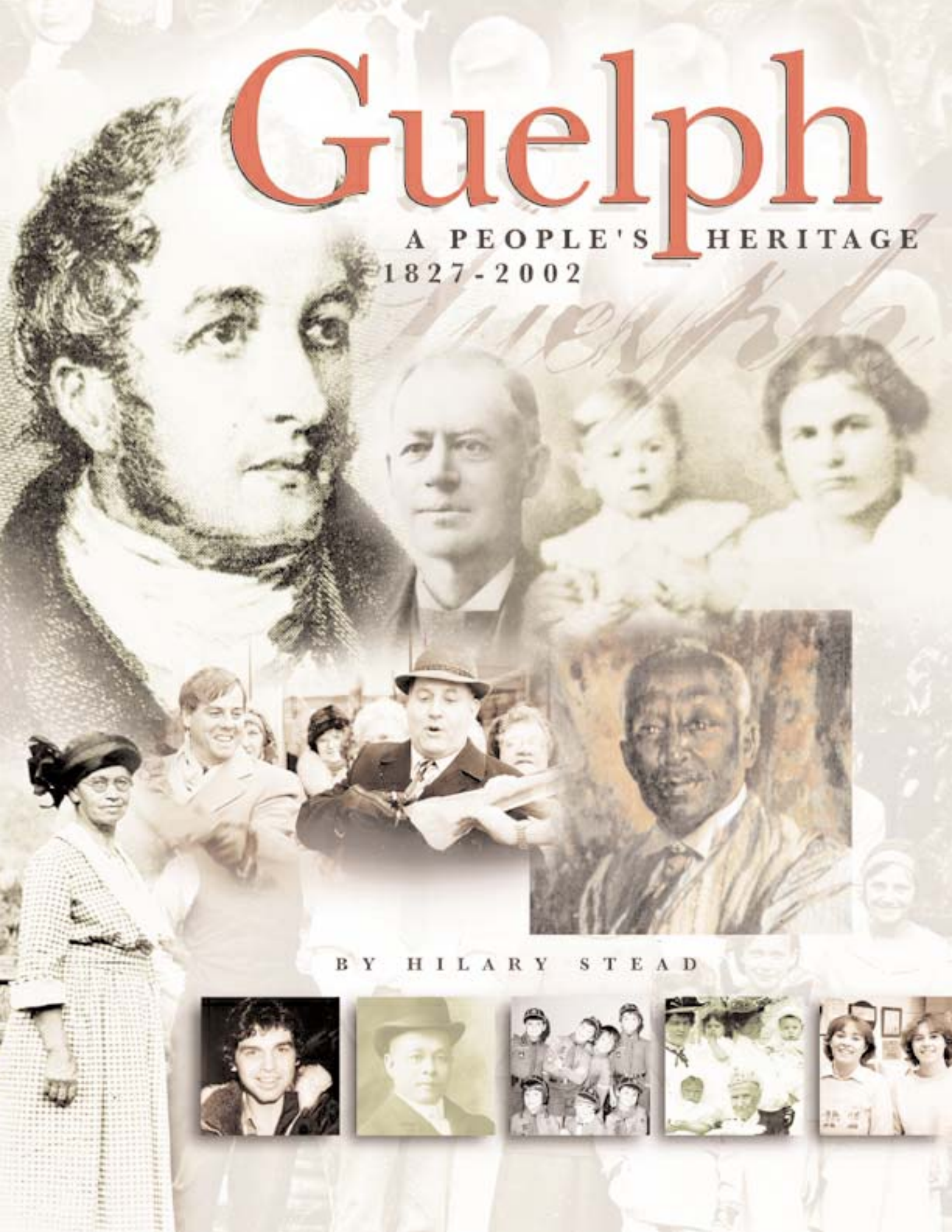


Guelph

A PEOPLE'S HERITAGE
1827-2002



BY HILARY STEAD



PROUD TO GROW WITH GUELPH, ONE HOME AT A TIME,

SINCE 1978



“Buying a Reid’s Heritage Home” is a long-time Guelph tradition.

Since 1978, the Reid’s Heritage Group has expanded that tradition by building homes for thousands of Guelph families, in many of our City’s favourite communities. It all started with Orin Reid building just a few houses in the first year. Today, we are the City’s leading Builder, responsible for building more than one in three new homes constructed in the City of Guelph.



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Reputation One Home
At A Time!*

*From all of us at the
Reid’s Heritage Group
on this 175th Birthday,
Congratulations &
Thank you Guelph.
Let’s keep growing together!*

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Homewood Manor, 1915



Norm Ringler, (1920) Homewood's chauffeur with Homewood's first car. Norm is Homewood's longest-serving employee with 50 years of service.



Occupational therapy



Homewood grounds, 1923



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Homewood Behavioural Health Corporation (HBH) is a Canadian leader with 25 years' experience in developing and providing Employee Assistance Programs. HBH's Employee Assistance Program offers an extensive range of organizational health and employee counselling services.



We certainly have
reason to celebrate.

175 years of great people,
great ideas, a great city.

Thanks.
Your City of Guelph.



T H E Mayor's M E S S A G E

Welcome to *Guelph: A People's Heritage*. It's a fascinating look at our City's development and is a most appropriate way for us to celebrate Guelph's 175th anniversary.

The City commissioned a new coat of arms and a corporate flag for our 150th anniversary. Officially, the corporate flag should only be flown on City property. At the time, we also developed a citizens' flag that can be flown by any resident or business in Guelph. However, the citizens' flag has not been available to the people of Guelph. That is not until now, in celebration of our 175th anniversary. I hope we will see many citizens' flags flying throughout our city to declare our civic pride. This beautiful flag is illustrated on this page.

The history of a great city is a history about great people. Truly remarkable people can be found in all corners of our community, making many contributions both large and small. They may have built a heritage landmark, coached a youth sports team or helped an elderly neighbour shovel the driveway. All contribute to our sense of spirit, community and home.

John Galt conceived of a city that was built "for the people". His vision remains strong today in the actions of us all.

Congratulations to the team of volunteers who made this book possible. Thanks to the advertisers who have supported its production and to the writer, Hilary Stead, for a magnificent job.

And finally, thanks to the people of Guelph, who continue to make our city the best place to call home.



Karen Farbridge
Mayor



The Board, Management and Staff of Guelph Hydro Inc. and its four subsidiaries congratulate the City of Guelph on its 175th Anniversary.

We have served the residents and businesses in the City for almost 100 years, dating back to the City's purchase of the Guelph Light & Power Company in 1903.

In 1907, the City created the Board of Light and Heat Commissioners. Also in 1907, local community leaders Mayor George Sleeman, John Newstead, Samuel Carter and John Lyon joined Sir Adam Beck to champion the development of electricity transmission from Niagara Falls. Guelph joined 13 other municipalities as the pioneers in the first contracts that resulted in the creation of the provincial utility that became Ontario Hydro.

Sixty years later, in 1967, the company adopted the operating name of Guelph Hydro. On November 1, 2000, the company was officially incorporated under the *Business Corporations Act* and successor companies were created.



We introduced to the community:

- Guelph Hydro Inc. • Guelph Hydro Electric Systems Inc.
- FibreWired by Guelph Hydro Inc. • Selectpower Inc.,
- Wellington Electric Distribution Company Inc. (*our newest subsidiary serving the Village of Rockwood*)



Guelph Hydro is proud that it has met the challenges of the City's growth and development for almost a century. A reliable supply of electricity is an essential ingredient in economic development. Guelph Hydro's family of companies continues to be a positive contributor to the City's economic development.



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Hilary Stead

A B O U T T H E Author

Hilary Stead was born and raised in Montreal and arrived in Guelph in 1971 to attend university. She ran several businesses in the 1970s, including *The Candyman* on Quebec Street and the *Carden Street Cafe* which she purchased from James Gordon. Hilary received her BA from U of G and a diploma in journalism from Conestoga College and has worked at the Guelph Mercury for 13 years. She considers her son, Simon Rogers, to be the finest thing she ever produced.

Introduction

"It is true indeed of practically all of old Ontario that it is a garden country, sustaining an educated, prosperous and contented population and representing Canadian life and civilization at its best."

Frank Yeigh, *Through the Heart of Canada*, 1913.

When Paul Mercer died last year his son recalled how the long-time Guelph merchant and former mayor was convinced that Guelph is "absolutely the best city in all of Canada."

People in Guelph, just as in Kingston and Moose Jaw and Charlottetown, are often guilty of laying claim to being the best or the first. Guelphites love to brag about having the best water, the finest blooms and the greatest number of musicians per square foot. Our museum credits us with the first coat hanger, the first jockstrap and the first lunch counter - at Guelph Collegiate.

Guelph's claims to be the birthplace of the Communist Party of Canada and of Ontario's first free public library appear to be founded in fact. But other claims often slip around the truth. Guelph did hire Canada's first female chief of a municipal police service in 1993. But before Lenna Bradburn came to Guelph, Canada's first female police chief was Liz Scout, appointed in 1988 to lead the Blood Tribe Police in Alberta. And while Fred Metcalf was definitely a cable television pioneer, Guelph's broadcast of the 1953 coronation of Queen Elizabeth II to a crowd gathered at King George Public School followed similar broadcasts in London, Ontario and Montreal in 1952.

What these sometimes exaggerated claims say is that Guelphites see Guelph as a place where good things happen, where there are visionary people who want to be the first to try something new, like motorcycles for police officers, physical education instruction in schools or a wet/dry recycling system for garbage.

There are thousands of stories of people and events that make up Guelph's first 175 years. It is an interesting story. Despite Guelph's reputation as a conservative town that plods along sensibly, the history of Guelph has not been dull.

The town was born during exciting times. Mackenzie's Rebellion was brewing and Upper Canada was becoming populated with tenacious individualists who were giving up a thousands-year-old culture to build a new one. They included people like Dr. William Clarke, whose membership in Ireland's illicit Orange Order is believed to have precipitated his departure from Dublin. He became Guelph's largest mill owner, a powerful magistrate and the town's second mayor. Clarke later married a daughter of Laura Secord, a Canadian legend from the War of 1812.

In contemporary times Guelph made the news on a hot July day in 1991 when Gwen Jacob, a student at the University of Guelph, decided she should have the same right as a man to walk down the Gordon Street hill without a shirt. She apparently did not cause any accidents as drivers slowed to take a look, but she did cause the law books to change the definition of an indecent act.

These pages tell some of the stories from Guelph's history so far. Since they only scratch the surface, they may motivate some readers to visit Guelph's museums and historic buildings and explore its archives and libraries to learn more about the city's rich history. The story starts at the beginning, with perhaps the best idea of all, John Galt's dream of a planned community.



This photograph of the 1908 Guelph Old Home Week at St. George's Square was taken by Charles Burgess, Guelph's most important photographer.

COURTESY OF GUELPH MUSEUMS

John Galt FOUNDS A NEW TOWN

The founding of Guelph grew out of one of the most lucrative land speculation deals in Canadian history. In 1792, the British Crown purchased a huge tract of land, stretching from Burlington Bay to Port Burwell and including present-day Guelph, from a band of nomadic Algonkian-speaking Indians for 1,180 British pounds.

By 1826, the land that would become Guelph was part of the sale of 2.3 million acres by the British to the Canada Company for 2.5 million pounds. Few land flips before or since could claim to net such a profit.

The Canada Company was the brainchild of John Galt, a Scottish novelist and a man with big dreams. Galt had been hired by a group of settlers in the Niagara area who wanted to be compensated for the losses they sustained when they were caught in the middle of the War of 1812. Despite strong connections to the British halls of power he was not able to pry loose any money, but his efforts gave him the idea for the Canada Company.

Galt reasoned that a private venture with enough capital could buy large amounts of the land that the Crown had acquired from Canada's aboriginal peoples and sell it profitably to the flood of European settlers. He managed to raise one million pounds from British merchants and bankers and headed to Upper Canada.

Initially, Galt negotiated with the powerful Family Compact headed by Rev. John Strachan in York (Toronto). He soon shifted his attention to land further away from the political hotbed and inked the deal for 2.3 million acres. This comprised 1.3 million acres of Upper Canada's remaining unleased Crown reserves, including the 42,000 acre Halton Block that would become Guelph and the surrounding township, plus the one million-acre Huron Tract that stretched to Lake Huron where Galt founded the town of Goderich.

The land that would become Guelph, part of the hunting territory of the Neutral Indians, was beside a large tributary of the Grand River, which Galt called the Speed River. He saw it as a logical choice for the company's first major development, within trading distance of York and many of the surrounding townships - including Waterloo, Erin and Eramosa - that were already active settlements.



"The Priory" was sketched by David Allan in his 1939 book, "Guelph: Its Early Days and Later." Guelph's first building, erected in 1827 beside the Speed River, provided temporary lodging for settlers and also served as a tavern, a post office, a school and John Galt's home. Later the Canadian Pacific Railway station, it was torn down in 1923. COURTESY OF THE GUELPH PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES

Galt, a storyteller as well as a land speculator, understood that the first swing of his axe would be an historic moment. In his autobiography he captured the solemnity of the evening of April 23, 1827 when he, together with Dr. William "Tiger" Dunlop, a fellow adventurer and author, and Charles Prior, the manager he had hired to supervise the building of the new town, felled a large maple tree and shattered the silence of the forest.

"The tree fell with a crash of accumulating thunder, as if ancient nature were alarmed at the entrance of social man into her innocent solitudes," Galt wrote.

It was no accident that the first tree came down on St. George's Day. Galt believed Guelph would become an important city, and chose the national holiday honouring the patron saint of England as a day fit to launch the city with the royal name. He chose a name steeped in history, dating back to the Hanoverian Welfs and the Guelfs who controlled the dynasties of Northern Italy in medieval times. King George I brought his ancestry as a Guelph and elector of Hanover to the British royal family with his accession to the throne in 1714.

John Galt got himself into trouble when he decided his city should be the first in the empire to use the royal name. Back in England his decision was interpreted as

a slight towards Lord Goderich who had assisted in the formation of the Canada Company. Galt was ordered to change the name to Goderich. He argued a change was impossible because deeds had already been issued in the Guelph name, but he smoothed ruffled feathers by giving the name Goderich to the town he built soon afterwards on the shores of Lake Huron.

Focusing on a piece of wilderness comfortably distant from York gave Galt the independence he savoured and the room to indulge his imagination. Galt agreed with his scouts that the tongue of land at the bend in the Speed River was an excellent focal point for the fan-shaped city he envisioned. The stump from the first felled tree was,

John Galt Finds a New Town

for a time, fitted with a sun dial and served as the town clock. Today the spot where Galt proposed five streets branching out in a radial design is marked with a plaque on the wall below the railway bridge at the corner of Macdonell and Wellington streets.

Unlike some Canadian cities that grew around the demands of rural settlers, Guelph was a planned city and grew from the inside out. Galt had researched the creation of American cities, in particular Buffalo, and believed the nucleus of a town needed a tavern, a mill, a store and a school house. Although not a particularly religious man, Galt also believed churches were necessary to successful cities and he set aside some of the most prominent pieces of land for places of worship. He granted the highest drumlin, later the site of the Church of Our Lady Immaculate, to the Roman Catholic Church as thanks to Alexander Macdonell, the Bishop of Upper Canada, for his support in creating the Canada Company.

After the initial clearing of roads and a commercial centre, Galt and Prior moved on to creating public buildings. The most important was the Priory, which could house as many as 100 newcomers at a time and also held the company offices and a tavern. By October 1827, 70 houses, some quite primitive, had been built. Farm land was selling for \$1.50 to \$2.50 an acre and city lots for \$20 to \$40.

One of the largest groups of settlers to descend on Guelph at one time was a party of Scots whose first attempt at settling in the New World was a dismal failure. Evicted from their homeland during the Highland Clearances, they had gone to LaGuayra in Venezuela where the land proved to be unfit for cultivation. The British government redirected them to Canada, via New York, where a consular official who was a friend of Galt advised them to head for Guelph.

After a brutal journey by lumber wagon, the 135 bedraggled travellers put themselves at Galt's mercy. He sold 50- and 100-acre lots to each family and waived the first payment because of their weakened state. This group of settlers eventually made good on their debts and contributed greatly to Guelph's development. They included David Stirton who would become Guelph's first MP and the ancestors of Alf Hales, MP from 1957 to 1974.

While Galt pursued his passion for planning and community building, his employers in England grew impatient. By all accounts, his bookkeeping left much to be desired and he had a habit of making decisions without getting approval from the company. In 1829, Galt was recalled to England where he spent a short period in debtors' prison for failing to pay his sons' school fees. He later participated in one final land scheme, this time in the Eastern Townships of Lower Canada, but he never returned to Canada. Galt died in Scotland in 1839.

Galt's sons also played important roles in the history of Upper Canada. Sir Thomas Galt was appointed Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas in 1887 and Sir Alexander Tilloch Galt was one of the Fathers of Confederation and the first minister of finance for the new Dominion of Canada. John Galt Jr. became the registrar at Goderich.

One of Guelph's favourite local legends involves the switch in the town plans for Guelph and Goderich; the switch is usually blamed for some confusing street configurations but there is no evidence to support the story. Both towns were planned by Galt, using his radial design with streets reaching out in a fan shape. The explanation for some of Guelph's odd-shaped streets and blocks became clearer in the early 1980s when Guelph historian Gil Stelter discovered an overlay on an early copy of the city plan. It showed that Galt's successors made changes to his ambitious design, reducing the amount of public space. Although it was scaled back, Galt's plan was too well established to be entirely lost.

Despite the criticism of Galt's methods, his vision of a planned community became a selling point for the Canada Company. The company, which sold its last lot in the 1950s, was able to sell land profitably in and around a town where important amenities were already available.

The Canada Company's venture in Guelph struggled after Galt's departure. The company halted the capital investment and toughened the terms of land purchases, often incurring the wrath of Guelph's citizens for its ruthlessness in foreclosing on those who fell behind in paying for their lots and for charging high prices at the company store. Some families could not hang on and sold their partially-cleared lots. Others left to seek better prospects further west or south of the border. Most, however, stayed and persevered.



John Galt's 1827 radial plan had five streets branching out in a fan shape from the spot where the first tree was felled.

JOSEPH BOUCHETTE, "The British Dominions in North America, Vol. 1" (LONDON, 1831)."

A N Industrious P O P U L A T I O N

The town that John Galt put in place grew around the large triangular market grounds that he believed would create a healthy local economy. At first, the pioneer population was too poor to sustain much commerce but gradually shops and hotels were built in a cluster around the market.

Galt knew the town would need a grist mill if it was to prosper so he convinced the Canada Company to build the Guelph Mill. Farmers would no longer face a trek to Galt or Dundas to have grain ground to flour. By 1832, the mill had been sold to William Allan, one of the wealthy settlers the company had lured to Guelph. A second mill, the Wellington, or People's Mill, was built by Frederick George. Allan augmented his income with a distillery across the river, where he fed pigs and cattle on the slops, and by operating a woollen carding business. The People's Mill also maintained a piggery and a distillery and ran a sawmill, a tannery and a foundry.

As the road system improved, Guelph became a bustling commercial centre, offering most services the new settlers and farmers would need. There were blacksmiths, wheelwrights, saddlers, harness makers, a watch maker, shoemakers, carpenters, painters, cabinet makers, dressmakers, tailors and coopers who made the barrels for the beer and

whiskey produced locally in large quantities. The length of time needed to travel even short distances meant that Guelph's many inns and hotels were always busy. Their guests included teamsters who, in the days before the railroad, had ample work hauling goods by wagon.

John Smith was the first mayor when Guelph attained town status in 1855 and the arrival of the Grand Trunk Railway the next year triggered a period of land speculation. The prospect of prosperity was celebrated in 1856 with the construction of a Market House/Town Hall following a bitter and protracted debate over the tax burden it would create. The building was much more than the centre for civic administration that it is today. It housed stalls for market gardeners and butchers, a court room, an engine house, police lockups, the mayor's and treasurer's offices, council chambers and the Farmers' and Mechanics'



Guelph marked its new town status in 1856 by building the limestone Market House/Town Hall, a Victorian architectural gem designed by William Thomas. The tower was removed in 1961.

COURTESY OF THE GUELPH PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES

Institute, the town's library that had outgrown its first home in the rear of Thomas Sandilands' general store. (When the province passed the Free Libraries Act in 1882, Guelph, with its collection of 2,625 books, became Ontario's first free public library, a few days ahead of Toronto.)

Although Guelph never abandoned its connection to agriculture, the arrival of the railway which sliced through the market square and the heart of Galt's radial plan certainly set the city on a new path.

One of the first men to take advantage of Guelph's new status as a railway town was James Goldie. He arrived in Guelph in 1860 and built the Speedvale Mill on a site near what is now John Galt Gardens across from Riverside Park. Four years later, after fire destroyed the People's Mill, Goldie sold his property to John Pipe and built Goldie Mill on the larger fire-damaged site to the south.

