



Guelph Historical Society

www.guelphhistoricalsociety.ca

February 2005

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY SPEAKER

Dr. Terry Crowley spoke at the February lecture on the subject of Canada's entry into World War II. In his lecture entitled, "1939 — Why did Canada go to War?" Crowley provided an answer to this question based on the research he conducted for his book, *Marriage of Minds: Isabel and Oscar Skelton Reinventing Canada*.

In 1939, the Canadian parliament, for the first and only time in Canadian history, declared war on another country. Unlike 1914, Canada had a choice because the Statute of Westminster (1931) had granted Canada independence. Dr. Crowley presented various theories about why Canada chose to enter the war, such as, to save the Jews, to stop the Nazis, and to assist the allies. However, Crowley argued that the reason Canada went to war was loyalty to Britain or a sense of "residual colonialism". This sense of loyalty was in English-speaking Canada, however, French-speaking Canadians did not share the same sentiments due to the legacy of the previous war.

The major figures on the Canadian political scene were Prime Minister William Lyon MacKenzie King, Ernest Lapointe, and Oscar Skelton. Lapointe was King's Quebec lieutenant and Skelton was the chief bureaucrat in the department of External Affairs. These figures represented the three perspectives in Canadian politics: King had a personal and political affiliation with Britain, Lapointe offered the French Canadian perspective, and Skelton was a Canadian patriot.

In the months before the declaration of war, there was confrontation behind the scenes between the three groups. Skelton developed a strategy for Canada's participation in the war and it became the basis for the Canadian military involvement. He emphasized no conscription and a focus on munitions and food rather than personnel. Although King was supportive of Britain, he was not publicly committing to the war. The 'no commitment policy' was to reconcile French and English Canada.

Professor Crowley's lecture was an engaging topic that was of interest to great number of members. The question period was a lively discussion.

Terry Crowley is the chair of the Department of History at the University of Guelph. His book *Marriage of Minds: Isabel and Oscar Skelton Reinventing Canada* was published by the University of Toronto Press in 2003.

Proclamation of War

Greeting:
A PROCLAMATION.
ERNEST LAPOINTE, ATTORNEY-GENERAL
CANADA

Whereas by and with the advice of our Privy Council for Canada we have signified our approval of the issue of a proclamation in the Canada Gazette declaring war with the German Reich exists and has existed in our Dominion of Canada, as and from the 10th day of September, 1939.

Of all which our loving subjects and all others whom these presents may concern are hereby required to take notice and govern themselves accordingly.

In testimony whereof we have caused these our letters to be made patent and the Great Seal of Canada to be hereunto affixed. Witness: Our right trusty and well-beloved John, Baron Tweedsmuir of Elsfield, a member of our more honorable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of our most distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Grand Cross of our Royal Victorian Order, member of our Order of the Companions of Honor, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of our Dominion of Canada.

At our Government House, in our City of Ottawa, this 10th day of September, in the year of Our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Thirty-Nine and in the third year of our Reign.

By Command,
W. L. MACKENZIE KING,
PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA

From The Globe and Mail, Monday September 11, 1939

NEXT MEETING: MARCH SPEAKER

Tuesday, March 1, 2005 at 7:30 p.m.

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 161 Norfolk St., Guelph

Was Guelph a Drinkin' Town? — Shawn Day

Known for being the hometown of the fine Sleeman libations, Guelph was once the hotbed of temperance street battles. Between 1850 and the turn of the century, many considered Guelph a town of excessive indulgence. Was this reputation deserved? Shawn Day will attempt to share some evidence and examine this contentious issue. Shawn Day is a doctoral candidate at McMaster University, having completed his Masters in History at the University of Guelph. His Master's thesis explored the social and economic perspective of the hotel-keeper in late 19th century Guelph.

2005 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please complete this form and mail to GHS with a cheque payable to the Guelph Historical Society.

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Address: _____

Town/City: _____ Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Please mark the appropriate box: **Renewal** **New Member**

Type of Membership

Single: \$25.00 Institutional: \$25.00 Family: \$35.00

Student: \$12.50 Lifetime: \$175.00 Donation*: \$ _____

* A portion of the membership fee is eligible for a tax receipt. A tax receipt will be issued for additional donations of \$10.00 or more.

NOTICES

GUELPH HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

APRIL 5, 2005, 7:30 P.M.

ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Guelph Historical Society will hold its Annual General Meeting on April 5 at 7:30 p.m. The monthly lecture will follow the AGM.

If anyone is interested in serving on the Board please contact either President Andrew Thomson at (519) 821-8229 or Vice-President Elysia DeLaurentis at (519) 846-8280.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED: BUS TRIP COORDINATOR

The Guelph Historical Society needs a volunteer to coordinate the annual bus trip, which is one of our most popular and successful programs.

In the past, members have visited Goderich, St. Marys, Ancaster and Dundas. Every year, the trip is filled to capacity. For this program to continue, the GHS needs someone to organize the trip.

If anyone is interested in this position, please contact Elysia DeLaurentis at (519) 846-8280 or email elysia@studiospace.com.

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

The GHS would like to thank Andrew Bloomfield and his family for their help with the newsletter. Their effort is greatly appreciated.



GUELPH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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