



The Burlington Historical Society  
**GAZETTE**

## The Paradox of Peace: Understanding NATO's Past and Present

We welcome our November speaker, **Timothy Andrews Sayle**.

Timothy is an associate professor of History and Director of the International Relations Program at the University of Toronto. He is the author of *Enduring Alliance: NATO and the Postwar Global Order* (2019) and *The Next War: Indications Intelligence in the Early Cold War* (2025). He has edited three other books on international security issues, and writes regularly on NATO, Canadian external affairs, nuclear history and the history of intelligence.

On the home front, Tim is married to Nicole and they have two boys, Henry and Charlie. The family lives in Burlington.

Photo provided by speaker



<i>This month:</i>	<i>In this issue:</i>
<p><b>Monday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, 7 pm</b>            Centennial Hall, Central Library</p> <p>Join us to hear <b>Timothy Andrews Sayle</b></p> <p><b>Everyone is welcome. Bring a friend.</b>  <b>Refreshments</b></p>	<p>President's Message 2</p> <p>BHS Executive 2</p> <p>The Royal Winter Fair 3</p> <p>Taylor Bros – an update 3</p> <p>Membership Report 4</p> <p>Social Media Report 4</p> <p>Historic Buildings 5</p> <p>From the Archives 6</p> <p>Fairfield School History 7</p> <p>Membership Form 8</p>

Unless noted otherwise, all photos are from the Burlington Historical Society Archives.

BHS Members will receive the BHS Gazette and other communications and can unsubscribe at any time [info@burlingtonhistorical.ca](mailto:info@burlingtonhistorical.ca).

Information contained on our website, newsletters and publications is printed in good faith and for general purposes Editor: Joan Downey

# President's Message *Don Thorpe*

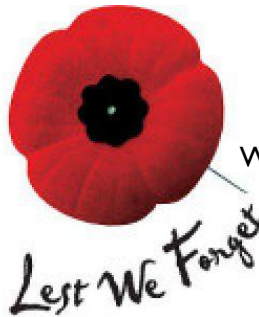
## Why Wear a Poppy? *Don Crawford*

"Please wear a Poppy," the lady said,  
And held one forth, but I shook my head,  
Then I stopped and watched as she offered them there,  
And her face was old and lined with care;  
But beneath the scars the years had made  
There remained a smile that refused to fade.

A boy came whistling down the street,  
Bouncing along on carefree feet,  
His smile was full of joy and fun:  
"Lady," said he, "May I have one?"  
When she pinned it on he turned to say,  
"Why do we wear a poppy today?"

The lady smiled in her wistful way,  
And answered, "This is Remembrance Day,  
And the poppy there is a symbol for  
The gallant ones who died in war,  
And because they did, you and I are free,  
That's why we wear the poppy, you see.

I had a boy about your size,  
With golden hair and big blue eyes.  
He loved to play and jump and shout,  
Free as a bird he would race about.  
As the years went by he learned and grew,  
And became a man – as you will, too.



But the war went on and he had to stay,  
And all I could do was wait and pray.  
His letters told of the dreadful plight,  
(I can see it still in my dreams at night)  
With the tanks and guns and cruel barbed wire,  
and the mines and bullets, the bombs and fire.

Till at last, at last, the war was won –  
And that's why we wear a poppy, son."  
The small boy turned as if to go,  
Then said, "Thanks lady, I'm glad to know,  
That sure did sound like an awful fight,  
But your son – did he come back all right?"

A tear rolled down each faded cheek:  
She shook her head but didn't speak.  
I slunk away in a sort of shame,  
And if you were me you'd have done the same:  
For our thanks, in giving, is oft delayed  
Though our freedom was bought  
And thousands paid.

And so when we see a poppy worn,  
Let us reflect on the burden borne,  
By those who gave their very all,  
When asked to answer their country's call.  
That we at home in peace might live.

Then wear a poppy,  
Remember.  
And give.

**Trivia Question:** When I attended Burlington Central High School on Remembrance Day, we walked to the cenotaph for the service. Where was the cenotaph located?

