



Newcastle Village and District Historical Society

20 King Avenue West • Newcastle • Ontario • L1B 1H7



Newcastle Community Hall - exterior renovations complete!

President's Message

Dear Members and Friends,

Thank you for your continuing support of the NVDHS. As most of you are aware, we have remained closed since last March, and the Community Hall itself is closed to the public at the moment as well. The exterior renovation is now complete. The clock tower has been restored to its former glory and is quite magnificent. The repairs to the brick work and mortar make the building look almost new again!



We look forward to re-opening as soon as we are allowed to do so - which will likely be in Step 3 of the provincial re-opening, when indoor museums and galleries are permitted to open. At the moment that would appear to be towards the end of July at the earliest.

We continue to maintain our Instagram, Facebook, email, and website and hope that you enjoy our posts and updates. It is always fun to visit our social media venues. We attempt to provide updates regularly with local and interesting information. Our computers are still off-site, and our summer student is hard at work

continuing the digitization effort. If you have a question about the history of Newcastle and District, please contact us.

We still have books for sale, though our inventory has been somewhat depleted, with quite a few sales and no new donations of books! If you have books about the area's history that need new homes, and would be willing to donate them, please let us know.

We are all looking forward to seeing you all in person soon (we hope!) - back in March 2020, I don't think any of us expected that we'd be shut down for almost 18 months. A huge thank you to our Board. They continue to respond to questions, locate information, update social media, balance the books, conduct research, publish and deliver our quarterly newsletters etc. Thank you.

Thomas Wallace

The Dutch in Clarington

By Myno Van Dyke

Prior to WW2, Dutch Emigration to Canada was minimal. The year 1929 saw about 2,500 emigrants make their way to Canada; many came to farm in the Prairie Provinces. After World War 1, the supply of free or cheap land in the North and the Prairies declined rapidly. Immigration essentially came to a standstill during Second World War. By then, more Canadians were moving from farms and rural communities to the cities, which left a lot of employment opportunities in agriculture for those wishing to come to Canada.

During the Second World War, the Dutch became much more familiar with Canada. Crown Princess Juliana and her two daughters, Beatrix and Irene, stayed in Ottawa during the war. Princess Margriet was born in Ottawa Civic Hospital. The maternity ward was "declared extraterritorial" which ensured that Margriet would qualify for Dutch Citizenship. After her birth, the family moved into "Stornoway" in Rockcliffe Park, the home of Canada's Leader of the Opposition, and today the home of Clarington's Erin O'Toole and his family.



Netherlands Ambassador Dr. J.H. van Roijin and Mrs. van Roijin greeting Dutch immigrants arriving by ship in Montreal, June 1947. (Photo: George Hunter, Library and Archives Canada / PA-123476)

In the Spring of 1945, the War was ending and it was the Canadian soldiers that the Dutch soon recognized as their liberators. After the War, many Dutch saw no personal future in The Netherlands. The country had been significantly damaged by the Nazis. Not only industry, but a large area of farmland had been intentionally flooded. They knew that rebuilding the country would take a long time.

In 1946, Canada sent an Immigration Officer to The Hague in the Netherlands to assist in re-settling "fiancés and dependents" of Canadian servicemen. The Dutch Government also knew that there was a demand for farm workers in Canada. So, in 1947, Canada amended its immigration regulations to include sponsored farm workers. As part of this initial agreement, both countries agreed that they would allow

