

Yesteryears

The Newsletter of The Burk's Falls and District Historical Society



SUMMER 2019

No. 2

Heritage Day



Heritage Day Recap

July 13: Heritage Day 2019 was all about **survival**. It was a huge success and included numerous representatives to promote emergency preparedness. The emergency services and agencies that participated in the event interacted with the community and provided people with the opportunity to learn more about the agencies that provide disaster relief and general



support. Visitors learned how to build their own preparedness kit and participated in activities for chances to win prizes, including a gift from the Survivorman himself, Les Stroud.

At high noon, five fire departments converged on a farm field for a **firefighter's challenge**, those being Burk's Falls, Perry, Kearney, Magnetawan and McMurrich/Monteith Fire Departments. This was the second annual challenge and resulted in a win for the Burk's Falls Fire Department for 2019! Congratulations!



Attractions that entertained the crowd for the day included UFC Fighter, **Kyle "The Monster" Nelson**. Kyle is extremely supportive of promoting local events and always draws a crowd. We also had free face painting, free inflatables, reptile adventure camp, and winning techniques sports camp. There was plenty of food and refreshments for sale by local sporting organizations and the Girl Guides.



We called in the army and the **Algonquin Regiment** showcased military weapons and equipment. A **SHERP ATV** (pictured) was displayed and attracted not



only the general public but all our emergency services as well. This is an amazing rescue machine!

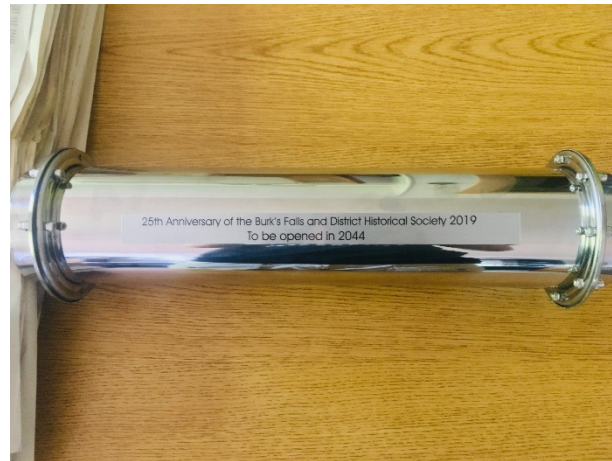
Another special guest, **Sawyer the Therapy Dog** from East and West Parry Sound Victim Services was in attendance. Sawyer made lots of friends on Survival Day.

Watt Century Farm House Events

Psychic Days

The Burk's Falls and District Historical Society would like to thank everyone who attended the Psychic Days for their support. We extend our appreciation to Penny Brandt who donated her time for this fundraiser, and Janice Skinner of Northspring Mercantile for donating the door prizes. Congratulations to Michelin L'Euyer and Brenda MacDonald who won the prizes.

Time Capsule



Heritage Day marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Burk's Falls & District Historical Society. As an homage to the milestone we have created a time capsule which will be opened in 2044 (on the fiftieth anniversary). Items that were enclosed included: letters and contributions from three heads of council, the principal of Land of Lakes Public School, and Norm Miller – MPP. Objects included are a fidget spinner, expired passports belonging to Jordan, Dylan, and Logan Watt, Public Meeting Minutes from our Flood Meeting, a Fall Fair Brochure, a Movie Flyer, USB sticks of photographs, an autographed photograph from Kyle Nelson – UFC Fighter, artwork from Kyle Nelson's 4 year old son, and letters from Historical Society Members.

Hallowe'en

The Burk's Falls and District Historical Society are joining in on the Haunted Highlands events by putting on a haunted farm house, and a pumpkin carving event on Sunday, October 20, 2019 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Watt Farm House (827 Chetwynd Road). Keep up to date on the event by following us on Facebook or checking out the event calendar on our website.

Wanted:

Information about the following pictures/artifacts

Burk's Falls Picnics held in High Park, Toronto in 1947, 1948, and 1949:



Unknown artifacts:



If you have any information about the above pictures/artifacts, please email us at info@burksfallsdistricthistoricalsociety.com

Burk's Falls and District Historical Society Archives – A Guide to the Holdings

In addition to the many artifacts that may be seen on display in the Wiseman's Corner Schoolhouse and the Watt Farm House, the Historical Society is fortunate to hold several interesting collections of historical photographs, newspapers, business correspondence, printed letterhead, family histories, manuscripts, journals and other ephemera. Visitors are invited to enquire about topics of interest and one of the staff or volunteers would be pleased to see if we are able to find items for your review while at the museum. A brief summary of our collection is provided below:

PHOTOGRAPHS: Thanks in large part to the generosity of the late Ted Bunt, our archive contains several hundred old photographs and post cards, many over 100 years old. The collection includes images of Burk's Falls from its earliest years, including prior to and immediately after the disastrous fire of June 1908. Many early buildings and industries are well represented, as are the Magnetawan River steamboats from the 1890's to the 1930's.

NEWSPAPERS: Older copies of the Burk's Falls Arrow are quite scarce, and we are fortunate to have a few, including one from 1887, and one from 1908 documenting the Great Fire. We have several issues from the 1920's and 1930's and many more from 1940's onward. We also recently acquired a large collection of the Arrow from 1947-66, the Powassan News from 1917 to 1966 and the successor newspaper, the Almaguin News from 1967 into the 2010's. A project is underway to properly catalogue and index these newspapers.

