

## Proposal for Historic Interpretive Plaques

### In the Town of Lincoln

For some time, the Town of Lincoln Heritage Committee has been discussing the best way to promote our Town's heritage culture. It was felt that simply having "Designation Plaques" for primarily our historic residences was not enough. Something else was needed to ignite interest, enthusiasm and pride in our early history and make it more personal to the residents of the Town as well as making it more inviting to our visitors. Consequently, it was decided that some kind of signage program, "Historic Interpretative Plaques" might become a way of celebrating our history.

Interpretive plaques, initially found in our National and Provincial Parks, are becoming increasingly more common and popular in our urban areas. In the Town of Lincoln; Beamsville, Vineland, Jordan, Jordan Station, Campden and Tintern each have histories that are unknown to most of us. Each community, each building has a story to tell; the interpretative plaque can be that story book!

#### Characteristics of Historic Interpretive Plaque

Example: Sign mounted on steel post

Steel Post — Tubular Steel - 2" x 2" x 84" — cemented into the ground

Steel Plate — 36" x 18" — mounted at 45° to post

Image — Picture and Printed Information Panel — a composite material attached to steel plate  
- weather resistant — warranty — 15 -20 years

See picture on following page.

Cost per plaque is approximately \$1,000.00

Amount requested for 2016 — 5 x \$1,000.00 = \$5,000.00.

## Historical Interpretive Plaques

### Morningstar Mill Example – 36" by 18"

Use the plaque and pedestal method to illustrate various aspects of Lincoln's history. These are especially applicable to situations where the original building is gone or has undergone major transformations.

#### Other possibilities:

MacGregor's Garage Beamsville

Jordan House 1846

Jordan Vinegar Works – Jordan Village

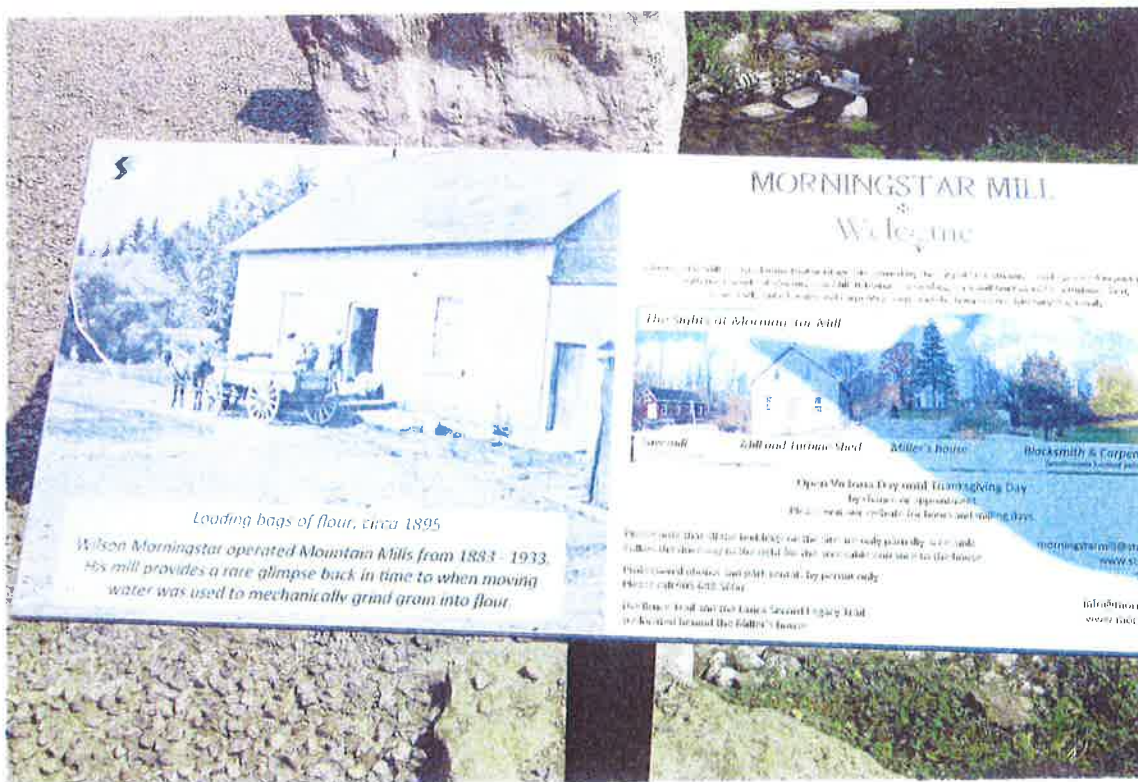
Vineland Public School – Rittenhouse Contribution

Beamsville Fairgrounds – Through Time - Aerial Photos

Dean's Mill – Tintern

Great Western Railway Bridge – Twenty Mile Creek

Each of us could up with these and other possibilities.



## Suggested Historical Interpretive Plaques

### Topic/Theme/Location

- (1) Toll House/Snure General Store – Jordan
  - proximity of Nineteenth Street and Highway 81
- (2) Mountain Mennonite Church and Cemetery – Campden
  - southwest corner of Fly Road and Tintern Road
- (3) Hamilton, Grimsby and Beamsville Radial
  - Either – Beamsville – opposite Cenotaph –in front of Plaza or
  - Vineland – northwest corner of Highway 81 and Victoria Avenue ?
- (4) Education in Beamsville – Beamsville
  - William Street and King Street – a respectful distance west of Cenotaph
- (5) Agriculture and Geography – Jordan
  - proximity to Nineteenth Street and Highway 81

With the exception of the Mountain Mennonite Church location, all others are in high traffic areas.

(cars/pedestrians) There are so many other potential sites that are waiting to be discovered and have their stories told. We hope to tell these stories in the coming years.