**October's trivia Question:** Where did Don buy his sporting equipment? Olsen's Sporting Goods

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## The Royal Winter Fair *Pat Taylor*

I worked at The Royal one fall for an apple farmer. Worked hard selling taffy apples to hordes of school kids. Stayed one evening for the Horse Show. Waaaaay underdressed! After the jumping competition, one of the judging classes was for 6 (or was it 8?) team big horses – Clydesdales – with 8 teams in the ring at the same time. With them trotting around the ring, the sound waves just reverberated off my chest – AWESOME.



[www.horsecanada.com](http://www.horsecanada.com)

**The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair 2025  
November 7-16, 2025**

## Taylor Bros – an update *Joan Downey*

If you remember, at the end of last month's article on this business I asked if anyone knew what happened to Taylor Bros.? Here's a bit of an update -

One of the founding brothers, Charles, died a year after the store was opened at the age of 27. His brother, Fred W. Taylor continued to operate the store until his death on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1937, 32 years after the grand opening.

Fred's wife, Orpha (nee Alton) kept the business until 1949 when it was sold for \$65,000. Orpha died on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1949.

Orpha had help from a longtime employee, Bruce Gibson, who started delivering groceries for Taylor Bros. at the age of 12 in 1911. With a slight interruption for service during WWI, he worked for Taylor Bros until 1950 when he opened Gibson's Food Market at Guelph Line and New Street "on the outskirts of town".

## From a "Time to Keep" By Eleanor B. Coulter Lowville Fonds U2/S4/7

In 1929 it was my great privilege to participate in the Royal 500 trip, an experiment sponsored by the Royal Winter Fair and the Department of Agriculture whereby the five top winners of the yearly Homemakers Competition in each county were involved. Those attending this great experiment with me from Halton County were: Ella Harris, Eva Chisholm, Ella Peacock and Isobel Tovell. We were billeted for five days and nights in the Royal York Hotel, the girls from one county all rooming together. I believe the whole floor was occupied by the 500. Connecting doors between the rooms meant we could get acquainted with girls from other counties and have a lot of fun playing tricks, pillow fights etc. Along with visits to the Royal Winter Fair we took tours to department stores, dairies and one night at the theatre. It was a rare experience for rural girls at the time and a first for eating in formal dining rooms of the hotel, finger bowls, and fashion shows. And another chance for me to obtain pen pals from all over Ontario.



This item, which appeared in the October newsletter article, tells us what happened to the store after the sale.

### **Burlington Gazette, 29 Mar 1950**

*Advertisement: Open House for "Town Super Market" opposite Post Office, Formerly Taylor Bros. Grocery – E.M.Coote, proprietor.*

So, there's the answer. The store was owned and operated by the Taylor family, with help from Bruce Gibson, until 1949 when it was sold to E. M. Coote who continued to operate this as a grocery store.

An interesting fact – the store burned in 1912 when Tom Green lit a match near an oil drum. It was rebuilt later that year.

Thank you Peggy Armstrong for helping me gather these details.

## Membership Report *Pat Taylor*

**Welcome to new member  
Eunice Bamber**

33 members have renewed for 2026

Welcome back!

The membership table will be at the back of the room at the meeting on November 10<sup>th</sup> ready to accept renewals.

## Social Media *Jennifer Kemp*

Facebook	1543
Instagram	575
X	70

The numbers continue to grow as people check out the of items of local interest and post their comments.

Don't forget to check out the 'Then and Now' column in Burlington Today anytime after the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month. [www.burlingtontoday.com](http://www.burlingtontoday.com) .



**HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY**

**Happy 90th Birthday!**  
Best wishes to longtime BHS member  
Anne Wingfield

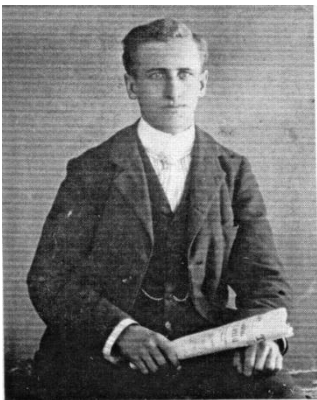
# Historic Buildings

## 513 Locust Street . Joan Downey



50 years ago, in June 1975, the owners of **A Different Drummer Books** informed their customers and friends that, after five years of bookselling in an old mid-Victorian house at the intersection of Locust and Elgin Streets, they were moving the business to a new location one block north. Their former premises had been expropriated by the City to make way for a parking lot.

The 12 April 1905 issue of the Gazette reported that “contracts have been let for the construction of Capt. Henderson’s house on Brant Street (now Smith’s Funeral Home), also for a house for E.A. Harris on Locust Street.”



Elgin Harris, ca 1910

In 1901, Elgin married a Burlington resident, Lena Mortimer. Their son, George was born in 1903. Their daughter, Marjorie, also a notable citizen of this city, was born in 1906 in the new house.

Elgin Harris served in various positions in the young city and in 1921 he was elected Mayor, a position he held for the 1 year term. His son, George would later be

elected Reeve and also served as Mayor of Burlington (1930/35),

In retirement, Elgin Harris sold his house to Garnet Ireland and moved a block farther north – still on Locust Street.

Al Cummings purchased the house in 1975 and converted this comfortable Edwardian house into a unique bookstore space which made an international reputation for the young architect, Tom Moore. The interior space soars from the ground floor up past the open mezzanine effect on the second floor and the third-floor loft to the cathedral ceiling. A projecting ‘greenhouse’ replacing the old add-on enclosed porch at the front was an innovation with few precedents in 1975.

From the mid 80s until 2010 the building was owned by Richard Bachmann. This was a time when superstores and online booksellers were taking over but A Different Drummer held its own. An interesting note – Richard’s wife, Jane Irwin, was chair of Heritage Burlington LACAC and also Archivist for the Burlington Historical Society.

Present owner, Ian Elliot, continues to serve the community. A Different Drummer Books hosts sold-out authors’ talks, has knowledgeable staff, and has a large selection of books in this beautiful house.

The City presently has a consultant conducting a peer review of a heritage evaluation report. The results of that review will advise if the home meets sufficient criteria for designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

## Thieves routed by bank Janitor and wife

**Burlington Gazette – some time in 1935**

Shortly after 7 o'clock one morning, T.A. Smith, Janitor of the Bank of Commerce, Burlington, and his wife, walked into the bank to clean up. In so doing they surprised two thugs who had entered by a side window with the intention of forcing the first official who arrived to open the safe at the point of an automatic pistol.



When Mr. Smith entered the bank from his own adjoining apartment about seven o'clock he found that the rear window on the west side of the bank had been jimmied during the night, but did not think that any one might be still on the premises. He informed his wife of the discovery and Mrs. Smith went back through the door into her apartment to telephone Col Walker. As she took the receiver from the hook, two masked men with black automatic pistols stepped from the manager's office at the front of the bank and while one covered Mr. Smith, the other walked through the open door into the apartment and took the telephone from his wife, at the same time saying "none of that".

Mrs. Nora Gilbert, who was on the switchboard at the telephone exchange, heard Mrs. Smith scream just as she was about to ask her for the number and as no further sound came from the telephone she sensed something was wrong in the bank and notified Col. Walker and Chief Lee Smith, who both hurried to the scene.

The gunmen were both about five feet eight inches tall and wore white handkerchiefs across their faces. One was dressed in a grey suit and the other wore a brownish suit and a fedora.

The gunmen had planned the robbery carefully but had not figured on the caretaker being in the building. The men backed the couple into their part of the building and then fled through a side door. The pair ran down Water Street and were seen by a number of citizens.

Paul Challen, teller at the bank, stated that he had intended to go to the bank about eight o'clock today to clear up some extra work, and if Mr. Smith had not entered the office to dust, the bandits would have confronted him when he arrived.

