

The York Pioneer Update

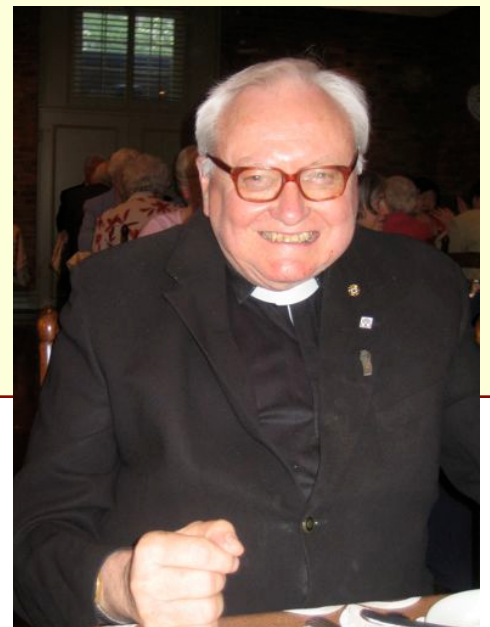


Annual Dinner

More than 30 Pioneers and friends enjoyed a delicious dinner at Campbell House; thank you to Diane Reid for organizing the dinner and for inviting her brother, guitarist

extraordinaire, to entertain us. John's music spurred on the bidders at the silent auction of history books. \$105 was raised.

John Reid (above) entertained before dinner; Father Burns (below right) blessed our event; above right, guests enjoying dinner and wine; below, Dr. Martin Cooper (with YPHS President George Duncan) before giving his enlightening talk on archeological sites of old Toronto.



Canadians at Table : Food, Fellowship and Folklore : a Culinary History of Canada, by Dorothy Duncan. Dundurn Press, 2006.

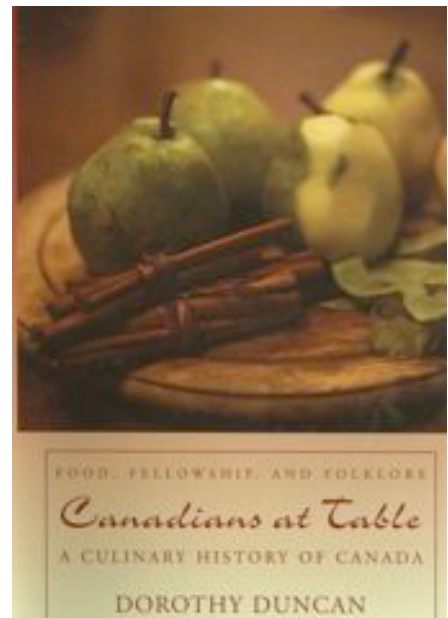
Where does a history of Canadian food begin? Dorothy Duncan commences her unique history of Canada with the first hunters who crossed the land bridge to Alaska; then follows with an account of the foods available to the First Nations as they spread across Canada. Fish, bison, maize, beans and squash provided nutritious and varied diets.

This book is not merely about food supply and eating habits, for it intertwines the social history of Canada, by province and region. Along the way we learn about the Hudson's Bay Company and how its commercial success led to the development of the Prairie provinces; and discover how the gold rush of 1898 affected British Columbia.

The emphasis, however, is on food and the role it plays in our social life, from elegant Victorian teas, to the monotonous dinners of logging camps, to down home events, like the Greenwood (Ontario) men's annual oyster supper. All of this is amplified with many contemporary excerpts, such as several first hand accounts of living conditions for Loyalists after their arrival in New Brunswick in 1783. A surveyor to Ontario's Moose River Basin takes with him beef, pork, corn and beans. A wedding tradition in York in 1820s held that whoever cut the piece of wedding cake containing a hidden nutmeg would be the next to marry. Eaton's 1909 catalogue lists dinnerware available to set an attractive table.

The recurring theme is the variety and richness of our natural food supply which has sustained Canadians for thousands of years: fruits and berries; grains; vegetables and greens; maple sap to become sugar ; wild fowl, game and fish. Thank you, Dorothy, for reminding us that we are a fortunate land.

~ Reviewed by Jeanine Avigdor



Right: our web designer Simon Cain gave the YPHS board a demonstration of our new (still under construction) website. We are slowly but surely moving to a web presence! Bear with us, it is a lot of work.

Don't forget we have a society e-mail address:
yorkpioneers@gmail.com





FIRST ANNUAL SCADDING DAY July 29

Join the Riverdale Historical Society (RHS) and the York Pioneers (YPHS) to celebrate the first annual Scadding Day on Henry Scadding's birthday (1813-1901), Sunday, July 29th.

There will be two parts to these celebrations.

In the morning, at 11 AM we will gather at 6 Trinity Square, Henry Scadding's house (by the Church of the Holy Trinity behind the Eaton

Centre). Ron Fletcher of the Riverdale Historical Society will address the group. We will see Henry's inscribed cane and the balcony from which he could view Toronto harbour.

