



Winter 2015

Important Highlights:

- OHS Visit
- History Day
- Hymers Fair
- Project updates

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The Silver Express

Ontario Historical Society Comes to Visit

Thursday, November 6th was a historic day for the society.

Executive director of the Ontario Historical Society (OHS), Rob Levery, made his first ever visit to the Silver Mountain and Area Historical Society to welcome us to the OHS family. He was accompanied by two local members of the OHS Board, 2nd Vice-President Pam Cain and Director Michel Beaulieu. On hand to greet Rob was Co-President Shel-

ley Simon, Directors Kyle Duckworth and Elle Andra-Warner, as well as society member and author Elinor Barr.

The meeting was very productive and allowed the members of the society to brief Rob on some of our projects. Afterwards, Rob was taken on a tour of the station and briefed on its history, in particular regarding Dorothea Mitchell, the "Lady Lumberjack." A first edition copy of the book Lady

Lumberjack now resides in the OHS library.

We look forward to more visits from Rob in the future and appreciate the ongoing support we receive from the OHS.



Rob Levery & Pam Cain visit with members of the SMAHS. (M. Beaulieu)

History Day 2014

On Sunday, August 17th the society hosted its 3rd Annual History day at the Silver Mountain Station. This year's edition would feature several notable guest speakers, one of which travelled a long way to be there.

First to join us was Nancy Perozo, who is on the board of the Friends of the Grain Elevators. This organization was formed a number of years ago to help preserve both the history of the grain industry in Thunder Bay and its physical structures.

Nancy described the work that her group had already undertaken, especially in recording much

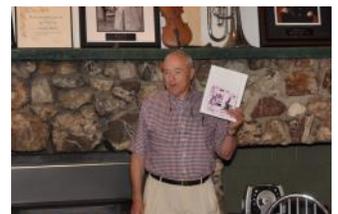
of the oral histories of those who worked in the elevators. The Friends have begun work on obtaining a historic designation for one of the city's oldest elevators, the Fort William Elevator in Westfort.

In many ways the efforts of the Friends of the Grain Elevators mirror those of our organization. We can certainly learn a lot from what they have accomplished and we are proud to be partners with them in the preservation of our area's history.

Our second guest travelled several hours to be a part of History Day. Bruce and Sue Kerfoot are

the owners of the Gunflint Lodge, which is located on the Minnesota side of Gunflint Lake. Our mandate of course encompasses the area on the Ontario side of lake, so we were very excited to have Bruce with us.

Bruce's grandparents purchased the Gunflint Lodge back in the 1920's and eventually his mother took over



Bruce Kerfoot



Next society

General

Meeting:

March 29, 2015



President's Report

It has been another exciting and successful year for the society.

Over the past 12 months we have seen our membership continue to grow. The message is getting out regarding who we are and what we are all about. Let's hope that 2015 is just as successful in that regard.

The society continues to work toward the completion of several of our initial projects. The final approvals have been received for the dedication of a portion of Highway 588 and hopefully signs will be going up soon. Work also continues on the preservation of historic sites in the North-Gunflint Lakes Corridor, albeit at a much slower pace. We look forward to adding several more projects to our plate in the months to come.

Financially we are slowing moving

toward a more stable footing, and we will continue to do so as our membership expands. We look forward to tapping into some government funding in the near future which will allow us to continue to grow. A full financial report will be provided at the next AGM.

Speaking of our AGM, the annual general meeting is coming up in March and we hope to have a good turn out for this event. Elections for all the board positions will take place at the AGM as well. We would like to see some new people on the board, especially

since we already have several vacancies to fill. Nominations should be sent to:

shelley@silvermountainhs.ca

One thing the society could really use is an infusion "people power." The board can always use help when it comes to organizing and planning events. Sometimes an extra hand can go a long way. If you'd like to help out, contact one of the board members list below.

Shelley & Dave

Board of Directors

Shelley Simon, Co-President

shelley@silvermountainhs.ca

Dave Battistel, Co-President

dave@silvermountainhs.ca

Treasurer (vacant)

Secretary (vacant)

Kyle Duckworth, Director

kyle@silvermountainhs.ca

Director (vacant)

Elle Andra-Warner, TBMHS rep

elle@silvermountainhs.ca

History Day/Hymers Fair

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ship of the business. Justine Kerfoot became an iconic figure in the area and even wrote several books documenting her life in the wilderness.

Bruce regaled us with the stories of his youth growing up on the lake and experiencing all the history it had to offer. The Kerfoot's closest friends were the First Nations families who lived on the Canadian side of the lake, such as the Cook's and the Plummer's. Many of them had been there since before the construction of the PAD&W Railway, so they were able to share with him both the physical and oral history of the area.

