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Paul O'Hara records a Sugar Maple used as an Aboriginal Trail Marker (Article starts on Page 9)

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

FOCUS ON STRATEGIC PLAN

FIRST JOB OF NEW OAS BOARD

Greetings and welcome to the OAS, the new 2013 edition. The Board has already met in January, and we are looking at a quite a bit of clean up on our plate as we move into the new year.

First up is concluding some leftover business from last year, namely finalizing a new strategic plan for the OAS.

You may recall that at the annual business meeting in November, members wanted an assessment on the previous Strategic Plan first. The board was able to complete that exercise at the January Board meeting, and we'll provide the results in the next issue of Arch Notes.

I can say now that, in reviewing the achievements and failures related to the last strategic plan, than an obvious challenge in developing this document is balancing between 'good to do' and 'strategic priorities'. The last plan was really a shopping list of everything that it would have been good to do. But that intent ran clearly into the limits of capacity on the board and in the membership, so many items on the list were not achieved, or only partly so.

This reactive nature to life on the board, and the ever more precious and rare commodity of time, really underscores the need for the strategic plan to provide limited focus on key objectives towards which to allocate those finite resources of people and time. That logic will inform the draft

of the strategic plan that we send out for member feedback.

Also on the 'tidy up' list is to get our web-based membership database operational. Board members and a few other members have been testing the member profile



functionality of the database, and we are working on getting the financial functionality operational. That has been challenging since we are trying to make the system work in a similar fashion to how financial matters have been processed previously, while also taking full advantage of the automated functions of the database. Obviously we will need to get this right before we open it up for full membership applications, renewals, and event registration, but look for that to be a key focus of the board through the spring.

Also, with the start of the new year,

several long time members of the board have stepped down. Directors Alistair Jolly and Morgan Tamplin left this year and we thank them for all the effort they put in!

As well, I learned this past year that, unfortunately, Treasurer on the Board is not a lifetime position. So it was with much regret, but full appreciation, that we said good bye to long time Treasurer Jim Keron, who was brilliant in the role and someone we all depended on. His contribution was tremendous and he will be missed, but at least now he can go back to his doctoral studies!

Of course, the loss of Alistair, Jim and Morgan has been tempered by the able and promising new Board members – Jim Montgomery as Treasurer, a seasoned veteran himself from his time with the Ottawa Chapter, along with new faces Lindsay Foreman and Peter Popkin.

As well, leadership continuity is achieved by Rob MacDonald stepping into the role of President-Elect. I expect to work closely with Rob, in order to de-mystify the process (not really all that mystifying!), and am sure he'll be a great asset to the board this year just through his advice and thoughtful commentary.

So it looks like the OAS is in good hands as we plunge into the year. Here's looking forward to seeing it all unfold!

**Neal Ferris
President, OAS**

SAVE THE DATE!

October
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The 40th Annual OAS Symposium
will be held at the Crowne Plaza Niagara Falls – Fallsview on
October 25-27, 2013

TRENT CHERT: AN UPDATE

by **William A. Fox**

INTRODUCTION

As the Ontario chert study evolved in the 1970s (Fox 2009: 354), it became clear that, in addition to the 'Balsam Lake speckled chert' abundantly represented in the University of Toronto Hardrock site collection (Fox 1971a), there were other black to grey coloured cherts on Trent Valley sites (Johnston 1984: 21, Table 1), as well as Wendat villages in Huronia (Fox 1971: 138). A particularly glossy black variant was named 'Trent chert', based on an outcrop of this material at Stony Lake reported to the author by Ray Le Blanc and John Tomenchuk (1973: 41-42).

Sporadic field trips were also made to the Kawartha Lakes region during the 1970s to investigate chert-bearing limestone outcrops reported by Dr. Bruce Liberty (then of the Department of Geological Sciences at Brock University), and it was assumed that the geological provenance of this chert was the upper member of the Ordovician Gull River formation (Liberty 1969: 32, 129, Le Blanc and Tomenchuk 1973: 42). Chert

derived from this formation in the Dalrymple Lake vicinity displayed a grey colour with darker flecks and thus, was considerably different in visual character. It should be noted that the author became aware of the existence during this period, of visually similar cherts in the Ottawa valley Ordovician formations, across the Precambrian Frontenac Arch to the east, courtesy of hand samples provided by avocational archaeologist, Clyde Kennedy.

Consequently, there was always some hesitation in defining the geologic provenance of grey to black coloured cherts from Trent valley/Rice Lake sites.