The Goldie family would dominate the business and political scene in Guelph well into the 20th century. James' son Thomas became president of the Dominion Millers' Association and played a leading role in everything from the city's baseball and cricket clubs to Knox Presbyterian Church, the school board and the Guelph Junction Railway. Elected mayor in 1891, he died in office a year later of pneumonia at the age of 41. James' son Lincoln became an Ontario cabinet minister.

Scottish businessman William Bell was visiting Guelph when he decided to become a partner in his brother's small organ and melodeon company. Opened in 1864, the factory initially produced one organ a week but at its peak in 1885 employed 450 people to manufacture 5,000 to 6,000 organs and pianos a year. The Bell Organ and Piano Company eventually became the city's largest employer and dominated the landscape of the downtown with two large factories that filled a city block along Carden Street.

An Industrious Population

American machinist Charles Raymond came to Guelph in 1861 and built the Raymond Sewing Machine Company into one of Guelph's largest employers. His daughter, Emma, married John Crowe who also set up his own business, Crowe's Iron Works, at the corner of Commercial and Norfolk streets in 1868. It was one of about a dozen foundries in the downtown core.

Another major manufacturing company that got its start in the 1860s was Armstrong, McCrae and Co. which by 1886 employed 250 people in its woollen factory. The company was one of several operated by Thomas and David McCrae, the grandfather and father of Col. John McCrae. During the same era, Robert Stewart, who built his first steam planing mill on the site now occupied by St. James Church on Glasgow St., expanded rapidly. His imposing Wyndham Street building, constructed in 1869, stood until 1921 when it was destroyed in Guelph's most spectacular fire. The site was redeveloped for a new downtown post office and Stewart's son Edward relocated to his Cardigan Street lumberyard. The family lumber business was finally closed in 1962 by Edward's son, Robert, one of Guelph's most colourful 20th century businessmen.



George Brooks and Skin Robinson, ca. 1890-1911, with a bag of Goldie Mill flour, produced by the family that operated flour mills in Guelph for almost 60 years.

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Brewing

A glimpse into Guelph's industrial history must include brewing, always a thriving local enterprise except for a slump during the Prohibition years (approximately 1915-1927 in Ontario). In 1843, nine breweries served a population of just 700. By 1900, 42 public houses, hotels and taverns satisfied the thirst of a population of 11,500. One of the few early watering holes still standing is the Albion Hotel which began as Stell's Tavern in 1856. A three-storey stone building later replaced the frame structure. When Rodger Crane became the sixth owner of the hotel in 1982, he is said to have inherited a harmless ghost believed to be the lovelorn daughter of a former owner who took her own life.

One of the earliest breweries in Guelph was James Hodgert's, established in 1827. It was managed by a young John Sleeman until he bought a large Waterloo Avenue property and opened the Silver Creek Brewery in 1851. The brewery was passed on to John's son George, who would become the first mayor when the town became the City of Guelph in 1880, a position he would occupy on and off for the next quarter century.

George Sleeman was a busy man, but unlike most other community leaders of his day he was not a high-profile member of a local church. He was president of the Wellington Mutual Fire Insurance Company, the Brewers and Malters Association of Ontario, the Wellington Hotel Company, the Guelph Bicycle Club, the Guelph Rifle Association, the Guelph Turf Club and the Maple Leaf Baseball Club. Sleeman built the town's streetcar system, chaired the Provincial Winter Fair and was treasurer of the Odd Fellows Progress Lodge. He supported the Guelph Opera House, the Guelph Junction Railway and the preservation of the Priory.

Sleeman and his sons also expanded the brewery by establishing the Spring Bank Brewery on Edinburgh Road. In 1916, the Canada Temperance Act forced the company to rely on sales of malt and ginger ale. Sleeman died in 1926.

In 1933, his son, George Alfred, was caught smuggling alcohol into the United States. Faced with the prospect of jail, he sold the business to pay the taxes.

In 1985, John Sleeman picked up where his ancestors had left off when he purchased the dormant company from Standard Brands. Sleeman Breweries, now located in the Hanlon Industrial Park, has become one of the most successful breweries in Canada.

By 1857, Guelph had two railways serving local industry. The accumulation of capital and skilled labour was producing a shift from a mercantile to an industrial economy, although most of the businesses were still small enterprises, often employing only one or two people.

In 1866, a Board of Trade was formed by Guelph's business leaders who worked behind the scenes but had close relationships with the partisan newspapers and the town council. The pressing issues of the day were taxation, attracting new manufacturing to Guelph, beautification of the city and the need for a proper train station.

The 1870s ushered in a construction boom, when many of the city's historic limestone buildings were built, including the Customs House/Post Office and the Wellington Hotel. But it was also a time of uncertainty. Guelph was losing ground as an economic player to places like Brantford and Berlin (Kitchener). An international depression from 1877 to 1879 forced some families to rely on soup kitchens and many local businesses were hurt. David Allan sold the family mill to a Brantford man for 10 cents on the dollar.

Hardship fueled conflict. The Orange Order was active in Guelph from the 1840s and held marches until the 1940s. Trade unions were formed as craftsmen were replaced by unskilled labour and machines. Many workplaces were fire traps, accidents were often blamed on the workers and some factories were still employing children.

Early trade unions, like the tailors' union formed in 1858 and the shoemakers' Knights of St. Crispin lodge established in 1869, were more support groups than catalysts for change. One of the earliest examples of worker agitation was the campaign by retail clerks for stores to close at 7 p.m. instead of an hour later. While the vast majority of merchants were receptive, there were three holdouts and the campaign failed.

Volunteer firefighters were more successful when they went on strike to have their stipend doubled to \$50 a year. In 1872, more than a thousand people attended a rally in market square in support of reducing the workday to nine hours. That year, the Working Men's Club was formed by employees of some of Guelph's large factories to lobby for improved wages and working conditions.

With its population hovering around 10,000, Guelph pursued city status in 1879, hopeful that strategies available to cities under the Municipal Act, such as offering incentives to industry, would improve economic conditions. New businesses were promised tax relief and free water for 10 years provided they met performance guarantees, hired a stipulated minimum number of workers and were not in competition with existing manufacturers. The policy was supported by the voters although only men who owned property were eligible to vote.

Business leaders, including Charles Raymond, William Bell and David McCrae, saw industrial growth as the key to prosperity and supported the city when it obtained a charter in 1884 to build the Guelph Junction Railway. The Grand Trunk was known to have a rate-fixing deal with Great Western, the other railway with service to Guelph. When the Grand Trunk and Great Western amalgamated in 1882, Guelph businessmen saw a city-owned railway as a way to fight the monopoly's high freight rates.

The railway increased the city's taste for public ownership of municipal services, initiated in 1878 with the establishment of a public water works in response to the need for improved fire protection. In 1880, the city laid 13 miles of mains to distribute water from springs near York Road. Guelph's pure spring water became a selling point, but it was not long before the city became a victim of its own success. Large water

users received discounted rates, resulting in wasteful practices. The added burden of huge industrial growth and the associated new residential suburbs led to contamination of the water supply and outbreaks of typhoid.

The city responded by installing a sewer system in 1903 but the problem of contaminated drinking water continued. During the summers of 1908 and 1909, the city built a pipeline from the Arkell Springs to a water tower on Prospect Street. This led to one of the city's first major environmental projects - the reforestation of the area surrounding the springs to protect the quality of the water.

Guelph's gas and electricity distribution system began in 1866 when the first coal oil street lights were lit. It was a private initiative and would remain in private hands when coal oil was replaced by gas and the Guelph Gas Company installed pipes under city streets in exchange for providing free gas to light street lamps and public buildings.

In 1903, the Guelph Light and Heat Commission was created and the city purchased what was now known as the Guelph Light and Power Company for \$155,000. Gas was generated by a steam engine at the gas works on Surrey Street and by a water wheel at Allan's dam until power became available from the generating station at Niagara Falls in 1908. Emissions from coal-powered factories dropped as they switched to electricity.



Guelph Horse Shoeing Forge, ca. 1890.

COURTESY OF THE GUELPH PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES

Newspapers

The first newspapers published in Guelph were the short-lived Guelph Herald, published in 1842 for nine months by Charles McDonnell, and The Wellingtonian which enjoyed a brief existence the next year. The Advertiser appeared in 1845, published weekly and then tri-weekly by John Smith. Smith wrote on civic matters for decades while holding the position of reeve and then as the first mayor of the town of Guelph.

Smith had no qualms about using his paper to drive his political agenda, but he was not alone. The second Guelph Herald was established as a weekly in 1847 by F.D. Austin and was soon taken over by George Pirie, a staunch Conservative, who was publisher for 22 years and played a prominent civic role. The Herald became a daily under Frederick Jasper Chadwick, an alderman who was elected mayor in 1877. It was later published by Henry Gummer and located in the Douglas Street building that today bears his name.

The Wellington Mercury was founded as a weekly in 1853 by George Keeling and became the Guelph Daily Mercury in 1867. Jonathan Wilkinson bought the Advertiser in 1858 and turned the paper into a daily, amalgamating with the Mercury in 1873. When The Advocate was established in the 1890s, Guelph's citizens were served by three daily newspapers.

One of the most influential Guelph newspapermen in the 19th century was James Innes who bought the Mercury in 1862 and took on a partner, John Davidson, in 1894. Innes controlled the paper for 36 years, including 1882-96 when he served as Guelph's Liberal Member of Parliament. The Mercury recruited talented writers and editors over the years, including novelist and historian Thomas B. Costain who worked as an editor at the Mercury before going on to a career in the United States as associate editor of the Saturday Evening Post and the author of "The Black Rose" and "Son of a Hundred Kings".

Before the era of radio (CJOY was not launched until 1948) and motion pictures, Guelph newspapers were the link to world events and the arena for local political debate. Towards the end of the 20th century, Guelph was served by only one daily, the Guelph Mercury, and by the twice-weekly Guelph Tribune. The 1990s was a time of great upheaval for newspapers across Canada. In the space of about five years, the Mercury was owned by Thomson Newspapers, Conrad Black's Hollinger Company, Sun Media, Quebecor, and finally Torstar. By 2002, regionalization was in full swing and the Mercury, the Cambridge Reporter and the Kitchener-Waterloo Record merged some parts of their operations into Torstar's Grand River Valley Newspapers.

As Guelph's dominant sewing machine and piano and organ manufacturers, both of which had been heavily subsidized over the years by the city, fell victim to a changing economy, new industries filled the void. Local incentives convinced Gilson Manufacturing to choose Guelph over Berlin and the company built a large plant on York Road in 1907. Initially Gilson's produced its "goes-like-sixty" engine and other farm machinery but later switched to furnaces and refrigeration equipment that was installed in Canadian warships during the Second World War. Company president Horace Mack also attracted attention for his love of waterfowl and his practice of keeping birds in cages on the factory lawn. Mack's efforts led to the creation of the Kortright Waterfowl Park on Niska Road.

Other companies established prior to the First World War included The Canada Ingot Iron Company, later Armtec, in the old Inglis and Hunter foundry beside the Norwich Street bridge and the Taylor-Forbes Company which built a lawn mower and radiator factory on the old Allan Distillery site after it was vacated by the bankrupt McCrae Woollen Mills. Taylor-Forbes peaked in size at 500 employees in 1924 but was bankrupt by 1955.

The Guelph Casket Company prospered on Wellington Street where Canadian Tire would later open its first Guelph store. Spring maker James Steele enjoyed success on Woolwich Street with his "cowcatcher" bumper invented to save passengers from being crushed by the city's streetcars. It was a municipal loan that convinced the Page-Hersey Company in Welland to



Labour Day Parade 1904, St. George's Square. PRIVATE COLLECTION



The Guelph Fat Stock Club was responsible for the establishment of the Provincial Winter Fair in Guelph. COURTESY OF GUELPH MUSEUMS

build a large plant on York Road where 100 employees produced tubing and pipe and later, auto parts.

At the same time, the Standard White Lime Company, formed from two older companies, began production on the western edge of the city. A hundred years later, the Dolime Quarry, still technically located in the township, slowed production because demand for its products, used in manufacturing steel, was hit by a slump in the auto industry. The news was comforting to some Guelph residents who had complained for years about dust, noise and damage to their homes from the blasting.

One of the most influential business leaders in Guelph after 1900 was James Walter Lyon, owner of the World Publishing Company. Lyon made a name for himself by buying large tracts of land in St. Patrick's Ward and giving portions to industries as an incentive to set up shop in Guelph. He generated profits by selling surrounding lots to workers to build homes,

a plan so successful it precipitated a public health crisis from uncontrolled sewage which contaminated the water supply. After the city responded by tapping into the new water source in Arkell, Lyon attracted three more major industries to his subdivision, the International Malleable Iron Company (IMICO), the Guelph Stove Company and the Dominion Linens Company. Other large companies established in this era were the Guelph Paper Box Company, the Callander Foundry on Crimea Street and the Dalyle Electric Company on the Allan's Mill site which manufactured light bulbs.

Guelph now had paved streets, a new train station, an impressive new library, improved public utilities and large banks at St. George's Square. It was a time of enormous industrial growth, but Guelph never lost its connection to agriculture and rural life and still promoted itself as the livestock capital of Canada. At the turn of the century, after lobbying by the Guelph Fat Stock Club, the city was chosen as the site for the Provincial Winter Fair and each year would showcase the best of Ontario's farmers. Today, many believe the fair was eventually replaced by the Royal Winter Fair, but the latter was a national exhibition established in Toronto in 1922. The prestige of the Guelph fair fell after 1922, but the provincial fair continued to be held annually until 1938.

Guelph was a city in transition in the late 19th century, holding fast to its rural traditions while courting an urban identity. An economic downturn in 1896 led to wage reductions at some of Guelph's large factories and provided the impetus for the formation in 1898 of the Guelph Trades and Labour Council. By the early 1900s many workers had organized, including brewers and piano and organ workers. They pushed for more concessions for workers and participated in politics at all levels. They protested tax breaks for industry and promoted union-friendly companies. Guelph held its first Labour Day parade in 1902, the same year the labour council staged a stormy protest over the city's plan to become one of the first of 111 Ontario communities to receive a library grant from U.S. industrialist Andrew Carnegie. Despite the argument that it was "blood money" earned by exploiting his workers, the city accepted the \$20,000.

The activities of the Labour Council were not always honourable, and sometimes displayed an anti-immigrant bias. Its 1912 platform contained many important social justice goals including free compulsory education, abolition of child labour and government inspection of workplaces but also listed "exclusion of Orientals". With the arrival of the First World War, 3,300 people enlisted at Guelph and local union and business leaders spearheaded campaigns to raise money for war bonds and charity efforts.

Biltmore Hats got its start in 1919 when Toronto's Fried Lee Hat Company opened on Suffolk Street. Hammond Manufacturing had its roots in Oliver Hammond's small workshop behind his home on Glasgow Street. His sons, Len, Roy, Ken and Canadian amateur radio legend Fred Hammond built the company into a major manufacturer of transformers. Northern Rubber, later Dominion Rubber and now operated by Uniroyal, built a large factory after the First World War that still stands on Huron Street.

For the next three decades Guelph settled into what some describe as a sleepy period during which there was minimal growth in population, industry or culture. The city rested on its laurels as a community with a stable population that shopped in a busy downtown core and enjoyed relative prosperity.

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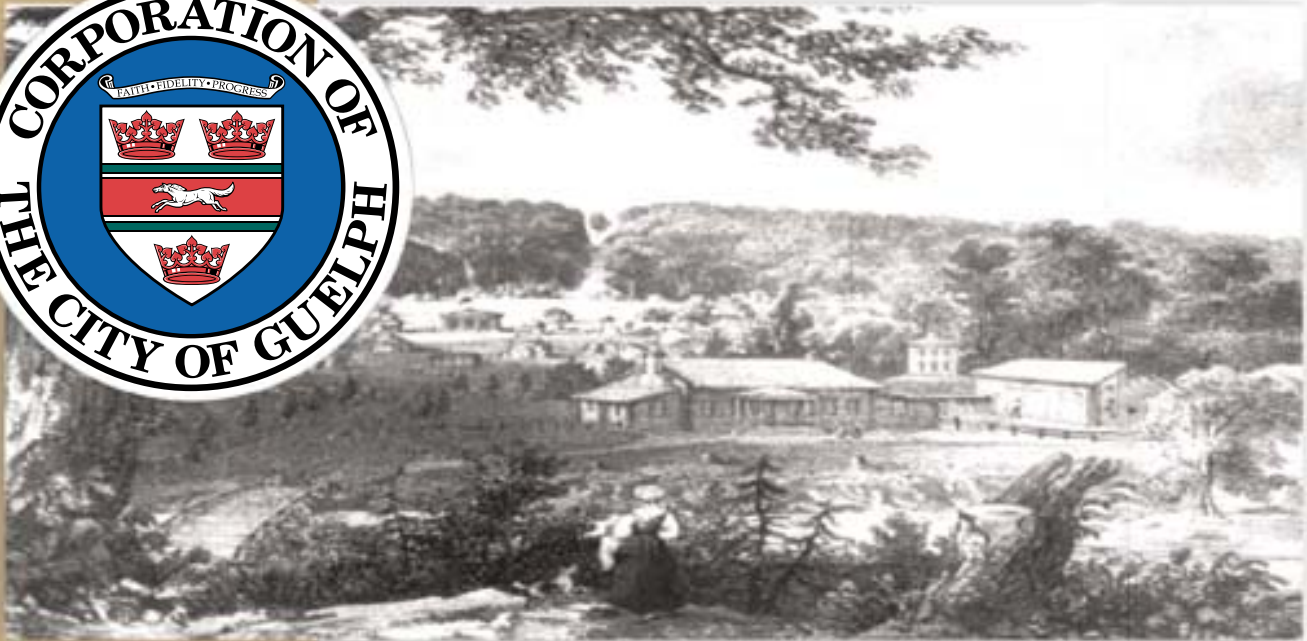


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Guelph early 1800's, the Priory is the large building in the foreground with the Market House in the centre of the cleared ground behind.
Source: Fraser's Magazine, vol 2 (November, 1830), pp. 455-57.

Mar-ket \ 'mar-kət \ n [ME, fr. ONF, fr. L mercatus trade, marketplace, fr. mercatus, pp. of mercari to trade, fr. merc-, merx merchandise] (12c)

1 a (1) : a meeting together of people for the purpose of trade by private purchase and sale and usu. not by auction (2) : the people assembled at such a meeting b (1) : a public place where a market is held; esp : a place where provisions are sold at wholesale (2) : a retail establishment usu. of a specified kind <a fish ~> 2 archaic : the act or an instance of buying and selling 3 : the rate or price offered for a commodity or security 4 a (1) : a geographical area of demand for commodities or services <the foreign ~ for consulting firms> (2) : a specified category of potential buyers <the youth ~> b : the course of commercial activity by which the exchange of commodities is effected : extent of demand <the ~ is dull> c (1) : an opportunity for selling <a good ~ for used cars> (2) : the available supply of or potential demand for specified goods or services <the labor ~> d : the area of economic activity in which buyers and sellers come together and the forces of supply and demand affect prices <producing goods for ~ rather than for consumption> -

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An Industrious Population

But not everyone was comfortable. The Depression of the 1930s meant layoffs and plant slowdowns and more than 3,000 people depended on relief. Wealthier families would invite hungry people into their kitchens for a meal, but the lack of a formal social safety net ensured that some people suffered greatly. Although there were industrial casualties, most Guelph businesses managed to survive and the diverse economy was credited with softening the impact experienced in other towns.

When Canada went back to war, military contracts boosted employment at Guelph's foundries and textile and electrical industries. Several large Guelph companies were established during the Second World War, including W.C. Wood which became Canada's largest manufacturer of freezers, and Hart Chemical.

Business was booming by the mid 1950s with existing businesses expanding and new companies providing thousands of new jobs. The foundries continued to prosper and textiles remained strong in Guelph, especially Biltmore Hats, Harding Carpets and Rennie Industries, which produced men's shirts.

But it was the arrival of General Electric in 1954, made possible by the controversial annexation of 2,500 acres of land from Guelph Township, that marked the most profound change, instantly adding 1,000 new jobs. Almost as many new jobs were added when Imperial Tobacco opened a plant next door in 1959.

Thousands of construction workers were kept busy throughout the '50s building suburban factories, shopping malls and homes. A 1953 Mercury article about the opening of a supermarket reads more like an advertisement than a news story, but captures the tone of the times: "Standing majestically on the corner of Woolwich Street and Speedvale Avenue, as material evidence of the vast expansion in Guelph already completed and that to come in the future, Loblaws deluxe groceteria today opened its doors to the wise shoppers of Guelph and district who will now have all the space in the world to conveniently park while they enjoy the ultimate of modern shopping convenience." When the decade was over Guelph was no longer a compact community.

The city was fundamentally changed by the construction of shopping centres, the first at the corner of Speedvale Avenue and Stevenson Street in the late 1950s followed by the Willow West Mall in the 1960s and the Stone Road Mall in 1975. By the early '80s the merchants who had stayed downtown were suffering and few people challenged the wisdom of inviting Eaton's to include Guelph in its massive expansion into city cores. The Eaton Centre dramatically altered the map of downtown Guelph by swallowing up Quebec Street East.

