The Museum has continued to put more and more content online during our closure. We hope that you have enjoyed the links we share in this newsletter each week.

Our latest project has been getting our gift shop online so that anyone, anywhere, can support the Museum with a purchase. We can arrange pick up or delivery in Niagara or we can ship to you at a cost. Many of our gift items are already online and we will soon be adding all of our books. Check back often to see what is new in the shop as we are updating daily!

For your convenience, you can also use the gift shop site to purchase a membership or make a donation. Visit notlmuseumshop.square.site to see what is in stock!

As some businesses begin to open up, Sarah Kaufman is working on a re-opening plan for the Museum to ensure the safety of staff, volunteers and the public. Give us your input by participating in the survey on page 2.
UPCOMING WEBINARS

All presentations start at 2pm and require online registration:

May 28 | Ted Rumble
Famous & Infamous: Dusko Popov
REGISTER HERE

June 4 | David Hemmings
Doing Family History in COVID Days

June 11 | Linda Fritz
Queenston: The Inland Port

June 18 | Michael Clark
Famous & Infamous: Conn Smythe

June 25 | Sarah Kaufman
Memorial Hall: Niagara’s own Cabinet of Curiosities

Recordings will be emailed to all members following each presentation

THE NIAGARA HISTORICAL SOCIETY TURNS 125 THIS YEAR!

The Niagara Historical Society was founded in 1895 by a group of 15 people who wanted to encourage the study of Canadian history and preserve historic relics. This December will be 125 years since their first meeting and my how we have changed!

In honour of this milestone we have been sharing early items from our collection on social media with #NHS125. We will continue to share 125 important artefacts from the organization's beginning. Here are a few examples:

1. 1911 Catalogue #16: Powder Horn that was presented by Chief Joseph Brant (Thyendanegea) to Jean Baptiste Rousseaux, 1794.

2. 1911 Catalogue #70: Uniform coat that belonged to Colonel Aeneas Shaw of the 1st Regiment of the Lincoln Militia in the War of 1812.

3. 1911 Catalogue #665: Judge’s chair used in NOTL’s second Courthouse and Gaol built in 1817. When the third courthouse was built at 26 Queen Street, this chair was brought there, and it remained a fixture in this building even when the courthouse closed and became a Town Hall. Mayors would use it during council meetings until at least 1877.

4. Government weights and measures mentioned in Janet’s Historical Notes #262 and described as “Government weights and measures being from the gill measure to the bushel and weights to 56 lbs. given by the town council.”
Three Virgil Stories in One

There are three Virgil stories that this postcard photograph represents among the many that resonate in the history of our ‘NOTL’ town.

First, this Real Photo postcard was taken in front of Grace United Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Any long-time resident of Virgil will probably recall that in 1965 Virgil United Church merged with Grace United, in Old Town, as congregations were shrinking, and churches everywhere were coming together. Some artifacts from Virgil United are in Grace United Church today to recognize the bond.

Second, we are told that the date of this photograph was in 1925. That was the year that Methodist congregations, including The Methodist Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake, merged with some Presbyterians and Congregationalists to form the new United Church of Canada, formalized on June 10, 1925. In Niagara-on-the-Lake, St. Andrews Presbyterian Church retained its congregation (or presumably most of it!) and as readers know, remains today.

Third, you may have wondered “Who are these people? What are their names and what are they doing?” Fortunately, we can answer that one, too. If you look carefully at the images, you will see toward the right, in her father’s arms, a young girl dressed in white and wearing a white sunbonnet. Her name is Mary Snider, a lifetime Virgil resident, and she has been honoured in her adult life by having the Mary Snider Room at the Arena named after her.

She was Mary Haines, and that's her father holding her. Mary tells us that the float was in front of the newly-named Grace United Church, to which her parents belonged. Reading closely, it was a Grace United Church Y.P.S. parade entry, which could have been for any celebration which merited a parade. From the outfits, we know that it wasn’t Christmas!

The Y.P.S. eventually morphed into a Y.P.U. (Young People Union) which was designed to attract and retain young people for the United Church. And Mary Snider was clearly attracted and retained because she is still a member of Grace United Church, some 95 years later. Mary and her late husband, George, have made a major contribution to Grace.

continued on page 4...
Mary’s unerring bookkeeping skills were honed by training at Toronto’s Shaw Business School while husband George was serving his country during the Second World War. For decades Mary was actively involved with the May Stampede put on by the Virgil Business Association and her contribution was significant each year.

On a personal note, Niagara-on-the-Lake postcard collector Judith Sayers attended that same Shaw Business School in Toronto several years later! This card, and all the other cards in Judith’s collection, will eventually migrate to the resources at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum.

So there you are. Just one photographic postcard – but three stories touching upon Virgil!

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.

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE WORD SEARCH

Find the following words in the puzzle. Words are hidden → ↓ and → .

- APOTHECARY
- BROCK
- CARNOCHAN
- CENOTAPH
- CHAUTAUQUA
- FORTGEORGE
- MEMORIALHALL
- NIAGARA
- PIERPOINT
- QUEENSTON
- RIVER
- RYE
- SECORD
- SIMCOEPARK
- STDAVIDS
- TECUMSEH
- UPPERCANADA
- VIRGIL