

Archives Awareness Week 2019



As a kick-off to Archives Awareness Week in Ontario we are proud to announce we are the first in Grimsby to populate the **"What Was There"** website and iPhone app with vintage photographs of Grimsby!

What Was There ties historical photos to Google Maps, allowing you to tour familiar streets to see how they appeared in the past.

Log on to whatwasthere and enter Grimsby, Ontario

You'll notice we have loaded over 90 vintage photographs of Grimsby already!

Click on a vintage photograph and you'll see where the photograph was taken.

Click on Google Street View to see how that building fit into the streetscape.

Use the Fade function to toggle between what was there and what is there now!

Volunteers will be uploading historical photographs all the time - so check the site regularly!



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During Archives Awareness Week, we shared the following profiles of people and places throughout Grimsby's rich history.

Did you know about the Grimsby Peach Queens?

We think everyone in Town knows about the Grimsby Peach Kings and would imagine most kids who play hockey dream of being a Peach King one day!

However, did you know in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the Ladies Grimsby Peach Queens played in the Fruitbelt league and were a very successful team!

In the February 22, 1911 Independent an article detailing a game between the Grimsby Peach Queens and the ladies team from Niagara Falls included the quote "This is the first defeat that the Grimsby girls have had in four years playing". The final paragraph in the article stated that thanks to the referee the game was fairly clean and no hair pulling was indulged by either team!

The photo below is of the 1902 Championship Hockey Team – (back row) Sadie Coulson, Winnifred Culp, unknown, Blanche Culp



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Did you know about Grimsby's Basket Factories?

During the late 19th century and into the middle of the 20th century, basket factories were an important role in the community.

While there were a number of basket factories in town the last one was owned by Canadian Wood Products Limited and was previously known as H.H. Farrell & Sons, which was located in the hollow alongside Forty Creek, where the Grimsby Lions Community Pool is today.

Farrell's Basket Factory was built in 1914 and was a partnership venture between H.H. (Hanky) Farrell and Art Hewson, former reeve of the town. During the 1920's, Mr. Hewson sold his interest in the factory and built Hewson & Sons Basket Factory on the northeast corner of Main St. and Patton St., also known as the foot of Palmer's Hill. Hewson & Sons Basket Factory was lost in a fire on February 8, 1948.

It was 3am on Thursday March 20, 1952, when the siren started wailing at the Grimsby Fire Station. As people awoke and looked to the sky they could see a red glow over Grimsby and they knew this was a terrible fire.

By the time the fire department, consisting of 20 firefighters, arrived they knew there was nothing they could do to save the basket factory as they weren't equipped to fight a fire of this magnitude. The best the men could do was to try to make sure nothing else was impacted and in this task they were successful.

Damage in the blaze was estimated at \$100,000 – the highest figure ever recorded for a fire in Grimsby, at that time.



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Did you know about Grimsby Brick and Tile Company Ltd?

It was around 1875, at the corner of Durham Road and Highway 8, when William Tallman founded Grimsby Brick and Tile Company Ltd, although it was known as Beamsville Brick and Terracotta. Clay was mined right on the site, which included more than 70 acres of land.

Ownership of the company changed several times over the years. The last owner, Robert Crawford, encountered problems when a local farmer, William A. McNiven, sued the company [ca. 1931] alleging that fumes from the Works killed his peach trees.

It was 1978 when the buildings and kilns were torn down and half a million tons of inert waste oxides were dumped into the site, with the approval of the Ministry of the Environment.



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Do you know who started the first Greenhouse in Grimsby?

John Kerman (1860-1917) was closely connected with the educational, social and municipal affairs of the Village of Grimsby. He was a member of the Board of Mechanics Institute, member of the Board of the free public library and for several years held the position of clerk and treasurer of the Township of North Grimsby.

John Kerman also made Grimsby hothouse tomatoes famous! According to a 1917 article in the *Globe and Mail*, he was one of the pioneers of raising tomatoes under glass, and on his property on Kerman Avenue was found one of the most complete establishments of this kind in the country. He made Grimsby hothouse tomatoes famous in most of the cities in Ontario.

There's a quote in the 1914 New York publication, *The Forcing-book - A Manual of the Cultivation of Vegetables in Glass Houses*, by Liberty Hyde Bailey that states "The largest forced tomato which I ever seen was grown by John Kerman, Grimsby, Ontario. It weighed 24-1/2 ounces."

John Kerman was also well known for growing the most amazing roses in his greenhouses.



Photo is of a small Bowling Green at Nixon Hall on Main St. W (circa 1908)

L-R: J.R. Smith, Rev. R.A. Ballard, Rev. John Muir, Wm. Pettit, John Kerman, Fred Pottenger, James Metcalfe, J. MacConochie, Colonel Roberts

Kneeling: Peter Gamble, Hamilton Pettit, Linus Woolverton, O.C. Pettit