

The Burlington Historical Society
GAZETTE

Life through a Lens : Community Journalism



Nikki Wesley has been drawn to visual storytelling her entire life. She is an award-winning photojournalist who has been capturing life’s moments in Halton for 17 years. She loved keeping people connected to their community through her work published in the Burlington Post, West of the City and the Oakville Beaver. After working in newspapers and magazines for more than a decade, she now produces stories in Oakville and Burlington for the Halton News on YourTV. She also produces the talk show Savvy Seniors, keeps her camera dusted off for freelance clients and strives to stay sane while navigating motherhood.

<i>This month:</i>	<i>In this issue:</i>																		
<p>Monday, May 13th, at 7 pm Centennial Hall, Central Library</p> <p>Join us to hear Nikki Wesley</p> <p>Everyone is welcome!</p>	<table> <tr><td>President’s Message</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>BHS Executive</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>Queen Victoria’s Children</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>Burlington Mayors, Part VII</td><td>4-5</td></tr> <tr><td>Social Media Report</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Membership Report</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Outreach Report</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>From the Archives</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>Membership Form</td><td>8</td></tr> </table>	President’s Message	2	BHS Executive	2	Queen Victoria’s Children	3	Burlington Mayors, Part VII	4-5	Social Media Report	5	Membership Report	5	Outreach Report	6	From the Archives	7	Membership Form	8
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President's Message *Don Thorpe*

What a great turn out we had for our April meeting. Thanks again to Dave Bartlett for presenting many interesting facts about Eaton's.

Thanks go out to Barb Porecki for leading the way in the pursuit to cleaning up the Loyalist Cemetery.

The month of May might have been named for the Roman goddess Maia, or more likely the Roman goddess of fertility Bona Dea, whose festival was held in May. May never begins or ends on the same day of the week as any other month. May's flower is the Lily of the Valley. Its birthstone is the emerald.

May Calendar

Asian Heritage Month

Asian Heritage Month is an opportunity for us to learn more about the diverse culture and history of Asian communities in Canada, as well as to acknowledge the many achievements and contributions of people of Asian origin who, throughout our history, have done so much to make Canada the country we know and love.

Jewish Heritage Month

Canada is home to an estimated 400,000 people of Jewish heritage, making it the fourth-largest Jewish community in the world. Jewish Canadians have made and continue to make important contributions to our society, including medicine, theatre, engineering, music, architecture, academia, politics, law, the arts, and more. During this month, we also recognize the courage, determination, and resilience that members of Jewish communities have shown throughout history.

May 4 Star Wars Day

May 5 Dutch Heritage Day Canada is the proud home of over 1 million people of Dutch descent.

May 12 Mother's Day

May 20 Victoria Day Queen Victoria's birthday was declared a holiday by the Legislature of the Province of Canada in 1845. An amendment to the Statutes of Canada in 1952 established the celebration of Victoria Day on the Monday preceding May 25.



Born in May?

Will be passionate and dynamic in the job they undertake. These highly ambitious lots are always on the lookout for reaching new heights.

Are on the hyperthymia scale, which means they have a general sense of optimism and positivity about them.

Are healthy and fit.

Are very determined and will always push themselves towards reaching their goals.

Love to travel across the globe.

Possess good leadership qualities, making them born leaders.

Tend to be night owls.

Trivia Question: Magnetic Hill is one of the only naturally occurring magnetic hills in Canada. Where in Burlington am I located?

Officers (Elected)		Directors (Appointed)		Convenors (Appointed)		Archives Volunteers
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QUEEN VICTORIA'S CHILDREN Submitted by Pat Taylor



Photo: www.anglotopia.net

At the sea-side residence of Queen Victoria, in the Isle of Wight, a large portion of pleasure grounds appropriated to the young princes and princesses, who have each a flower and vegetable garden, green-houses, hot-houses and forcing frames, nurseries, tool-houses and even a carpenter's shop. Here the royal children pass much of their time. Each is supplied with a set of tools, marked with the name of the owner; and here they work with the enthusiasm of an amateur and the seal of an Anglo-Saxon. There is no branch of gardening in which the royal children are not *ou fait*.



