

# The Maryhill Historical Society

**Maryhill**  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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Join Our Society— Become a Member

Membership: \$25 Annual

\$50 Lifetime

Spring 2020

Editor: Susan Motz

## 2020 Committee:

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V. President: Linda Kennedy

Secretary: Marg Drexler

Treasurer: Frances Vegh

Past President: George Isley

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Ron Schmuck

Diane Strickler

Mary Ann Stroh

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## An Item From the Past - Single Furrow Plough



Many of our ancestors were farmers in Europe and came to Canada with the promise of fertile soil. They were successful in finding their dream here. After the land was cleared of trees and stones it was ready to be ploughed in preparation for planting. The plough was the basic tillage tool, the fundamental farm implement. As the moldboard turned the furrow, each particle of soil was forced to slip against the particle adjoining, a process

which results in a turn that no other single operation approaches. It was pulled by a team of horses or a yoke (pair) of oxen. The farmer walked behind the plough trying to keep a straight furrow as well as drive the team. Voice commands were "gee", "haw", and "whoa". Many farmers had multiple ploughs: potato plough and perhaps a breaker plough. Later a sulky plough arrived which allowed the farmer to sit on the plough. This required a team of 3 or 4 horses to pull the plough. A farmer could plough 1-2 acres in a 10 hour day. Many teams and ploughs were used on larger farms. Today with the larger furrow ploughs and tractors the same farmer can plough 60 acres or more in a day.



**Coronavirus**



## Greetings From The President

**As I write this letter, we are in the grips of a pandemic.**

These are unprecedented times for all of us. Social distancing and self isolation are new terms that have become a part of our life. Before the pandemic hit, we were busy with events in the community. On February 22 we participated in the annual Wilmot Township Historical Fair at the New Dundee Community Center. The theme was "Early Churches in Waterloo County". Our display included St. Boniface Church as well as Shantz Station Lutheran and Bloomingdale United churches. The event was well attended by local citizens and the local MP, MPP, and local councillors. The board of our Historical Society is planning events for this calendar year with a little uncertainty. At this time, we are still planning to celebrate Canada Day on July 1st. Also planning for Heritage Sunday on September 27th. Please let us know of members that are celebrating their

50th, 60th + anniversaries this year. We have the records for the marriages from St. Boniface Church in 1960 and 1970, but we are missing some members who were married elsewhere. We would like to recognize these couples. We also like to recognize members celebrating their 80,90 + birthdays. We continue to invite new members to our Society and to our Facebook Group. We are always looking for interesting pictures, stories and items to share with our members!

As spring passes, the pandemic too shall pass. In the meantime stay at home, keep a safe distance in conversations, wash hands and practice all the safe protocols that our health authorities suggest. We will survive this challenge and someone, in a hundred years, will have a great story to share in their newsletter!

*Tom*

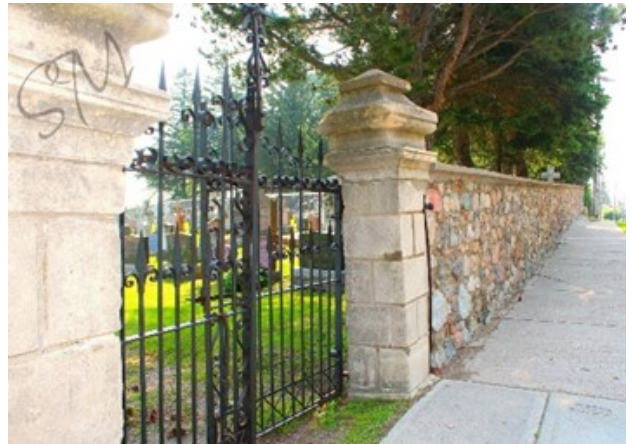
## In Our Community: The Old Walled Cemetery

By Susie Motz

*We are mighty proud of our Old Walled Cemetery in Maryhill, and we should be!*

Maryhill is home to the second oldest cemetery in the Region of Waterloo. We refer to it as the "Old Walled Cemetery" as opposed to the newer cemetery found across the road. We have unique grave markers and a beautiful stone wall surrounding an interesting resting place for our ancestors. Let's open the iron gate and take a tour!