In the 1980s and '90s, Guelph settled comfortably into its place as a mid-sized Ontario city with a stable economy. The University of Guelph was the largest employer followed closely by auto parts giant Linamar. Established Guelph firms like Hammond Manufacturing, W.C. Wood, Better Beef, the Co-operators Insurance and Blount Canada, established as Oregon Saw Chain in 1952, all expanded and compensated for companies like Gilson's and Harding Carpets that did not survive.

The abandonment of IMICO by its U.S. owner provided Guelph with both comic relief and financial grief. The Beverley Street foundry, which had once provided a livelihood for Guelph's immigrant factory workers, became a liability that no one wanted to assume. The next owner, John Long, acquired it for a dollar and then gave it to Walter Tucker and Michael Baldasaro who used it as the headquarters for their marijuana- and nudity-advocating Church of the Universe. Dubbed "Hempire Village", the squatters lived there while the city sought a buyer for non-payment of back taxes. The contaminated structure was targeted by arsonists six times, raising alarm in the neighbourhood and finally forcing the city to evict the occupants and take control when a buyer could not be found. Today, IMICO is just one of 175 potentially contaminated properties that will have to be looked at as part of a long-term cleanup of brownfield sites.

In 2001, the city purchased a large section of land in the southwest industrial park which it will use to attract new industries to Guelph. An economic downturn, made worse by the events of September 11 in the United States, could produce a slowdown in the city's large automotive parts sector. With the historic diversity of its economy, Guelph should weather the storm.



The International Malleable Iron Company in St. Patrick's Ward was a major Guelph employer in the first half of the 20th century, employing many immigrant workers – men, women and children.

COURTESY OF THE GUELPH PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES

Roads, Rails AND Riders



John Galt knew that good roads were essential if Guelph was to become the jewel of Upper Canada that he envisioned. The new town was located in a forest so dense that even the outline of the nearby Niagara escarpment was not discernable. The chopping and burning evoked Armageddon as crews of men cleared the ancient stands of sugar maple, oak, hemlock and white pine.

In the summer of 1827, an inviting avenue dubbed “the Glory of Guelph” was cleared as the principal entrance to the town from Waterloo Township. Almost two centuries before planners began to rethink cutting such wide swaths through neighbourhoods, Galt pictured rows of trees along the seven-mile Waterloo Road that would rival the stateliest streets of Britain. By 1828, Galt had also supervised construction of the Eramosa Road to the east and of a muddy sleigh track known as the Huron Road from Guelph to Goderich.

The arrival of the Grand Trunk Railway in 1856 ensured Guelph would be a player in the industrialization of Upper Canada but the railway weakened its monopoly as a market town. Farmers who had previously relied on Guelph as a livestock and market centre now had access by rail to other towns.

The climate was ideal for civic leaders like James Innes, owner of the Guelph Mercury, and William Bell, one of the largest employers in the new city, to win support for a city-owned railway. In 1884, the Guelph Junction Railway (GJR) was incorporated and in 1888 the line was completed, connecting Guelph with the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) at Guelph Junction west of Campbellville.

Guelph leased its 16 miles of track to the CPR for 99 years. The CPR station was located initially in the Priors, the original offices of the Canada Company. Later a new station was opened with much fanfare beside the Eramosa bridge near a site now occupied by a high-rise apartment building.

The GJR was promoted heavily by members of the Guelph Board of Trade, although the Grand Trunk still captured most of the local business. Revenue did not always cover debenture payments on the city’s \$170,000 investment, but the GJR at the turn of the century was an important example of Guelph’s preference for municipal ownership of public services, utilities and natural resources.

By 1930, the city’s investment had produced \$1.3 million in dividends. The windfall was not sustainable, however, as rail transportation lost ground to an expanding highway system and a growing reliance on cars and trucks. When its lease with the GJR expired in 1988, the CPR was no longer interested in servicing spur lines. Fortunately, the city was able to negotiate a deal with London’s Ontario Southland Railway to keep the GJR operational, a relief for several large employers who depend on a rail link to ship their goods.

One of the directors of the fledgling Guelph Junction Railway was businessman George Sleeman. Not content with only inter-city passenger and freight service, he drew Guelph into the North American public transit boom of the 1890s. Sleeman paid for construction of The Guelph Railway Company which opened in 1895 with five miles of

track, including routes out the Elora Road (Woolwich Street) and along Waterloo Avenue to his Silver Creek Brewery and his adjacent home, now the Manor Hotel.

New lines were added in 1899 on Suffolk Street, York Road and up the Dundas Hill (Gordon Street) to the Ontario Agricultural College. Sleeman built car barns on Waterloo Avenue where the streetcars were powered up by electricity generated by a steam engine. The site later housed Sutton’s Steering and Collision and is now being redeveloped for residential use.

By the turn of the century, Sleeman’s railway was struggling and he lost it to the bank. In 1903, the city purchased what was now known as the Guelph Radial Railway. Although popular with passengers, with its special rush hour fares for workers and late night runs on Saturdays, freight provided 20 per cent of the revenues. The streetcars



Guelph’s street railway was started by George Sleeman, who brought public transit down Waterloo Avenue to his Silver Creek Brewery in the late 1800s. Cars also took passengers to Riverside Park, to the OAC and along Suffolk Street and York Road.

COURTESY OF GUELPH MUSEUMS

could be used to ship goods to the Grand Trunk and Guelph Junction lines for industries not located on the main lines. There was also a special car for hauling coal to the OAC.

The convergence of streetcars every 20 minutes into St. George's Square began a controversy that continues today. The only difference is that instead of streetcars the dispute now focuses on buses.

"There's going to be somebody badly hurt or killed if they don't do something soon to get those buses out of the square," said Staff Sgt. Carl Meyers of the Guelph Police in a 1983 news report. For more than a century the two sides have clashed over the competing interests of passenger convenience and immediate access to downtown businesses versus congestion and toxic fumes spewing from idling buses. In 2001, Guelph city council approved a downtown public realm plan calling for the buses to be removed from the square but no date was set for implementing the plan.

The railways had transformed life in towns like Guelph in the 19th century, and dominated travel prior to the Depression years. In the mid 1920s, 34 trains left Guelph's two main stations each day, a dozen of them headed for Toronto. The Toronto Suburban Railway also operated frequent electric streetcar service between Toronto and Guelph on its own track that ran south of the Eramosa River, hooking up to the Guelph streetcar tracks at the Gordon Street bridge.

After 1921, Guelph's electric streetcars were operated by Ontario Hydro. There were improvements, such as the addition of Sunday service, but over time, as transportation shifted irreversibly to cars and trucks, the provincial thrust to link southwestern Ontario through one large electric rail system petered out. Ontario Hydro closed its railway department in 1933 and the last Guelph streetcar sputtered into the car barn in 1937.

During the Depression passenger rail service was cut drastically because of huge losses. When the hard times eased up, the car was poised to take off, full speed ahead. The first motor vehicle had been registered in Guelph in 1903 to George Williams of Wyndham Street for his four-passenger Cadillac Runabout. In 1904, there were only 1,000 vehicles registered in Canada, 535 of them in Ontario. After the Second World War, Guelph's road network grew rapidly and the province established a system of provincial highways, including numbers 6, 7 and 24 through Guelph. The city made lots of changes to accommodate all the cars, including construction of the Norfolk Street underpass which significantly changed the downtown.

In the 1950s the province was building the 401 highway and decided it would cut through Puslinch Township, close to Guelph. The Hanlon Parkway was built in 1972 to connect the western edge of the city to the 401, diverting some of the growing volume of truck traffic. There was little public participation and initially the plan was for the four-lane highway to cut through sensitive wetlands surrounding the Hanlon Creek. Opponents raised the alarm and triggered the Hanlon Creek Watershed Study that would become a model for including environmental protection in future Guelph planning.

The struggle to protect the environment from the effects of progress has not become easier, however, especially during the climate at the end of the 20th century of government cutbacks to spending on environmental protection and support for building bigger and better roads. In the late 1990s, despite intense opposition from local environmentalists and trail users, the province spent about \$30 million to build an enormous concrete cloverleaf at the Hanlon and Wellington Street interchange.

Today, getting people to consider alternatives to their cars such as public transit or bicycles remains a huge challenge. Guelph is well ahead of many other municipalities in attracting ridership to its public transit system but is still struggling to capture 10 per cent of the flow of people moving about in the city. A transportation strategy was approved by Guelph city council in 2001 that attempts to balance the demands of industry and motorists for a good network of roads, and the desire for a clean and attractive city that is safe for pedestrians and cyclists.

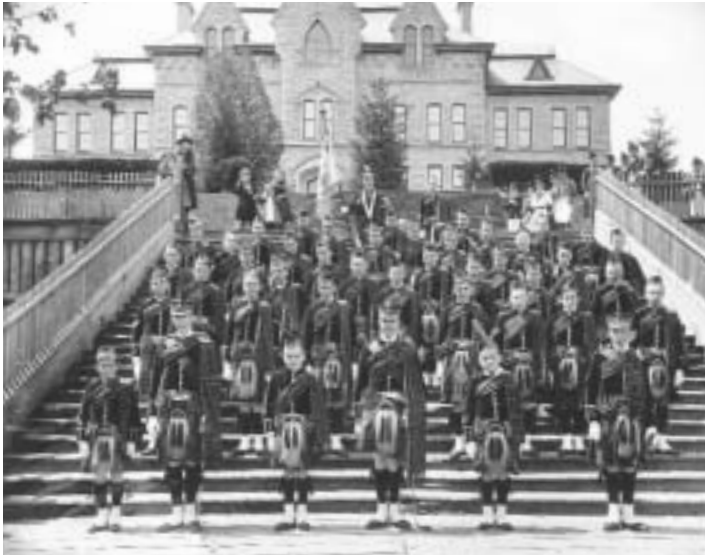


Bus driver Elmer Lovegrove started with Guelph Transit as a track boy for the streetcars and was a transit inspector when he retired after 49 years. COURTESY OF GUELPH TRANSIT

Sharpening THE MIND

Education

Patterned on the British, class-based education system, Guelph's early schools provided a classical grammar school education for the sons of its wealthier citizens and a poorly-funded system of common schools for everyone else. Still, Guelph was well ahead of other pioneer settlements because John Galt attached as much importance to feeding the mind as others did to the needs of the body and soul.



Central School, built in 1876, dominated the downtown landscape. It was an important community centre, seen here in a portrait of the Highland Cadet Corps, ca. 1890.

COURTESY OF THE GUELPH PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES

The 1841 Education Act created boards of education and provided provincial funding for common schools matched by local taxation, although the amounts were still lower than the grants for grammar schools. Fees continued to be charged until they were abolished in 1871 by education minister Egerton Ryerson who also made attendance mandatory for children aged seven to 12. It would be more than half a century, however, before the elimination of high school entrance examinations would fully open the doors to everyone.

A large growth spurt in Guelph between 1850 and 1880 had schools bursting at the seams. The pressure was relieved somewhat when the Separate Schools Act made it possible for St. Stanislaus to open in 1854. A Catholic girls elementary school, St. Agnes, was later built on the opposite side of the Church of Our Lady. As well, the Loretto Academy, a day and boarding school, taught senior grades for girls of all denominations.

For most of this period Galt's Stone School was the only public school owned by the town. In 1856, The Board of Education decided a primary school would operate for boys and girls in each ward. The grammar school, the precursor to the high school, offered Latin, Greek, and other subjects required by students going on to professions. The Alexandra School for girls, which housed Guelph's first kindergarten, was built on Dublin Street in 1865 and in 1870 the first Central School, with five classrooms, opened at the corner of Essex and Gordon streets.

The cornerstone for Galt's permanent "academy" was laid Aug. 12, 1827. The one-room "Stone School" was Guelph's first stone building, built by the Canada Company which had set aside half of the revenue from the sale of lots to endow a school. After the first teacher was dismissed for too often trying to beat his students into learning their letters and numbers, the town hired David Matthews, who stayed for 15 years. He collected 25 cents per month from parents, sometimes taking flour or pork in payment instead of cash.

In 1841, Guelph became the central town for the new Wellington District and eligible for a yearly grant of 100 pounds to hire a teacher for a grammar school. The first schoolmaster of the Wellington District Grammar School was a classical scholar from Armagh, Ireland, Arthur Cole Verner. The solid frame schoolhouse on Waterloo Avenue was in use until 1855 when a two-room school was built on Arnold Street. Only boys could attend, which created the demand for several girls' private schools that opened in the 1840s, including Miss Maclean's school on Kent Street where Edward Johnson later took piano lessons.



The 1902 Carnegie Library, designed by W. Frye Colwill, was demolished in 1964 despite strong objections from the public.

COURTESY OF THE GUELPH PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES

Although industrialists agreed that taxation was necessary to create better schools, it was 1876 before the large stone Central School opened on the Dublin Street hill with 16 classrooms, an assembly hall and a library, and classes extended to Grade 8. Three years later, Guelph achieved city status and the grammar school on Arnold Street was rebuilt as the Guelph High School. Concerts arranged by Capt. Walter Clarke raised \$2,800 in 1887 to build a gymnasium. Clarke's drill and calisthenics instruction would become a model for physical education for the province.

The Guelph Collegiate and Vocational Institute (GCVI) was the only high school in Guelph until John F. Ross opened in 1956 and Bishop Macdonell in 1962. It was the hub of learning and of artistic and athletic accomplishment. It produced the town's doctors, politicians, lawyers and teachers, and even its priests as the Catholics still did not offer a full high school program.

Graduates who went on to distinguished careers included Henry Peterson, later the County Crown Attorney, David Ouchterlony, organist at the Royal Conservatory of Music and Canadian landscape painter Frederick Verner, the son of the headmaster of Guelph's grammar school. John "Jack" McCrae was a student at GCVI from 1883 to 1888 and studied English under William Tytler. Before penning the poem "In Flanders Fields" that would make him Guelph's most famous son, he studied and taught medicine in Montreal and England.

Some teachers at GCVI also achieved great success beyond Guelph, including Olive Freeman (later Palmer), who held a senior position with the Ontario Department of Education before marrying John Diefenbaker in 1953. Fortunately, many of the school's most notable educators, including James Davison, David Young and E. Lorne Fox, remained in Guelph for their long careers.



Principal John F. (Scotty) Ross, in front, second from left, in 1925 with the GCVI rugby team. COURTESY OF THE GUELPH PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES

The names of some of Guelph's public schools - Torrance, Tytler, John F. Ross, Taylor Evans and Fred A. Hamilton - tell the story of the people who most influenced the education of the city's youth. Rev. Robert Torrance, a teacher and first minister of the United Presbyterian congregation, was superintendent of Guelph Public Schools from 1856 to 1892. His name was on the historic Waterloo Avenue school until 1998 when it was closed and sold to a developer at a controversial, fire-sale price.

Torrance's successor as superintendent, William Tytler, was an English teacher and the first principal of GCVI and was instrumental in Guelph being the first municipality to take advantage of the Free Libraries Act in 1883. He also supported the inclusion of nature study, music and art in the curriculum.

John F. "Scotty" Ross succeeded James Davison as principal of GCVI in 1925 and earned the respect of a generation of students. He retired 20 years later and had just been named as Guelph's first juvenile court

judge when he died unexpectedly. The job was then given to Roy Austen, founder of the Protestant Argos club, the second largest Bible class in Canada.

Taylor Evans was chairman of the Board of Education in the late 1960s and served as a trustee for 35 years. Fred A. Hamilton, a former principal of GCVI, was appointed as Guelph's first director of education in 1964. He retired in 1971 and then served three terms as a trustee, including serving as chair of the school board in 1976.

Guelph architect Allan Sage built his career on the massive school expansion of the 1950s and '60s, designing the lion's share of more than a dozen schools needed to accommodate the post-war baby boom. The largest school building project in the city was the educational-recreational complex on College Avenue marking the country's centennial year. The 60-acre site included two new high schools, Centennial Collegiate Vocational Institute and College Heights Secondary School, the first vocational school in Wellington County. The project included a new ice arena, a swimming pool and a large complex of sports fields. During the same era, Guelph was a beneficiary of the decision by the Ontario government to establish colleges of applied arts and technology when the Guelph campus of Conestoga College opened in 1970.

The Catholic system expanded again after 1984 when the provincial government extended funding to Roman Catholic high schools, leading to the upgrading of St. James and Our Lady of Lourdes. Bishop Macdonell was closed in 1995 after a bitter and emotional debate within the Catholic community. A new "B.M." will open in 2003 in the city's south end.

School closures and the vulnerability of public education were volatile issues at the turn of another century in Guelph. The provincial funding formula for education under the Conservative government pressured boards to close small schools if they wanted to build new schools in expanding suburbs. The municipality, embarking on initiatives to revitalize inner-city neighbourhoods and reduce urban sprawl, reacted with alarm at the possibility that more downtown schools might close.

Controversy over new standardized curriculum and student and teacher testing, loss of control over budgets by local boards and friction between the province and its teachers all contributed to rising dissatisfaction with public education. At the same time, the province passed new legislation to provide tax credits for parents who send their children to private schools. In this climate, long-established alternative schools, both religious and secular, including John Calvin Christian School, Crestwicke Christian Academy, several Montessori and Waldorf-method schools and St. John's Kilmarnock School in Maryhill, enjoyed increased enrolment.



The field husbandry building at the OAC was later named Zavitz Hall after Charles Zavitz who brought renown to the college for his work on hybrid grain varieties that greatly improved yields for Canadian farmers.

ARCHIVAL AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH LIBRARY

third time around when William Johnston, the college rector, was named president. He served from 1874 to 1879 and was the first to lobby for the college to be independent from the ministry. When he resigned, his students praised him for leading an institution “devoted to the cultivation of a much needed scientific system of farming.” But it would be decades before a truly scientific system would wrest control from the practical side.

Johnston's successor at what was now the Ontario Agricultural College was James Mills, a devout Wesleyan Methodist. The eldest of 10 children, he had only a bare bones primary education before he lost an arm in a threshing accident at the age of 20, putting an end to his prospects as a farmer. He went back to school and into teaching. Mills fought rural indifference and hostility by establishing farmers' institutes and promoting extension education. Early accomplishments at the college included the birth of the first Aberdeen Angus calf registered in Canada.

At the OAC, Mills inherited the conflict between science and practicality that eventually escalated into a provincial scandal. A young residence master, Lawrence Hunt, who had aligned himself with farm manager Thomas Shaw, was sacked in 1892 for having an affair with the college matron. From the sidelines he directed a campaign to discredit Mills and John McCrae, his successor as residence master. In the end Hunt and Shaw were defeated by hubris. A petition they caused to be sent to the Minister of Agriculture sparked a commission of inquiry that vilified the pair and demanded an end to the turf war between the farm and the school.

The civil service environment was always a problem. The college offered degrees through the University of Toronto but remained under the firm control of the province's department of agriculture. Poor remuneration meant it was almost impossible to recruit faculty from outside the college. Mills was always begging for money from the province - for dormitories, laboratories, a gymnasium, proper heating and lighting - the need was endless.

Sometimes he found help outside of the government, such as the \$45,000 from Walter Massey for the Massey Hall and Library. One of the largest gifts ever made to the University of Guelph and its colleges came during Mills' term

The University of Guelph, with an international reputation for agricultural research, began as the Ontario School of Agriculture and Experimental Farm in 1874. The province's agriculture department paid Frederick William Stone \$74,500 for his family farm of 550 acres as a site for “the college on the hill.”

In many ways, it was an idea before its time. Farmers could not see the value of sending their sons away to school, where they might acquire grand ideas about other careers, when they were needed at home. It did not help that the appointment and almost immediate departure of the first principal was surrounded by allegations of nepotism and payments of hush money. His successor did not fare much better, breaking his leg while leaping off a bridge into the Speed River during an episode of temporary insanity.

Fortunately the college was lucky the

when eccentric millionaire philanthropist Sir William Macdonald agreed to fund construction in 1903 and 1904 of three major buildings - Macdonald Hall, Macdonald Institute and the Macdonald Consolidated School. More than a century later all three are still prominent on campus, the latter as the home of the Macdonald Stewart Art Centre.

Much of the credit for bringing the Macdonald Institute to Guelph goes to Adelaide Hunter Hoodless, a Hamilton woman who became an advocate for education in homemaking after her infant son died from contaminated milk. The institute would provide young women, especially farmers' daughters, with practical education and also train public school teachers using the Macdonald Consolidated School as a learning ground.

The Macdonald Institute was always closely associated with the OAC. By the time George Creelman succeeded Mills, his father-in-law, the OAC and its sister college had a solid presence, both in Guelph and in the province. Creelman was in charge during a period of rapid growth, overseeing the construction of the field husbandry building, later to be named Zavitz Hall, a new poultry building (now Graham Hall), the Maids' Dormitory, Creelman Hall, new physics, machinery and chemistry buildings and the first building in North America devoted to apiculture.

