

YESTERDAY

News from the Tavistock and District Historical Society

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"BLESS THIS HOUSE"

A closer look at churches and congregations in Tavistock and Area.

**Tavistock & District
Historical Society Inc.**

Executive:

Chair – Sherrill Calder
Secretary – Mary Nicklas
Treasurer – Bob Rudy

Directors:

Paul Bartlett
Roy Erb
Bill Gladding
Bruce Halliday
Barb Matthies
Blain McCutchen
Ed Pellow
Ron Saunders

Who was the first to set foot in Tavistock?

The Tavistock and District Historical Society has put together a PowerPoint presentation in which the early history of Tavistock is outlined. Topics covered include the formation of Zorra and South Easthope Townships, the Woodstock and Huron Gravel Road, the coming of the railway, early businesses, incorporation in 1909, and Tavistock’s uniqueness.

While we were researching Tavistock’s history, it came to light that the field notes written by the original surveyor of each township are on file in the archives of the Department of Natural Resources in Peterborough. The curator of the archives very kindly sent us a copy of the notes written during Zorra Township’s first survey. She also sent us a copy of the original map. They are interesting documents.

The original survey of Zorra Township was done by Shuball Park in 1819. He and his crew (usually two assistant surveyors and eight or nine native Canadians) began the survey at the southwest corner of the township (where Zorra meets Nissouri Township). Their first task was to mark out the perimeter of the township. They walked north along the western edge of the township and then they turned and headed east, staking out the rear line or northern edge of the township as they went. That “rear line of Zorra Township” is today’s Hope Street, West and East, through Tavistock. The first person on record, therefore, to walk through Tavistock is Shuball Park.

The survey notes are descriptions of the landscape and the trees they found as they laid out the roads of Zorra Township. Included here is Park’s description of his findings as he and his crew surveyed the rear of the township from the 12th line to just past the 14th line. Of note, the land which is at present the centre of Tavistock is described in the notes as a “swale”. A swale is defined as a “wet spot with a clay base. This soil, unless well-drained, is very difficult to maintain permanent roads on because of frost boils in the spring.”

The Historical Society would be happy to show this 30-45 minute presentation to any group interested in the early history of Tavistock and district. Paul Bartlett will be showing it to the Tavistock Men’s Club at their monthly meeting in January.



*Shuball Park’s 1819
field notebook*

Tavistock & District Historical Society Inc.

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**MUSEUM
HOURS:**

*Saturdays
10am-12 noon*

*Other times
by appointment*

All Aboard at Quehl’s Atrium

If you cock your head slightly sideways you can just about hear the train whistle at the new display at Quehl’s atrium. Brian and Cindy Larson have once again kindly given space to the Tavistock & District Historical Society to showcase a key element of our history ... the railroad. Railway buffs from near and far can check out the 0-gauge model cars of the Lionel & K line, station agents’ hats, signs and the detailed model of the Tavistock station built in 1966 by the late Bob Buck, Tavistock’s last station agent. Long-time area residents and history buffs will enjoy the Lemp Studio Collection pictures of the station and surrounding area in the village. All aboard!!



MUSEUM CALENDAR:

Please mark your calendars, check your attics, scour your basements and plan to participate in the 2008 lineup.

Displays feature items related to the theme loaned by people in the community as well as artifacts from the Historical Society's permanent collection of Tavistock and area memorabilia.

January 1 – 5

Final week of "Bless This House – Our Churches"

January 12 – March 15

Tavistock – A Sports Town

March 22 – May 31

The Zimmerman Family Businesses

June 7 – June 28

Rotary – A Special Anniversary

July 5 – September 6

Hobbies and Collections – What's In Your Display Cabinets?

September 12, 13 & 14

Tavistock Fall Fair – special display

Sept. 20 – Nov. 29

Interesting Ancestors – Wanted Dead or Alive!

Dec. 6 – Jan. 31, 2009

A Victorian Christmas

plus**March 29, 2008**

**The Historical Society
- On Display!**

10 am to 4 pm - Open House
3:00 pm - Annual
General Meeting

Speaker Series

Dates and speakers to be announced.

Bless This House: Our Churches



Barbara Matthies displays a Sunday School Register from the former Knox United Church.

One of the first necessities for the early settlers in our community was a spiritual one ... a place to worship. All faiths held services first in the homes and barns of their members.

Unlike other communities where great rivalry existed amongst the differing religions, the many faiths represented in the Tavistock area existed in harmony. And in the early days their were many different faiths ... Amish Mennonite, Methodist, Evangelical United Brethren, Lutherans of both the Canada and Missouri Synod, United, Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Roman Catholic.

One by one church buildings and meetinghouses were erected and saw active use. Some are no longer standing. Some still hold regular services. Others are opened just once a year. A few have been sold to community groups to use for other purposes. A few stand sadly empty.

