



Pen & PADDLE

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Worth Bookmarking : www.champlainsociety.ca

The long-awaited relaunch of the Society's website is more than fancy graphics and shiny colours. After considerable review, Council asked Becker Associates to overhaul its website to add new features, ease navigation, and make each visit a more pleasing experience. "The new site has more detailed information on the Society's publications, better search functions, and continual updates on events and news around the world on topics of interest to the membership," said webmaster Adam Becker.

Key features of the old site remain in place, including the link to the Digital Collection that provides free access to most of the Society's publications for readers throughout the world. The website makes it easy

to renew memberships, make donations, buy past publications that are still in stock, and get updates on new activities of the Society.

The website also collects news items on developments in Canadian history. Recently, a link to a very interesting interview by Joseph Planta with distinguished Pulitzer Prize-winning historian David Hackett Fischer on his latest book, *Champlain's Dream: The Visionary Adventurer Who Made a New World in Canada* (Knopf, 2008) was added to the site. More features will be added as the site continues to evolve, such as polls and blogs by experts in various fields, etc. As in all things, the Society's Council aims to serve its membership. Comments and suggestions are always welcome.

Gwyn wins Chalmers Award

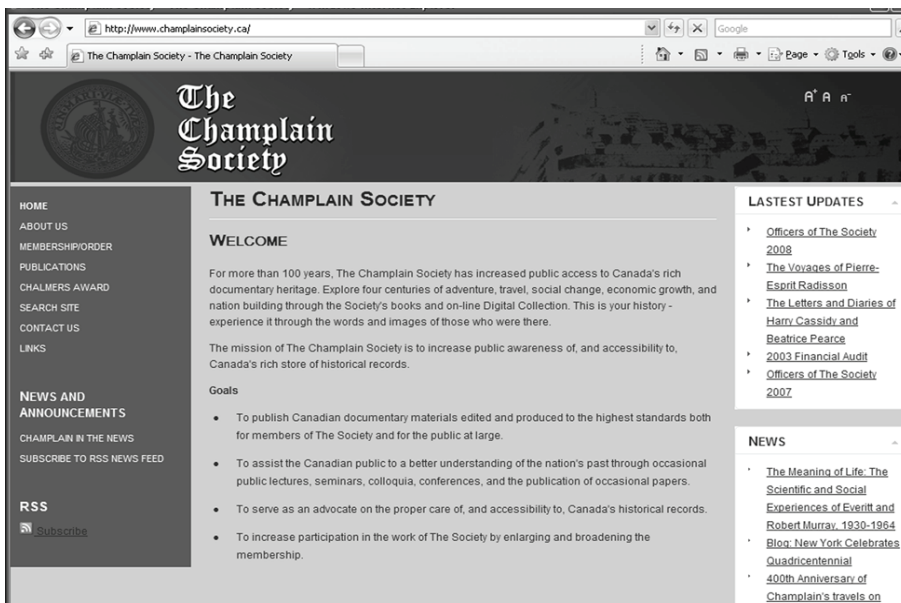
Well-known journalist Richard Gwyn accepted the Floyd Chalmers Award for Ontario History at the Society's Annual General Meeting last October for his book, *John A., The Man Who Made Us: The Life and Times of John A. Macdonald. Volume One: 1815-1867* (Random House Canada, 2007). The Jury offered

this citation:

"Richard Gwyn reinvigorates interest in Ontario's political history in the first of a projected two-



volume biography of one of our leading mythic figures, Sir John A. Macdonald. A veteran journalist known principally for his studies of contemporary politicians such as Joey Smallwood and Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Gwyn has turned to history in an engagingly written book that carries Macdonald's life from his birth in Scotland up to the creation of Canadian Confederation in 1867. This biography enriches our understanding of the individual who was, along with George-Etienne Cartier, the principal architect of a federal union that has proved enduring. It skillfully weaves public and private life into a well-organized volume that is a pleasure to read ... In short, it is an open, accessible, and innovative treatment of an important subject."