During the First World War the college was charged with doing what it could to offset food shortages. As acting president, Zavitz, a Quaker, was opposed to the formation of an engineering corps for home defence, for which he was criticized. The war attracted many faculty, staff and students as recruits and War Memorial Hall was opened in 1924 in honour of the 109 who died.

When the United Farmers of Ontario came to power in 1919 under E.C. Drury, the Liberal-leaning Creelman was removed and replaced by Joseph Reynolds. Reynolds was a great scholar and a champion of scientific agriculture. As the first head of a tiny physics department he conducted research on lightning rods and refrigeration, and was also responsible for teaching English. In 1906, when the college decided to fund a full-time professor of English, Reynolds took the job and passed the reins of the physics department to William Day. Day's research into drainage led to the tiling of hundreds of thousands of acres of agricultural land in Ontario, including the Holland Marsh.



The Macdonald Consolidated School was one of three campus buildings constructed through donations from tobacco magnate Sir William Macdonald. In 1979 it was renovated to create the Macdonald Stewart Art Centre.

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The George III cannon was acquired by the OAC about 1878 and was used for gunnery instruction, and as a good place for "Mac girls" to pose for pictures. It was located near the Johnston Arch until students moved it one night in 1973 and now rests in Branion Plaza where it has become a favourite campus bulletin board.

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As OAC president, Reynolds began a series of reforms that would strengthen the academic standards and reputation of the college. The creation of separate two-year diploma and four-year degree programs made high school matriculation a prerequisite for admission to the latter. Degree students now spent their afternoons in the lab instead of the college barns and fields.

In 1922, Guelph's growing reputation as a centre for rural and agricultural studies was enhanced when the Ontario Veterinary College, founded in 1862, moved from Toronto to Guelph. The move, directed by OVC principal Charles "Shotgun Charlie" McGilvray, marked a radical shift in veterinary medicine. It had been an equine empire, devoted to the care and study of the beast that throughout history was the unchallenged transporter of people and their belongings. McGilvray recognized what many of his colleagues were unwilling to admit - that the horse was on the way out. More

importantly, he saw that veterinarians in the future would forge a much stronger alliance with agriculture in protecting the health of livestock and the food supply.

McGilvray, with support from Reynolds, convinced the province that a modern veterinary college did not belong in an urban setting. The federal government paid to build what was then the only English-speaking veterinary college in Canada. Construction of the OVC on the west side of Gordon Street also marked the start of a large expansion of the campus.

Through the 1930s and '40s, under the presidencies of George Christie and William Reek, the OAC was accused of "in-breeding," with the overwhelming majority of faculty being OAC grads. Christie exemplified the OAC's lack of sophistication in 1939 when he was quoted saying he still saw the horse as more valuable to the small farmer than the tractor.

War dramatically changed the Guelph campus, but not the mentality of the OAC. The Number 4 Wireless School of the Royal Canadian Air Force took over most of the OAC buildings, including the new residence (Johnston Hall) that had opened in 1932 and all of the buildings occupied by the Macdonald Institute, which was shut down for the duration of the war. Although OAC students were encouraged to complete their studies, more than 1,000 students, faculty, staff and alumni enlisted. Eighty were killed.

While universities took part in a scientific revolution fueled by the demands of a six-year war, the college stuck with the familiar in supporting Ontario's war-time agricultural production. After the war the old debates resurfaced in a very public way courtesy of John Kenneth "Spike" Galbraith, an OAC student from the late 1920s. In 1948, Galbraith, by now an internationally-renowned economist and ambassador, roasted his alma mater in two damning articles in Saturday Night magazine. He accused the college of engaging in "horse-and-buggy" teaching instead of scientific research, criticized the qualifications of its professors and challenged the close ties to the department of agriculture. "Real scholarship has never flourished in a civil service atmosphere," he wrote.

Change did not occur overnight, but Galbraith's stinging characterization of a college of country bumpkins, where the value of teaching English to "aggies" was still up for debate, certainly ensured there would be no sliding backwards. Research assumed a more prominent place. A 1945 proposal for the college to become a university was shelved when George Drew was elected premier but OAC alumni kept steady pressure on the government and supported efforts by college president J. D. (Doug) MacLachlan to achieve university status.

Politics dominated two decades of negotiations to create a university at Guelph. The ruling Conservatives did not want to upset their strong rural support by threatening the primacy of agriculture and rural life at the Guelph colleges, especially at a time when farming was undergoing dramatic change.

In 1960, there were 32,000 university students in Ontario. By 1970 the number would be 120,000. MacLachlan and OVC president Trevor Lloyd Jones argued it would be cheaper to create a university in Guelph because the site and buildings were already in place. Margaret McCready, principal of the Macdonald Institute, had to fight to be heard at Queen's Park where home economics did not have the influence enjoyed by the male-dominated areas of agriculture and veterinary medicine.

In 1962, the three institutions were reorganized as the Federated Colleges in a move most felt had killed any chance of university status for the foreseeable future. Students denounced federation as a step backwards and, like the administration and the faculty, were caught off guard when Premier John Robarts announced Feb. 27, 1963 in the Ontario Legislature that a university would be created at Guelph.



During the Second World War the Macdonald Institute was shut down and many of the major buildings at the Ontario Agricultural College were used to house The Number 4 Wireless School of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

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A 13-member, all-male board of governors was appointed in 1964, including Fred Presant who had spearheaded the OAC alumni lobby for university status. Drew, born and raised in Guelph and a former mayor of the city, was named chancellor. When he officiated at the first convocation in 1965 it was fitting that the first honorary degree was awarded to Galbraith.

Guelph was essentially a “hick town” before the creation of the university - it was a great place to grow up, but not very sophisticated. The arrival of hundreds of new faculty and thousands of students, many of whom now had to live off-campus, transformed Guelph. It also transformed the institution. The heads of new arts and science departments faced huge challenges recruiting faculty. In some departments, half of the professors were Americans.

Earl McNaughton, the dean of the College of Physical Science and the man who brought the university into the computer age, fought for chemistry, physics and mathematics to enjoy a mainstream academic role instead of supporting the life sciences at the agricultural college. Bill Winegard, a metallurgical engineer, was hired as president in 1967 as the university worked to catch up on 20 years of post-war innovation.

Fears that its status as a university would spell the end of the institution’s rural and agricultural focus proved to be unfounded. While the university certainly exerts much influence in the development of arts and culture in the city and course offerings have expanded with the opening of schools of engineering and landscape architecture and departments of human kinetics and fine art, the connection to agriculture, food and rural life has not been diminished.

More than a century after the institution was founded as a place to train boys for work on the farm, the three founding colleges of the University of Guelph have proven to be a good fit. People like Jim Shute of the Centre for International Programmes, child care expert Donna Lero and Neil Stoskopf, who wrote the definitive text on plant breeding, have helped Guelph win a strong international reputation. The Arboretum, the Turfgrass Institute and new programmes in hotel and food administration within the College of Family and Consumer Studies add to the mix.

As a college within the university, the OAC maintains strong links with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, a relationship that was cemented when OMAFRA moved its headquarters to university-owned land in Guelph. The ministry funds \$45 million of the university’s \$100 million annual research budget. With links between the university, OMAFRA, Agriculture Canada and private industry, Guelph is now an international leader in agri-food and biotechnology research.

The two presidents in the 1990s, Brian Segal and Mordechai Rozanski, have taken a more business-like approach to the job than their predecessors, a reflection of the demands of the global economy. Partnerships with industry and a government that has been criticized for putting training for employment ahead of scholarship mean the historic and healthy philosophical balancing act continues. An institution that started with an enrolment of 30 and had fewer than 1,000 students in 1964 now projects a student population of 18,000 in 2008, guaranteeing that no other factor will have a greater impact on the future direction of the city.



John Kenneth “Spike” Galbraith, an OAC grad, received the first honorary degree at the first convocation of the new University of Guelph in 1965. The internationally-renowned economist had long argued for the OAC to achieve independence from the Ontario Department of Agriculture.

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Bricks, Mortar A N D Limestone



The Church of Our Lady Immaculate, visible from every entrance to the city, is unquestionably the most impressive and defining structure in Guelph. It looks out over buildings, bridges and other structures - from the 19th century limestone City Hall to the River Run Centre opened in 1997 - that represent each period of the city's history.

The first substantial building in Guelph was the Priory, a stylish log dwelling named after Canada Company official Charles Prior. The Priory was home to John Galt and his family as well as offices of the Canada Company, a tavern, a post office, a school and accommodation for newly-arrived settlers while they were building their homes.



In the 1920s and '30s, streetcars ran along Wyndham Street and through St. George's Square, which was framed by majestic Victorian buildings.

PRIVATE COLLECTION

Demolished in 1928, The Priory was one of the first victims of the city's cyclical periods of rapid "progress" and demolition. Although Guelph lost several spectacular buildings, including the Classical Beaux Arts Carnegie Library designed by W. Frye Colwill, Central School and the Customs House/Post Office at St. George's Square, it can take comfort from having saved more of its architectural heritage than some other cities in southwestern Ontario.

Ten beautiful limestone churches help to give Guelph the feel of an old-world city of spires. All were built in the 19th century, at a time when religion dominated everyday life and when the land around Guelph contained an abundance of distinctive, amber-hued limestone.

Most of the primarily-Gothic stone churches were built during an economic boom from the 1860s to the early 1870s. One of the earliest was St. Andrew's

Church, designed by Toronto architect William Hay for the Church of Scotland in 1857. Knox was built for the Free Kirk Presbyterians in 1868 and, in 1871, a disgruntled segment of Knox's congregation, led by Donald Guthrie, hired Toronto architect Henry Langley to build Chalmers just a few doors away.

Langley also designed the First Baptist Church on Woolwich Street in 1871 and the red brick Second Baptist Church in 1892 (later St. Paul's Lutheran). The Wesleyan Methodist Church (becoming Norfolk Street United in 1925) was built in 1855 and when the congregation grew too large to be accommodated the Dublin Street Methodist Church (later United) was built in 1873.

Langley had a relatively easy time with the Anglicans compared to the delicate maneuvering around the sensibilities of the fractured Presbyterians. The St. George's congregation initially worshipped in the town's first schoolhouse with Rev. Arthur Palmer who arrived in Guelph in 1832 and later became archdeacon of Toronto. A frame church built in St. George's Square in 1833 was replaced by a medieval-style building in 1851. As a commercial hub formed around the square businessmen complained about congestion and by 1870 Langley was hired to design the stunning Gothic Revival church built on Woolwich Street at a cost of \$26,000. The building opened in 1873 and has become a local landmark.

In 1926, St. George's received a gift of the 3,000-pipe, 23-bell carillon chimes from Arthur Cutten, the Guelph-born Chicago commodities trader who also financed the Cutten Club. The church hired Robert Donnell as carillonneur who became one of the world's most famous bell ringers and served as Dominion carillonneur at the Peace Tower in Ottawa from 1939 to 1975.



St. George's Anglican Church on Woolwich Street, seen in this 1924 photograph and designed in 1872 by Henry Langley, replaced two earlier churches in St. George's Square.

COURTESY OF THE GUELPH PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES



St. Bartholomew's was the second church built on Catholic Hill. Beginning in 1877, when this photograph was taken, it was slowly replaced by the Church of Our Lady Immaculate.

COURTESY OF THE GUELPH PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES

The Church of Our Lady was the longest building project in Guelph's history. Inspired by the 13th century French Gothic cathedral at Cologne, Germany, and designed by renowned Catholic architect Joseph Connolly, it was started in 1877 at the rear of the existing St. Bartholomew's church which was demolished as the new church took shape. While the main structure was finished in 1888, the towers and parts of the interior were not completed until 1926.

The only locally-designed stone church was the British Methodist Episcopal Church on Essex Street designed by John Hall in 1880 for the black community who continue to worship there as part of an integrated congregation. The BME Church now shares the premises with Bethany Baptist Church.

The last of the downtown Gothic churches to be built with locally-quarried limestone was St. James the Apostle Anglican Church following a split of 73 members from St. George's in 1890 led by Thomas Saunders. Designed by Toronto architect Richard Windeyer and built by Guelph architect and contractor John Day, the medieval-style church with its outstanding wood ceiling

and elaborate vaulting opened in 1892. It was one of Day's last projects as he committed suicide in 1896.

Not all of the early limestone structures built in Guelph were grand churches or public buildings. Many homes still found in the older neighbourhoods of the city illustrate the popular styles of the past. They include the work of some of Guelph's fine early stone carvers and masons, including Matthew Bell and William Kennedy. The stately Sunnyside at 16 Arthur St. N. was built in 1854 by Kennedy as a wedding gift for his daughter; the modest stone dwelling at 157 Ontario St. was built about 1883 for teamster James Chambers. The latter was one of the first houses in the subdivision registered in 1856 by Canada's first prime minister, Sir John A. MacDonald, who made a handsome profit in Guelph as a land speculator. Bell's own homes, the 1858 "House of Heads" at 96-98 Water St., decorated with eight carved stone heads, and the two-headed version at 49 Albert St., are the best examples of his outstanding work.

One of the grandest 19th century Guelph homes is Ker Cavan, built between 1854 and 1856 for Rev. Arthur Palmer. The home, still standing on Stuart Street, was in the Palmer Survey, a large tract of land Palmer purchased in 1846 from Henry Tiffany. Originally called Tyrcahlen, the limestone Tudor-style home was later the home of druggist and industrialist Alex Petrie, insurance executive Henry Higinbotham and Second World War veteran Brigadier Kenneth Torrance.

After the turn of the 20th century, homeowners were often more interested in the comforts of central heating, electric light and indoor plumbing than style. Two-storey red brick homes began to line the streets. Whole neighbourhoods grew up quickly to provide housing for the workers at large new factories, especially in St. Patrick's Ward.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s local builders and architects became interested in more modern designs, sometimes experimenting with their own homes. William Mahoney was the leading architect in Guelph during the first half of the 20th century. He made his reputation designing plain, functional structures, but for his own home at 380 Woolwich St. he chose an Art Deco style. Dario Pagani, whose construction firm built Memorial Gardens and the police station on Fountain Street, chose an Art Moderne style for his home at 49 Metcalfe St.

After the Second World War, Guelph, like most other small Canadian cities, experienced a suburban building boom. Local builders and developers such as Jack Skov, Cosmo Carere, Peter Brazolot, Len Ariss and the Reid brothers - Melville, George and Albert - kept the scale small.

Since then residential growth has stretched as far south as the new city limits at Maltby Road. The overwhelming majority of new homes, in the south end as well as in large subdivisions in the east and west ends of the city, have been single-family homes, many designed with a garage prominently located at the front of the house. The last subsidized building project was the Matrix apartment building on the old Muller's Carriage Works site on Woolwich Street, designed by Guelph architect Lloyd Grinham. In the late 1990s construction of low-cost rental housing came to a grinding halt after the provincial government stopped providing funding for social housing.

Modern architecture has had just as dramatic an impact on Guelph's public buildings as it has had on the city's growing residential suburbs. No one laments the loss early in the 20th century of the small, one-storey building on Wyndham Street, then known as Huskisson Street, at the corner near where the Guelph Police Station now sits. The multi-purpose building served as the morgue as well as a carpenter shop, a garage and the city's first isolation hospital for patients with diphtheria and scarlet fever. It's enough that the story of its existence remains to be told.

But other buildings were lost after much divisive public debate and continue to be missed. After the Second World War, Guelph experienced a building boom that had a devastating impact on its architectural heritage. An early casualty was the Royal Opera House built by the Ancient Order of United Workmen in 1894. With seating for more than



The Royal Opera House, designed in 1893-94 by Stratford architect Henry Powell, seated 1,200. It became the Capitol Theatre in 1923 and was torn down by Joe Wolfond in 1953 to build Simpson-Sears and the Odeon Theatre.

COURTESY OF THE GUELPH PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES

1,200, it opened to great fanfare with a performance of the comic opera *Athenia* by a travelling Detroit company accompanied by a Guelph orchestra.

On Sept. 20, 1953, after a final Saturday night performance, what had become the Capitol Theatre closed its doors. Soon afterwards the imposing building was torn down by the new owner, Joe Wolfond, who built the Odeon Theatre (now the Club Denim) and Simpson-Sears in its place. Portions of the stone walls from the opera house were used in 1956 in construction of the Christian education wing of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church.

In 1954, people in Guelph welcomed the arrival of Simpson-Sears, at that time one of the most modern stores in Wellington County. The department store stayed downtown for only two decades. In 1975 it was one of the leaders of the exodus to the suburbs when it relocated to the new Stone Road Mall. During a Third Age Learning class in 1996 at the University of Guelph there was a collective gasp in the room as local historian Don Coulman flipped from a slide of the opera house to a slide of what replaced it.

"It didn't matter what it looked like, it just had to be new. You could tear anything down," Coulman said. Over the three post-war decades the domed Carnegie Library, the old Central School, which was almost as prominent on the Dublin Street hill as the Church of Our Lady, and all of the majestic buildings in St. George's Square were torn down. In a 1961 headline, a local newspaper editor with a flair for

alliteration captured what was happening - "Guelph's Slab-Sided Building Boom is Bulldozing the Baroque."

Many of the buildings did not go without a noisy and public tug-of-war. The newspapers were filled with letters to the editor prior to the demolition in 1960 of the Customs House and former post office to build the Bank of Nova Scotia. The transformation of St. George's Square continued as the wrecker's ball brought down the Scottish Baronial-style Bank of Commerce building with its corner turret, the 1887 Second Empire Mahoney building and the Victorian Tovell Building designed by John Hall in 1881.

A young Jane Caspers, today a local judge, was a university student in 1974 when she expressed her outrage in a letter to the editor. "I am disturbed and incensed at how cheaply the people of Guelph will sell out their national heritage for the sake of what some term progress," she wrote. "Those of us who have lived through the last 15 years have noted the destruction with sadness, realizing that with proper, far-sighted planning the earlier Guelph, left untouched, could have continued as a city of character."

It was the fight for the Canada Trust building on Wyndham Street in 1977 that cemented a change in attitude in Guelph. Alderman Ken Hammill was on the losing side of an attempt to have the example of early Scottish stone masonry designated as a heritage facade.

"It makes us different from the masses of cement and glass prevalent in such places as Cleveland," he argued. The attempt at heritage designation failed when then-Mayor Norm Jary cast the deciding vote, giving the bank the green light to demolish part of one of the few complete pre-Confederation city blocks still standing in Canada.

One of the champions of heritage conservation in Guelph was Gordon Couling, whose ancestors settled in the Guelph area between 1827 and 1832. After Couling retired as chair of the fine art department at the University of Guelph he immersed himself in a new career, compiling an inventory of pre-1927 structures and creating interest in the city's heritage with his popular walking tours published by the Guelph Arts Council.

A Local Architectural Conservancy Advisory Committee (LACAC) was appointed in 1977 with support from city planner Norm Harrison who had encouraged the city to adopt a bylaw protecting the sight lines of the Church of Our Lady by restricting building height in the city core to between three and five storeys. The bylaw was in anticipation of more applications for buildings like the Park Mall, a 13-storey apartment block at the corner of Yarmouth and Quebec Streets criticized for its visual impact on the historic character of the city. In 2001, the bylaw was invoked to defeat an application by a developer to build a nine-storey apartment building on Yarmouth Street.

Since 1977, 75 buildings have received heritage designations, including several city-owned structures - City Hall designed by William Thomas and opened in 1857 on the site of the first St. Andrew's Church, the Guelph Civic Museum, John McCrae House, the Goldie Mill ruins and the Blacksmith fountain, presented to the city by carriage manufacturer James Armstrong in 1885 and moved from St. George's Square to Priory Square in 1922.

The city has also designated three of its bridges: the 1897 Gow's Bridge, the only surviving limestone bowstring bridge in Guelph, named after miller Peter Gow who was Guelph's first MPP; the Heffernan Street footbridge built in 1914 behind St. George's Anglican Church to replace an earlier low-level bridge; and the 1882 steel and iron Norwich Street Bridge. There had been a bridge across the Speed River at Norwich Street as far back as 1860. First called the Wellington Foundry Bridge, it was an important link for moving goods across the river because of nearby mills and foundries. The structure was later known as the Inglis-Hunter Bridge because of its proximity to the former Marblelike Products factory at 195 Arthur St. N, the site of the birthplace of the John Inglis Appliance Company. The factory was a derelict limestone structure before it was converted in 1980 into a row of townhouses.

The Bullfrog Inn at 414 Eramosa Rd., named for the nearby swamps and ponds, has a colourful history. It was the setting for the first meeting of Guelph Township Council in 1850 and was later operated by eccentric Guelph carpenter and watch repairman James Gay, a self-described "poet laureate of Canada." Local lore also has it that, in 1878, Dr. Abraham Groves of Fergus used a sterilized pen knife to remove a massive gallstone from a man weighing 300 pounds. The inn was restored and converted in the 1970s by owner Freddy Veri from a rooming house into a hair salon.