As part of Tavistock's 150th Anniversary celebrations, the local churches were asked to make a scale model of their church building. Five of these well-constructed and detailed models are currently on display at the museum. In addition, each church was asked to loan something that spoke to their faith and/or their traditions.

Membership Reminder

It's been a remarkable year for the Tavistock and District Historical Society. Over 800 people visited the museum. Some came to see a specific display: others came to see each of the many and varied displays. Our visitors included people living in our community, friends from afar, residents from the local nursing/retirement homes, service clubs and special classes. There was definitely something for everyone. We appreciate the financial support of our members. Memberships for 2008 can be purchased at the museum at a cost of \$10.00.

One tradition common to most of the area churches is the "church bazaar" ... a grand means of fundraising. One story, included in the museum display, talks about the "behind-the-scenes" antics at a church bazaar. It goes like this One bazaar morning Mrs. George Bagg phoned her daughter-in-law to say "come over right away!". There, lined up in front of her, were 10 loaves of homemade bread ... "and my dentures are in one of them!". Which one? After lots of scrutiny the dentures were found in her apron pocket ... and 10 loaves of bread went to the bazaar.



The Wilks family views Veterans Project books at the Library Hall display.

Year of the Veteran Project

The first public presentation of the photos, names and records of 500 veterans of Tavistock and district was held in the Library Hall on four Saturday mornings around Remembrance Day – October 27th, November 3rd, 10th, and 17th. It was a tremendous success. Well over 200 family, friends and Veterans came from Toronto, London, Cambridge and locally to view the 9 volumes and the DVD. Displays of war brides, Legion veterans, women veterans, uniforms and photos of unknown WW I veterans were showcased around the hall.

A general display called “Honouring Our Veterans” was viewed in the museum with the focus on the veterans killed in action ... 6 in WW I and 18 in WW II.

The 9 books depicting the biographies and pictures of area veterans are available for viewing at the museum/archives on an ongoing basis every Saturday morning from 10 am to noon. Veterans may still be added to these books. The DVD with the photos and names of 360 Veterans is available for sale for \$20.00 at the museum.

We wish to thank everyone who supplied photos and information for this project. For further information contact Susan J. Pellow at 519-655-2600.

World War Songs

Patriotic music was very popular in the early recording years. One of the most popular songs among the British, German and Russian armies during World War I was “It’s a Long way to Tipperary.” It sold a million copies in 1914 and was later recorded by John McCormack, an international and well-known Canadian tenor.

In Oldbury near Birmingham, England, a music-hall entertainer, Jack Judge, is credited with composing the song along with Harry Williams who was a musician. While Jack had never been to Ireland, it was where his grandparents were from. He sang “It’s a Long Way to Tipperary” for the first time on the stage of The Grand Theatre during the evening’s performance on January 31, 1912. It quickly became a favourite, and its catchy tune soon caught the imagination of the public.

In recent memory, perhaps the most emotional rendition came at a very special ceremony that took place in Messines, Holland. During the First World War, Messines was completely destroyed. For more than three months, bloody battles were fought here, in almost continuous rain, at a cost of 170,000 killed, wounded or missing.

History was again made here when the Irish State formally honored, for the first time, the quarter of a million Irish people who had served in the British Forces during the first World War. More than fifty thousand of them died.

On November 11, 1998, a monument to those Irishmen who fought and gave their lives in World War I was unveiled by the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, in the presence of Queen Elizabeth II and the King and Queen of Belgium. The monument is a 110 foot Irish Round Tower made from tons of stones taken from a former workhouse in Mullingar, Co. Westmeath. As part of the unveiling ceremonies, the band played “It’s a Long Way to Tipperary.”



Museum at the Fall Fair

The Tavistock Fall Fair display was entitled “Do You Remember When?” and featured memorabilia from local business establishments. The back wall of the display held over 40 calendars dating from 1907 as well as framed Lemp Studio Collection photos. Included in the display were books featuring the Lemp Studio Collection photos and books with Tavistock and area school histories. Two plexiglass cases held memorabilia such as milk bottles and other dairy artifacts, matches, pens, pencils, thermometers, rulers, mugs, letter openers, shaving brush and strop, old store invoices, photos of some old business vehicles and much, much more. Surrounding these cases sat egg crates from F. Corp, Tavistock Produce and CC Wettlaufer, a child’s wooden wheel barrow and an old wooden pulley from C.L. Erb’s planing mill. Bowling ball and pins and a bubble gum machine from Joe’s Place, flour bags from the Tavistock Milling Company, a creamery can from the Tavistock Cheese & Butter Company also business signs from C.J. Kaufman, Mike’s Service Station and a Tavistock sign from Charlie Matthies’ milk wagon.

Bill Gladding had a graphics display featuring a computerized, 3-D model of the downtown as it was in 1926. It is hoped that students will get involved with this project to create a complete model of the village of yesteryear.

This was truly a walk down memory lane as people looked, enjoyed and reminisced about Tavistock’s past and the many businesses that the village once had, those that are no more and those that have withstood the test of time.