SURVEY ACTIVITIES

A return to Ontario in 2010 provided an opportunity to initiate a program of intensified chert survey across southern Ontario. Based out of Peterborough, Trent University provided an opportunity to collaborate; so that a lithic reference collection was initiated through the support of James Conolly and the Department of Anthropology. Previously, reference collections had been assembled in Thunder Bay and London, while the author was working for the Province.

At Trent University, storage cabinets were purchased and the

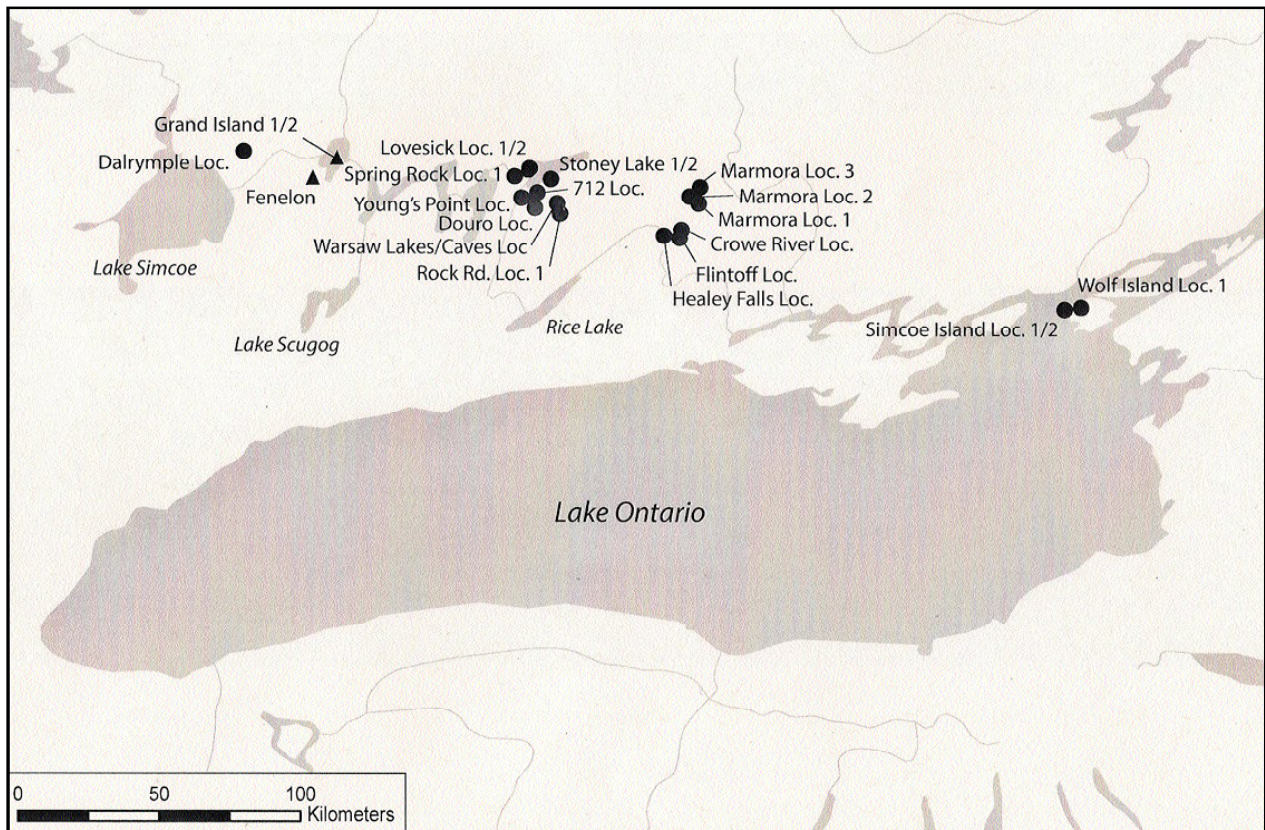


Fig. 1: Trent chert locality distribution (two triangle icons locate Balsam Lake chert)

arrival of a graduate student to study the Jacob's Island site lithic assemblage provided further impetus to pursue additional information concerning the availability to former Native groups of not only Trent chert, but also Balsam Lake chert.

Field work began in August of 2011, with a revisit to Dalrymple Lake, where George Laidlaw had reported that "a ledge or outcropping of siliceous rock (chalcedony) occurs in Carden Township, southeast of Mud Lake" (Laidlaw 1898: 58). Grey chert nodules were recovered from a limestone outcrop in the Sylvan Glen Beach community park, which appeared to be north of the original 1981 collecting locality. Samples were obtained, photos taken and the Dalrymple locality was recorded by GPS, in what became the standard collection protocol (see Figure 1).

