

The Burlington Historical Society
GAZETTE



The History of Home Canning in Canada

This month’s speaker, **Tom Holbrook**, comes to us from Kitchener Ontario.

Tom is a retired Quality Engineer, who spent most of his career working in the Medical Device Industry.

In his leisure time, he has studied and collected Canadian Fruit jars for over forty years.

Tom will take you back to the days when preserving food meant skill, ingenuity, and often, trial and error. Learn about the big players who shaped the early Canadian home canning industry and explore the strengths—and surprising limitations—of the equipment they used.

If you have any old jars tucked away in cupboards or basements, bring them along—Tom would be delighted to take a look and share what he knows.



<i>This month:</i>	<i>In this issue:</i>																						
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President's Message *Nicola Thomson*

I was recently asked why so many global civilizations have built pyramids all the same basic design and why they have endured so well. So, I did a bit of research.

The main reason, I believe, is that they are so easy to design. Just take a look at children building sandcastles on the beach. Their pails are flat topped pyramids.

A pyramid is stable and can be built with basic local materials. They are also scalable for large monuments and their shape distributes weight perfectly, plus, often they are massive and solid.



Egyptian Pyramids

Many pyramids have been built and expanded over centuries using thousands of workers, simple tools, skilled planners, engineers and architects, requiring mathematics and planning. Geometry would be used for angles and alignment and surveying techniques for level foundations. Tools were very simple and in most cases animals were not available for heavy lifting thus requiring manual labour.

As a point of interest Egyptian pyramids are sealed monuments for the dead (pointed tops) while Mayan and Aztec pyramids are living temples meant to be used (flat tops).



Mayan Pyramids

Did you know?

Mexico is actually home to a vast number of ancient, often stepped, pyramids—more than Egypt—built by pre-Hispanic civilizations like the Maya, Aztecs, Teotihuacanos, and Zapotecs. These structures were typically used as temples to worship deities, ceremonial centers, or astronomical observatories, rather than as tombs.

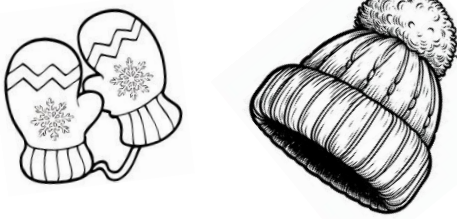
Pyramid construction was highly precise, often aligning with astronomical events like the equinox sun creating a serpent shadow at Chichen Itza.

The structures we see were often built on top of older ones. Inside Chichen Itza's El Castillo, archaeologists found two smaller, hidden pyramids.

Directors (Elected)		Officers (Appointed)		Convenors (Appointed)		Archives Volunteers
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						Pat Taylor
						Coleen Tew
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Outreach Report

There wasn't much happening in March. We were all trying to keep warm.



In April, Nicola will be presenting at Hearthstone by the Lake. The topic? The Pig and Whistle Inn. An apt topic since the Inn is on the Hearthstone property and presently used as a clubhouse.

If you remember, in October, Nicola and Alan took a group of residents of Chartwell Retirement Residence on a bus tour of the downtown sites. It was a great hit!

It seems the word has spread. We have been asked by Hearthstone and Burlington Gardens to arrange tours for their residents.

More about this in the next issue.



Social Media Report Jennifer Kemp

Followers at the end of February

Facebook	1687
Instagram	605
X	70

Check out the monthly articles in Burlington Today www.burlingtontoday.com and now

January 2026 - Built by a community, Joseph Brant Hospital celebrates 65 next month

February 2026 - Honouring Black history: The legacy of Michael Groat lives on

March 2026 - Graham's Celery Farm helped put Burlington produce on the map

April 2026 -

Membership Report Pat Taylor



Our membership for 2026 presently stands at **90** persons.

Everyone is welcome to join us at our meetings – no strings attached. If you would like to join talk to me. I am at the membership table at the back of the room.

Members are eligible to receive the monthly newsletter.



The Trials and Tribulations of a Hotel Keeper *Joan Downey*

The [Scott Act of 1878](#) was federal legislation enabling Ontario municipalities to vote for **local** prohibition of alcohol sales. It allowed counties/cities to ban alcohol locally, leading to many "dry" localities in Ontario before province-wide prohibition ([Ontario Temperance Act](#)) began in 1916 – Wikipedia.