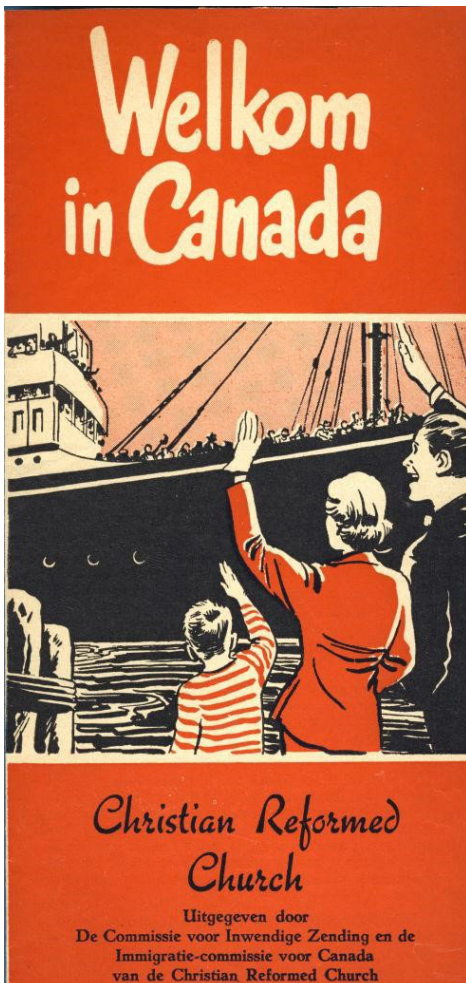
10,000 “agriculturists” to come to Canada. Canadian farmers, who required farm help would fill out applications and agree to pay \$75 per month for married men and \$45 per month for single men. They would also provide housing for their new workers. This program was officially called “The Netherlands Canada Settlement Scheme.”

Prime Minister MacKenzie King put this policy on record and began developing an expansive immigration program to bring in farm workers. In 1950, it became apparent that many emigrants could not afford the boat fare and shipping costs for their possessions. The Dutch provided subsidies to assist those who could not afford the trip to Canada. The Canadian Government changed the immigration regulations in 1953 so that Dutch citizens with “business, professional, technical and other backgrounds” could also come to Canada. After the first “wave” of Dutch settlement, the Canadian Government took over the responsibility of placement. The placements were often decided when they arrived in Canada, so many of the Dutch did not know where they would end up until then.



Van Dyke family on the Volendam, 1951.

From 1948 to 1958, there were 130,000 “sponsored” Dutch citizens who immigrated to Canada. Approximately 50% of the Dutch citizens came to the Province of Ontario and the majority were farm workers. The Deputy Minister of the Department of Mines and Resources, described the Dutch Immigration movement as “probably the most successful single scheme of its kind in Canadian History.”



Note: My own family took advantage of this program and in March, 1951 my parents, sister and I made the voyage to Canada on the S.S. Volendam, a former troop carrier. We arrived at a farm in Virgil, Ontario.

Many of these immigrants settled in the Clarington area. There were many farms needing “agriculturists” as the post-war industries were luring many Canadian-born farmers to work in local factories. Industries, like General Motors in Oshawa, were very attractive to young farmers or sons of farmers.

The Christian Reformed Church also played a role in Dutch emigration. Many new churches were being set up in key areas of settlement. They were interested in steering the Dutch emigrants to join their churches so they set up an “Immigration Committee for Canada.” They also provided “Chaplains” on the immigration ships that came to Canada. As well, they had “Fieldmen” to welcome and assist the new immigrants when they arrived and of course, steer them to the nearest Christian Reformed Church.

The First Christian Reformed Church in this area was organized in Blackstock in 1949 and services were at Blackstock United Church. The first minister was Rev. Herman Moes who conducted the services in Dutch. They soon outgrew that church and in 1950, moved to St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, on Church Street in Bowmanville. Here they had services on Sunday afternoons and soon the congregation grew to over 300. This group purchased land on the west side of Scugog Street at Jackman Road and by 1952, they moved the congregation there, first utilizing the basement as their church until

the rest was finished. This church was renamed as "Rehoboth" and in 1964, a second Reformed Church, called "Maranatha," was started on King Street East at Cemetery Road in Bowmanville. Soon, many from the eastern part of Clarington, including Newcastle, attended here.

