

# Reflections

Newsletter of the Marsh Historical Collection  
Amherstburg, Ontario

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## Lest We Forget



The Marsh Collection's "Lest We Forget" exhibit expanded this year to include information on the women of the area who served in World War II. Twenty-eight young women from Amherstburg, Anderdon and Malden joined the WRENS, CWACs, Nursing Sisters or RCAF-WD. Many had brothers or husbands overseas.

We still need information and/or photos of the following. If you can help, please contact us!

- Gladys Agla
- Joyce Allen
- Blanche Goodchild
- Doris Hart
- Laurie Holdaway
- Dorothy Jarriett
- Betty Louch Kemp
- Georgina Mayville
- Jean Mickle
- Betty Ann Reynolds
- June Scratch
- Betty Winegarden
- Joan Winegarden

*More photos of the exhibit can be found on page 2.*

### Doors Open Amherstburg

The popular Doors Open event, which ran annually from 2003 to 2006, has been revived and will take place in Amherstburg on Saturday, September 19, 2009 from 10am to 4pm. The event will feature churches, historic sites and private homes showcasing our architectural and cultural heritage, all open for viewing free of charge. More details will be available early in the year.

This event is part of Doors Open Ontario, sponsored by the Ontario Heritage Trust.

### Where to find us

The Marsh Collection is located at 235 Dalhousie Street on the upper floor - across from the Amherstburg Echo building.

We are open Tuesday to Friday from 10am to 4pm.

235A Dalhousie Street • Amherstburg ON • N9V 1W6  
(519) 736-9191 • [www.marshcollection.org](http://www.marshcollection.org)  
e-mail: [research@marshcollection.org](mailto:research@marshcollection.org)

*If you enjoy Reflections, please let us know! We welcome your comments. Reflections is also available by e-mail - please contact us for details.*

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# Growing Up in the 'Burg

## Aiding and Abetting

Immediately to the south of the town library on Apsley Street was the Green Lantern Restaurant and back in the fifties this was one of our local hang-outs. At the Green Lantern we did what everybody did while hanging out. If you were a guy you talked about cars first and girls a very close second. If you were a girl you talked about guys first and whether or not they had a car.

Anyway, after a lot of car/girl talk, my buddy and I decided we had better mosey, as Mr. Pann, the owner of the restaurant, was asking us to buy something or find somewhere else to roost. Out the door we went, when lo and behold, there in front of us was this poor unfortunate individual trying to start his car. He

seemed to be in an awful hurry and was quite agitated that the car wouldn't start. Now, my buddy and I felt that we knew everything there was to know about cars and we asked if we could help. He promptly agreed and we lifted the car's hood to perform our magic. While we were under the hood checking things out, who should pull up alongside of us with all their lights flashing? Why, none other than Amherstburg's finest, who promptly grabbed the guy and put him in the rear of the police car.

The police then turned to the two of us and asked just what we thought we were doing. We rapidly explained that we were

only trying to help a guy start his car. We said we didn't even know the guy and we asked what was going on. The police told us that he had just broken out of the town jail and the car we attempted to start was being stolen so he could get out of town.

After a stern warning from the police which in laymen's terms meant, "Do something more constructive," they left with their prisoner, leaving us to decide that in the future we would be much more selective in offering our expertise.

I never did find out whose car it was or why it wouldn't start.

*The author, who wishes to remain anonymous, still hangs out with his friends, though no longer at the Green Lantern.*

## Lest We Forget

*continued from page 1*

We still need photos of the following men whose names appear on our cenotaph. If you have one, please bring it in to our office - we can scan it while you wait and hand the original right back to you!

- Orville Leland Fox
- Robert Isaac Fryer
- Ovide M. Bastien
- Marvin James Gibb
- Lawrence Hainer
- Albert Kencil Heaton
- Frank Higgins
- Raymond Martin
- William John Pettypiece
- Leo Alexander Joseph Renaud
- Arthur "Mac" Reynolds
- Douglas Reynolds
- John R. "Jack" Thomas
- Arthur Frederick Williams
- Harold Wilson



# Yesterday's News

from the archives of the *Amherstburg Echo*

## December 1878

- Young ladies are complaining of the young men who stand in groups on street corners on Sundays, spitting tobacco at a mark and staring at passersby.

