

The Burlington Historical Society  
**GAZETTE**

**History of the Royal Botanical Gardens**



**David Galbraith** is Head of Science at Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington and Hamilton. He studied wildlife biology at University of Guelph and Queen’s University at Kingston, joining RBG in 1995 to promote conservation projects among botanical gardens. In 2006 David was appointed head of RBG’s science department, overseeing library, archives, and herbarium, research staff, and the use of RBG’s resources by outside researchers. Since 2007 he has led the development of the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System, a park alliance in Hamilton and Burlington for which he was named Hamilton Environmentalist of the Year in 2010. David has always had a deep love of both science and history. He’s an adjunct professor in the biology department of McMaster University, a Fellow of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society, and a Fellow International of The Explorers Club.

Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG) is Canada’s largest botanical garden and a unique combination of gardens, visitor amenities, educational and research programs, and large, ecologically important natural areas. Delving into RBG’s history this year is very appropriate as 2020 the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of King George V approving the use of “Royal” in the name of a proposed botanical garden in Hamilton, and 2021 is the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of RBG as an incorporated not-for-profit agency

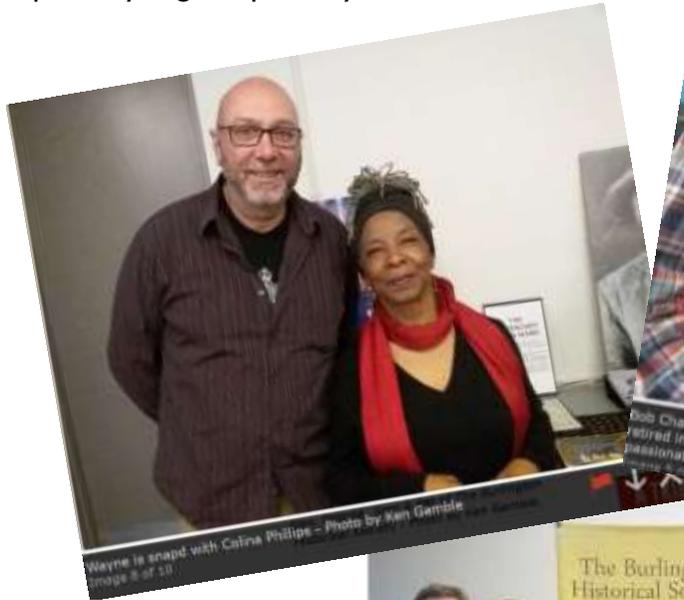
<p>Join us on March 9<sup>th</sup> 2020 at 7 pm, Centennial Room,                  Burlington Public Library, Central Branch                  To hear <b>Dr. David Galbraith</b></p> <p>Ask a friend to join us to hear an interesting speaker and enjoy a                  coffee &amp; cookies. Everyone is welcome</p>	<p><i>In this issue</i></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>President’s Report</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Outreach</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>From the Archives</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Burlington Reeves</td> <td>4,5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Freeman Station Update</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Heritage Happenings</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BHS Executive</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BHS Membership</td> <td>8</td> </tr> </table>	President’s Report	2	Outreach	3	From the Archives	3	Burlington Reeves	4,5	Freeman Station Update	6	Heritage Happenings	7	BHS Executive	7	BHS Membership	8
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<p>Our next meeting will be April 14<sup>th</sup> 2020                  NOTE: This meeting is on the <b>2<sup>nd</sup> TUESDAY</b> of the month                  7 pm, Burlington Public Library, Central Branch                  Our April speaker is Bob Hayworth, the brother of the first                  Canadian civilian casualty of WWII</p>																	

# President's Report *Joan Downey*

The Burlington Historical Society has been getting a lot of exposure lately on Snapd Burlington. It seems everywhere we go, there they are with cameras ready. Want to check out some more BHS photos? Look also for the Walking Tour and Heritage Month Launch.

<https://burlington.snapd.com/edition/9837> or, look for the paper copy in local businesses.

“All publicity is good publicity.”



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## Outreach Report *Joan Downey*

Heritage Month is over for another year. And, very successful it was. As usual, Alan Harrington's Downtown Walking Tour was a great success. He always manages to make it entertaining. The John Waldie presentation on February 27<sup>th</sup> at Knox Presbyterian was also a success. We have been asked to repeat the Waldie talk at the Library on April 21<sup>st</sup> at 7 pm.

