfilling research requests, transcribing oral histories, preparing for conferences, representing the facility at local events, indexing and labelling collections, writing articles, and more. Thank you to Donna Maine, Korleen Halbert, Nancy and Scott Seiler, Harris Kuhl, Pat Foster, and Bonna Rouse for contributing more than 250 volunteer hours over the summer. Great work!

We have now switched over to our winter hours. The Reading Room is open Monday to Friday 10:00am – 5:00pm, and Saturday 1:00pm – 5:00pm. As always, we are closed Sundays and all statutory holidays. If you haven't been to the Reading Room for a while, drop in to see over seventy photographs from our collection gracing the walls. Also, there is a small exhibit in the Reading Room foyer explaining Archives. The display includes items from our collection and rotates three times a year. We are now showing items from the William Kennedy Collection.

As mentioned in our E-Updates Newsletter, the Archives has received this year's release of Ontario Vital Statistics on microfilm. We have added the Birth Index & Registrations for 1909, Marriage Index & Registrations for 1924, and the Death Index & Registrations for 1934. Please note that we only purchase the reels that contain registrations for Grey. Not receiving E-Updates? Visit [www.greeroots.com/get-involved/sign-up/](http://www.greeroots.com/get-involved/sign-up/) to sign up.

The Archives recently participated in its first Homeschool Day. Children of various ages participated in a slightly modified version

of our regular school program Climb Your Family Tree. This program focuses on the importance of family history, genealogy, and how students can do research both at home and in the Archives. Parents and students alike enjoyed the behind the scenes tour of the Archives, and the family tree craft.

This month is also the time for the annual Bruce & Grey Branch of the Ontario Genealogy Society's Fall Event. This year's event will be held at the Durham Arena and Community Centre, on 28 October, with Ceil Wendt Jensen as keynote speaker, exploring the topic of Technology for Genealogy. All registrants of the event will enjoy free admission to the Grey County Archives from 26-27 October! You do not have to be a member of the BGOGS to participate in the event. For more information or to register email [bgogs@bmts.com](mailto:bgogs@bmts.com) or visit the Calendar of Upcoming Events portion of their website at [www.bmts.com/~bgogs/](http://www.bmts.com/~bgogs/).

Grey Roots is now part of a Past Perfect (database software) support group. The first meeting was held at the Guelph Museum earlier this month. Both the Museum and the Archives use this software to document its collections. Entry of items into this database is a necessary part of the accessioning process. From an archival point of view, we will predominantly be using it as a search tool available to the archivists, as the collections are out growing our memory! This will mean that keyword searches of the collection will expand, helping us find the hidden gems in our collection for archival researchers.

May the fall treat you well! Hope to see you in the Reading Room!



**GREY ROOTS**  
MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

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