



Surviving World War I: The Collingwood Shipyards

Much has been written about the Collingwood Shipyards' amazing contributions during World War II, but very little about its endeavours during World War I. A series of letters written by Captain Alexander McDougall, President of the Collingwood Shipbuilding and Drydock Company, and Thomas Long, Vice President, are documented in the letter books of John S. Leitch, General Manager, Collingwood Shipbuilding Co. Ltd. These letters illustrate a number of the difficulties faced by management in securing work for the Shipyards at the beginning of the war, and finding qualified tradespersons to complete the contracted work.



In 1914 and 1915 the Canada's industrial sector floundered under massive amounts of debt and lack of capital. In 1914, wheat yields plunged because of a severe drought. In Collingwood, at the beginning of World War I, the country's bleak economic situation was evident in the Shipyards. Many of the skilled workers had been laid off. Captain Alexander McDougall did his best to keep the Shipyards' workers employed with various contracts, including ship construction and machining ammunition shells.

In November, 1914, the Collingwood Board of Trade sent representatives to Ottawa to meet with the finance minister and Prime Minister Borden to secure a contract for the *Hopper Barge*. The trip was a success and heralded the beginning of a new and prosperous era for the Collingwood Shipyards. The *Hopper Barge* was built for \$134,000 and was launched on June 19, 1915.

When the production of shells began in 1915, many of the skilled workers who had been laid off at the beginning of the war had left Collingwood to join the assault overseas. The dilemma for the Shipyards' management was no longer securing contracts, but locating able-bodied workers.

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Hull 44:
M. & F. Hopper Barge No. 2

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Supervisor's Message

Museum staff and volunteers are being kept on their toes with holiday educational programming and exhibit work. Between December 7th and December 16th, Collingwood's school children will have the opportunity to visit the Museum with their classes to make a holiday craft and dip a candle. Volunteers and staff have also been working on two new exhibits that will be installed during the winter season. Staff will keep you updated with exhibit opening details as these become available.

The Museum is currently looking for volunteers to help enter its collection into our database. A completion date of three years has been set and the staff is going to need help in achieving this goal. Our updated database will allow researchers and visitors to have improved access to Collingwood's rich history. The database will also make exhibit planning less time consuming. If you are computer-savvy, and would like to help us achieve this goal, please stop by to learn more about this great opportunity.

In 2009 and 2010, the community has raised \$3726.77 toward the conservation of Father Time. Donations received in 2011 will be directed towards the conservation of other artifacts in the Museum's collection.

If you have a collection which you believe may be of interest to the community, please feel free to contact the Museum. There may be an opportunity for the Museum to utilize pieces from your collection in an upcoming exhibit.

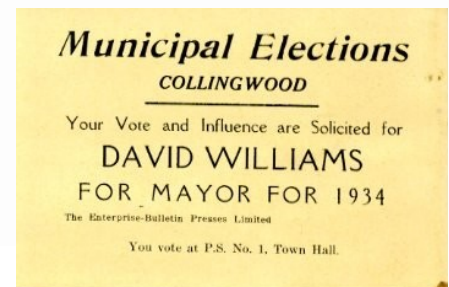
Happy Holidays!

Susan Warner, Museum Supervisor

Local Trivia Challenge...

David Williams

- David Williams was born in _____ in Perth County Ontario.
- His father was William Williams, the principal of _____ for 30 years.
- David Williams was editor of the _____ at the time of his death.
- He was a member of town council from 1929 to 1933 and mayor of Collingwood from _____ to _____.
- He received an honorary _____ degree from the University of Toronto in 1941.
- David Williams married Ida Cleland. They resided at a home known as _____, located between Third and Fourth Streets on Pine Street.
- David Williams was founder of The _____, the Collingwood Museum's predecessor.
- David Williams passed away on October 21, _____.
- Upon his death the Enterprise Bulletin passed to his nephew, _____, to preserve the family's ownership.
- David and Ida Williams had one daughter named _____.



