

## WHAT'S INSIDE

- ▶ Florence McGillivray's first position as an art instructor was at Pickering College (when it was still in Pickering). She went on to become a well-respected painter who may even have had some influence on Tom Thomson.
- ▶ Tom Mohr concludes his study on Gandatsetiagon. Most of the evidence now suggests that Scarborough's claim to the 17th century Seneca village is stronger than Pickering's.
- ▶ Old railway trains and stations still hold a fascination for many people. For the record, we present a portfolio of pictures of some former local railway stations.
- ▶ Indian interpreters James Ruggles and Jacob Herchmer had land dealings in Pickering three years before their demise in the tragic loss of the Speedy in October 1804.
- ▶ Pickering, so legend has it, was first given its name in 270 BC. It boasts a castle (now in ruins) which was founded by William the Conqueror. We're talking about the Pickering of Yorkshire, England, of course.



## PATHMASTER

• SPRING EDITION VOLUME 2 NUMBER 3 •

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ *Names in the News* ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

## FLORENCE MCGILLIVRAY

by John W. Sabeau

When Florence McGillivray went to Paris in 1913 to study painting, she was neither a young woman nor a novice in art. For many years she had taught art at the Ontario Ladies' College in Whitby, having received her initial art training in Toronto under William Cruikshank, Frederic Marlett Bell-Smith, John W.L. Forster, Lucius R. O'Brien, and Farquhar McGillivray Knowles, all members or associate members of the Royal Canadian Academy.

In Paris she studied under Lucien Simon and Emile René Ménard, and was greatly influenced by the French impressionists and fauvists. Her work did not go unnoticed in France as she took part in an exhibition at the Salon des Beaux Arts, and was elected president of the International Art Union, all within a year of her arrival in Paris.

When she returned to Canada in 1914, she brought with her a new vision for painting the Canadian landscape. As Maria Tippet describes it: "Florence McGillivray ... was one of the artists to discover the aesthetic possibilities of the northern Ontario landscape... [She] approached the northern wilderness in a distinct way... The patchwork effect created by the palette knife, the juxtaposition of intense colours and the use of thick black outline to enclose her forms, all characteristic of Fauve painting, enabled her to inject the northern Canadian landscape with unprecedented luminosity. [Certain of her paintings] predate the now conventional and familiar views of northern Ontario that would soon be familiar in the oil sketches of Tom Thomson ... and in the work of the emerging Ontario Group of Seven. Thus McGillivray belongs to the small group of artists whose pre-First World War landscape paintings linked two visions of the land: the romantic-realist view of the railway artists of the 1880s and 1890s and the heroic view of the landscape that characterized the mature

work of the Group of Seven and their adherents following the Great War."<sup>1</sup>

It may be that McGillivray had a direct influence on Thomson, as it has been reported that around 1917 she met Thomson in Toronto. The story was told by Mark Robinson, superintendent at Algonquin Park: "[Tom] told us of having Miss Florence McGillivray visit his studio in Toronto when she gave him a few valuable hints from her long experience in art."<sup>2</sup>

Shortly after her return from Europe, McGillivray had two of her paintings chosen by the Royal Canadian

Academy for their annual exhibition in 1914, and one of the two was purchased by the National Gallery of Canada. The *Whitby Gazette and Chronicle* commented:

"She is entitled to the warmest congratulations for the honor she has brought upon herself and her native town."<sup>3</sup> A few years later she was admitted as a member of the Ontario Society of Artists.

For a time McGillivray lived in Ottawa and while there became one of the founders of the Ottawa Group of artists. The other members were Paul Alfred, Harold Beaumont, Frank Hennessey, Graham Norwell, David Milne, and Yoshida Sekido.

They had their first exhibition at Hart House in Toronto in January 1924.<sup>4</sup>

Long before all of these honours had come her way, McGillivray had begun her

career as a teacher of painting in the art department at Pickering College in Pickering. She taught there in the 1890s under the principalship of W.P. Firth. Later, when she became a teacher at the Whitby school, she continued as art critic at Pickering.

