

# CFHA Newsletter

Produced by the Canadian Friends Historical Association, 60 Lowther Ave., Toronto, Ont., Canada M5R 1C7

## Saving the Doan House



Seneca Doan House (circa 1845), Yonge Street, Newmarket on the move.

The Seneca Doan House (c. 1845) on Lot 92 King Township, next to the Yonge Street meetinghouse, is a fine example of the classical style of architecture as developed in New England States. It is representative of the houses built in Upper Canada in the early-to-mid 19th century by prosperous Quaker farmers and it has sheltered numerous generations of the Doan family. It is an important example of Quaker architecture, one of a number of buildings in the area constructed by members of the Doan family: notably the Yonge Street Meeting House, and Sharon Temple. This basic two-storey building with its original wood and plaster finish is a good example of a well-built Quaker building, and reflects the care and quality of workmanship of the early Quaker era. Without undo alteration, it has retained its original form. The overall structure is in good condition, with only slight changes over the years, and represents an important example of the early built heritage of Newmarket. Because of its significance both historically and architecturally, and in recognition of its intact architectural style reflecting the influences of the Quaker period of Upper Canadian colonial history, Heritage Newmarket LACAC designated the Doan House as a building of local and provincial historic significance under the Ontario

Heritage Act.

Shortly after its formation in 1980, the Newmarket Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC), turned its attention to preservation of Quaker buildings and sites, notably the Doan House which had been sold to a developer in 1967, and the Hicksite Friends Burying Ground which was overgrown with weeds.

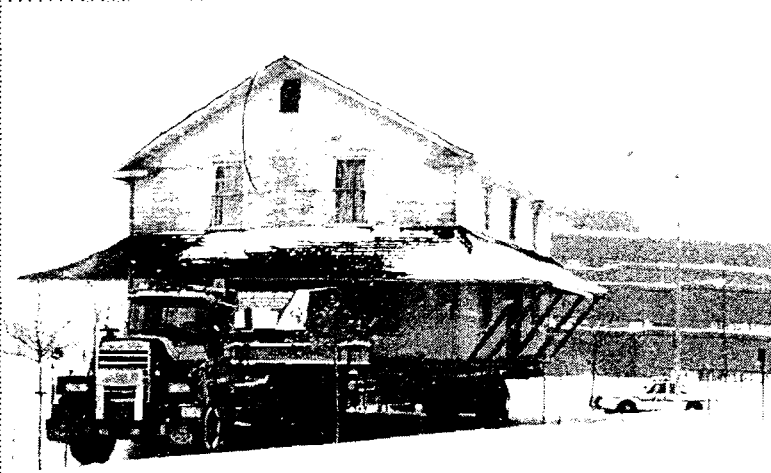
For well over a century, until it was sold in 1967, succeeding generations of the Doan family lived in this house. At the time that the Doan farm property was being sold, Friends purchased the property of Yonge Street Meeting House back from Doan family. Elma Starr, a faithful member of Yonge Street Meeting for many years, had the idea that Quakers should also purchase the Doan House for their use. She wanted to see it used as a Home for aging Friends adjacent to the Meeting House. With the restoration of the Yonge Street Meeting House, under the direction of restoration architect, Napier Simpson, the Yonge Street Meeting of Friends was revived. However, the future of the Doan House remained uncertain in the hands of the developer. For many years it was thought that the Quakers would accept the house and use it to enhance the usefulness of the Yonge Street Meeting of Friends.

Through the persistence of the Newmarket Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC) and the Doan Family Association, the Council of the Town of Newmarket was persuaded to save the Doan House. By means of a site plan agreement negotiated in 1983 between the Town of Newmarket and Orsi Developers, an obligation was placed on the owner-developer that, as a condition for development approvals, they agreed to pay the costs of moving the building and construction of a new foundation to support the building on a new site. Through its LACAC, the Town of Newmarket offered the building to the Society of Friends, provided that they would accept it on their property.