Before we wander inside the cemetery, please note that the Old Walled Cemetery was not the first cemetery in Maryhill. In 1834 a small cemetery was blessed by Father Wiriath. It was situated across the road from the Old Walled Cemetery, where today a house sits beside the small gravel church parking lot.

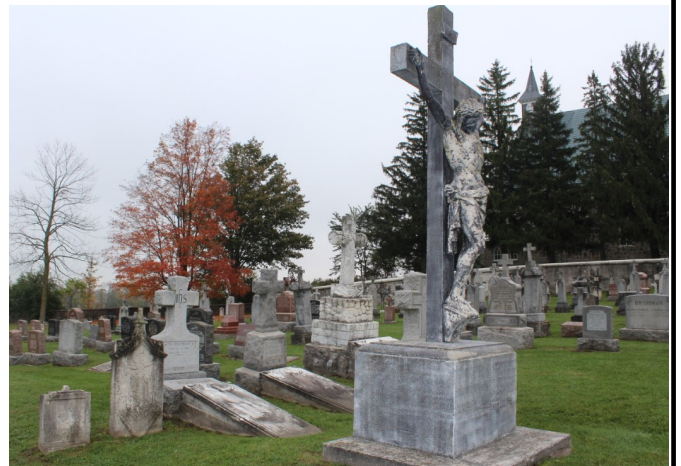


On June 17 1844, Lucas Zettel, Jacob Burkle & Lorenz Goetz sold to "*Right Rev. Michael Power, Catholic Bishop of the City of Toronto and his successors of the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation for the Diocese of Toronto in Canada*" for the sum of 25 pounds, 5 acres for "*the building of a Catholic church, a Catholic parsonage, schoolhouse and other purposes.*" This was registered on October 8 1846. The graves in the early cemetery were dug up and moved across the road in 1851. The first burial in this cemetery was John Gehl, age 84 on Nov 28 1851. Unfortunately, he doesn't have a marker. The oldest tombstone in our cemetery is dated December 21 1843 and is for Margaretha (Hauck) Weiler.

### The Stone Wall

The cemetery originally was overrun with many wild rose bushes, grasses and weeds which were burned off each year. In 1862 and 1863, the cemetery was graded and surrounded with a stone wall. Stones, sand and labour were donated to the construction and yet it still cost \$1002.92 to erect. The top of the wall was originally covered with a plank coping, and after it rotted, it was replaced using cement. In 1961, this wall was completely repaired. Again in 1998 the stone wall was restored and again in 2018 it was repointed. The main gate to the cemetery was crafted at a cost of \$106. Today, hanging on the wall of the old walled cemetery are two brass plaques created by descendants from the Weiler family and descendants from the Drexler/Sauer/Schmuck/Messmer families.

Many cemeteries are open and do not contain a wall so we do wonder why our ancestors went to the expense and effort of creating the stone wall. It could have been to give definition to the cemetery. On the other hand, we wonder if perhaps the wall and iron gates were erected to keep people out. Perhaps grave robbers? Medical doctors and students in the 19<sup>th</sup> century had a reputation for grave snatching. Medical schools needed human bodies to learn anatomy. Local historians speak of grave robbers from Fergus and another from Bridgeport (known to frequent the Maryhill area) with a helper from Elmira. Perhaps the stone wall was erected and locked to keep our ancestors resting at peace in their graves! Today, the gates to the cemetery may be closed, but not latched and certainly never locked. Grave robberies are no longer a concern!