The first paintings she had exhibited publicly were at the Bowmanville Fair in 1881. At that show she won two first prizes which no doubt encouraged her to pursue a career in art. Today her works may be found in the collections of the National Gallery of Art, the Art Gallery of Ontario, and the Art Gallery of Hamilton, among others.



LANDSCAPE PAINTER  
AND ART TEACHER



Florence McGillivray. *Venetian Shipping, N.d.* Whitby Public Library, gift of the artist.

McGillivray's grandfather was Charles Fothergill, an accomplished artist himself and a former resident of Pickering.<sup>1</sup> Her grandmother, Eliza Richardson Fothergill, was a member of one of the pioneer Quaker families of Pickering. Their daughter Caroline married George McGillivray in Pickering in 1846 and they set up

their first home in Audley (now 786 Taunton Road East). The first 8 of their 14 children were born in this home. Then they moved about 1858-59 to Whitby where Florence and 5 other children were born. The house, named "Inverlynn" by the family, is at 1300 Gifford Street and is still occupied by descendants of the McGillivrays.

At her death in 1938, McGillivray was laid to rest in Oshawa's Union Cemetery.

*My thanks to Brian Winter, Whitby Archives, and Rhonda Jessup, Whitby Public Library, for their help in preparing this article.*

NOTES:

- 1 Tippett (1992), pp. 53-54.
- 2 Retrospective (1970)
- 3 3 December 1914.
- 4 Hill (1995), p. 293.
- 5 See *Pathmaster* 1(4):35.

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- Retrospective. 1970. "Florence McGillivray Retrospective Exhibition at 'The Station'". Whitby Arts Incorporated, October 4th - October 18th, 1970.
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## LAST ISSUE'S WHAT'S IT?

by Iys Laurence  
Drawing by Pat McCauley



### ANSWER :

My grandmother-in-law kept this little silver shovel with other little silver remembrances of her parents: pill boxes, dental floss container, nail file case, shoehorn, etc. Her parents were married in New York City about 1880, and were part of a society that considered monogrammed sterling silver pieces everyday items. It is believed that the miniature shovel was used for measuring headache powders or other medicines or toiletries.

## THIS ISSUE'S WHAT'S IT?

by Dave Marlowe



This wood and iron artifact can be seen at Pickering Museum Village. It has a blade approximately twelve to thirteen inches long. The upper edge of the blade has spread as if it has been struck repeatedly.

It appears to have been hand-forged. The handle has been hand-shaped and fitted into the collar on the end of the blade. Illustration from Eric Sloane. 1964. *A Museum of Early American Tools*. Wilfrid Funk Inc.



## SPINNING HIS OWN YARN

Barb Vranic teaching John Sebean how to use a drop spinner at the Scarborough Heritage Showcase, February 1999.

## GANDATSETIAGON

*Evidence Beneath our Feet?*

by Tom Mohr



(In the previous issue of *Pathmaster*, the author attempted to confirm the location of this contact-era Seneca village using the

historical record, only to find that the literature did not stand up to scrutiny)

Gandatsetiagon appears on maps of the day and for 100 years later, but they are ambiguous as to its exact locale. Historical descriptions of the site are even more vague although one uncited quotation c1700 places it squarely on the banks of the Rouge River. It is fairly certain, though, that the site was abandoned in advance of Denonville's punitive expedition against the New York Seneca in 1687.

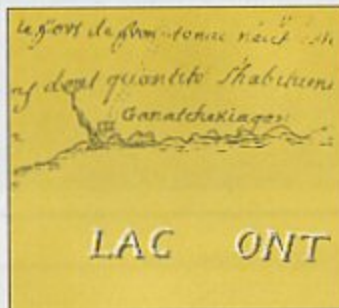
The *Pickering Story* cites historian Percy Robinson in describing a huge feast at the village, conducted by the French warrior and his mixed army, but even that story does not stand up to current scrutiny.<sup>1</sup> While this event appears in Denonville's accounts, it may well have taken place west of the present day site of Toronto. Finally, it has long been assumed that Denonville burned Gandatsetiagon for the same reasons he terrorised the south shore, to intimidate the hostile Seneca into acquiescence.