SCHOOL HISTORIES: Before school consolidation took place in the 1960's, each Township had several one room schoolhouses (of which our Wiseman's Corner Heritage Centre is one - S.S. #4 Ryerson). We have several written descriptions and reminiscences of the many schools in the area, as well as photographs of some. We are actively seeking copies of school yearbooks from more recent years.

FAMILY HISTORIES: At present, we have only a few histories of local families; we would welcome copies of any additional family histories that may be available. We do have a history file of the "First Family" of Burk's Falls, David Francis "Frank" Burk, available for viewing.

MANUSCRIPTS & JOURNALS: We have several journals and transcriptions of oral histories from early residents of Burk's Falls and District in which they describe their memories of life in the early days. A project is underway to make transcriptions and index each of these manuscripts.

LEGAL DOCUMENTS: We have a small collection of legal documents, mostly land deeds, mortgages, and similar items from the 19th and early 20th century. It includes an original land patent from Armour Township in the 1880's.

PETTITT FARM COLLECTION: Our collection of business receipts from the Pettitt Farm (Lot 11 Con. 6 Proudfoot Township) is a remarkable record of local commerce from about 1890 to 1940. Now housed in an archival binder, it consists of the following items: Vol 1. Receipts from Burk's Falls businesses, including among many others, James Sharpe, Fowler Bros. and A. A. Agar's General Stores, Magnetawan Tannery, Knight Bros. Planing Mill, doctors, dentists and other merchants in the village; Vol 2. Similar business receipts from merchants in Kearney and the Sand Lake area; Vol 3. Regional and national businesses such as Massey Harris, Cockshutt Plough Co. and others; Vol 4. A handwritten journal about the Pettitt family and their building of the log house on the property, together with additional information about the family.

T.B. (Boyd) HIGGINSON COLLECTION:

Boyd Higginson lived in Burk's Falls from about 1965 to 1976. He was employed as Principal of the Burk's Falls High School, and later at the East Parry Sound Board of Education. While living in Burk's Falls he started a private publishing venture, Old Rectory Press, (named after his residence

in the old Anglican rectory on Queen St.) to publish the family and local history pamphlets he wrote as a lifelong hobby. Three of these pamphlets are of direct relevance to the history of the Burk's Falls area: *Sportsman's Paradise* Volumes I (1965) and II (1972); and *Bengough and Burk's Falls* (1975).

In 2015, we were able to acquire a modest collection of Higginson's pamphlets, correspondence, typescripts and other items of his Canadiana collecting interest, written by and to Higginson. A pamphlet is available which records a brief biography and bibliography of the work of this interesting Burk's Falls resident.

MILITARY RECORDS:

The museum archives an assortment of military records from local sources, including selected records of the local men and boy who joined the 162nd (Parry Sound) Battalion during the Great War.

SCHOOL BOOKS

At the Wiseman's Corner School House, we have a collection of early Ontario school textbooks, prescribed for use during the 1880's to 1930's.

- Mike Quinton

Membership

Members enjoy exclusive benefits such as free access to the museums, events and activities while helping to support the development of new exhibitions and projects. Memberships also helps to maintain and care for the historic Wiseman's Corner Schoolhouse and Watt Century Farmhouse so they can continue to be enjoyed by all. Your membership contributes to the development of programs, new exhibits and artifacts. Help preserve our local heritage for years to come. Enjoy the perks of becoming a member and show your support for local history and culture with an individual or family membership.

Subscribe to an individual membership or a family membership and gain access to:

- Member events including exhibition previews
- Access to quarterly newsletters
- Early bird information on upcoming programs and events

Prices

Annual Individual Membership	\$10.00
Annual Family membership (2 adults and 2 children)	\$20.00

Items for Sale

Armour Township Making the Past Visible (Blue Book)	\$ 10.00
A Tribute to Ryerson Township 1880 to 2007 (Green Book)	\$ 10.00
Mugs	\$ 5.00
The Great War paper	\$ 1.00
Postcards	\$ 1.00
Calendars with early photos of the area	\$ 1.00



Various Graphite and Charcoal Drawings & Prints by Brad Crozier



Army Display Case

Come see our new display case featuring various wartime items such as canteens, gasmasks, a parachute backpack, binoculars, and much more!



Membership Form



Year: _____

**Please complete the form below to enroll as a member of the
Burk's Falls and District Historical Society.**

A Membership is good for one (1) calendar year and is renewed each March 1st.
Fees are subject to change.

Please check (✓) desired category for membership

<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual Annual	\$ 10	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Family Annual	\$ 20	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Please include your email address.

If an email address is not provided, correspondence will occur by regular mail.

Names: _____

Address: _____ **City:** _____

Postal Code: _____ **Telephone:** _____

Email: _____

Payment Methods: Cash, Cheques (payable to Burk's Falls and District Historical Society)

Please drop off form and payment to either museum or mail to the address above.

Thank-you!

..... **Office Use Only:**

Date: _____ **Cash:** _____ **Cheque #:** _____

Signature: _____



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