One of first Dutch families to live on Mill Street North in Newcastle was the Bierstecker family. Frank Gibson had an apple orchard at the north end of Mill Street and his house was on the north side of Monroe Street (no longer there). Across from the house on the southwest corner of Monroe and Mill was an old barn that Gibson used to store his apples and other produce before the Durham Grower's Co-



Wybenga building at Mill and Monroe.

operative was built across the street and a bit farther north. In October, 1951, recent Dutch immigrants Simon and Grace Biersteker, along with their five children purchased the barn in partnership with another Dutch immigrant, Andy Wagenaar. They converted the barn into two separate apartments with Bierstekers living on the west side and the Wagenaars living on the east side. A few years later the Wagenaars moved to the 4th Concession of Clarke and purchased a tobacco farm there. Then, Dutch immigrants Dirk and Trijntje Brinkman took over the west side and Mr. Brinkman had an Allstate Insurance Business there until they moved their business and home to Bowmanville.

Simon Biersteker (Sr.) found employment at the J. Anderson Smith factory (JASCO) in Newcastle and there he met another Dutch immigrant, Bert DeBruyn. Soon after, Bert married Simon and Grace's daughter, Annie. In 1953, there were layoffs at JASCO and Bert DeBruyn went to work in construction in Northern Ontario where he learned how to make cement blocks. When he returned to Newcastle, to the former barn on Mill Street, they began making cement blocks in the side yard and basement of the building. They called it Newcastle Block and soon after business was so successful that both Bert and Simon quit their jobs at JASCO. In 1955 they purchased land severed from the Bandstra farm (also Dutch immigrants) at the east end of Newcastle on Highway 2... Here they constructed new buildings and later purchased the old "Honey Hollow" restaurant next door, to expand the Newcastle Block business even more. For the past 30 years the old barn still has a few apartments and has been owned by the son of another Dutch immigrant, Fred Wybenga.

On the east side of Mill Street North, across from the old Gibson barn lived Jacob and Dorothy DeJong and their 7 children. They emigrated from the Province of Friesland, The Netherlands in May, 1952. After working on a farm in Nestleton for a year, they bought the building lot and slowly constructed a new home for their family. Apparently, they had many problems with the well as it continually ran out of water. Since the Canadian Pacific Railway station was just to the north of the house, the DeJong's had permission to get their water supply there when they needed it.

Today, on the south side of the old Gibson barn, we find the residence of Narda and Ben Hoogcamp. They emigrated from the Netherlands; Narda in 1951 and Ben in 1953. They met and married and in 1957 purchased the large building lot from Mr. Rudland. They still live there to this day. They would often find concrete blocks in their yard from the Bierstekers and DeBruyns.

This is just a small sample of the Dutch families who immigrated to this area after World War 2. These families who settled on Mill Street North around Monroe Street clearly demonstrated their perseverance, their strong

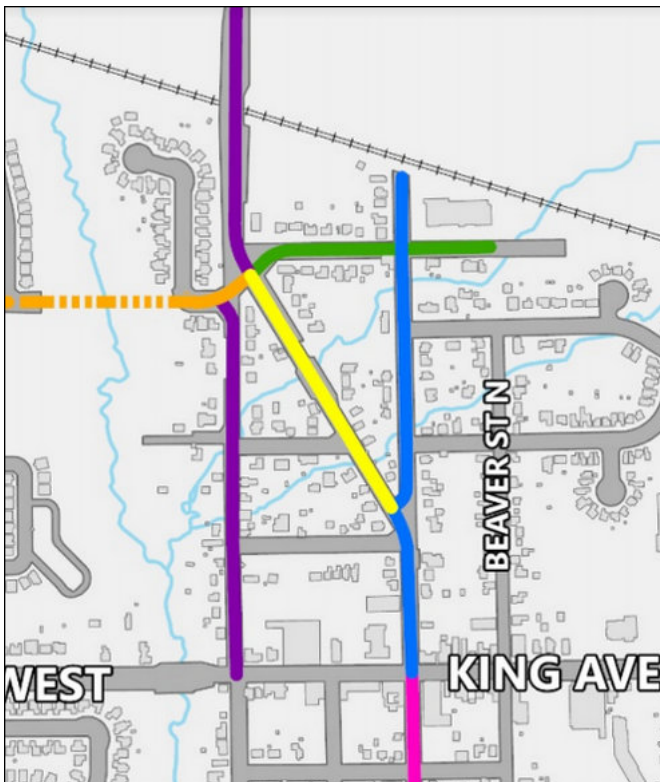
work ethics, their personal sacrifices and their fierce desire to adapt and contribute to their adopted land. They were 20th Century Pilgrims, who came for a better life, especially for their children.