Does this story bear up? Having exhausted both contemporary and later accounts in search of a definitive location for Gandatsetiagon, and to account for its fate, one is left with one final avenue of investigation — to look beneath our feet — and it is here in the realm of archaeology that the physical evidence begins to accumulate.

Following this thread, a brief return to Frenchman's Bay reveals a handful of stories but little else. Older families, those with roots in the agricultural tradition, have no recollection of "arrowheads" or other relics that were unearthed during the ploughing. That the rich ecology of the Bay would have attracted native hunters, gatherers and fisherfolk is undeniable, but up to now

nothing has been offered up for examination. Just recently, though, one individual has made the Society aware of his collection of native artifacts, much of it gathered locally. It is hoped that some of these objects may provide further insight into the native history of the Bay.

However, it is now to the Rouge that we must focus our attention for there



Bernou map, 1680. P.A.C. H3/902

are a number of 19th and 20th century accounts of a First Nations presence there. Certain of these are specific enough to suggest a number of contact-era sites. In the 1960s, human remains were reported unearthed near the forks of the Rouge, and were investigated by the renowned archaeologist Dr. Walter Kenyon. The interment was native in origin and contained mortuary ware that was definitely post-contact era Seneca. One particular piece was a typical Seneca comb, decorated with figures wearing European garb, one drinking from a goblet. The artifacts were sent to the Royal Ontario Museum, the remains re-interred and the matter rested for some two decades.

During the mid-eighties, the area of the forks was revisited by archaeologist Dana Poulton who had encountered some of the old literature regarding the area and applied it to Kenyon's observations. He saw a fit between them and posited that Gandatsetiagon may well have existed on the banks of the Rouge.<sup>2</sup> This would be a significant development as none of the seven village sites of the Iroquois du Nord exist today. Some have never been discovered, others such as Teyalagon on the Humber have been destroyed without study. Preliminary testing at the Rouge, in

1988, led to a more extensive investigation in 1991 for Parks Canada. Stone tools, ceramics and the remains of many, many meals proved the site had been native. European trade goods were found in abundance, as was a missionary ring and a French coin of the era. The artifacts confirmed Poulton's suspicions that the area had been the site of a major Seneca settlement dating back to



Raffex map, 1688. P.A.C. H3/902

the latter half of the 1600s. It could only be Gandatsetiagon. He stresses, though, that the site "undoubtedly served as the nucleus for a whole range of smaller Seneca camps and activity areas, and the Rouge Trail itself was probably in use for centuries if not millennia before the Seneca occupation of the Rouge".

The site is not complete. Part of it has been given over to residential development, once again without archaeological testing so we do not know what we have lost to "progress". The remainder, though, has been acquired by various levels of government and is in the process of being designated as a National Historic Site. Other aspects of this cultural sequence are certainly scattered up and down the river's banks. Some may eventually be retrieved and studied, others are bound to be destroyed by an unaware, or perhaps even uncaring, modern society. It must also be recalled that the Seneca represent a period of perhaps less than 20 years on a location that saw continuous occupation for many tens of centuries before them, and 300 years since.

What finally happened to Gandatsetiagon and its Seneca pioneers? The fact that so many beads and

other valuables were recovered tells a story in itself. Denonville's army was given full rein to desecrate the Seneca lands; along with burning the food stores, his vengeful native troops sought out and looted cemeteries for the grave goods they held. If so much mortuary ware has been recovered, the interments could not have been looted. No horizon of destruction has thus far been discovered, therefore Gandatsetiagon was probably not torched. Denonville likely found a village abandoned by cautious natives who had retreated to New York to rebuild their traditional homelands in the wake of the French scourge. The brief era of Iroquois territorial expansion had come to an end.