For a number of reasons, it was thought that the Society of Friends could provide the most appropriate site and use for the building. From the beginnings of the Quaker settlement on Yonge Street, there was a long association between the Doan family and Friends, especially from a number of exchanges of ownership of the meeting house property. The architectural styles of the Friends' meeting house and the Doan House are similar, and would be very compatible on a common site. The two buildings which stood by each other for about 150 years should stay together as monuments to the Quaker presence on Yonge Street. The Doan House could be moved most easily to adjacent property belonging to the Society of Friends in Newmarket. As a means of celebrating the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Quaker Settlement on Yonge Street, the addition of the Doan House might reinforce the revival of a Quaker presence in the locality, and at the same time, increase the dimension of Quaker service. Suggested uses for the building included a Quaker Heritage Centre, space for the Canadian Yearly Meeting, an apartment for a resident Friend, space for the Montessori School, Alternatives to Violence (AVP) programs.

Repeated attempts were made to create a situation where Quakers might see the value of accepting and using the house. It was presumed that both the Canadian Yearly Meeting and the Yonge Street Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends would be interested in having the building on their properties so that it could be used in connection with the Yonge Street Meeting House. It was expected that Friends would negotiate at various levels within the Society, and would consult with other groups, in order to form the coalition which would allow the Society of Friends to assume responsibility for the house.

The Doan Family Association of Canada has been interested in seeing that the building would be preserved and suggested that it might be used to house the collection of Doan family archives and artifacts. In 1908, a Doan Centennial Reunion honouring Ebenezer Doan was held at the Friends Meeting House, Yonge Street, then owned by the Doans. Many of his descendants gathered to celebrate the 100th anniversary of their arrival there by unveiling a tablet in the form of a headstone in the Quaker Cemetery which adjoins the meeting house and the farm



where he settled in 1808. Reunions of the Doane Family Association (Ont. Branch) continue to be held annually on the first weekend after Labour Day.

By 1993, Newmarket councillors advised that because development proposals would proceed on this property in the near future, decisions about the ownership of the Doan House needed to be made in the preliminary stages of planning. With the guidance of the LACAC, the Doan House Committee was formed and

held a number of meetings over the next several years in order to determine the future location and use of the Doan House and to explore funding proposals for its restoration. The Doan House Committee promised financial assistance for restoration through grant applications, fundraising, and arrangements for materials and professional work in exchange for charitable donation receipts.

Preference for new ownership of the building was directed towards the owners of Quaker or Quaker-related sites in the community. In addition to the Society of Friends (Quakers), it was thought that either Pickering College or Sharon Temple Museum might find a use for the building. Pickering College might have used it as a Quaker House on campus, providing space for the Quaker Archives and Reference Library and accommodation for staff and researchers. Because the same Doan family of builders were responsible for construction of the other buildings on the site, it was offered to the Sharon Temple Museum with the idea that it might be used as an administrative building. However, persons in charge of these three sites declined to accept ownership of the building.

In 1996, when citizens were celebrating the 200th anniversary of the laying out of Yonge Street, attention was again directed towards saving the Doan House. In 1999, the Doan House was selected as one of the projects which would assist Newmarket to celebrate the Millennium. An agreement was negotiated with the Region of York for a site at the northwest corner of Yonge and Eagle Streets, near its Millennium Garden. Although various uses were explored for the building on this site, restoration of the Doan House did not proceed to completion as a Millennium Project.

In 2000-01, Newmarket celebrated the 200th anniversary of its founding by Quaker settlers. In the early 1800s, the community which became Newmarket began to take shape when many Quaker families left the USA and located here. Many of their descendants still live in the Newmarket area. Newmarket

Mayor Tom Taylor deemed that preserving a Quaker House was a fitting way to recognize and celebrate the Town's origins and gave his support to this project because of its close association with Quaker history. Hospice Newmarket agreed to use the building for its administrative offices, and in conjunction with the Town, to be responsible for its restoration. Hospice Newmarket and the Newmarket Historical Society combined to submit an application for funding to the Ontario Trillium Foundation. Because of its heritage designation and its appropriate use, the building qualified for a one-time grant of \$75,000. Finally, after several decades of hopes being raised and dashed, and fears that the Doan House would be lost, in March 2002, it was moved to the north-west corner of Yonge and Eagle Streets, Newmarket, where it will be renovated, used by Hospice Newmarket, and enjoyed by the community. Persons wishing to make contributions to this project may contact Hospice Newmarket.