Subsequent investigation of the area in December of 2012 indicated that the original mapping on a 1:50,000 topographic map had been in error, due to more recent road reconfiguration, and the two localities became one. To date, a total of 15 days of field survey has been devoted to Trent valley cherts (13 to Trent chert and two to Balsam Lake chert). While much 'negative evidence' has accrued, 15 new Trent chert localities have been documented; 12 bedrock outcrops, and three large chert-bearing boulders (see Figure 1).

Given the angular form and size of the latter, it is assumed that they have not travelled far through glacial transport (see Figure 2).

Unlike the Marmora highway cut and Birchview road cut, all of these outcrops were available for native chert acquisition. During the year and a half of survey activities, greater success in locating deposits occurred as the author became more aware of the limited vertical extent and exact positioning of chert-



Fig. 2: 712 locality boulder (Photo: WA Fox)

bearing strata in the limestone depositional sequence.

CHERT DEPOSITS

One of the more challenging aspects in locating this particular Ordovician chert is that it may have a formation transgressive distribution (Eley and von Bitter 1989: 32-33). That is, it may occur in the upper Gull River formation in certain areas and the lower Bobcaygeon formation in others (Fox 1989: 26). Obviously, this can make a survey of geologically mapped outcrops problematic, time consuming and indeed frustrating! A specific example occurs at the Highway 7 cut west of Marmora, where the outcrop is mapped as Bobcaygeon formation (Carson 1980a), while Liberty's Marmora west composite section (1969: 129) identifies only the upper two feet as Bobcaygeon formation (see Figure 3).

A site inspection last December indicated that if one takes Liberty's measure at face value, the upper stratum of chert lies on the surface of the Gull River formation, at the interface with the Bobcaygeon formation (see Figure 3); whereas, outcrops a mere 14 kilometers to the southwest are mapped well within the Bobcaygeon formation (Carson 1980a).

Likewise, chert-bearing outcrops to the southeast on Simcoe Island at the Carson quarry site (BbGd-2) are mapped as Bobcaygeon formation (Carson 1982a), and a nearby Wolfe Island chert locality is mapped as Gull River formation (Carson 1982) (see Figures 1 and 4).

As is typical of Ordovician deposits in Ontario, Trent chert occurs as zones or layers of scattered nodules, not as continuous beds which can occur in later Silurian and Devonian formations. One or more such layers have been recorded at the various outcrop sites. At the Marmora Highway 7 cut, two

layers of chert nodules are separated by approximately a metre of pure Gull River formation limestone, with the upper layer displaying the largest nodules (see Figure 3). Further to the northwest, the Stony Lake Locality 2 road cut displays three layers of nodules distributed through a little over one metre of Gull River formation limestone (Carson 1980), beneath which is another 60 cm thick limestone stratum with slight chert development (see Figure 5).

Again the upper deposits of nodules are the most massive; albeit, only to a maximum thickness of 7.4 cm. Concerning the location of Trent chert deposits, it is important to understand that as little as one layer of irregularly distributed nodules several centimetres in



Fig. 3: Highway 7 cut – upper chert nodule layer (Marmora Locality) (Photo: WA Fox)

thickness may be all that is present in a limestone member over 10 metres thick!

NATIVE ACQUISITION

Given the relatively small nodular form of Trent chert and the massive and tough character of the host limestone, bedrock quarrying by native peoples will have been limited. The Carson quarry evidence from Simcoe Island suggests that the acquisition strategy there was limited to opportunistic removal of jointed nodule segments projecting from the bedrock surface, probably augmented by collection of loose fragments eroded from the deposit. Understandably, there is no evidence of quarrying into the tough limestone bedrock.

A similar strategy of contingent acquisition of nodule fragments projecting from bedrock exposures likely occurred over the most massive deposits in the Kawartha Lakes region. This would have been augmented by the collection of chert fragments scattered by glacial and subsequent bedrock erosion in secondary deposits along waterways, such as the Crowe or Indian rivers.

EPILOGUE

This and subsequent articles which further define the distribution of Ontario chert types are dedicated to John ‘Jack’ Holland, who introduced the author to ‘chert chases’ across various states over several decades. A recipient of the prestigious Society for American Archaeology Crabtree Award in 2001, this avocational archaeologist from West Seneca, New York assembled the most comprehensive North American chert reference collection in existence (recently transferred from the Buffalo Museum to the Smithsonian).

The author is also pleased to acknowledge support received from the Trent University Department of Anthropology, and Dr. James Conolly, in particular (including production of Figure 1).