In the afternoon, at 2 PM we will gather at John Scadding's log cabin on the grounds of the Canadian National Exhibition, between the Horticultural Building and Liberty Grand. We will have a tour guided by members of the York Pioneers, Henry Scadding being one of its founders.

Participants may attend one or both of the events - **free** to RHS and YPHS members, **\$5** to non-members. You must **register** for these events: contact Ron Fletcher (416) 461-9159 or Gerrald Whyte (416) 466-2478

- submitted by Ron Fletcher

SCADDING CABIN NEEDS YOUR HELP

Free admission to the CNE if you volunteer for three hours at Scadding Cabin greeting visitors. No experience needed to spend a pleasant afternoon by the lake.

You don't need a green thumb to work in the cabin's herb garden for just an hour or two a week during July. The work isn't strenuous. Plants will be provided. A great way to spend some time by the breezy lake!

Contact Edna Rigby at (416) 494-0503 to offer your help.

The Update is published four or more times a year; please contact Audrey Fox at (416) 656-0812 or audrey.fox@mac.com to submit ideas, pictures or stories. Receiving The Update by e-mail saves us time & money; thank you for 'subscribing' by e-mail!

REBELLION BOXES CONTINUE TO STIR INTEREST

Readers of the Sunday Star may have noticed two articles recently (March 18 and April 8) about 1837 Rebellion Prisoners' boxes - small wooden boxes carved by men imprisoned in the Toronto gaol (as jail was then commonly spelled) following the ill-fated uprising and defeat at Montgomery's Tavern.

In 2005 there was an exhibit of eighteen of these boxes, most of them belonging to the City of Toronto or on loan from area museums. Subsequently, John Carter (of the provincial Ministry of Culture) and I located 21 more boxes (and references to boxes) and created an inventory. Descriptions of each of these thirty-nine boxes was published in last year's York Pioneer. As a result of that publication - and the recent Star interest in developing a museum for this city - some eighteen additional boxes have been "found," that is, identified as having been treasured by families, purchased by collectors, held by museums, or described in publications. No one knows how many were carved - but there are almost certainly more.

Collectively, these boxes offer a very personal perspective on the ordeals - and the ideals - of those men who were so long imprisoned. Some carved their boxes as sentimental gifts to wives, sweethearts or friends. Others were moved to carve them as tributes to Samuel Lount and Peter

Matthews, "Martyrs" hanged April 12, 1838. A number of the boxes have verses testifying to religious faith in time of suffering. But a surprising number of the inscriptions are vigorous affirmations of "Liberty" and "Equal Rights" and firm assertions that tyranny will be overthrown.

If anyone knows of other prisoners' boxes, please, please get in touch with me. We plan to publish a second installment to the inventory in the York Pioneer - like the first, the privacy of individual owners will be fully respected.

**Chris Raible (6923 Side Road 12/13,
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Photo Credit: The Toronto Star

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS ISSUE, ESPECIALLY JEANINE AVIGDOR, DIANE REID, KATHARINE WILLIAMS AND CHRIS RAIBLE. THANK YOU FOR THE ARTICLES AND THE PICTURES.

YPHS MEMBER WINS AWARD

The Etobicoke Historical Society (EHS) has awarded the coveted Jean Hibbert Memorial Award to Katharine Williams. This award (established 1982) is given annually to recognize an individual or group who contributes significantly to the preservation and promotion of Etobicoke's heritage.

The late Jean Hibbert was a provincial civil servant with the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations, and a news reporter for the Toronto Star for 21 years. She was a reporter for the Lakeshore Weekly and later for the Lakeshore Advertiser-Guardian. As well as following politics, Jean was always concerned about education, local history and

heritage matters. She won numerous Toronto newspaper guild awards, and spearheaded committees promoting women in the media, which was unfamiliar territory fifty years ago. Bert Ashley, who won the Jean Hibbert Memorial Award in 2004, knew Jean Hibbert personally. He acknowledges that she was a real trail-blazer who gave a whole new meaning to the word 'journalist'.

Katharine Williams researched, wrote articles, and helped produce twenty-six EHS newsletters over the last three years. Two EHS newsletters were cited for research excellence by the Ontario Genealogical Society - Toronto Chapter: the articles on "Thomas Montgomery Papers" and "Early Municipal Etobicoke". Two years ago, Katharine nominated the York

Pioneer & Historical Society for the award; President Diane Reid accepted on behalf of the York Pioneers [see lead story of YPHS journal, 2006 - Volume 101]. Katharine is also a frequent contributor to the York Pioneer's newsletter and annual journal, as well as other genealogical and historical-society publications.

It is quite a honour to win the prestigious Jean Hibbert Award, in its 25th year of its founding. As the EHS approaches its 50th birthday, we are pleased to acknowledge Katharine's efforts with this award.