“A GEOGRAPHY OF THE HEART”: AN INTERVIEW WITH KEITH WALDEN

The Champlain Society's publication in late 2009 will be *The Letters and Diaries of Harry Cassidy and Beatrice Pearce: The Courtship Years*. The volume is edited by Dr. Keith Walden, Professor of History at Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario. Walden is the author of *Visions of Order* (1982) and *Becoming modern in Toronto: the Industrial Exhibition and the shaping of a late Victorian culture* (1997). Patrice Dutil, Vice President of The Champlain Society, recently interviewed Professor Walden about his project.

PD: *The Champlain Society is becoming decidedly modern with the publication of what are essentially the remnants of Harry Cassidy's affairs of the heart. Who was this man?*

KW: Harry is now best remembered as a prominent academic and civil servant during the 1930s and 40s, but these papers predate his professional career. He was raised on a farm in the Fraser Valley, enlisted underage in the First World War, spent time overseas, and then, after his return in 1919, attended university, first at the University of British Columbia, then at graduate schools in California and Washington, DC. The volume covers Cassidy's youth, starting in 1917 when he was in military service and ending in 1925 when he married Beatrice Pearce.

PD: *Who was Beatrice?*

KW: Bea also attended UBC, finishing in 1924 as a member of the first graduating class of the first

university-level nursing program in Canada. During the year prior to her marriage in 1925, she worked as a public health nurse in Victoria, her home town.

PD: *What attracted you to this project?*

KW: I stumbled across these papers in the University of Toronto Archives while doing research on an unrelated topic. Even though the material wasn't relevant to my concerns, I decided to take a quick glance at it anyway. Before long, I was hooked. Harry was a wonderful writer, capturing in his diaries and letters not just what he was doing, but what he was thinking and feeling.

Harry Cassidy



PD: *How did Harry and Bea meet?*

KW: They met at university, but at the time Harry was absorbed in another relationship. In fact, the documents tell the story of two courtships – one failed and one

successful. When Harry returned from overseas, he was infatuated with a young woman named Brownie Peebles, with whose family he had boarded during his last year of high school. He was terribly smitten with her but she was intent on pursuing a musical career, and wasn't interested in the serious relationship that Harry wanted. It took him a long time to accept this. During his first couple of years at UBC, Harry was in constant turmoil over Brownie. He was very sociable, though, and just because he was heartsick didn't mean he wasn't going to have fun. He started to date Beatrice Pearce, accompanying her to various school-related events. Gradually, he began to realize that the affair with Brownie was going nowhere, and that he was actually having a lot of fun with Bea, who was a much better match for him.

PD: *What do these papers tell us about courtship in Canada in the early 1920s?*

KW: They indicate that patterns of courtship were beginning to change substantially, with couples being relatively free from direct parental supervision. For Bea and Harry, dating was the norm, not the old-fashioned "calling". However, their courtship was traditional in that much of it was conducted through correspondence. They were often apart from each other – during summer breaks when he was at UBC, and for more extended periods when he went off to graduate school. Through more than 500 letters they exchanged from 1920 to

1925, they got to know each other very well.

PD: *What were their concerns as they headed toward matrimony?*

KW: Harry was the one who was anxious to wed. By the time he graduated from UBC, he knew that he loved Bea, and was determined to tie the knot as soon as he finished school. Bea was always more tentative about marriage. She realized that during their long separations, Harry might meet someone else. Indeed, both of them continued to have active social lives when they were apart. As well, she was intent on having a career and a period of independence before taking on family responsibilities. When Harry began to lobby for an early marriage before he finished school, they started to negotiate a number of very practical matters, including finding reliable birth control information.

