HELLO!

Many people are starting to think about what business operations will look like for our organizations as we get closer to the idea of opening up again. We know we still have several weeks left of isolation and physical distancing, but even if we are open for the summer to the public, will people feel comfortable gathering in large groups for events? Will that even be allowed? With that in mind, we are postponing and cancelling many of our summer programs. This includes our Neighbourhood Walks series in June, which we will try to reschedule for the fall. If you have already purchased tickets online, we can arrange for a refund or you can hold on until we know more in the fall. Please contact us by phone for a refund.

We will also be cancelling our annual Past is Present Heritage Festival on the Civic Holiday in August as well as our weekly walking tours. Tours will resume as soon as we know that it is safe to do so. We are still waiting for more information before we decide about our summer Kid Curators Camp.
LECTURE FROM RARE BOOK LIBRARY AT U OF T

Local historian and archivist at St. Mark’s, Donald Combe recently shared with us a link to a lecture called “The Flickering of the Flame: The Reformation and the Printing Press”. The lecture is by P.J. Carefoote, Chief Librarian of the Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto. He is a good friend of the Addison Library and has been encouraging the St. Mark’s Archives Committee’s work there. Check it our HERE.

NEW EXHIBIT ON GOOGLE ARTS & CULTURE

Apologies that the link in last week's newsletter was not working. Our newest virtual exhibit is up on Google Arts & Culture! Check out the history of Chautauqua by clicking on the link below:

Virtual Exhibit: Chautauqua

ONLINE PROGRAMMING

With the postponement of many of our lectures and other programs, we are going to try some online programming through Zoom. We will start out with a trial lecture by Sarah Kaufman, followed by our guest presenters. The talks originally scheduled for 2020 will still take place in-person later this year or early 2021, but this will allow us to offer some kind of engagement for our members. We also have some F&I presentations from previous years that we are offering in this online format. Thanks to David Murray & Liz Surtees for helping to coordinate some of these previous presenters. You will receive a separate email with information on how to sign up for these talks.

All presentations start at 2pm and require online registration:

May 7 | Sarah Kaufman - The Spanish Flu & Niagara Camp, 1918-19
May 14 | Tony Chisholm - Marathon Swimmers on Lake Ontario
May 21 | Suzanne Hebert - Famous & Infamous: The Medicis
May 28 | Ted Rumble - Famous & Infamous: Dusko Popov

WILMA MORRISON

On April 23rd we were saddened to learn about the passing of Wilma Morrison from COVID-19. A resident of Niagara Falls, Wilma was a champion for honouring and understanding Canada’s Black History, especially in the Niagara Region. She received the Order of Ontario for her work, the highest honour that can bestowed on an individual by the Province. She was an educator, historian and an inspiration to many people. We had the honour of working alongside Wilma in her role of honorary chair of the Voices of Freedom Park Committee. She will be greatly missed in the history community and beyond.

photo credit: Bravo Niagara
Memories of Chautauqua

This lovely postcard view of the Chautauqua Hotel here in town was sent in August 1908 to Miss Stella Niven, who lived on Geneva Street in St. Catharines. No street address. Certainly no postal code, which came very much later. It was a simpler and more personal world when the postal people didn’t need a street address to find you.

Signed only as ‘La’ the sender’s message is: Dear Zella – Do you know this place? If not somebody might be able to tell you that was camping here (ha ha).

The postcard was published by Valentine & Sons of Montreal and Toronto, rather than by a Niagara source. It’s a useful promotional tool and may have been produced for the Hotel and actually sold at Chautauqua. So, do our Niagara-on-the-Lake residents who live in Chautauqua know its history?

The hotel was constructed in 1887 and provided a venue and centerpiece for what might be called a Christian retreat, one of several ‘Chautauquas’ in North America. As well as the hotel, cottages sprang up and as the writer implies, there must also have been a facility for camping. It’s not easy to imagine the experience, but if you want to see something closer to what it would have been like, take a trip across the border to Chautauqua, just west of Buffalo along the Lake Erie shore. You can visit for a day or stay for several days. We went on a CAA bus day-tour leaving from their office in Thorold.

You will find a substantial and grand central hotel built many years ago which is still there, many residences varying in size and grandeur, and a large covered central space where you can participate in a tent meeting on various topics. Their buildings are comparable in nature and purpose to the ‘cottages’ that remain in our own Chautauqua, but theirs has not succumbed to the pressures of ‘urban development’.

Watch for an announcement of one of our own Museum’s tours of our own Chautauqua area, and you’ll learn even more.

Judith Sayers (jasayers@saybuck.com) has a large collection of postcards of Niagara Camp and Niagara-on-the-Lake which will be shared with you in this series.
ACROSS
1. One time Governor of Montreal
3. Scotland’s Queen of the South
5. Officer in charge of siege at Ft. Niagara
8. Russian count
9. Tree
10. Abolitionist
15. Not quite the King
16. Poet
17. Not a King

DOWN
2. Opening
3. Down South land
4. Long reigning monarch
6. Common place name
7. Lt. Gov.
8. Longest serving mayor
11. British economist
12. Reformation guy
13. Jones’ locker
14. Not the back

All Answers are Street Names in NOTL