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OWHN NEWSLETTER

<http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/~owhn/>

OCTOBER 2012

OWHN 2013 Spring Conference

Hold the Date:

*Friday April 5 &
Saturday April 6*

On the theme of

*Food & Culinary
History*

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Newsletter created
by
Sarah Hogenbirk
and Alyson King

Women and the War of 1812

Friday, April 13:

Friday evening's program offered a tasty reception at John McKenzie House, home of the Ontario Historical Society, and a presentation by "Studio Thomas + Guinevere." Thom Sokoloski and Jenny-Anne McCowan introduced their art installations, "The Encampment," which have been set up in various sites, including New York City and now Toronto to celebrate the War of 1812. The goal of this Encampment is to offer participants the chance to develop an artistic response to personal profiles developed by Jenny McCowan. Each participant is given a tent to develop a display that artistically represents one of these profiles. We were reminded of the importance of public

history projects like this one to engage a broad audience in the appreciation of the historical past. The evening concluded with a short AGM.

Saturday, April 14:

The Saturday program was held at the Blue Barracks at Fort York and the context was set with a session entitled "Race, Gender, Ethnicity and Class in Colonial Canada Before the War." Jane Errington, Professor of History at Queen's University, presented "On a Precipice: The Pre-War World of Upper Canada." Professor Errington traced the contours of the diverse community that had developed in Upper Canada. Women reacted both to the shock of war and to the continuities in their lives of sustaining their fami-

lies, social relationships and the economy.

Francoise Noel, Professor of History at Nipissing University spoke on "Women and Family Life in Early Nineteenth Century Canada." Women in both French and English families acted as stabilizing forces in society, maintaining the seigneuries with the men away, sustaining essential social links, and keeping up "appearances" in the face of poverty.

Susan Hill, Assoc. Professor of History and Director of First Nations Studies at the University of Western Ontario, and Richard Hill, Director of Deyohaha:ge: Indigenous Knowledge Centre, Six Na-

(Continued on page 2)

Herstoriescafe.ca

HerstoriesCafe received a **Heritage Toronto Community Award** for our outreach work in the City of Toronto at the Heritage Toronto Awards ceremony at Koerner Hall October 9th, 2012.

Here is what the Jury said:

HerstoriesCafé was founded to bring together people interested in local women's history through free café talks generally held at a location related to the evening's topic. Topics explored include the history of women teachers' unions and the experience of black women in nineteenth-century Toronto. City-wide in its

reach, HerstoriesCafé seeks to create connections between all those who "do" history: historians, archivists, museum practitioners, teachers, students and history enthusiasts.

The jury recognized Herstories Café for its contemporary and innovative approach to local history programming. The jury also noted that the group has brought to light a wide diversity of perspectives on local history, as well as otherwise untold stories in their own contexts.

For more info: <http://herstoriescafe.ca>

Heritage Fairs Award

OWHN's award in women's history for the Ontario Heritage Fairs Association was presented at all 20 regional fairs in 2012. Students received a newly designed ribbon and an OWHN pin, along with a certificate. The Heritage Fairs allow students to act as historians, interpreters, and story-tellers. The criteria for OWHN's award are:

- Winning projects must have a primary focus on women in Canadian history and the ways in which women have contributed to Canadian society. It may deal with Canadian women at the local, provincial, national or international level.
- Projects must provide evidence that the student has thought critically about one or more of the following: historical significance, primary and secondary sources, continuity and change, cause and consequence, possible interpretations of the student's chosen theme.
- Students must be able to present project in an engaging and convincing fashion.



Women and the War of 1812 (con't)

tions Polytechnic surveyed the effects of the War of 1812 on local Indigenous Peoples, including pitting aboriginal communities against one another.

In the second panel, Julia Roberts, Assoc. Professor of History at the University of Waterloo offered 'voices' from the War of 1812, including a fascinating document portraying the reactions of a "lady" during the War. Maria Moncur, a doctoral candidate at Queen's University, presented stories by women of the War (as opposed to stories about them) through the lens of petitions they presented to the state. Cindy Ellen Crawford, chair of the Algoma War of 1812 Commemoration Committee, offered two profiles of women during the war: Charlotte Ermatinger and Madelaine Askin. Both were wives, mothers and active in their communities, but their assessment in history is radically different because of race, where the oral tradition alone recorded Charlotte's contribution.

The keynote address was given by Cecilia Morgan, Professor at OISE/UT. She spoke on "Gender and the War of 1812 in Upper Canada: History, Memory and Commemoration." Professor Morgan compared the imagery of commemorated women as vulnerable and victimized as opposed to symbolism of honour, patriotism, and courage in male warriors. These constructions were promoted through local histories, museums and other means of commemoration.