## The Tombstones in our Old Walled Cemetery

### The Tombstones

There are 764 graves in this cemetery with six hundred & ninety-three tombstones. Of those, there are ninety iron crosses. There are also seventy-four unmarked graves (most likely many had wooden crosses that have deteriorated). One hundred and nineteen tombstones have writing in German Script. The last burial in the old cemetery was Betty(Doris) Yantz nee Brohman 06 July 2010. We are very fortunate to have transcripts of all the markers in the Old Walled Cemetery - thanks to Diane Strickler, Mary Ann Stroh and the St. Boniface grade 7/8 class from June 1979.

Years ago, Diane was working on her family tree and joined the Waterloo-Wellington Genealogical Society. She attended their meeting at the KPL and started to participate in "Cemetery Picnics" which entailed the recording of the information on all the stones in a cemetery. While in the cemetery for a whole day, the group would bring their lunches – thus the picnic. It was at that time that Diane volunteered to do our cemetery. She rallied the students, under the direction of teacher Mary Ann Stroh. One afternoon in June the students were assigned rows and graves and recorded the wording on each grave marker.

Diane then indexed all the information and published it as a directory of the cemetery. This directory contains a map with areas divided into sections – making it easier to find the stones of our ancestors. This directory has been recently updated and, thanks to Ron Schmuck, now includes an aerial view of the cemetery.

Early burials, and those moved from the original cemetery, are located in the North section. (Walk into the cemetery and turn left). There is a children's section at the far East Side ( Back ) with smaller tombstones. Death at childbirth was not uncommon 150 years ago. Most often babies were buried with their mother, if the mother didn't survive. Sometimes babies were buried with another family member that had previously passed away (a grandparent or sibling). In the centre of the cemetery is a large crucifix and a few large white raised tombstones marking the graves of some of the priests - either former local boys who became priests or St. Boniface parish priests.

Many of the earlier markers are made from sandstone; since about 1910 granite stone has been used for its durability. The iron crosses, some mounted with sandstone slabs, marble plaques, lead alloy or cedar with inscriptions are very ornate with coiled straps, iron motifs, angels, lambs and flowers. Some of these iron crosses were made by J. D. Mueller (Miller). Mueller also forged the main cemetery gates. Other iron crosses were made by Joseph Frank and his son Walter, including the crosses that sit over their graves. Walter's daughter, Mildred Hergott, recalled that her father used a mold into which he poured the metal to form the cross. The iron crosses are dated from 1860 to 1903. Common to the Alsatian German settlers, similar iron crosses can be found in other Ontario Roman Catholic cemeteries including St. Agatha, St. Clements, Macton, Formosa, Mildmay, Deemerton, Carlsruhe, Riversdale, Chepstow and Zurich.

Over several summers, the stones and Epitaphs that were written in

*German Script*

or in German were translated with the help of Anna Klausnitzer.



## The Maintenance of Our Cemetery

Many of our members, the Maryhill community and descendants of those buried in the cemetery are dedicated to maintaining our cemetery. Starting in 1899 and for decades through 1990, the cemetery was maintained by the descendants of the George Zettel family- Frank, William and Gerald Zettel. The Zettel family dug the graves with a pick and shovel. The fee to open and close a grave was \$5 in the summer and \$6 when the ground was frozen hard in the winter.

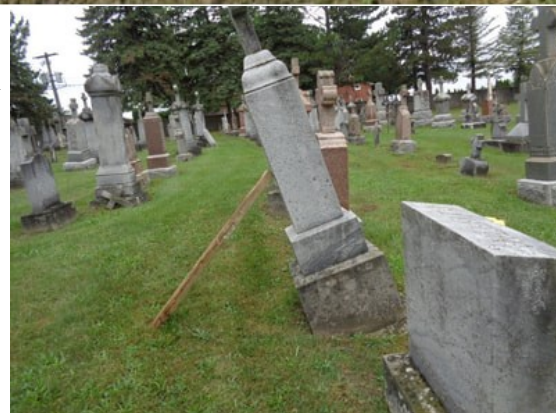
In 1934 Pastor Joseph Wey, concerned that the cemetery becoming full, had the rows filled and monuments erected with some order. Some years later, a working bee was held with men from the parish using horse teams and wagons. Topsoil was hauled from the church property across the road to fill the low portions of the cemetery. They leveled off the area, planted grass and put a driveway into the cemetery.