The late Charles Crowther, wrote a series of articles in the Newcastle Village & District Historical Society Newsletter in 2017. In it he featured a number of Dutch families who came to the Newcastle area.

"As you have seen from the above stories, our friends did not come to Canada with very many material items, but what they did bring was a strong work ethic. They "changed" Newcastle for the better, in that they started businesses like the Cement Block factory, Farming operations, Flower Shops, Green Houses and Real Estate. Many contributed to volunteering, and are still doing so, like the Horticultural Society, Hall Board, Historical Society and Lions Club to name a few".



Hoogcamp home



On December 8, 2020, I received a note from Mark Jull, Planner for the Municipality of Clarington, saying that the Municipality was considering re-naming a short section of Mill Street north of King Avenue that ends just north of Monroe Street. I fully support this change as the existing route from King Avenue north to the 3rd Concession has 4 different names and is very confusing. I feel that the main street running north should just be called "Mill Street" and the short section that was formerly Mill Street North be renamed. I propose that this street be named in recognition of the many Dutch Immigrants that lived not only on that street but all over Clarington.

Rather than identifying one particular Dutch family, I felt that it would be more appropriate to re-name that portion of Mill Street North in a way that celebrates the contributions of all of the Dutch immigrants who came to this area. At a recent meeting of the Clarington Heritage Committee, I did a presentation and recommended that the Municipality consider renaming this section "Nederland Street".

"Nederland" is the proper Dutch name of the country we know as "The Netherlands." Note: Many think the country is named "Holland,"but it has not been called that for hundreds of years. Although even Dutch folks refer to it at times as Holland, Holland simply refers to the two Provinces, North Holland and South Holland which is more populated than other areas. There is a Nederland in Colorado and one in Texas, which also has a Nederland Avenue.

Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic at this time, the process to re-name Mill Street has been postponed by the Municipality of Clarington until the fall of 2021. At that time, a public meeting will be held to receive further input.

Clarington's Best Kept Secret

By Crystal Yaki

Now more than ever, people are trying to grow their own food during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, as both a welcomed distraction and to provide a reliable food source. We have seen people doing everything from container gardening to starting new community gardens. While families are engaging in more home-based activities, they are also finding new ways to explore their surrounding communities. Newcastle is rich in history and offers multiple opportunities to learn and explore during these unpredictable times.

Over many years, families have made it a tradition to visit local Wilmot Orchards farm to pick blueberries. But, if you ask some who live in the area, they may say that they have never heard of it, or never been there before, even though it's entering its 46th year of operations. A family-run business that is nestled just outside the heart of Newcastle on Concession Rd 3, Wilmot Orchards was founded in 1976 by Charles Stevens and named after Wilmot Creek. Wilmot Creek was named after one of Newcastle's founding fathers, Samuel Wilmot, and flows directly through the back of the Steven's farm. Together, Charles and his wife Judi Stevens, embarked on this farming adventure. They later had a daughter named Courtney, who has grown up farming and plays a major role in the operations of the business today.



Judi, Charles and Courtney Stevens

In 1976, they started farming apples and cash crops, with the intention of adding blueberry bushes. They planted their first blueberry bush in 1979 and they opened for the first pick-your-own blueberry season in 1983. When we ask why blueberries, this is something Charles wanted to do and he really wanted to differentiate from the norm. Before embarking on his journey, he had a government soil test completed and was told that he could never grow blueberries with their soil condition. While some may have taken that information and stopped pursuing their dreams, this was just the beginning for Charles. His ambition and determination is what fuelled his success over the years.



Aerial photo is of the original Stevens' family farm in Bowmanville (now Loblaws).

