



THE UPDATE

York Pioneer and Historical Society

PO Box 45026, 2482 Yonge Street, Toronto ON M4P 3E3

www.yorkpioneers.com
yorkpioneers@gmail.com

YPHS ANNUAL DINNER

Help celebrate our 150th anniversary!

Enjoy social time with your fellow Pioneers, a delicious buffet dinner and an engaging speaker.

- Date:** Saturday November 9, 2019
Time: 5:30-6:00 (socialize with a glass of sparkling wine)
 6:00 Buffet Dinner (cash bar available)
Location: The Philpott Room of the Toronto Lawn Tennis Club, 44 Price Street, Rosedale (a short walk from both Rosedale and Summerhill subway stations).
Cost: \$80 (non-member \$90)

RSVP: yorkpioneers@gmail.com or call Audrey Fox @ 416-656-0812. **Cheques** [or PayPal on our website] should reach us NO LATER than Wednesday Oct 30. (Mail cheques to the address at the top of this page). The large and private Philpott Room of the historic Toronto Lawn Tennis Club is the delightful venue for our annual dinner - a special one this year as we celebrate our founding in 1869. [The room can be accessed by elevator].

The TLTC was founded in 1876; the first courts were on Front Street. There were two moves over the years, first to College Street and then to Bathurst. The TLTC's permanent home was purchased in 1911. As *Saturday Night* magazine reported in 1913:

"Here on a plan of grounds enclosed by a brick wall 20' high, in time to be obscured by a close line of poplar trees, 20 clay courts have been laid out and the clubhouse erected. The clubhouse is of grey stucco and in the Mexico or hacienda style of architecture, with spacious upper and lower balconies overlooking the courts."

We thank Dr. Alexander Franklin for graciously sponsoring our Society at this private club.

UPCOMING EVENTS - VOLUNTEERS

**NEEDED - CNE Scadding Cabin,
 Aug 18- Sep 2**

See Page 7 for list of events

CALLING ALL AUTHORS!

The York Pioneer is looking for writers to contribute to its 2020 edition. We're looking for fresh ideas and original research that feature interesting tidbits of Toronto history. You may submit a completed article; however story outlines and drafts are preferred as we can't guarantee publication. Pictures, maps and other visual content are especially welcome.

If you'd like to contribute, please contact Christina at christinafriendjohnston@gmail.com with your idea or article by **October 1**

IN THIS ISSUE

2019 Launch 2
 Volunteer Appreciation 4
 The Tinsmith - Part 3 5
 Member News..... 6
 CNE Calendar / New Memberships 7

**REPORT FROM
THE 2019 YORK PIONEER LAUNCH!**



*Above: David Staples and Fred Robbins
Photo: Audrey Fox*

It was a beautiful day for the launch of the 2019 *York Pioneer* held in the 1914 Owen Staples house and studio; about 60 members and guests enjoyed visiting the sunny garden and the Arts & Crafts-style home now owned by descendant David Staples.



Photo: Audrey Fox

Board member Michael Nettleton (membership) welcomed guests for YPHS President Fred Robbins who was suffering from laryngitis; David Staples spoke about his renowned great-grandfather; assistant editor, Christina Friend-Johnston and editor Audrey Fox introduced the journal’s contributors.



Photo: Audrey Fox

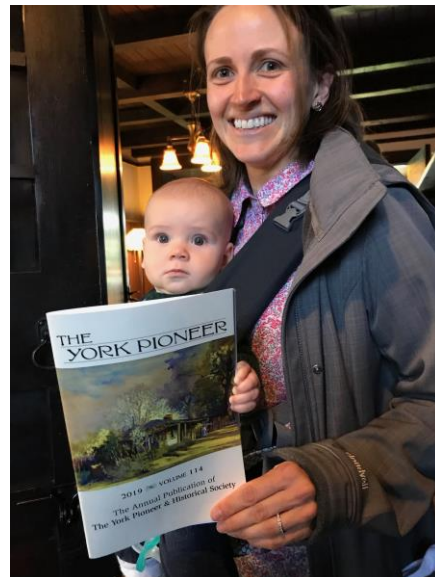
Attendees toured the gardens, the house and the art collection; and many lively conversations were fueled by snacks and sparkling wine.



Photo: Audrey Fox



Photo: Sue Roden.



Top Row, L to R: Fred Robbins and Gerald Lee present Ralph Barron his 66th year anniversary certificate. Bob & Sue Roden (aka "The Simcoes") flank Madeleine McDowell.

Second Row: Former YPHS president George Duncan, David Staples and current president Fred Robbins. Lionel Collier (in window) found the perfect perch for viewing the festivities. Mary (Staples) Welb, visiting from Thunder Bay, is welcomed by board member Michael Nettleton.