The **local** application of the Scott Act caused some unique problems:

2 June 1881- The Anti Scott Act papers have been publishing the following item with considerable exultation:-

Halton has one hotel keeper upon whom the Scott Act cannot act. The boundary line between Halton and Wentworth runs through the Brant House, overlooking Burlington Bay and the proprietor proposes erecting his bar in the Wentworth end of his building next year. They must remember that it will all depend upon whether the License Commissioners of Wentworth will grant the place a license. (the license was granted)

5 December 1885

Escape of a Convicted Hotelkeeper after a Desperate Struggle

This village was thrown into great excitement to-day. About four months ago a hotelkeeper named Peter Zimmerman was convicted of violating the Scott Act, and as it was his fourth offence he was sentenced to two months in gaol. He evaded arrest and skipped across the line where he stayed for a time, but returned a few weeks ago. County Constable Page, who held the warrant, arrested him to-day as he was about to take the train for Hamilton. The constable was about to start with his prisoner for Milton, but Zimmerman's son stepped up and prevented Page from getting his prisoner on the train. Page then called on Constable Coffee, who was standing by to assist him and the two constables tried to take the prisoner to a house close by. Young Zimmerman still kept hold of his father and Constable Page told him to let go or he would have to use force. Young Zimmerman was very abusive, and paid no attention. Page then drew his baton and commenced using it on him, when Zimmerman let go his father and clinched with Page and overpowered the constable. Taking his baton from the constable, he commenced beating him unmercifully over the head, and had it not been for the interference of some outsiders it is believed he would have killed Page. The Zimmermans then made their escape, and it is believed have crossed the lines. Constable Page was assisted to a store where he had his wounds dressed, and he was then taken to his home at Kilbride.

It seems the Zimmerman family continued to run afoul of the law.

16 June 1887 - *Mrs. Peter Zimmerman of Burlington, was arrested here for failure to pay a \$50 fine for violating the Scott Act. She paid the fine and was released.*

But, she didn't take it lying down - **17 June 1887** – *County Constable McNair went to Milton yesterday morning and arrested Scott Act Inspector Brothers on a charge of assaulting Mrs. Peter Zimmerman. Brothers arrested her for an unpaid Scott Act fine, and she claims that he used unnecessary violence. The Inspector was bailed and will come up for trial*

There were a few other articles about Peter Zimmerman and the Scott Act. Then this follow-up was in a later article – date unknown.

In regard to the cases of violation of the Scott Act in Halton referred to in The Globe of this morning, it appears the cases were called in Milton, according to the summonses today, before Justice Young. The following are the names of the parties charged:- Peter Zimmerman, Burlington; A Cunningham, Nelson Village; Mr. Bunton of St. Anne; and Mr. Welsh of Oakville.....

Beside the charge of violation of the Scott Act against Peter Zimmerman, a more serious matter is to be brought up against him, for obstructing the License Inspector and police officer in discharge of their duty yesterday. It appears that County Constable Dent and Inspector Fraser went to the Zimmerman's and demanded admission, but were refused, and afterward assaulted – a rough and tumble turn taking place. The common assault was summarily called on in the village at once, resulting, however, in the dismissal of the charge against the defendant Zimmerman.....

The liquor seizures by the officers the last two days have been very considerable. The detective engaged reports that as a rule the Act is a success in the county, notwithstanding there is in some localities strenuous opposition to it...

Peter Zimmerman's obituary dated 14 June 1906 reads as follows: *Peter Zimmerman died at the home of his brother at Carlisle on Saturday. His age was 86. He built the Queen's Hotel at Burlington about 25 years ago and had a hot time of it shortly afterwards, while the Scott Act was in force. He was fairly well off at one time, but lost all his property. His body was taken to Burlington on Monday for burial.*

Peter is buried in Greenwood Cemetery.

Burlington Mayors – Part XI *Joan Downey*

John Oscar Ryckman (1864 – 13 Aug 1934)

Burlington Mayor 1933



John Oscar Ryckman served as the 12th Mayor of the Town of Burlington. In 1933 he was elected mayor with a 106 vote majority. Burlington population at that time was 3,046 (1931 Canada Census).