*- Gregory P Wowchuk, P Eng
President, Etobicoke Historical Society*

(Katharine is a member, and former board member, of the YPHS.)

HERITAGE SHOWCASE AT CITY HALL

On Friday April 20th, the Toronto Historical Association held a successful annual Heritage Showcase in the Rotunda of the Toronto City Hall. Eighteen groups had tables with artifact, posters, and newsletters ~ generally, each told the story of their group. Seven councilors made visits to our Showcase, however the top visitor of the day was Peggy Mooney, the new Executive Director of Heritage Toronto. She visited all the booths, asked pertinent questions and showed a keen interest. THA appreciates the City of Toronto allowing us to have our Heritage Showcase in such a great venue.

(Thanks to Diane Reid, John Marshall and Jeanine Avigdor for setting up and staffing the YPHS table.)

Sharon Temple Celebrates 175th Anniversary of Its Completion in 2007

Visit the Temple's website at www.sharontemple.ca or call (905) 478-2389 for program information.

YPHS VISITS TOLLKEEPER'S COTTAGE



June 16, several York Pioneers visited The Tollkeeper's Cottage at the corner of Bathurst and Davenport where they enjoyed refreshments and a tour.



Top: Jane Beecroft of the Community History Project explains the evolution of the tollkeeper's cottage to members of the YPHS.

Below: YPHS members listen to Jane at the cottage.

Right: the cottage in its parquette, Bathurst & Davenport.

YPHS In the News

Our society was mentioned in the media several times over the past months.

The March 31'07 *National Post* had a lovely write-up about Scadding Cabin, "Little house on the midway" by Sarah B. Hood. The Rebellion Boxes (& interviews with YPHS member Chris Raible) were featured in two long *Toronto Star* articles (March 18 & April 8). And Sharon Temple was featured twice in the *Toronto Star*, May 26 & June 6; the articles, with photos, extolled the music program and the architecture.



SCADDING CABIN OPENED MAY 12

Several Pioneers volunteered their time to open the cabin; shown are John Marshall repairing a door, Diane Reid and Brooke Jarvis unpacking artifacts.



The Scadding Cabin was also open during Doors Open Toronto. Thank you to all who volunteered their time that May weekend and during the July 1 long weekend.

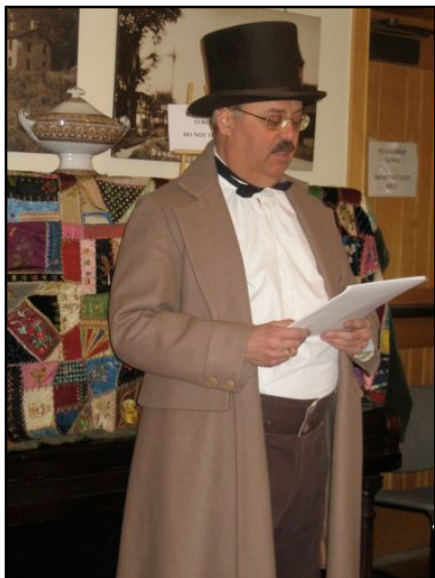
The cabin needs you: see p. 3 for a chance to volunteer.

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Barry Laver, Brian Narhi, Rochelle Gai Rodney, Ian and Elinor Mitchell (Family), Rolande Smith, John Davis (Life).

The YPHS gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Culture.

LAUNCH OF YORK PIONEER



Above: Randall Reid of Montgomery's Inn, co-editor of this year's Pioneer, entertained with his readings from the Wadsworth letters.

Below: Wadsworth family members delighted with the publication



Above: Eizabeth Page McDermott, a Wadsworth descendant, with Jeanine Avigdor, co-editor of The York Pioneer.

The launch of this year's York Pioneer was a great success, a co-operative effort between the YPHS and Montgomery's Inn.



The turnout was great, the food wonderful, the speeches entertaining. A good time was had by all!

Calendar

Sept 6: Corn roast at Montgomery's Inn, 5-8 pm. Heritage displays, music & much more. (416) 394-8113

Sept 23: Doors Open King. Volunteers needed to staff Eversley Church.

Sept 29: YPHS bus trip (see below)

YPHS BUS TRIP

**Sept 29/07
Saturday**

SAVE THE DATE!!

Diane Reid and Brooke Jarvis are again organizing a wonderful day trip, this year to Ruthven Estate (Cayuga) and Cottonwood Mansion (Selkirk) as well as other sites en route.

Cottonwood Mansion is an Italianate, 15-room, 6,000 square foot brick building built in 1870.

Ruthven Estate is a Greek Revival mansion on a 1,500-acre property. The property was held by the Thompson family for five generations.

Contact Diane Reid for more details and the final cost:

dreid@couttscrane.com

phone: (416) 483--0907