In 1997 a cemetery committee was formed to govern the maintenance of the cemetery; the committee continues to operate today. For 25 years, Bernie Brohman was the groundskeeper for our cemeteries and for the last 8 years Earl Haid has taken over the task. A few replica grave markers have been installed to replace broken or missing markers. Two plaques are mounted in the cemetery to honour our ancestors.

Many stones are covered with lichens (moss or mold) and should be cleaned. Over the past few years various families have brought buckets of water and mild soap to scrub the stones. Once cleaned, many stones look like new again allowing for families to enjoy them for years.

Over the past 20 years, one of our Historical Society Board of Directors, Ron Schmuck, has repaired about 150 stones (and counting) and he has adjusted/straightened another 60+. Ron started repairing his family and friend's stones and when they were done he went on to repair and straighten any stones that needed it. Ron has crafted metal holders for the wrought iron crosses so that the small stone markers can be inserted into them and re-attached to the crosses. Ron even purchased a machine to repair the wrought iron scroll-work on the crosses. Ron has made molds of missing angels, and even dyed the cement to match the weathered colour of the original stones.

Take a look at the web site titled "[Old Walled Cemetery Project](#)". Ron has documented the details of his work. The maintenance of the stones themselves are the responsibility of each family, but Ron is happy to help with repairs.



*The condition of our Old Walled cemetery certainly is a testament to those in the community that value and respect our heritage. Our ancestors are looking down on us and smiling at the pride we take in their final resting places!*



## Found in Grandma's Scrap Book

*Unsure of the year of this article.*

**TRACTOR WRECKED**—Alfred A. Zinger, R.R. 1, Breslau, looks at what is left of his 13 year-old tractor after it struck a hole about a foot deep while turning a corner moving hay. The accident occurred on the Herbert Weiler farm north of Maryhill which Mr. Zinger has rented. Turning and hitting the hole at the same time combined to break the frame of the machine at about seven points. Mr. Zinger was unhurt.



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Join our Facebook Group! [\*\*MARYHILL ROOTS\*\*](#)

With over 270 members, we grow every day! We share pictures from years ago, community events, birthdays, obituaries and general community news!

**facebook**



## According to the Lowell's Gazetteer of British North America, in 1873

A Gazetteer is a geographical dictionary of a country. In 1873, the Lowell's Gazetteer of British North America described our local villages:

**NEW GERMANY**, a village in Waterloo co., Ont., 3 1/2 miles from Breslau. Pop. 150.

**FREIBURG**, a post village in Waterloo co., Ont., 4 1/2 miles from Breslau. It contains 1 store and 4 hotels. Pop. 100.

**KOSSUTH**, a post village in Waterloo co., Ont., 4 miles from Breslau. Pop. 150.

**WEST MONTROSE**, a post village in Waterloo co., Ont., on Grand river, 12 miles from Berlin. It has a woollen factory, a saw mill and smelting works. Iron ore is found in the vicinity. Pop. 100.

**New Germany**—a Village in Waterloo co., Ont., 3 1/2 miles from Breslau. Pop. 150.

**Freiburg**—a post village in Waterloo co., Ont., 4 1/2 miles from Breslau. It contains 1 store and 4 hotels. \* Pop 100.

**Kossuth**—a post village in Waterloo co., Ont., 4 miles from Breslau. Pop 150

**West Montrose**—a post village in Waterloo co., Ont., on Grand river 12 miles from Berlin. It has a woollen factory, a saw mill and smelting works. Iron ore is found in the vicinity. Pop. 100

**\* Note: We think the Gazetteer mixed up the distance from Breslau for the villages of Freiburg and New Germany.** Freiburg, as a village, no longer exists. It was located

at the intersection of Shantz Station Road and St. Charles Street where today there are a half dozen houses. We also doubt there were 4 hotels in Freiburg—there was most likely 1 hotel in Freiburg and another 3 in New Germany.