In 1981, Simcoe-based architect Carlos Ventin was hired to restore the city's oldest public buildings - the county jail and courthouse on Woolwich Street - as the Wellington County administrative offices and council chambers. When the county was considering demolition, city planner Norm Harrison was able to convince Puslinch farmer Archie McRobbie and the rest of county council to save the heritage jewel from the wrecker's ball.

In recent years, many historic buildings have been converted for other uses. The White Dress Factory built in 1911 at 40 Northumberland St. lost its last industrial tenant in 1988. Guelph developer Ike VanSoelen transformed the building into condominiums with high ceilings and huge factory windows. Old factories were also converted into the Oxford Lodge retirement home and the Barber Gallery.

The Boathouse, built in the early 20th century beside the Speed River, was about to be levelled in the mid 1990s to create more parking spots for the Guelph Lawn Bowling Club when a pair of restaurateurs made a deal with the city to restore the heritage structure in exchange for a long-term lease at nominal rent. The site was a hub of social and sporting activity in the 19th century when it was occupied by Johnson's boathouse. It was used by the Speed Canoe Club in the 1890s but was later torn down. The rental boathouse that replaced it was taken over by the Navy League during the Second World War. The Sea Cadets then used it for their headquarters until 1993 when they joined with the Guelph Youth Music Centre to share the former Heritage Seed Company building on Cardigan Street. That has been yet another major heritage restoration project and opened its doors in the fall of 2001.



This sketch of the Post Office/Customs House is by Gordon Couling who fought for Guelph to retain its architectural heritage. The building designed by federal architect David Ewart was torn down in 1960 and replaced by the modern Bank of Nova Scotia.

PRIVATE COLLECTION

John and Tom Lammer have made a name for themselves in Guelph by saving several vulnerable buildings. They took the grimy Cooke and Denison machine and welding shop on Yarmouth Street and restored it as a 20-unit complex of bachelor apartments and a restaurant. The 1875 building was originally part of the Raymond Sewing Machine Factory. The Lammers developed new residential units in the burned-out Guelph Carpet Factory on Neeve Street, in St. Paul's Lutheran Church on Woolwich Street and in the Tolton Textile Factory on Commercial Street.

The father-and-son team also had a hand in the restoration of the Cutten-Kelly building at the corner of Wyndham and Macdonell Streets, the former home of Kelly's Music Store designed in 1882 by local architect John Hall. Next door, the building designed the same year by Guelph architect John Day for druggist Alex Petrie with the distinctive mortar and pestle and stamped galvanized facade, also cries out for restoration. Guelph's main street kept a major anchor when Guelph architect Karl Briestensky, whose work includes St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church on Victoria Road, and local developers Doug Bridge and Chester Carere transformed the triangular, copper-roofed 1877 Wellington Hotel that had been gutted by fire in 1975.

Today, the city struggles with a new crop of complicated heritage issues. The single-lane bowstring bridge on Stone Road is perceived as an obstacle to some and as a gem to others as the city expands its arterial road system in the south end. Via Rail and Canadian National Railways may be interested in unloading the historic CN station on Carden Street and the city is negotiating with the federal government over the future of the Art Deco post office on Wyndham Street. The spectacular Guelph Correctional Centre, designed by John Lyle who designed Union Station and the Royal Alexandra Theatre in Toronto, is slated to be closed by the province in 2002 and has enormous potential as a restoration project.



The Provincial Winter Fair Building was built in 1900 after lobbying by the Guelph Fat Stock Club. The fair ended when the building was taken over by the military during the Second World War. The facade of the old fair building was discovered in 2000 under the siding of Memorial Gardens. PRIVATE COLLECTION



The history of the Albion Hotel stretches back to the 19th century when it was one of dozens of downtown watering holes.

ARCHIVAL AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH LIBRARY

Wyndham Street. The spectacular Guelph Correctional Centre, designed by John Lyle who designed Union Station and the Royal Alexandra Theatre in Toronto, is slated to be closed by the province in 2002 and has enormous potential as a restoration project.

A project that will have a huge impact on the character of the city in the 21st century is the redevelopment of Memorial Gardens. The facade of the Provincial Winter Fair building, constructed in 1900, was discovered under the siding of the Gardens when the arena was closed in 2000. The provincial fair was held at the site until 1938 and covered over when the arena was built after the Second World War. The heritage structure presents an opportunity to dramatically link the future to the past, to the thriving market square that John Galt envisioned as the heart of an important city.

Safe AND Secure

For early settlers dependent on wood fires and coal oil to heat and light their homes, fire was a fact of life, but the residents of the village of Guelph could rely only on a bucket brigade when fire broke out. The first organized volunteer fire brigade used a fire engine that was pumped by hand. In 1868, the town bought a steam engine and sank tanks at several locations for quick access to water. After 1860, fire equipment was housed in the new Market House/Town Hall and in 1865 the fire and police departments moved to an annex behind the Town Hall. In 1878, the fire brigade became the Guelph Hook and Ladder Company, still a volunteer crew with Col. James Armstrong as chief.



Fire chief John Smith shows off Guelph's first motorized fire truck, nicknamed "The Little Red Devil," to an audience in 1918 that included MPP Lincoln Goldie. COURTESY OF TED ERNST

In the early 1900s, fire services moved to a permanent fire hall, now the Loft, in the west wing of the Provincial Winter Fair Building. A full-time chief was hired in 1909 and in 1917 the department acquired a Model T truck nicknamed "The Little Red Devil." The fire department moved into its present location in 1972, with community fire halls on Speedvale Avenue and Stone Road and a new hall that opened in 2000 adjacent to the West End Community Centre.

Maintaining law and order had something of a "wild west" flavour in Guelph's early years. Just as they are in 2002, most crimes in 1827 stemmed from overindulgence in beer and whiskey. The first police constable and "grog boss" assigned to keep the peace was Thomas Brown, who also enjoyed the distinction of being the father of Letitia Brown, the first child whose birth was recorded in Guelph.

John Jones was named as the first chief of police in 1840 and by 1860, with a population of 7,000, it was still a one-man force. Under chief Jonathon Kelly, appointed in 1868, the ranks swelled to four and cells were installed in the Town Hall. In 1881, Frederick Randall, who had a reputation as a crack shot, began a 38-year career as Guelph's chief of police.

After the First World War, Randall was succeeded by Alex Rae and the force added a Model T car to augment its fleet of bicycles. On May 30, 1925, Const. Teddy Lamb provided the force with its first motorcycle which was often used to deal with a new problem - speeding cars. Harold Nash, the founder of the Police Association of Ontario, was appointed chief in 1936. He was in charge throughout the Second World War when women constables were hired to replace the men who had enlisted. They were not kept on after the war and Guelph did not hire another female officer until 1973 when Judy Godbehere was hired because of the increase in the number of female prisoners.

Lamb was promoted to chief on Nash's retirement in 1949 and supervised the rapid growth in the force and its move from City Hall to a separate headquarters on Fountain Street in 1959. He was succeeded in 1964 by Deputy Chief Robert Gill who joined the force in 1929 and was responsible for the creation of the juvenile bureau. Gill died in office, having served only nine months as chief. He was replaced by Bob McCarron who brought in many innovations including court officers, radios for foot patrols, and crime prevention programs. McCarron retired in 1980 and was succeeded by Lorne Halls, a Fergus native who had joined the force in 1945.

Bill McCart filled the top job between 1985 and 1988 when the 911 system was initiated. He was succeeded by Richard Stewart who was on the Canadian Association of Chiefs of



Police chief Ted Lamb makes revolver ammunition in the 1950s. COURTESY OF THE GUELPH PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES

Police forensic committee when the country's DNA data bank was being developed. The police department entered a period of upheaval in 1994 when Stewart retired and was replaced by 32-year-old Lenna Bradburn, the manager of the investigations unit of the Ministry of Solicitor General and Correctional Services. Bradburn was brought on to implement sweeping new provincial legislation on policing. Her tenure was marked by discontent, culminating in a vote of non-confidence by the rank and file. Relative harmony returned when Bradburn resigned in 2000 to take a position with the Ontario Ombudsman and veteran Guelph police officer Rob Davis was named chief.

Police, fire and hospital services may have been slow to develop in the 19th century, but towns in the colony of Upper Canada, including Guelph, wasted no time establishing courts of law to settle a litany of disputes from payment of tolls on the bridge over the Speed River to charges of treason against Reform sympathizers. Tensions were often fueled by the imported conflict between Irish Catholics and Orangemen. In 1844, the divisions sparked a fire that levelled St. Patrick's Church on Catholic Hill.

The first court in Guelph sat in 1833 to hear debt disputes. When the District of Wellington was formed in 1837, Guelph, as the district seat, needed a courthouse and a jail. The jail, a portion of which still survives as part of the redeveloped Crown attorney's offices, was built in 1839 by Guelph contractor William Day. Its first prisoner was James Lindsay, sentenced to five years for stealing cattle. The courthouse was built by Guelph miller William Allan in 1843 and is the city's oldest public building.

One of Guelph's most notorious court cases resulted in the town's first public execution. Charles Coghlin, a young Irish Catholic, was sentenced to death for stabbing Richard Oliver, a Protestant, in a fight on the Eramosa Road in March 1847. The killing followed months of tension and court battles between the two families. In each case, the Protestant magistrate Dr. William Clarke had ruled in the Olivers' favour.

Before the hanging, Coghlin spoke for almost 30 minutes to a crowd of 1,500 people. He declared his innocence, apologized to Oliver's widow and denounced the quality of justice in Guelph, singling out Clarke. Although Coghlin had urged his friends not to seek revenge for his death, the Wellington Mill, owned by Clarke and coroner Henry Orton, was burned to the ground the month after the hanging.

Many people in Guelph felt Coghlin's sentence should have been commuted to life. Uneasiness about capital punishment increased forty years later after the hanging of William Harvey. The bookkeeper for J.W. Lyon had been charged with embezzlement. In what doctors for the defence later described as a fit of temporary insanity, Harvey reacted by killing his wife and two daughters. He was arrested in Toronto where he had gone to track down his son, presumably to kill him before killing himself.

Despite the medical evidence, Harvey was found guilty and sentenced to hang. A petition circulated across Canada could not save him. The hanging, covered by the Toronto newspapers, was terribly botched and Harvey took more than 10 minutes to succumb because the inexperienced hangman had not properly adjusted the noose. At a subsequent inquiry, a jury recommended that in future the government employ a professional executioner.

The need for prison reform was identified in 1908 and Guelph was seen as an ideal place for a prison farm where rehabilitation would replace punishment. In 1910, prisoners began clearing 800 acres for construction of the Ontario Reformatory and by 1915 the Central Prison in Toronto was closed and its occupants transferred to Guelph. By 1917 it had wood, broom, tailoring, shoe, machine and paint shops, a woollen mill, a quarry and a farm. The site was commandeered by the federal government during the First World War as the Speedwell Hospital for convalescing veterans. Reinstated as a prison, it had 1,400 prisoners by 1921.



Guelph's oldest public building is the courthouse on Wyndham Street. It was restored in 1981 by Simcoe-based architect Carlos Ventin and houses the Wellington County administrative offices and council chambers.

PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF CANADA

An abattoir had been part of the institution from its inception but in 1974 operations were contracted out to a private company, later known as Better Beef. Inmates were on the payroll for Better Beef until the early 1990s. The prison's busy farm operations, including a herd of 100 prize dairy cattle and vegetable gardens that supplied the institution's cannery, also ceased operation in the 1970s when a large portion of the prison grounds was sold to the Royal Canadian Legion.

In 2002, the Guelph Correctional Centre is slated to close its doors as part of the Conservative government's restructuring of the provincial prison system. The local closures began in 2001 with the Wellington Detention Centre. Prisoners awaiting trial in Guelph courts are now detained in facilities in Hamilton and Milton. Guelph courts could become a casualty in the future if transporting prisoners long distances is deemed to be too costly.

Defence of king and country has always found strong support in Guelph. As early as the 1830s Capt. John Poore trained a volunteer rifle company to defend the town against William Lyon Mackenzie's Reformers. Mackenzie is believed to have hidden near Guelph before fleeing to the United States after the abortive 1837 rebellion against the Family Compact who controlled the government of Upper Canada.



John McCrae, bottom left, pictured with his sister Geills, brother Thomas and mother Janet Eckford McCrae, was born and raised in Guelph and shortly before his death wrote "In Flanders Fields." COURTESY OF GUELPH MUSEUMS

Local militia came together in 1857 as the First Wellington Battalion. The Guelph Garrison Battery was formed in 1866 to guard against threatened Fenian raids. That spawned the Wellington Field Battery of Artillery in 1871 and the Ontario Field Battery in 1878 comprised of OAC students. The two combined to form the First Provisional Brigade of Field Artillery in 1880 which produced soldiers who fought in the Northwest Rebellion and the Boer War.

Guelph was a true blue British Commonwealth town in those days, with imperialist sentiments infused into all aspects of life. Politics helped win a proper home for Guelph's military activities when Liberal MP Hugh Guthrie lobbied successfully for both an armoury and an enlarged post office and customs house. The Guelph Armoury was built in 1908 and its large assembly hall became a venue for local festivities.

Thousands of troops were accommodated and trained at the Armoury during the First World War when the local militia unit was renamed the First Howitzer Brigade Canadian Forces Artillery and was sent to Halifax for coastal defence. Guelph men joined five regular artillery batteries that were sent overseas and some women joined nursing units. Guelph lost 281 men and one nursing sister.

One of those who died was Lt. Col. John McCrae, while serving with the ambulance corps of the Canadian Army. Weary of the slaughter he was witnessing at the Second Battle of Ypres in Belgium in 1915, he wrote *In Flanders Fields* shortly after the death of his best friend, Alexis Helmer. McCrae died of pneumonia at Boulogne, France, in 1918.

Guelph found itself at the centre of a national incident during the First World War as the imposition of conscription fueled anti-Catholic sentiments. The Citizens' Union Committee, backed by the Guelph Ministerial Association, took out an advertisement in the *Toronto Globe* newspaper proclaiming its support for the "maintenance of British ideals and traditions" and its alarm over the "menace of French Canadian domination."

Local Protestants complained that young Catholic men in Guelph's Jesuit seminary, one of them the son of the federal justice minister, were evading military service. Military police raided the seminary in June, 1918, and arrested three novices. A subsequent inquiry found that the student priests were legally exempted from service and the raid had been a sad demonstration of religious intolerance.

After the war, the militia was reconstituted as the 11th Brigade under the command of Lieut.-Col. George Drew. Guelph casualties during the Second World War numbered 173. In the post-war period, interest in the militia receded and the cadet corps faced tough competition for recruits from sports, arts and other youth activities.

Today, Guelph's 11th Field Artillery Regiment is Canada's oldest artillery regiment. Its focus has been on disaster relief and peacekeeping, with members assisting in the 1998 ice storm in Ontario and Quebec, the flooding of Manitoba's Red River in the mid 1990s and on missions to Cyprus, Cambodia, and Yugoslavia.

Healing AND Helping

The Sisters of St. Joseph from Hamilton opened St. Joseph's Hospital and House of Providence in 1861 with 16 beds, serving as a hospital and a poor house. A year later they moved into a larger stone building on Hospital Street north of London Road.

The hospital doubled in size in 1877 and a home for the aged was built next door in 1895. A modern five-storey hospital was completed in 1951 and in 1960 the early hospital buildings were demolished during construction of a larger home for the aged.

The Guelph General Hospital opened in 1875 on a four-acre site on Delhi Street with 12 beds and did not have an operating room until an addition was built in 1888. A short time later nursing superintendent Louisa Eastwood

established a school of nursing where, besides nursing, students were responsible for housekeeping, operating the switchboard and doing the laundry.

For 35 years, the hospital was run by a Swiss man with an unusual name, Blessed Sinner. His duties included managing the farm which supplied food for the patients, administering anaesthetics, assisting in operations and keeping the books. Several new buildings were added to the hospital over the years, including a nurses' residence and an isolation hospital for patients with diphtheria, smallpox, cholera or typhoid. Today, those buildings house Family and Children's Services and the Delhi Recreation Centre. In 1904, the Elliott Home for "elderly ladies and gentlemen" was built, assisted by a bequest from George Elliott, a former chairman of the board, who saw the need for a "home of the friendless."



St. Joseph's Hospital and House of Providence was Guelph's first hospital, established in 1861.

PRIVATE COLLECTION

In 1930, the city assumed responsibility for Guelph General and established a board of commissioners. A new \$1.4 million hospital was opened in 1951, staffed by 200, with 171 beds and space for 38 bassinets. In 1956, the old hospital was demolished and replaced by a new nurses' complex. Seventy-five beds were added in 1968.

Eventually it was determined that it made no sense for the city to have two acute-care hospitals, sparking a bitter conflict that lasted three decades. A local group of women, advocating for the General so that abortion services would continue to be available in Guelph, launched a "One Hospital for All" campaign. In the end, the General underwent major redevelopment as the acute-care institution. In 2002, construction of a new St. Joseph's Health Centre for long-term care was nearing completion.

Guelph's third hospital, the Homewood Health Centre, was founded as a private psychiatric institution in 1883 in the former home of Liberal MP and later MPP Donald Guthrie. The Homewood Sanatorium began as a 50-bed facility and, for those who could pay, was the only alternative in the province to the public asylums.

From the beginning, Guelph's hospitals relied heavily on ladies' auxiliaries. The volunteer work on behalf of hospital and church projects did not, however, bring Guelph women the recognition their husbands enjoy in the history books. Members of church groups would visit sick and elderly people who could not leave their homes. The St. George's, St. Andrew's, St. Patrick's and St. Vincent de Paul societies all raised money for the needy, usually assisting those from their own religious group. Widows and orphans were looked after by the Masons, the Odd Fellows and dozens of other fraternal



The Guelph General Hospital was run for 35 years by Blessed Sinner, pictured in the mid 1890s with nurses Jessie Turnbull, Maria Tripp, Augusta Ariss, Grace Murphy and Etta Stirton.

COURTESY OF GUELPH GENERAL HOSPITAL

orders. Union members were helped by the Guelph Trades and Labour Council. During the Depression, missions in the Ward and elsewhere in the city provided food and organized youth activities.

Through volunteer efforts, money was raised by the Red Cross to support men fighting in South Africa and later during two world wars. When the need for a youth centre was identified in 1912, solicitor Walter Buckingham led a fundraising drive to build a YMCA with a swimming pool at the corner of Quebec and Yarmouth streets. Within a year 564 men and boys had joined. The Y became the gathering place for Guelph youth, especially at the Friday night dances. A sister club on Macdonell Street opened a hostel for women in 1929.

In the first half of the 20th century dozens of service clubs were established in Guelph, including the IODE, the Rotary, Kiwanis, the Optimist Club, the Guelph Lions Club and the Kinsmen. In the late 1930s, a young insurance salesman named Bill Hamilton (later MPP and Mayor of Guelph) started the Community Chest, later United Way Community Services of Guelph and Wellington. Ontario Agricultural College librarian Florence Partridge provided a forum for women through the Business and Professional Women's Club in 1925 and founded the Guelph chapter of the Canadian Federation of University Women in 1945.

The Canadian Club in Guelph, established in 1888, is the disputed first Canadian Club in Canada. The City of Hamilton claims the same distinction. The club is the forerunner of the Club of Guelph founded by Ken Hammond in 1975 and Friends of Guelph founded in the late 1990s, organizations of business and community leaders, until recently exclusively men, who took on major community projects. In 2000, Friends of Guelph helped the Guelph Community Health Centre move into a permanent downtown home, established the Guelph Community Foundation to build endowments for charitable organizations, assisted Mary Anne Bracewell with the Millennium Bandshell in Royal City Park and supported efforts to save the Via Rail station.

The realization that much of Guelph's history was not recorded led to the formation of the Guelph Historical Society in 1961 whose publications have since been setting the record straight. The local historians opened a small museum which provided the foundation for a permanent home to open on Gordon Street where the Guelph Farmers' Market is now located. Today the museum is located on Dublin Street in one of the oldest stone commercial buildings in the city, the former home of the Knights of Columbus. Together with the McCrae branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, the Guelph Historical Society also acquired John McCrae's birthplace on Water Street and restored it as a museum. In 1997, Toronto garment manufacturer Arthur Lee purchased McCrae's war medals at auction for \$400,000 and donated them to the museum.

Today, a climate of dwindling resources has created a massive network of volunteer organizations all vying for the disposable income of Guelph's citizens. The number of large fundraising campaigns for the hospitals alone - capital campaigns for equipment, Black Tie Bingo,

Hotfoot Happening and a Taste of Guelph - raises questions about the future of the public health system. At the same time, every local organization has adopted a worthy cause, and there are plenty - Wyndham House, Change Now, Women in Crisis, schizophrenia, AIDS, cancer, Parkinson's disease, arthritis, autism.