The final set of presentations at the conference featured three community activists and educators who are important in popularizing women of the War of 1812. Two are direct descendents of Laura Secord, artist Barbara Klunder who has constructed a set of paper cuts on Secord, and Caroline McCormick who is President of the Friends of Laura Secord. Teacher Karen Fraser presented a variety of ways through which she introduces women's stories into the Grade 7 history of her students. All presented important ways for the history of the War of 1812 to be more accessible to the general public.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

2013 Spring Conference

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Saturday April 6

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REMINDER:
Renew your
membership for
2013!

Minutes of the AGM, April 2012

Ontario Women's History Network, Annual General Membership Meeting, April 13, 2012, Toronto, Ontario (excerpts)

Present: Executive - Linda Ambrose, Gail Cuthbert Brandt, Sharon Cook, Jane Errington, Rose Fine-Meyer, Sarah Hogenbirk, Alyson King, Sandra Kritzer, Julia Roberts, Jan Haskings-Winner, and OWHN member attendees.

1. Alyson King, Chair, called the meeting to order and asked for approval of the 2011 AGM meeting minutes and the Agenda. Approval of the Minutes and the Agenda: moved by Jane Errington and seconded by Lorna Mclean. The motion was passed.

Alyson and Gail are updating the membership lists-emails are important and Gail is putting the lists on Excel. Alyson confirmed the two year terms of the Executive first elected in 2011-2012. The Slate of Officers is Chair: Alyson King, Vice-Chair: Jane Errington, Treasurer: Gail Cuthbert Brandt, Secretary: Rose Fine-Meyer. Members at large: Jan Haskings-Winner, Linda Ambrose, Sarah Hogenbirk, Sharon Cook, Julia Roberts, Sandra Kritzer

2. Treasurer's Financial Report. Gail Cuthbert Brandt provided copies of the Treasurer's Financial report. Gail noted that this year there was a small surplus. The total expenditures for 2011 were \$6912.78 and the Net Assets for the end of the year were \$636.47. Expenditures included conference 2011 expenses, auditor's fees, OWHN support for the women's history month poster. OHS membership fees and bank fees.

OWHN paid \$1000 for an audit for a two year period. Gail noted that OWHN had never submitted a professional audit before so it was good we did that now.

Business arising from the report. Linda Ambrose asked about the membership numbers. Gail noted that we had 38 paid members so far in 2012 but that membership was close to 80 if we include 2011 members. Jane Errington asked if we could perhaps make a note in the Ontario Historical Society about membership to OWHN. Gail noted that this year we went back to a member's audit. Marlene Epp signed a document that she received the books and that they were in order. It was decided that OWHN approach Marlene Epp again and the executive voted that we send a thank you letter to Marlene for her work and support (Sharon Cook moved, seconded by Sandy Kritzer). Motion by Linda Ambrose, seconded by Jan Haskings-Winner to accept the Treasurer's report. The motions were passed.

3. The Chair announced the passing of Dr. Helen Smith and noted that OWHN had sent a \$100 donation in her honour to Women's Studies at Lakehead University. Alyson also noted that OWHN gave \$1500 towards the Women's History poster but ideally we wanted to provide \$2000. This year we hope to provide the \$2000 for the poster, if our financial situation allows. Jane Errington made a motion that OWHN continue to support of the poster. Tina Bates seconded the motion. Jane noted that the posters were very important and that we continue to provide financial support. OWHN members understand the

importance of the posters in schools. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Alyson noted the need to increase general membership fees by \$5 to \$25. Members discussed how a raise in fees was way over due. Jan Haskings-Winner made a motion to support the raising of membership dues by \$5, Seconded by Sandy Kritzer. The motion was passed.

5. There was a discussion of including more women in historic plaques in Ontario. Dianne Dodds has been active in this area through her work at Parks Canada. OWHN would like to see Margaret Ann Bulkley, aka Dr. James Barry nominated for a plaque. It was suggested that we create a sub-committee to identify public women and push for women to be recognized. It was decided we needed Diane's expertise and support in this area and that we create a committee. Rose Fine-Meyer, Jane Errington, Pam Peacock and Diane Dodds will form the sub-committee to look into this further.

6. Discussion took place on the possible theme for next year's conference. Several members felt it was time to go west, perhaps to Windsor or London, Ontario. Jane thought it would be good to establish partnerships and London might be an easier place as several Canadian women's historians have links with OWHN. It was agreed that food would be the central theme. Jane also suggested OWHN might partner with local restaurants, food banks, community gardens and others. Discussion continued about partnering with the Culinary Arts and the possibility of including Dorothy Duncan. Tina Bates noted her work "Out of Ontario Kitchens." The beginnings of a planning committee for the next conference was formed that included Jane Errington, Tina Bates and Julia Roberts. It was suggested that the Chair for the planning committee be a University of Western Ontario contact.