There have been several epidemics in the area over the years.

An **epidemic** is an outbreak of a disease that attacks many people at about the same time and may spread through one or several communities.

A **pandemic** occurs when an epidemic spreads throughout the world.

**1834—Cholera Pandemic** - said to have started in India and travelled west to Canada on immigrant's boats. In Galt a traveling circus brought the disease to the town of 200 and 33 died in one week. At that time there was only one doctor for the village and surrounding area.

**1886—Diphtheria** outbreak in Wellesley and Wilmot Townships affecting many young children of whom approximately 20% died. A sad note is that Catharina and Anthony Henhoeffter (a brother to Magdalena who married Nicholas Raitar (Rider)) lost 3 children to Diphtheria in a few days. Joseph (age 7) and six days later lost both Henry (age 5) and Matilda (age 1.5).

**1918–1919—Influenza Pandemic** that impacted almost 60% of the local population in October of 1918.

Locally, some of the family we lost:

- 27 year old Regina Steffler (daughter of George and Mary Ann Weiler)
- 2 year old Mathilda Rellinger (daughter of Phillip and Ellen Doll)
- 21 year old Teckla Weiler (daughter of Anthony B & Theresia Weiler)

*This information was published previously, but is relevant today so we are publishing it again.*

## The Last Word Door-to Door Salesmen

In interviews with the elders from our community, I hear similar stories of the door-to-door salesmen visiting homes and selling their wares. Here are a few. We'd love to hear stories about the others you remember!

**Rag Man** – Ida (Kreiger) Fowler told us about the Rag Man who would come around once or twice a year to purchase old rags. Bob Fehrenbach recalls that the Rag Man also purchase horse hair. The Fehrenbach's would comb and then trim their horses manes and tails and cut and sell them to the rag man. He thinks the hair was used for insulation or for stuffing in furniture. The Rag Man paid quite dearly for the horse hair!

**Bread Man** - Bob Fehrenbach says they called him "Georgie Baker" and he was from Frohmer's Bakery in Kitchener. He came weekly with an assortment of fresh breads and buns. Bernie Brohman says his Bread Man drove a Model A bakery truck. He was an old man and owner of Stumpf's bakery in Elmira.

**Mr Brown** – Betty (Brohman) Motz remembers Mr. Brown, from **W.C. Brown & Sons** or Brown's Men's Wear in Elmira, came to her family farm with a trunk filled with men's dress clothes. He came frequently to her farm, most likely because there were 8 sons in the family! Bernie Brohman remembers one time he set the clothing aside and helped the family to harvest the hay!

**Cheese Man** – Came on Mondays with a variety of cheeses.

**Fish Man**—Came regularly with a freezer chest full of fish

**Elmira Meat Market** – Came on Mondays with a selection of luncheon meats.

**Raleigh Man**—A few times a year he stopped by to sell brown salve, liniments, cinnamon, and chocolate-milk powder.

**Fuller Brush**—Also stopped by a few times a year, he sold brushes.

**Horse Stud Service** – Bob Fehrenbach recalls a man with a horse and buggy, with a black stallion following behind. The salesman would leave the horse on the farm overnight to do his business. The salesman would often have supper and breakfast, sleeping at the house of his customer. What a great job – for both the man and the horse! Tom Schell tells us that his Grandfather, Gorge Schell, toured the county with a buggy and a Percheron named "Laddie".

**Scrap Dealer**—The scrap dealer drove up every spring in his Harley with a side car. "Dollar" was his name and he wore a leather helmet. The scrap purchased was loaded into his side car and away he went.

*This column will feature stories from years ago—often handed down by word of mouth.  
Have a story you want to share? Contact us!!*