Photo: www.clipart-library.com

Moreover, on this juvenile property in a building, the ground floor of which is fitted up as a kitchen, with pantries, closets, dairy, larder, all complete in their arrangements; and here may be seen the young princesses, arrayed *a la cuisiniere*, floured to the elbows, deep in the mysteries of pastry making, like a rosy New England girl, cooking the vegetables from their own gardens, preserving, pickling, baking, sometimes to partake among themselves, or to distribute to the poor of the neighborhood, the result of their handiwork.

The Queen is determined that nothing shall remain unlearned by her children; nor are the young people ever happier than during their sojourn at Osborne.



Osborne House, UK Photo: www.englishheritage.org.uk

Over the domestic establishment is a museum of natural history, furnished with curiosities collected by the young party in their rambles and researches – geological and botanical specimens, stuffed birds and animals, articles of their own construction, and whatever is curious or interesting, classified and arranged by themselves. Here nature, common to us all, is studied and admired; while beyond this, a capability of entering into the condition of the people, and a sympathy for their labors, is acquired by practical knowledge of what labor is; and though we need scarcely suppose that the royal children weary themselves as those who toil by the sweat of their brow, yet, even in their moderate digging and working, they must learn to better to appreciate the results of labor in the luxuries surrounding them. Not plants alone are cultivated, but health, vigor, and liberality – every quality, in fact, that must tend to make them better men and women, and better fitted to fill the stations Providence has allotted to them.



Victoria Day is a federal Canadian public holiday observed on the last Monday preceding May 25 to honour Queen Victoria, who is known as the "Mother of Confederation". The holiday has existed in Canada since at least 1845, originally on Victoria's natural birthday, May 24. www.wikipedia.com

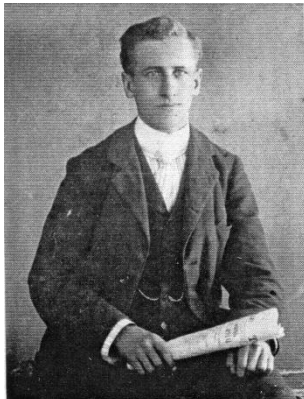
In 2024, Victoria Day falls on Monday, May 20th.

Burlington Mayors – Part VII *Joan Downey*

Elgin Alexander Harris (1876-1975)

Mayor of Burlington -1923 - 1924

This article is an interview with Elgin Harris, by the Hamilton Spectator, 1973 when Burlington was celebrating the Centennial. I can't possibly tell his story any better than the man, himself. Joan



Elgin Harris knew Burlington when coal lamps lit the mud streets, and sidewalks and running water were a part of the future.

Back in 1900, he heard a 12-piece orchestra play for the grand opening of the Hotel Brant and he watched as a town of 300 grew to 93,000.

At 97 years of age, Mr. Harris of Locust Street has lived in the area most of his life. (Ed. Note: *The Harris home was at 513 Locust Street, presently the home of A Different Drummer Books.*)

“And if I had to do it again, I would come to Burlington,” he says.

Mr. Harris worked as a typesetter for *The Spectator* and the *Sachem* newspaper in Caledonia – for 50 cents a week – to learn the newspaper trade.

“I was getting bored with it and I wanted to go west for adventure. I was about 20 years old then and anxious to find out what life had to offer. My parents didn't want me to go west so they decided to help me buy a newspaper in the area if I would stay. I agreed, and never left Burlington after that.”

In 1899, he bought – for \$1500 – the *Burlington Gazette*, which he wrote and printed.

That same year, Mr. Harris met and married Liona Mortimer of Burlington and they took a house on Pearl Street at \$5 a week.

“I can remember Colonel W. Kerns, a businessman and member of council, saying to me, ‘you young whipper-snapper. I give you six months before that paper of yours folds.’ But, it didn't fold and I had that paper for 60 years says Mr. Harris with a smile.”

“I fought for this town in my editorials,” says Mr. Harris proudly. “I instigated waterworks when everyone was using well water and paved roads when they were mud.”

He was elected reeve in the early 1900s and during his term, waterworks were introduced to the town.

“Just before the election, some of the local businessmen of the town threatened to take their advertising out of my paper if I didn't stop writing such strong editorials. I told them that a threat would make a good story and that was the end of that.”