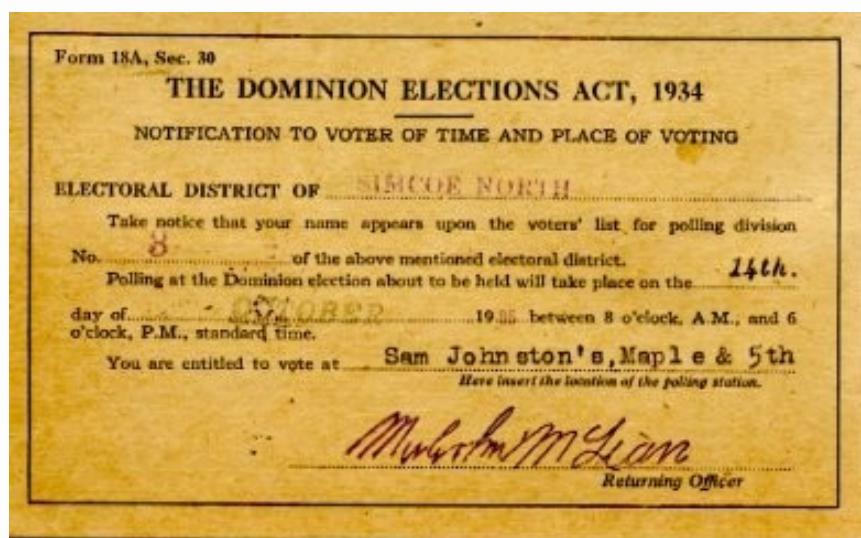
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- Answers:
1. 1863
 2. Collingwood Collegiate Institute
 3. Enterprise Bulletin
 4. 1933 to 1934
 5. Doctor of Laws
 6. Boddis
 7. Huron Institute
 8. 1944
 9. R.W. Irwin
 10. Winifred

From the Collection...

The David Williams scrapbooks that were featured on the front page of the September/October newsletter are filled with articles and items relating to Collingwood's early elections. With Collingwood's current municipal election at an end, it seems fitting to share one of the documents Williams collected.

The election notification postcard (pictured below) was issued under The Dominion Elections Act, 1934, to notify voters of the time and place of voting. The 5 1/2" x 3 3/8" postcard is printed in black ink on cardstock. The card is addressed to David Williams, notifying him of the upcoming election on October 14th, 1935, and directing him to his designated polling station at Sam Johnston's, Maple and 5th Streets in Collingwood. David Williams was no stranger to Collingwood's political sphere. He was a member of Collingwood's town council from 1929 to 1933, and mayor of Collingwood in 1933 and 1934.



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David Williams' scrapbooks are fine examples of the importance of collecting and preserving everyday items to ensure that they are passed on to future generations.

Have you considered documenting your personal history or the histories of your family or property? Today's new homes will be historical homes in the distant future. Imagine being able to pass on the mementoes of your life to future generations. Everyday items such as home titles, marriage licenses, tax bills and insurance policies will provide important documentation for future historians.

Who are they?

The Collingwood Museum's collection includes many photographs of unknown subjects. While researching the role of the Shipyards in World War I, the picture featured to the right was rediscovered. Records indicate that Mrs. Knox is located on the left; however, the identities of the remaining women are unknown. Do you have this picture in your family's collection? Do you know the names of the remaining women in the photo? Please call (705)445-4811 if you can help us solve this mystery.



X974.823.1 Women War Workers, Collingwood Shipyards

...Surviving World War I

(Continued from Page 1)

To add to the employment crisis, Imperial Oil contracted to purchase two canal size bulk oil freighters in August of 1915.

Various solutions to the labour shortage were tried. Advertisements were placed in small town newspapers to attract men who might otherwise take jobs in large American shipyards. Another plan involved hiring men from Scotland. In a letter dated November 26, 1915, to John Dalrymple in Glasgow, Thomas Long describes the prosperous future that Mr. Dalrymple could have in Collingwood. "Collingwood is a town of 7000 inhabitants and is a nice place to live... While we get a good deal of snow and frost yet there is a great deal of sunshine to counteract the cold, and work is carried on outside all year round.



