

now using the phrase. In fact, journalists themselves frequently re-write old stories about familiar subjects, only occasionally seeking out new material. Museums and archives exist in part so that the works of these less famous people may be preserved until the press and public are ready for fresh insights. These works may be "out of sight" while preserved in storage, but they are never completely "out of mind"; those responsible for archival collections remember until, like "No Man's Land" for Mary Riter Hamilton, an exhibition calls attention to the subjects. When the show ends and the works return to storage, the catalogue remains as a record of what had been presented and what might be retrieved again, together with the knowledge consolidated on paper by those who compiled the document. Exhibitions and catalogues, such as have been arranged in this instance, are crucial to one another in preserving the national memory.

Hugh A. Halliday
Canadian War Museum

Her Stories: Lives of Women in the Detroit River Region. FRANÇOIS BABY HOUSE: WINDSOR'S COMMUNITY MUSEUM. Mounted at the François Baby House, Windsor. 21 February 1993 - Summer 1994.

This exhibition, the first of its kind for Windsor, looks at aspects of our social history which have been, if not forgotten, certainly ignored. The tendency in local history has been to look at transportation links with the United States, automotive history, and our amalgamated towns (Walkerville and its famous Canadian Club Whiskey). But women's history? Along the Detroit River region? One walk through will ensure the most sceptical person that this was a subject very worthy of examination. "Her Stories" (a nice little twist on HIStory) brings to light fascinating tales of eleven women "who lived or travelled through the Detroit River region in the 18th and 19th centuries." In addition to presenting the traditional way of life for pioneer women, "Her Stories" demonstrates that there were a number of women who chose to lead very different lifestyles for their time.

The information for the exhibit was extensively researched; it becomes apparent that very little documentation is available locally on the topic of early women's history. One original document can be found in the display—part of a poem by Byron which, it is presumed, one of the Reynolds' sisters had copied. I say presumed because there is no caption for it. All other documents are photocopies or typewritten excerpts. Thus, there is a photocopy of Suzanne Baby's 1800 partition document dividing her estate among her surviving eleven children (she had twenty-two in all) from the Archives nationales du Québec, and printed passages from Ann Powell's diaries contained in the Powell-Jarvis Papers from the Archives of Ontario. Three original pieces of art (ink and watercolour), attributed to Catherine Reynolds, are from the museum's collection and serve to show how talented this woman was. The caption explains that she chose to remain single even though she was one of few women in the military town of Amherstburg. "In the early 19th century, increasing numbers of well-to-do women chose to lead what was known as a life of 'single blessedness' in order to develop their own special talents and abilities." Fortunately, there are a number of photographs (none of them originals) which serve to further illustrate the lives of these women. Notable is the



Miss Mary McKee, Anderdon Township, Essex County, 1911. *Photo taken by C.M. Barbeau.* Hiram Walker Historical Museum, Windsor, Ontario.

photograph of Laura Haviland showing objects of slavery. An anti-slavery activist, Haviland “worked in northern army hospitals and prison camps and offered religious instruction to refugee blacks.” A copy of an 1828 map shows the close relationship between the countries and helps put the stories of war, travel, and settlement into perspective. Credit must be given to the museum for being able to amass a wealth of information from such a wide variety of sources.

Windsor has been plagued for years with inadequate museum facilities. Unfortunately, the exhibition's impact is lessened by its setting: upstairs in the François Baby House. Visitors must walk around work tables and duck into corners; as an additional disadvantage, the second floor is inaccessible to the handicapped. The captions, for the most part are well-written and clear, in addition to being bilingual. Some consideration should be given to changing their colour for further exhibits; black writing on blue background appears washed out and is difficult to read. In spite of these drawbacks, the staff has, as usual, risen above the circumstances to present a refreshing and long overdue look at this topic.

Documents are supported by a wide variety of artifacts such as a spinning wheel, teapot, candle mould, mourning veil, rolling pin, and cross-stitch samplers. This is, after all, a museum exhibit: artifacts are its strong point. The exhibit revolves around the theme of a quilt. As the poster for the show states, "like a patchwork quilt, the blocks of women's history can be sewn in many colours and arranged in many patterns." In order to involve children in the exhibit, blank squares of material are available for them to "make a pattern, or draw something that reflects the modern woman as you see her." The squares are sewn together and already, a sizeable quilt is available for viewing. This contrasts nicely to the log cabin-patterned quilt hanging on the wall.

Taken as a whole, "Her Stories" presents a novel look at some of the women who helped to shape this area's history. It does not attempt to tell the complete story—it could not do so. As the poster suggests, "every woman has a past, and there are many more stories to be told."

Linda Chakmak
Windsor Public Library

Crossing the Bar: A Century of Women's Experience "Upon the Rough and Troubled Seas of Legal Practice" in Ontario. THE LAW SOCIETY OF UPPER CANADA. Mounted at the Law Society of Upper Canada Museum. Toronto. 25 March - 27 August 1993. No published catalogue.

This exhibition, staged in the historic setting of Toronto's Osgoode Hall, surveys the first century of women's participation in legal practice in Ontario. Located in a room upstairs from the Law Society's main reception area, it is difficult to find due to the lack of external signage. A series of pre-nineteenth century artifacts usher the visitor along the hall leading to the room where most of the material is hung around three walls, in chronological sequence. Glass-topped display cases in the centre of this room present themes such as the early twentieth-century debate over women's brain size.

The wall panels remind us that the modern practice of law generates a profusion of written words. This dense exhibit includes legislative extracts, newspaper and journal articles, letters, books, pamphlets, and conference programmes. There are also posters, prints, photographs, clothing, and symbolic objects, such as the large ceramic pig presented at a reunion of Osgoode's class of 1969. The nine women members dedicated the pig to their male colleagues as testament to the sexism of the student paper *Obiter Dicta* during their law school days.