



## **Hamilton Mountain Heritage Society**

### **President's Report to the Annual Meeting of 2013**

In 2012 the Hamilton Mountain Heritage Society held five general meetings. One had been planned for off-site at the Educational Archives and Heritage Centre but reorganization of that facility necessitated the visit being cancelled. Two of the five talks were given by members of the Society's executive. The topics included the centennial of St. John Ambulance in Hamilton, debunking so-called facts in history, the institutionalization of 10 women at the asylum in the 1890's, the Educational Archives and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the RHLI. Each general meeting was preceded by a meeting of the Society's executive for purposes of planning and setting direction for the Society.

The Society nominated Lee Gowers for a Heritage Volunteer Recognition Award, which was presented during a ceremony at City Hall celebrating Heritage Comes Home. Murray Aikman, a past-president of the Society, and current member of the executive was named the winner of the Rev. T. Melville Bailey Heritage Award at that same event.

Doors Open Hamilton provided the Society with an opportunity to set up displays within the Mohawk Trail School and at Westmount Secondary School. The Society took part in Concession Streetfest in early June. Several members assisted with display boards and publications under a much-needed tent. On Canada Day members braved the winds and tied down the displays at Mountain Drive Park during Chris Charlton's Canada Day celebrations.

Again in 2012 the Bailey's Bulletin was published three times. It was mailed to members, when possible, and available at general meetings and events. The HMHS website continues to attract visitors from around the world. Our webmaster reported that the website was visited 1857 times during 2012: those visits were made by 1488 distinct individuals. The majority of visits originated in Canada, the rest were from the USA, Russia and Iran. This year the HMHS joined Facebook. The page is open to the public and will be used to post notices of upcoming meetings and other events that might be of interest, as well as news from the Society.

In January of 2012 the bylaws of the HMHS were reviewed and amended. In May Murray Aikman, the second president of the HMHS was presented with a Life Membership. Three individuals who are retiring from service, Arthur Smith, Doug Embleton and Evelyn Haslehurst were recognized and thanked for their efforts. Membership in the Society dropped a bit from that of 2011 to 84 members.

The year finished off with four members of the Society making the trip to Waterloo to have tea with Mrs. Voelker, her daughters and youngest grandchild. Mrs. Voelker is the lady who provided photos of Auchmar for Mountain Memories and also the colour films of Auchmar during the war years that formed the basis of our video Auchmar: The War Story. Now 97 ½ years old Mrs. Voelker is as sharp as a tack and still brimming with stories and fond memories of her time at Auchmar, as the wife of the doctor in charge of rehabilitating members of the RCAF.

I again thank you for allowing me to serve as president of the Hamilton Mountain Heritage Society during this past year. Thank you to those of you who have taken a moment to chat or offer a compliment: you'd be surprised how much somebody saying 'good meeting' does for the ego! Thank you to the members of the executive for their support, encouragement and mentoring. I encourage all of you to consider joining the executive and taking an active role in this Society. Whether you can sit in judgement of the ideas being tossed about or take on a job you are needed. Although the Society celebrates history and heritage it needs to keep an eye to the future. What seems modern today will soon be 'old fashioned': if we don't keep moving and changing we will become stagnant and a part of history.