If we look closer at the Steven's family roots within Clarington, you will discover that their family goes back 7 generations. They actually started farming in Bowmanville in 1810 on Hwy 2, where the McDonalds and Loblaws are located now. Stevens Rd., running behind the Home Depot and Garnet B. Rickard Complex, is named after the family and is where Charles' parents Bob and Jean Stevens moved after selling the family farm. The house that Charles grew up in was located exactly where the McDonalds on Hwy 2 is built. His father Bob, Grandfather Ross and Great-Grandfather R.R were all dairy farmers of their Glen Rae Dairy. The bottling and storing was done at their Glen Rae Farm on Hwy 2 in

Bowmanville, just one mile west of the town.

Charles had a solid understanding of farming when he moved to Newcastle in 1976, he was eager to put his skills to good use. They practice no-till farming, which allows nutrients from falling fruit and leaves to continuously go back into the earth. If the bushes are well looked after, they have a life expectancy of up to 50 years - some of the original bushes from 1979 are still producing.

Blueberries are considered a native plant in Canada and can be found growing naturally in all provinces. They were called "star fruits" by North American indigenous peoples because of the five-pointed star shape that is formed at the blossom end of the berry. It was believed that the Great Spirit sent them from the stars to feed them and keep them healthy. For centuries, blueberries were used as a source of food and for medicinal purposes. The rediscovered health benefits have driven blueberry consumption even higher today. They have earned their reputation as a super fruit that is rich in nutrients.

A single blueberry bush can produce as many as 6,000 blueberries per year. Wilmot Orchards has nine varieties that are available to the public; they include Blue Jay, Blue Ray, Jersey, Patriot, Berkeley, Duke, Nelson Blue Crop and Toro. They do sell some of their berries to local bakeries, but around 98% of the berries that come out of the farm are pick your own.



Environmentally conscious, the Stevens have solar panels on their barn that feed back into the grid and help them offset their usage. All of their berry packaging is recyclable and the boxes, plates and cutlery used in their cafe are biodegradable. They strive to do what they can to benefit the land and the environment, the way that it benefits us.

Located right at the orchard is a seasonal cafe (AppleBerries Cafe) where you can enjoy one of their delicious blueberry desserts and a refreshing drink on their patio. The cafe opened in 1994 and Judi Stevens used to do all the baking in her home kitchen and then transported the goodies to the cafe. Not anymore! With their new addition, all of the baked goods are made at the cafe and almost all of them are made from scratch. They even have ice cream made from scratch with their fresh berries - a must try!

We think Courtney Stevens said it best when she said "We are Clarington's best kept secret!" They are proud to be a multi-generational farming family in this community. Their goal has always been to provide a quality fruit and an elevated farm experience. We hope they will continue to grow their history (and their blueberries) in Newcastle for years to come!

Three Identical Houses

By Leslie Wilson

Many houses, like all people, change considerably in appearance over the years. Did you know that 106 King Ave. East Newcastle (currently the Sunrise Griddle) and 118 King Ave. East Newcastle (currently Newcastle Hearing Solutions) began life as identical twins? In fact they had an identical triplet sibling; the miller's house at 612 Mill St. South, in Bond Head!



106 and 118 King Avenue East

The first owner of the lots on which 106 & 118 King East stand was a brother of Nathaniel Powers, first settler of what became Kirby, who had settled in what would eventually become Newcastle about a year or so before Nathaniel Powers came to Kirby.

As any title searcher who has had the dubious joy of title searching an old Newcastle village property will tell you: it is usually, to put it mildly, a dog's breakfast. Whether it was William McIntosh Sr., his widow, or his son William Jr. who purchased the properties (and precisely when) from Powers is not possible to ascertain from the land register books as the registrar of that era frequently neglected to enter instrument numbers into them and if you don't have the instrument number you can't locate the deed/will/bargain & sale etc. He also had a habit of entering an instrument number into the wrong book – and add to all that the then registrar's atrocious handwriting and a title searcher often throws in the towel. So that is why my research into when a member of the McIntosh family purchased them yielded no definitive answer. However it was by 1856 when Newcastle was incorporated as a village, if not some years before.