Although Guelph is considered to have a higher than average standard of living, it is not immune to poverty, homelessness and a lack of resources for people with mental illness. In 1983, Sister Christine Leyser opened the Welcome In Drop In Centre on Wyndham Street, providing meals and a welcoming environment for Guelph's marginalized population. She also opened Stepping Stone, an emergency shelter, and in 2002 opened a new shelter for women and children. With housing advocate Ed Pickersgill she lobbies continuously for construction of affordable housing. Local churches provide hot meals to downtown residents at Chalmers United Church. Also in 2002 Change Now, the city's youth drop-in resource centre, will open an emergency youth centre in Norfolk St. United Church. In 2001, Onward Willow celebrated its 10th anniversary as a community development project focusing on early intervention for babies and toddlers with the goal of breaking the cycle of poverty. It was the first of a new wave of neighbourhood groups working to address social problems in Guelph.



The YM-YWCA has a long history in Guelph and for many decades had a prominent presence in the downtown core. This distinctive YWCA building, ca. 1920, is one of the few historic buildings at St. George's Square that survived the post-war modernization movement.

COURTESY OF GUELPH PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES

Multiculturalism

FROM MANY Lands

For most of Guelph's first century diversity was more about religion than country of origin. Guelph was a predominately English town, with smaller but sizeable Irish and Scottish populations. Moral and theological disagreements spawned splinter congregations from the Presbyterian, Methodist and Anglican churches. Minorities consisted of Quakers, Baptists, German Mennonites and a few blacks.

By 1907, Guelph had the 10 Jewish men required to form a minyan - a formal prayer quorum. The Acker, Brown, Smith and Enushevsky families came mostly as peddlers from Russia and Poland. The Jewish community eventually produced prominent downtown merchants and builders, including the Wolfonds and the Enchins, as well as community leaders such as Joe Young, elected to city council in 1983 and mayor from 1995 to 2000, and Mordechai Rozanski, appointed president of the University of Guelph in 1993. In 1949, the small synagogue on Dublin Street was replaced by the Beth Isaiah Synagogue dedicated to the memory of Isaiah (Sidney) Acker and all Jews who died in the Second World War. Throughout the 20th century the Jewish population grew slowly. Today there are 90 families, many in professional occupations rather than following in the business footsteps of their parents.

A small black community of about 100 people lived in Guelph towards the end of the 19th century, working as labourers, painters, barbers, dressmakers, blacksmiths and domestic servants. They were descendants of escaped and refugee slaves who originally settled in Queen's Bush near Elmira. By the 1860s, 38 had moved to Guelph.

While Guelph's English roots are still its defining influence, the 20th century opened doors to people from beyond Britain's shores - from Italy, Germany and France at first, and later from anywhere on the globe. Class and cultural divisions were clearly marked in the early days. Families from France, Italy and Poland settled in St. Patrick's Ward. They found work in the foundries and planted large gardens to feed their families. A few Asian families opened laundries and small numbers of refugees from places like Armenia began to arrive.

Two world wars tested the limits of tolerance in Guelph. During the First World War, Austrians, Hungarians and Austrian-Poles who were not married were interned in Toronto. A generation later, Italians in Guelph were viewed as the enemy and subjected to discrimination.

After the Second World War, the city's multicultural character blossomed. Hundreds of Italian, Polish and Dutch families arrived in Guelph as people fled post-war poverty in Europe and put their skills to work in North America's building boom. The 1940s, '50s and '60s also produced smaller Hellenic, Hungarian, Ukrainian, Philippino, Maltese and Caribbean communities in Guelph before immigration slowed significantly in the 1970s. By the 1980s people were again on the move, but there were new global hot spots and immigration to Canada and to Guelph had a new face as churches sponsored Vietnamese, Laotian and Cambodian refugee families.

Throughout its history, Guelph has had a fluctuating population of First Nations people, today numbering about 1,000. Newcomers to Guelph are from mainland China, Afghanistan, India and Latin America. The Chinese tend to be young, independent professionals. The Afghans are part of a large exodus of refugees. Immigration from India has been steady for years as people settle and sponsor relatives to reunite their families. War and political unrest in Columbia and El Salvador has driven many families to Guelph but the hundreds of Spanish-speaking families represent all parts of Latin America.

Each year, 750 refugees and people from the general pool of new immigrants who are not joining relatives or taking jobs in a specific location are settled in Guelph by federal agencies. As a result, at the beginning of the 21st century, Guelph has new Tamil, Bengali, Egyptian and Iranian communities. Pat Joannie, the executive director of the Guelph and District Multicultural Centre, says Guelph is more multicultural than perception suggests because some immigrant communities still feel safer keeping to themselves and are simply not visible.



Sam Lee Hing was a launderer in Guelph, part of a tiny visible minority population in the Victorian era.

COURTESY OF GUELPH MUSEUMS

The Italians

Arriving in two waves of 20th century immigration, the Italian influence is today integral to Guelph's character. In 1901, only two residents of Guelph listed Italy as their country of origin. One of the earliest was the father of grocer Lou Embro (the "Mayor of Carden Street") who came to Guelph in 1904 and worked as a gravedigger for the city. The 1911 census lists 358 Italians and by 1921 their numbers had risen to almost 600.

Many of the early immigrants, including the Valeriotos and Careres, came from the town of San Giorgio in Calabria in Southern Italy and today still celebrate the feast of San Giorgio on April 23, the same saint's day that John Galt chose for the founding of Guelph. Most moved into St. Patrick's Ward, close to the factories where the men found work as labourers. Large groups of young men would bunk together until they earned enough money to bring a bride from Italy. Over time a strong Italian neighbourhood evolved in what became known as "The Ward."

Lou Fontinato, who eventually found fame as a hockey player with the New York Rangers, had a typical childhood growing up in an Italian family in Guelph in the 1930s. He was the sixth child, and only son of Maria and Liberale who came to Guelph from Treviso in Northern Italy. The one suitcase they had brought with them was not even full. They boarded with other Italian families before eventually buying a house of their own on Ferguson Street.

Liberale Fontinato worked for 40 years at the International Malleable Iron Company. He also kept a five-acre market garden on St. George's hill, land he later sold to the city for construction of war-time houses on Lane Street. Lou Fontinato remembers the arguments with his sisters over whose turn it was to bring the cow back

from the nearby pasture for milking. He and his friends played in the quarry behind the rubber plant and had great fun burning oil-soaked cotton batting pulled from around the bearings of the wheels of the trains at the roundhouse near Alice Street. In the winter the boys skated on a rink his father built beside their house; in summer, the rink became a bocce court.

The women worked tirelessly raising large families and feeding large groups of boarders to make ends meet. Lou's mother made the confirmation dresses for his five sisters and prided herself on getting through the Depression years without taking handouts.

"Weren't we lucky to be born in the Ward. Everyone down there had a work ethic," Lou says now.

Immigration was halted during the Depression and the Italian pioneers faced another harsh period during the Second World War when they had to register as enemy aliens. Some were interned. Many who were Canadians were shunned and denied jobs because of their heritage, particularly if they were members of the patriotic Sons of Italy.

The thousands who came to Guelph in the 1950s and '60s to escape the poverty of post-war Italy found a friendly and established "Little Italy." Many intended to work in Canada for a while and eventually go back to

Italy, but few returned. They were the stone masons, bricklayers and carpenters who built the homes during Guelph's post-war housing boom. Some were risk takers who built their own companies like Durose Welding, Barzotti Woodworking, and Gorgi's Construction or went into the real estate, travel or grocery business.

Immigration again slowed in the '70s when economic prosperity returned to Italy. Imelda Porcellato, the Italian Vice-Consul in Guelph, says it was the sacrifice of the immigrants to Canada who regularly sent money home that helped those who stayed behind to prosper.

Although not borne out by census statistics, some claim one third of Guelph's population is of Italian ancestry, representing one of the largest Italian communities per capita in North America. The community now lives in neighbourhoods throughout the city. Porcellato says the legacy of those hard-working pioneers is their determination to ensure an education for their children. Few have not gone on to university. That success has not been without a price, however, as most of the fully-integrated younger generation do not speak the Italian language.



Peter Marucci's family was part of the first wave of Italian immigration to Guelph.

COURTESY OF WELLINGTON COUNTY MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES

PEOPLE IN Politics

Guelph is generally viewed as a small “c” conservative town. Its history supports that view, although since Confederation Guelph has sent Liberal politicians to Ottawa and Queen’s Park by a margin of two to one over Conservatives.

Liberal David Stirton was elected in 1867 during the first election of the new federal government. He had been Wellington South’s member of the Legislative Assembly since 1857 and resigned as MP in 1876 to become Guelph’s postmaster, a position he held for 28 years.

Stirton was replaced by Donald Guthrie in the first of two elections in which Guthrie defeated Tory James Goldie. Guthrie came to Guelph to set up a law practice with his cousin Adam Fergusson-Blair and went on to serve as city and county solicitor for more than 50 years. He was orphaned at age 13 when his parents died of cholera on the journey from Scotland. Although deaf for most of his life, Guthrie became a prominent public speaker and community leader. He chose not to seek re-election in 1882 but a few years later began an eight-year term as Guelph’s MPP.

From 1882 to 1896 Guelph’s representative in Ottawa was James Innes, owner, publisher and editor of the Guelph Mercury. He was defeated in 1896 by Guelph’s first Tory MP, industrialist Christian Kloepfer, who held the seat for four years until he lost to the man who would attain the highest position of any of Guelph’s federal representatives. Hugh Guthrie’s 35 years in Ottawa began in his father’s footsteps as a Liberal, serving as Wilfrid Laurier’s right-hand man. He parted ways with Laurier and joined the Union Coalition in support of conscription in 1917, becoming Canada’s solicitor general.

After the war, the Coalition disbanded and Guthrie switched to the Tories, becoming solicitor general and minister of military defence in Prime Minister Arthur Meighen’s cabinet. When the Tories lost the 1926 election and Meighen resigned Guthrie served as interim Leader of the Opposition and leader of the party. He was named Minister of Justice when R.B. Bennett came to power in 1930. Guthrie did not run for re-election in 1935, instead accepting an appointment as Chief Commissioner on the Board of Railway Commissioners.

His departure opened the door for Liberal Robert Gladstone, a teacher and community leader, who held the seat until 1949 when he accepted a seat in the Senate. Liberal Henry Hosking won the 1949 election, was re-elected in 1953 and died in office in 1957. Guelph voters then switched parties and sent Tory Alf Hales to Ottawa for the next 17 years. Allegiances flipped back

and forth after that, with Liberal Frank Maine serving from 1974 to 1979, Tory Albert Fish holding the seat during Joe Clark’s short-lived minority government and Liberal Jim Schroder serving during the Trudeau years of 1980 to 1984. Schroder, an OVC pathologist, was parliamentary secretary to ministers of health, science and technology and the environment and was a big supporter of many Guelph environmental projects. He lost to Tory Bill Winegard in 1984.

Winegard became the first minister of science in 1990 and retired in 1993. The Liberals reclaimed the seat when Brenda Chamberlain, the chair of the Wellington County Board of Education, was elected during the first of three landslide victories for the government of Jean Chretien.

At the provincial level, all of the 19th century MPPs after Confederation were Liberals. Peter Gow, a miller and tanner, had enjoyed a lengthy political career and was mayor of Guelph when he surprised the town with his election in 1867. Gow was Provincial-Secretary when Oliver Mowat’s government agreed to establish the Ontario Agricultural College (OAC) in Gow’s home town. He was re-elected by acclamation twice but resigned because of poor health in 1876, later serving as sheriff of Wellington County.

Guelph businessman James Massie also won the seat unopposed but left politics in 1879 to become warden of Central Prison in Toronto. The Tories finally ran a candidate in 1879 who narrowly lost to James Laidlaw, the OAC farm manager and a former warden of Wellington County. Laidlaw lost his party’s nomination to Donald Guthrie in 1886. Guthrie retired from politics in 1894 and held the job of inspector of legal offices for the next 20 years.



From 1957 to 1974 Tory Alf Hales represented Guelph in Ottawa. He was unbeatable at the polls.

COURTESY OF GUELPH PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES



Pierre Elliott Trudeau drew a huge crowd in November 1977 when he helped Guelph celebrate its 150th birthday with a visit to the Italian Canadian Club.

COURTESY OF THE GUELPH MERCURY

lawyer, Paul Munro. He had just been re-elected in 1934 when he was killed in a car accident. James King took the seat in a by-election and defeated George Drew in 1937. The only member of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) ever elected in Guelph was Leslie Hancock, who won in 1943 when the CCF came within four seats of forming the government. The OAC horticulture professor was one of only two members of his caucus to support an alliance with the communist Labour Progressive Party. He resigned and sat as an independent for the balance of his term and did not seek re-election.

The election of Hancock was not the only time Marxists made a statement in Guelph. Tim Buck was a young member of the Worker's Party of Canada when he and a small group of radical trade unionists founded the Communist Party of Canada during a secret meeting in June 1921 in a barn belonging to Fred Farley of Guelph. Buck led the party from 1930 to 1973.

Hancock's replacement at Queen's Park in 1945 was Tory W.E. (Bill) Hamilton, an insurance executive who held the seat for 10 years. Hamilton, later president of Homewood Health Centre, went on to serve 13 years on Guelph City Council, the last two years as mayor.

Former mayor Harry Worton, whose family ran a bakery in St. George's Square, represented Guelph for 30 years after defeating Hamilton in 1955. The highlight of his political career came while he was mayor when he and his wife, Olive, represented Guelph at the 1953 coronation of Queen Elizabeth II at Westminster Abbey. Worton, much like Alf Hales at the federal level and Norm Jary in the mayor's chair, was undefeatable as long as he decided to run. Worton was MPP during the delicate negotiations with the Tory government to create a university at Guelph. Proponents of the idea suggested he stay in the background in case his politics jeopardized the deal but he said Premier John Robarts kept him informed. "I never get excited about what people's politics are because there's decent people out there no matter what their politics are," said Worton, who earned a reputation as "a man for the people."



MP Bill Winegard, the mayor's wife Jean Jary and MPP Rick Ferraro join in the festivities at a community event in St. George's Square.

COURTESY OF THE GUELPH MERCURY

The riding stayed in Liberal hands with the election of its first Italian-Canadian provincial politician, Rick Ferraro. He carried the banner for the failed bid by St. Joseph's to become the city's acute-care hospital and lost his seat to school board trustee and trade unionist Derek Fletcher in the stunning election of Bob Rae's New Democratic Party government in 1990.

Brenda Elliott, who operated a store that sold environmentally-friendly products, was elected in 1995 as part of the sweep by Mike Harris' Conservative Common Sense Revolution. She was named minister of the environment but lost the job in the first cabinet shuffle. She won a healthy majority again in 1999 but her role as minister came under scrutiny in 2001 during the inquiry into the safety of the public water supply in Walkerton. In 2001, Elliott was reappointed to cabinet as minister of inter-governmental affairs.

In municipal politics, the issues that faced Victorian-era politicians were not entirely different than the issues that dominate council agendas today. Growth, water, subsidies for industry, ownership of public utilities, the ward system, spending on capital projects and the role of the city administrator were all fodder for lively debate.

Some of the names of early municipal leaders are still familiar today because of the landmarks that are reminders of the influence they exerted - mayors like George Elliott, Peter Gow, George Sleeman and Thomas Goldie. George Drew, elected to Guelph city council in 1922 and to the mayor's job in 1925, went on to become Ontario's only Guelph-born premier.

A lawyer, Drew became a master of the Ontario Supreme Court in 1929 and first chairman of the Ontario Securities Commission in 1931. He won the leadership of the Ontario Conservative Party in 1938 and served as premier from 1943 to 1948, becoming the architect of Ontario's post-war Conservative agenda. He was less successful as leader of the federal Tories between 1948 and 1956. Following his resignation as party leader he was appointed Canadian High Commissioner to London.

Most of Guelph's municipal politicians have fallen into obscurity, some undeservedly so like Col. Nathaniel Higinbotham, mayor in 1868, and Samuel Carter, who was elected mayor in 1913. Higinbotham operated a drug store in the building known as Medical Hall and later occupied by the Toronto Dominion Bank at the corner of Wyndham and Macdonell streets. He was an active member of the Board of Trade and the Board of Education and was the



Col. Nathaniel Higinbotham, at left, was mayor in 1868 and one of Guelph's most influential citizens. He and his family lived at the stately Riverview that still stands on Queen Street.

COURTESY OF GUELPH PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES



George Drew, at right, was Ontario's only Guelph-born premier, and frequently visited his hometown with his wife Fiorenza, the daughter of famed tenor Edward Johnson, pictured at left.

ARCHIVAL AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH LIBRARY

Liberal MP for Wellington North from 1872 to 1878. In 1893 he founded the Guelph Humane and Children's Aid Society, one of the oldest such organizations in Canada. In those days the mandate was the welfare of children as well as animals and the group would advertise children for adoption in the local newspapers. The Children's Aid Society separated from the Humane Society in 1927.

Carter was a founder of the Royal Knitting Co. on Norwich Street. The devout Methodist was first elected to council in 1900 and was one of the driving forces behind the city's acquisition of the Guelph Light and Power Company in 1902. He helped organize the Guelph Co-operative Association in 1904 to lower the cost of groceries for the working classes and ran for mayor in 1913 on a platform of cleaning up municipal politics.

From 1856 to 1879 a mayor and 12 aldermen were elected each year in ward elections. The number of aldermen increased to 18 after 1880 until the electors voted to switch to an at-large system in 1903. After that,



Wellington South MPP Harry Worton, Wellington MP Frank Maine, Mayor Norm Jary and club president Bruno Sanvido helped celebrate expansion of the Italian Canadian Club at the sod turning in 1976.

COURTESY OF THE GUELPH MERCURY

the system changed every four or five years as the council experimented with political reform but never tried anything new for long enough to find out if it had been effective. There would be 11, 12 or 18 aldermen. The mayor would be elected by general vote or from within the council ranks. Terms would vary from one to three years.

By 1930, things settled down and 11 aldermen and a mayor were elected at-large yearly, then for two-year terms after 1966 and three-year terms from 1983. Consistently through the first half of the 20th century, the members of Guelph city council were primarily businessmen. Like their counterparts in other cities, they made their decisions in the back rooms and public council meetings were short affairs. City contracts went to those who had contacts at City Hall.

By the late 1950s television had arrived in most homes and politics was changing at all levels. One of the biggest changes was the participation of women on council and in senior positions at City Hall. Harry Worton recalled “a little rumble” when Mildred Tovell was named city clerk in the 1940s, despite her credentials as a long-time employee in the clerk’s office.

The first woman councillor was Elizabeth Mowat, who had been runner-up to Jim Clare and was appointed to his seat when he resigned to go after the job of city solicitor. Clare lost his bid, the job going to Richard Hungerford, and Mowat also failed to retain the seat on council at the next election. Elvie Lowell was the next woman to sit on council, managing a less complicated victory in 1956. No other women were elected until Margaret MacKinnon in 1973.

Carl Hamilton shook things up in 1970 when Ralph Smith resigned from council to become industrial commissioner. Hamilton was runner-up in 12th position on the ballot but some members of council were not anxious to admit a committed socialist to the horseshoe and positioned Jack Quarrie in competition with Hamilton to fill the vacancy. Hamilton squeaked in on a 5-4 vote after councillor Hayes Murphy concluded that belief in democracy should apply as much in Guelph as elsewhere.

Hamilton, a former national secretary of the CCF, recalled many 6-5 votes but said he was part of a group that generally worked things out. One of the issues that dominated council in Hamilton’s day was growth. Although politics was not supposed to matter at the municipal level, Hamilton found that the Liberal councillors generally embraced growth while he and the Tories were more cautious. Anne Godfrey recalls being labelled anti-growth but says she just wanted to be sure that growth was carefully planned.

In 1992, the electorate voted in a plebiscite for a return to the ward system. John Counsell lost the mayor’s job to Joe Young in 1995. In November 2000, “the Brendas,” as Chamberlain and Elliott had come to be known, were joined by another woman when Karen Farbridge was elected mayor, defeating two of her fellow councillors and two former councillors. Guelph became the only city in Canada in which women led all three levels of government.

Farbridge sees that as a good thing. As mayor she attends countless meetings and is often still the only woman at the table except perhaps for a recording secretary. “I would guess we’re a long way from being representative of the population,” she says, adding that the backlash against women in politics is still insidious. “Not on a public level, but it’s there in the background.”



In 2000, Guelph became the only city in Canada where women headed all three levels of government when Mayor Karen Farbridge, centre, was elected, joining MP Brenda Chamberlain, left, and MPP Brenda Elliott.

COURTESY OF THE GUELPH MERCURY

Music, Art AND Letters

Music was of the amateur variety in the 19th century. Guelph's first "festival" was organized by John Galt for the King's birthday, Aug. 12, 1827. Like many of the celebrations that would follow, the festive mood was fueled by vast quantities of locally-distilled whiskey which in this case helped ameliorate the taste of an undercooked ox.