The valley of the Rouge remains a storehouse of cultural and natural history. Even the river's name, along with Petticoat Creek and Frenchman's Bay, reflect a chapter of history when these lands were considered a colony of France and its residents were subjects of the French Crown. Yet today Gandatsetiagon and the Toronto Passage are but shadows in the invisible history of the Township of Pickering. Few of our questions have been answered, but research goes on.

A more detailed treatment of this subject and a full bibliography are contained in this author's study entitled "The Gandy Project: Locating the Historic Seneca Village of Gandatsetiagon", on file with the Pickering Township Historical Society. For an indication of ongoing concerns regarding archaeology and the Lower Rouge, please consult "The Battle for Gandatsetiagon" in *Pathmaster* Vol. 2, No. 1.

## NOTES:

- 1 McKay, William A. 1961. *The Pickering Story* (Pickering: Township of Pickering Historical Society), pp. 12-13; cited from Robinson, Percy J. 1933. *Toronto During the French Regime* (Toronto: Ryerson Press), p. 56.
- 2 Mayer, Poulton and Associates Inc. 1991.



Pickering CN Station, 1964



Port Union CN Station, c1964



Stouffville Station, May 1964



Uxbridge Station, n.d.



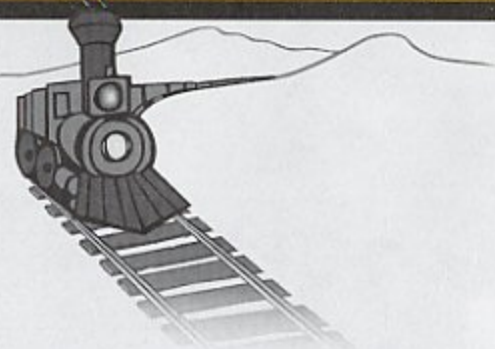
The "Extra Belleville" passing through Pickering, 5 April, 1955



Oshawa CN Station, n.d.

# Pickering & Area A LOOK BACK AT RAILWAY STATIONS

Photography by Al Paterson. Submitted by Laura Sawadny.



Whitby CP Station, April 1964



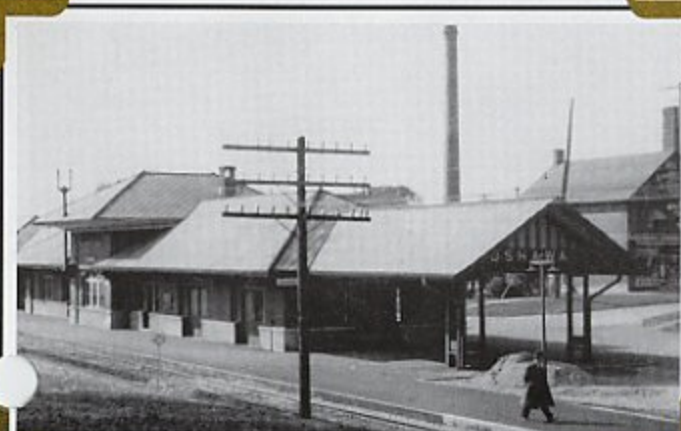
Whitby CN Station, n.d.



Whitby Town Station n.d.  
(formerly the Whitby, Port Perry & Lindsay Railway)



Claremont CP Station, c1964



Oshawa CP Station [1], n.d.



Oshawa CP Station [2], 1970s?

# HOW PICKERING GOT ITS NAME

*[Pickering in Yorkshire, England, that is]*



Pickering was once a town by-passed by people on their way to the Yorkshire coast or the North York Moors.

Now visitors bide their time in the

ancient market town, which according to legend was given its name by King Peredus in 270 BC.



All illustrations from Pickering promotional literature.