X974.839.1

Women War Workers, 1918,
Collingwood Shipyards



983.60.30 Trawler T.R. 7 under construction,
September 26, 1917

Living in Collingwood is fairly cheap in fact much more so than in some of the larger cities and if you are a married man you could readily have a nice house here... As for salary, we offer you \$200 per month with a two years' agreement, and trust you will find this satisfactory."

By enticing Mr. Dalrymple with a prominent position and an attractive salary, Thomas Long hoped Mr. Dalrymple would attract other skilled Scottish labourers to Collingwood.

The workforce continued to grow and by January, 1917, there were as many as 950 men at the Shipyards.

Workers from Duluth, Minnesota, contributed to this large employment base. During the winter months, farmers and seafaring men worked in the Shipyards.

The "Department of Ship-construction" also assisted in finding skilled labour; however, with the country's need for men overseas and an increased number of contracts, the labour shortage crisis returned.

The Museum's collection of Leitch's letters end in April of 1917. Consequently, there is no documentation of the eventual solution to the labour shortage.... the employment of women. In the latter months of 1917 the Shipyards began to recruit women, primarily for the manufacture of 18 pound shrapnel shells and 4.5 inch high-explosive shells. In fact, one of the Shipyards' buildings was known to all as the "4.5 Machine Shop" until the closing of the Shipyards in September, 1986.

Source: Reflections. Ed. Barbara Arp. The Corporation of the Town of Collingwood: Collingwood, 1983. 136 -142

The Museum Mystery...

At a public meeting held in June 1954, a recreation committee was appointed to plan for a new museum in Collingwood, The David Williams Memorial Museum. In August, 1955, noted local architect, William J. Carswell, designed the proposed building which was to be located on the north-west corner of Collingwood's Exhibition Park. The building plans included a public auditorium. Although this project was never realized, Mr. Carswell's plans are treasured and preserved in the Collingwood Museum.

According to the May 1996 issue of the Collingwood Museum's Historical Bulletin Series, an article entitled "The Winds of Change" discusses the David Williams Memorial Museum. The article reveals that in 1956, Mr. John Ridgway became curator of the Huron Institute. Moreover, the biannual flooding of Second Street, along with the overcrowding of artifacts in the basement of the Carnegie Library, are addressed as factors that necessitated a new building.

"The Winds of Change" also addresses the reasons behind the project's dissolution: "The present plan to erect a museum building should be dropped, and an effort made to acquire a suitably located house or building that



David Williams 1933-1934
X976.553.1

could be concentrated without too much financial outlay, so that exhibits could be displayed in an attractive manner. If this is done, it will give the committee an opportunity to demonstrate the real need and also to prove the earning power of such a project."

There is no information to suggest whether an attempt was made to raise money for the museum project. In fact, there seems to have been little support for the museum endeavour: "Only when popularity is established and earning power is demonstrated should a campaign be considered."

Although the memorial project was never realized, David Williams' importance in Collingwood's political and cultural spheres is remembered. He participated in many local and provincial organizations, and was eventually acknowledged for these efforts by the University of Toronto; he received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree in 1941, just three years before his death.

David Williams was a member and president of the Ontario Historical Society.

He was an honorary Chief of the Six Nations Indians, having received this honour at Oshweken. He was also president of the Canadian Press Association in 1903 and 1910.

To the staff at the Collingwood Museum, David Williams' most important achievement was establishing the Collingwood Museum, a branch of the Huron Institute. Following Mr. Williams' death, the museum collection had other guardians; however, nothing could save the Museum's collection from the effects of the devastating fire that struck the Carnegie Library in 1963. Thankfully, Mr. Williams' tireless documentation was preserved, in its original format and the numerous published hardcover books he printed through his printing press. In 1966 the Museum's collection was moved to the former railway station on St. Paul Street in 1966, the present-day site of the Station which continues to house the Collingwood Museum.