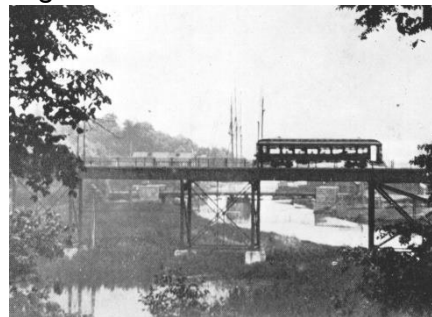
During the early years of his newspaper career, Mr. Harris had a circulation of 600, which included readers from as far away as Kilbride and Lowville.

At that time Burlington was bounded by Caroline Street to the north, Martha Street to the east and Maple Avenue to the West. Lakeshore Boulevard was called Water Street and where Brant Street met the lake was a large canning factory.

“Burlington was a lively town, even then,” says Mr. Harris. “People would come from Hamilton and all along the lakeshore on Saturday nights to dine and dance. The stores were always open until 11 or 12 o'clock at night and we had three hotels for entertainment.”

“The first automobiles were beginning to creep along the streets, but mostly people used the horse and buggy or wagon.”

“Rapid transportation in those days was the radial railway. It was an electric train which ran on tracks from Hamilton to Oakville. The cost of a round trip was 50 cents, and it took about 45 minutes to get to Hamilton from Burlington.”



"I had a bicycle on which I used to go everywhere. Sometimes I would take trips to London and back on it," says Mr. Harris.

Mr. Harris's son and daughter grew up in Burlington and when it came time for high school the children were sent to Hamilton because of the lack of secondary schools in town.

"There were no hospitals in town at the turn of the century and for quite a while afterwards, so babies were born in their homes and anyone who was ill was taken into Hamilton," says Mr. Harris.

"Life was very exciting then, but not all the days were happy ones. I remember when Burlington had its flu epidemic and 18 citizens died overnight."

In 1923 Mr. Harris was elected mayor of Burlington and during his term he saw the first paving of a street in the town.

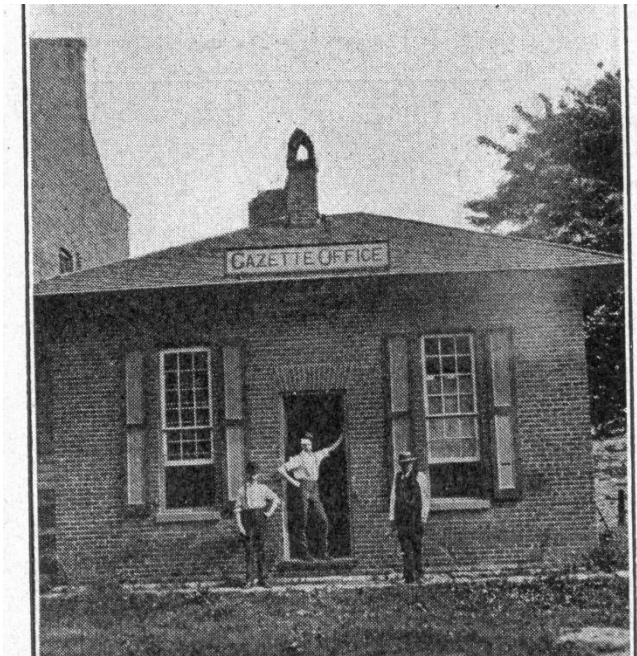
"It was a glorious sight to see Brant Street paved and smooth where only mud had been before," says Mr. Harris.

"There has been a lot of changes in Burlington since I was young, and I've watched it grow. I guess the biggest difference is the size."

"But this town has always been a beautiful place to live and that is one thing which isn't any different."

Notes: Elgin Harris was very involved in the town of Burlington. He served as a Town Reeve in 1922 and Mayor in 1923/24. He was also a Warden of Halton County, a member of the Water Commission and a member of the School Board. His son, George Harris also served a term as Mayor from 1936-1939.

Elgin Harris died in 1975 at the age of 99. He is buried, along with his wife, Lena and his daughter Marjorie, in Greenwood Cemetery.



That's Elgin in the straw hat to the right of the office door.. Photo: BHS Archives

Social Media Report *Jennifer Kemp*



WE DID IT
THANKS TO YOU!

Facebook
Instagram
X

1400
475
60

1500 by Christmas??