We are told that the king lost his ring in the River Costa and accused a maiden of stealing it.

When a cook found the ring in the belly of a pike caught in the river, the king married the maiden and called the town "Pike ring."

The next visit by a king was in 1106, when King Henry I visited Pickering Castle and founded the Royal Forest of Pickering, a vast hunting domain which stretched from near the coast to Rosedale and from the River Derwent to the River Esk.

The Borough of Pickering was established in 1201 when King John visited the castle, which today is a popular tourist attraction.

The last Royal visit was in 1975 when the Queen went to Pickering Castle to meet tenants of the Duchy of Lancaster estates.

In 1668, a survey of the town listed 195 houses; the population today is about 5,000.

The 18th and 19th centuries saw the building of a Congregational Chapel, a



Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, a Primitive Methodist Church, a New Primitive Methodist Chapel on Potter Hill, as well as the building of the grammar school in Kirkham Lane.

Today the town, which holds its open-air markets on Mondays, boasts many attractions, including a parish church with famous medieval murals; a museum with particular interest in rural

life; an 18-mile privately run steam railway; and, of course, the ruined castle which was founded by William the Conqueror.

*Our thanks to Ray Bates for providing us with this information. Text and pictures are taken from Pickering's promotional material.*

## VACATION TIPS

by John W. Sabean

If you are headed south of Lake Ontario this summer you might like to visit a couple of places in New York State that are of special interest to Pickeringites. Northwest of Syracuse, along the north shore of Onondago Lake, in the town of Liverpool, is a museum known as St Marie Among the Iroquois, a sister museum to Midland's St Marie Among the Huron. The New York museum is much smaller than Ontario's, but is well interpreted by its staff who assume the roles of the inhabitants of the original 17th century mission outpost.



*"Jesuit priest" at St Marie Among the Iroquois.*

The mission established by the Jesuits was short-lived, lasting only a few years in the mid-1650s. It followed by about 20 years the Jesuit mission to the Huron in the Midland area and preceded the Sulpician

mission to the Senecas at Gandatsetiagon by about ten years.

Further along the New York State Thruway, in Little Falls, east of Utica, is a park built around the homestead of General Nicholas Herkimer. The park is just off the highway and easy to reach. The grounds are free, picnic tables are available, and there is plenty of room to stretch your legs after a long drive.

A gravestone and monument on the property tell you that General Herkimer died ten days after the Battle of Oriskany, in August 1777, "where, commanding the Tryon

County militia he defeated the English troops with their Tory and Indian allies." But while Nicholas was a patriot, his nephew, Jacob, was a Loyalist who fled to Upper Canada after the Revolutionary War, and for a short time held property in Pickering.

A further note: some of the plazas along the New York State Thruway have interpretive displays which they call "History Happened Here". These are well worth a few minutes of your time to examine because the Thruway follows an old transportation corridor. Many a Loyalist followed the ancient pathways on their way to Upper Canada.

# JAMES RUGGLES AND JACOB HERCHMER

by John W. Sabean

In 1799, Asa Danforth purchased 600 acres (243 hectares) in Pickering Township from the original grantee, John Nighton.<sup>1</sup> This was the same Asa Danforth who had contracted to build the Kingston Road in 1799. The lands Danforth purchased were lot 1 in concessions 3, 4, and 5 of Pickering Township. These same lots were transferred by deed poll from Asa Danforth to James Ruggles on 5 October 1801, and on the same day by Ruggles to Jacob Herchmer (or Herkimer). Both Ruggles and Herchmer were aboard the schooner *Speedy* when it foundered in a storm off Presqu'île in October 1804.