Thanks also to Shari Prowse and Andrew Hinshelwood of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Sources of other southern Ontario cherts, as well as stone materials used for native pipe and bead production, were investigated in 2012, and lithic source prospecting will continue for the foreseeable future. Additional outcrops of Trent chert in the Kingston vicinity will be pursued in 2013, and a visit to outcrops of this material in the equivalent Leray formation (Wray 1948: 35) in Jefferson County, New York is planned.

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Fig. 4: Carson quarry outcrop (Simcoe Island Locality 2) (Photo: WA Fox)

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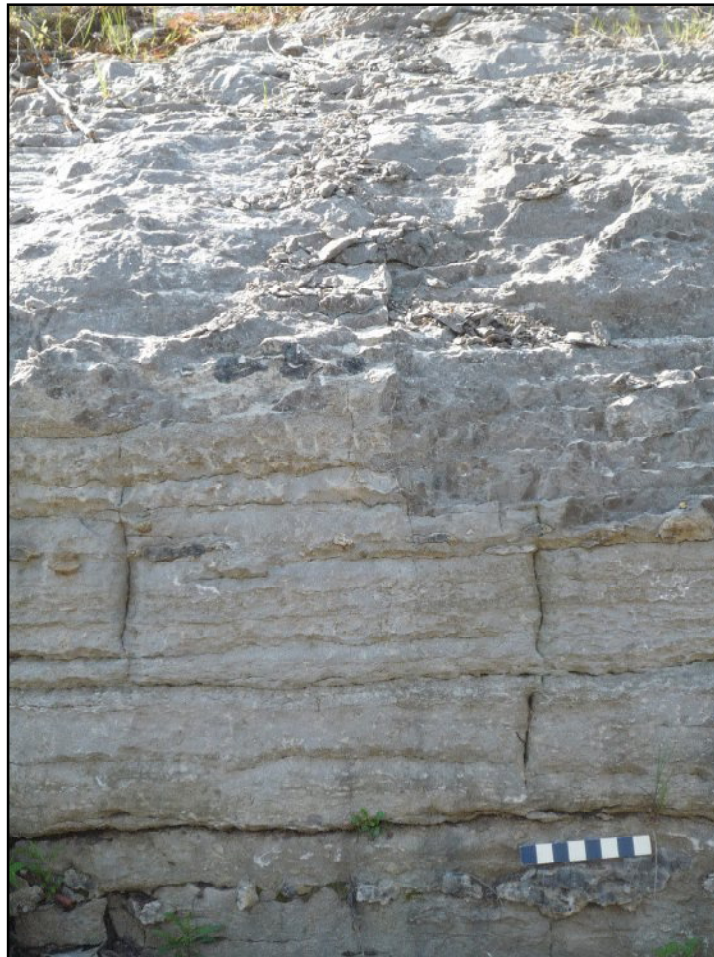


Fig. 5: Birchview road cut (Stony Lake Locality 2) (Photo: WA Fox)

CALL RETURN: ABORIGINAL TRAIL MARKER TREES IN SOUTHERN ONTARIO (PART TWO)

By Paul O'Hara

Amazing what a year can bring. Last fall, my article 'A Call Down the Path: Trail Marker Trees in Southern Ontario' appeared in the FBO newsletter. Shortly after, it was picked up and re-published eight times in naturalist newsletters from Ottawa to Windsor-Essex. And shortly after that I got calls and emails from folks in Gananoque, Oakville, Owen Sound, Sarnia, Kincardine, Milton, Mississauga, Walsingham and Simcoe telling me of marker trees they knew of. I spent much of last winter following up on the calls and here are a few stories about some of the amazing trees I saw.

ON THE HURON BEACH TRAIL

Janice McKean and Art Wiebe run the The Ark Farm, a bed and breakfast, organic veggie farm and native plant nursery on the Lake Huron shore north of Kincardine. They read my article in the Grey-Bruce Woodlot Association newsletter and emailed me to say they might have a potential marker tree on their property. I visited Janice and Art at The Ark Farm on a snowless February day. After feeding me a wonderful homemade vegetarian lunch, we bushwhacked through the White Cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*) that crowded Andrews Creek (which runs through their property), and climbed up the abandoned beach ridge where the tree stood. Wow!

There was no mistaking it, an old Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) marker that pointed north along the edge of the ridge. Janice and Art told me that archaeologists documented an ancient First Nation fishing village along Andrews Creek, adding that there are not too many places to get off the lake around here, suggesting that the creek valley must have been a welcome respite from the winds off Lake Huron.

I would guess this tree was marked close to 200 years ago, maybe by the ancestors of the nearby Saugeen First Nation or the Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point.