J.O., as he was known, was the youngest of eight children born to Samuel Hamilton Ryckman and Alma Gage. The family farm was located at the intersection of Upper James Street and Rymal Road in Hamilton, ON.

That area of Hamilton is still known as Ryckman's Corners.

To learn a little about his life I consulted his obituary.

Burlington Gazette, 15 Aug 1934

Burlington's Ex-Mayor Dies From Paralytic Stroke
Ex-Mayor John Oscar Ryckman died suddenly early Saturday morning from a paralytic stroke, suffered at his home on Nelson Avenue, Burlington. The death came as a shock to many residents who had seen Mr. Ryckman on the street as late as 9 o'clock Friday night. Mr. Ryckman, who was in his 70th year, was born near Ancaster. He belonged to the family that gave its name to Ryckman's Corner on the mountain top. For some time he operated a dairy in Ancaster and Hamilton, and spent several years in the United States. The first public office accepted by Mr. Ryckman in Burlington was that of town councillor in 1927. He sat on the council again in 1932, and was mayor of the town in 1933. At that time he also was chairman of the board of health, and sat on several other committees. He was a prominent Conservative. Mr. Ryckman leaves his widow, formerly Mary Blagden.

J.O. married 3 times. There is no record of any children. His first marriage was in 1892 when he married Nora Smith. Unfortunately, Nora died at age 23, just a few

months after their marriage. What was thought to be a cold turned into 'acute tuberculosis'.

In November of 1894 he married again, this time to Edith May Unsworth. They may have been married for about 20 years. I cannot find a record of divorce, however, both went on to marry again.

In 1919, J.O. married for the third and last time to Mary Elizabeth Blagden. On the marriage record he lists himself as 'widower'. 'Divorce' was frowned upon at the time.

They settled into a home on Nelson Avenue where they lived until their deaths. J.O. became very active in the town. He was a member of the town council in 1927 and 1932, prior to becoming mayor in 1933.

As can be seen from the Census records and directories, J.O. seemed to like travelling. In a 1913 Directory of Bellingham, Washington, John O. Ryckman (wife Edith) is shown as Manager, Apollo Theatre. Residence Hotel Windsor. He also lived in Chicago for several years. In 1929, the Burlington Gazette carried a series of articles during March and April regarding the Ryckman's automobile trip to Florida.

J.O. Ryckman was buried in the Ryckman Family Cemetery which is just North of Ryckman's Corners, behind a Nissan dealership. J.O.'s grave is not listed, however, there are a number of stones which are unreadable.

Mary (Blagden) Ryckman died in 1937 and is buried in Greenwood Cemetery,



Ryckman Family Cemetery, Hamilton, ON

Jocelyn's Book Store *Joan Downey*

Burlington Gazette 25 Jan 1905 Mr. J. R. Wells has disposed of his stationary, book and cigar business to **Mr. T. Jocelyn**, of Hamilton, who took possession on Monday. Mr. Jocelyn is president of Unity Sons of England Lodge* (see the following article), one of the largest lodges in Hamilton, and is well known here, having visited the local lodge on many occasions. He states he will carry a complete stock in his line, and solicits a share of the public patronage.

Commercial, Industrial and Progressive edition of Milton, Oakville and Burlington, Ontario, printed in 1917

Thos. Jocelyn

Holding a prominent place among the well established business houses located in Burlington is the one carried on by Mr. Thos. Jocelyn. This business was established many years ago and was taken over by its present proprietor in the beginning of 1912. From its inception it has generally advanced and extended, keeping abreast with the progress

ago and was taken over by its present proprietor in the beginning of 1912. From its inception it has generally advanced and extended, keeping abreast with the progress

of the town and its development. Mr. Jocelyn recently moved into larger quarters and now is located in the store formerly occupied by Mr. J.M. Pollock. He also purchased this gentleman's entire kodak and stationary business. The premises occupied on Brant Street are well arranged and completely stocked with books of all kinds, school supplies, fine stationery, newspapers, magazines, periodicals, souvenir cards, candies, tobacco, etc., in endless variety from which to choose is to be found. A speciality is made of old country newspapers, magazines and periodicals. The motto of this establishment is always 'the latest in everything handled.' Mr. Jocelyn is a gentleman of sterling qualities, who has by strict attention to all the details and a thorough knowledge of the requirements of the public been ever ready to supply them with everything desired in this line.