## January 1889

- A vote will be taken in Essex County municipalities on whether the county should have a poorhouse.

- Oyster suppers were popular for New Year's Eve house parties.

- Albert Fox has fitted up an oil stove for keeping passengers warm on the Amherstburg-Windsor stage.

## December 1908

- Relic hunters could walk out to the channel bank on Monday when the water was the lowest in many years.

## January 1909

- The ice on Big Creek is in splendid shape for horse-racing.

## February 1909

- Local historians are against changing the name of Bois Blanc Island to "Bob-Lo," a so-called phonetic spelling.

## December 1918

- Word has been received that Private Earl Fox of the American Expeditionary Forces, son of Maurice and Cecile (Boufford) Fox, was killed in action in France on October 2nd.

- Amherstburg soldiers are gradually returning home. C.C. Kemp, Wilfred Smith and Charles Aikman are the most recent arrivals.

- A meeting to organize a town band will be held at the Lake View Hotel.

- The second week of Christmas and Easter holidays will be eliminated and schools will be open six days a week until Easter to make up for time lost due to the influenza closures.

## January 1919

- N.A. Marra has purchased the corner lot, Richmond and Sandwich. He

intends moving the present building off and erecting an up-to-date moving picture theatre with 500 to 600 seats.

## December 1928

- The Amherstburg Goodfellows Club was reorganized with committee women from each church.

- 1928 has been a year of prosperity for Amherstburg - the streets were lighted with a "White Way," a new distillery was established and every citizen has had an opportunity to be employed.

- A beautiful super-service station costing about \$12,000 will be built in the near future at the corner of Richmond and Bathurst by W.W. Trimble. A full line of Hudson-Essex cars and Imperial Oil products will be sold there.

## January 1929

- Dr. T.J. Park, Medical Officer of Health, has ordered schools to remain closed because of the influenza epidemic.

- The name of Border Breweries & Distillers has been changed to Pioneer Distillers Ltd.

- The R.C. cemetery is being enlarged by the purchase of additional property to the north.

- The Detroit River Canadian Bridge company has run into a snag in connection with the proposed Grosse Île-Anderdon bridge. The Great Lakes navigation companies have entered strenuous objections to the 600-ft. width of the span from pier to pier, which they say is too narrow for safety in fog and bad weather.

## February 1939

- Tenders were called for construction of a museum building and entrance gateway at Fort Malden. The building will be of stone from the Brunner Mond quarry, built in French chateau design. Luigi DeAppolonia was low bidder at \$12,495, which is higher than the estimated figure.

- Town council has passed a bylaw that every owner or occupant of a building must clean their sidewalks within 10 hours of each snowfall.

- A fireproof cement kitchen, enlarged dining room and a private upstairs dining room will be added to the Amherst Hotel.

## December 1948

- Bob-Lo Excursion Company has announced it will not open in 1949 and plans to liquidate all assets unless taken over by another company.

- The Amherstburg Sportsmen's Assn. will hold a trapshoot New Year's Day at the club's range, east end of Brunner Avenue.

## January 1949

- The Columbian Squires of Amherstburg held their charter night.

## December 1958

- The McGregor property has been acquired and added to Fort Malden. It contains the south moat and part of the southwest bastion.

## January 1959

- The Amherstburg Kinsmen Club have taken on the project of erecting a Scout Hall.

## February 1959

- The first meeting of Amherstburg's recently-formed Police Commission was held Jan. 29th.

## December 1968

- A half-million-gallon water tank will be built on the south side of Alma Street.

## January 1969

- The popularity of the outdoor ice rink at the town park points out the need for an arena in Amherstburg.