BIG CREEK MARKER

Mary Gartshore is well known to the scientific and naturalist community of Southern Ontario. Co-founder of St. Williams Nursery and Ecology Centre and an incredible biologist, it didn't take Mary long to spot a tree in Norfolk County. Mary took



Janice and Art with the Beech marker on The Ark Farm (Photo: P. O'Hara)

This article originally appeared in the Fall 2012 issue, Vol. 24 (3), of the Field Botanists of Ontario Newsletter and has been reprinted with permission of the author and the FBO editor. We acknowledge the assistance of OAS Hamilton Chapter member, Art Howie, in bringing this to our attention.



**Mary Gartshore and Red Maple marker on Big Creek
(Photo: P. O'Hara)**

time out of her busy schedule over the Christmas break to show me the tree – a grizzled Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*) along a cart path adjacent to Big Creek. The balding and plated bark and stag-headed crown were giveaways to its advanced age. Mary told me that many arrowheads and spear points of earlier native cultures have been found in the adjacent sandy fields and I learned from Scott Gillies, Curator of the Eva Brook Donly Museum in Simcoe, that a major Indian trail ran up the east branch of Big Creek where this tree is found.

SUMMER CAMP ON THE ST. LAWRENCE

John MacLeod is a retired high school environmental studies teacher who acts as a volunteer steward at Landon Bay, a 225-acre ecological reserve on the St. Lawrence River east of Gananoque. John contacted me after Holly Bickerton – biologist, FBO member, and former student of John's – forwarded the article to him. John immediately tied the marker shapes to a tree he knew at Landon Bay and emailed me. We

made arrangements to meet after Christmas, and on January 8, I made the trip to beautiful southeastern Ontario to meet John at the Landon Bay Ecological Reserve.

Before showing me the tree, John led me down the Donevan Trail to the Lookout Trail and, in his words, “the best natural view of the Thousand Islands” – a granite promontory that provided a stunning panoramic view of Landon Bay with the Thousand Islands in the distance. He told me the bay was a summer fishing camp and gathering place for the Haudenosaunee of southeastern Ontario, and judging by the view I could see why.

Stepping off the rock we continued along the trail and within a few steps I heard John chuckle as he could see my eyes widen as the tree came in to view. It was another Red Maple: large, old, covered in moss, with a prominent pointer aiming straight north along the edge of Landon Bay.

ON THE BERRY GATHERING TRAIL

This was pure luck. I just happened to meet Dave Kelly, friend of Scott Fifield, a Hamilton stonemason I have worked with. Dave knew from Scott that I was interested in marker trees and told me about a pine tree with a funny loop in it that he had seen on the Flamborough Plain in Hamilton Region where he lives. I'll follow any lead, so I went up to have a look around. Dave gave good directions and I soon saw the tree, a 40-year-old White Pine (*Pinus strobus*) whose trunk did a little loop about 8 metres up. The leader was probably storm-damaged in the recent past, recovering by turning in a loop towards the sky. Not a marker, but the woods along the nearby Fairchild Creek were pretty so I wandered around a bit. It was a young forest, with scattered older Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*) and

Chinquapin Oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*) and a shag carpet of Wood's Sedge (*Carex woodii*) underfoot. Stumbling for a while through a nest of American Prickly Ash (*Zanthoxylum americanum*) I reached a small clearing, and it was then that I saw it out of the corner of my eye. It was pointing right at me: a giant, rugged, old Sugar Maple marker. I was gob smacked, both at the sight of the tree and the serendipity of the find. The tree pointed east along the Fairchild Creek towards the heart of Beverly Swamp and it triggered a remembrance of a quote I once read. After fawning over the tree a little more I raced home and found the reference: “Fairchild's Creek used to be a prominent Indian trail, and the Indians used to come up north for the purpose of gathering fruit...” (Letter to J.H. Smith, President of the Wentworth Historical Society from Oscar Main dated January 7, 1914, Wentworth Historical Society, Papers and Records, 1915, Volume Six).

This tree must have marked the berry-gathering trail along Fairchild Creek, and I'm convinced their berry of choice was

Highbush Blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*). This is our tallest blueberry (up to 3m in height), native to swamps and slough forests, and cultivated on the sands of southern Ontario for the plump blueberries we see in our supermarkets in high summer. The hydrology has changed a lot, but Highbush Blueberry can still be found growing on hummocks in Beverly Swamp to this day.