Ruggles was born in Massachusetts where his family had lived for six generations. The Ruggles were prominent Massachusetts loyalists (General Timothy Ruggles, James' uncle, served in the army under Lord Amherst), but despite deep roots in New England, James' family moved to Upper Canada.<sup>2</sup>

Settling eventually in York, Ruggles opened a store on Yonge Street. He was also actively involved in the young community as a justice of the peace, a commissioner of roads, and a member of the militia. He must have had a good education because at the time of his death he was discussing with others the possibility of establishing a library at York.<sup>3</sup>

It is not entirely clear why he was on the *Speedy*, but the suggestion is that he was involved in the trial of the Indian, Ogetonicut, as an interpreter either for the defendant or more likely for the Crown.<sup>4</sup>

Like Ruggles, Jacob Herchmer came of loyalist stock and had an uncle who was a general in the American Revolutionary War. But the uncle, General Nicholas Herchmer (or Herkimer), fought on the patriot side. Jacob was also a prominent York merchant and served the community in other capacities: as a tax collector and as town warden. One of the commodities he dealt in was ginseng root which he shipped to the Far East.<sup>5</sup>

Among other occupations, Herchmer was a fur trader out of the Rice Lake/Smith's Creek (Port Hope) region (where he probably knew fellow-fur trader William Peak before Peak settled in Pickering Township). Craik (1901)



tells the story of how Herchmer appeased the Indians in 1793 on the occasion of the arrival of the four families who comprised the first permanent settlers of Port Hope.<sup>6</sup>

Herchmer may have been intended as another interpreter at the trial of Ogetonicut, or he may have gone as a witness for the defence. According to one source, Herchmer had three children by an Indian woman, and she was a kinswoman of the defendant.<sup>7</sup>

A year after Herchmer's death, his brother Laurence signed a letter of release for the Pickering properties, and they were taken over by James Roach. Roach retained them for nearly thirty years, then sold them in 1833 to Robert Baldwin Sullivan, a lawyer in York, who, two years later, was to become the second mayor of Toronto, succeeding William Lyon Mackenzie.

Incidentally, lot 1, concession 3 was the land on which Dennis O'Connor settled in the early 1830s, although the actual purchase from Robert Sullivan was not recorded until 1840. The O'Connor family's story is told in previous issues of *Pathfinder* (vol. 2, numbers 1 & 2).

There is an interesting sidelight to this story which is told by Brendan O'Brien in his book *Speedy Justice*.<sup>8</sup> In July 1803, a year before his death, Herchmer married Margaret England of Kingston. However, John Strachan, a young Anglican clergyman destined one day to be Bishop of Toronto and one of the leaders of the Family Compact, believed that she had promised herself to him, and had

composed a number of poems in her honour. He was deeply chagrined by her change of mind. Five years after Jacob's death, Margaret married Aeneas Shaw, not only one of York's most prominent citizens, but also a large landowner in Pickering.



#### NOTES

- 1 All land transactions may be found in the Land Registry Office, Abstract Indexes.
- 2 On Ruggles, see Cruikshank (1930), 26-296; Firth (1962), p. 69n; O'Brien (1992), p. 89.
- 3 O'Brien (1992), p. 89.
- 4 *Ibid.*
- 5 On Herchmer, see Firth (1962), p. 68n; Graham (1981), p. 142; O'Brien (1992), p. 92-93; Reid (1936).
- 6 Pp. 3-4. See also Belden (1878), p. iv.
- 7 O'Brien (1992), p. 92.
- 8 Pp. 92-93, 118.

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- Cruikshank, E.A. 1930. "Petitions for Grants of Land, 1796-99," *Ontario Historical Society, Papers and Records* 26:97-379.
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## COMING EVENTS:

General Meetings of the Pickering Township Historical Society

Day: Second Tuesday of the month, September through June

Time: 7:30 p.m. Place: East Shore Community Centre, 910 Liverpool Rd.

### SPRING / FALL SCHEDULE

**Tuesday, 13 April 1999**

**Guest speaker: Pickering Village Museum Staff**

One of the casualties of the Upper Canada Rebellion of 1837 was Pickering's Peter Matthews, who was hanged for his efforts to reform the government of the day. Was he a traitor or a patriot? Pickering Museum Village staff will present the results of their research on the day after the 160th anniversary of his execution.