Third Row: David Staples and his son Lewis Baird-Staples with YP editor Audrey Fox. Lisa Jemison (YP copy editor) and her son Angus.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DAY AT CAMPBELL HOUSE - JUNE 23, 2019



Above: Upstairs ballroom of the 1822 Campbell House. From left to right: Morris Jacobs, Sarah Gossip, Glenn Bonnetta, John Marshall, Doreen Mapes, Barry Mapes, Beth Alaksa, Gerry Lee, David Raymont, Stephanie Thomas, Kayoko Smith, Fred Robbins Patricia Robinson, and Stephanie Lem. Photo: David Raymont.

Judge, Sir William Campbell, 1758-1834, was a Scottish law student who left Scotland to fight in the Revolutionary War. Following the surrender at Virginia, he resumed law studies in Nova Scotia, and married a fisherman's daughter. He became a judge in Yor (population of 700). In 1822 he built his one bedroom plus ballroom house, and he retired in 1829 with a knighthood.



Photo: Doors Open Toronto 2012: Campbell House Museum | by Jackman Chiu, Flickr

An interpreter took us on a tour of this Georgian mansion. Colourful Chinese toile wallpaper in the entry hall sets the expectation for luxury. The handsome reception room features two arched alcoves beside the refined geometric fireplace with quaint portraits of His Honour and his Lady. The pair of enormous windows at one time looked down Frederick Street to the bay.



Photo: Toni Hafkenschied., Installation view of Fissure, Campbell House Museum, Toronto, May 1 - June 2, 2019.

We were also invited into the pioneer kitchen, with many period artifacts on display and a roaring fire on a Sunday afternoon.

After washing our subway-soiled hands, it was we ourselves who prepared ingredients, mixed and rolled out molasses cookies!



Photo: Jason E., Yelp - The kitchen in the basement

The Tinsmith – Part Three

Thank goodness I was able to build a small one room abode for the winter. Mr McNamara provided some used lumber while Mosses and I were able to salvage a couple of old wagons to use as building materials. The little house quickly took shape and I was able to acquire a small pot belly stove for warmth. February was turning into a slow month. But this nothing new. Business is always slow at this time of the year but I had prepared for it by stocking up on dry goods. Also, by doing odd jobs for the McNameras and Austins I was able to earn some money for meat, vegetables and the occasional quart of whisky (for medicinal purposes only).

Valentine's Day was fast approaching and so was the Austin's annual Valentine's event which would include treats, dancing, skating and games of skill. One of these games was target shooting. The object was not only to see close to the centre of the target you could get but also how quickly you fire off three rounds using a Brown Bess musket. First prize included a brand new musket, one pound of powder and one pound of lead for making musket balls. After firing off a few rounds with my old faithful Bridget, I realized that three rounds per minute was alright for the militia but to win this competition I would have to be faster on the loading.

Finally the big day arrived and I walked up Cruickshank's Lane with Hannahs and others going to the Austins. Upon entering the gate the wonders never seemed to cease. Where the house garden grows in the spring a large ice surface was created to either skate on or just slide across. One of the drive sheds had been converted to house the baking and preserves competition, out at the front driveway men dropped off their wood working projects for judging. All around the grounds were tables and stalls with cider, delicious treats and games for the children. The targets were set up behind the house with their backs facing the Black Walnut trees. There were four areas set up. One each for knife throwing, hand axe throwing, musket shooting and something called arch...arching (bow and arrow shooting). Moses signed up for the axe throwing and I signed up for the musket shoot. To Moses' surprise Mrs. Hannah entered the archery competition.

It turned out to be a great day for everyone. The children were pretty much tuckered out by the time the awards were handed out. Moses did pretty good throwing the axe by coming in third out of seventeen contestants. The braggart in me wants to tell y'all that I took first prize in the musket shoot, but I have to admit I placed only as high as 6th place out of twenty-one shooters. Oh well there's always next year.

The biggest surprise was Mrs. Hannah who expected to place amongst the lower portion of contestants. After all was said and done she won the whole kit and caboodle and took first place ahead of fourteen archers. She was presented with a handmade bow with matching arrows. After that Moses and I teased her about being part Indian.

After the awards were handed out and the children safely tucked away, the music started up and the dancing began. Fires were lit for warmth and to provide light. We danced in to the wee hours of the morning, enjoying the warmth and comfort of the fires and the friendship and comradery of the people around us.

Barry Mapes, Esq., Tinsmith



From Wikipedia: A tinsmith, sometimes known as a whitesmith, tinner, tinker, tinman, or tinplate worker is a person who makes and repairs things made of tin or other light metals. By extension it can also refer to the person who deals in tinware, or tin plate. Tinsmith was a common occupation in pre-industrial times.

York Pioneer member Barry Mapes is a volunteer at the Tollkeeper's Cottage and has been learning about tinsmithing.