THE LOOPING TREE

My friend Martha Howatt formerly of Caledonia, Ontario, now of PEI, showed me this tree three years ago near Caledonia. This tree is unlike any I have ever seen before and I was beside myself when I first saw it. (Figure 5: Photo on Page 1) It's another old Sugar Maple and has been modified to turn in a complete loop – from grounded trunk to long span to anaconda-like body to upright trunk reaching into the shallow canopy of this disturbed woodland. This tree had two upright trunks but one fell down last winter. The other, still standing, is rotted out at the bottom and doesn't have much longer to live. The bulbous scarring at the 'elbow' looks like it might be a graft joint, and I'm convinced the 'anaconda' part is rooted to the ground like the habit of a layering Black Spruce (*Picea mariana*). This amazing tree is along (or near) an old trail that can be seen on the 'Map of the Niagara District in Upper

Canada' drawn by Lieutenant W. A. Nesfield in 1815 (Ontario History in Maps by Gentilcore and Head). On the map the trail is labeled 'Indian Path' and crosses the Grand River south of Caledonia. The map is coarse, but I believe the now dead, double-trunked Sugar Maple marker tree on the Welland River near Binbrook was also on this trail.

But why the loop in this modified tree? Did it mark a boundary point? A halfway point? A gathering area? I have no idea and I'm okay with that. I have so many questions about aboriginal trail marker trees and I don't expect to answer them all. All I know is that in spite of over 200 years of pushing the land around, the spirit of our First Nations is still imprinted on this beautiful land, subtle, but there for those who choose to look. Each marker tree says someone was here, someone with a connection to the land we will never completely understand, someone who witnessed its true rhythms – the primeval woods, wetlands and prairies that abounded at the time the trees were marked.

I know of about 40 marker trees in southern Ontario so far – alive and still standing, recently dead, and historical. About a third I have found on my own wanderings. Since my article was published a year ago, I developed a PowerPoint presentation on marker trees, debuting it in March at the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation and since then to a handful of naturalist



John MacLoed and Red Maple marker at Landon Bay. (Photo: P. O'Hara)

clubs. With the coming cold, my work will slow down and I'll get back out on the trail to follow up on the calls and emails I have received over the past few months. As well, I would like to get a website up this winter to share the stories of these trees with my fellow Ontarians. And finally, I intend to engage our First Nations more to share what I have discovered, and try to find out more about the practice of marking trees from their oral histories.

Once again, if you know of a marker tree where you live please give me a call or email. I would be honoured to come out to photograph you beside it and attempt to tell the human story behind it, both past and present. It is important that the stories of these extraordinary trees live on even after the trees have passed on.

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Special thanks to Janice McKean, Art Wiebe, Mary Gartshore, John MacLoed, Scott Fifield, Dave Kelly and Martha Howatt, and to the naturalist groups who helped spread the word about these very special heritage trees.

P.S. Also in the last year, two books on marker trees were published in the United States. *Native American Trail Marker Trees: Marking Paths Through The Wilderness* by Illinois' Dennis Downes is a slick scrapbook of Downes' thirty plus year search for marker trees in the Great Lakes states and beyond. *The Mystery of the Trees* by Don and Diane Wells is a compact, ring-bound book that is very informative on the study of marker tree forms, preferred species, the mechanics and the mystery. Both are good primers on the subject.

Paul O'Hara is a field botanist, landscape designer and native plant gardening expert. He is the owner/operator of Blue Oak Native Landscapes (www.blueoak.ca) and lives in Hamilton, ON.



Scott Fifield and Dave Kelly with Sugar Maple marker on the Fairchild Creek. (Photo: P. O'Hara)

LIFE DURING THE WAR OF 1812 IS FEATURED IN RECENT BOOK

HOPING for the BEST, PREPARING for the WORST – EVERYDAY LIFE IN UPPER CANADA, 1812-1814 by Dorothy Duncan, 2012, Dundurn, 247 pages, notes, index, \$21.95 (paper).

**Reviewed by
Ellen Blaubergs**

The year 2012 was filled with bursting with the bicentennial commemoration of the War of 1812: special events and reenactments, special edition journals (e.g. *Ontario History*, Special Issue: The War of 1812), two upcoming new Heritage Minutes videos produced by the Historica-Dominion Institute, the movie *Explosion 1812* (featuring Archaeological Services Inc. archaeologists at Fort York), several archaeological conference sessions (SHA Baltimore, CNEHA St. John's, ESAF Perrysburg, Ohio, OAS Windsor), historical society talks (1.), a great on-going series in the Sunday Toronto Star, and of course, a proliferation of new books.