Membership Report *Pat Taylor*

We have a total of 68 renewed members – 45 seniors, 9 family (18 people) and 5 adults. Thank you again for your support. It sure would be nice to hit 70 members (same number as Auston Matthews aim for number of goals for the year.) Several ways to get your renewal to me using the form on the last page: the modern e-transfer method; Canada postal service, or personal delivery at the meeting on Monday May 13th. Thank you in advance for your continued support.



Outreach Report *Joan Downey*

Bastedo Trunk Gift

On 25th March, we met with a group of people at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church to present them with the Bastedo trunk. Refer back to the January 2022 edition of the Gazette for details of how we came to be in possession of this valuable artifact.



Photo: St. Paul's Presbyterian Church

From the parking lot of the present day church one can see the cemetery and old church on land donated by Gilbert Bastedo, the trunk owner.

The church members were very pleased to receive this gift from BHS. It is fitting that the trunk is back where it belongs.



Photo: Jennifer Kemp

New Posters

At our April meeting, 2 new posters were unveiled, giving us 20 posters on historic Burlington. The new topics: Spencer Smith Park and The Pig & Whistle Inn.

Look for them this summer proudly displayed along the fence at Spencer Smith Park.

LaSalle Park Historic Walk



On 27th March, 26 hearty members of the Appleby Walkers club joined Alan on a chilly walk at LaSalle Park

It was a balmy 6 deg. C but that did not dampen spirits. As always, the participants enjoyed Alan's banter and his knowledge of the area's history.

Maybe again next year?

Photo: Alan Harrington

UEL Cemetery Project

BHS member, Barbara Porecki, has been working diligently to get this project approved. She has received formal permission from the UEL Cemetery Trust for us to be allowed to go into the cemetery. Once that was received she approached the city and that permission came through just prior to our April meeting. The details need to be ironed out and you will hear more.

BHS has earmarked \$5000 for this project. Barb also applied to the City's "matching funds" program. The application was approved! The City not only matched our proposal, but added additional funds for volunteer time, etc. We hope to iron out the details and hold a general cleanup day near June 19th which is UEL Day in Ontario. Stay tuned for more details.

We, in Burlington, owe a lot to our UEL founding fathers.



Photo: BHS Archives

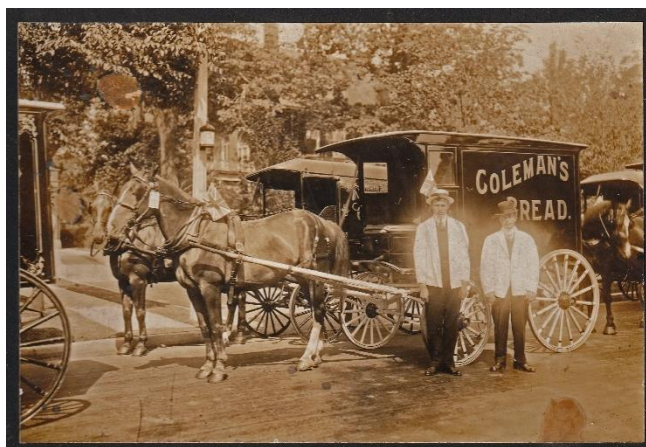
From the Archives *Joan Downey*



A June wedding

The date was 23 June 1919 when John Frederick McLelland married Elfrieda Stranger Easterbrook. It was a fine day and the guests gathered for a photo on the lawn at 631 Plains Road, East. In the picture we are looking Southeast. Plains Road is just behind the group.

This photo, along with many others, was shared by their grandson, BHS member Mark McLelland.



Does anyone have a photo of a Burlington delivery cart of long ago?
Would you share with us?

Until the 50s, daily bread and milk delivery was common.

A while ago I found this photo in the Archives and I wanted to find out if it was a Burlington company. Jennifer posted it on Facebook and asked her followers for more information. Turns out, no, it was not in Burlington but on Euclid Avenue in Toronto. The advertisement is from 1911. Too bad. But, it's still a great photo.

**Coleman's
Bread**

WRAPPED in Wax Paper and Sealed at the Factory. It retains all its excellent flavor, keeps moist and is a favorite everywhere. Ask for "The Limit."

Have our wagon call with "The Limit." You are under no obligation to us. We will be glad to show you.

'Phone Coll. 3645 - - 134 to 142 Euclid Ave.



The Burlington Historical Society

Preserving Burlington's History for Today and Tomorrow

Membership - 2024

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 using e-transfer, 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

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