PD: *Aside from courtship matters, what do these papers tell us about this period?*

KW: They say a lot about how Harry and Bea prepared themselves for professional life. This involved much more than just acquiring technical knowledge. Both of them had to construct identities that were appropriate to the social roles they intended to play. For Harry, especially, moving away from rural roots towards a middle class, urban existence required him to become a different kind of man. Of course, Harry wasn't unique in making this sort of transition, so the diaries and letters illuminate changing ideals of masculinity in society more generally. As well, because Bea and Harry wrote extensively about their day to day activities, the documents provide a ground-level view of postwar life and culture. For example, both of them wrote a fair

bit about their leisure activities and religious views. The papers also open windows onto parts of the past that now are hard to access. Some of Harry's summer jobs come to mind. One year he worked in a logging camp up the BC coast. Another year, he edited a small town paper in the Okanogan. He brings these places alive. Bea's observations about her hospital training and nursing experiences are no less fascinating.

PD: *What did you enjoy the most about this project?*

KW: Harry and Bea had done all the hard work. I just had to keep out of their way, and let them tell their own story.

Professor Walden will speak about this project at the Society's Annual General Meeting, City of Toronto Archives, 24 October 2009, 2:00 P.M.

The Champlain Society Pin

To celebrate its centenary and the 400th anniversary of Samuel de Champlain's founding of Québec, the Society is distributing lapel pins to Members. The pins' design is based on the crest that has graced Society publications for more than a hundred years. According to Society historian Conrad Heidenreich, the crest was inspired by the seal of the



Compagnie des Cent Associés, which was commanded in New France by Champlain from 1627 to 1635. The crest features the motto, "Thy way is in the sea" (Psalm 77:19). According to Heidenreich, there is no doubt that Sir Edmund Walker – the original guiding force of the Society – was personally involved in finalizing the crest.

Join The Society's Order of Good Cheer

Patrons of the "Habitation": This membership category recognizes annual gifts over \$5,000 that create a strong foundation to sustain the Society's mission and goals.

Patrons of the "Astrolabe": This membership category recognizes annual gifts ranging between \$1,000-\$4,999 that enable the Society to "seek out" important documents that enrich our understanding of Canadian history.

Patrons of the "Capitaine": This membership category recognizes annual gifts ranging between \$100-\$999 that allow the Society to "steer in confidence" as it embarks upon new publishing projects.

Patrons of the "Voyageur": This membership category recognizes annual gifts ranging between \$50-\$99 that support exploration of new approaches to providing access to Canada's documentary heritage.

Donations can be made online by visiting the Society's website, or by mail. Patrons will receive a tax receipt for their contribution.

WHAT'S NEW

With You?

Are you moving?
Do you have a new email address?

Send us your new information so we can keep in touch with you. Mail it to the address at the right or email info@champlainsociety.ca.

Name _____
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With Us!

Upcoming Events
& Publications

The Society is pleased to present the following schedule for its publications, which may be subject to change as projects unfold during the coming years:

- *The Meaning of Life: The Scientific and Social Experiences of Everitt and Robert Murray, 1930-1964.* By Donald Avery and Mark Eaton. In Print.
- *The Writings of David Thompson, Volume 1.* Edited by William E. Moreau. Published with McGill-Queen's University Press and University of Washington Press. 2009.
- *The Letters and Diaries of Harry Cassidy and Beatrice Pearce: The Courtship Years.* Edited by Keith Walden. 2009.
- *The Works of Samuel de Champlain, 2nd Edition.* Edited by Conrad Heidenreich and Janet Ritch. 2010.
- *The Voyages of Pierre-Esprit Radisson.* Edited by Germaine Warkentin. 2011.
- *The Moravians in Labrador.* Edited by Linda Sabathy-Judd. 2012.

For more than 100 years, **The Champlain Society** has increased public awareness of and access to Canada's rich documentary heritage. Our goals are

- to publish Canadian documentary materials edited and produced to the highest standards both for members of the Society and for the public at large;
- to assist the Canadian public to a better understanding of the nation's past through occasional public lectures, seminars, colloquia, conferences and the publication of occasional papers;
- to serve as an advocate on the proper care of and accessibility to Canada's historical records; and
- to increase participation in the work of the Society by enlarging and broadening the membership.



The Champlain Society
www.champlainsociety.ca

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