Look for changes to Heritage Month celebrations for 2021 as Heritage Burlington takes over the planning.

1877 Halton Atlas



## From the Archives *Pat Taylor*

### S.O.E. - Sons of England

While sorting through the donation from Ross Taylor, 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?

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. It was founded in 1876 in Canada and wound up its affairs in 1971.



BHS Archives

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 of Harry Brain, Robert Morse and Stanley Smith. On the north face are the names Albert Horrocks, Thomas Nutkins and Horace E. Horne.

Photo – Pat Taylor



# Burlington Reeves

## Part V - Thomas Atkinson, 1855-1938

### Reeve 1892

Thomas Atkinson was born on 25 November 1855 in Appleby, Ontario, the son of Joseph Atkinson & Rebecca Buckley. By the time of the 1861 Census, the Atkinson family was living in Walpole, Haldimand County where Joseph was a farmer.

In 1871, Thomas, age 16 already had a trade as a harness maker. Not long after the 1871 Census, Thomas moved to Waterdown where he continued to practice his trade.

On 17 August 1876, Thomas married Elizabeth Irving of Nelson. Elizabeth was the daughter of William and Annie Irving. They were married in Burlington and established their home in Burlington.



BHS Archives

By the time of the 1891 Census, Thomas listed his occupation as Merchant. Then later, Thomas was employed by Garlock Packing Company and travelled coast to coast for the company for many years prior to his retirement.

Thomas served on the Burlington Council at various times. The Canadian Champion of 5 April 1888 included the following article:

*“A CEMETERY FOR BURLINGTON – There is a project of some magnitude on foot in the Village of Burlington. Councillor T. Atkinson has introduced to the council a proposal to purchase a public cemetery. The Council has approved of the scheme submitted and has called a special meeting to consider the matter.”* The proposal resulted in the establishment of Greenwood Cemetery.

Then in 1892 he was elected as Reeve of the Village. He served his year in office and ran again in the 1893 election. Unfortunately he was not successful and the Reeve for 1893 was James Mortimer.

According to his obituary in the Burlington Gazette, Thomas moved back to Walpole for a period of time but eventually returned to Burlington

BHS Archives



The Burlington Gazette of 15 April 1908 reported that “Mr. Thomas Atkinson is obtaining figures from the local contractors with a view of erecting a two storey brick store and dwelling on his property, corner of Brant and Pine streets.” Things moved pretty rapidly in those days and the 29 April edition of the Gazette reports that work was commenced “on Monday”. The building was sufficiently completed by mid July for The Bank of Nova Scotia to open a branch and in October of 1908 the Atkinsons moved into the living apartment of the new building. The Bank of Nova Scotia did not remain in the building for very long, closing the branch in 1909.

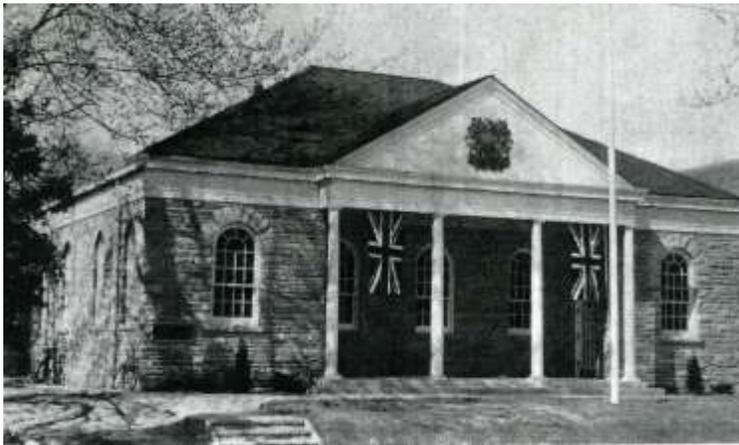
In April of 1936 there is a newspaper report of an auction of household goods by Thomas Atkinson, 7 Pine Street.

Did he sell the building and move to a smaller place? Perhaps. However, sometime around the end of 1937 he moved to the Peel Halton Old Peoples Home where he died at the age of 84. Cause of death was heart failure due to anaemia.