## February 1969

- The Amherstburg Cold Storage building, a landmark on Richmond Street, will be razed to make way for the new TD Bank. Once the Fox livery stable, the building had been moved there from the 4th of Malden, where it once housed the Union Sunday School.

# Bricks 'n' Beams

## The Pensioner Scheme at Amherstburg

By the mid-1840s the military importance of Fort Malden had dwindled and the British Government no longer wanted the expense of maintaining a regular garrison there. Earl Grey, the Colonial Secretary, developed a plan whereby enrolled pensioners in the British Army would be settled in areas adjacent to military establishments. These Pensioners would not only serve as a military presence to maintain the posts and provide security when needed, but they and their families would also contribute to the settlement of the colony and the local economy. Earl Grey proposed the plan be carried out at Penetanguishene, Amherstburg, Niagara, Toronto and other locations in Canada West where there were suitable military reserves; however, only the schemes at Amherstburg and Penetanguishene were realized.

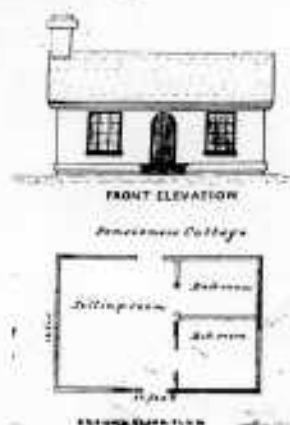
The military reserve at Amherstburg had 300 acres of unused land to the east of Fort Malden. In 1851 this area was laid out as Registered Plan 240 into 86 lots of approximately 2½ acres each. Today this area is bounded by Sandwich, Victoria, St. Arnaud and Richmond Streets. On each lot a single-storey, wood frame cottage approximately 18 x 22 feet was to be erected. The cottage consisted of a combined living room/kitchen with a stove for heating and cooking, and one or two small bedrooms.

On July 4, 1851, eighty-two Pensioners with their wives and

children arrived at Fort Malden aboard the steamer *Hope*. They took up temporary quarters in the barracks until their cottages were completed the following year. An 1852 map showing the layout of the Pensioner scheme noted that "all the cottages are in an exact line and square to the road at 5 yards distance, and in the centre of the lot of ground with a ditch about 2 feet wide excavated along the front of each allotment for the purpose of drainage; the roads made by the Pensioners are 22 yards wide; a row of Trees on each side of the road in front of the cottages has been planted by the corporation and given in charge of the Pensioners."

A certain sum was deducted from their pensions to pay for the land and cottage, thus giving them clear legal title to the property. Many requested that this sum be doubled in order to pay down the property faster. Crown Grants were issued for most of the properties in 1860. Upon the death of a Pensioner, his widow and family were entitled to continued occupation of the house and land, until they were recompensed for the amount paid toward the house and any improvements made. The houses were also protected by insurance policies.

By providing the Pensioners with a house and land, it was hoped that in addition to their pension they would be able to raise livestock and plant gardens and crops, not only providing for their own family's needs but also producing enough to sell for further income. Many of the Pensioners and



**Cross-section of Pensioner's cottage, from 1852 survey, "Cottage Lots of Enrolled Pensioners on Military Reserve"** (National Map Collection)

their children also took jobs in town. Some were given advances to pay for dividing, railing and fencing their lots. They were also exempt from taxes while occupying land on a military reserve. Most of the Pensioners had an annual income exceeding that of the average unskilled labourer and in this way they not only provided a military presence but also contributed greatly to the local economy. As well, the influx of approximately 350 people, mostly Irish Catholics, equalled more than 10% of the total population of Amherstburg and thus made up a large cultural group.

The Pensioners were expected to perform routine military tasks, including sentry duty and maintenance of the artillery, buildings and earthworks at Fort Malden. They were also used as police when required. Their military duties ceased when Fort Malden was sold to the Provincial government in 1859. Some returned to Great Britain but the majority remained, their children marrying and contributing to the town's growing population.

The Pensioner scheme had a large impact on the physical settlement of Amherstburg. The development of the

*continued on page 5*



Street map of Amherstburg, circa 1860. Outlined area is Pensioners' Scheme.

*"The 1852 survey labels two roads (now Fort St. and St. Arnaud St.) as "Roads made by the Pensioners" and the Townline Road as "Road made by the corporation". On the 1858 map all streets have been named, Balaclava, Alma and St. Arnaud being names relating to the Crimean War (1854-56).*



# Ancestral Lines

## Two Pensioner Families

The "Bricks 'n' Beams" article in this issue highlights 1850s era residences known as Pensioners' Cottages. As noted, there are still several in existence but many have been significantly remodelled, so it takes an eagle-eye like Jennifer's to pick them out. We believe it's also good to recall the people who lived in those hundred and fifty-something year-old structures.

Matthew Pollard and Charles O'Connor were Pensioners who resided next door to each other on lots 30 and 31, south side of Fort Street. Thanks to the foresight of folks in the Amherstburg Historic Sites Association and Fort Malden, both of those cottages were saved, moved and restored some years ago. Pollard's is situated behind the historic Park House Museum on Dalhousie Street and O'Connor's is at Fort Malden National Historic Site of Canada. Our intention in this article is to give the reader an inkling of what life might have been like for the Pensioners' families who lived in these cottages, which were miniscule by today's standards. Picture yourself living with your five kids in a 2-room 18' x 22' frame house - no bathroom, no electricity or running water, cooking on a wood stove, reading by a coal oil lamp. Cozy maybe, but certainly no privacy!

*"Private Charles O'Connor, late of the 31<sup>st</sup> or East Surrey Regiment"* and his wife Mary (nee O'Neil) did just that, according to an 1852 Survey. Charlie was 52 years old and Mary was 46 at the time. By 1861 though, according to the census that year, there were only four children left at home - the two

older girls were in their twenties and the two younger boys were in their teens. Ten years later Charles and Mary were alone at their Fort Street residence. The two girls had married and moved away and the boys were nowhere to be found around Amherstburg. An article in the Amherstburg Echo dated October 26, 1877 reports that the youngest son, John O'Connor, had been elected a member of the Ohio Legislature for Montgomery County but so far no further data has been located. Soon Charles and Mary disappeared from the local scene. It's said that they went back to Ireland but that's an earlier researcher's guess.

*"Private Matthew Pollard, late of the 28<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot"* and his wife Mary Ann (nee Thomas) raised their family in a cottage next door to the O'Connor's on Fort Street. Married in 1845 while Pollard was stationed in England, they arrived in Amherstburg in 1851 with two children - Jennie and Annie. Annie died shortly after settling here. Their only son, Robert George Pollard, was born here in 1853 and died 17 years later (January 1, 1871) without issue. In 1856 they had another daughter who only lived six months. The last two children born in Amherstburg were Katharine Pollard (1857-1926) and Sarah Ann Pollard (1860-1927). Unfortunately, Matthew Pollard died or disappeared around 1860 when Sarah was born. His wife is listed in the 1861 census as a widow.

The three remaining children were **Jennie, Katie and Sarah**. **Jennie** married William Gasco in 1873. A year later they moved to Windsor where they had a daughter Maud in 1882. Two years later they moved to Chicago, returning to Detroit thirty years later where Jennie, whose eyesight was failing, died in 1920 of injuries received in a fall through a trap door into the cellar of their home.

**Katharine** Pollard, a.k.a. "Katie", was found in the 1911 census of Windsor, living with her sister Sarah's family. We have reason to believe that she married later in life to William Teehan, a son of pensioner Peter Teehan, but that has yet to be verified.