Musical performances were often used to raise money for church benevolent societies or to build the hospitals and over time Guelph developed a reputation for high standards of musical performance, aided by the choir and organ masters hired by local churches. By the time the city was 50 years old, the Guelph Musical Union had been organized, conducted by William Philp, the choir leader and organist at Dublin Street Methodist Church. Philp led the Wellington Field Battery Band to top prize in the band competition at the first Toronto Industrial Exhibition (later the Canadian National Exhibition) in 1879.

Together with his counterpart at St. George's Church, Roberta Geddes-Harvey, Philp helped foster a strong musical consciousness. He brought in outside talent for the City Band which became a fixture at local celebrations. The Ontario Agricultural College's Glee Club and Lawrence's Silver Cornet Band were just two of the dozens of popular local groups.

The growth of the cultural community bred the early version of the push for a performing arts centre. Philp and others provided the impetus, but just as politics prevented the River Run Centre from being built before the 1990s, so Guelph's 19th century arts community waited until the 1890s before the Royal Opera House opened its doors. Despite the importance of music to OAC life there was also not a proper campus venue until 1924 when War Memorial Hall was constructed.

Guelph's musical tradition took off after the opera house opened. Music teachers Jessie Hill, Hattie Kelly, Eva Taylor and Annie Kilgour formed the Presto Music Club in 1898 and held concerts in the opera house and in the town hall auditorium. The Philharmonic Society was formed in 1905, followed by the Guelph Choral Union and the Orchestral Society. The success of native son and operatic tenor Edward Johnson put Guelph on the map.

Eddie Johnson never apologized for being a "propagandist for beauty in life." Press coverage of his funeral in Guelph in 1959, attended by Prime Minister John Deifenbaker and hundreds of other dignitaries, credited him with imbuing "a whole continent with an unbridled appreciation of good music." It was a long journey from his humble beginnings, born in 1878 in a small cottage on Verney Street.

"There was little music in our town, except what we made among ourselves - in church and with the local band. How in the world I ever took up the profession, I'll never know," he said in a 1953 speech at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, where he was chairman of the board.

By the time Johnson graduated from Guelph Collegiate his vocal talent was undeniable, but he was in his 40s before he made his debut at New York's Metropolitan Opera. As a young man in New York City he dallied with Broadway operetta and sang in churches and synagogues to make ends meet. In 1909, Johnson moved to Italy where he changed his name to Edoardo di Giovanni to win acceptance with European audiences. When his wife died in 1919, Johnson returned to North America with his young daughter, Fiorenza



Edward Johnson performs as Aethelwold in the 1927 world premier of Deems Taylor's opera "The King's Henchman" at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City.

EDWARD JOHNSON COLLECTION, ARCHIVAL AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH LIBRARY



Guelph's Laura Lemon won recognition in England as a composer and poet, most notably for "My Ain Folk."

COURTESY GUELPH PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES

(who married George Drew, later premier of Ontario), and joined the Chicago Opera Company. Three years later he returned to New York where he enjoyed more than a dozen years as one of the Met's most acclaimed tenors. Named general manager in 1935, he raised the profile of the company and of North American opera singers before retiring home to Guelph in 1950.

It had not been an easy road from Guelph to the Met and Johnson was determined to smooth the road for others. He envisioned a national music education program to train promising young musicians and develop informed listeners. He decided Guelph should be the prototype and donated \$25,000 in seed money to the Board of Education in 1928 so that every child could have a musical education. The Depression put an end to the program after only three years.

In 1929, Johnson made local musical history with the highly successful Guelph Music Festival at the Guelph Collegiate auditorium, something many view as the trial run for the Guelph Spring Festival. Later, he started a "crusade for strings" to address a shortage of string musicians, leading to the establishment of the Guelph Youth Orchestra.

Johnson was almost 80 when Guelph Rotarians Jim Schroder and Trevor Lloyd Jones approached him about founding the Edward Johnson Music Foundation to support young musical talent. Johnson agreed to lend his name to the idea and planned to establish an endowment. He died before that could happen, suffering a heart attack in the lobby of Memorial Gardens in April 1959, just before the first performance of the National Ballet in Guelph. An editorial in the Guelph Mercury mourned the loss of Guelph's "goodwill ambassador" with the contagious smile.

The Edward Johnson Music Foundation became a reality through the determination of a group of people in Guelph who believed the community's cultural growth should keep pace with residential and industrial expansion. Undeterred by the loss of their patron, foundation supporters Mannie Birnbaum and Ed Crispin kept the idea alive until the arrival in Guelph of Murdo MacKinnon. As founding dean of arts and director of cultural affairs for the new University of Guelph, MacKinnon earned a reputation as "the festival evangelist."



The River Run Centre opened in 1997 after a decades-long effort by local arts advocates to replace the Royal Opera House that was demolished in 1953.

PHOTO BY DON COULMAN

As the foundation grew, MacKinnon and director of music Nicholas Goldschmidt revived Johnson's dream of a Guelph arts festival. Goldschmidt, as head of the Centennial Commission's performing arts division, helped Guelph land the 1967 National Vocal Competition. The success of the competition convinced MacKinnon and Goldschmidt that an annual arts festival would work in Guelph. Since its first official season in 1968, the Guelph Spring Festival has commissioned dozens of works, including the centennial oratorio *Angels of Earth* by Guelph composer Charles Wilson, and more operas than Toronto's Canadian Opera Company. It has attracted world-renowned artists, including Yehudi Menuhin, Jon Vickers and Oscar Peterson.

At first, the festival tried to be all things to all people by including popular music and literary events in the programming,

but eventually found its niche in chamber music. MacKinnon believes the "boldness, uniqueness and innovation" of the Guelph Spring Festival was a catalyst for the broad musical tradition that exists in Guelph today. "It grew by force of example," he said, pointing to Hillside, a music festival at Guelph Lake started in 1984, and the eight-year-old Guelph Jazz Festival which both enjoyed huge crowds and accolades in 2001.

There had been a push for a new performing arts facility since the demolition of the opera house in 1953. Backed by the Guelph Arts Council and a strong core of women, including Edith Kidd, Anne Godfrey, Edwina Carson, Margaret MacKinnon, Eleanor Ewing and Nancy Coates, it took 40 years for the River Run Centre to become a reality. There was early public resistance to a project some considered elitist and extravagant. But by the 1990s,

with the support of Mayor John Counsell, public opinion was swayed and Guelph citizens and corporations contributed an astounding \$5 million towards the \$12 million project.

The initial plan was to restore the 1882 Speed Skating Rink as the new arts centre but when it was destroyed by fire, a new building was designed by Toronto architects Moriyama and Teshima and finally opened in 1997. The limestone facade of the skating rink was salvaged and reconstructed beside the River Run Centre. The Guelph Arts Council also supervised the nearby installation of the Time Line/Water Line canoe sculpture by John McEwen, the city's official millennium project.

Guelph's support for music education has helped develop popular as well as classical performers. James Gordon, who studied music at the University of Guelph, has gone on to a successful career as a Canadian songwriter and music educator and founder of the Canadian Songwriters' Festival. Singer Jane Siberry started her career while she was a microbiology student at the University of Guelph and a waitress at a downtown cafe. Guelph is home to Jeff Bird of the Cowboy Junkies and songwriter Stephen Fearing as well as musicians Scott Merritt, Lewis Melville and Tannis Slimmon. Bands like the kramdens, Black Cabbage, the Bird Sisters and King Cobb Steelie are all products of Guelph. Many recorded in the 1990s with Dave Teichroeb at his record company, Dave's Records of Guelph (DROG), and helped build Guelph's reputation as a magnet for musical talent.

In 1997, Joanne Grodzinski and Robert Pennee won a Juno nomination for their children's CD, *Maestro Orpheus and the World Clock*, and the Guelph Jazz Festival won the Lieutenant-Governor's Award for the Arts. In 2001, the success of the Linamar-sponsored eyeGO to the Arts program that provides low-cost concert tickets for youth, the birth of the Guelph Chamber Orchestra and the opening of the Guelph Youth Music Centre all suggest that a vibrant musical tradition will endure in Guelph.

The sketches and watercolours by David Johnson Kennedy of pastoral scenes in the pioneer village are typical of early-19th century art in Guelph. Later, Victorian-era artists who wanted to make a living from their talent usually left Guelph. Those who stayed in Guelph could only hope for employment where art was part of a more functional endeavor - stained glass for churches and paintings for public buildings.

The presence of a post-secondary institution proved to be almost as beneficial to the visual arts as it was to the development of Guelph's reputation as the City of Music. The Ontario Agricultural College established a "picture fund" for buying and displaying works of art. The fine art department at the University of Guelph was founded by Gordon Couling, best known for his tireless efforts to protect Guelph's architectural heritage. Couling was also an artist and a founding member of the Guelph Creative Arts Association. His most outstanding work is perhaps the stained glass he designed for Paisley Memorial United Church on Margaret Street. Guelph painters who earned reputations at home and abroad include portrait and landscape artist Evan Macdonald and watercolourist Effie Smith. Lois Etherington Betteridge is Canada's most prominent silversmith and Ken Danby has brought international recognition to Guelph for his high-realist painting and silk-screened prints. In 2002, Danby, Guelph lawyer and writer T. Sher Singh and scientist and arts advocate Bob Gillham were awarded the Order of Canada.

In 1978, the University of Guelph, the city, Wellington County and the public school board entered an historic agreement to create a 25,000 square-foot public gallery in the former Macdonald Consolidated School. The building was renovated by architect Raymond Moriyama and the Macdonald Stewart Art Centre opened in 1979.

Under the leadership of director Judy Nasby, the centre has acquired a renowned collection of Inuit art, part of a collection of more than 4,000 works of Canadian art. The gallery's profile is also enhanced through the steady growth of the Donald Forster Sculpture Park, named after the university's third president.



Guelph's Hillside Festival attracts thousands of people to a weekend of music each summer at Guelph Lake. PHOTO BY TRINA KOSTER, COURTESY OF HILLSIDE FESTIVAL

Today, Guelph supports a strong creative arts community. Throughout the year their work is exhibited and sold at studio tours and arts festivals. But making a living as an artist remains a struggle. Loss of inexpensive studio space to developers, especially downtown, has brought many Guelph artists together in an effort to create a visual arts centre.

Elinor Glyn, an early 20th century novelist, and poet Alice Parker Iles were from Guelph, but it is in the late 20th century that Guelph writers have been most successful.

Among the most prolific are two of Canada's best-loved children's authors, Bob Munsch and Jean Little. Munsch came to Guelph to teach in the family studies department at the University of Guelph and discovered through his work that children loved his stories. He found instant fame with his controversial story, the "Paper Bag Princess" and won the Order of Canada in 2000 shortly after the release of his 35th book.

Little's roots go much farther back in Guelph. Born to missionary Canadian physician parents in Formosa (Taiwan), her mother was Guelph's first woman doctor. Her failing eyesight steered her towards a career as a writer and her first novel, "Mine for Keeps", won the Little, Brown Canadian Book Award in 1962. She has become a bestselling author of books for young readers with titles that include "From Anna" and "Different Dragons".

The university's English and drama departments have cultivated much of Guelph's cultural life. OAC English professor O.J. Stevenson was known for bringing his victrola into the classroom and his successor George Elmore Reaman was responsible for instituting Canada's first course in radio broadcasting in 1939 and for fostering a love of music in students through the Sunday Nine O'clock concert series.



Guelph-born Rolfe Scarlett, an abstract painter, set and industrial designer and jewelry artist, worked for years at the Guggenheim Museum in New York City which still owns a large collection of his work.

MACDONALD STEWART ART CENTRE



Greg Denton's "anyone lived . . ." 2000 depicts 400 artists, musicians, merchants, writers and people from Guelph. The work was commissioned by the Macdonald Stewart Art Centre to celebrate Guelph's 175th birthday with funds raised by volunteers and with assistance from the Canada Council for the Arts.

PHOTO BY DEAN PALMER, MACDONALD STEWART ART CENTRE COLLECTION



"Grand Trunk Railway, Across the Speed, at Guelph, Canada West 1861" by David Johnson Kennedy. Purchased through the Alma Mater Fund, 1972/73.

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH COLLECTION



"Carousel Hill" by Ken Danby, 1977 watercolour of the carousel at Riverside Park in Guelph. In 2002, Danby received the Order of Canada.

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including the Shaw Festival collection. The library is also recognized for its Scottish collection and for the Lucy Maud Montgomery archives collected by Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston.

In the community, Guelph Little Theatre has provided a stage for amateur thespians since the 1960s. When their Dublin Street home in the former Salvation Army citadel was destroyed by fire in 1993 the troupe relocated to a renovated factory on Morris Street. Royal City Musical Productions, under the direction of Kay McKie, began staging Broadway musicals in 1979, first on the stage of John F. Ross high school and now at the River Run Centre. The company provided a learning ground for Jeff Norman, Cathy Akin and others who went on to highly successful careers in professional theatre.

Decades later, English professors Constance Rooke and Janice Kulyk Keefer were guiding forces behind the establishment of the Eden Mills Writers' Festival. The Guelph Jazz Festival was the progeny of English professor Ajay Heble. English professor and author Tom King has achieved cult status with the CBC Radio's Dead Dog Cafe Comedy Hour. Guelph is also home to writers Dennis Bock, Sandra Sabatini and Mary Swan, who won the prestigious O Henry short story prize in 2001.

On campus, Canadian playwright Judith Thompson and scholars Ric Knowles and Alan Filewood have raised the stature of the university's drama department. Some of Guelph's finest dramatic productions are mounted at the George Luscombe (formerly the Inner Stage) Theatre, launching the careers of designer Sue Lepage, actor Peter Donaldson and arts administrator John Crompton.

Through the efforts of Len Conolly, the MacLaughlin Library acquired Canada's largest collection of theatre archives



"The Ontario Agricultural College" by A.Y. Jackson showing Johnston Hall, the Chemistry Building, the Administration Building, Massey Hall and Library, 1959. Presented by the OAC Class of 1909 during the celebration of their 50th anniversary.

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH COLLECTION



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JUNE 2002

Slapshots A N D Shortstops

Although recreational hockey was popular in the 19th century, it was not until 1897 that Guelph had a team, the Victorias, in the Ontario Hockey Association. The sport really took off after the First World War when the local team, based out of the Cambridge Ice Palace at the corner of Paisley and Norfolk streets, made the 1923 OHA finals.

During the 1930s, hockey was championed by Roy Mason who purchased the deteriorating rink and kept it going as Mason's Arena. Hockey's fortunes turned around when Memorial Gardens opened Nov. 11, 1948.

With a top new facility, the city was able to put together a winning team, the Biltmore Madhatters, that won the Memorial Cup in 1952. The powerful Guelph club was a training ground for many players who went on to careers in the National Hockey League. Guelph players like captain Andy Bathgate, Harry Howell, Dean Prentice and Ron Murphy helped rebuild the New York Rangers.

Another member of the 1952 winning team, "Leapin" Lou Fontinato, who grew up in St. Patrick's Ward in Guelph, was signed by the Rangers in 1954. He played with them for eight years before being traded to the Montreal Canadiens. A year later, in March 1964, his career ended during a game at the Forum against the Rangers when he broke his neck while being checked against the boards. He retired to Guelph and today farms near Eden Mills.

Guelph took the Memorial Cup again in 1986 when the Platers beat the Hull Olympiques. Once again, the Guelph team sent players to the NHL, including Gary Roberts, Steve Chiasson and Kerry Huffman. Their coach, Jacques Martin, went on to coach in St. Louis and Ottawa.

Guelph made it to the finals again in 1996. The Guelph Storm had finished the season on top of the OHL with outstanding defence, goaltending and teamwork, but it lacked a big scorer and was quickly eliminated by the Granby Predateurs.

By the 1990s, Memorial Gardens had fallen into disrepair. Keeping a team in Guelph meant a new arena would have to be built and deciding where to put it became a divisive community issue. After years of political wrangling, the downtown proponents won out over those who thought it should be built in the west end and the city negotiated a deal with Nustadia Developments to build a \$21.5 million facility. The Guelph Sports and Entertainment Centre opened in September 2000 on the spot that had been vacated by Eaton's.

The arena was meant to boost the fortunes of the city core, helped by the redevelopment of the remainder of the former Eaton Centre Mall. When the sale of the near-empty mall dragged on, another controversy erupted as Guelph city council learned that Nustadia had failed to make its loan payments. Not wanting to take ownership of the arena, council voted to make the loan payments for four years and give Nustadia more time to make the facility profitable. The city got the boost it was looking for when it was chosen to host the 2002 Memorial Cup.

If hockey was only informally organized in the 19th century, baseball was another matter. The Maple Leafs were formed in 1861 and quickly helped the town earn a reputation as one of the most enthusiastic baseball towns in North America. The Leafs were Canadian champions three years running beginning in 1869, a feat that earned them permanent possession of the coveted "silver ball." After joining with George Sleeman's Silver Creeks Baseball Club, the Leafs became world semi-professional champions in 1874, winning three straight games in Watertown, New York, including a 13-4 victory against the Ku-Klux team from Oneida. Baseball fever was at such a pitch that a game in Guelph leading up to the Watertown tournament was reported to have drawn a crowd of 10,000. It was an auspicious start for the Guelph club, and local sports fans are still singing the team's praises.

A decade-long rivalry between the Leafs and the Galt Terriers had one or the other managing to win the inter-county championship most years between 1910 and 1920. The Guelph Outfitters Baseball Club won the Ontario



Hockey fever hit Guelph in 1952 when the Biltmore Madhatters won the Memorial Cup. Here trainer Joe Veroni, wearing hat, and owner Roy Mason, holding cup, celebrate with the team, including Lou Fontinato (standing at right).

COURTESY OF LOU FONTINATO



The Guelph Maple Leafs baseball team was perhaps the greatest team in Guelph sports history, winning the world semi-professional championship in 1874. COURTESY OF GUELPH PUBLIC LIBRARY ARCHIVES

Junior Championship in 1922. Joe Kaine dominated the game in those days and in 2001 the city promised to retain the name when the Joe Kaine field at Centennial Park is moved to another location.

Growing up near Exhibition Park, Bill “Mr. BIG” Craven had a typical childhood for a Guelph boy - hockey in the winter and baseball in the summer every day until the sun went down. When lights were installed at the Exhibition Park stadium in the late 1940s people would line up an hour before a game to get a seat in the grandstand.

Baseball attendance fell in the ‘50s. “It’s like in any other sport,” said Craven. “If you win, they come.” Guelph’s baseball players were not winning. After Guelph won the inter-county major baseball championship in 1932 there was a dry spell until the 1956 senior inter-county championship win and a repeat performance by the Guelph CJOYs in 1970. Over

the years the grandstand in Exhibition Park fell apart. There was plenty of arguing between fans and Guelph city council over how much money and effort should be invested in repairs until finally, in 1988, a group of fans formed Baseball in Guelph (BIG) and pressured council to make major improvements. They won larger dressing rooms, a better ball diamond and a roof over the stands at The David E. Hastings Stadium.

“Our park was the laughing stock of baseball, and now it’s one of the best in the league,” says Craven.

Guelph’s teams started winning again. In the 13 years after BIG was formed, the junior team won five championships and was runner-up four times. It provided an excellent crop of players for the senior team, the Royals, who also performed well, winning championships in 1993 and 1997.

In 2000, the team came full circle, returning to its roots by reclaiming its old name, the Silvercreeks. Their job done, BIG handed the reins over to a new crop of volunteers in 2001.

The Queen's Plate

Horse racing was always popular in Guelph, despite the disapproval of the local clergy. During the 19th century, Rev. Arthur Palmer of St. George’s Anglican Church would regularly speak out against the “demoralizing effects” of the activity and would lobby against events organized by the local turf clubs. Although religious leaders carried much influence in those pioneer days, on this point, they were unsuccessful.

On July 5, 1864, Guelph became a derby town for a day when it hosted the Queen’s Plate, the only time the event was ever held in the Royal City. It was also the first time since the race started in 1860 that it was not run at the Carleton Race Course in Toronto.

It was a hot day and thousands of people stirred up a lot of dust as they descended on the town by carriage, by foot and by train, headed for the one-mile course on the Newstead Farm near Bullfrog Pond on Eramosa Road. A special grandstand was built for the ladies and there was another for the dignitaries including MPP Arthur Hogg, Sheriff George Grange, Judge J.J. Kingsmill, Mayor William Clarke and Hon. A.J. Fergusson-Blair. The Union Brass Band entertained and every hotel in the town was full.

It was the largest field ever for the running of the Queen’s Plate, with 12 horses competing for the prize of 50 sovereigns. The winner was a four-year-old filly named Brunette, owned by Dr. George Morton of Bradford, the reeve and coroner of Simcoe County and a leading horse breeder.

The first established sports team in the city was the Guelph Cricket Club which played on the grounds of Market Square beginning in 1833 and later moved beside Goldie Mill. Thomas Goldie was president of the Ontario Cricket Association in 1892.