*Sandra Fuller*

## Conference of Quaker Historians & Archivists, 2002



Former Chair-person of the CFHA, Chris Densmore, leading a panel discussion at the Conference of Quaker Historians

The 14th Biennial Conference of Quaker Historians & Archivists sponsored by the Friends Historical Assoc., USA, was held at Haverford College, Haverford Pennsylvania, on the weekend of 21-23 June 2002. Founded in 1833, Haverford College is a private, co-educational, liberal arts institution located in suburban Philadelphia PA. It is the oldest institution of higher learning with Quaker roots in North America. CFHA was well represented with members Chris Densmore, Elizabeth Moger, Robynne Rogers Healey,

and Sandra Fuller, in attendance. CFHA's past chairperson, Chris Densmore, recently appointed Curator of the Friends Historical Collection at Swarthmore College, Swarthmore PA, was heavily involved in the program. At one of the Saturday morning sessions of the program entitled, "New Applications for Quaker Archives", staffpersons, Patricia O'Donnell and Anne Yoder, presented papers on the "Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College" and "Swarthmore College Peace Collection", and later on Saturday, Chris Densmore was on hand to welcome participants to a visit to the archives and library at Swarthmore College. At another Saturday morning session of the program entitled, "Quakers as Abolitionists", Chris presented a paper on "Progressive Friends and Abolition". At the same session, Elizabeth Moger presented a paper on "The Robinsons of Rokeby and Charles Marriott". At the Friday evening session entitled, "Quakers, Cultures, and Challenges", Robynne Rogers Healey, University of Alberta, presented a paper on "Building, Sustaining, and Reforming Quaker Community in Upper Canada: Quaker Women and the Case of the Yonge Street Friends". She was one of the three Cs - the other papers in this session came from California and Cuba. As a finale to the program, on Saturday evening, the conference offered a change of venue to Quaker Westtown School with a

tour of the school archives in an underground vault, a delicious dinner, and an after dinner session. Plans are underway for the next conference at George Fox University in Oregon in 2004.

*Sandra Fuller*

### **Newmarket's Bi-Centennial Celebrations 1801-2001**

In 1996, the citizens of the Region of York and Toronto celebrated the 200th anniversary of the laying out of Yonge Street, the military road which linked York (Toronto) on Lake Ontario and Holland Landing to Lake Simcoe. Once a route to the interior of the province was available, settlers soon followed, and by 1800-01 many courageous pioneer families had commenced the Quaker Settlement on Yonge Street at Newmarket. In the years 2000-2001, the Canadian Friends Historical Association, the Yonge Street Meeting of Friends (Quakers), and the Town of Newmarket, celebrated the the 200th anniversary of the founding of this Quaker Settlement. For those CFHA members who were not able to participate in this event, we are including a report in this CFHA Newsletter.