4. Rose Fine-Meyer provided a brief report on the new curriculum changes taking place in history in Ontario to be released soon by the Ontario Ministry of Education.

OWHN is a stakeholder, and as such, is allowed to submit suggestions and comments. Jan Haskings-Winner clarified the date of curriculum release is 2013.

5. Other Business. Pat Staton noted that the OWHN archival boxes and binders are to be placed at the Archives of Ontario. Archives staff will come to Pat's home and take the materials. Pat asked the members if they wanted to make the files completely open to researchers, with no restrictions, or if they wanted to put some restrictions on some of the materials-perhaps allowing open access to the conference planning and AGM's but not to the personal correspondences. Discussion followed. Sharon Cook moved that the OWHN archival materials be deposited at the Archives of Ontario with unrestricted access. Seconded by Linda Ambrose. The motion was passed. Pat and Alyson will sign the appropriate forms in order to confirm the deposit of the OWHN archival files in the Archives of Ontario.

The meeting was adjourned.
Rose Fine-Meyer, Secretary.

News, etc.

Thanks!!

To the Faculty of
Social Science &
Humanities, UOIT
for sponsoring the
mailing of this
Newsletter with
the Ontario
Women's History
Month Poster.

Send items for the
next Newsletter to:

Alyson King
(Alyson.king@uoit.ca)

Constance Backhouse, a Distinguished University Professor in the Faculty of Law at the University of Ottawa, has been awarded the Gold Medal for Achievement in Research award from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). SSHRC's highest research honour, this award recognizes her exceptional and ground-breaking contributions to legal and women's history. A co-founder of the Feminist History Society, Dr. Backhouse is currently working on a biography of former Supreme Court of Canada Justice Claire L'Heureux-Dubé.

Sharon Anne Cook, a distinguished University Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Ottawa, won a Canadian Society for the Study of Women in Education (CASWE) Achievement Award for 2012. This award recognizes Dr. Cook's long-time dedication to and outstanding contributions in the area of women and education. Her most recent book, *Sex, Lies, and Cigarettes: Canadian Women, Smoking, and Visual Culture, 1880-2000*, is currently available at McGill University Press.

The **Marion Dewar Women's History Reading Group** is delighted to announce that its winner of the National Capital Committee on the Scholarship, Preservation and Dissemination of Women's History, Marion Dewar Prize for 2011-12 is Lynne Marks at the University of Victoria. The Reading Group draws from the University of Ottawa, Carleton University, Museums, Parks Canada and other sites of the Federal Public Service, and represents women at all stages of the career path. For more information, contact: Sharon Cook <scook@uottawa.ca>.

2014 Berkshire Conference of Women's Historians in Toronto. OWHN will be a small sponsor of the 2014 "Big Berks" in Toronto. OWHN will hold a women's history walk and sponsor a panel.

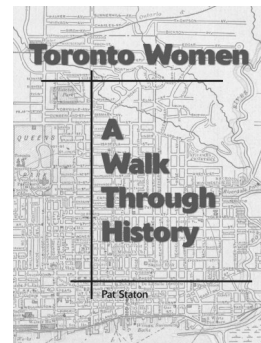
Carol Helmstadter and Judith Godden's new book, *Nursing Before Nightingale 1815 to 1899*, will be available in November 2012. This revisionist book covers the reforms which preceded Nightingale and from which she got most of her best ideas.

OWHN PIN : The new OWHN pins given out at the Heritage Fairs are also on sale for \$3 at the spring conference.



Karen A. Balcom, McMaster University, will be keynote speaker for **Women's History Week at Laurentian University** in Sudbury, October 16-17, 2012. Karen is the award-winning author of *The Traffic in Babies* (U of T Press).

Pat Staton's new book, *Toronto Women: A Walk Through History*, has recently been published by Green Dragon Press. The book was launched on October 11, 2012, as part of the Herstories Café series of women's history talks. With about 60 people in attendance, Pat's book and her talk were well-received. To order, go to Green Dragon Press's website: <http://greendragonpress.com>



OWHN would love your help!! If you are interested in becoming a member of the Board of Directors in any role, or in helping out on an *ad hoc* basis, please let any member of the Board know or contact: Alyson King at alyson.king@uoit.ca .

Help needed in:

- organizing Spring Conferences,
- writing letters in support of women's history (and related issues, i.e., protesting government cuts to programs that support historical projects),
- compiling information regarding significant women in Canadian history (i.e., for historical plaques & other memorials),
- other ideas??