Probably the most enduring sport in Guelph has been curling. Dr. William “Tiger” Dunlop, who helped Galt chop down the maple tree to found the city, would join some of the earliest settlers for games on the Speed River or on

local ponds. The Union Curling Club was formed in 1836 by immigrants from Scotland, the birthplace of curling. Games would be organized near Allan's Dam or the Dundas (Gordon Street) bridge. The game really took off when the first covered rink opened in 1869 at the corner of Huskisson (Lower Wyndham) and Wellington streets.

In 1888, brewer George Sleeman organized a second club, the Guelph Royal City Curling Club, and spearheaded construction of the Victoria Rink on land that had been the town's burial ground before the Union and St. George's cemeteries, later Woodlawn Cemetery, were built in the north end. The rink was enjoyed by curlers and skaters in the winter and by roller skaters in the summer. It operated until the city purchased the land in 1968 for what is now the Baker Street parking lot.

Over the years the city produced some excellent curlers. In 1918 the Royal City club won the Ontario Tankard. The two clubs united in 1926 as the Guelph Curling Club. Curling has remained strong in Guelph and in 1997 the Guelph club hosted the Ontario Men's Curling Championship.

Guelph has produced an impressive number of individual athletes. Jack Purcell was world badminton champion between 1932 and 1945. In 1911, runner Freddie Meadows, a moulder at the Taylor-Forbes Company, won the middle-distance world championship, competing against Tom Longboat at Madison Square Gardens in New York City. Nationally, George Creelman and George Chapman won top honours in lawn bowling in the early 1900s. Mico Valeriotte, later a city alderman, made a name for himself in the early 1930s as a long-distance runner. One of the greatest Guelph athletes was Victor Davis, a swimmer who trained as a teenager with the Guelph Marlin Aquatic Club. In 1984, Davis earned an Olympic gold medal for his world record performance in the 200-metre breast stroke. He was just 25 in 1989 when he died after being hit by a car outside a Montreal bar.

In the 1940s and '50s, Guelph turned out a surprising number of professional boxers, including the Zaduk brothers - Bill, Peter and Mike - as well as Joe Contini and Manny Sorbara. Many of the young Italian boys would work out in the basement of Sacred Heart School with trainer Joe Veroni. Rod Lamont, Ontario boxing champion in 1924, founded the Guelph Boxing Club and coached the Canadian Olympic boxing team in 1936. The greatest Guelph boxer was Cosmo (Cutts) Carere who won the Ontario heavyweight championship in the 1920s.

Minor sport has a huge following in Guelph, supported financially by local businesses and kept going by volunteers. Minor baseball has experienced sharp fluctuations, often influenced by the fortunes of the Toronto Blue Jays and competition from soccer, lacrosse, track and field and basketball. In 2001, 3,858 youngsters aged four to 19 were signed up to play soccer while only about 2,080 opted to play ball.

Soccer has deep roots in Guelph. As early as the 1880s Guelph teams played soccer at Exhibition Park. The game was tremendously popular through the 1890s and in 1905 a league was formed by the Guelph Scots, the Guelph Rovers and the "Red and Blue Soccer Machine" from the Ontario Agricultural College. After the First World War, soccer lost ground to baseball and American football, a slump that was blamed on the importing of English and Scottish soccer players and a failure to develop young local talent through minor league play. Soccer enjoyed a resurgence during the Second World War when teams of servicemen, including members of the Royal Netherlands Army training in Guelph, formed a league.

Soccer flourished again in Guelph during the 1970s and 1980s when the Guelph Royal Oaks had a strong team. Since then it has become primarily a recreational sport with a growing number of female teams.

The sheer numbers of children enrolled in hockey, baseball and soccer have challenged the city's ability to keep up with the demand for ice surfaces and lighted ball parks and soccer fields. "Luxuries" like recreation must also compete for dwindling budget dollars as cities wrestle with new responsibilities for social housing, welfare and public health. The ill will between the provincial government and the province's teachers has hurt school sports programs but Guelph's high school athletes continue to excel in local, regional and national competitions.



Cosmo "Cutts" Carere, Ontario heavyweight champion in the 1920s, led a strong Guelph boxing tradition. Carere later became a local developer.

COURTESY OF GUELPH MUSEUMS

A Green CITY

Environment

The Guelph Horticultural Society, established in 1851, was one of the earliest horticultural societies in Ontario. Just 25 years after the wholesale clearing of trees to create a town, the society was formed to plant shade trees on "The Avenue" (Waterloo Avenue). The society's primary focus became the beautification of the market square, but at times the forces of progress made their work difficult. When the railway arrived in 1856, John Higinbotham, the son of Col. Nathaniel Higinbotham, who had lived next to the square in the Priory, lamented the loss of a downtown gem. "Truly, one can say, who visits the present scene of desolation with its odoriferous stock yards and wheezy, asthmatic locomotives - the Glory has departed," he wrote.

The market square was certainly changed forever, and the glory of the virgin forest that it replaced was long gone, but over the years Guelph has redeemed itself in many ways. The oldest park in Guelph is the 32-acre Exhibition Park developed in 1871 as a site for the agricultural society's annual fall fair. The Guelph Central Exhibition was held in an octagonal fair building and on the grounds of the fenced park. The fair flourished until 1879 when the first Toronto Industrial Exhibition, later the CNE, was held in Toronto. The park had a bandstand for most of its first 100 years and was a gathering place for Sunday evening concerts and political and patriotic meetings. It was torn down in 1964 but a new bandshell is part of a plan for redevelopment of the park.

Riverside Park opened in 1905 and was part of Guelph Township until the 1953 annexation. The park was part of a plan by the Guelph Radial Railway, then headed by industrialist J.W. Lyon, to boost ridership. People would ride the streetcars out to the park for company picnics, skating, concerts, dances at the dance hall or to visit the zoo, complete with bears and monkeys. In 1908, Lyon donated land for another park that still carries his name

The floral clock in Riverside Park, decorated with more than 6,000 plants and flowers each year, was designed in 1954 by the city's long-time parks administrator, John "Jock" Clark, who combined his love of gardens with a passion for old clocks. Each year the floral design is changed to commemorate a different event and historians report that it is Canada's only patented clock.

Jubilee Park was created when the 19th century market shelter was torn down but the prime downtown land was later redeveloped for the Grand Trunk Railway station. Many parks filled the void. There are now more than 100 in Guelph, many bearing the names of people who have made important contributions to the city.

Skov Park, W.E. Hamilton Park and Fitness Trail, Hugh C. Guthrie Park, Wolfond Park and Mico Valeriotte Park are all named after men who contributed time, money or land to the city. Margaret Greene Park was named after the woman who donated 33.5 acres in the city's west end for a park in 1966. Heritage Park was excavated in 1977 from the ruins of Allan's Mill and Hillcrest Park on Grove Street was created after the 500,000-gallon standing water reservoir was removed.

A group of former classmates of John Kenneth Macalister petitioned the city to rename St. George's Park in memory of the Rhodes scholar who was hanged by the Nazis at Buchenwald in 1944; the city agreed instead to create Macalister Park in the south end. Today, the Alf Hales Memorial Trail and Overlook links up with the TransCanada Trail and Guelph brings home prizes almost every year in the Communities in Bloom and Nations in Bloom competitions.

Ironically, many of the city's beautiful riverside parks are built on industrial and household garbage dumps. During the 19th century, three bridges crossed a broad expanse of channels near Edinburgh Road where the Speed now travels in a straight line. There was nothing to stop plating and other industries from discharging heavy metals into the sewers. Silver Creek flowed on the surface but today is enclosed in storm sewers below a residential neighbourhood and Silver Creek Park.



This postcard of Exhibition Park depicts the busy fairgrounds. The annual Guelph Central Exhibition was held in the park from 1871 to 1915. The park was fenced and had a large wooden exhibition building with four wings called the Crystal Palace.

COURTESY OF GUELPH MUSEUMS

In the 1970s, Pollution Probe, a campus environmental group, presented a report to Guelph city council recommending that the riverlands that had been used as landfill until the 1960s be converted into parkland. The Speed River Cleanup, started in 1981, contributed to a gradual shift in the community. The Speed River Project, coordinated by Peter Meisenheimer and Mike Pearson, promoted restoration and naturalization of the river corridor and thousands of people in Guelph participated.

Also critical in Guelph's environmental evolution were the purchase of the Arkell Springs to secure Guelph's water supply and the Hanlon Creek Watershed Study which preserved an original habitat of brook trout. Former provincial cabinet minister W.E. (Bill) Hamilton was mayor when the city learned that a Kitchener gravel company had purchased the Arkell land. Hamilton used his powers of persuasion on the company and on Queen's Park to secure the property for the city. Hamilton was also one of the people responsible for the city putting every home on water meters. Previously, people had paid for their water based on the number of taps in their homes. Switching to meters reduced water consumption by 25 per cent.

In the 1960s, several aldermen worked with scientists at the University of Guelph to create a plan to protect the Hanlon Creek, which was threatened by rapid industrial and residential development in Guelph's south end. Their job was made easier by city manager Fred Woods who convinced the city and the Grand River Conservation Authority to buy up land to preserve the watershed.

Garbage was a highly contentious issue. The city and the county could not find a community that was willing to host a new landfill site. The sense that incineration was a done deal served as a clarion call to the growing environmental movement at the University of Guelph. OPIRG-Guelph, one of the public interest groups inspired by American activist Ralph Nader, was established on campus in 1976 and early organizers Peter Cameron and Tom Kleinbeernink set out to sell the city on the three Rs - reduce, recycle and reuse. In 1987, campus and community volunteers established a recycling depot next to the lawn bowling club, the lead-in to the blue box program. Environmentalist Evan Ferrari lobbied for more public consultation in the development of a waste management master plan.

The garbage crisis could have descended into ideological warfare but developed instead into what Dan Hoornweg, the city's former waste management co-ordinator, calls "a happy confluence of interested and willing people." He gives credit to teachers at local schools for creating a generation of students who forced their parents to recycle, Chris Clark at the Guelph Tribune for giving recycling good press, the Bookshelf for carrying books about the environment, Brenda Elliott for organizing women to fight incineration, garbage hauler Ken McLellan for buying into recycling, Alderman Ken Hammill for bringing Guelph city council on side and OPIRG for keeping up the pressure. After city engineer John Bull and other officials travelled to Europe to investigate waste management practices that incorporated alternatives to incineration, Guelph made the leap to state-of-the-art wet/dry recycling.

The balancing act between the forces of progress and the importance of protecting the natural environment has constantly been tested during half a century of rapid suburban development. The Hanlon Creek study was a turning point for planning in Guelph. Decisions no longer flowed from the top. They were reached through consideration of all the environmental, social and economic factors, and with the involvement of people from all sectors. Hoornweg, Kleinbeernink and Graham Knowles, president of Hart Chemical, met over coffee and laid the groundwork for Guelph to start the first round table on the environment and the economy in Canada. The River Systems Management Plan spawned an advisory committee that provides input on development applications and strategic planning. Stephen Rodd and the Green Plan Steering Committee monitor Guelph's unstoppable growth.

Environmental protection is now imbedded in the bureaucracy where people like city engineer James Etienne have become champions of environmental initiatives. Citizen watchdogs like Hugh Whiteley continue to raise the alarm at City Hall when they think the environment is in jeopardy. The risk is that as Guelph continues to grow it will become an outward-looking bedroom community. In 2001, Guelph's mayor, Karen Farbridge, a former OPIRG coordinator, launched a "smart growth" initiative to mitigate the risk.



Jubilee Park was created when the 19th century market shelter was torn down but was later developed for the Grand Trunk Railway station, now the Via Rail station. PRIVATE COLLECTION

LOOKING Ahead

On its 175th birthday, Guelph is what it has always been - a good place to live. What makes it that way in 2002 is dramatically different from what the pioneer village had going for it in the 19th century. Guelph is no longer a rural community, and it is no longer overwhelmingly British in its character.

Massive post-war growth and the arrival of the University of Guelph in 1964 set the city on a new course and today Guelph is a multicultural urban centre dealing with urban problems like homelessness and pollution. It is also a sophisticated city that wants its children to be well educated, cultured, tolerant and physically fit, and to be able to develop those strengths at home.

By resisting amalgamation into Waterloo region, Guelph was forced to become strong enough to go it alone and to nurture an identity that values the arts, a healthy environment and the welfare of its more vulnerable citizens. Guelph citizens typically resist the top-down approach and one of the benefits of staying out of regional government is that public participation has remained strong. "The community is always ahead of the politicians," says Guelph's mayor, Karen Farbridge. It was public participation that gave Guelph its own railway, its first industrial basin, the Guelph General Hospital, recycling and the River Run Centre. Public participation drove the development of the city's well-used network of parks and trails along a revitalized and naturalized river system.



The Church of Our Lady Immaculate, inspired by the 13th century French Gothic cathedral at Cologne, Germany, and designed by renowned Catholic architect Joseph Connolly, is the city's defining structure. PHOTO BY HILARY STEAD

How Guelph grows towards the end of its second hundred years depends on how people participate in their community over the next 25 years. They will have to grapple with big issues. A truly viable city has to have a viable core and Guelph's downtown has still not recovered from the destruction of much of its architectural heritage during the 1960s and the blunder of the Eaton Centre. But a new arena and performing arts centre, visionary public realm and transportation plans and redevelopment of the downtown mall, Memorial Gardens and the Baker Street parking lot could turn things around.

Protection of the quality of life that exists today will depend on good planning if municipal infrastructure is to keep up and if people in the expanding suburbs are going to think of themselves as Guelphites. Growth may not come just from urban sprawl, but from governmental change if the sharing of services with Wellington County puts amalgamation back on the table.

Throughout its history, Guelph has had to balance the pressure to grow against the desire to maintain its small-city feel. Sometimes the balance was lost and polluting factories were allowed to proliferate, high rises were built that blocked the view of the city's historic churches and wetlands were drained in the rush to expand.

For the most part, the people who have made Guelph what it is have done a good job. They have balanced the demand for sports and recreation facilities with the desire to support the arts and juggled maintenance of roads with

A sense that government had abdicated its responsibility for social housing spawned the Wellington Guelph Housing Committee which could well succeed in changing public policy. Alarm over widespread illiteracy has triggered a community response. The campaign to raise money for equipment for Guelph's redeveloped hospitals is a testament to the community's ability to get the job done.

People are what have made the difference. These pages could have been filled just by listing the names of those who have put their stamp on Guelph. People like no-nonsense judge Henry Howitt, outspoken alderman Albert Frank and ecumenical priest John Newstead. Individuals who have given much to their community like arts advocates Helen Brimmell and Sally Wismer, Children's Aid directors Fred Promoli and Moe Brubacher, teachers Daisy Pope and Joe Tersigni, business leaders Bob Ireland and Martha Jakowlew and social activists Lucy Reid and Chris Margetson.

the growing need for social services. One of the city's greatest assets in ensuring people will be able to pay the taxes to provide the services is its diverse economy. Guelph's links to agriculture and rural life are still strong, especially at the university where scientists have helped Ontario remain the largest agricultural producer in Canada. Linamar, the city's second largest employer, heads a large automotive sector. Information technology, health care, insurance, creative arts and manufacturing are all represented in an economy that still includes many locally-controlled companies.

Salaries in Guelph for university professors and company presidents may not match what is available in the United States or in larger Canadian centres, but Guelph wins hands down because of the quality of life. Because of the carousel at Riverside Park and the covered wooden bridge over the Speed River. Because of Hillside Festival and the Dragon Boat Races at Guelph Lake. Because of minor sport and summer camps that keep kids busy and out of trouble. Because of concerts in the Church of Our Lady and a bookstore that is also a cinema, a pool hall and a restaurant. Because of the beautiful stone buildings and the intimacy of the Farmer's Market.

John Galt believed that celebrations were important events in communities. He chose St. George's Day for the ceremonial felling of the first tree to provide some insurance that the solemn occasion would be remembered. In the 21st century, few people mark St. George's Day, but the 175th anniversary of the founding of Guelph, a city where good things happen, is a day to remember and to celebrate.

Happy Birthday, Guelph.



The Queen's representative in the Royal City, Governor General Jeanne Sauve, officiated in 1985 at the unveiling of the Family of Man fountain at St. George's Square. The work by sculptor Bill McElcheran was a gift from the city's Italian community, represented in this photograph by John Valeriote.

COURTESY OF THE GUELPH MERCURY

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Steering Committee

For everyone in Guelph, 2002 is a year of celebration. The many events and special projects including *Guelph: A People's Heritage 1827–2002* have been carefully planned by a hardworking committee including:

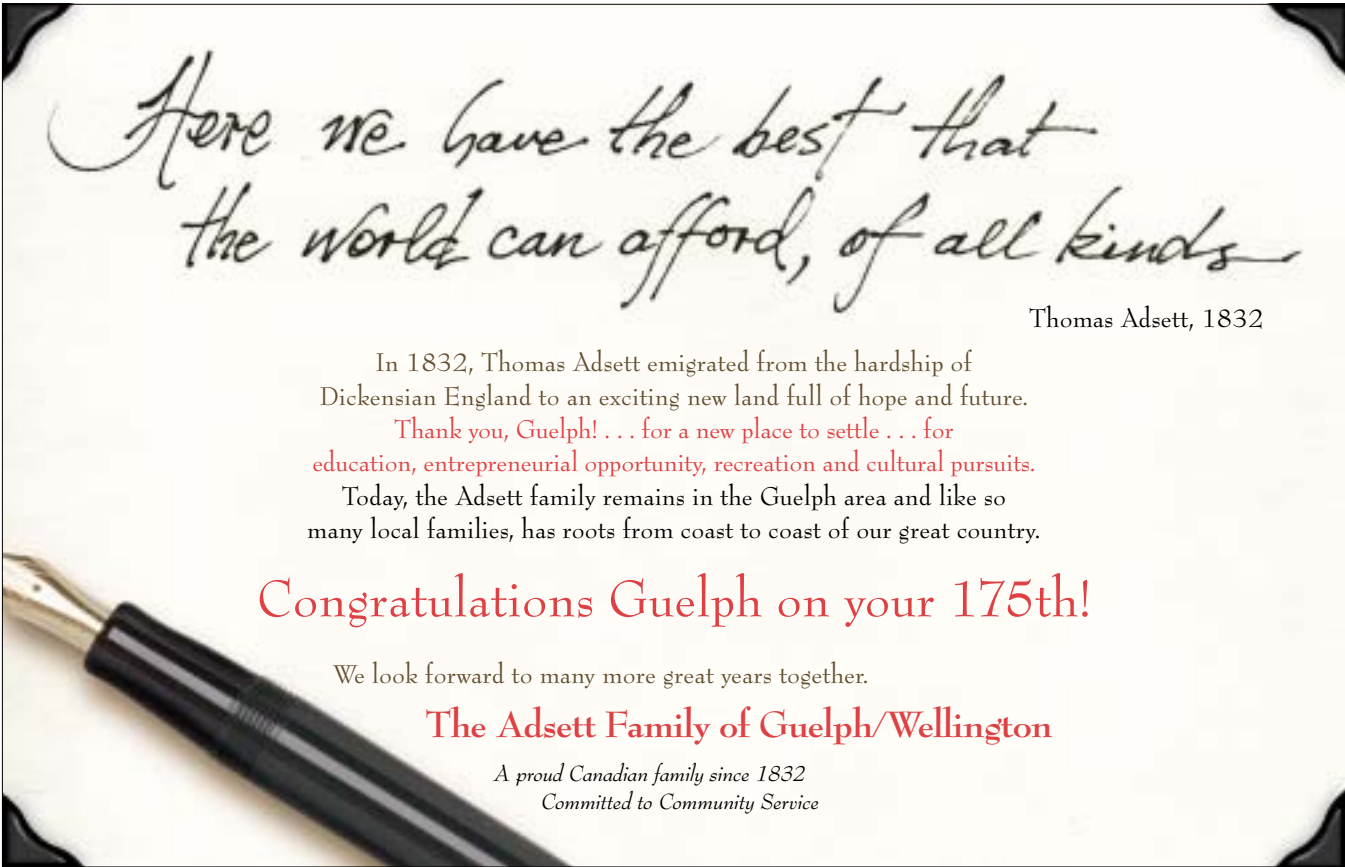
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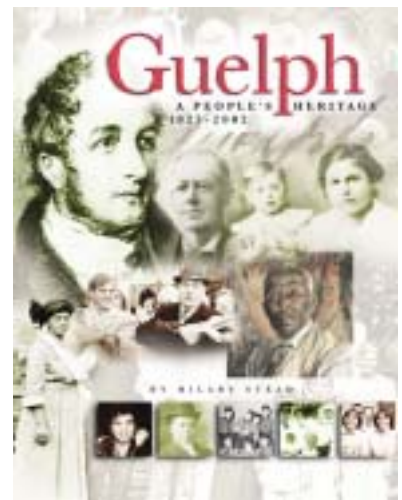
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