Early in 2001, a group of Newmarket citizens and Councillors formed the Newmarket 200 Committee to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the arrival of Quaker settlers on Yonge Street in 1801 and the founding of Newmarket. Members of the Committee, under the chairmanship of Ralph Magel, were responsible for different aspects of the events which were held during the year 2001 - displays, fundraising, homecoming weekend, publicity. Although all aspects of the history of Newmarket, as it progressed through 200 years, were to be included, it seemed that Quaker history and Quaker institutions should play a prominent part in the celebrations. Sandra Fuller agreed to act as co-ordinator of displays related to Quaker history and events. Requests were made to borrow items which reflected life and activities in the Quaker community. A sufficient number of responses made it possible for the Newmarket Museum to mount an exhibit which featured a wide variety of items - photos of Quaker meeting houses, Bibles brought to Upper Canada in the early 1800s, account books, a recipe book, books by local Quaker authors, art, clothing worn by men, women, and children, hats and Quaker bonnets, jewellery, quilts, as well as furniture and utensils made or used in the settlements. Appreciation goes to all those whose participation helped to make the exhibit a success - the Canadian Yearly Meeting (Quaker) Archives and Jane Zavitz-Bond, the Aurora Museum, and the descendants of many Quaker families, amongst them Brown, Cornell, James, Randall, and Rogers, who produced many treasured keepsakes, usually only known to individual families, but shared on this occasion.

Heritage Newmarket LACAC (Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee) agreed to mount a special

display of photographs of some of the many fine buildings which represent the Quaker community in the Newmarket area, noted for the excellence of the built heritage which comes from its Quaker roots, especially, the Yonge Street Meeting House of Friends 1810, Sharon Temple 1832, and Pickering College 1910.

The Homecoming Weekend, Saturday, September 29, 2001, provided an opportunity for descendants of early Quaker settlers of the area to have a reunion, exchange memories and information, and view memorabilia. Both Pickering College, formerly a Quaker school, and the Quaker Archives located in the College's library, agreed to participate in an Open House on Saturday morning. There was a wonderful response from the general public who had passed by the impressive structure but had never been able to venture inside its walls. Visitors appreciated the informative guided tours of the building provided by Pickering College students, and enjoyed its architecture, its art, and the pictorial wall history. The Newmarket Museum set up their display of Ted Rogers' original batteryless radio in the front lobby of the school. Many of the guests were interested in the history of the school and Quaker education. One gentleman who grew up in Newmarket had many stories of time spent on the College campus. A special display of seldom-seen original items from the Quaker Archives was available for viewing in the Dorland Library Room - Timothy Rogers' Journal, certificates of removal to Canada for the earliest settlers - members of the Rogers, Hill, and Phillips families, and early registers of births, marriages, and deaths. Sandra Fuller was on hand to receive guests in the Dorland Room and from the length of time some of the guests spent, there was obviously a great deal of interest in the collection and the information offered.

All in all, everyone seemed to enjoy the Newmarket 200 Celebration.

**All-Quaker Conference**  
**"George Fox's Legacy: Friends for 350 Years"**  
**Friday, 11 October - Saturday, 12 October 2002**  
**Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania**

Persons interested in attending this conference should send a cheque payable to Friends Historical Library, and forward with name, address, telephone number, to Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College, 500 College Avenue, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, USA 19081-1399, attention Charlotte Blanford or telephone Charlotte at 610-328-8498, or e-mail [cblandf1@swarthmore.edu](mailto:cblandf1@swarthmore.edu). The registration fee is a nominal \$5.00

**Articles of interest:**

**On the Children of Peace:** The Winter 2001-2 issue of *TYPES & SHADOWS: JOURNAL OF THE FOLLOWSHIP OF QUAKERS IN THE ARTS*, has a front page article by Chuck Fager, "A Tangible Vision of Quakers, Art and Peace" giving a history (and one photo) of the Sharon Temple. And the winter 2001 issue of *ETHOS* (journal of the Society of Psychological Anthropology) published an article by Albert Schrauwers, "Sitting in Silence: Self, Emotion and Tradition in the Genesis of a Charismatic Ministry" which describes David Willson's (founder of the group) "theology of mind."

**On First Nations:** Donald B. Smith, "Nahnebahwequay (1824-1865): "Upright Woman," in *CANADIAN METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY PAPERS* 13 (2001): 74-105, concerning a Canadian Mississaugua (Ojibwa) woman from Credit River, also known as Catharine Sutton, who traveled to England in 1860 to petition the Crown for redress of First Nation land grievances. In her travel to England, she was aided by Quakers in Canada, New York State and Great Britain.