Shortly before noon the teller discovered that his revolver, a .38 caliber Iver Johnson, had been removed from his drawer.

Editor's Note:

The Shaver Building was built in 1881 by James Cushie Bent for the **Bank of Hamilton**, merged in January 1924 with the Canadian Bank of Commerce. This was the City's first bus terminal, replaced in 1972 by a new terminal on Elizabeth Street.

In 1973 the building housed an Off-Track Betting Service.

Today (2025) it is home to BudSmoke, a cannabis store.



Screen capture from Google Maps

# Fairfield School History

From a brochure issued for school's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary 1913-1988

The earliest school, a frame building contained two rows of forms with an aisle up the middle. Three backless seats ranged on each side of the teacher's platform were for the primary classes.

About 1868 the two school sections #1 & #2 East Flamboro united to build a new modern school on the boundary of the two sections. This school, now torn down, was on the present Howard Road opposite Tower's store. This school was considered one of the finest within a radius of forty miles. A junior room was added to the school to accommodate increased attendance.

In 1911 the two school sections separated and Maplehurst School was built for the pupils east of the Waterdown Road.

In 1913 Fairfield School was built at a cost of \$25,000. Messrs. Unsworth, Reycraft and Smille were the trustees. Mr. Armes designed this present modern four room school with an up-to-date water system for flush toilets and drinking fountains. This was an innovation for 1913. The school grounds were, in the early 1900's, part of the race track for the Hendrie Stables.



First School photo – 1913 – Donated to the Archives by Margaret Lemon.

In 1925 an additional acre of land enlarged the school grounds. In 1920 equipment for the teaching of Manual Training and Household Science was purchased. Hot lunch was provided at noon for children who lived some distance from school.

In 1945 another four room addition was completed along with an assembly room on the lower floor. The first Kindergarten classes for the whole Aldershot area

began in the 1951-1952 year. In 1953 increased attendance due to new homes built in several surveys necessitated another four room addition with a modern Kindergarten room



In 1966 Fairfield lost its grade 7 and 8 classes to Maplehurst and became a K-6 school under the "new" middle school – junior school plan proposed by the former Burlington Board of Education.

During the early 80's declining enrolments threatened the very existence of Fairfield. However, in more recent years the enrolment has begun increasing steadily and projections show it should continue well into the 1990's.

During the summer of '88 the office renovations took place bringing the older Fairfield facility closer to the standard of other newer schools.

As we celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> birthday of the present building we can reflect with pride the contribution Fairfield has made to this Aldershot community for the past 75 years.

**Editor's Note:** A school that once boasted 500 pupils had just 42 when it was closed. Despite many battles between community members and the Halton Public School Board and the City, Fairfield was demolished in 2002.





# Burlington Historical Society

Preserving Burlington's History for Today and Tomorrow

## Membership - 2026

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Dues

- New Member       Renewal  
 Family \$40.00       Adult: \$30.00       Senior \$25.00

Yes, as a **new** BHS member I wish to receive the Gazette newsletter and other e-communications and understand I can unsubscribe at any time.

## Volunteer

Are you interested in volunteering with the Society? Would you like to help us in preserving the history of our City? Tell us a bit about your talents and interests – [info@burlingtonhistorical.ca](mailto:info@burlingtonhistorical.ca)

## Donation

I wish to make a separate donation to the society in the sum of \_\_\_\_\_

A Tax Receipt will be issued for all donations totalling \$25.00 or more

The Burlington Historical Society is a registered charity # 119217693RR0001

### Mail completed form and remittance(s) to:

The Burlington Historical Society  
Membership Convenor  
PO Box 93164  
1450 Headon Road  
Burlington, Ontario L7M 4A3

Make cheques payable to The Burlington Historical Society

### OR

e-transfer funds to [info@burlingtonhistorical.ca](mailto:info@burlingtonhistorical.ca)



If you are a new member or there are changes to your contact information, please email the completed form to us at the above email

### OR

Leave it at the Membership table at any General Meeting

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