**Tuesday, 11 May 1999**

**Guest speaker: Helen Skinner**

The PTHS and the Pickering Horticultural Society will welcome Spring with a joint meeting to be held at the O'Brien Room of the Pickering Recreational Complex. Helen Skinner will discuss the subject of Pioneer Gardens of Ontario. The Horticultural Society will also be featuring a show of Victorian Floral Design.

Please note the new location for this meeting only.

**Tuesday, 8 June 1999**

**Guest speaker: Richard Schofield**

Our guest from the Scarborough Historical Society will speak on the subject of Port Union, formerly part of the Township of Pickering.

**Tuesday, 14 September 1999**

**Guest speaker: Bill Lishman**

The PTHS is pleased to kick off its 1999-2000 lecture series by presenting an evening with Bill Lishman. Lishman is a wildlife hero with local roots—known as "Father Goose" for his efforts in teaching Canada Geese to migrate. He is both an internationally recognised environmentalist and a noted sculptor. Having grown up in Pickering Township he has a wide knowledge of local historical lore.

**Tuesday, 12 October 1999**

**Guest speaker: Lynn-Philip Hodgson**

Our guest speaker, Lynn-Philip Hodgson, is the author of a new book about Camp X, Durham Region's contribution to the shadowy world of espionage in World War II.

**Editor:** Lys Laurence

**Editorial Assistants:**

John Cormier  
Pat McCauley  
Tom Mohr  
Gayle Quintilian  
John Sabean

**Design:** John Cormier  
Hands On Art & Design

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Our second annual Members Night in December became an awards night. We gained a new Honourary President (along with Dr. McKay) in conferring that title on former local historian Robert Miller. Miller was the founding president of the former Pickering Township Historical Society, the main force behind the creation of the Pickering Museum Village, and the author of *The Ontario Village of Brougham* (1973). We also gave out the first two William and Melba McKay Awards established to honour local citizens and groups who have contributed toward the preservation of the heritage of Pickering and Ajax. Nefer LePard accepted one of the plaques on behalf of the Fire Department Employee's Credit Union, and another was given to the Ajax Kinsmen. Both organizations recently restored heritage buildings and put them to new uses.

A descendant of a Berczy settler and President of the Markham Historical Society, Lorne Smith spoke at our January meeting on the Berczy settlement in York County. German count Berczy recruited some 60 families to emigrate to Pennsylvania in the 1790s. Unused to pioneer life, they endured extreme hardship as they attempted to cross the Appalachians and establish a settlement late in the season. They moved on to New York State, and eventually relocated in Markham Township in the early 1800s, where Count Berczy had negotiated a huge land grant. Unfortunately for the count, after Governor Simcoe had returned to England, no record could be found of the transaction. Berczy turned to portrait painting to earn his living. His settlers retained their small farms, and their land records and names are a

treasure for local historical research in Markham.

There is a fascination in seeing how places we know looked in earlier times. Ron Brown had an attentive audience in February as he showed slides and spoke about the "lost villages" of Toronto and surrounding areas. He is the author of a number of illustrated books on the subject. In the 1800s, the Toronto area had mills by the hundreds, and dozens of little hamlets boasting a blacksmith, general store, and one or more taverns. The lakeshore was strung with a series of schooner ports. Dunbarton was one of the earlier ports, but it was superseded by Fairport, which had deeper anchorage. In historical society circles, "GTA" is heard less than "GTR": Grand Trunk Railway. The coming of the railway changed the face of Ontario, and its shipping patterns. The GTR had stations at Port Union, Dunbarton, and Pickering Village, and a flag station at Rosebank.



Nefer LePard, CEO of the Fire Department Employees Credit Union, receives the 1998 William & Melba McKay Award from PTHS President Tom Mohr.

Photo by John W. Schorner



**PICKERING  
TOWNSHIP  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY**



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