We were very honoured that Bruce and Sue took the time to join us, and we hope that they can visit us again in the future.

Planning has already commenced for the 2015 edition. Dates and details will be discussed at the AGM.

Hymers Fair

The society once again had a presence at the 102nd edition of the Hymers Fall Fair. We were a little more prepared than our first year, and that experience made us even more successful.

The booth was manned on the Sunday by Co-President Dave Battistel and on Monday by Director Kyle Duckworth. There was a

steady flow of traffic past our booth, with a lot of people stopping to chat or ask questions about the society.

Over the two days we sold several memberships, as well as several copies of the Lady Lumberjack book (from which we receive a share of the proceeds). Look for us again at this year's installment!



Society booth at the Hymers Fall Fair.

Project Update: North-Gunflint Lakes Historic Corridor

Work continues on the preservation of historic sites in the North-Gunflint Lakes Historic Corridor. These locations date from Archaic-period Natives, fur trade era voyagers and 19th/20th century railway, logging and mining ventures.

The initiative is being spearheaded by Co-President Dave Battistel, who has been working on this project with the assistance of a cultural heritage specialist from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MTCS) in Toronto.

Recent developments have lent some urgency to the process. On a visit to the site last July, it was discovered that some of the rock ovens at the ghost town of Leeblain on Gunflint Lake had been disturbed. While there does not appear to be any malicious intent in this activity, it can lead to irreparable damage to these important artifacts.

MPP Bill Mauro was made aware of the situation and there has been an increased effort from the

MTCS. It is a very slow process, but one that we hope will yield some tangible results in the near future.

We will hopefully have more to report at the society general meeting in March.



Disturbed rock oven at Leeblain.



Project Update: Highway Dedication

The society is one step closer in our pursuit to have a portion of Highway 593 dedicated in honour of local pioneer Dorothea Mitchell, the “Lady Lumberjack.”

Dorothea Mitchell was a vital part of the history of Silver Mountain and the surrounding area. She ran a sawmill, lumberyard and was postmistress of Silver Mountain Station. She was the first unmarried women in Ontario to be

granted a homestead, right here in Silver Mountain.

Last year letters were sent out to all the local road boards to seek their input as required by Ministry of Transportation protocol. Although it was a slow and time-consuming process, all the necessary approvals were obtained.

Application can now be made to the MTO to finalize the dedication. We hope to have things

completed as quickly as possible so signs can be ordered and a dedication ceremony can be held in the foreseeable future.

Thanks go out to Co-President Shelley Simon for leading this important project. Please stay tuned for more details coming soon.

Upcoming events: Annual General Meeting

The society Annual General Meeting (AGM) will take place on Sunday, March 29th, 2015 at the Silver Mountain Station. The meeting will begin at 2:00pm.

Current and new members are encouraged to attend. 2015 membership fees can be paid at the meeting; only paid members will be allowed to vote on any posi-

tions or resolutions. All board positions (co-presidents, secretary, treasurer and directors) are open for election. Nominations can be submitted in writing to the society or by email to shelley@silvermountainhs.ca.

The board will present the current state of affairs and provide up-

dates on current projects and initiatives. Question and answer time will follow.

Stayed tuned for other upcoming events, such as the 2015 installment of our very successful History Day program and other society sponsored events.



Stay up-to-date with the society blog.

Visit it at

silvermountainhs.com



SILVER MOUNTAIN AND AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The Silver Mountain and Area Historical Society (SMHS) was founded in October 2012. We are a non-profit organization committed to preserving the history of the Port Arthur, Duluth and Western Railway (PAD&W), the Silver Mountain Station and the surrounding area.

Our mandate includes the promotion of the railway, as well as the preservation of the remaining physical traces of the line and structures. We are also interested in the cultural and economic history of the area, such as settlements, mining and logging. Our geographic area stretches from the former railway stop at Sellers west to the US-Canada border at Gunflint Lake.

The SMHS is governed by an elected board of directors and is affiliated with the Ontario Historical Society (OHS). We are headquartered out of the historic Silver Mountain Station, which was built in 1907 and is the last remaining station on the PAD&W line.

Membership

The Silver Mountain and Area Historical Society welcomes any and all new members.

Membership benefits:

- Invitation to special events and gatherings
- Regular newsletters
- Volunteer opportunities
- Voting privileges at the Society's Annual General Meeting



For more information on how to join us, please visit our website or email us at info@silvermountainhs.ca



Silver Mountain HS



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