While browsing in my excellent local independent book store a while ago, I

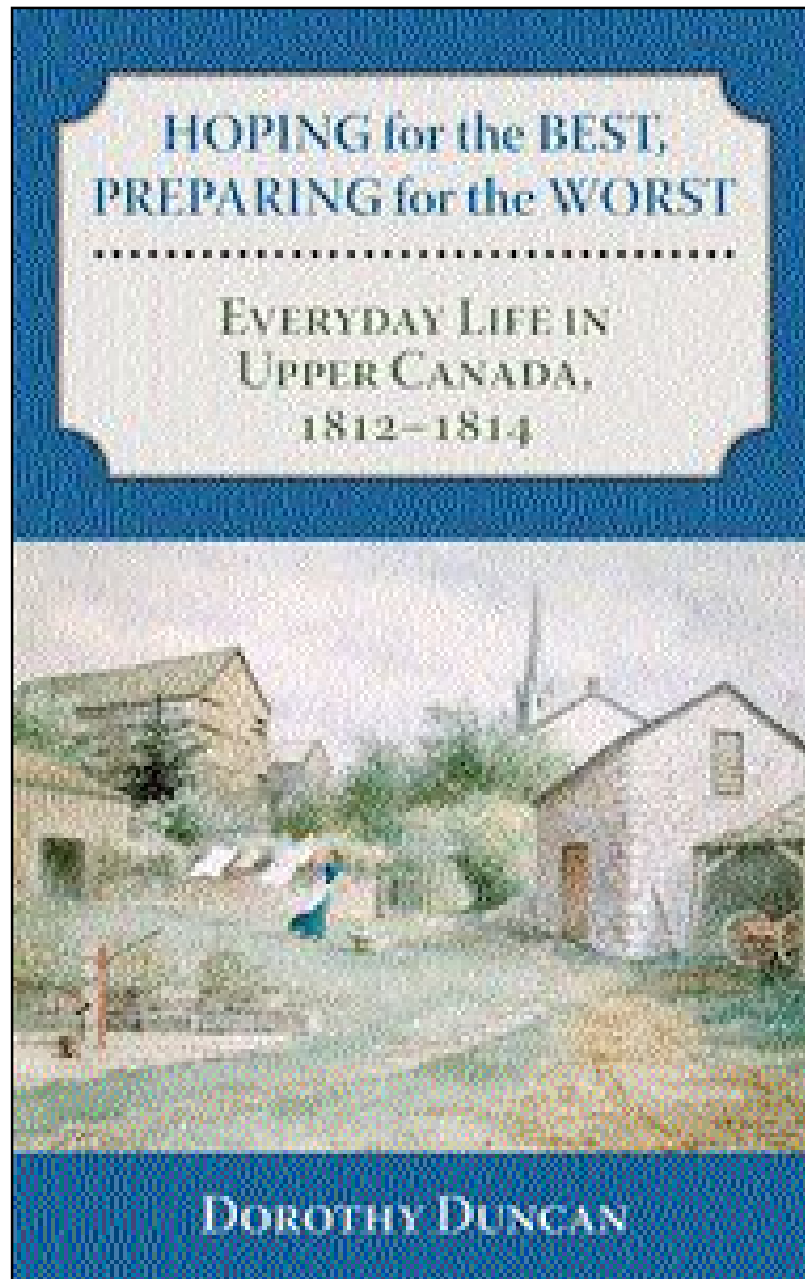
overheard an interesting discussion between the shop owner and a patron. The patron declared that there was no new information in “all of these War of 1812 publications” – no reevaluation of the war, no new insights into battle strategies

or the events leading to the conflict and no reexamination of the outcome. I assumed that he had read a few as he was quite knowledgeable about the war and Canadian history.

But many people are encountering this war for the first time. *Hoping for the Best, Preparing for the Worst* is an excellent introduction for ‘first timers’ or those like me who have forgotten some of the details and often want information beyond the battlefields. It is worth reading before embarking upon others.

What is different (and perhaps new) in many War of 1812 presentations and new books, including Duncan's, is the inclusion of more than just a passing reference to the contributions of First Nations. Like the fur traders,

soldiers, entrepreneurs, farmers, merchants and many others,



1. The most well attended talk in Simcoe County must certainly have been the Huronia Museum's Heritage Dinner on May 10, 2012 in Midland; 300+ people heard American historian Alan Taylor, author of *The Civil War of 1812*. Over \$18,000 was raised for the museum!

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they too responded to this conflict with perseverance and loyalty and did not survive unscathed.

The first five chapters explore the intricate human relationships that developed in Upper Canada after the American Revolution and the years leading up to the War of 1812. These are clearly written and set the stage extremely well.

Recently, the Ontario Museum Association gave its 2012 Award of Excellence in Exhibitions to the Canadian War Museum for the 1812 Exhibition Project.

“The War of 1812 was experienced and remembered so differently by its principal participants, no single narrative [can] easily or respectfully present their points of view. Instead, the Canadian War Museum told the story of one war from four perspectives – the Canadian (including Canadian First people), the British, the Americans, the Native Americans (2.)”

Like this museum exhibit, *Hoping for the Best, Preparing for the Worst* brings forth multiple points of view and narratives about the war both on the front and back home. This is done quite effectively through the use of primary and secondary documents, and quotations from rare diaries that exist from this time period.

One can also judge this book by its cover or cover image – a water colour entitled Old Courtyard, 1812, Queenston, by Julien Ruggles Seavey (3.). A woman is hanging the laundry in a courtyard bordered by several outbuildings and possible fruit trees. There is a church spire in the background and a well pump in the foreground. The image reflects the prime focus of this book – the fabric of everyday life in a frontier society: family, friends, homes, births, deaths, gardens, farms, roads, villages, towns, shops and food.

As in her previous publications recording Canada’s culinary history, Duncan gleans much from handwritten and printed cookery books. Among others in *Hoping for the Best*, she includes and discusses ‘A Michilimackinac Stew’, ‘Indian Corn Flour Pudding’, ‘Sponge Cake’, ‘Nice Cookies That Will Keep Good Three Months’ and even ‘Spruce Beer’. These early cookery books often gave instructions for medicines, potions, salves and other remedies, as well.

Lydia B. Bacon’s 1856 diary details an incident that injured and blinded her husband in 1811 as he was priming his gun for fowl hunting. A “simple curd made with new milk and vinegar cured his eyes and an application of oil and brandy, alternately applied to his face healed it rapidly (pages 112-113)”.

Chapter 14 is entitled ‘Have a Large Bag on the Pommel

of my Saddle’ and is devoted to quotations from Lydia Bacon’s diary. This remarkable 26-year old wife of Lieutenant Josiah Bacon, quartermaster of the 4th Regiment of the U.S. Infantry, accompanied her husband for over a year prior to the war, from Boston to Philadelphia to Vincennes to Detroit. Her poignant description of the U.S. ‘victory’ at the Battle of Tippecanoe and subsequent celebrations in many communities is contrasted with the capture of her husband’s regiment on the Canadian side near the village of Malden in early July 1812. As the wife of an officer, she and other captured officers’ wives were treated well and permitted to return to the U.S. “We do not make war upon the ladies” was the reply received after her request for release to return to Detroit was granted. As to the contents of the “large bag on the pommel of [her] saddle,” would you believe “a Bible, Homer’s Iliad (translated)”...and “a huge sponge cake” from a friend? Definitely food for the mind and body!

Apart from the front cover image (courtesy of the Archives of Ontario and supplied by the publisher) there are no others. These days, many authors must foot the cost of reproducing images in their own volumes. This can become quite expensive and run into thousands of dollars. Although Duncan’s writing style flows very well and conjures some colourful imagery, a few additional ones and even a map or two would have been helpful, especially for a War of 1812 ‘novice’ (e.g. the route travelled by the Bacons).

Hoping for the Best, Preparing for the Worst – Everyday Life in Upper Canada 1812-1814 concludes with an appropriate quote for this volume. It comes from the York Gazette reported on April 15, 1815. “The [Lake] Ontario uncommonly high – The ice disappeared from the bay of York a fortnight earlier than in the two preceding seasons – Immense flights of the wild pigeon – from west to east – The wild ducks revisit our waters since peace was made (page 214).”

While attending the monthly meeting of a local historical society a few years ago, Dorothy Duncan was mortified by some comments made by the chair (who also happened to be a history teacher). This person informed her audience that a lot about the War of 1812 could be learned from the movie *Gone with the Wind* (D. Duncan p.c. October 2012). In a perverse way, she should be as grateful to this ‘catalyst’ for her unique contribution to the War of 1812 bicentennial commemoration as she is to the long list of researchers, scholars, librarians and others who contributed material.

2. Ontario Museum Association OMA eNews, 2012 Awards of Excellence. Accessed 10 October 2012
http://museumsontario.com/en/awards_of_excellence_42/2012_Awards_of_Excellence_2190/15.html

3. Julien (or Julian) Ruggles Seavey (1957-1940) was born in Boston, four decades after the conclusion of the war. He came to Hamilton in 1879 and became a well-known artist and teacher.

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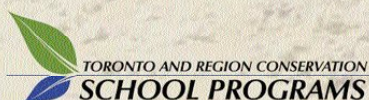
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