Because 106 & 118 King East were at one time identical in design and interior layout and were also identical to the original design and interior layout of the miller's house at 612 Mill St. South it is assumed they were all built at the same time for the McIntosh family. None of them were millers, but they owned the flour mill at Bond Head and had since the early 1840s when Wm McIntosh Sr. purchased the property from George Strange Boulton of Cobourg; thus they would have been responsible for erecting a house suitable for their miller.

All three houses are of red brick, one storey, and square. In design they are a very plain interpretation of what is called a Regency cottage. They all had only one fireplace, and that was (and still is) in the south west quarter of each house, thus the west wall of each house once had only one window. Originally none of them had porches. The porch on 118 King East was added by either William McIntosh Jr. or the mother of Dr. Butler when she purchased the properties from Wm Jr.'s estate. The field stone entry on 106 King East was added by Lloyd Stephenson in the 1940s/early 1950s, after he had purchased it from Dr. Butler. Lloyd's daughter Nancy would some years later purchase 118 King East and today, both lots again have only one owner, Syvan Developments. While the miller's house had many tenants during the 19th century, it had only one owner and that was the McIntosh family. Shortly before the first world war Dr. Carveth purchased the property from the McIntosh estate and it remained in the Carveth family for almost one hundred years.

So the next time you pass by the no longer identical twins on the north side of King Ave East, take a minute to examine them and you should readily see that they once really were identical. 612 Mill St. South is more difficult as you need to have known the house as it was seventy years ago. The additions to the house made by Gordon Carveth in the last quarter of the 20th century have enclosed all but the north wall of the original "miller's house".

The Newcastle Royal Oaks

By Myno Van Dyke

The coronation of King George VI in May of 1937 was a special time for residents of not only Newcastle, Ontario, but all of Canada. NVDHS editor Herb Taylor wrote an article about the Newcastle Royal Oaks in the January-February 1995 edition...

"On May 12th it was "Coronation Day" and George VI and Elizabeth were crowned at Westminster Abbey. Each year, on May 29th there was another celebration called "Oak Apple Day." This was a day when people wore oak leaves and acorns. This was to celebrate when Charles II hid from Cromwell's Roundheads by climbing an oak tree. To celebrate the Coronation year, the "Men of the Trees Society" sent a supply of Royal Oak acorns and Royal Oak Seedlings to Ontario in 1937 to be distributed to schools in Ontario. The hope was that in later years "Newcastle Royal Oaks" might stand tall in Ontario school yards as a reminder of the historic event that took place on May 12, 1937.

The Lake Shore School in Newcastle received some of these trees and Hazel Crago, then Hazel Powell, thinks it was her brother Donald who brought a tree home that was planted beside her father's house. Hazel's mother, Marjorie Selby, daughter of Isaac Newton Selby married Samuel Powell; she taught school for a short time at Elizabethville, near Kendal, and then she and Sam moved to Morgan's Road, living near the lake on the west side of the road. The tree grew and matured but didn't ever seem to produce many acorns. Maybe this summer we can find some so that more Newcastle Royal Oaks can be grown in Clarke Township.



Royal Oak on Wilmot St.

There are two other Royal Oaks in the Village. On the north side of Wilmot Street, just east and north of the hydro transformer installation there is a plaque beside a Newcastle Royal Oak which says:

"THIS ROYAL OAK FROM WINDSOR FOREST, ENGLAND WAS PLANTED HERE AT THE TIME OF THE CORONATION OF GEORGE VI, 1937 BY WILLIAM J. KENEFICK, WHO WAS BORN IN NEWCASTLE IN 1863. ERECTED BY HIS SON, EDGAR J.A. KENEFIC FOR CANADA'S CENTENNIAL YEAR 1967."

William Kenefic was listed as a miller and lived on King Street with his wife Annie who was a dressmaker. William was for many years the "Fish Manager" at the Wilmot Fish Hatchery and in 1899 he was made the manager of the Wilmot Power station. He was there until it was sold to Seymour Power in 1911.

"The other Newcastle Royal Oak is on Edward Street, west of the Anglican Church. Dorothy Trenwith, who until a few years ago, lived on the south-west corner of Church and Edward Streets tells the following story:

Dorothy was born in Toronto, and was just 20 months old when her mother died and she went to live with her grandfather George Alfred Trenwith, and her Aunt Louise in West Toronto. Her grandfather, who had worked for 41 years for the Grand Trunk and CNR railroad, retired in about 1924, and moved to Newcastle. Grandfather Trenwith really enjoyed Newcastle and Dorothy can remember him heading off to fish up at Rice Lake, in a large McLaughlin touring car, with Mr. Smith from the Box Factory.

A Newcastle Royal Oak was planted on the park area between the Community Hall and the CIBC Bank, and Aunt Louise was at a special service for the planting. Aunt Louise was a Director of the Horticultural Society and had a Royal Oak seedling. She saw Joseph Coulson at the village ceremony, suggested to him that he help plant a tree on Edward Street, and so Joe Coulson and Grandfather George Trenwith planted a Newcastle Royal Oak on Edward on the north west corner of the Trenwith property. The tree was threatened by the street widening that

happened a couple odd years ago, but several members of our Society, including Ralph Whincop, were there supporting Stephen Oakley, and the tree was saved."

In a ceremony at Newcastle Public School, School Board Chairman Mr. C.T. Batty planted two trees, described as "A Royal Oak seedling from the grounds of Windsor Castle, and "a Canadian Maple." George Meadows assisted the Chairman in distributing coronation medals and flags. Then the students formed a line, smallest children in the front and Board members in the rear and marched over to the Newcastle Community Hall to listen to the two radios installed by Mr. Brereton to broadcast the Coronation Ceremony at 11 a.m.

The evening before, on the lawn of the Community Hall, where members of the local Council, members of the Newcastle Horticultural Society and local citizens witnessed the planting of two trees. As well as a Royal Oak, they also planted a "12 foot high Schwedler Purple Maple." Councillor E. A. Walton, supervised the planting and local citizens that attended were encouraged to assist. Councillor Walton's son Murray, was the youngest to participate. Murray Walton is still an active member of NVDHS and a Life Member.

National Indigenous History Month

In June, Canadians celebrate National Indigenous History Month to honour the history, heritage and diversity of Indigenous peoples in Canada. It is a time for learning about, appreciating and acknowledging the contributions First Nations, Inuit and Métis people have made in shaping Canada.

We acknowledge and honour the land that we are on, situated within the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas and Chippewas of the Anishinabeg, known today as the Williams Treaties First Nations. We pause to reflect on the Indigenous people who came before and their important place in the history of Canada. Our work on these lands acknowledges their resilience and their longstanding contributions to the area now known as the Municipality of Clarington. It is on these ancestral lands that we engage in personal journey of reconciliation.

Open your mind and heart



Membership Info

Single Membership (1 vote):

\$10 - digital newsletter (email)

\$15 -print newsletter

Family Membership (2 votes):

\$15 - digital newsletter

\$20 - print newsletter

Corporate Membership (1 vote):

\$25 - digital & print newsletter

Notes:

Memberships are for one year from the date of payment.

Corporate sponsors will be recognized on the NVDHS website, with a link to their website.

Newsletters are published quarterly. Print newsletters will be delivered by mail, or by hand. Those with print memberships can also opt for a digital copy to be emailed.

Memberships can be purchased or renewed online at newcastlehistorical.ca OR by cheque mailed to: Newcastle Village and District Historical Society 20 King Ave. W., Unit #3 Newcastle, ON L1B 1H7 OR can be paid in person* at the Historical Room Newcastle Community Hall 20 King Ave. W. Newcastle, ON, on Tuesday or Saturday mornings from 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon. (*once we are able to reopen)

Questions? Email us at info@newcastlehistorical.ca or via our website, newcastlehistorical.ca.