In Memoriam

Peter Ridout QC, a former member and York Pioneer contributor, died June 10, 2019 at age 93. From his *Globe and Mail* death notice: "His wit, intellect and heart were intact to the end."

<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/theglobeandmail/obituary.aspx?n=peter-howard-hunter-ridout&pid=193141330>

Member Donald Guthrie, QC died in May 2019 at age 90, survived by Ann, his wife of 65 years. A distinguished fourth-generation lawyer, he served on many boards including the ROM, the Canada Council, and CN Rail, and was active in politics. A faithful annual member of the Society for 53 years, Donald joined the Society in 1966 and graciously donated every year.

Life Member **Kenneth Albert Menagh** died in February 2019 at age 68. Kenneth joined the Society in 1983. He is survived by his daughter Nicole and brother Bob.

Our new Membership Chair Michael Nettleton recently undertook a search for our "lost" life members. As expected, he found that many were deceased, and we have included them in our In Memoriam section below.

Life Member **Robert Ernest Barron** died in December 2004 in his 96th year. He was predeceased by his first wife, Ethel, and survived by his second wife Rosabelle, who subsequently died in October 2018 at age 101. In his career Robert was traffic manager of the Canadian Manufacturers Association, and he was an advocate for social justice with a life-long passion for history. He was a member for some 30 years.

Life Member **Evan Alexander Dickson** died in Feb 2005 in his 88th year, and Life Member **Ivy Alice Dickson** died in November 2008 in her 99th year. They were married for nearly 65 years. Evan enjoyed a long career with Coca-Cola. He was public-spirited and after retiring devoted much time and effort to public causes in Wellington County. Evan and Ivy joined the Society together in 1980.

Life Member **Ellen Jane (Mrs R G) Pearse** died in August 2011 at age 96. She was married to RCAF Second World War veteran and noted Judge Russell G Pearse for 64 years, until his death in 2006 at age 91. She was a member of the York Pioneers for 45 years, having joined in 1966.

Life Member **Marian Adelaide (Mrs N S) Robertson** died in May 2007 at age 102, having been a member of the Society since 1966 — some 41 years. Her husband, noted lawyer Norman Stuart Robertson died in 1988. They were generous supporters of causes in Toronto, leaving their legacy as the N S Robertson Charitable Foundation, and had a shared passion for the history of mathematics and science.

Life Member **Edna Margaret Robinson** died in November 2005 at age 89. Nicknamed "Ted" by her father, Edna was a trailblazer in education as the first female principal of a large urban high school in Ontario, and taught in Toronto and Burlington. In her career she also was a significant advocate of the role of extracurricular activities in education. She joined the Society in 1974.

Life Member **Evelyn (Mrs G F) Whittamore** died in April 2017 at age 92. She is survived by her husband Gilbert (Gib) Whittamore and their extended family. Evelyn taught elementary school for over a decade and had a life-long love of music, but is perhaps most fondly and widely remembered for pioneering with Gib the pick-your-own fruit and vegetable industry at Whittamore's Farm in Markham. Evelyn joined the society in 1985.

CNE Calendar 2019 – Scadding Cabin

As always, the York Pioneers welcome volunteers to join us at the Scadding Cabin during the CNE. See below for the list of special events:

- August 19 (2-4pm) - Visit from John and Elizabeth Simcoe
- August 23 (12-5pm) - Tinware: 19th Century Tinsmithing
- August 24 (2-5pm) - Scadding Cabin for Kids
- August 25 (12-4pm) - Tagging Monarch Butterflies with the Toronto Field Naturalists
- August 26 (2-5pm) - Scadding Cabin for Kids; (1-5pm) Spinning Wheel Demonstrations
- August 28 (1-5pm) Spinning Wheel Demonstrations
- August 29 (1-5pm) Spinning Wheel Demonstrations
- August 31 (1-5pm) - Mackenzie House Printing Press Demonstrations; (1-5pm) Spinning Wheel Demonstrations
- September 1 (12-4pm) - Tagging Monarch Butterflies with the Toronto Field Naturalists; (1-5pm) Spinning Wheel Demonstrations
- September 2 (12-5pm) - Tinware: 19th Century Tinsmithing; (1-5pm) Spinning Wheel Demonstrations

Please contact Kayoko Smith at kayto.ca@live.ca to make volunteering arrangements.

Reminder: Existing Members – RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

A friendly reminder to all existing members that annual memberships extend from Jan 1 through Dec 31. You may renew online by PayPal:

<https://www.yorkpioneers.com/membership/>

1869 – 2019

150th

Welcome New Members!

Grant Karcich Karen Bahal Vicki Mills
Patricia Blackstock Adene Kuchera

*Apologies to Polly Winsor for misspelling her name in the last update.

Elevated to Life Members!

Christina Sobolak

New Family Members!

Johanna Bull
Maura Blain Brown & Peter Brown
Kat & Craig Akerfeldt

The YPHS gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport.