



# Memory Archive Update

Anne-Louise Cole

### *Did you know?*

The HLA is one of the oldest law associations in Ontario. It was created in 1879. By comparison, the County of York Law Association (currently the Toronto Lawyers' Association) was created in 1885.

The Hamilton Law Association (HLA) has a long tradition of supporting the legal profession in Hamilton. Upon its inception in 1879, the purpose of the HLA was “the formation and support of a Law Library for the use of its members, to be kept and maintained in the Court House, in the City of Hamilton, and to promote the general interests of the profession, and good feeling and harmony among its members.”

It began with 60 members and a Board of Trustees. At that time, each member was required to pay a fee of \$5.00. New members were admitted by ballot and were proposed by two members in writing at least two weeks before the ballot was taken.

The first president of the HLA was Emilius Irving. He went on to have an illustrious career as the longest-serving treasurer of the Law Society of Upper Canada, becoming a Member of Parliament, and being knighted in 1906.

Over the years, the membership and participation of the HLA has continued to grow. The members now benefit from one of the largest law libraries in Ontario with over 30,000 volumes. Membership has grown to nearly 1,000 members. Regular Continuing Legal Education programs are developed and hosted by the HLA.

The purpose of the HLA has changed over the years, but the current purpose still echoes some of the original goals

of the founding members – “to strive to enable its members to become successful, respected and fulfilled in their profession.”

The HLA has recently formed a subcommittee with the goal of creating an archive for its members. Although the subcommittee is in its infancy stage, it is anticipated that the archive will be taking on a digital format. If you have any photographs, newspaper clippings, videos, or any other material which you would like to contribute to the archive, please email them to [history@hamiltonlaw.on.ca](mailto:history@hamiltonlaw.on.ca). ■

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Do you recognize anyone? This photograph was taken in 1975 at the Annual Lawyers Picnic.