

Memory Archive Update

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High school history class. Negative or positive? Negative, maybe negative. Memorizing dates and names. What for, really? Is this your experience of “history”? If so, it’s not surprising that you weren’t attracted by John Loukidelis’ invitation to create a “Memory Book” of the HLA. But history is more than boring statistics! History is a window into the past. It is vibrant and edifying. Take, for example, Westfield Pioneer Village, just a stone’s throw from Hamilton’s core. It’s a fictional town, composed of over 30 historical buildings, moved from various near-by locations. Westfield is set in time, but alive in culture, giving us a glimpse into daily life in a bygone era.

Is there a law office in Westfield? Don’t think so, but we can change that, because the history of Hamilton’s legal profession is worthy of preservation and praise. We count among our forbearers many notables like J.J. Robinette (we all remember Evelyn Dick, eh?). Who was he? Just a member of our bar, like us, who did his job, and did it well. Why do we remember him? Because someone took the time to record what he did and why. That’s what our subcommittee wants to achieve – record who we were, who we are, and what we will become. We are not new in our purpose. As it turns out, previous generations of lawyers were also curious about our history. And they recorded it. In our last ar-

ticle, we invited the profession to contribute “photos, newspaper clippings, videos, or any other material to the archive”. We also invite you to contribute stories.

If you are planning to contribute an article to the Hamilton Law Association Archive, there are some great, easily accessible, resources that may assist you with your research. Although your search will likely start with the Hamilton Public Library and the Hamilton Law Association Library, we thought it might be helpful to provide you with some insight to other resources about which you may not have known.

One such resource is the archive created by the Law Society of Upper Canada. This archive started in 1982, and a significant portion of it has been posted online at <http://goo.gl/5Qj4le>. Some of the material includes information about prominent Hamilton lawyers, like Emilius Irving. There is also a link to a Flickr account, which has class photographs from Osgoode Hall, photographs of lawyers and judges, and group photographs from picnics and other social events.

Over the years, the Hamilton Law Association has been collecting some articles from the Hamilton Spectator about Hamilton lawyers. Many of these articles are from the 1980s and 1990s. These articles are located at the back of the library in a filing cabinet.

Many of the lawyers who have articles in the filing cabinet are still in practice today. You might be surprised to find a sub-file about yourself in there!

If your research is not about a contemporary Hamilton lawyer, then another interesting resource is the Namesakes Interactive Map on the Hamilton Spectator website. Namesakes was a daily feature in the Hamilton Spectator which would explain what some of the streets and landmarks in Hamilton were named after. This feature has now been moved online and turned into an interactive map. By scrolling over the map, you will find out that some of the streets are named after lawyers and judges in Hamilton. For example, Hunter Street is named after Peter Hunter Hamilton who was one of the city’s first magistrates. This interactive map can be found at <http://goo.gl/1BMzHZ>.

So, we invite you to be inspired. Sit on a bench at 50 Main Street East, the site of our prior courthouse. View the mural on the building: it tells an interesting history! And, maybe, you, too, will make history. ■

If you have any photographs, newspaper clippings, videos or other material which you would like to contribute to the archive, please email them to history@hamiltonlaw.on.ca