Elizabeth died in January of 1920 of pernicious anemia 18 years prior to Thomas' death. The Atkinsons had no children. They are buried in Greenwood Cemetery.

Thomas' last public appearance was to turn the first sod for the new post office building on Brant Street. Hughes Cleaver, M.P. in his introduction made the following remarks regarding Thomas Atkinson's time serving the community. *"Mr. Thomas Atkinson first entered the municipal council in 1885, forty nine years ago, and after serving Burlington for six years on the council he was elected Reeve of the Village in 1892, the year that I was born. Since then he has served Burlington on many occasions and as late as 1922. It is very fitting that one who has taken such an interest in public affairs in Burlington should have a part in the building of the first public building to be built here by the Department of Public Works. On behalf of the Dominion government it affords me very much pleasure to now ask Mr. Atkinson to turn the first sod."*

Note: Hughes Cleaver served as Burlington Mayor in 1920, prior to entering federal politics.



**URNS FIRST SOD FOR NEW POST-OFFICE**

Starting work on a modern post-office building for Burlington, Thomas Atkinson, 82, oldest ex-reeve of Burlington, turned the first sod yesterday with a silver-plated spade. The new building will be erected on Brant St., near the public library. Mr. Atkinson is shown with the spade about to commence work. Hugh Cleaver, M.P., and other officials were present.

BHS Archives



Atkinson's store was located at the South East corner of Brant & Pine Streets. Today, that is the location of Molly Cakes. Is that Atkinson's original store? I think so – do you?

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

## Freeman Station Update *Alan Harrington*

For Burlington Heritage month, about 25 people attended the first ever WINTER event at the Station held on Feb 15 2020.

Last year's planned event was cancelled due to the ice storm and previous to 2019 there was no heat, no furnace in the building.



This was a first time visit to the Station for half the audience, and they were treated to an audiovisual presentation of the history of the Station followed by a quick tour.

Part of the presentation was on local food including Tip Top Canned Tomatoes & Pumpkins.



\*\*The Station is scheduled to open for the summer season on April 18 2020 at 10:00 am

Photos – Alan Harrington

## Membership Table *Pat Taylor*

*Welcome to our new members  
Marilyn Cummings and Lily Kennedy*



**A reminder** – only 60 members have renewed to date. Pat, our membership convenor, will be at the desk on 9<sup>th</sup> March, eagerly awaiting renewals.



Celebration of the Royal Wedding Day on the Ice of Burlington Bay, Lake Ontario, Canada West  
April 18, 1863

## Heritage Happenings

### Maple Syrup Festival Bronte Creek Provincial Park

Weekends in March and the week of March Break.  
9:30 – 3 pm Allow 2 hours to enjoy.



## Burlington Historical Society Executive

Officers (Elected)		Directors (Appointed)		Convenors (Appointed)		Archive Volunteers
President	Joan Downey	Programs	Alan Harrington	Greeting Cards	Anne Wingfield	Peggy Armstrong
Vice President	Vacant	Archives	Joan Downey	Phone Committee	Elizabeth Baldwin	Josie Hammond
Secretary	Dobrila Kinn	Webmaster	Wayne Murphy	Heritage Burlington	Rick Wilson	Jennifer Kemp
Treasurer	Vacant	Membership	Pat Taylor	50/50 Draw	Frank Armstrong	Dorothy Kew
		Newsletter	Joan Downey	Publicity	Jennifer Kemp	Dobrila Kinn
Past President	Jane Ann Newson	Outreach	Joan Downey			Chris Mallion Moore
						Donna Ryan
						Pat Taylor
						Russ Woodley



# The Burlington Historical Society

Preserving Burlington's History for Today and Tomorrow

## Membership - 2020

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Dues (check all categories that apply)

New Member     Family: \$40.00     Senior: \$25.00

Renewal     Adult: \$30.00

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

**Join our volunteer team** – please circle your interest(s)

RESEARCH - 50/50 DRAW - COFFEE - BYTES OF BURLINGTON - ARCHIVES - NEWSLETTER – OUTREACH -  
MEMBERSHIP - SPECIAL PROJECTS – GENERAL MEETING GREETERS – EXECUTIVE – DIRECTOR -  
TELEPHONE COMMITTEE

## 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

**OR**

Leave it at the Membership table at any General Meeting.

Make cheques payable to The Burlington Historical Society.

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