**Sarah** Pollard (1860-1927) at the age of eleven in the 1871 census was listed with the family of Joseph and Mary Grondin in Amherstburg. But where were her mother and two older sisters? We've searched all the logical and some illogical sources but to no avail. The possibilities are endless but we'll have to leave that question unanswered till another day. In 1871 another family was living in the Pollard house on Fort Street next to the O'Connors, but Mary was still listed as owner. In 1876, sixteen-year-old Sarah Pollard was married at St. John the Baptist Church to John B. Deneau. Sarah and John produced sixteen children, 14 of whom were living in 1910 when John dropped dead outside the International Hotel in downtown Windsor. Sarah passed away in 1927, leaving behind many, many Deneau descendants who can trace their ancestry back to the little Pensioner's cottage on Fort Street.

# Amherstburg Museums & Galleries

Since 1996 the heritage sites in Amherstburg have worked together for purposes of advertising and promotion. Currently there are seven member sites: Gibson Gallery, Holiday Beach Conservation Area, Fort Malden National Historic Site of Canada, The Commissariat (Amherstburg Provincial Marine), Park House Museum, Marsh Historical Collection and North American Black Historical Museum.

## AMG Events - Winter 2008-2009

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| December 20    | <b>Mittens for a Mission</b> (A "River Lights" event)<br>Roasted chestnuts, hot chocolate, visit with Santa.<br>Bring mittens for the needy.<br><i>Navy Yard Park, behind Park House Museum</i> |
| February 15-20 | <b>Heritage Week</b><br>Display of recent donations.<br><i>Park House Museum</i>  |
| March 8        | <b>Collectibles Sale &amp; Appraisal</b><br><i>Park House Museum</i>  |

*For details contact Park House Museum at (519) 736-2511.*

**Don't forget that Monday February 16  
is Heritage Day!**

## Quilt Challenge

Rose Cottage Quilt Shop and Gibson Gallery's 2nd Annual Quilt Challenge, "Feather Fantasy," was the last exhibit at the Gallery for 2008. Pictured below is the quilt which won "Best of Show," created by Barb Cozens. The talent of local quilters was evident in the high quality and imaginative original design of the entered quilts. First place winner in the appliqué category was Barb Cozens; second place June Dickin and third place Ruth Brough. The "People's



Choice" award was presented to Carol Gagnon and June Dickin. Congratulations to the award winners and to all of the quilters who participated!

*Contributed by Sue Brewin*

## Amherstburgers and other Culinary Delights

### Recipes and Historical Tidbits from the AMG Cookbook

These tried-and-true recipes were contributed by members and friends of AMG. Each recipe is named for an aspect of Amherstburg's history, explained at the bottom of each page. The 143-page cookbook, an AMG fund-raiser, may be purchased at the Garrison Gift Shop (Fort Malden), Park House Museum, Gibson Gallery and Marsh Historical Collection...now on sale for \$10. Makes a great gift!

*This is a great make-ahead dish for Christmas morning!*

#### **Beta Sigma Phi Bacon, Cheese and Egg Slice**

½ loaf unsliced white bread, crusts removed	1 tsp. dry mustard
125g grated Cheddar	1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
5 strips bacon, cut into 1-inch pieces	1 tbsp. mayonnaise
3 green onions, sliced	black pepper
1 small green pepper, chopped	½ tsp. dried basil
6 eggs	1 small red pepper, chopped
2 cups milk	

Cut bread into 1-inch cubes. Place in single layer in 2-inch deep casserole. Sprinkle with cheese. Fry bacon until crisp. Drain and scatter over cheese. Top with green onion and green pepper. Whisk eggs; whisk in milk, mustard, Worcestershire sauce, mayonnaise, black pepper and basil. Pour over casserole. Top with red pepper. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight. The next day bake uncovered at 375° for 50-60 minutes.

*The Amherstburg chapter of the Beta Sigma Phi sorority was formed in 1948 to provide a group in which young women would develop socially, culturally and intellectually. The chapter is still active.*

# Then & Now

## Dalhousie Street



**East side of Dalhousie Street, looking north from Richmond Street**

**Above:** *circa 1930s.* Building at far right is Imperial Bank.

*Marsh Collection P3795 - Photo courtesy Kent Wigle*

**Below:** November 27, 2008. Building at far right is now CIBC.

*Marsh Collection photo*