On the following pages, the text for each of the five plaques that have been listed is given. At this point in time, they are in rough draft form and limited to 204 words. The Heritage Committee will no doubt need to modify, proof read and confirm the final product. The photograph(s) or diagram(s) which are an integral part of each plaque have not been included at this time.

The Town of Lincoln Heritage Committee hopes that this suggested Interpretive Plaque program meets with your approval and can be included as part of our 2016 budget.

Respectfully submitted,

Lincoln Heritage Committee

Chairwoman - Carla Mackie

Vice-Chair - Vic Dirksen

## Toll House and Snure General Store

From the mid 1800's to well into the 1950's, the Snure and then the Richardson General Store were the economic and social heart of Jordan. Then, in 1966 Nick and Alexandra Poursanidis bought the store and operated it for 25 more years before replacing it with a new plaza in 1991.

Clark Snure was a general store merchant, postmaster and Township Clerk in what was a bustling community in the 1800' s. Other businesses included carriage makers, butcher, harness maker, shoe maker, cabinet maker, four general stores, watch maker, weaver, blacksmith, and several inn keepers.

The Queenston – Grimsby Road (former Iroquois Trail and present Highway 81) was the expressway of the 1800's through the Niagara Peninsula. Many of the early settlers (Pennsylvanian German) used this route when immigrating into Upper Canada. Keeping this road passable was difficult and expensive. Initially, voluntary labour was used to maintain the road but it was less than satisfactory. Consequently, road tolls, as indicated by the toll house and gate, were used to hire companies to make road repairs. In 1917, the Province of Ontario took over responsibility for its' maintenance.

Decew Hydro Electric plant was providing electricity for the H.G.& B. Radial by 1899.

208 words

## Mountain Mennonite Church and Cemetery

This site was the location of the Mountain Meeting House that was built about 1843. David Moyer sold a half acre of his farm for five shillings (\$1.00) to Abraham Kratz who was one of the Elders of the religious group known as the Mennonites for a place to worship. The meeting house was 36 X 50 feet, a white framed building with a gable end featuring two windows and a door facing Fly Road.

Although the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century featured much growth for the congregation, the second half encountered much division among the parishioners. Disagreements over the Temperance Movement (Restrict Alcohol), Sunday School classes and prayer meeting protocol including emotional expressions and testimony of women, divided members of the church. Consequently, by 1875, the Mountain Mennonite Church had lost many of its' younger members to a more liberal Evangelical movement that was occurring at the time.

In 1907, services ceased, the meeting house was taken down in 1918 and moved to another location on the Chris Fretz farm in Vineland for farm tenants. The cemetery to the west contains over 240 pioneer grave stones, including those of the family of former Governor General – Roland Michener.

204 Words

## The Hamilton, Grimsby and Beamsville Radial

The H.G.&B. Electric Railway Company, established on April 14, 1892, built an electric rail and trolley system to extend from Hamilton to Beamsville, a distance of 37 kilometres with ten stops. It was the first electric railway in Canada designed exclusively for inter-urban transport. The line reached Grimsby by 1894, Beamsville by 1896 and finally Vineland; however, this last extension was abandoned by 1906. The trolley cars were initially powered by thermal electric power from Stoney Creek. By October 23, 1898, the Hamilton Cataract Power, Light and Traction Company built a hydro electric plant at DeCew Falls near St. Catharines as a replacement power source.

A variety of trolley cars offered the rural population an opportunity to travel to Hamilton for shopping or allow farmers to ship their milk or fruit crops to the city. Some trolley cars were completely open, (open bench) while others during winter had electric heat provided.

Trains left hourly, costing 40 cents for a return ticket. At its' most prosperous time, H.G.&B carried over 1 million people and in terms of freight, 60,000 tons, annually.

By June 30, 1931, economic conditions were changing and the advent of the automobile resulted in the H.G.&B's termination.

203 words

### Education in Early Beamsville

Over 150 years ago, this site looked very different. James Henry, a prominent merchant in the village, had built a very spacious and opulent home for his wife. It had large rooms on two levels, at least three fireplaces, fine decorative brick work, extensive fretwork and a cupola. It was quite spectacular for the time. Unfortunately, James' wife died before they could move in. Thereafter, the building was referred to as "Henry's Folly". In 1859, it was purchased for \$5,000 and became the Common School or Elementary School for Beamsville.

With more and more students wanting to go on to higher education, or as it was called then, "Grammar School"; a second building, Beamsville High School, was built in 1888 at a cost of \$10,000, a horrendous amount of money at that time. It consisted of two rooms, a principal and an assistant who taught 25 students. Eventually, the two buildings were demolished and in day/month, 1953 Jacob Beam Public School was built.

## Agriculture and Geography

The geologic history of the Niagara Peninsula had much to do with the excellent soil which attracted the first settlers to this area after the American Revolutionary War of 1776.

The area where you are standing was covered with water of glacial Lake Iroquois about 10,000 years ago. This ponding of glacial meltwaters resulted in the level terrain called a lacustrine plain. The numerous creeks, pouring off the Escarpment, carried sand, silt and clay particles, depositing them upon entering the body of water. When ice blockage near Kingston melted, the water dropped to its'present level of Lake Ontario.

The new landscape became the basis for the fertile sandy loam soils as indicated by the black walnut trees that attracted the first settlers. Initially, the farmers had cattle and grain crops before transitioning to the more valuable crops of tender fruits and then grapes of today.

In fact, the very narrow band of shoreline (mainly sands and pebbles) of Lake Iroquois provided a better drained pathway through the peninsula. Areas along Lake Ontario to the north were hampered by wide creeks; hence the more popular Iroquois Trail route which had slightly steeper terrain but more narrow and shallower crossings.

203 Words