Source: Research folders and collection documents

Conservation Corner...Paintings

A traditional painting is constructed in layers: the frame, the ground (which is usually made from a wooden or fabric panel), paint, and finally a finishing coat. When the ground is made from fabric, the fabric is strung over stretchers with keys (flat triangular wedges) in the corners to adjust the tension of the fabric and to prevent bulges and creases. The ground provides a smooth surface for the paint. The paint on top of the ground can be applied in a very thin single layer or multiple layers. A top coating, which could be synthetic or natural resin, is usually put on top of the paint to protect the work from dirt, abrasion and moisture.

Take great care when handling paintings as they are fragile and very costly to repair. Large panels and canvases should be moved by two or more persons. Keep dirt and fingerprints away from paintings that do not

have a protective coating by wearing gloves or ensuring your hands are clean. All jewellery should be removed, watches included, when moving to prevent snagging or scratching the painted surface. Moreover, always carry the painting with two hands from the sides of the frame or stretcher. Do not carry a painting by the top of the frame or stretcher.

Improper framing and loose keys should be corrected before handling. The keys fit into slots where the strips of the wooden stretcher join each other. If your painting is missing keys, these may be purchased at an art supply store and inserted into the slots prepared for them.



(To be continued in the January & February 2011 edition of On Track)

Source: www.si.edu (Smithsonian Institution)

982.29

"Night" by Mary McKay

The Station Gift Shop

With Christmas just around the corner, it's a great time to visit the Station's gift shop. Wonderful finds from around our town and from around the world await you. Everyone on your gift-giving list will be excited to receive a treasure from our gift shop. Toys, games and clothing for the whole family are found here. We have holiday decorations that will evoke memories of days gone by or may initiate new family traditions. Our selection of books will bring joy to the recipient. Consider the gift of art for your friends by purchasing a Collingwood poster or print, starting at under \$5.00. Please come in and browse our shelves. Remember, Museum members receive a **20% discount** on all non-sale items.

November 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 Remembrance Day	12	13
14	15	16 Songs of Georgian Bay 7pm	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

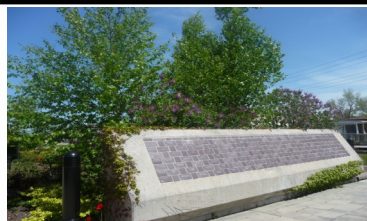
December 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Open 9:00-12:30	25 Christmas Day Closed
26 Boxing Day Closed	27 Open 10:00-3:00	28 Open 10:00-3:00	29	30	31 New Year's Eve	



The Collingwood Museum

Phone: (705) 445-4811
Fax: (705) 445-9004
Email: museum@collingwood.ca



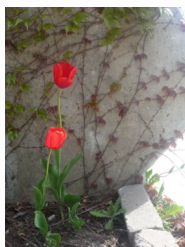
Written & Created By:

Museum Staff

Edited By:

Susan Warner & Melissa Shaw

Membership News



Interested in receiving a green newsletter?
Send your email address to
museum@collingwood.ca and we will add you to
our e-newsletter database.

A special thank you from the staff at the Collingwood Museum to
our new and returning members. We are pleased to welcome:

**Durie Family, Donna Witherspoon, Isabelle Daniels,
Marty Bruce, Jean Ferguson, Canadian & World Studies
Department, C.C.I., James Campbell, Margrit von Kleist,
George Foster, & Irene Pradyszak**

Hours of Operation

9:00 am—5:00 pm: Monday, Tuesday, Friday, Saturday
10:00 am—3:00 pm: Sunday
Closed –Wednesday and Thursday (from Thanksgiving to Victoria Day)

The Collingwood Museum

P.O. Box 556
45 St. Paul Street
Collingwood, Ontario
L9Y 4B2

Take a Look Inside