Burlington Gazette 31 August 1921

Thomas Jocelyn's obituary was included along with the following article:

The mother of the late Thomas Jocelyn purposes carrying on the business recently owned by her son in Burlington, with the able assistance of Mr. Thos Waumsley as manager. It is hoped that all old friends and customers will rally round.

Thomas Waumsley continued to manage the store for six years and then in 1927 he took over the store on his own behalf.

S.O.E. Sons of England *Pat Taylor*

While sorting through a donation we came to this photo – who or what are the S.O.E? Someone suggested “Sons of England” - note the Union Jack (flag). It appears the float is about to take part in a parade. Is it on Brant Street?



“S.O.E. Wagon” ready for a parade

From the Archives of Ontario, “The Sons of England Benefit Society was a benevolent society for Protestants which provided insurance to members in need because of family illness or other mishaps.

The Canadian society was founded in 1876 in Canada and wound up its affairs in 1971. Although the primary function of the society was a form of insurance, the constitution also states that the society will foster the British connection and love of Empire in Canada. The Society was also referred to as the Sons of England Benevolent Society.”

Although the Society no longer operates in Canada, lodges are still active in England, continuing the tradition of their predecessors.

There is a monument in Greenwood Cemetery to honour the S.O.E. The names of six men are listed on the stone. On the west face, under the words “Killed In Action” are the names: Harry Brain, Robert Morse and Stanley Smith. On the north face are the names Albert Horrocks, Thomas Nutkins and Horace E. Horne.



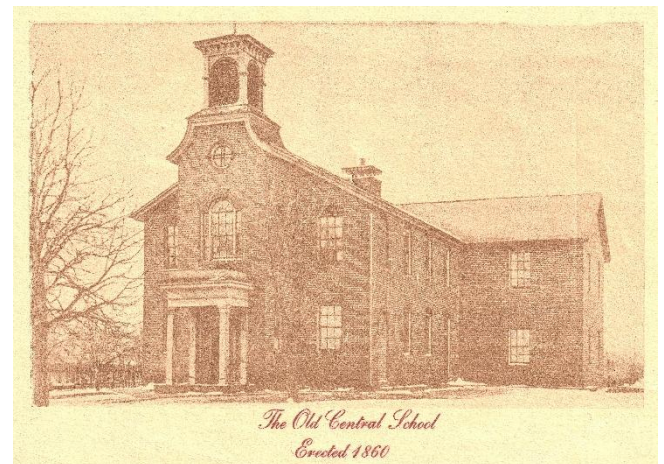
[/www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)

Archives Report *Joan Downey*

A citizen who works at a local School was concerned recently when a couple of boxes of old crumbling documents were about to be sent to landfill. Her mother volunteers with Head of the Lake Historical Society so she knew the value of ‘old junk’. We were contacted and are now in possession of the attendance records for the years 1907 to 1927 for Burlington Central Public School!

There are interesting notes. In 1918 there is noted a 2 week ‘closure due to flu.’ (Ed note: this would have been the Spanish Flu of 1918)

The school in the photo served the growing town until 1912 when the present building was erected.



THE BURLINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Preserving Burlington's History for Today and Tomorrow

Membership - 2026

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____ Email address: _____

Membership Dues

New Member

Renewal

Family \$40.00

Adult \$30.00

Senior \$25.00

Yes, as a **new** BHS member I wish to receive the Gazette newsletter and other e-communications and understand I can unsubscribe at any time.

Volunteer

Are you interested in volunteering with the Society? Would you like to help us in preserving the history of our City? Tell us a bit about your talents and interests – info@burlingtonhistorical.ca

Donation

I wish to make a separate donation to the society in the sum of _____

A Tax Receipt will be issued for all donations totalling \$25.00 or more

The Burlington Historical Society is a registered charity # 119217693RR0001

Mail completed form and remittance(s) to:

The Burlington Historical Society
Membership Convenor
PO Box 93164
1450 Headon Road
Burlington, Ontario L7M 4A3

Make cheques payable to The Burlington Historical Society

OR

e-transfer funds to

info@burlingtonhistorical.ca



If you are a new member or there are changes to your contact information, please email the completed form to us at the above email

OR

Leave it at the Membership table at any General Meeting

www.burlingtonhistorical.ca

info@burlingtonhistorical.ca

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